



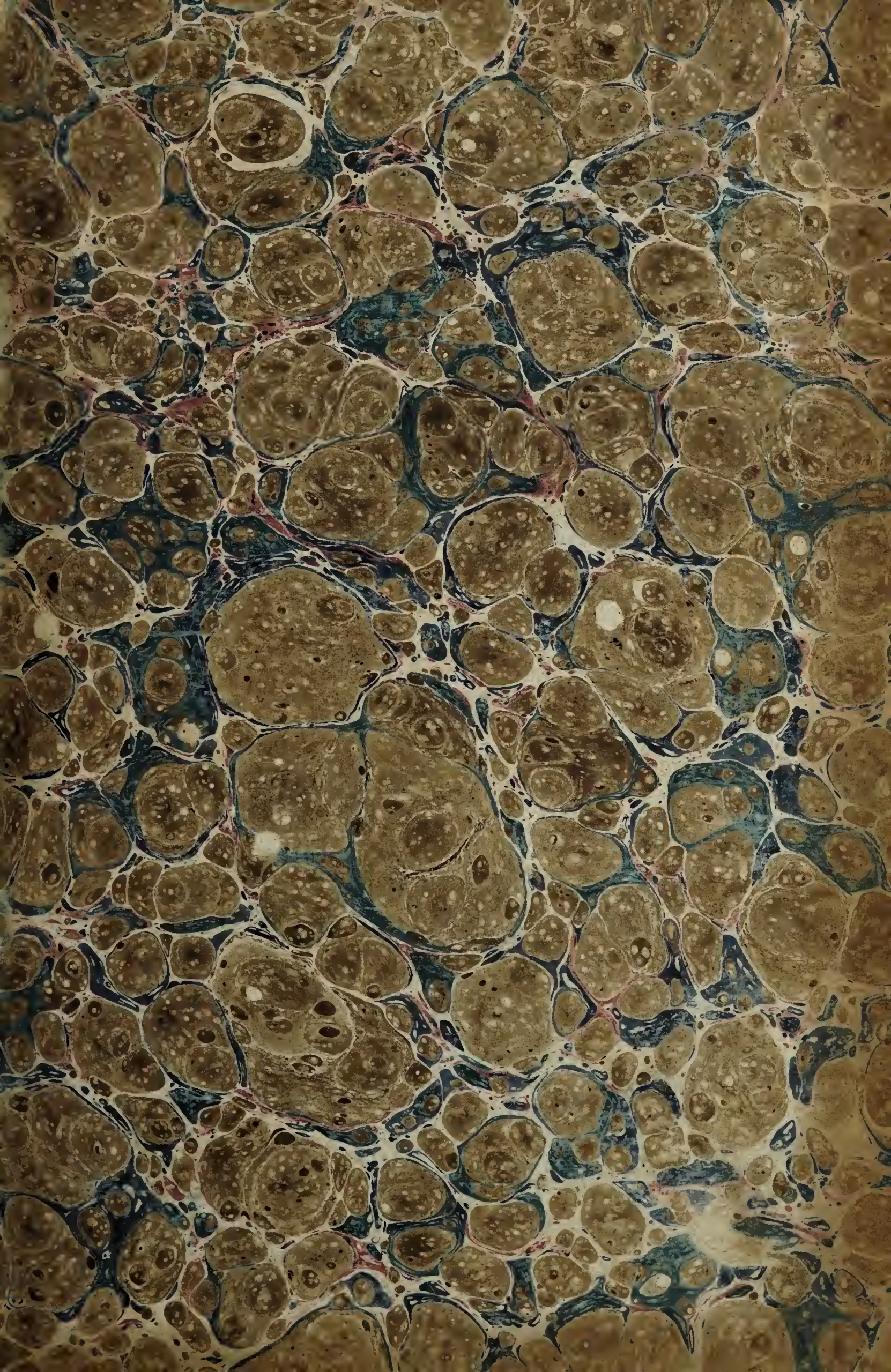


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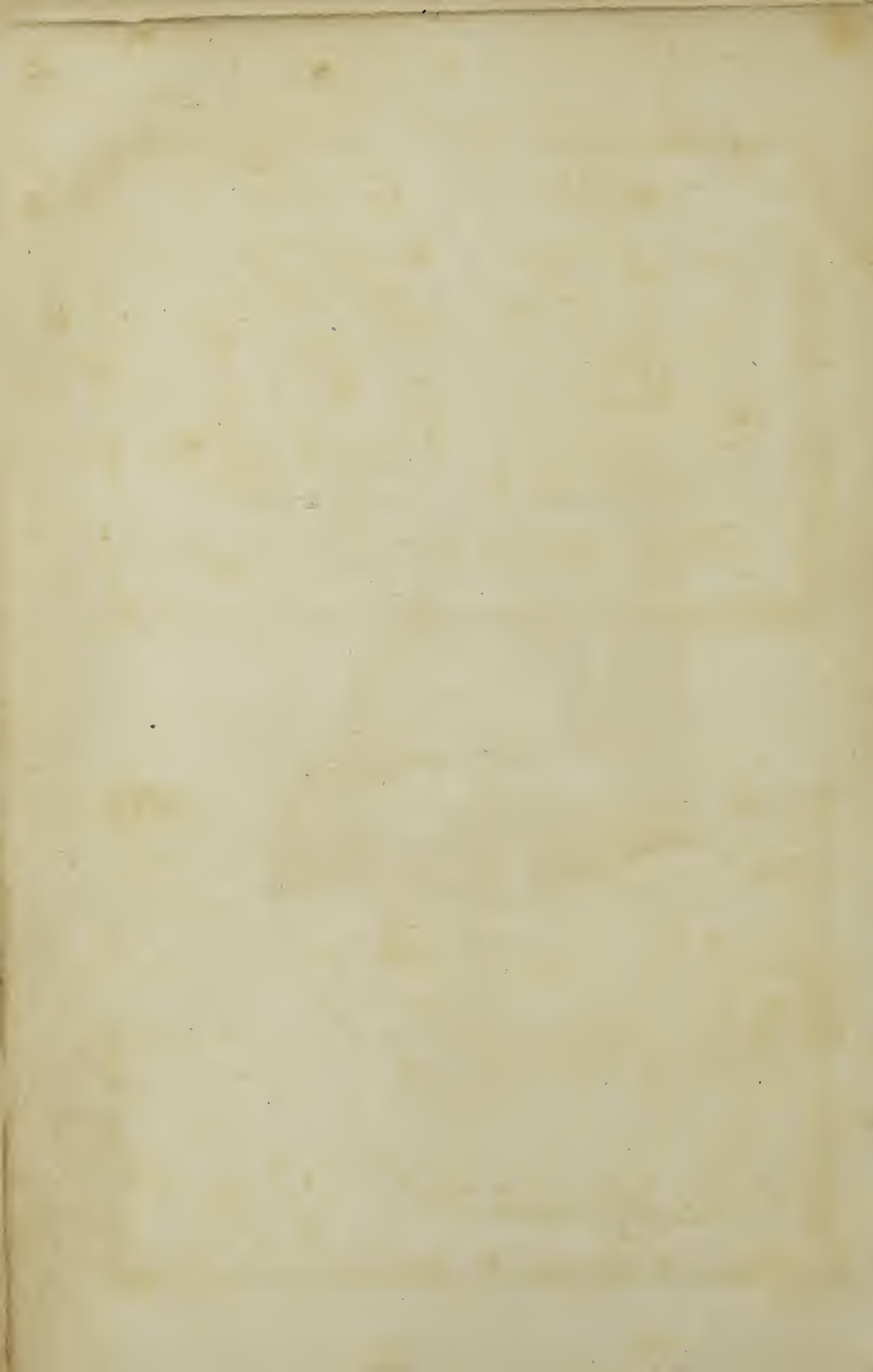
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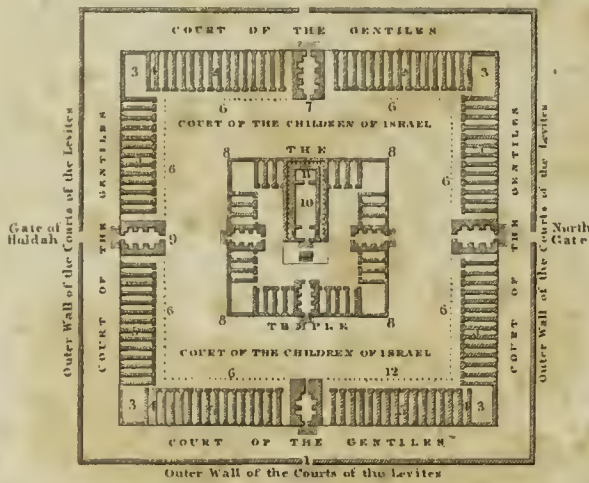
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**PLAN OF THE TEMPLE  
OF JERUSALEM  
WITH ITS COURTS**

BY T. STARLING

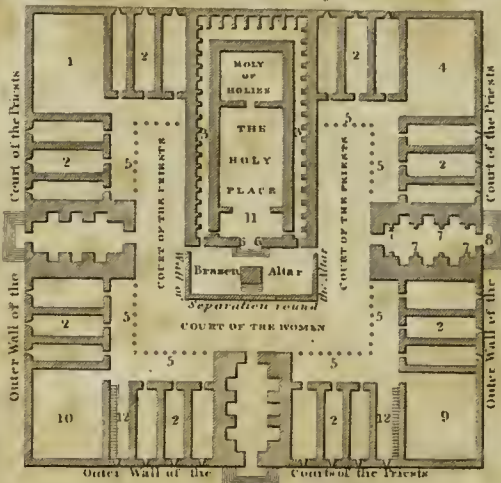
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**PLAN OF THE TEMPLE  
OF JERUSALEM  
ON AN ENLARGED SCALE**

BY T. STARLING

SCALE OF CUBITS  
200 100 50



- REFERENCE
- 1 Shushan Gate
  - 2 Parbar
  - 3 Apartments of the Levites
  - 4 The Stairs leading to the Upper Chambers
  - 5 Chambers round the court of Israel
  - 6 Galleries supported by Pillars
  - 7 Gate of Parbar
  - 8 The Outer Wall of the Court of the Priests
  - 9 Cattle Gate
  - 10 The Holy Place
  - 11 The Holy of Holies
  - 12 Solomon's Porch

- REFERENCE
- 1 Oil and Wine House
  - 2 Chambers for the Guards, Singers and Priests
  - 3 Small apartments round the Temple where the necessaries were kept
  - 4 The Lepers Rooms
  - 5 Pillars supporting the Galleries
  - 6 The two Pillars at the entrance of the Temple called Joas and Jaabin
  - 7 Stones on which the Beasts were killed for Burnt & other Offerings
  - 8 The North Gate and Porch
  - 9 Wood House. Here the wood was warmed and prepared.
  - 10 The Nazaries Room
  - 11 The outer Court
  - 12 The Stairs leading to the upper apartments

W.B. Smith

**PLAN OF ANCIENT  
(ATHENS)**

French Tohuom.



- 1 Great Square
- 2 Propylæa
- 12 Ceramæus Forum &c.
- 3 Acropolis Parthenon &c.
- 4 Mars Hill & Pnyx
- 5 Erechtemum Forum
- 6 Ceramicæ Forum &c.
- 7 Lyceum Forum &c.
- 8 Port Piræum
- 9 Port Cantharus
- 10 Temple of Theseus

**VOYAGES AND TRAVELS  
OF  
ST PAUL**

BY T. STARLING.

EXPLANATION

- 1<sup>st</sup> To and from Jerusalem to Damascus and into Arabia.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> From Jerusalem to Antioch and return through Antioch to Jerusalem.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> From Jerusalem to Antioch in Syria and thence to Cyprus, Antioch in Pontus and return through Antioch to Jerusalem.
- 4<sup>th</sup> From Jerusalem to Antioch in Syria and through Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, and return to Jerusalem through Cæsarea.
- 5<sup>th</sup> From Jerusalem to Antioch in Syria and thro Cappadocia, Cilicia, Pontus, Bithynia, Macedonia, Greece, and return to Jerusalem thro Troy and Cæsarea.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Voyage from Cæsarea to Crete, Sicily, Syracuse and finally to Rome.





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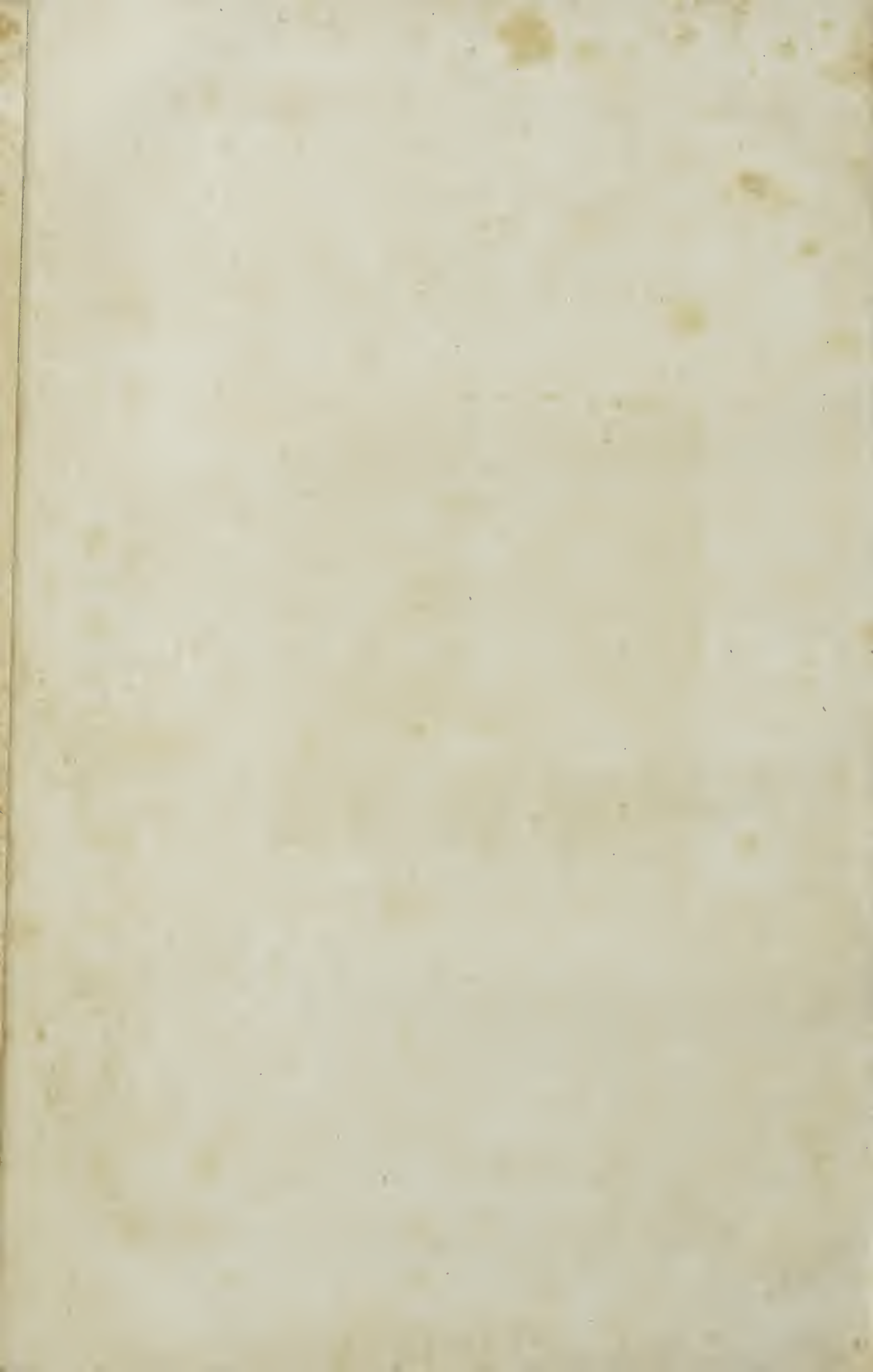


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ACTS—REVELATION.

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(INCORPORATED OCTOBER 26, 1836.)

1838.



**PUBLISHERS' ADVERTISEMENT.** In presenting to subscribers the *fifth* and last volume of the Comprehensive Commentary, the publishers cannot refrain from expressing their pride and pleasure in being the means of laying before the religious public so important and valuable a work, complete. No pains or expense have been spared to render it in every respect worthy of patronage; and it may justly be said, that no work was ever issued in this country which more completely fulfilled all the promises of the original proposals than this. The number of pages in every volume except the last, exceeds the number stipulated for in the prospectus; while the Engravings are very much more numerous and expensive than was originally anticipated. The amount of matter comprised in the work is almost incredible. The pages are as long and nearly as wide as those of the common *quarto Bibles*, and the quantity of reading matter, in the whole work, (exclusive of the Supplement,) is equal to that in nearly *seventy* common octavos of 450 pages each. Printed in such a manner, the matter contained in the five volumes of the Commentary, would have cost the subscribers *one hundred and seventy-five* dollars, or about **THIRTY-FIVE DOLLARS** per volume! Or reverse the calculation; and the publishers have furnished subscribers with this great amount of valuable biblical matter, at the rate of less than *twenty-five* cents each for octavo volumes of 450 pages! A *library*, indeed, of the most valuable materials, equal to 70 octavo volumes, for fifteen dollars!! The expense of *editing* has been more than treble the original calculation; and the whole cost of 'getting up' the work (exclusive of paper, printing, and binding) has been about **FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS**.—In conclusion, the publishers return their thanks to those of the subscribers who have continued cheerfully to receive and pay for the successive volumes of the Commentary, and they trust that none such will ever lament having, by their names and patronage, aided in bringing before the American people so important a work, and one calculated to be so extensively useful in our land. It is, in fact, as the publishers believe, a *national work*, adapted to the times, and to the circumstances of the people of the United States; and one of the most stupendous literary enterprises ever undertaken in America. No man, surely, will ever repent having purchased the work for his own use, or regret to leave so rich a legacy, and so valuable an *heirloom* to his descendants.

The *Supplementary*, or *sixth* volume of the Commentary will be found an almost indispensable companion to the original work, and an invaluable aid to the Minister, Sabbath School Teacher, and every one who desires to study the Bible; and it is to be hoped, that every subscriber will make his set complete by adding this valuable volume.

JUNE, 1838.

**EDITOR'S NOTICE.** Having now, by the Divine blessing, been permitted to bring to a close this fifth volume, which, with the Supplement, will complete the work, that, six years ago, I entered upon with trembling; it is my heart's desire to bless and praise God for his great goodness experienced throughout it. To his glory, and the furtherance of his kingdom of love, righteousness, holiness, and peace, be this labor consecrated and devoted; and may He accept and deign to bless it, for the Redeemer's sake!

No alteration, of great moment, has been made in the arrangements for conducting this volume; but the same helpers have been with me, and their efficient and indispensable exertions appear on every page of it. To the sound judgment and orthodox heart of my invaluable friend, the Rev. Mr. HOADLY, and to the assiduity, care, and taste of my son, J. W. JENKS, M. A., the work, in all its parts, since their early connexion with it, is abundantly indebted. A few contributions of scattered notes have been made by others, and are acknowledged in their places, excepting some which were kindly sent by my friend, Rev. J. WARD, and received too late, and a dissertation by Rev. Mr. BARSTOV; for both which, however, I tender my sincere thanks.

Nothing but such a diligent comparison, as this work necessarily required, of the labors of HENRY and SCOTT, could have shown how greatly the latter was indebted to the former, especially in the Old Testament; and the lack of acknowledgment can be accounted for, and reconciled with principle, only by the consideration, that, possibly, if it had been made in every case where it was due, the work would have been less acceptable to persons of the 'establishment,' whom the writer was very desirous to influence favorably. In the last volume of the New Testament, the originality and force of Dr. SCOTT'S mind more peculiarly display themselves; and to this portion of his labors, probably, may be with most justice applied the well-known commendations of the present bishop of Calcutta; commendations in which generally I can join with great cordiality; holding, as I do, in most respects, the same theological views: yet I can by no means admit, that he is, at any moment, forgetful of his 'system.' On the contrary, no occasion is suffered to escape,—and it may be satisfactorily accounted for,—in which he does not evince his own peculiarities. For this, however, there is abundant occasion to be grateful to God; since, without question, the high and just popularity of the excellent and finished work of this venerable man, combined with its extensive circulation, has tended to produce more distinct tones of evangelical sentiment, and a greater degree of uniformity in it, than previously obtained.

The plan of re-editing, in this country, Henry's Exposition in an abridged form, originated with J. C. HOLBROOK, Esq., and was by him communicated to me. It was soon agreed to combine this with Scott's admirable work, as far as practicable, and to add illustrations from all available sources. To the accomplishment of this plan, brought out into its necessary details successively, Mr. HOLBROOK has devoted himself with unabating industry, talent, and perseverance, and a resolution to spare no needful expense, notwithstanding the overwhelming embarrassments of times unfavorable to literary enterprise. I had feared, that consequent disappointments, and loss of property, would have greatly retarded the appearance of the work, or compelled to its utter abandonment. But the formation of a stock company, under Mr. H.'s superintendence, has, in the good providence of God, scoured now to the Christian community among us its entire publication. It leaves the press with many prayers, I trust, for its usefulness; and the originator and conductor of the enterprise is not to be forgotten in them.

It may be necessary to observe, that, in the notes, illustrations, and original remarks, a considerable range of research has been indulged in, without any other restriction of names, or subjects, than the occasion, and the necessary limits of the work, required. From this cause one advantage, of no small moment, is anticipated,—the creation of a habit, in the readers, of making all their inquiries and acquisitions concur to the elucidation of the blessed Word of God, and the application of its salutary truths to the diversified character and wants of man, in his education to be useful here, and prepared for higher service and blessedness in eternity.

Boston, June 1st, 1838.

WILLIAM JENKS.

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AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

WE have seen the foundation of our holy religion laid in the history of our blessed Savior, its great Author, as related and left on record by four several inspired writers, who all agree, That *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.* Upon *this Rock the Christian church is built*; and how it began to be built thereon, comes here next to be related. I. This history looks back to the preceding Gospels; the promises there, are here made good; particularly the great promise of the *descent of the Holy Ghost*, and his wonderful operations, both *on*, and *with* the apostles, making the Word mighty which had been before comparatively preached in vain. The commission there granted to the apostles we here find executed, and the powers there lodged in them exerted in miracles wrought on the bodies, and much greater miracles on the minds of people, in pursuance of Christ's purposes and promises, which we had in the Gospels. The proofs of Christ's resurrection, which the Gospels closed with, are here abundantly corroborated, not only by the constant and undaunted testimony of those that conversed with Him after He rose, (who had all before deserted Him, and one of them denied Him,) but by the working of the Spirit with that testimony for the conversion of multitudes, according to the word of Christ, that his resurrection, the sign of the prophet Jonas, which was reserved to the last, should be the most convincing proof of his divine mission. II. It looks forward to the following epistles, introduces, and is a key to them, as the history of David is to David's Psalms.

The four Gospels showed us how the foundation of God's house was laid; this shows us how the superstructure began to be raised. 1. Among the Jews and Samaritans, which we have an account of in the former part of this book. 2. Among the Gentiles, which we have an account of in the latter part: from thence, and downward to our own day, we find the Christian church subsisting in a visible profession of faith in Christ, as the Son of God and Savior of the world, made by his baptized disciples, incorporated into religious societies, steadily meeting in religious assemblies, attending on the apostles' doctrine, and joining in prayer and breaking of bread, under the conduct and precedency of men that gave themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word, and in a spiritual communion with all in every place that do likewise. Such a body as this there is now in the world, which we belong to: and in this book we find the rise and original of it, vastly different from the Jewish church, and erected on its ruins; but undeniably appearing to be of God, and not of man.\*

Its penman was Luke, who, as Whitby shows, was, very probably, one of the 70 disciples; it should seem he wrote this history when with Paul at Rome, during his imprisonment there, for the history concludes with Paul's preaching there in his *own hired house*. Its title is, *The Acts of the Apostles; of the holy Apostles*, so the Greek copies generally. Rev. 18:20. One copy inscribes it, *The Acts of the Apostles by Luke the Evangelist*. It is the history of the apostles; yet here is in it the history of Stephen, Barnabas, and some other apostolical men, not of the 12. And of those that were apostles, the history of Peter and Paul only is here recorded; Peter the Apostle of the circumcision, and Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles, Gal. 2:7. But this suffices as a specimen of what the rest did in other places, pursuant to their commission, for they were none of them idle. † It is called their *acts*, or *doings*. The history is filled with their sermons and their sufferings; yet so much did they labor in their preaching, and so voluntarily did they expose themselves to sufferings, and such were their achievements by both, that they may very well be called their *acts*. ‡

Luke, undoubtedly, intending this book as an appendix to his Gospel, inscribes it likewise to Theophilus. (*Pref. to Luke*.) Indeed, the whole may be considered as one publication, in two parts: but the convenience of having the four Gospels together, seems to have induced Christians in early times to divide it, by inserting John's Gospel between these two parts. It was written (as may fairly be concluded) within 30 or 31 years after our Lord's crucifixion. But the circumstance which most of all demands our attention, and should raise our expectations respecting it, is this; it records the fulfilment of the ancient prophecies concerning the kingdom of the promised Messiah, and the manner in which it should be established in the world; and also of those predictions, or promises which our Lord gave to his disciples, 'while He was yet with them,' concerning the powers to be bestowed on them, the success of their labors, and their persecutions. (*Notes*, Mat. 10:16—23. 24:6—8. Lu. 10:17—20, v. 18. 21:12—19. Jn. 12:27—33, vv. 31, 32. 14:7—14, vv. 12, 25, 26. 15:17—21. 16:1—3, 7—13.) SCOTT.

'The Acts comprise a history of about 30 years, from the Savior's ascension, to Paul's arrival at Rome after his appeal to Cesar. . . The book being continued to the 2d yr. of Paul's imprisonment, could not have been written before A. D. 63; and as his death in 65 is not mentioned, was probably composed before. Hence *Mich.*, *Lard.*, *Bens.*, *Ros.*, *Toml.*, and the generality of critics, date it in 63: to its genuineness and authenticity, the earlier Christian fathers bear unanimous testimony.' HORNE.

\* It is fact, that the religion of Jesus the Nazarene, who expired on a cross at Jerusalem, 1800 years ago, was soon very extensively propagated among the nations; that it obtained a permanent establishment, which it preserves to this day; and that the prophets had foretold that this would be the case, as to the kingdom of the Messiah: but the book before us is the only history, which expressly relates the manner in which this religion was first promulgated.—Here we are informed, that 11 obscure men, whom Jesus had called to be his attendants and apostles, having continued with Him till his crucifixion, saw and conversed with Him after his resurrection, and afterwards beheld Him ascend from them towards heaven, † till a cloud received Him out of their sight. ‡ In a few days, having appointed one in the room of the 12th, who had betrayed his Lord and destroyed himself, and being accompanied with a small number of disciples, the Holy Spirit, according to the promise of their Lord, descended upon them in a most extraordinary manner, enabling them to speak divers languages, and work stupendous miracles; and in all respects qualifying them for their arduous undertaking. Accordingly, without further delay, within less than 2 months from the time when Jesus was crucified; and at Jerusalem, under the immediate notice of his crucifiers, they began boldly to declare, that He was risen from the dead, ascended into heaven, and exalted at the right hand of God; that He was the promised Messiah, 'the Prince of Life,' the Savior and Judge of the world, and as such entitled to all confidence, obedience, and adoration; and openly to charge the people, the priests, and the rulers, with murdering 'the Lord of glory.' They were themselves unarmed, and unprotected, except by a divine power; they possessed neither human learning, eloquence, nor influence: yet they had all the wisdom and the folly, the learning and the ignorance, the religion and the irreligion, with all the obstinate and varied prejudices, and corrupt passions and habits of the whole world to encounter; as well as the power of rulers and princes to oppose them: notwithstanding which, they became decidedly and permanently triumphant. They employed no weapons, but simple testimony to the facts which they had witnessed, cogent arguments, affectionate persuasions, holy, beneficent lives, fervent prayers, and patient sufferings, even unto death.—With the Jews they reasoned from the SS. of the O. T., and showed how exactly these had been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth; and when they afterwards went among the Gentiles, they reasoned with them from such principles as they themselves acknowledged.—Proceeding in this manner, and everywhere attended by a divine power, both manifested in undeniable miracles, and by inwardly preparing men's hearts to receive the truth; they had such astonishing success, that many hundreds of thousands, if not millions, not only from among the Jews and proselytes, but also from the grossest and most licentious idolaters, became the avowed disciples of the crucified Jesus, and the devoted worshippers and servants of 'the one living and true God.' Thus, in 'the Acts of the Apostles,' there is given us the *only* history of the manner, in which the most extraordinary revolution that ever took place in the moral and religious state of the world was first begun: and if this account be true, the Gospel must be divine. Jerusalem, Cesarea, Antioch, and Ephesus, all great and celebrated cities, nay, Rome itself, the proud capital of the world, were among the places, in which the miracles are attested to have been wrought, and the success attained, in the full view of the vehement and powerful opposers who never ventured to deny the facts, though they could not account for them, without allowing the truth of the Gospel.—To suppose, that such a religion as Christianity, which directly opposes every corruption of the human heart, without making the least allowance, either to persons in the highest stations, or to its most zealous friends, could have prevailed in the world as it has, by such instruments and means, and in the face of such powerful opposition, without the power of God succeeding it; is to assume, without shadow of proof, a fact immensely more incredible, than any of the miracles recorded in Scripture, or all of them combined.

† We must not here expect a full and particular history of the labors and successes of the apostles and primitive evangelists: a select specimen alone is given. After

the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and the first successes and sufferings of the apostles, little is recorded in the Scripture concerning most of them. Indeed the names of more than half of them are never mentioned after the first ch.; and most of the ancient records and traditions of them are so mingled with fiction, as not to be entitled to implicit or indiscriminate credit. The events of several years of Paul are summed up in 2 or 3 chs. And though, after Luke the historian joined him, and became his faithful companion, (shown by his using 'we,' in the narrative,) he is somewhat more circumstantial; yet Paul's epistles prove his labors, persecutions, and successes far greater, and instructive to his converts far more particular, than a cursory reading of this history would lead us to suppose. At the same time, the remarkable coincidence, even in minute particulars, of the history and the epistles, is such, as could never have taken place, had not both been genuine. See *Paley*. See.

‡ Luke does not write a complete ecclesiastical history of the church for 30 yrs. nor of Paul's life, for he has wholly omitted what passed among the Jews after Paul's conversion, and is totally silent concerning the spread of Christianity in the E. and in Egypt, as well as the foundation of the church of Christ at Rome, Paul's journey into Arabia, and other interesting topics and labors. We shall perceive the historian had 2 objects in view:—1. To relate how the gifts of the Holy Spirit were communicated at Pentecost, and the subsequent miracles of the apostles, by which the truth of Christianity was confirmed. An authentic account of this matter was absolutely necessary, because Christ had often assured his disciples that they should receive the Holy Spirit: unbelievers, therefore, whether Jews or heathens, might have made objections to our religion, had not this been shown.—2. To deliver such accounts as proved the claim of the Gentiles to admission into the church of Christ,—a claim disputed by the Jews, especially at the time Luke wrote the Acts. Hence the relations, chs. 8, 10, 11.—3. *Mich.* too, thinks it probable, Luke might design only to record the facts he had either seen himself, or heard from eyewitnesses.—*Dr. Benson*, however, thinks the book was written, to show in its 3 parts, how the Gospel was propagated. I. Among the Jews only, from A. D. 33 to A. D. 41; this first part including ch. 2 to 12:2. II. Among the devout Gentiles, (proselytes of the gate,) and further among the Jews, A. D. 41 to 44. Acts, 10—12. III. Among the idolatrous Gentiles, and further among the 2 preceding classes, A. D. 44 to 63. Acts, chs. 13—28. *Horne*: whom see, (with *Hug.*) for Chronology of Acts; and for an Analysis. Comp. too, 'Sacred Chron.' *Ed.*

§ The book contains also a specimen of true believers, as illustrating the nature and effects of genuine Christianity: and it should be carefully noted, that, in every age, all those multitudes who are called Christians, yet bear no resemblance to this specimen, will be driven away as chaff, at the great decisive day: and that the more we are like these primitive believers, when 'great grace was upon them all,' the more evident it is, that we shall 'be numbered with them in glory everlasting.'—Some intimations are also given of the manner, in which the primitive church was constituted and governed, its ministers appointed, its ordinances administered; yet it can hardly be supposed, but that the eager disputants of all sects must feel considerably disappointed in this respect; and secretly regret, that more particular and explicit information has not been given on these subjects; but this the Lord for wise reasons has seen good to withhold. *Scott*. 'If a man wishes to learn how to preach well, he can probably acquire it nowhere else so readily as by giving himself to the prayerful and profound study of the specimens contained in this book. At the same time, we have here a view of the character of the true church of Christ. The *simplicity* of this church must strike every reader. Religion is represented as a work of the heart; the pure and proper effect of truth on the mind. It is free from pomp and splendor, and from costly and magnificent ceremonies. There is no apparatus to impress the senses, no splendor to dazzle, no external rite or parade adapted to draw the affections from the pure and spiritual worship of God. How unlike the pomp and parade of Pagan worship! How unlike the vain and pompous ceremonies which have since, alas! crept into no small part of the Christian church.' *Barnes*.



CHAP. I.

1 Christ preparing his apostles to the beholding of his ascension, gathereth them together into the mount Olivet, commandeth them to expect in Jerusalem the sending down of the Holy Ghost, promiseth after few days to send it: by virtue whereof they should be witnesses unto Him, even to the utmost parts of the earth. 9 After his ascension they are warned by two angels to depart, and to set their minds upon his second coming. 12 They accordingly return, and giving themselves to prayer, choose Matthias apostle in the place of Judas.

THE former treatise <sup>a</sup> have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

2 Until <sup>b</sup> the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments <sup>c</sup> unto the apostles whom he had chosen :

3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many <sup>d</sup> infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God :

4 And, <sup>e</sup> being assembled together with them, commanded <sup>f</sup> them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye <sup>g</sup> have heard of me.

a Lu. 1:1-4, &c. 16:15-19. gether. b Lu. 24:51. ver. d Lu. 24:15. Ja. f Lu. 24:49. 9 I Pi 3:16. c. 20, 21. g Ja. c. 14, 15, 16. c Mat 23:19. Ma. e or, eating to-

CHAP. I. The inspired historian begins his narrative of the Acts of the Apostles with a brief recapitulation of his gospel, or history of the life of Christ, inscribing this, as he had done that, to his friend Theophilus.

V. 1-5. It was usual with the ancients, both Christian and heathen writers, thus to inscribe their writings to some particular persons. But the directing of some of the books of the Scripture so, is an intimation to each of us to receive them as if directed to us in particular, to us by name, for our learning. His gospel he here called the former treatise, intending this for a continuation and confirmation of that: let not new sermons and new books make us forget old ones.

I. Christ both did and taught; v. 2. His doctrine was confirmed by his miracles, which proved Him a Teacher from God, John 3:2. Those are the best ministers, that both do and teach, whose lives are a constant sermon. His apostles were to carry on and continue what He began, Heb. 2:3.

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1-3. The phrase, 'began both, &c.' simply means, what Jesus had done and taught, [comp. Gen. 9:20. Mark 6:7. &c.] from the beginning to the close of his public ministry.—The use of the word 'all,' in this connexion, when so many miracles and discourses of our Lord are recorded by the other evangelists, is a full demonstration, that arguments tending to establish universal conclusions, from this general term, must be precarious. (Jahn 1:6-9) —The expression, 'by the Holy Ghost,' may either refer to our Lord's choosing the apostles, or to his giving them commandments after his resurrection: but the latter seems to be intended; as He 'breathed on them, and bade them receive the Holy Ghost;' and as He then 'opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures.' (Luke 24:44-49. Jahn 20:19-23, vv. 22, 23.) All those things which Jesus did and taught, in respect of his human nature, are ascribed to the Holy Spirit; as well as the endowments which He conferred on his disciples.—It is also stated, that Jesus 'showed Himself alive' to his apostles, after his death, by many signs, or evidences, which could not possibly deceive them. It is highly probable, that a great deal more [concerning the kingdom of God] passed between our Lord and his apostles, in the course of the 40 days preceding his ascension, than is anywhere recorded. Scott.

(1.) Treatise.] 'Logos: a narration, history, or a book of a history; so the best Gr. writers (see Welstein, &c.) use it.' Bloomf. Theophilus.] See Luke 1:3. All.] 'This often signifies indefinitely, a large portion or number, or a great part. Webster. It is so used Acts 13:10. 1 Tim. 1:16. Ja. 1:2. Mat. 23. 3:5. Acts 2:5. Rom. 11:26. Col. 1:6.' Barnes. It is a 'popular mode' of speaking, like the phrase, all-about, &c. Ed.

(2.) Through, &c.] 'Whatever was done after the atonement and resurrection of Jesus, after He had finished his great work, was to be regarded as under the peculiar influence and direction of the Holy Ghost.' Barnes. 'There has been much doubt on the construction, and consequently on the interpretation of this passage. Kuin, follows Beza, Heumann, Kypke, Mich., and Ros., who place a comma after "apostolais,"

II. The truth of Christ's resurrection is maintained and evidenced, v. 3. That part of what was related in the former treatise, was so material, that it was necessary to be on all occasions repeated.

1. The proofs were infallible, plain indications, both that He was alive, (He walked, talked, ate, drank with them,) and that it was He Himself, for He showed them, again and again, the marks of the wounds in his hands, and feet, and side; the utmost proof the thing was capable of, or required.

2. They were many, and often repeated; He was seen by them 40 days; not constantly, but frequently appearing to them, and bringing them by degrees to be fully satisfied of it, so as to do away all their sorrow for his departure. Christ's staying on earth so long after He was entered on his state of exaltation and glory, to confirm his disciples' faith, and comfort their hearts, was such an instance of condescension and compassion to believers, as may fully assure us, that we have a High Priest touched with our infirmities.

III. A general hint of the instructions He furnished his disciples, now He was about to leave them.

1. Concerning their work; Christ's choice is always attended with his charge. It was their receiving the Holy Ghost, that sealed their commission, John 20:22. He was not taken up till He had thus finished his work.

2. Concerning the doctrine they were to preach; the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; He let them more into the nature of it, as a kingdom of grace in this world; and of glory in the other; and opened to them that covenant, the great charter by which it is incorporated. This was intended to prepare them to receive the Holy Ghost, and to be one of the proofs of his resurrection, so it comes in here; the disciples, to whom He showed Himself alive, knew that it was He, not only by what He showed them, but by what He said to them. None but He could speak thus clearly, thus fully, of the things of the kingdom of God.

IV. A particular assurance, that they should now shortly receive the Holy Ghost, with orders to expect it, v. 4, 5. He being assembled together with them, probably in the interview at the mountain in Galilee, which He had appointed before his death; for there is mention of their coming together again, v. 6. to attend his ascension. Though ordered to Galilee, yet they must not continue there, but return to Jerusalem, and not depart thence.

1. The command to wait, was to raise their expectations of something great: in

Jerusalem must the Spirit be first poured out, because Christ was to be as King upon the holy hill of Zion; and because the Ward of the Lord must go forth from Jerusalem. This favor done to Jerusalem, teaches us to forgive our enemies and persecutors.

2. His assurance that they shall not wait in vain. They had already been breathed upon with the Holy Ghost, John 20:22. but now they shall have larger measures of his gifts, graces, and comforts, and be baptized with them; where there seems to be an allusion to those O. T. promises of the pouring out of the Spirit, Joel 2:28. Is. 44:3.—32:15. 'Ye shall be cleansed and purified by the Holy Ghost, as the priests were baptized and washed with water, when consecrated to the sacred function. Ye shall be sanctified by the truth, as the Spirit shall lead you more and more into it, and your consciences purged by the witness of the Spirit, that ye may serve the living God in the apostleship. Ye shall hereby be more effectually than ever engaged to your Master, as Israel to Moses in the cloud, and in the sea, so that ye shall never, for fear of any sufferings, forsake Him again, as once you did.'

1st. The Spirit was given by promise, at this time the great promise, as that of the Messiah was before, Luke 1:72. and that of eternal life is now, 1 John 2:25. Temporal good is given by Providence, but the Spirit and spiritual blessings by promise, Gal. 3:18. not as the spirit of men, by a course of nature, Zech. 12:1. but by the Word of God. As Christ, so the Spirit, is received by faith.

2dly. It was the promise of the Father, of Christ's Father, owning his mission; our Father, who, if He give us the adoption of sons, will certainly give us the Spirit of adoption, Gal. 4:5, 6.

3dly. This promise of the Father they had heard from Christ many a time, especially in the farewell sermon a little before He died, wherein He assured them, again and again, that the Comforter should come.

You have not only heard it from Me, but you had it from John; when he turned you over to Me, he said, Mat. 3:11. I indeed baptize you with water, but He that comes after me, shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost. A great honor Christ now does to John, to make this great gift of the Spirit, now at hand, to be the accomplishment of his words.

Now this gift of the Holy Ghost thus promised, prophesied of, waited for, is what we find the apostles received in the next ch., for in that this promise had its full accomplishment; for it is here promised to be given

transposing only the "hous," [whom.] This trajectio [transposition] is, he thinks, the easiest, and, (since in whatever way the words be taken, some trajectia must be admitted,) is, upon the whole, preferable. This punctuation is found in some MSS., and is confirmed by the Syr., Arabic, and Ethiop. vers. and Cyril. Nor is the transposition unusual, as 3:24. John 9:40. Comp. Cicero against Verres, 3:31. After all, however, the [Eng. vers.] seems most satisfactory, and, as being supported by the ancient Fathers, may deserve the preference. Bloomf.

(3.) Showed Himself.] The appearances of Christ that are distinctly noted in the N. T., are, (1.) To Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, Mat. 28:1-9. (2.) To the two near Emmaus, Lu. 24:15. (3.) To Simon Peter, Lu. 24:34. (4.) To 10 apostles, Lu. 24:36. Ju. 20:19. All these appearances were on the day of his resurrection. (5.) To 11 apostles, Ju. 20:26. (6.) To 7 apostles in Galilee, Ju. 21:4. (7.) To James, 1 Cor. 15:7; most probably in Jerusalem, and when He ordered all his apostles to assemble, as in Acts 1:4. See Bp. Pearce. (8.) When they were assembled, and Jesus led them out as far as Bethany, Lu. 24:50, whence He ascended: then He seems to have been seen by the 500, 1 Cor. 15:6. [Barnes makes out 13 appearances.] Forty.] At intervals during that period. Kingdom of God.] The Christian religion, the Christian dispensation, 'the church (so Schaeftgen) of the N. T. times, whose k. is Christ.' Bloomf. Passion.] 'I. e. suffering: so the Gr. is in 1 Pet. 1:11. 4:13.' Barnes.

V. 4-8. Notwithstanding all He had taught them, they still entertained some thoughts of a temporal kingdom: perhaps they supposed, the pouring out of the Holy Spirit would induce the nation, in general, to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah; and that He would then perform, what they supposed to be the meaning of the ancient prophets in this respect. 3:19-21, v. 21. It is, however, not only difficult, but perhaps impossible, to delineate, with any tolerable precision, the state of the apostles' minds at this crisis; in which darkness and light, hopes and fears, carnal and spiritual views and expectations were blended so intimately, that almighty power alone could separate them. And this was



5 For John <sup>h</sup> truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy <sup>i</sup> Ghost not many days hence.

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt <sup>j</sup> thou at this time restore <sup>k</sup> again the kingdom to Israel?

7 And he said unto them, It <sup>l</sup> is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8 But ye shall receive <sup>m</sup> power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye <sup>n</sup> shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10 ¶ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two <sup>o</sup> men stood by them in white apparel;

11 Which also said, Ye men <sup>p</sup> of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall <sup>q</sup> so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

now restore it to the Jewish nation, as far as it will submit to Thee as its king! Two things were amiss:

1. Their expectation of the thing itself, that Christ would restore [and perfect] the kingdom to Israel, i. e. make the nation of the Jews as great and considerable as it was in the days of David, Solomon, Asa, and Jehoshaphat; whereas Christ came to set up his own kingdom, and that a kingdom of heaven, not to restore the kingdom to Israel, an earthly kingdom. See how apt even good men are to place the happiness of the church too much in external pomp and power! How apt we are to retain what we have imbibed, and how hard it is to get over the prejudices of education! The disciples having early imbibed the notion, that the Messiah was to be a temporal prince, were slow to have any idea of his kingdom as spiritual. See also how naturally we are biassed in favor of our own people! They thought God would have no kingdom in the world, unless it were restored to Israel; whereas the kingdoms of this world were to become his, in whom He would be glorified, whether Israel sink or swim. See also how apt we are to misunderstand Scripture, and to understand that literally, which is spoken figuratively, and to expound Scripture by our schemes, whereas we ought to form our schemes by the Scriptures. But when the Spirit shall be poured out from on high, our mistakes will be rectified, as the apostles' soon after were.

2. Their inquiry concerning the time; they were inquisitive into what their Master had never directed or encouraged them to inquire into, and were impatient for the setting up of that kingdom, in which they promised themselves so great a share, and would anticipate the divine counsels. Christ had told them, that they should sit on thrones, Luke 22:30. and now nothing will serve but they must be in the throne immediately; whereas he that believeth, doth not make haste, but is satisfied that God's time is the best time.

II. Christ's check to this question, as a little before to Peter's concerning John, v. 7. Christ is now parting from them, and parts in love; yet He gives them this rebuke, which is intended for a caution to his church in all ages, to take heed of splitting on the rock which was fatal to our first parents,—an inordinate desire of forbidden knowledge, and intruding into things which we have not seen, because God has not shown. Buxtorf mentions a saying of the Rabbins concerning the coming of the Messiah; Perish the men who calculate the time!

III. He appoints them their work, and with authority assures them of an ability to go on with it, and of success in it, v. 8. If Christ make us servicable to his honor, in our own day and generation, let that be enough for us, and let not us perplex our-

selves about times and seasons to come. Christ here tells them,

1. That their work should be honorable and glorious; *Ye shall be witnesses, martyrs, unto Me.* They shall proclaim him King, and confirm their testimony, not, as witnesses do, with an oath, but with the divine seal of miracles and supernatural gifts.

2. That their power for this work should be sufficient. They had not strength of their own for it, nor wisdom or courage enough; *But ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you,* so it may be read, shall be animated and actuated by a better spirit than your own; ye shall have power to preach the Gospel, and to prove it out of the Scriptures of the O. T., which, when they were filled with the Holy Ghost, they did to admiration, ch. 18:28. 'and to confirm it both by miracles and by sufferings.'

3. That their influence should be great and very extensive; *Ye shall be witnesses for Christ, and shall carry his cause, first, in Jerusalem, and thence throughout all Judea, where before ye have labored in vain. Thence ye shall proceed to Samaria, though at your first mission ye were forbidden to preach in any of the cities of the Samaritans.* Your usefulness shall reach to the uttermost part of the earth, and ye shall be blessings to the whole world.

IV. Having left these instructions with them, He leaves them, v. 9. so we were told, Luke 24:50. and while they had their eye fixed on Him, receiving his blessing, He was gradually taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. He went, not as Elijah, in a chariot and with horses of fire, but He rose to heaven, as He rose from the grave, purely by his own power; his body being now, as the bodies of the saints will be at the resurrection, a spiritual body, and raised in power and incorruption.

V. Two angels appeared to them, and delivered them a seasonable message from God. There was a world of angels ready to receive our Redeemer, now that He made his public entry into the Jerusalem above: these two, appear as two men in white apparel, bright and glistening; for they know, according to the duty of their place, that they are really serving Christ, when ministering to his servants on earth. We are told what they said,

1. To check their curiosity. *Why stand ye gazing, as men frightened and perplexed, as men astonished and at their wits' end? Christ's disciples should never stand at a gaze, because they have a sure rule to go by, and a sure foundation to build upon.*

2. To confirm their faith concerning Christ's second coming: which their Master had often told them of. When we stand gazing and trifling, the consideration of our Master's second coming should quicken and awaken us: and when we stand gazing and

<sup>h</sup> Mat. 3:11. <sup>i</sup> Mat. 24:35. <sup>j</sup> Lu. 24:47—49.  
<sup>k</sup> c. 2:4. 10:45.11:15. <sup>l</sup> Th. 5:1,2. <sup>m</sup> Mat. 28:19.  
<sup>n</sup> or, the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you. <sup>o</sup> Jn. 20:12. <sup>p</sup> c. 2:7. 13:31. <sup>q</sup> Jn. 14:3. 1 Th. 4:16.

not many days hence. He does not tell them how many, because they must keep every day in a frame fit to receive it. Other Scriptures speak of the gift of the Holy Ghost, to ordinary believers, this speaks of that particular power which, by the Holy Ghost, the first preachers of the Gospel, and planters of the church, were endued with; enabling them infallibly to relate to that age, and record to posterity, the doctrine of Christ, and the proofs of it; so that by virtue of this promise, and the performance of it, we receive the N. T. as of divine inspiration, and venture our souls upon it.

V. 6—11. Here we have an account of Christ's ascension. Observe,

I. The question the disciples asked Him at this interview, 'Surely Thou wilt not at all restore the kingdom to the present rulers of Israel.' Or rather, 'Surely Thou wilt

done, at once, and effectually, in most things, by the descent of the Holy Spirit: though in a few particulars, they were left, for some time longer, under a degree of error or prejudice.—The change wrought in the minds and hearts of the apostles, on the day of Pentecost, was as truly miraculous as the gift of tongues. They were no longer the same men; nay, in many respects, men of a widely different spirit and character; possessing an enlargement of mind, and a superiority to carnal prejudices, hopes, and fears, beyond what could have possibly been previously conceived.

(4.) *Promise.* 'Evangelian: the effects of divine power, i. e. the faculties and strength necessary to their office, or the divine power showing its efficacy in them, John 14:16, 17.'

(6.) 'At this time, is the point of their inquiry; to this solely, therefore does Christ answer.'

(7.) *Power.* 'Dynamis: those high spiritual endowments necessary to the discharge of their apostolic office, including a perfect knowledge of Christianity, zeal, and perseverance in the propagation, and unshaken constancy in the profession of it.'

(8.) *Uttermost.* Commentators say, this expression must not be too much pressed; but the Japanese have traditions of a religion once made known among them of similar character to the Christian; and we have no proof that some, even, of those present did not carry the Gospel even to the farthest corners (then peopled) of America, Africa, and Oceania. It would be both curious and profitable to collect the dim recollections, in all these nations, of holy teachers coming among them from remote regions. The Mexicans and Peruvians have such traditions.

V. 9—12. The instructions and promises, which have been considered, seem to have been delivered, as our Lord was leading the disciples forth to that part of the mount of Olives, whence He ascended.—The place belonging to the village of Bethany, from which Jesus ascended, was about a mile from Jerusalem: this was called a sabbath-day's journey; probably, because it might generally be necessary to go so far on that day, in order to attend the service of the synagogue.

(11.) *In like manner* ] Among other reasons why Jesus should thus return, Barnes gives the following: 'The great transactions of redemption have been public, open, often grand. The apostasy was public, in the face of angels and the universe. Sin has been open, public, high-handed. Misery has been public, and has rolled its deep and turbid waves in the face of the universe. Death has been public; all worlds have seen the race cut down and moulder. The death of Jesus was public; the angels saw it; the heavens were clothed with mourning; the earth shook; and the dead arose. The angels have desired to look into these things, (1 Pet. 1:12.) and have felt an intense solicitude about men. Jesus was publicly whipped, cursed, crucified; and it is proper that He should publicly triumph; that all heaven rejoicing, and all hell at length humbled, should see his public victory. Hence He will come in the clouds, (emblem of sublimity.)—with angels,—with fire,—and will raise the dead, and exhibit to all the universe the amazing close of the scene of redemption. . . . These vs. present the most grand and wonderful events this world has ever known . . . consolation for the Christian . . . ceaseless alarm to the sinner.'



12 ¶ Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath-day's journey.

13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alpheus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.

14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

15 ¶ And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of the names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

17 For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

19 And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, *Aceldama*, that is to say, The field of blood.

r Lu. 24:52. u Ps. 41:9. Ju. w Lu. 6:16.  
s Lu. 6:13-16. 13:18. x Mat. 27:5-10.  
t Lu. 23:49, 55. v Mat. 26:47. Ju. y 2 Pet. 2:15.  
24:10. 13:3.

trembling, the consideration of it should comfort and encourage us.

V. 12-14. We are here told,

1. From whence Christ ascended, v. 12. from that part of the *mount of Olives*, where the town of Bethany stood, Luke 24:50. There He began his sufferings, Luke 22:39. therefore, there He rolled away the reproach of them, by his glorious ascension, and thus showed that his passion and his ascension had the same reference and tendency. Thus would He enter on his kingdom in the sight of Jerusalem, and of those ungodly, ungrateful citizens of his, that would not have Him to reign over them. It was prophesied

(12.) 'A "sabbath-day's journey" was 2,000 cubits or paces, or 7½ stadia, Lu. 24:13. Ju. 11:18. This had been determined, not by Moses but by the Rabbins. See *Lightf.* The distance of Olivet is variously stated at 6, or 5 stadia; either might be correct, according to the point in Jerusalem, or in the mountain, reckoned from.' Bloomf.

V. 13, 14. Mary is mentioned in a very cursory manner, as one of the company who joined in prayer; but without any peculiar distinction, or the least appearance of her exercising authority over the apostles, or even of giving them counsel, or at all interfering in their measures.—*Continued.* 'The word signifies, to go on, in performing or enduring any thing, courageously, and with a certain invincible hardness and resolution of mind.' Beza. 'Pursued with great ardor and intentness of soul.' Doddridge.

(13.) *Upper-room.* Note, Jer. 22:13, 14. 'Epiphanius says, it was on Mt. Sion, and that a church was afterwards erected on the place where it stood.' Doddridge.

V. 15. *Names.* 'I. e. persons, men: (Rev. 3:4.) so used by Polybius, Ovid, Statius, Horace.' Bloomf. The Jews required 120 for a council, in any city, so some suppose the disciples took care to get that number together.

V. 16-18. It is most reasonable to suppose Peter was directed by a divine admonition, to take the lead on this occasion; and the whole transaction showed, how fully all concerned were satisfied, that he was sincerely and deeply penitent. In his address, he called the disciples 'Men and brethren.' Our Lord never thus addressed the people; and perhaps it implied an equality, not suitable to the dignity of his charac-

[6]

of Him, Zeck. 14:4. *That his feet shall stand on the mount of Olives, before Jerusalem, shall stand last there;* and presently it follows, *The mount of Olives shall cleave in two.* This mount, is here said to be near Jerusalem, a *sabbath-day's journey from it*, i. e. a little way; some reckon it, 1000 paces; others, 2000 cubits; some 7 furlongs; others, 8. Bethany, indeed, was 15 furlongs from Jerusalem, John 11:18. but that part of the mount of Olives next to Jerusalem, whence Christ began to ride in triumph, was but 7 or 8. The Chal. par. on Ruth, 1. says, *We are commanded to keep the sabbaths and the holy days, so as not to go above 2000 cubits; which they build on Josh. 3:4. and thus far it is a rule to us, not to journey on the Sabbath, any more than in order to the sabbath-work; and, as far as is necessary to that, we are not only allowed, but enjoined,* 2 K. 4:23.

2. *Whether the disciples returned.* They came to Jerusalem, according to their Master's appointment; there they went up into an upper room, and there abode; not that they all lodged and dined in one room, but there they assembled every day, and spent time together in religious exercises, in expectation of the descent of the Spirit. It was said indeed, by the same historian, that they were continually in the temple, Luke 24:53. but that was in the courts of the temple, at the hours of prayer, where they could not be hindered from attending; but, it should seem, this upper room was in a private house.

3. *Who the disciples were,* that kept together. The eleven apostles, v. 13. and Mary the mother of our Lord, v. 14. It is the last time mention is made of her in the Scriptures. There were others, here said to be the brethren of our Lord, his kinsmen according to the flesh; and, to make up the 120, v. 15. we may suppose all or most of the 70 disciples, were with them, associates with the apostles, and employed as evangelists.

4. *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication.* It was now a time of trouble and danger with the disciples of Christ, they were as sheep in the midst of wolves; and, they had before them a great work, they were waiting also for the descent of the Spirit on them. The Spirit descended on our Savior when He was praying, Luke 3:21. Those are in the best frame to receive spiritual blessings, that are in a praying frame. Christ's promise now shortly to send the Holy Ghost, was not to supersede prayer, but to quicken and encourage it. God will be inquired of for promised mercies, and the nearer the performance seems to be, the more earnest we should be in prayer for it. Their accord intimates, they were together in holy love, and those who so keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, are best prepared to receive the comforts of the Holy Ghost. See Mat. 18:19.

V. 15-26. The apostles were ordained

12, with an eye to the twelve tribes of Israel, descended from the twelve patriarchs, Rev. 12:1. Mat. 19:28. Care was taken, before the descent of the Spirit, to fill up the vacancy, occasioned by Judas' sin and ruin, which now we have an account of the doing of; our Lord Jesus, probably, having given directions about it, among other things which He spake pertaining to the kingdom of God.

1. The house consisted of about an hundred and twenty names, that is, persons; some think, men only, distinguished from the women. Lightfoot reckons the 11 apostles, the 70 disciples, and about 39 more, all of Christ's own kindred, country, and con-course; and that these were a sort of synod, or congregation of ministers, a standing presbytery, ch. 4:23. to whom none of the rest durst join themselves, ch. 5:13. and that they continued together, till the persecution at Stephen's death dispersed them all but the apostles, ch. 8:1. but he thinks that, beside these, many hundreds in Jerusalem, if not thousands, at this time, believed; and we read of many that believed on Him there, but durst not confess Him; therefore I cannot think, as he does, that they were now formed into distinct congregations, for the preaching of the Word, and other acts of worship; nor that there was any thing of that till after the pouring out of the Spirit, and the conversions in the following ch. Here was the beginning of the Christian church.

2. The speaker was Peter, who had been, and still was, the most forward man; therefore notice is taken of his forwardness and zeal, to show that he had perfectly recovered the ground he lost by denying his Master; and Peter being designed to be the apostle of the circumcision, while the sacred story stays among the Jews, he is still brought in, as afterward, when it comes to speak of the Gentiles, it keeps to the story of Paul.

(1.) His account of the vacancy made by the death of Judas, is very particular, and, as became one that Christ had breathed upon, he notices the fulfilling of the Scriptures in it.

He lost his money shamefully enough, v. 18. his life more shamefully. We were told, Mat. 27:5. that he went away in despair, and was suffocated; so the word signifies there, and no more; here it is added, that, being strangled, or choked with grief and horror, he fell headlong, fell on his face, so Dr. Hammond, and partly with the swelling of his own breast, and partly with the violence of the fall, he burst asunder in the midst, so that all his bowels tumbled out. The suffocating Matthew relates, would make him swell till he burst, which Peter relates. He burst asunder with a great noise, so Dr. Edwards, which was heard by the neighbors, and so, as it follows, it came to be known, v. 19. His bowels gushed out; Luke writes like a physician, understanding all the entrails of the middle and lower ventricle.

ter: but the apostles frequently did, in speaking to the Jews, as well as Christians, yet never in addressing the Gentiles: and it seems to imply, that they recognised a two-fold relation to them, as men of the same nature descended from Adam, and as brethren of the same favored family descended from Abraham.

(16.) 'While David [Ps. 41:9, 10, so Wolf, Eckerman, &c., 69:25. 109:8, so Bloomf., Dodd., &c.] prophesied of the calamities which should befall his persecutors, it was revealed to him, by the Holy Spirit, that the enemies and murderers of the Messiah should inherit those curses in all their terror, and yet be more miserable than the persons on whom they were more immediately to fall. This fact is asserted in these words, as what was revealed, by the same Spirit, to Peter.' Dodd. Pl.

(18.) *Purchased.* 'I. e. occasioned the purchase. Comp. Gen. 42:35. 1 K. 14:16. Is. 6:10. 1 Cor. 7:16, &c.' Dodd. 'I rather incline to think it a figurative catachresis, by which Judas might be said to have bought the field with the wages of iniquity, by receiving such wages as would have bought it. So 2 K. 5:26. Possessed by being buried in it, seems too forced; and the fact wants confirmation.' Bloomf. 'An expression similar to "he purchased repentance dearly," &c.' Dr. A. C. Kuin., Ros., Heinrich, Dr. A. C. &c., make vs. 18, 19. a parenthesis of Luke's, not Peter's.

V. 19. This seems a parenthesis, not of the apostle, but of the historian.—It is remarkable, that he does not say, in our, but their proper tongue, and this, I think, shows that the writer was not a Hebrew, but either a Hellenist, or a Gentile. Pref. to Luke. Mat. 27: 6-10, v. 8. Some think, that Judas also was buried in this field; if so, he bought a



20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein : and his bishopric let another take.

21 Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

22 Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

23 And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen,

25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

26 And they gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias ; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

CHAP. II.

1 The apostles, filled with the Holy Ghost, and speaking divers languages, are admired by some, and derided by others. 14 Whom Peter disproving, and shewing that the apostles spake by the power of the Holy Ghost, that Jesus was risen from the dead, ascended into heaven, had poured down the same Holy Ghost, and was the Messiah, a man known to them to be approved of God by his miracles, wonders, and signs, and not crucified without his determinate counsel, and foreknowledge : 37 he baptizeth a great number that were converted. 41 Who afterwards devoutly and charitably converse together : the apostles working many miracles, and God daily increasing his church.

AND when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

z Ps. 69:25. c Lu. 10:1,2. Jn. 2:23.  
 a Ps. 109:8. 15:27. a Le. 23:15.  
 b or, office, or, d c. 15:22. b c. 1:14.  
 charge. e Je. 17:10. Re.

Bowelling is part of the punishment of traitors. And, perhaps Christ had an eye to the fate of Judas, when He said of the wicked servant, that He would cut him in sunder, Mat. 24: 51.

PRACT. OBS. Let us remember, that all instruction should be reduced to practice; and that ministers should begin to do, and then to teach, that their example may illustrate, confirm, and adorn their doctrine. We do not indeed expect the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit; but we must experience his purifying baptism, or we never can serve God, or be made meet for the inheritance of heaven. But it behooves us to leave 'secret things to the Lord, to whom they belong;' and to submit to his wisdom, in all the dispensations of his providence and grace. It is enough, that He has engaged to give his people strength adequate to their trials and services: that, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, they may, in one way or other, be witnesses for Christ on earth; while in heaven He manages their concerns with the most perfect wisdom, truth, and love.—A little company, united in love, exemplary in their conduct, fervent in prayer, and prudently zealous in

burying-place among strangers for himself, with 'the wages of his iniquity.' Num. 31:8. 2 Pet. 2:15, 16. SCOTT.

V. 20—22. Let his, &c.] (20) This varies considerably from the Sept., and especially as the plural pronoun is used in both. (Ps. 69:22—23, v. 25.)—His, &c.] Verbatim from the LXX. Ps. 109:8. Id.

(20.) Habitation.] 'Epaulis: like the Heb. tyrb, properly, a shepherd's hut, with the enclosed cattle-yard, and also generally a habitation of any kind. See Hesychius.' Hence the Latin aula and caula, [and the English hall.] From the rustic hut, says Valckenacr, the word was transferred to other habitations: for all men were originally rustics and shepherds. Bishopric.] Episcöpe: in the Sept. it answers to the Hebrew hqda, which denotes any office committed to one's administration. Kain.] BLOOMF.

(22.) Ordained to be.] 'The Gr. is simply genesthai, &c. be made, no rite was used, and none is alluded to.' Dr. A. C. Resurrection, &c.] The phrase is put for all the heads of Christian doctrine. Comp. 1 Cor. 15:14. and see Bloomf. Ed.

V. 23—26. As Jesus had personally appointed the other apostles, many expositors have argued, that this prayer was immediately addressed to Him; and the language favors the supposition. Matthias, some suppose to have been the same with Nathanael, because both their names signify 'the gift of God;' but this is very uncertain. It is remarkable, that Matthias is never mentioned in Scripture, except on this occasion, but Barsabas is, 15:22—35, vr. 22, 32. The whole account, when compared

(2.) The public notice taken of this. It was known to all the dwellers in Jerusalem, known as a remarkable judgment of God on him that betrayed his Master, v. 19. known to be true, incontestably so, and every body spoke of it; one would think this should have awakened those to repentance, that had had any hand in the death of Christ, when they saw him that had the first hand, thus made an example. But their hearts were hardened, and as to those of them that were to be softened, it must be done by the Word, and the Spirit working with it. One proof of the notoriety of the thing mentioned, the field purchased with Judas' money, was called *Aceldama*,—the field of blood, because it was bought with the price of blood, which perpetuated the infamy, not only of him that sold that innocent precious blood, but of them that bought it too. Look how they will answer it, when God shall make inquisition for blood.

(3.) Let none be surprised, or stumble at it, that this should be the exit of one of the twelve, for David had foretold not only his sin, (which Christ had noticed, John 13:18. from Ps. 41:9.) but also his punishment, Ps. 69:25. Perhaps Judas had some habitation of his own at Jerusalem, which, upon this, every body was afraid to live in, and so it became desolate, [people detesting the very place where the suicide lived and died.] The substitution of another in his room, is quoted from Ps. 109:8. With this quotation, Peter very aptly introduces the following proposal. God will not suffer any purpose of his to be frustrated, any commission of his to be vacated, or any word of his to be undone, for the miscarriages of them that are intrusted therewith. Judas is hanged, but his bishopric is not lost, and Christ's cause shall never be lost for want of witnesses.

(4.) The substitute, v. 21, 22. must be one of these men, &c. the 70 disciples, a witness with us of his resurrection. By this, it appears, that others of the disciples were with the 11 when Christ appeared to them, else they could not have been witnesses with them, as competent witnesses as they of his resurrection. The great thing which the apostles were to attest to the world, was, Christ's resurrection, for that was the great proof of his being the Messiah, and the foundation of our hope in Him. See what the apostles were ordained to, not to a secular

dignity and dominion, but to preach Christ, and the power of his resurrection.

The nomination of the person to succeed Judas.

1. Two, who were known to have been Christ's constant attendants, and men of great integrity, were set up as candidates for the place, v. 23. They appointed two; i.e. the hundred and twenty did so, for to them Peter spake, and not to the eleven. Of neither of the two do we read elsewhere, except this Joseph be the same with that Jesus who is called Justus, whom Paul speaks of, Col. 4:11. and who is said to be of the circumcision, a native Jew, as this was; and who was a fellow-worker with Paul unto the kingdom of God, and a comfort to him. Some think this Joseph, is he that is called Joses, Mark 6:3. the brother of James the less, Mark 15:40. and was called Joses the just, as another person was called James the just. Some confound this with that Joses mentioned Acts 4:36. But that was of Cyprus, this of Galilee; and, it should seem, to distinguish them, that was called Barnabas,—a son of consolation; this Barsabas,—a son of the oath. These two were, both of them, such worthy men, and so well qualified for the office, that they could not tell which of them was fitter, but all agreed it must be one of these two. They appeal to God, (as the Searcher of hearts,) by the lot, v. 26. Matthias was not ordained by the imposition of hands, as presbyters were, for he was chosen by lot, which was the act of God; and therefore as he must be baptized, so he must be ordained, by the Holy Ghost, as they were all, not many days after.

CHAP. II. V. 1—4. Between the promise of the Spirit and his coming, there intervened but a few days; during these, the apostles, though under orders to preach, were yet silent. We have here an account of the descent of the Holy Ghost. Observe, I. When and where; which is particularly noted for greater certainty.

I. When the day of pentecost was fully come. There seems a reference to the manner of expression in the institution of this feast, Lev. 23:15. Ye shall count 7 sabbaths complete, from the day of the offering of the first-fruits, the next but one after the passover, the 16th of Abib, which was the day Christ rose. This day was fully come, i.e. the night preceding, with a part of the day,

promoting the cause of Christ, by every mean in their power, will generally increase with rapidity.—The crimes and awful end of some ministers, who have been high in rank and reputation in the church, should by no means lead men to despise that sacred calling: but such instances loudly require others, 'to look to themselves,' to their motives and intentions, as well as to their doctrine and moral conduct.—But when mercenary and ungodly men are removed; we should beseech the Great Searcher of hearts, to fill their places in the church, with such ministers as have known Christ, and are capable of being witnesses for Him, and of declaring to others the efficacy of his sufferings, and 'the power of his resurrection.' Indeed, in every thing, when we have gone as far as we can, 'according to the wisdom given' to us, we should, in one way or other, refer the decision to the Lord. SCOTT.

with the surprising blindness of the disciples to the true meaning of the prophecies, before the resurrection of Christ, illustrates the evangelist's words, 'Then opened He their understandings, to understand the Scripture.' Luke 24:44—49, v. 44; for there is a constant recurrence to the sacred oracles, and a clear and sound interpretation of the passages adduced.—It is wonderful, that any person should have referred to this narrative, in the argument concerning the choice of ministers; when the case was most evidently extraordinary, and one which could never again occur: and when the 11 apostles, with a number of the 70 disciples, probably formed the far greater part of the company present. Sc.

(25.) Place.] See Kain. and Bloomf., proving that hell is meant. Ed. (26.) 'Grotius' account seems probable, that they put their lots into two urns, one of which contained the names of Joseph and Matthias, and the other a blank and the word apostle. In drawing these out, the blank came up with the name of Joseph, and the lot on which was written the word apostle came up with the name of Matthias.' Burder, Beza, and Bloomf. think the decision was made by throwing dice. Io.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1. The word 'Pentecost' implies, that this was the fiftieth day; i.e. from the second day of unleavened bread, whence 'the feast of the ingathering' of the harvest was computed.—Different opinions are maintained, concerning the persons assembled on this occasion; whether the apostles only, or the whole company of disciples; but the language of the sacred writer obviously implies the pouring out of the Spirit, on not the apostles only, but on all



2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

c. c. 4:31.

was fully past. (1.) The Holy Ghost came down at the time of a solemn feast, because there was then a great concourse of people to Jerusalem from all parts of the country, and of proselytes from other countries, which would make it the more public, and the fame of it to be spread the sooner and further, contributing much to propagate the Gospel into all nations. (2.) This feast was kept in remembrance of the giving of the law on mt. Sinai, whence the incorporating of the Jewish church was to be dated, which Lightfoot reckons to be just 1447 years before. Fitly, therefore, is the Holy Ghost given at that feast, in fire and in tongues, for the promulgation of the evangelical law, not to one nation, but to every creature. (3.) This feast happened on the first day of the week; which was an additional honor put on that day, and a confirmation of it to be the Christian Sabbath, the day the Lord hath made, to be a standing memorial in his church of those two great blessings,—the resurrection of Christ, and the pouring out of the Spirit. This serves not only to justify us in observing that day under the style and title of the Lord's day, but to direct us, in sanctifying it, to give God praise particularly for those two great blessings; every Lord's day in the year, I think, there should be a full and particular notice taken in our prayers and praises of these two, as there is by some churches of the one, once a year, on Easter-day, and of the other, once a year, on Whit-sunday. Oh! that we may do it with suitable affections.

2. It was when they were all with one accord in one place, we are not told, particularly, whether in the temple, Luke 24:53. or in their own upper room. But it was at Jerusalem, because it had been the place God chose to put his name there; the prophecy was, that from hence the Word of the Lord should go forth to all nations, Is. 2:3. and it was now the place of the general rendezvous of all devout people; there God had promised to meet them, and bless them, here therefore He meets them with this blessing of blessings. This teaches us not to fall out with places, nor conceive prejudices against them.

Here they were with one accord. We cannot forget how often, while their Master was with them, there were strifes among them, which should be the greatest; but now we hear no more of these; what they had received already of the Holy Ghost, when Christ breathed on them, had in a good measure rectified the mistakes on which those contests were grounded, and had disposed them to holy love. They had prayed

more together of late than usual, ch. I:14. and that made them love one another better. By his grace He thus prepared them for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Would we have the Spirit poured out upon us from on high? Let us be all of one accord, and, notwithstanding variety of sentiments and interests, as, no doubt, there was among those disciples, let us agree to love one another; for where brethren dwell together in unity, there the Lord commands his blessing.

II. How the Holy Ghost came.

1. Here is an audible summons to awaken their expectations, v. 1. a sudden, unexpected sound from heaven, Rev. 6:1. the sound of a wind, for the way of the Spirit is like that of the wind, John 3:8. Ez. 37:9. It was a rushing, mighty wind; it came not only with a great noise, but with great force, as if it would bear down all before it. This was to signify the powerful influences and operations of the Spirit of God on the minds of men, and thereby on the world, that they should be mighty through God to the casting down of imaginations. It filled not only the room, but all the house, where they were sitting. Probably, it alarmed the whole city, but, to show that it was supernatural, presently fixed on that particular house; as some think the wind that was sent to arrest Jonah, affected only the ship that he was in, Jon. 1:4. and as the wise men's star stood over the house where the child was. This would direct the people who observed it, whither to go, to inquire the meaning of it. This wind filling the house, would strike an awe on the disciples, and help to put them into a very serious, reverend, and composed frame, to receive the Holy Ghost. Thus the rough convictions of the Spirit make way for his gentle comforts.

2. A visible sign of the gift they were to receive, cloven tongues, like as of fire; v. 3. and it sat, not they, those cloven tongues, but He, the Spirit, signified thereby, rested on each of them, as He is said to rest on the prophets of old. Or, as Hammond describes it, 'An appearance of something like flaming fire, [a lambent flame,] lighting on every one of them, which divided asunder, and so formed the resemblance of tongues, with that part of them that was next their heads, divided or cloven.' (1.) The outward sensible sign, was to confirm the faith of the disciples themselves, and convince others. (2.) The sign was fire, that John Baptist's saying concerning Christ might be fulfilled, He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; with the Holy Ghost, as with fire. Ezekiel's mission was confirmed by a vision of turning coals of fire, ch. 1:13. and Isaiah's by a coal of fire touching his lips, ch. 6:7. The Spirit, like fire, melts the heart, separates and burns up the dross, and kindles pious and devout affections in the soul, in which, as in the fire upon the altar, the spiritual sacrifices are offered up. This is that fire Christ came to send on the earth. Luke 12:49. (3.) This fire appeared in cloven tongues.

The operations of the Spirit were many; that of speaking with divers tongues was one, and was singled out to be the first indication of the gift of the Holy Ghost, and to that this sign had a reference. (4.) This fire sat upon them for some time, to show the constant residence of the Holy Ghost with them. The prophetic gifts of old were conferred sparingly, and but at some times, but the disciples of Christ had the gifts of the Spirit always with them; though the sign, we may suppose, soon disappeared.

III. The immediate effect.

1. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, more plentifully and powerfully than before; filled with the graces of the Spirit, and more than ever under his sanctifying influences, were now holy, heavenly, spiritual, more weaned from this world, and better acquainted with the other; were more filled with the comforts of the Spirit; rejoiced more than ever in the love of Christ, and the hope of heaven, and in it all their griefs and fears were swallowed up. They were also, for the proof of this, filled with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which is especially meant here; they were endued with miraculous powers for the furtherance of the Gospel. It seems evident to me, that not the 12 apostles only, but all the 120 disciples, were filled with the Holy Ghost alike at this time; all the 70 disciples, who were apostolical men, and employed in the same work, and all the rest too that were to preach the Gospel; for it is said, expressly, Eph. 4:8, 11. When Christ ascended on high, which refers to this, v. 23. He gave gifts unto men, not only some apostles, such were the twelve; but some prophets, and some evangelists, such were many of the 70 disciples, itinerant preachers, and some pastors and teachers settled in particular churches, as we may suppose some of these afterward were. The all, here, must refer to the all that were together, ch. 1:14, 15.—v. 1.

2. They began to speak with other tongues, beside their native language, though they had never learned any other. They spake not matters of common conversation, but the Word of God, and the praises of his name, substantial, weighty sayings, worthy to be had in remembrance, so the Greek. Probably not only one was enabled to speak one language, and another another, but every one to speak divers languages, as he should have occasion. And they spoke, not here and there a word of another tongue, stammeringly, in broken sentences; but spake it as readily, properly, and elegantly, as if it had been their mother-tongue. They spake not from any previous thought or meditation, but as the Spirit gave them utterance; He furnished them with the matter as well as the language. Now this was, (1.) A very great miracle, it was a miracle on the mind, for in the mind words are framed. They had not only never learned these languages, but, for aught that appears, had never so much as heard these languages spoken, or had any idea of them. They were neither scholars nor travellers; nor

the disciples, which would form a more exact fulfilment of Joel's prophecy (1:2); and it is plain that others, besides the apostles, were filled with the Holy Ghost; at a very early period. (6, 3, 5, 8.) As afterwards, miraculous powers, and the gift of languages, were conferred on others, by the laying on of the hands of the apostles; so without this, the gift of tongues was now conferred on converts in general. Indeed, either the apostles assembled alone, as if for this special purpose, of which no intimation is given; or else the whole company partook of the blessing; and this certainly accords to the tradition of the church in ancient times.

V. 2, 3. The shape of the mitre, worn by bishops, is by some thought to have been derived from the supposed form of these divided tongues; but if they sat on every one present, (as the original determines,) and others besides the apostles were present, the ground of this distinction fails. Indeed, it is more likely, that there appeared several divisions in the tongues, than merely two; as the former would be a more exact emblem of the gift of speaking divers languages conferred at the same time. Id.

(2.) Strong wind, loud and repeated peals of thunder, convulsions of lightning, and lambent flames resting on those who were objects of the Deity's regard, are all employed by them [the Greeks, Romans, &c.] to point out the mode in which their gods were reported to make their

will known to their votaries. Every thing of this kind was probably borrowed from the account given by Moses, of the appearance on Mount Sinai; [comp. too, Gen. 3:24. 15:17.] for traditions of this event were carried through almost every part of the habitable world, partly by the expelled Canaanites, partly by the Greek sages, travelling through Asiatic countries, [comp. Townsend's Arrang. notes on Dan.] in quest of philosophic truth; and partly by means of the Gr. vers. of the Sept., made nearly 500 B. C.

(3.) Cloven. Rather, distributed, see Markland; so the Vulg.; dispersita Vales. tr. dividing themselves. Ros., &c. tr. discursantes, running hither and thither. Supposing the opinion of the later Jews, (see Schoettgen,) to have been entertained by the earlier, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that God would vouchsafe to use a symbol accordant with the notions of that age, and therefore intelligible to all. Storr urges strong objections to the manner of accounting for this by some Germans, as Kuin., Hermann, Eichhorn, &c. Mich., Ros., Hezel, Paulus, Kuin. refer to the electric fluid. Wetstein (see his citations) observes, that the ancients believed the presence of the Deity to be indicated by fire, and that a flame burning from the head was accounted a sign or symbol of Divine favor; and that a little tongue of fire, or a radiant head, indicated the sanctity of those on whom it was found. Ep.



4 And they were all <sup>d</sup> filled with the Holy Ghost, and began <sup>e</sup> to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

6 Now <sup>f</sup> when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were <sup>e</sup> confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak <sup>h</sup> Galileans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues <sup>i</sup> the wonderful works of God.

12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, <sup>j</sup> What meaneth this?

13 Others mocking, said, These men are full of new wine.

14 ¶ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words :

d c. 1:5. e Ma. 16:17. c. 10:46. f when this voice was male. g or, troubled in mind. h c. 1:11. i 1 Co. 12:10, 23. j c. 17:20.

had had any opportunity of learning languages, either by books or conversation. (2.) A very proper, needful, and serviceable miracle. The language the disciples spake, was Syriae, a dialect of the Hebrew; so that it was necessary that they should be endued with the gift, both for the understanding of the original Hebrew of the O. T. in which it was written, and of the original Greek of the N. T., in which it was to be written. But that was not all; they were commissioned to preach the Gospel to every creature, to disciple all nations. But here is an insuperable difficulty at the threshold; How shall they master the several languages so, as to speak intelligibly to all nations? It will be the work of a man's life to learn their languages. Therefore, to prove that Christ could give authority to preach to the nations, He gives ability to

preach to them in their own language. And it should seem, that this was the accomplishment of that promise which Christ made to his disciples, John 14:12. *Greater works than these shall ye do.* For this may well be reckoned, all things considered, a greater work than the miraculous cures Christ wrought: Christ Himself did not speak with other tongues, nor did He enable his disciples to do it, while He was with them; but it was the first effect of the pouring out of the Spirit on them. And Abp. Tillotson thinks it probable, that if the conversion of infidels to Christianity were now sincerely and vigorously attempted, by men of honest minds, God would extraordinarily countenance such an attempt with all fitting assistance, as He did the first publication of the Gospel.

V. 5—13. We have here an account of the public notice taken of this extraordinary gift, with which the disciples were all on a sudden endued. Observe,

I. The great concourse of people now at Jerusalem. [The religious centre of the world, as London is the commercial, and Paris the literary.] It should seem, there were more than usual at the feast of pentecost. The expression, *out of every nation*, is hyperbolic, denoting, that there were some from most of the then known parts of the world.

1. All were either Jews originally, dispersed into those countries, v. 9, 11. or proselytes to the Jewish religion, but natives of those countries. Whitby observes, that the Jewish writers about this time, as Philo and Josephus, speak of the Jews as dwelling everywhere through the whole earth; and that there is not a people upon earth among whom some Jews do not inhabit.

2. What brought them all together to Jerusalem at this time was, a general expectation of the appearing of the Messiah; Daniel's weeks were just now expired, the sceptre was departed from Judah, and it was then generally thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear, Luke 19:11. This brought the most zealous and devout to Jerusalem, to sojourn there, that they might early share in the blessings of Messiah's kingdom.

II. Their amazement when they heard the disciples speak in their own tongues. The Parthians hear one of them speak their language, the Medes hear another of them speak theirs; and so of the rest, v. 11. Probably they spake of Christ, and redemption by Him, and the grace of the Gospel; these are indeed the great things of God, which will be for ever marvellous in our eyes. It was strange, and kind as strange, and helped to engage their affections, as a plain indication of the favor intended to the Gentiles, and that the knowledge and worship of God should no longer be confined to the Jews; and this is to us a plain intimation of the mind and will of God, that the sacred records of God's wonderful works should be preserved by all nations in their own tongue; that the Scriptures should be

read, and public worship performed, in the vulgar languages of the nations.

III. The scorn some natives of Judea and Jerusalem made of it, probably the Scribes and Pharisees, and chief priests, who always resisted the Holy Ghost, v. 13. Not that they were so absurd, as to think that wine would enable men to speak languages they never learned; but these, being native Jews, knew not, as the others did, that these were really the languages of other nations, and therefore took what they said to be gibberish and nonsense, such as drunkards, those fools in Israel, sometimes talk. As when they resolved not to believe the finger of the Spirit in Christ's miracles, they turned it off with this, 'He casteth out devils by compact with the prince of the devils;' so when they resolved not to believe the voice of the Spirit in the apostles' preaching, they turned it off with this, *These men are full of new wine.*

V. 14—36. We have here the first-fruits of the Spirit in Peter's sermon, directed, not to those of other nations in a strange language, but to the Jews in the vulgar language, even to them that mocked, for he begins with the notice of that, v. 15. and addresses his discourse, v. 14. to the men of Judea and inhabitants of Jerusalem; but we have reason enough to think, that the other disciples continued to speak to those who understood them, in the languages of their respective countries, the wonderful works of God. And it was not by Peter's preaching only, but that of all, or most, of the 120, that 3000 souls were that day converted, and added to the church; but Peter's sermon only is recorded, to be an evidence that he was thoroughly reconverted, and restored to the Divine favor; he that had sneakingly denied Christ, now as courageously confesses Him.

I. His account of the miraculous effusion of the Spirit, is designed to awaken them all to embrace the faith of Christ, and to join themselves to his church. Two things he resolves it into,—the fulfilling of the Scripture, and the fruit of Christ's resurrection and ascension, and, consequently, the proof of both.

1. It was the accomplishment of the prophecies of the Old Test., which related to the kingdom of the Messiah. He specifies, Joel, ch. 2:28. It is observable, that though Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake with tongues as the Spirit gave him utterance, yet he did not set aside the Scriptures, nor think himself above them; nay, much of his discourse is quotation out of the O. T., to which he appeals, and with which he proves what he says. Observe, (1.) The text Peter quotes, v. 17—21. refers to the last days, the times of the Gospel, therefore called the last days, because the dispensation of God's kingdom among men, which the Gospel sets up, is the last dispensation of divine grace, to the end of time. Or, in the last days, i. e. a great while after the ceasing of prophecy in the O. T. church. Or, in the day immediately preceding the destruction of the Jewish nation, in the last

V. 4. A more stupendous miracle than this can scarcely be imagined; as every one must perceive, who carefully considers the subject; and recollects with what difficulty an adult person acquires the accurate knowledge and pronunciation even of one language, so as to speak it with propriety, and without hesitation.—The diversity of languages introduced by the power of God, as a judgment on the presumptuous and rebellious builders at Babel, has always been the great obstacle to the diffusion of useful knowledge, and of true religion. SCOTT.

(4.) *Speak with tongues.*] Many essays have been written on this, see Bloomf., but the Ed. perceives nothing fit to overthrow the opinions of Henry and Scott, and the Fathers. ED.

V. 5. The phrase, 'every nation under heaven,' is general, not universal, and the interpretation of it, which the subject absolutely requires, should render us cautious of deducing conclusions, and attempting to prove doctrines, from single expressions, at least not more energetic; especially when clear testimonies of Scripture must be explained, differently than their obvious meaning implies, to establish such conclusions. SCOTT.

(5.) *Devout.*] *Eulabeis*: never used in the N. T. for proselytes. It means men of integrity, piety, as Simeon, Luke 2:25. *Every.*] Hyperbolic; as that of Xen. "he killed all, and took a few alive." Philo,

too, makes king Agrippa say to the Jews, "There is no nation in the world where a part of you is not to be found." BLOOMF.

V. 6—11. The Hebrew, or the Syriac, was generally used. From the different regions afterwards mentioned, it is computed, that seven or eight distinct languages, and many more different dialects of the same language, must have been thus spoken, that each of this company might hear his native tongue.—The strangers of Rome, mean native Jews, and persons proselyted to their religion, who generally resided at Rome, but then sojourned as strangers at Jerusalem.—(9) The peculiar dialect of the Galileans no longer was perceived by the inhabitants of Judea. S.

(7.) *Galileans.*] Was the name thus early given to the sect? ED. V. 13. *New.*] I. e. sweet: it could not at that season have been new. DR. A. CLARKE.

V. 14—21. It may here be observed, that the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was no more than the beginning of the accomplishment of this prophecy.—The word 'prophecy' may denote, not only the fluency of the persons in speaking of divine things, for the instruction of others, as the term is sometimes used; but also their predicting future events, especially those concerning the approaching ruin of the unbelieving Jewish nation.—The quotation, though in general made in the words of the Sept., varies from that version, and from the



15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing <sup>k</sup> it is *but* the third hour of the day.

16 But this is that which was <sup>l</sup> spoken by the prophet Joel ;

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out <sup>m</sup> of my Spirit upon all flesh : and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams :

18 And on my servants and on my hand-maidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit ; and they <sup>n</sup> shall prophesy :

19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath ; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke :

20 The <sup>o</sup> sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come :

21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever <sup>p</sup> shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words ; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by <sup>q</sup> miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye <sup>r</sup> yourselves also know :

23 Him, being <sup>s</sup> delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye <sup>t</sup> have taken, and <sup>u</sup> by wicked hands have crucified and slain :

24 Whom <sup>v</sup> God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death : because it was not possible <sup>w</sup> that he should be holden of it.

k 1 Th. 5:7. 10:13. 1 Co. 1: u Mat. 27:1.  
l Joel 2:28-32. 2. He. 4:16. v Lu. 24:1. c. 13:  
m Is. 44:3. Ez. 36: q Ju. 14:10, 11. 30, 34. 1 Co. 6: c. 13:  
27. He. 2:4. 14. Ep. 1:20.  
n c. 21:4, 9, 10. 1 r Ju. 15:24. Col. 2:12. 1 Th.  
Co. 12:10. s Lu. 22:22. 24: 1:10. He. 13:20.  
o Ma. 13:24. 2 Pe. 44. c. 3:13. 1 Pe. 1:21.  
3:7, 10. t c. 5:30. w Ju. 16:18.  
p Ps 86:5. Ro.

days of that people, just before that great and notable day of the Lord, spoken of, v. 20. [1.] There should be a more plentiful and extensive effusion of the Spirit of grace from on high than had ever yet been. The prophets of the O. T. had been filled with the Holy Ghost, and it was said of the people of Israel, that God gave them his good Spirit to instruct them, Neh. 9:20. But now the Spirit shall be poured out, not only on the Jews, but on all flesh, Gentiles as well as Jews; though yet Peter himself did not understand it so, as appears, ch. 11:17. Or, on all flesh, i. e. on some of all ranks and conditions of men. The Jewish doctors taught, that the Spirit came only on wise and rich men, and of the seed of Israel! [2.] The Spirit should be in them a Spirit of prophecy; by the Spirit, they should be enabled to foretell things to come, and to preach the Gospel to every creature. This power shall be given without distinction of sex, age, or outward condition, v. 18. or, in general, men and women, whom God calls his servants and his handmaids. The mention of the daughters, v. 17. and the handmaidens, v. 18. would make one think the women noticed, ch. 1:14. received the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, as well as the men, ch. 21:9. and Paul, finding abundance of the gifts both of tongues and prophecy in the church of Corinth, saw it needful to prohibit women's use of those gifts in public, 1 Cor. 14:26, 34. [3.] One great thing they should prophesy of, should be the judgments coming on the Jewish nation, the chief thing that Christ Himself had foretold, Mat. 24. at his entrance into Jerusalem, Luke 19:41. and when He was going to die, Luke 23:29. and these judgments were to be brought on them, to punish them for their contempt of the Gospel, and their opposition to it, though it came to them thus proved. Josephus speaks of prodigies that preceded the Jewish wars, terrible thunders, lightnings, and earthquakes; a fiery comet hung over the city a year, and a flaming sword was seen pointing down upon it; a light shone on the temple and the altar at midnight, as if it had been noon-day. Lightfoot gives another sense of these presages. The blood of the Son of God, the fire of the Holy Ghost now appearing, the vapor of the smoke in which Christ ascended, the sun darkened, and the moon made blood, at the time of Christ's passion, were all loud warnings given to that unbelieving people,

to prepare for the judgments coming upon them. Or, it may be applied, and very fitly, to the previous judgments themselves, by which that desolation was brought on. The blood points at the wars of the Jews with the neighboring nations, with the Samaritans, Syrians, and Greeks, in which abundance of blood was shed, as there was also in their civil wars, and the struggles of the seditious, (as they called them,) which were very bloody; there was no peace to him that went out, or to him that came in. The fire and vapor of smoke, here foretold, literally came to pass, in the burning of their cities, and towns, and synagogues, and temple at last. And this turning of the sun into darkness, and the moon into blood, speaks the dissolution of their government, civil and sacred, and the extinguishing of all their lights. Lastly, The signal preservation of the Lord's people is here promised, v. 21. (2.) He applies this prophecy to the present event, v. 16; it is the accomplishment of it, the full accomplishment of it: and so this Spirit of grace, the Advocate, or Comforter, that was given now, according to the promise, will, according to the same promise, continue with the church on earth to the end, and will work all its works in it and for it, and every member of it, ordinary and extraordinary, by the means of the scriptures and the ministry.

2. It was the gift of Christ, and the product and proof of his resurrection and ascension. From this gift of the Holy Ghost, he takes occasion to preach unto them Jesus; and this part of his sermon he introduces with another solemn preface, v. 22. See what a stress Peter lays on Christ's miracles! The matter of fact was not to be denied; 'They were done in the midst of you, in the midst of your country, your city, your solemn assemblies; I appeal to yourselves. The inference from them cannot be disputed; the reasoning is as strong as the evidence; if He did those miracles, certainly God approved Him, declared Him to be, what He declared Himself to be, the Son of God, and the Savior of the world; for the God of truth would never set his seal to a lie.'

They were witnesses of his death and sufferings also, but a few weeks ago; and this was the greatest miracle of all, that a Man approved of God, should thus seem to be abandoned of Him; and a Man thus approved among the people, and in the midst of them,

Heb. text, in nearly the same particulars. Instead of 'afterward,' or 'after these things,' we here read, 'in the last days;' the order of the clauses in v. 17. is changed; 'and they shall prophesy,' at the end of the 18th, is added; as is 'above,' and 'beneath,' in the 19th. The Sept. has 'notable,' or illustrious, instead of terrible, which is here retained. —The conclusion of the prophecy is omitted.

(14.) The eleven stood as witnessing to Peter's account. Ed. (15.) Third.] 'I. e. nine o'clock, the hour of prayer, previous to which the Jews scarcely ever eat or drank.' Dr. A. C. 'None who regarded religion did so. Lightf. quotes from Berachoth, "It is not lawful for a man to taste any thing before he shall have prayed his prayer." So Jos. says, the Sabbath assembly was not usually dismissed to breakfast till the sixth hour, i. e. after the prayers appropriated to that hour. Even the Gentiles accounted it disgraceful to get drunk in the day time. See Plant., Scæva, Ælian, Cic.' Bloomf.

(16-18.) Peter quotes neither the Heb. nor Sept., but from memory. Bloomf. (18.) And on, &c.] 'Rather, Ye, further: i. e. in other nations, also, my servants [in all nations and times] shall have the same gifts. This [important promise, thus expressed by the peculiar copulative kai &c] shows, that the most inconsiderable things in the scriptures are not to be neglected.' Markland. Ed.

(19.) Blood, fire, smoke, &c. denote war, which causes them; and, perhaps, calamitous times in general, political, civil, social, and domestic. 'It was an opinion common to Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans, that, by prodigies of the kind here mentioned (19, 20), were portended public calamities, and the ruin of estates.' Bloomf. Vapor of Smoke.] 'Smoke the densest.' By fire may more correctly be understood, ignited meteors, sulphurous and inflammable bodies, which burn and shine; and by smoke, thick and black vapors, which ascend from the earth, and obscure the light of the sun and moon, so (Kuiv.) that they receive that rubicund color, (blood,) which is usually observed to precede earthquakes.' Bloomf. Dr. A. C. refers v. 20. to the darkness of the sun and redness of the moon, during an eclipse of the sun; and v. 18. to war, devastations with fire, dagger, and sword. See Daddr. Id.

V. 22-24. 'In Scripture, that is said to be done by "the determinate counsel of God," which is done according to what He had written and declared in his Word; all predictions concerning things future, being declarations and determinations that they shall come to pass. (Mat. 26:24. Luke 22:22.) ... This only doth suppose, that God can foresee

and foretell, what man, not hindered by Him, but left to his own inclinations, will do. And if that foresight hath any influence on the will, to make the action necessary, then ... all our actions must be necessary.' Whitby. Did this learned writer suppose, that, according to the doctrine of Calvinists, the foresight, or even the decree, of God has any influence on the will or free agency of man? If either he, or others, who have brought the same objections, suppose this, they are very blamably ignorant of the doctrine which they would confute.—God foresees and foretells, what 'man left to his inclinations will do;' and God determines to leave him to his inclinations. The permission is enough in such a case; but to determine, by preventing grace, to make the sinner willing to submit, believe, and obey, requires a positive interposition of a divine and new-creating power; which none deserves, or, left entirely to himself, desires, and which God bestows or withholdeth, 'according to the counsel of his own will.'—Again, such texts constrain both the above cited learned writers (Hammond as well as Whitby) to allow, that the event was certainly foreseen, and could not but take place; though the persons concerned were under no coercion, and acted according to the lusts of their own hearts. But did God certainly foresee this, as his own all-wise determination and decree; or as something independent on his decree, which could neither be altered nor prevented? Notes, 4 23-28, v. 28. Mat. 26:21-24. Luke 22:21-25.—'The pains of death' would introduce 'the pains of hell,' to sinful man. But the sinless Savior, as our Surety, endured the former, till He could say, 'It is finished;' and having done so, it was impossible that He should be holden under the power of the latter; or that any of his believing people should be subjected to them. Scott.

(23.) Foreknowledge.] Bloomf. contends, with Krebs, that the context requires prognasis, tr. foreknowledge, to be tr. decree, counsel, as in 1 Pet. 1:2. Christ's sufferings not depending so much on any pre-science as on the divine decrees. 'This signification of prognasis is not only confirmed by the usage of the Heb., but the Gr. For the Hebrews use yad, as the Greeks do gnōnai, in the sense of (by a metonymy of cause for effect) decree, appoint. So Herod., 7:5, 4. Philo, 966 B. See Elsner and Loesner.' Bloomf. 'Though the awful subject of God's foreknowledge, no finite mind can comprehend, yet it is possible so to understand what relates to us in it, as to avoid the extremes of presumption or despondency. God's foreknowledge is spoken of in reference to us, not to Himself. To omniscience there can be neither fore-



25 For David speaketh <sup>z</sup> concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved :

26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad ; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope :

27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.

28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life ; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

29 Men and brethren, <sup>v</sup> let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

30 Therefore being <sup>z</sup> a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn <sup>a</sup> with an oath <sup>b</sup> to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne ;

31 He seeing this <sup>c</sup> before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This <sup>d</sup> Jesus hath God raised up, whereof <sup>e</sup> we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having <sup>e</sup> received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth <sup>b</sup> this, which ye now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens : but he saith himself, The Lord <sup>i</sup> said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

therefore he insists most largely on. 1. He describes his resurrection ; God loosed the bands of death,—the sorrows of death ; the word is used for *travailing pains* ; and some think, it signifies the trouble and agony of his soul, in which it was exceeding sorrowful, even to the death ; from these pains and sorrows of soul, this travail of soul, the Father loosed Him, when at his death, He said, *It is finished*. Thus Dr. Goodwin understands it : Lightfoot gives another sense of it, alluding to his having broken the power of death, and destroyed its pangs on his own people. But most refer this to the resurrection of Christ's body. And death, says Mr. Baxter, as a separation between soul and body, is by privation a penal state, though not dolorous by positive evil. But Hammond shows, that the Sept., and from them the apostle here, use the word for *cords and bands*, as Ps. 18: 4. to which the metaphor of loosing and being held best agrees. 2. He attests the truth of his resurrection, v. 32. 3. Because the Scripture had said, that He must rise again, before He saw corruption, therefore it was impossible that He should be holden by death and the grave ; for David speaks of his being raised, so it comes in, v. 25. The Scripture he refers to, is Ps. 16: 8—11. which, though in part applicable to David as a saint, yet refers chiefly to Christ, of whom David was a type, and shows us,

(1.) The constant regard our Lord Jesus had to his Father, in his whole undertaking. *I foresaw the Lord before Me continually*, John 13: 31, 32. 17: 4, 5. (2.) The assurance He had of his Father's presence and power going along with Him. *He is on my right hand* : this was an article of the covenant of redemption, Ps. 89: 21. (3.) The cheerfulness with which our Lord Jesus went on in his work, notwithstanding the sorrows He was to pass through. 'Being satisfied that the good pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in my hand, therefore doth my heart rejoice, and my tongue is glad, and the thought of my sorrow is as nothing to Me.' (4.) The pleasing prospect He had of the happy issue of his death and sufferings ; He was putting off the body, but *my flesh shall rest* ; the grave shall be to the body, while there, a bed of sweet repose ; *it shall rest in hope, that Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell* ; what follows is the matter of his hope, or assurance rather : that the soul shall not continue in a state of separation from the body ; for that would be the continuance of death's triumph over Him who was, in truth, a Conqueror over death : that the body shall lie but a little while in the grave ; *not to see corruption* ; therefore it must return to life, on, or before, the third day after death. This was typified by the law concerning the sacrifices, that no part of the flesh of the sacrifices which was to be eaten, should be kept till the third day, for fear it should see corruption, and begin to putrefy, Lev. 7: 15—18. That his death and

sufferings should be, not to Him only, but to all his, an inlet to the blessed immortality. 'Thou hast made known to Me the ways of life, and by Me made them known to the world, and laid them open.' That all his sorrows and sufferings should end in perfect and perpetual felicity. *Thou shalt make Me full of joy with thy countenance*. The reward set before Him, was, *joy, a fulness of joy* ; and the smiles with which the Father received Him, when, at his ascension, He was brought to the Ancient of days, filled Him with joy unspeakable : and that is the joy of our Lord, into which all his shall enter, and in which they shall be for ever happy.

III. Here is Peter's comment on this text, especially so much of it as relates to the resurrection of Christ, v. 29. David is here called a patriarch, because he was the father of the royal family, and a man of great note in his generation, and whose name and memory were justly very precious. Now we must consider, that, as he could not say of himself, (for he died, and was buried, and his sepulchre remained when Peter spake, his bones and ashes in it, nobody ever pretending he had risen,) that he should not see corruption ; it was plain he did see corruption. Paul urges this, ch. 13: 35—37. Comp. 1 K. 2: 2. Therefore certainly he spake it as a prophet, with an eye to the Messiah, whose sufferings the prophets testified beforehand, and with them the glory that should follow ; so did David in that Ps., as Peter here plainly shows.

1. David knew that the Messiah should descend from his loins, v. 30. that God had sworn to him. He promised him a son, the throne of whose kingdom should be established for ever, 2 S. 7: 12. And it is said, Ps. 132: 11. *God swore it in truth unto David*. When Jesus was born, it was promised, that the Lord God would give Him the throne of his father David, Luke 1: 32. And all Israel knew that the Messiah was to be the Son of David, i. e. that, according to the flesh, He should be so by his human nature ; for according to the Spirit, and by his divine nature, He was to be David's Lord. This David kept in view, in penning his Psalms.

2. Christ being the Fruit of his loins, and, consequently, in his loins when he penned that Ps., if what he says, as in his own person, be not applicable to himself, (as plainly it is not,) we must conclude it points to that Son of his that was then in his loins, in whom his family and kingdom were to have their perfection and perpetuity ; therefore, when he says, that his soul should not be left in its separate state, nor his flesh see corruption, without doubt he must be understood to speak of the resurrection of Christ, v. 31. And as Christ died, so He rose again, according to the Scriptures ; and that He did so, we are witnesses. Further, as David did not rise from the dead, so neither did he ascend into the heavens, bodily, as Christ did, v. 34.

x Ps. 16:8—11. y or, *I may*. z 2 S. 23:2. a 2 Sa. 7:12, 13. Ps. 132:11. b He. 6:17. c 1 Pe. 1:11, 12. d ver. 24. e Lu. 24:43. f c. 5:31. Ph. 2:9. g Ju. 16:7, 13. c. 1:4. h c. 10:45. Ep. 4:8. i Ps. 110:1. Mat. 22:44.

should be thus abandoned by them too ! But both these mysteries are here explained, v. 23. Neither God's designing it from eternity, nor his bringing good out of it to eternity, would in the least excuse their sin ; for it was their voluntary act and deed, from a principle morally evil ; it was justly looked upon as a national act, because done both by the vote of the great council, and by the voice of the great crowd, the majority.

II. Christ's resurrection effectually wiped away the reproach of his death, v. 24. This

knowledge nor after-knowledge : nothing can be future to God, He lives in all we call futurity ; nothing past, because He equally exists in all past time ; past, present, and future can have no relation to God, who exists in an infinite, indivisible, and eternal now. . . . Because God can do all things, it does not follow that He must ; because He can know all things, that He must. What God has ordained as absolutely certain, He knows as absolutely certain ; what He has ordained as contingent, (i. e. such things as his infinite wisdom has thought proper to poise on the possibility of being, or not being, leaving it to the will of intelligent beings to turn the scale,) that He knows or foreknows as contingent. To deny this, would involve the most palpable contradictions, the most monstrous absurdities, making every act, good or evil, God's own act, confounding all distinctions of right and wrong, virtue and vice, guilt and innocence ! Dr. A. C., whom see.

(24.) *Pains*.] *Olines* : lit. chains, bonds, equivalent to the Heb. *chebelym*, originally ropes, bonds, and, by a figure, pains. Is. 13:3. Jer. 49:24. Comp. the metaphors, 1 Thes. 5:4. Ps. 119:61. 138:5. 116:3. 2 S. 22:6. Ps. 91:3. (where Death is a fowler) ; and the note and cut, Ps. 138:5. Ed.

V. 25. *I foresaw*.] The word seems to refer to *place*, not *time*. In *hell*.] *Keber*, the Hebrew word for *grave*, is never rendered *hades*, (in the LXX.) *Sheol*, on the contrary, is never rendered a *tomb*, or *grave*, nor construed with . . . to bury, a thing almost inevitable, in words so frequently recurring, if it had ever properly signified a grave. Campbell, in Scott. (25.) See on the double sense of prophecy, p. 310, Vol. III. Ed.

V. 26. *Heart*.] The Heb. has *kebed*, 'glory,' equivalent, it would seem from the parallelism, Gen. 49:6. to *animus*, mind, heart. See Bloomf. Id.

V. 27. *Hell*.] Gr. *Hades* : Tartarus to the wicked, Elysium to the good. *Corruption*, &c.] 'Unto dust shalt thou return' was man's sentence after the fall, therefore it could be executed on none but the fallen. The immortality of Jesus' human nature was a necessary consequence of its being pure from transgression.' Dr. A. C. 'Hades answers the Heb. Sheol, orcus, the subterraneous seat of the impious spirits.'

BLOOMFIELD.

V. 23. *With us*.] 'Only the royal family could be buried within the city.' *Kuin*. See the mosque now over David's tomb, in the vignette, title, Vol. III., and comp. note there, on the back of the title-page. En.

V. 30. 'The [superfluous] words "according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ," are omitted in the A. C. D., \* \* Barb. 1., Ed. Syr., Erp., Copt., Æth., Arm., Vulg., Æth., Cyr., Iren., Victorin., Fulg., and in other books, we have after "his throne," "to raise up Christ according to the flesh." The common reading is defended by De Dieu, Wolf, Heuman, and others : but has been, with reason, rejected by Bengel, Mill, Schott, Griesbach, [Schoettgen, Pr. White, Bp. Pearce, Dr. A. C.] and others ; since the very variety of reading betrays a gloss. The words are not to be found in Ps. 132. nor in the par. pass. 25. 7:12. Ps. 89:5. and by omitting the words the reading is rendered more difficult ; which points to the real origin of the common reading. On omitting them, we must subaud *tina* [one] at "to sit," i. e., a successor to the kingdom, namely, Christ. *Kuin*. David indeed spoke of himself, but he spoke just as if he had foreseen what had now happened. *Wetst.* Id.

V. 33—36. The scope of Peter's argument was, to show that the cru-



35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that <sup>k</sup> God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both <sup>l</sup> Lord and <sup>m</sup> Christ.

37 ¶ Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked <sup>n</sup> in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what <sup>o</sup> shall we do ?

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise <sup>q</sup> is unto you, and to your children, and <sup>r</sup> to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

§ Zec. 13:1. n Eze. 7:16. Zec. 19.  
k c. 5:31. 12:10. q Joel 2:28.  
l Jn. 3:35. o c. 9:6. 16:30. r Ep. 2:13,17.  
m Ps. 2:2,6-8. p Lu. 24:47. c. 3:

And, to prove that when he spake of the resurrection, he meant it of Christ, he observes, that when in another Ps. he speaks of the next step of his exaltation, he plainly shows that he spake of another person, and such another as was his Lord, Ps. 110:1. *The Lord said unto my Lord*, when He had raised Him from the dead, *Sit Thou at my right hand*, in the highest dignity and dominion there; be thou intrusted with the administration of the kingdom, both of providence and grace; *sit there as King, until I make thy foes either thy friends or thy footstool*, v. 35.

IV. We now come to the application of this discourse concerning the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ.

1. This explains the meaning of the present wonderful *effusion of the Spirit* in those extraordinary gifts, as some had asked, v. 12. *What meaneth it? This Jesus being exalted to the right hand of God*; so some, to sit there; *by the right hand*, we read it, by God's power and authority; it comes all to one; and *having received of the Father*, to whom He is ascended, *the promise of the Holy Ghost*, He hath given what He received, Ps. 68:18. and *hath shed forth this which you now see and hear*; for the Holy Ghost was to be given when Jesus was glorified, and not before, John 7:39. Now this which you see and hear is from the Holy Ghost, whose coming is an evidence that Jesus is exalted, and that He has received this gift from the Father, to confer it on the church, which plainly

ified Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah, and that He was actually risen, ascended, and glorified. When the Jews were convinced of this, and induced to believe on Him in that character; they would readily learn from Scripture, and from further instructions, the spiritual nature of his kingdom and salvation, the intent of his sufferings and death, and the various doctrines of his religion.

(35.) *Foes thy footstool.*] An expression derived from the ancient custom towards the vanquished, Josh. 10:24. Ps. 60:11. See Ovid, Virg., Prudentius, Jos., and cuts, 2 K. 17:6. Ps. 110:1. and m. at the end of Jeremiah.

V. 37-40. The apostle's arguments were invincibly conclusive, and his application most highly interesting; though in other respects his discourse was peculiarly plain and simple. But if we duly consider the complicated evidence of our Lord's doctrine and miracles, and the obstinate unbelief of the Jews notwithstanding; we shall perceive, that neither Peter's words, nor yet the miracles which the people witnessed, would have produced those effects which followed, had not the Holy Spirit also been communicated, to remove the veil of pride, prejudice, and sinful affections from their minds. 'The Comforter being come, He convinced them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.' John 16:8-11. For 'the promise,' both the general promise respecting the Messiah, and the blessings of his kingdom, as made to Abraham their father, Gen. 12:1-3. 17:7, 8. and the particular promise of the Spirit quoted from Joel, 16-21. was made, or proposed, 'to them and to their

speaks Him to be the Mediator, or middle Person between God and the church. *The gift of the Holy Ghost* was a performance of divine promises already made, here called *the promise of the Holy Ghost*; also, a pledge of all Divine favors further intended; what you now see and hear, is but an earnest of greater things.

2. This proves, what you are all bound to believe, that *Christ Jesus is the true Messiah and Savior of the world*; this he closes his sermon with, as *the conclusion of the whole matter*, v. 26. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that this truth has now received its full confirmation, and we our full commission to publish it; for they were charged to *tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ*, till after his resurrection, Mat. 16:20. 17:9. This is the great truth of the Gospel which we are to believe, that *that same Jesus*, the very same that was crucified at Jerusalem, is He to whom we owe allegiance, and from whom we are to expect protection, as *Lord and Christ*.

V. 37-41. We have seen the wonderful effect of the *pouring out of the Spirit*, in its influence on the preachers of the Gospel. We are now to see another blessed fruit of it, in its influence on the hearers of the Gospel. Let us see the method of it.

I. *They were startled, and convinced, and put upon a serious inquiry*, v. 37. *Having patiently heard Peter out, they were pricked to the heart, or in the heart*, and, under a deep concern and perplexity, applied themselves to the preacher with this question, *What shall we do?* It was very strange such impressions should be made on such hard hearts all of a sudden! Yet, *when they heard this plain scriptural sermon*, they were much affected with it. 1. It put them *in pain*; Peter, charging the death of Christ upon them, as accessories, awakened their consciences, and the reflection they now made upon it, pierced them, as they had pierced Christ. Those that are truly sorry for their sins, and ashamed of them, and afraid of the consequences of them, are *pricked to the heart*. 2. It put them on inquiry. Ministers are spiritual physicians, they should be advised with, as here, by those whose consciences are wounded; and it is good for people to be free and familiar with those ministers, as *men and their brethren*, who deal for their souls as for their own. Those that are convinced of sin, would gladly know the way to peace and pardon, ch. 9: 6. 16:39.

II. Peter and the apostles direct them what they must do, and what in so doing they might expect, v. 38, 39. 1. *Repent*; this was the same duty *John the Baptist and Christ had preached*, and now the Spirit is poured out, it is still insisted on; *Repent, repent.* 2. *Be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ*, i. e. firmly believe the doctrine of Christ, and submit to his grace and government; and make an open, solemn profession of this, and come under an engagement to abide by it, by submitting to

the ordinance of baptism; be proselyted to Christ and to his holy religion, and renounce your infidelity.' They must be baptized *in the name of Jesus Christ*. They believed in the Father and the Holy Ghost, speaking by the prophets; but they must also believe in Jesus, that He is the Christ, the Messiah, promised to the fathers; 'Take Jesus for your King, and by baptism swear allegiance to Him; take Him for your Prophet, and hear Him; take Him for your Priest, to make atonement for you;' which seems peculiarly intended here; for they must be baptized *in his name for the remission of sins*, on the score of his righteousness. 3. This is pressed on each particular person; there is grace enough in Christ, be ye ever so many, and grace suited to the case of every one. Israel of old were baptized unto Moses in the camp, the whole body together, when they passed through the cloud and sea, 1 Cor. 10:1, 2. for the covenant of peculiarity was national; but now every one of you, distinctly, must be baptized *in the name of the Lord Jesus*, and transact for himself in this great affair. See Col. 1:28.

2. He encourages them to take that course: (1.) 'It shall be for the remission of sins. Repent, and be baptized into the faith of Christ, and in truth you shall be justified, which you could never be by the law of Moses.' (2.) 'You shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost as well as we; for it is designed for a general blessing; some shall receive these external gifts, and each, if sincere in your faith and repentance, his internal graces and comforts; shall be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.' (3.) 'Your children shall still have, as they have had, an interest in the covenant, and a title to the external seal of it.' v. 39. The promise was very express, Is. 44:3. 59:21. Gen. 17:7. Now it is proper for an Israelite, when he is by baptism to come into a new dispensation of this covenant, to ask, 'What must be done with my children? Must they be thrown out, or taken in with me?' 'Taken in,' says Peter, 'by all means; for the promise, that great promise, of God's being to you a God, is as much to you and to your children now as ever.' (4.) 'Though the promise is still extended to your children as it has been, yet it is not, as it has been, confined to you and them, but the benefit of it is designed for all that are afar off;' we may add, *and their children*, for the blessing of Abraham comes on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, Gal. 3:14. Rom. 9:4. even on as many particular persons in each nation, as *God shall call effectually into the fellowship of Jesus Christ*.

III. These directions are followed with a needful caution, v. 40. The unbelieving Jews were an untoward generation, perverse and obstinate, they walked contrary to God and man, 1. Thess. 2:15. wedded to sin and marked for ruin. Now as to them, *Save, i. e. separate yourselves, distinguish yourselves, from this untoward generation.*

children; and not to those present only, but to all, however dispersed, whom God should call by his Gospel. The promise, as made to Abraham, included also his posterity; and that of the new covenant did the same to those who should be interested in it; and the language here records with this. Jer. 32:39-41. Rom. 11:11-21. 1 Cor. 7:10-14. The male descendants of Abraham were circumcised, as included in the promise, and as a part of the visible church; and this passage may intimate, that the infant-offspring of Christians, being also included in the promise, and in the covenant of their parents, and being a part of the visible church, should be admitted to baptism, which is the outward sign of the same spiritual blessings, as circumcision was. Gen. 17:9-12. S. (33.) *Gift, &c.*] 'Comp. v. 17. i. e., the effects of divine grace, a full and accurate knowledge of divine things, a fervent and constant striving after holiness, a most ardent desire to profess and propagate the doctrine of Christ.'

(39.) *All afar off.*] 'Peter seems to have understood Gentiles, [so *Æcum., Bloomf., &c.*] but (comp. Acts 10.) not till they had passed over to the Jewish religion.' KUIX. 'The Spirit of God, by which he spoke, had doubtless the calling of the Gentiles, in view.' Dr. A. C., Henry, Scott. Since Peter knew not of this calling of the Gentiles, he could only mean the dispersed of Israel: but the Spirit of God might have a further view.' Doddr. 'The phrase is equally applicable to those who have been afar off from God, by their sins, and their evil affections.' Barnes.



41 ¶ Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

1 Co. 11:2. He. t Ma. 16:17. v Is. 58:7. 2 Co. 10:25. u c. 4:32,34. 9 1,9. 1 Ju. 3:17.

*Be not rebellious like this rebellious house; partake not their sins, that you share not their plagues.* To separate from wicked people, is the only way to save ourselves from them; we may thereby expose ourselves to their rage and enmity, but it is better to have the trouble of swimming against their stream than the danger of being carried down it. Those that repent, and give themselves to Jesus, must evidence their sincerity by breaking off all intimate society with wicked people.

IV. The happy success and issue, v. 41. The Spirit wrought with the Word, and did wonders by it. These, that had many of them been eyewitnesses of the death of Christ, and the attendant prodigies, unwrought upon, were yet wrought upon by the preaching of the Word, for that is the *power of God unto salvation*.

1. They received the Word; admitted its conviction, accepted its offers. 2. They gladly received it; though humbling to them, and likely to expose them to the enmity of their countrymen. 3. They were baptized; believing with the heart, they made confession with the mouth, and enrolled themselves among the disciples of Christ by that sacred rite and ceremony which He had instituted. And though Peter had said, 'Be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus,' yet we have reason to think that, in baptiz-

V. 41. As it is highly improbable, that there should have been none of John's disciples in this large company; we may fairly infer, that Christ's baptism was not precisely the same institution with John's; and that from this time, at least, John's disciples were baptized, when they were admitted into the Christian Church, according to the form appointed by our Lord after his resurrection. 19:5, 6. Mat. 3:5, 6, 23:19, 20. John 3:22-24. As so great a number were baptized on this occasion, and as they were not by the river Jordan 'where was much water,' or near to any other river; but in the midst of a populous city, crowded also with strangers, it is at least highly probable, that they were not baptized by immersion: especially seeing the baptism of the Holy Ghost, represented by it, is constantly, and in several places of the chapter, spoken of, as 'poured out' upon them. (See on 33.) SCOTT. *Received.* 'The Gr. *apodechesthai*, as applied to things, denotes to receive, assent to, approve, admit, follow the authority of, &c. So *Xen.*, Eurip. See Kypke, &c. *Baptizel.* In the earlier ages of Christianity, those who acknowledged Jesus to be the Messiah were received, by this solemn rite, into the Christian Church; so that a fuller instruction did not precede, but follow baptism.' BLOOMER. 'Lightf. has well remarked, that the Gentiles who received the Christian doctrine, were baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the Jewish converts only in the name of the Lord Jesus.' Dr. A. C. '[This] was the true model of a revival of religion, and a perpetual demonstration, that such scenes as have characterized our own age and nation especially, are strictly in accordance with the spirit of the N. T.—And it was especially proper there should be given, by an inspired man, a record of a true revival of religion. The human mind, as all experience shows, is prone to enthusiasm and fanaticism; and men might be disposed to pervert the Gospel to scenes of wild-fire, disorder, and tumult. That the Gospel would produce excitement, was well known to its Author. It was well, therefore, that there should be some record to which the church might always appeal, as an infallible account of the proper effects of the Gospel; some inspired standard, to which might be brought all excitements on the subject of religion. If they are in accordance with the first triumphs of the Gospel, they are genuine; if not, they are false.' BARNES.

V. 42, 43. The conversion of this great multitude was sudden; yet their profession was not transient or wavering. SCOTT.

(42.) *Breaking of Bread.* Breaking of bread was 'that act which preceded a feast or meat: and which was performed by the master of the house when he pronounced the blessing: what we would call grace before meat.' See on Mat. 26:26. Dr. A. C. 'The Gr. phrases tr.

ing them, the whole form Christ prescribed was used in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Those that receive the Christian covenant, ought to receive the Christian baptism. 4. Hereby there were added to the disciples about 3000 souls that same day. The conversion of these 3000 with these words, was a greater work than the feeding of 4000 or 5000 with a few loaves. They who are joined to Christ, are added to the disciples of Christ. When we take God for our God, we must take his people to be ours.

V. 42—47. In these vs. we have the history of the truly primitive church, of the first days of it, its state of infancy indeed, but, like that, the state of its greatest innocence.

1. They kept close to holy ordinances, and abounded in all instances of piety and devotion; for Christianity, admitted in the power of it, will dispose the soul to communion with God, in all those ways wherein He has appointed us to meet Him, and promised to meet us. 1. They were diligent and constant in their attendance on the preaching of the Word: continued in the apostles' doctrine; or, as it may be read, continued constant to the apostles' teaching or instructions. 2. They kept up the communion of saints, v. 42, 46; not only had a mutual affection, but a great deal of mutual conversation; they were much together. They were concerned for one another, sympathized with one another, and heartily espoused one another's interests. They had fellowship with one another in religious worship; the temple was their place of rendezvous: and though they met with the Jews in the courts of the temple, yet the Christians kept together by themselves, and were unanimous in their separate devotions. 3. They frequently joined in the ordinance of the Lord's supper; they kept up this memorial of the death of Christ, because it was an institution of Christ, to be transmitted to the succeeding ages of the church. They broke bread from house to house,—house by house; not in the temple, for the eucharist was peculiar to the Christian institutes, and therefore they administered that ordinance in private houses, choosing such houses of the converted Christians as were convenient, to which the neighbors resorted. 4. They continued in prayer, after the Spirit was

poured out, as well as before, for prayer will never be superseded till it comes to be swallowed up in everlasting praise. Breaking of bread comes in between the Word and prayer, for it has reference to both, and is a help to both. The Lord's supper is a sermon to the eye, and a confirmation of God's Word to us; and it is an encouragement to our prayers, and a solemn expression of the ascent of our souls to God. 5. They abounded in thanksgiving; were continually praising God, v. 47. They that have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, will be much in praise.

II. They were loving one to another, and very kind; their charity was as eminent as their piety, and their joining in holy ordinances knit their hearts, and very much endeared them to one another.

1. They had frequent meetings for Christian converse, v. 44. All that believed, were together; not all those thousands in one place; but, as Lightfoot explains it, different companies or congregations, according to their languages, nations, or other references. They thus expressed and increased their mutual love. 2. They had all things common: perhaps common tables, or, there was such a concern for one another, and such a readiness to help one another, as there was occasion, that it might be said, They had all things common, according to the law of friendship; one wanted not what another had, for he might have it for the asking. 3. They were very cheerful, and very generous in the use of what they had; a great deal of religion appeared in their common meals; they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. None have such cause to be cheerful as good Christians have; it is pity, but that they should always have hearts to be so. It made them very liberal to their poor brethren, and enlarged their hearts in charity. They did eat their meat with singleness of heart,—with liberality of heart; so some; they bid the poor welcome to their table, not grudgingly, but with all the hearty freedom imaginable. It becomes Christians to be open-hearted and open-handed, and in every good work to sow plentifully, as those on whom God hath sowed plentifully, and who hope to reap so. 4. They raised a fund for charity, v. 45. This was to destroy, not property,

break bread and breaking of bread, in the N. T. are not only used to denote breaking of bread, breaking it to pieces and giving it to others, (see Is. 58:7. Jer. 16:6. Luke 24:30, 35. Mat. 14:19.) but are likewise so used as to denote the meal itself, and the common partaking of the food. Hence, also, "to break bread" is used of the Lord's supper in 1 Cor. 10:16. Er., Schmid, Beza, &c., understand, a common meal; but this is proved false by the words, "doctrine" and "prayer," associated; and thus are enumerated rather the parts of divine worship in the assembly of Jerusalem. The Syr. tr. the Lord's supper, and artos [bread] elsewhere r. *lamb*, (as in Acts 20:7.) he has here expressed by *Eucharist*. So some Fathers, and many recent interpreters, as Heuman, Lightf., Suicer, Schoettgen, and Wolf. But in v. 45, the subject treated of is plainly common meals, nor is there any sufficient reason why the words, "breaking bread" should there be taken in any other sense than the "breaking of bread" in this passage. I therefore do not hesitate to assent to Limborch, Mosheim, Barkey, Hansen, and others, who take the expression here, and at Acts 20:7. to denote common sacred meals, called *agape* [love-feasts,] to which the richer Christians contributed, for the use and relief of the poorer brethren, and which used to precede the celebration of the Lord's supper. See 1 Cor. 11:16. &c. Kuin. So Bloomer, 'Doddr., Casaubon, Grot., and Wolf, think a common meal is meant.'

V. 44—47. The same disposition [i. e., of liberality and charity] ought always to prevail: yet it is evident, that the same way of expressing it is not required, nor would it be in general expedient. The minds of the new converts were occupied almost entirely with the important concerns of eternal salvation; and as numbers of them were far from home, and probably had not many secular affairs to attend on; they daily continued, in the most harmonious manner, to meet together in the courts of the temple for the worship of God, and in the houses of believers, one after another, as they had opportunity; where they hospitably entertained each other, as well as joined in sacred ordinances. What a lovely exhibition of the effects of genuine Christianity, when applied and blessed by the Spirit of God! What excellent and what happy characters does it form! SCOTT.

(44, 45.) 'I incline to Whitby, Wolf, Heuman, Kuin., Heinrich, &c., that the words here are not to be too much pressed, not to be interpreted of an absolute community of goods; since it does not follow because the richer Christians, for the purpose of relieving the necessities of their poorer brethren, sold part of their goods, that they gave up all, and had no property in their own hands, and could not afterwards sell it. That



46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

47 Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

CHAP. III.

<sup>1</sup> Peter, preaching to the people that came to see a lame man restored to his feet, <sup>12</sup> professeth the cure not to have been wrought by his or John's own power, or holiness, but by God, and his Son Jesus, and through faith in his name; <sup>13</sup> withal reprehending them for crucifying Jesus. <sup>17</sup> Which because they did, through ignorance, and that thereby were fulfilled God's determinate counsel, and the scriptures. <sup>19</sup> he exhorteth them by repentance and faith to seek remission of their sins, and salvation in the same Jesus.

NOW Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.

2 And a certain man, lame from his mother's womb, was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;

w or, a home. y c. 5:14. 11:21. c:10. r Lu. 2:52. Ro. a Ps 55:17. Da. b Ju. 9:3. 14:15.

as Mr. Baxter says, but selfishness. Herein, probably, they had an eye to the command Christ gave to the rich man, as a test of his sincerity, *Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor.* Not that this was intended for an example, to be a constant binding rule, as if all Christians in all places and ages were bound to sell their estates, and give away the money in charity. For Paul, after this, often spake of the distinction of rich and poor, and Christ hath said, that *the poor we have always with us*, and shall have, and the rich must be always doing them good out of the issues of their estates, which they disable themselves to do, if they sell them, and give all away at once. But here the case was extraordinary. (1.) They were under no obligation of a divine command to do this, as appears by what

PRACT. OBS. Delays as to the performance of God's promises, till the appointed time is 'fully come,' are peculiarly advantageous to those, who wait on Him in patient faith, and fervent, persevering prayer. When a company of believers are 'of one heart,' thus to seek and hope for 'the pouring out of his Holy Spirit,' a revival of true religion may reasonably, but confidently, be expected; for the promise stands sure, that 'our heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.' (Jer. 32:39-41. Luke 11:5-13, v. 13.) We cannot explain the manner of his operation; but we may perceive, that with invincible power He bears down all the opposition of pride and worldly lusts and prejudices, as 'with a rushing mighty wind,' and changes the heart like a vehement fire. We do not expect such miraculous powers, as were communicated to the apostles on the day of Pentecost; yet we share the benefit of them; both in the demonstrative evidence thus given to the truth of the Gospel, and in the infallible declaration, which they have authenticated and transmitted to us, concerning the way in which we may be saved.—The remarkable pouring out of the Spirit, even in his ordinary influences and operations, will always produce a

this power of sale was left them, and was voluntary, is clear from the story of Ananias and Sapphira, 5:4. Thus also, the words of 4:32. plainly indicate, that only the use of the possessions was common, not the possessions themselves. "It clearly appears, (says Kuin,) that there were those among the Christians that had property and kept it. Thus 12:12. one Mary had houses of her own at Jerusalem. Nor do we find in the Epistles any vestige of there having been a community of property in the rest of the Christian societies. Nay, we find that there were rich and poor. By the admonition of the apostles, money, indeed, was collected for the use of the poor, (1 Cor. 16:1.) and contributed on the Lord's day. They therefore had retained their possessions. Moreover, in 1 Thess. 4:11. the apostle exhorts the Christians to provide for their support by the labor of their hands; and in 2 Thess. 3:7, and 12. he urges this by his own example. See also 1 Eph. 4:23. Acts 9:36. 11:29. Thus the words, 'and they had all things common,' are to be taken in a popular sense, and nearly as the old adage 'all things are common among friends.'" Kuin. BLOOF. The Ed., however, thinks that a common reader of this passage, (44, 45, and it seems to be properly tr.) would understand, and correctly, a community of goods, in the broadest sense. So have some of our missionaries practised. Ep.

(47.) Church.] See in Mat. 16:18. 'Ekklesia: to the assembly of the followers of Christ. The word church [in the Gr.] properly means those who are called out, and is applied to Christians as being called out, or separated from the world. It is used but 3 times in the gospels, Mat.

Peter said to Ananias, ch. 5:4. Was it not in thine own power? But it was a very commendable instance of their raisedness above the world, their contempt of it, their assurance of another world, their love to their brethren, their compassion to the poor, and their great zeal for encouraging Christianity, and nursing it in its infancy. Our rule is, to give according as God hath blessed us; yet in such an extraordinary case as this, those are to be praised, who give beyond their power, 2. Cor. 8:3. (2.) They were Jews that did this, and they who believed Christ, must believe that the Jewish nation should shortly be destroyed, and an end put to the possession of estates and goods in it, and, in the belief of that, they sold them for the present service of Christ and his church.\*

III. God owned them, and gave them signal tokens of his presence with them, v. 43. Many wonders and signs were done by the apostles, of divers sorts, which confirmed their doctrine, and incontrovertibly proved that it was from God. And more yet, the Lord added to the church daily. It is God's work to add souls to the church; and a great comfort both to ministers and Christians.

IV. The people were influenced by it; the standers by, spectators. 1. They feared them, and had a veneration [mixed with admiration] for them, v. 43. every soul, i. e., very many who saw the wonders and signs done by the apostles, and were afraid, lest their not being respected, as they should be, would bring de-olation on their nation. The common people stood in awe of them, as Herod feared John. Fear came upon every soul; and the souls of people were strangely influenced by their awful preaching and living. 2. Far the greater part of the common people favored them, though there were those that despised and hated them, surely the Pharisees and chief priests did. Undissembled piety and charity will command respect; and cheerfulness in serving God will recommend religion to those that are without. Some read it, They had charity to all the people; they did not confine their charity to those of their own community,

\* Doddr. adds, many sojourners would now justly desire to continue at Jerusalem much longer than they had intended, to get a thorough knowledge of the Gospel. See the sensible note of this judicious and pious commentator. Ed.

but it was catholic and extensive; and this recommended them very much. 3. They fell over to them. Some or other daily, though not so many as the first day; and they were such as should be saved. Those that God has designed for eternal salvation, shall one time or other be effectually brought to Christ; and those that are brought to Christ, are added to the church in a holy covenant by baptism, and in holy communion by other ordinances.

CHAP. III. In this ch. we have a miracle, (but one, of the many, 2:43.) and a sermon: the miracle wrought to make way for the sermon, and the sermon to explain the miracle, and to sow the ground which by it was broken up. The former part of the discourse opens the wound, the latter applies the remedy.

V. 1-11. Peter and John, [whose diverse qualities made them the complement of each other, and so helps-meet,] seem to have had a peculiar intimacy after Christ's resurrection more than before, John 20:2. The reason of which, (if I may conjecture,) might be, that John was more compassionate to Peter on his fall and repentance, than any other of the apostles were, and more solicitous to restore him in the spirit of meekness; which made him very dear to Peter ever after: and it was a good evidence of Peter's acceptance with God, on his repentance, that Christ's favorite was made his bosom-friend.

Their miracle was in the temple, whither Peter and John went up together, because it was the place of concourse; and we may suppose it within the compass of the days of the pentecost. However, it was at the hour of prayer, one of the hours of public worship; these, among the Jews, were three, the ninth hour, i. e., 3 o'clock in the afternoon; also at 9 o'clock in the morning, and 12 at noon, other two. See Ps. 55:17. Dan. 6:10. It is of use for private Christians so far to have their hours of prayer as may serve, though not to bind, yet to remind, conscience; every thing is beautiful in its season.

The patient was a poor lame beggar (probably paralytic, v. 7.) at the temple-gate. He would not have been laid daily there, if

measure of the same effects, as this extraordinary communication did. To suppose that, now Christianity is publicly professed among us, and we have no longer need of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, we therefore do not want his sanctifying operations; is as unreasonable, as it would be to argue from the present improved state of agriculture, that the influences of the sun and rain are become unnecessary: and the state of those congregations, where such notions are maintained, too plainly show the real tendency of them. If Peter and Paul should come again on earth to preach the Gospel, and to confirm their doctrine with the most undeniable miracles; no saving effects would follow, except the Holy Spirit were given to render the Word successful. It should also be noticed, as the evident doctrine of the sacred oracles, that when God so remarkably pours out his Spirit, in abundance of spiritual gifts and graces, on numbers of every rank and station, as to effect a great revival of true religion; it may also be expected, that He will remarkably punish those, who persist in neglecting and despising his great salvation. SCOTT.

16:18. 13:17. It occurs frequently in other parts of the N. T., and usually as applied to the followers of Christ. Comp. Acts 5:11. 7:32. 8:1, 3. 9:31. 11:22, 26. 12:1, 5, &c. It is used, in classic writers, to denote an assembly of any kind, and is twice thus used in the N. T. Acts 19:39, 41. where it is tr. assembly. Barnes. Such as should be saved.] 'Sozomenous: rather the saved, those who are being saved, those who are placed in a state of salvation, by having rejected the Jewish superstitions, and embracing the Christian religion. See Matthy on Mat. 1:21. So Mark and, Whitby? Bloomf. Luke speaks, as an historian, of a thing which fell under his view, of a fact relating to the Jews, not to the hidden counsels of God.' WETSTEIN.

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1-11. The events in this ch. and that which follows, seem to have occurred soon after those which have been considered. The apostles and primitive believers generally attended the temple-worship at the hours of prayer; of which the 3d and 9th, or 9 o'clock in the morning and 3 in the afternoon, when the morning and evening sacrifices were offered with burning of incense, were the chief. The two apostles Peter and John seem, however, on this occasion to have gone up to the temple apart from the others; perhaps to seek an opportunity of preaching to the people, as well as to offer their supplications before God. The Beautiful gate of the temple was erected by Herod the Great: it was above 15 yards high, and about 8 yards wide, being formed of Corinthian brass, with the most exquisite workmanship. [50 cubits high, its doors 40 c., adorned more than the other



3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked an alms.

4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us.

5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 And he, leaping up, stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking, and praising God:

10 And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

11 And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

12 ¶ And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?

c c. 4:10. e Jn. 10:23. c. 5: f 2 Co. 3:5.  
d Is. 33:6. 12.

he had not been used to meet with daily supplies there. Our prayers and our alms should go together; Cornelius' did, *ch.* 10: 4. Objects of charity should be in a particular manner welcome to us, when we go up to the temple to pray.

Peter, instead of turning from him, as many do from objects of charity, turned to him, nay, fastened his eyes upon him, *v.* 4. John did so too. The man justly thought this gave him cause to expect he should receive something from them, *v.* 5. But Peter said, Silver and gold have I none. The apostles were very poor, had but just enough for themselves, and no overplus. Peter and John had abundance of money laid at their feet, but that was appropriated to the maintenance of the poor of the church, and they would not convert any of it to their own use, nor dispose of it otherwise than according to the intention of the donors. Public trusts ought to be strictly and faithfully observed.

8, with richer and thicker plates of silver and gold. *Jos.*, in Dr. A. C.] It is supposed to have separated the court of the Gentiles from the inner court. [The text of *Jos.* is by no means clear. Dr. A. C.] The purpose of the apostles to work a miracle in this man's behalf, seems to have arisen from an immediate divine suggestion to their mind. The circumstances attending this miracle need no comment. There is not the least probability in the tradition of the Jews, that this very portico was built by Solomon, and was spared by the Chaldeans, when they burnt the rest of the temple. *Scorr.* 'A portico 400 c. long, built by Solomon, on the E. side of the outer court, was left standing by Herod.' See *Jos.* Ed.

(1) Together.] 'Rather, about that time.' *Grot.*, *Doddr.*, Dr. A. C.' 9th hour.] 'The Jews divided the time between sunrise and sunset into 12 hours.' *Doddr.* Some of the Rabbins make sunrise, noon, and sunset to be the three seasons for prayer: a division natural, beautiful, and exceedingly appropriate, *Ps.* 55:17. Id.

(1) Look on us.] 'Said, to fix his attention to them distinctly, and to the act, and that he might perceive that the healing came from them.' BARNES.

Yet Peter goes far beyond his highest expectations. Those who are poor in the world, may yet be rich, very rich, in spiritual gifts, graces, and comforts; certainly there is that which we are capable of receiving, which is infinitely better than silver and gold; the merchandise and gain of it better, *Job* 28:12, &c. *Prov.* 3:14, &c. The cure of his disease would enable him to work for his living, so that he should not need to beg any more; nay, he would have to give to them that needed, and it is more blessed to give than to receive. Those may be, and ought to be, otherwise charitable and helpful to the poor, who have not wherewithal to give in charity. As every one has received the gift, so let him minister it.

Let us now see how the cure was wrought.

Peter bids him rise up and walk; which would have been a banter, if he had not premised, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. He bids the cripple rise up and walk; which does not prove that he had power in himself to do it, but proves (if he attempt to rise and walk, and, in a sense of his own impotency, depend on a divine power to enable him to do it) that he shall be enabled; and by rising and walking he must evidence, that that power has wrought upon him; and then let him take the comfort, and let God have the praise. Thus it is in the healing of our souls, that are spiritually impotent. If we set ourselves to do what we can, God has promised his grace to enable us to do what we cannot: and by that promise we partake of a new nature; and that grace shall not be in vain; it was not here; his feet and ankle-bones received strength; which they had not done, if he had not attempted to rise, and been helped up; he does his part, and Peter does his, and yet it is Christ that does all.

He leaped up; did not stool up, with fear and trembling, as weak people do when they begin to recover strength; but started up; as one refreshed with sleep, boldly, and with great agility, and as one that questioned not his own strength. He held Peter and John, *v.* 11. We need not ask why. I believe he scarcely knew himself: but it was in a transport of grateful joy; he would have them stay with him, while he published to all about him what God had done for him by them. Those whom God hath healed, love his instruments, and see the need of their further help. He went into the temple, not only to offer up his praises and thanksgivings to God, but to hear more from the apostles of that Jesus in whose name he had been healed. Those that have experienced the power of Christ, should earnestly desire to grow in their acquaintance with Christ. Here was that Scripture fulfilled, *Is.* 35:6. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart. Now that this man was newly cured, he was in this excess of joy and thankfulness. All true converts walk, and praise God; but perhaps young converts leap more in his praises.

See how the people, that were eyewitnesses of this miracle, were influenced by it.

I. They were entirely satisfied in the truth of the miracle, and had nothing to object against it, *v.* 10. They all knew the

man; and for that reason he was chosen to be the vessel of this mercy. Now they were not so perverse as to make any doubt whether he was the same man, as the Pharisees had questioned concerning the blind man that Christ cured, *John* 9:11. They now saw him walking and praising God, *v.* 9. perhaps noticed a change in his mind; for he was now as loud in praising God, as he used to be in begging. The best evidence that it was a complete cure, was, that he praised God for it. Mercies are then perfected, when they are sanctified. 2. They were filled with wonder and amazement, *v.* 10. greatly wondering, *v.* 11. in an ecstasy. There seems to be this effect of the pouring out of the Spirit, that the people, at least those in Jerusalem, were more affected with the miracles the apostles wrought than with those of Christ Himself; and this was in order to the miracles answering their end. 3. They gathered about Peter and John; some, only to gratify their curiosity with the sight of men that had such power; others, with a desire to hear them preach, concluding that their doctrine must needs be of divine original, which thus had a divine ratification. They flocked to them in Solomon's porch, a part of the court of the Gentiles, where Solomon had built the outer porch of the temple. Or, it was some cloisters or piazzas, Herod had erected on the same foundation on which Solomon had built that stately porch [or propylon?] that bore his name. Here the people met, to see this great sight.

V. 12—26. We have here the sermon Peter preached after he had cured the lame man.

I. He humbly disclaims the honor of the miracle, as not due to them, who were only the ministers of Christ, or instruments in his hand. Christ had done such things many a time, and they had not duly regarded it, or been affected with it; why marvel now; and give so much of the praise to them? Why look so earnestly on us? Useful men must see to it, that they be very humble.

II. He preaches Christ to them; that was his business, that he might lead them into obedience to Christ.

I. He preaches Christ, as the true Messiah, promised to the fathers, *v.* 13. for, He is Jesus the Son of God; they had lately condemned Christ as a blasphemer, for saying, He was the Son of God, yet Peter avows it; He is his Son Jesus; to Him, dear as a Son; to us, Jesus a Savior. God hath glorified Him, in raising Him up to be King, Priest, and Prophet, of his church; He hath glorified Him as the God of our fathers, whom he names with respect, for they were great names with the men of Israel, and justly, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. God sent Him into the world, pursuant to the promises to those patriarchs, that in their seed the families of the earth should be blessed, and the covenant with them, that God would be a God to them, and their seed. The apostles call the patriarchs their fathers, and God the God of those patriarchs, from whom the Jews were descended; to intimate to them, that they had no evil design on the

(5) Expecting, &c.] 'For it was a constant custom for all who entered the temple, to carry money with them for the treasury, or poor, or both.' In many parts of the E. no superior is approached without a gift, *comp. Ex.* 23:15. and in 'Catholic' and Oriental countries the doors of houses of worship are still places of alms. *Martial* mentions the custom, too, among the Gentiles. Ed.

V. 12—16. Holiness. (12) 'Here is a plain evidence of the variation of the Roman doctrine from that of the apostles, assisted by the Holy Ghost: for the apostles here plainly disclaim any excellency or piety in them, which might make them worthy to be God's instruments, above any others, in working such miracles; but the catechism of the council of Trent plainly declares, that God confers on us many benefits by the merits of the saints; and *Lorinus*, on the place, declares, that innumerable histories, and the practice of the church, show that the merits of the saints are prevalent for the working of miracles.' *Whitby*. —Through faith, &c.] Some expositors interpret this of the faith which the lame man exercised in the name of Jesus; and the probability that he had heard and seen Christ Himself, as well as the piety which apparently accompanied his gratitude to Peter and John for his



13 The God of Abraham and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.

14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

15 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

16 And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

17 And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.

18 But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

g Mat. 22:32. 1:35. r Lu. 24:44. c. 26:  
h c. 5:30-31. m c. 7:52. 22:14. 22:33.  
i Jn. 17:1. Ep. 1: n or, author. Jn. s c. 2:33.  
20-22. Pa. 2: 1:4. 1 Jn. 5:11. t Is. 1:16-20.  
9:11. He. 2:9. o Mat. 23:2-5. Joel 2:13.  
Re. 1:5, 13. Ep. 1:30. u Is. 43:25.  
j Jn. 19:15. p c. 2:32. v Je. 31:23-25.  
k Mat. 27:17-25. q Lu. 23:34. Jn. Zep. 3:14-20.  
Lu. 23:16-23. 16:3. 1 Co. 2:3. Re. 21:4.  
l Ps. 16:10. Lu.

Jewish nation, but were well-wishers to it; and the Gospel they preached, was the revelation of the mind and will of the God of Abraham. See ch. 26: 7, 22. Luke 1: 72, 73.

2. He charges them flat and plain with the murder of this Jesus, as he had done before, mentioning the circumstances of the ease, and aggravating their guilt, v. 13-15. Particularly, the holiness and justice of the Lord Jesus, which are something more than his innocency, were a great aggravation of the sin. Observe, also, the antithesis: 'You preserved a murderer, a destroyer of life; and destroyed the Savior, the Author of life.'

3. He attests his resurrection as before, ch. 2: 32. and ascribes the cure to the power of Christ, v. 16. He repeats it again, *The faith which is by Him hath given him this soundness*. Here, he appeals to themselves concerning the truth of the miracle; the man was not acquainted with Peter and John before, and they knew him to be a

cure, favors the opinion that he was a believer. Yet it does not appear that he previously expected a cure; and the texts referred to, will, I think, convince the attentive reader, that the faith of the apostles was intended. (Mat. 21:21,22. Mark 11:20-26) [Faith always receives, never gives. Dr. A. C.] This was designed to show, that Jesus was risen; that He was indeed the Messiah, and as such honored by the God of Abraham; and that the apostles were his servants and witnesses.—Every reflecting person must observe the very great difference, which there was in the manner of our Lord's working his miracles, and that of his apostles. His language was that of omnipotence and sovereignty, 'I will, be thou clean;' 'Peace, be still;' 'Damsel, arise.' Nor did He ever, except in the case of Lazarus, which has been considered, even appeal by prayer to his Father, or give the least intimation of any power exerted, except what was inherent in Himself. He never hesitated to receive the greatest honor, which was rendered on these occasions; He never cautioned any man against supposing that He wrought miracles by 'his own power, and to manifest his own glory.' (John 2:6-11, v. 11.) But the apostles wrought their miracles expressly 'in his name,' and by faith in Him: they were afraid of receiving any honor to themselves, except as the undeserving instruments in the hands of Jesus: they referred all the honor to their Lord: and they never mentioned the Father; except to show, that the God of Abraham was fulfilling in 'his Son Jesus,' the promises made to the patriarchs, and was determined to glorify in every way that Person, whom the Jews had treated with contempt and indignity. No satisfactory reason ever was, or ever can be, given of this manifest difference; but by allowing that Jesus knew

cripple from a child. The miracle was wrought publicly, and they had liberty to examine it immediately, and may yet. The cure was complete, perfect soundness. It was done by the name of Christ, not merely by naming it as a spell or charin, but by us as professors and preachers of his name, by virtue of a commission and instructions received from Him, and a power He has invested us with: a power of Christ is fetched in, through faith in his name, a confidence in Him, a dependence on Him, a believing application to Him, and expectation from Him, even that faith which is by Him, which is of his working, not of ourselves, but the gift of Christ, and for his sake, that He may have the glory of it; for He is both the Author and Finisher of our faith. Lightfoot suggests, that faith is twice named in this v., because of the apostles' faith in doing this miracle, and the cripple's faith in receiving it; but I suppose it relates chiefly, if not only, to the former. By this true and just account of the miracle, Peter both confirmed the great gospel-truth they were to preach to the world,—that Jesus Christ is the Fountain of all power and grace, and the great Healer and Savior; and recommended the great gospel-duty of faith in Him, as the only way of benefit by Him. It explains, likewise, the great gospel-mystery of our salvation by Christ; it is his name that justifies us, that glorious name of his, *The Lord, our Righteousness*; but we, in particular, are justified by that name through faith in it, applying it to ourselves. Thus does Peter faithfully preach unto them *Jesus, and Him crucified*.

III. He does all he can to convince them, yet is careful not to drive them to despair. The guilt was very great, but,

1. He mollifies their crime, by a candid imputation of it to their ignorance, and by calling them brethren, v. 17. This was the language of Peter's clarity, and teaches us to make the best of those whom we desire to make better. Perhaps some of the rulers, and people, did therein rebel against the light and convictions of their own consciences, and did it through malice; but the generality went down the stream, and did it through ignorance; as Paul persecuted the church, 1 Tim. 1: 13.

2. He mollifies the effect of their crime,—the death of the Prince of life; this sounds very dreadful, but it was according to the Scriptures, v. 18. whose predictions, though they did not necessitate their sin, yet did necessitate his sufferings; so He Himself saith, *Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer. You did it through ignorance, may be taken in this sense, 'You fulfilled the Scripture, and did not know it. God was fulfilling the Scripture, when you were gratifying your own passions.'* It was not only determined in the secret counsel of God, but declared to the world many ages

before, by the mouth and pen of the prophets, that Christ should suffer, in order to the accomplishment of his undertaking; and it was God Himself that showed it by them, who will see that his words be made good. Now, though this is no extenuation at all of their sin, in hating and persecuting Christ to the death, yet it was an encouragement to them to repent, and hope for mercy on their repentance; not only because in general God's gracious designs were carried on by it, but because in particular the death and sufferings of Christ were for the remission of sins, and the ground of that display of mercy which he now encouraged them to hope for.

IV. To apply his sermon, he exhorts them all to turn Christians, and assures them it would be unspeakably for their advantage for ever.

1. They must believe. (1.) That Jesus Christ is the promised Seed, that Seed of Abraham according to the flesh, in which, God had told Abraham, *all the kindreds of the earth should be blessed*, v. 25. Gen. 12: 3. and not the families of Israel only; all have some benefits by Him, and some have all benefits. (2.) That Jesus Christ is a Prophet, that Prophet like unto Moses, which God had promised to raise up to them from among their brethren, v. 22. This refers to Deut. 18. Christ is a Prophet; in Him all divine revelation centres; He is a Prophet, like unto Moses, a Favorite of Heaven, more intimately acquainted with the divine counsel, and more familiarly conversed with, than any other prophets. He was a Deliverer of his people, and their Guide, a Prince and a Lawgiver, the Builder of the true tabernacle, as Moses was of the typical one. [Christ, like Moses, was the introducer of a new dispensation.] Moses was murmured against by Israel, defied by Pharaoh, yet God owned him, and ratified his commission. Moses was a pattern of meekness and patience, so is Christ. Moses died by the Word of the Lord, so did Christ. *There was no prophet like unto Moses*, Num. 12: 6, 7. Deut. 34: 10. but a greater than Moses is here where Christ is. He is a Prophet of God's raising up; He took not this honor of Himself, but was called of God to it. He was raised up unto Israel in the first place; He executed this office in his own person, among them only; they had the first offer of divine grace; therefore, He was raised up from among them; of them, as concerning the flesh, Christ came; which, as it was a great honor done to them, so it was both an obligation on them, and an encouragement to them, to embrace Him. The O. T. church was blessed with many prophets, a constant succession of prophets for many ages, which is here noticed, v. 24. but those servants being abused, last of all God sent them his Son who had been in his bosom. (3.) *That times of refreshing will come from the presence*

Himself to be 'One with the Father' and co-equal to Him; and that the apostles were conscious, that they were weak and sinful men, who depended on Jesus alone for every thing.—His name, &c.] His power accompanying the use of 'his name,' with 'faith in his name,' even 'the faith that is by Him,' effected the cure. SCOTT.

(16.) 'And it is by faith in his name that He hath strengthened this poor man, whom you see here before you, and know to have been unable from his birth to walk: [Tea.] I repeat it, it is his name, and the faith which is centred in Him, and which derives its efficacy from his power, that has given,' &c. Doddr., adopting the pointing of Heinsius. Ed.

V. 17. *Wot.*] 'From the Anglo-Saxon *witan*, to know.' Dr. A. C. V. 19-21. The words [*The times of refreshing, &c.*] may be rendered, perhaps more clearly, 'That seasons of refreshment may come [so Tertullian, Heinsius, Lightf., De Dien, Raphaelius, Doddr., Dr. A. C., &c.] from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Jesus Christ, who hath been before preached unto you, &c.'—'Divine refreshment would no doubt immediately mingle itself with the sense of pardon, and eternal happiness would at length certainly succeed. But the following elapse seems to intimate, that Peter apprehended, that the conversion of the Jews as a people, would be attended with some extraordinary scene of prosperity and joy, and open a speedy way to Christ's descent from heaven, in order to "the restitution of all things." Vitrina agrees in this interpretation.' Doddr. The prophets in general predicted, not only glorious times to the church, under the reign of the Messiah, but to the nation of Israel when converted to Him. (Marg. Ref. y.) That



20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you :

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me ; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

w c. 1:11. He. 9: x Mat. 17:11. z De. 18:15-19.  
28. y Lu. 1:70.

of the Lord, v. 19. and that they will be the times of the restitution of all things, v. 21. There is a future state, another life after this; those times will come from the presence of the Lord, from his glorious appearance at that day, his coming at the end of time. The absence of the Lord occasions many of the securities of sinners, and the distrusts of saints; but his presence is hastening on, which will for ever silence both. Some understand this of a state on this side the end of time; but it is rather to be understood of that end of all things, which God hath spoken of by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began; for this is that which Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of, Jude 14. and the temporal judgments, which the other prophets foretold, were typical of that which the apostle calls the eternal judgment. This is more clearly and plainly revealed in the N. T. than it had been before, and all that receive the Gospel have an expectation of it. With this will come the

nation had long been harassed and oppressed in various ways, and was at the time, when Peter spoke, under the Roman yoke, which was extremely galling; and the wickedness of the rulers and people, in crucifying the Messiah, might seem to have filled up the measure of their national guilt, and ripened them for destruction. But as Jesus, after his resurrection, had directed his apostles to 'preach repentance and remission of sins in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem;' Luke 24:44-49, v. 47.) and as the success of their first attempt had been so signal, and they had hitherto met with no opposition; it is probable, they expected that Christ would soon 'restore the kingdom to Israel,' having first brought the nation in general to repent and believe in Him; (1:4-8.) and would afterwards, by their means, bring the other nations to embrace the religion of Israel, and so, as proselytes, to seek admission into the kingdom of the Messiah. Then, perhaps, they expected that Jesus would return again from heaven, set up a triumphant kingdom on earth; and, destroying all obstinate enemies, would introduce those glorious days, which all the prophets had foretold.—It is undeniable, that the apostles, for a considerable time after the day of Pentecost, did not clearly understand many things, relating to the calling of the Gentiles, the rejection of the Jews, and the fulfilment of the prophecies. (2:14-21, 10:9-16, 44-48, 11:1-18, 15:1-21, Mat. 24:3.) Their minds were enlightened, and their prejudices dissipated; rapidly indeed, yet gradually, and as their present circumstances and duties required. Thus the ancient prophets were inspired to foretel as much, as it was proper should at the time be known; yet they did not immediately, or certainly, know the meaning of their own predictions; (1 Pet. 1:10-12.) and the apostles and primitive Christians after the event understood them far more clearly, than the prophets themselves had done. In like manner, after the conversion of Cornelius, and the council at Jerusalem, Christians in general would understand Peter's words, concerning the 'pouring out of the Spirit on all flesh,' more distinctly than he did when he uttered them; and after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the abolishing of the Mosaic dispensation, the surviving Christians would more exactly perceive the meaning of the words before us, than Peter himself did at the time. Our Lord had told the apostles: 'It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father had put in his own power,' (1:7.) and there is ground to believe, that this, in many respects, was not clearly revealed to them, but left to be discovered by the event. (2:14-21.) Had the nation of Israel, as a body, embraced the Gospel, 'the times of refreshment would have come from the presence of the Lord;' and when the nation shall thus turn to their long rejected Messiah, those times will come. But the prophets who foretold these events, predicted also a national rejection of the Messiah, and dreadful desolations to the people, with long-continued dispersions. It was not, however, necessary, that the Holy Spirit should, on this occasion, make known 'the times and seasons' of these dispensations; and, without such an immediate revelation, the apostle might expect that these happy times for his nation were at hand. Even to the end of the N. T., such an obscurity is left on these subjects, that diverse opinions still prevail, in respect of the reign of Christ during the millennium, whether it is to be personal or spiritual; (Rev. 20:4-6.) and his

times of refreshing, v. 19. of consolation to the Lord's people, like a cool shade to those that have borne the burden and heat of the day. All Christians look for a rest that remains for the people of God, after the toils of their present state, and, with the prospect of that, they are borne up under their present sufferings, and carried on in their present services.

2. He tells them they must, (1.) Repent, bethink themselves of what they have done amiss, return to their right mind, admit a second thought, and submit to the convictions of it; they must begin anew. (2.) Be converted, face about, return to the Lord their God, from whom they had revolted. It is not enough to repent of sin, but we must be converted from it, and not return to it again. They must not only exchange the profession of Judaism for that of Christianity, but the power and dominion of a carnal, worldly, sensual mind, for that of holy, heavenly, and divine principles and affections. (3.) Hear Christ, the great Prophet; attend his dictates, receive his doctrine, submit to his government. Hear Him with a divine faith, as prophets should be heard, that come with a divine commission: in all things; 'let his laws govern all your actions, and his counsels determine all your submissions.'

A good reason is here given, why we should be observant of, and obedient to, the Word of Christ; for it is at our peril if we turn a deaf ear to his call, and a stiff neck to his yoke, v. 23. The destruction of the city and nation, by war and famine, was threatened for slighting the prophets of the O. T.; but the destruction of the soul, a spiritual and eternal destruction, is threatened for slighting Christ, this great Prophet.

3. He tells them what they might expect. (1.) Pardon of their sins; this is always spoken of as the great privilege of all those that embrace the Gospel, v. 19. This intimates, that when God forgives sin, He remembers it no more against the sinner; it is forgotten, as that which is blotted out; all

the bitter things written against the sinner, Job 13:26. are wiped out, as it were with a sponge; it is the cancelling of a bond, the vacating of a judgment; but if no repentance, no remission. The most comfortable fruit of the forgiveness of our sins will be when the times of refreshing shall come; the comfort will be complete, when the pardon shall be allowed in open court, and our justification published before angels and men; when, whom He justified, them He glorifies, Rom. 3:30. During these times of toil and conflict, we cannot have that full satisfaction of our pardon, and in it, that we shall have when the refreshing times come, which shall wipe away all tears. (2.) The comfort of Christ's coming, v. 20, 21. 'He shall send Jesus Christ, the same Jesus, the very same which before was preached unto you; for you must not expect another dispensation, another Gospel, but the continuance and completion of this; some way or other Jesus shall be seen to you.' It is agreeable to a state of trial and probation, that the glorified Redeemer should be out of sight, because we must live by that faith in Him, which is the evidence of things not seen: because He must be believed on in the world, He must be received up into glory. Hammond reads it, Who must receive the heavens, that is, who must receive the glory and power of the upper world; He must reign till all be made subject to Him, 1 Cor. 15:25. Ps. 75:2. Yet it is promised, that He shall be sent to all that repent, and are converted, v. 20. 'He shall send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you, both before and since his resurrection, and you shall have his spiritual presence, the comfort of his being sent. He shall send Him to destroy Jerusalem, and the nation of unbelieving Jews, and to deliver his ministers and people from them, and that shall be a time of refreshing, which you shall share in.' Then had the churches rest; so Hammond. He shall send Him to judge the world, at the end of time, and then you shall lift up your heads with joy, knowing

coming to set up his kingdom all over the earth, has been very generally, even by diligent expositors and other learned writers, confounded with his coming to judge the world: and in various other particulars this obscurity and inaccuracy is found. Now, that which was to be obscurely foretold, a prophet or apostle might but obscurely foresee: and the historian merely records the apostle's discourse.

SCOTT.

(19.) Repent, be converted.] 'Metanoēsate indicates a change of mind and purpose; epistrepesate, a change of conduct.' Blotted out.] The ancients marked on wax tablets, [with a metal pointed at one end and flat at the other], and erased by closing up the marks with the flat part; this is the proper meaning of the Gr., here. The metaphor is in Is. 43:23. 2 Mac. 43:23. is from creditors crossing out their debtors' accounts when discharged, Col. 2, &c. It is an image frequent in the Rabbins; so Valck., Kuin. But the primary sense is to wipe off, for as *ateiphō*, means to besmear with oil, *ewateiphō* means the contrary, to wipe off the oil. &c. There is the same metaphor in the Latin *delere* and Heb. *mehh*. Bloomf. Dr. A. C. thinks the phrase may refer to Num. 5:23. Most of the ink used in the E. is made without a mordant, and so is wiped off the pasteboard, parchment, board, leaf, or ivory, with a sponge. See Horne, and note, end of Ez. The climate of Judea is said to be too hot for the use of wax. Ed. Refreshing.] 'Anapsyche; properly, cooling after being heated; metaphorically, refreshment, rest, and this, to an Oriental, [who, as a traveller remarks, thinks it very strange one should move when he can remain still,] is an image of felicity, and is perpetually so used in the SS. The days of the Messiah, then, from the presence, i. e., caused by the will, direction, of God, are meant here.' Bloomf.

(20.) Preached.] 'Rather designed, appointed; so the 2 Syr., all the Arab., the Arm., Chrysost., and 54 MSS.' Dr. A. C. 'So Hammond, Mill, Valck., Vittr., and most commentators, Beng., Griesb., Matthæi., &c.' Bloomf.

Ed.

(21.) Restitution, &c.] 'I. e., the reign of grace; individual, as restoring each soul to God's image, and universal, as the Scriptures seem to intimate it will one day be. All his prophets.] Several Gr. MSS. with a Syr., the Copt., Æth., Arm., and Vulg., read simply, the prophets, and Griesbach, omits "all." Dr. A. C. All.] See Pref. to Proph. Books, pp. 309, 310. Vol. III., and Hengstenberg's 'Christology.' Ed. Heaven.] 'They thought Messiah was to reign perpetually on earth.' Bloomf.

V. 22, 23. (7:37-43.)—'One cannot imagine a more masterly address than this; to warn the Jews of the dreadful consequence of their infidelity, in the very words of Moses, their favorite prophet; out of a pretended zeal for whom they were ready to reject Christianity, and to attempt its destruction.' Doddr. (John 5:45-47.) The general meaning of the passage is here compendiously given; but it is not a quotation, properly speaking, either from the Sept., or the Heb.; between which there is no material difference.

SCOTT.

(22.) Peter evidently gives them to understand, that Christ was a legislator, giving a new law, the Gospel, to supersede the old.' Dr. A. C. No Rabbins, it is said, refers Moses' prophecy to the Messiah, and Kuin., Ros., Dathe, &c., would prove that Moses did not mean it of Him, but the Ed., with Schoettgen, &c., &c., prefers Peter's opinion, here unequivocally expressed. See Hengstenberg

En.



24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

26 Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

#### CHAP. IV.

<sup>1</sup> The rulers of the Jews, offended with Peter's sermon, 4 (though thousands of the people were converted that heard the Word,) imprison him and John. <sup>5</sup> After, upon examination, Peter boldly avouching the lame man to be healed by the name of Jesus, and that by the same Jesus only we must be eternally saved, <sup>13</sup> they command him and John to preach no more in that name, adding also threatening, <sup>23</sup> whereupon the church fleeth to prayer. <sup>31</sup> And God, by moving the place where they were assembled, testified that He heard their prayer: confirming the church with the gift of the Holy Ghost, and with mutual love and charity.

AND as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,

2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now even-tide.

a Ro. 9:4. 15:8. d Is. 59:20. Mat. a or, ruler.  
b Ge. 22:18. 1:21. Tit. 2:11 b Mat. 22:23.  
c Mat. 10:5. Lu. —14. c. 23:8.  
24:47.

that your redemption draws nigh. It seems to refer to this, for till then the heavens must receive Him, v. 21. As God's counsels from eternity, so his predictions from the beginning of time, had a reference to the transactions of the last day, when the mystery of God shall be finished, as He had declared to his servants the prophets, Rev. 10:7.

4. He tells them what ground they had to expect these things, if they were converted

PRACT. OBS. 'Happy are those whose souls are so formed for devotion, that the proper returning seasons of it, whether public or private, are always welcome! Doubly delightful that friendship, which, like this of Peter and John, is endeared, not only by taking sweet counsel together, but by going to the house of God in company.' Ps. 55:14. DODDR.

The stated seasons of communion with God, and opportunities of doing good, will be welcomed with alacrity, proportioned to the degree in which we are 'spiritually minded;' for the carnal mind alone complains of the tediousness and too frequent returns of these sacred services; as sickly persons even loathe the sight of the food, which the healthy relish and enjoy. Poverty and simplicity, and contempt of filthy lucre, in the ministers of Christ, are far better proofs of integrity, than affluence, splendor, and luxury: and, while the Lord employs others as his stewards, in dispensing wealth to relieve the necessities of their brethren; it should not grieve the 'steward of the mysteries of God,' if he be constrained to say to the expecting poor, 'Silver and gold I have none, but such as I have I give unto thee.' If we would attempt to good purpose the healing of men's souls, we must go forth in the name and power of Jesus Christ; calling on helpless sinners to arise, and walk in the way of holiness, by faith in Him. SCOTT.

'Happy the minister whose heart is thus intent upon all opportunities of doing good, as these holy apostles were! Happy that faithful servant, who, like them, arrogates nothing to himself, but centers the praise of

V. 24—26. It is not necessary to prove, that predictions concerning Christ are found in the writings of every one of the prophets, for the words imply a general, not a universal, proposition: yet Jonah and Nahum alone appear to be exceptions; for Obdiah certainly is not. The book of Jonah is a history, not a prophecy; and he was a remarkable type of Christ. That of Nahum, is 'the burden of Nineveh,' and relates expressly as a prophecy to no other subject. This ch. furnishes additional and very striking views of the admirable spirit, which actuated and fully possessed the apostles, after the day of Pentecost. Behold their moderation and their piety, still gladly taking part in the Jewish worship (1); their simplicity, perfectly willing to be and to pass for poor men (6); their tenderness to the afflicted; (6, 7.) their indifference to themselves, and zeal for their Divine Master; (12, 13, &c.) their boldness; (13—15.) yet, withal, their candor (17); and their affectionate compassion for souls. (19, 25, 26.)—What do we want, as Christians or as ministers, but to be formed to such blessed tempers as these, thus happily blended together? And by what means were the apostles formed to them, but by the influence of that same Spirit, who is so firmly promised, and even urgently offered, to 'every one' that asks his [18]

to Christ. They, as Israelites, were, above any other, God's favorite nation, and the favors God bestowed on them were such as had a reference to the Messiah, and his kingdom; Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant. A double privilege! They were the children, that is, the disciples, of the prophets, as children at school; of that people, from among whom the prophets were raised up, and to whom all prophets were sent, Amos, 2: 11. All the inspired writers, both of the Old and N. T. were of the seed of Abraham; and to them were committed the oracles of God, Rom. 3: 2. Their government was constituted by prophecy, i. e. by divine revelation; and by it their affairs were for many ages very much managed, Hos. 12: 13. Those of the latter ages of the church, when prophecy had ceased, might yet be fitly called the children of the prophets, because they heard, though they did not know, the voices of the prophets, which were read in their synagogues every sabbath-day, Acts 13: 27. Now this should quicken them to embrace Christ, and they might hope to be accepted of Him; for their own prophets had foretold, that this grace should be brought unto them at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 1: 13. and therefore ought not to be neglected by them, nor should be denied to them. We may apply it particularly to ministers' children, who, if they plead that effectually with themselves, as an inducement to be faithful and forward in religion, may comfortably plead it with God, and hope that the children of God's servants shall continue. They were the children, i. e. the heirs, of the covenant which God made with our fathers, as children in the family. All the kindreds of the earth were blessed in having a church for Christ among them; and those that were the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh, stood fairest for this privilege. They had the first offer of the grace of the N. T. an encouragement to hope, that, if they did repent, and were converted, He should be yet further sent for their comfort, v. 20. He shall send Jesus Christ, for to you first He hath sent Him, v. 26. The personal ministry of Christ, as that of the prophets, was confined to the Jews; He was not then sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and He forbade the disciples He then sent forth, to

go any further. After his resurrection, He was to be preached indeed to all nations, but they must begin at Jerusalem, Luke 24: 47. And when they went to other nations, they first preached to the Jews they found therein. 'Therefore, do your part; repent, and be converted, because Christ is ready to do his, in turning you from your iniquities, and so blessing you.'

CHAP. IV. V. 1—4. Surely the Scribes and Pharisees, and chief priests, were so confounded at first with the pouring out of the Spirit, that they were for a time struck dumb! But their forces rally again, and here we have an encounter between them and the apostles; for from the beginning the Gospel met with opposition. Let Christ's servants be ever so resolute, Satan's agents will be spiteful; and therefore, let Satan's agents be ever so spiteful, Christ's servants ought to be resolute.

I. Peter and John went on in their work, and not in vain. They spake to all within hearing, v. 1. What they said, concerned all, and they spake it openly and publicly. This doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, was verified in Jesus; this they proved, they preached it as their warrant for what they did. It is secured also by Christ to all believers. The resurrection of the dead includes all the happiness of the future state; this they preached through Jesus Christ, attainable through Him, Phil. 3: 10, 11. and Him only. They meddled not with matters of state, but preached to people heaven as their end, and Christ as their Way. See ch. 17: 18.

The hearers cheerfully received it, v. 4. not all, perhaps not the most, yet many, to the number of about 5000, over and above 3000 we read of before. Though the preachers were persecuted, the Word prevailed; for sometimes the church's suffering days have been her growing days; the days of her infancy were so.

II. The chief priests and their party, (always sworn enemies to Christ and his Gospel, as jealous for their priesthood as Cæsar for his monarchy,) now made head against them, and did what they could to crush them; but their hearts were not changed. The captain of the temple, is sup-

all in Him who is the great Source from whom every good and perfect gift proceeds! Happy the man who is himself willing to be forgotten and overlooked, that God may be remembered and owned!

'May ["this Jesus of Nazareth"] strengthen the feeble power of fallen nature, while we are attempting to raise men up; and may spiritual health and vigor, when restored, be improved in God's service and thankful acknowledgments.—We are not to wonder, that, as the name of Jesus, their great Deliverer, is incomparably precious to all that truly believe, such have also some peculiarly tender friendships for the persons by whose means He has wrought this good work upon them. May many such friendships be formed now, and be perfected in glory!' DODDR.

Let not sinners imagine, that religion calls them to be uneasy and unhappy; but rather that it kindly offers to guide them to true felicity. Let none suppose that they can be happy, by continuing in sin; when God declares, that the blessing consists in being 'turned from their iniquities.' Let none think that they understand and believe the Gospel, who seek deliverance only from the punishment of sin, but do not expect happiness by salvation from sin itself; and let none expect to be turned effectually from their constitutional or customary iniquities, except by believing in Christ the Son of God, being 'found in Him,' 'who of God is made to' all believers, 'Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.' SCOTT.

presence?—This also repels the suspicion of enthusiasm. Where is the wnywardness or self-sufficiency of an enthusiast? On the contrary, moderation, candor, and modesty, are united with most decided courage, and most fervent zeal, in the conduct of the apostles. SCOTT.

(24.) 'The Jews called prophets and teachers fathers.' BLOOM.

(25.) 'You have peculiar obligations to regard and improve these our declarations, as you are the children, &c.' DODDRIDGE.

(26.) 'To bless, &c.' 'Blessing you, in each one turning away from his wickedness.' Each, who did this at that time, or does it at any time, is blessed by Christ; but none else. This seems the purport of the words. SCOTT. 'The Covenant salvation is from sin, not from the Romans.' Dr. A. CLARKE.

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1. Captain.] The prefect of those priests and Levites who kept guard in the temple. It was his duty to see there was no tumult in it. Mt. 26:47. Luke 22:4. So Deyling, Schleus., Campb., Kuin., Scott, &c. Ed.

V. 3. Eventide.] 'Hespera: afternoon, it is used like the Heb. areb of all the afternoon hours. The Hebrews had two Hesperai, the first [about] three, the last about six o'clock.' KUIN.



4 Howbeit, many ° of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

5 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes,

6 And Annas <sup>d</sup> the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By <sup>e</sup> what power, or by what name, have ye done this ?

8 Then Peter, filled <sup>f</sup> with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,

9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole ;

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that <sup>g</sup> by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

c c. 28:24. e Mat. 21:23. g c. 3,6,16.  
d Jn. 18:13. f c. 7:55.

posed to be a Roman officer, governor of the garrison placed in the tower of Antonia, for the guard of the temple: so that still here were both Jews and Gentiles confederate against Christ. The Sadducees also were zealous against them, who denied the being of spirits, and the future state. 'One would wonder (saith Mr. Baxter) what should make such brutists, as the Sadducees were, such furious silencers and persecutors. If there is no life to come, what harm can other men's hopes of it do them? But in depraved souls all faculties are vitiated. A blind mind has a malignant heart and a cruel hand, to this day.'

It grieved these, both that the gospel-doctrine was preached, and so publicly, so boldly, and that the people were so ready to hear it: for they thought, when they had put Christ to such an ignominious death, his disciples would ever after be ashamed and afraid to own Him, and the people would have invincible prejudices against his doctrine, Ps. 112:10. It grieved them that the apostles preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. The Sadducees opposed that doctrine, and could not bear to hear of a future state, to hear it so well attested. The chief priests, though they professed to believe the resurrection of the dead against

the Sadducees, yet they would rather give up that important article than have it preached and proved to be through Jesus.

They, i. e. their servants and officers, laid hands on them, and put them in hold, committed them to the custody of the proper officer until the next day; they could not examine them now, for it was even-tide, and yet would defer it no longer than till next day. See how God trains up his servants for sufferings by degrees, and by less trials prepares them for greater; now they resist unto bonds only, but afterwards to blood.

V. 5—14. We have here the trial of Peter and John. Preaching Jesus Christ, and working a miracle in his name, this is charged upon them as a crime.

I. Here is the court set; an extraordinary court, it should seem, called on purpose on this occasion. The judges were the rulers, elders, and Scribes, v. 5. The Scribes were men of learning, who came to dispute, and hoped to confound them. The rulers and elders were men in power, who, if they could not answer, thought they could silence them. The names of some of the most considerable; Annas, president of the Sanhedrim, and Caiaphas, the high priest, (though Annas is here called so,) and father of the house of judgment. It should seem, that Annas and Caiaphas executed the high priest's office alternately, year for year; they two were most active against Christ; then Caiaphas was high priest, now Annas was. John is supposed to be the son of Annas; and Alexander is mentioned by Josephus, as a man that made a figure at that time. There were others likewise that were of the kindred of the high priest, who, having dependence on him, and expectations from him, would be sure to say as he said, and vote with him against the apostles. Great relations, and not good, have been a snare to many.

II. The prisoners are arraigned, v. 7.

1. They are brought to the bar; set in the midst, for the Sanhedrim sat in a circle, and they who had anything to do in the court, stood or sat in the midst of them, Luke 2:46. so Lightfoot. Thus the Scripture was fulfilled, Ps. 22:16. Ps. 118:12. They were seated on every side.

2. The question they asked them, was the same they had asked their Master, Mat. 21:23. 'Who commissioned you to preach such a doctrine as this, and empowered you to work such a miracle as this? You have no warrant or license from us, and therefore are accountable to us whence you have your warrant.' Some think this question was grounded on a fond conceit, that the very naming of some names might do wonders, as ch. 19:13. The Jewish exorcists used the name of Jesus. Now they would know what name they used in their cure; they knew very well, v. 2. yet they ask them, to tease them, and try if they could get anything out of them that looked criminal.

III. Their plea, not so much to clear and

secure themselves, as to advance the name and honor of their Master. The apostles, with a holy negligence of their own preservation, set themselves to preach Christ, as He had directed them to do in such a case, and then Christ made good to them his promise, that the Holy Ghost should give them in that same hour what they should speak. Christ's faithful advocates shall never want instructions, Mark 13:11. The plea is a solemn declaration,

I. That what they did was in the name of Jesus Christ, which was a direct answer to the question the court asked them, v. 9, 10. 'Now if we be reckoned with for this good deed, we have no reason to be ashamed, 1 Pet. 2:29. ch. 4:14, 16. Let them be ashamed, who bring us into trouble for it.' He transfers all the praise and glory of that good deed to Jesus Christ. He charges it on the judges themselves, that they had been the murderers of this Jesus. Peter will miss no occasion to convince them of sin. He attests the resurrection of Christ as the strongest testimony for Him, and against his persecutors. He tells them, that God raised Him from the dead, and they could not for shame answer him with that foolish suggestion, that they palmed on the people, that his disciples came by night and stole Him away. He commands all manner of persons, from the highest to the lowest, to notice it at their peril; 'Be it known to you all, all here present, all the people of Israel, wherever dispersed; as the Lord God of gods knows, so Israel shall know, all Israel, that wonders are wrought in the name of Jesus, not by repeating it as a charm, but believing in it as a divine revelation of grace and goodwill to men.'

2. That the name of this Jesus, by the authority of which they acted, is that name alone by which men can be saved. He passes from this particular instance to show, that it is not a particular sect, a party, that is designed to be set up by the doctrine they preached, and the miracle they wrought, as the sects of the philosophers, and those among the Jews; but it is a sacred and divine institution that is hereby ratified and confirmed, and which all people are highly concerned to submit to, and come into the measures of. It is not an indifferent thing, but of an absolute necessity, that people believe in this name, and call upon it; we are obliged to it, in duty to God, and in compliance with his designs, v. 11. Probably, Peter chose to use this quotation, because Christ had Himself used it in answer to the demand of the chief priests and the elders concerning his authority, not long before, Mat. 21:42. Scripture is a tried weapon in our spiritual conflicts; let us therefore stick to it. We are undone if we do not take shelter in this name; for we cannot be saved but by Jesus Christ, and if we be not eternally saved, we are eternally undone, v. 12. Neither is there salvation in any other. There is no other religion in the world, no,

V. 4. Some think, that 5000 were converted on this occasion; but it rather seems, that this number was then completed; for it is not likely, that any one day should be honored with greater success, than that on which the Holy Spirit first descended: nor do the words convey that idea to the mind, but rather that 'the number became about 5000;' yet they imply, that the women and children were not included. SCOTT.—'But *andron* [tr. men] may mean either *virorum*, or *hominum*.' Bloomf., who, with *Camerarius*, *Pisc.*, *Doddr.*, *Ros.*, and *Kuin.*, includes the 5000.

V. 5—12. Caiaphas seems to have performed the ordinary functions of the high priesthood, and Annas to have had the greater influence and authority in the council. [It seems most probable, that Annas was the vicar or deputy of Caiaphas the high priest, and was also, by courtesy, styled high priest.] Bloomf. 'The kindred of the high priest,' must have been different persons from the heads of the 24 courses; as many of these were no more his kindred, than all the other priests were; i. e. they were descended from Aaron, either by Eleazar, or Ithamar.—Some learned men have labored to prove, that *healing*, or the cure of bodily disorders, is meant in the concluding v.; and not eternal salvation; because the same original word in some instances signifies *healing*. In fact, it denotes *deliverance*, whether from disease, slavery, death, or damnation; and the context must fix the meaning. But in this place, the miracle of the man who had been healed, was merely adduced as a proof that Jesus was risen from the dead, and was consequently the

Messiah, the Son of God, and the only Savior for sinners. The apostles, the rulers, and audience, did not want miraculous cures of bodily diseases; but they all needed a Savior and salvation: the name of Jesus is given to men of every age and nation, as that by which alone believers are saved from the wrath to come, and 'with an everlasting salvation;' not from bodily sickness and temporal death. [See, too, *Doddr.*] Indeed, every reader must perceive, what energy there was in the address to the consciences of these persecutors, according to the obvious interpretation of it; and how this vain criticism enervates it, and causes all its spirit and vigor to evaporate.—The insertion of *you*, in quoting the prophecy (11) was very pointed. It was saying to each of them, 'Thou art the man.'—(11) *This is the stone*, &c.] Nearly from the Sept., which agrees with the Heb. Ps. 118:22.

SCOTT.—(6.) 'John might be (as *Lightf.* thinks) the celebrated Rabbi, Joehanan Ben Zaccai, of the Talmud, a scholar of Hillel.' *Doddr.* 'Alexander is thought by *Pearson*, *Krebs*, *Doddr.*, and *Mangey*, to have been brother to the celebrated Philo Judæus, frequently mentioned by *Jos.*' Bloomf. *Kindred*, &c.] 'Luke mentions this to show how powerful were their enemies.' *Ros.*, *Kuin.*

(7.) *Name*, &c.] 'The Jewish exorcists then cast out devils, and healed dangerous disorders, not merely by the use of medicines, but by employing various formulas of incantation, as, for instance, the name of Solomon, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, or God.' KUIN. (10.) *Stand here*.] 'They had, it seems, sent for the man.' IN.



11 This is the stone <sup>b</sup> which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

12 Neither is their salvation in any other: for <sup>i</sup> there is none other <sup>j</sup> name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

13 ¶ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were <sup>k</sup> unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing <sup>l</sup> against it.

15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves,

16 Saying, <sup>m</sup> What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them <sup>n</sup> is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny <sup>o</sup> it.

17 But that it spread no farther among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that <sup>p</sup> they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to <sup>q</sup> hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

20 For <sup>r</sup> we cannot but speak the things which <sup>s</sup> we have seen and heard.

21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because <sup>t</sup> of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done.

h Ps. 118:22. Is. 28:16. Mat. 21:42. i c. 10:43. 1 Ti. 2:5, 6. j Ps. 45:17. k Mat. 11:25. 1 Co. 1:27. l c. 19:35. m Jn. 11:47. n c. 5:40. o c. 5:29. p Je. 20:9. q c. 22:15. 1 Jn. 1:1, 3. r Mat. 21:26. c. 5:26.

not that delivered by Moses, by which salvation can be had for those that do not now come into this, at the preaching of it. So Dr. Hammond. Observe here, Our salvation is our chief concern, and that is not in ourselves, nor can be obtained by any merit or strength of our own; we can destroy ourselves, but we cannot save ourselves. How far those who have not the knowledge of Christ, nor any actual faith in Him, yet live up to the light they have, may find favor with God, it is not our business to determine. But this we know, that, whatever saving favor such may receive, it is on the account of Christ, and for his sake only; so that still *there is no salvation in any other.*

*I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me. Is. 45:4.*

IV. The stand the court was put to, v. 13, 14. Now was fulfilled that promise Christ made, that He would give them a *mouth and wisdom*, such as *all their adversaries should not be able to gainsay or resist.*

1. They could not deny the cure of the lame man to be both a *good deed* and a *miracle*; he was there, standing with Peter and John, ready to attest the cure, if there was occasion, and they had *nothing to say against it*, v. 14. either to disprove or disparage it.

2. They could not, with all their pomp and power, face down Peter and John; this was a miracle not inferior to the cure of the lame man, considering both what cruel, bloody enemies these priests had been to the name of Christ, and considering what cowardly, faint-hearted advocates those disciples had lately been for Him, Peter particularly; yet now they see *the boldness of Peter and John*, v. 13. Probably, there was something extraordinary and very surprising in their looks, something majestic in their foreheads, sparkling in their eyes, and commanding, if not terrifying, in their voice. They *set their faces like a flint*, as the prophet, Is. 50:7. Ez. 3:8. The courage of Christ's faithful confessors has often been the confusion of their cruel persecutors. Now,

(1.) We are here told what increased their wonder; They *perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men*: they inquired either of themselves or others, and found that they were of mean extraction, born in Galilee, bred fishermen, and not at the feet of any of the Rabbins, nay, perhaps, talk to them on any point in natural philosophy, mathematics, or politics, and you will find they know nothing of the matter; and yet speak to them of the Messiah and his kingdom, and they speak with so much clearness, evidence, and assurance, so pertinently, and so fluently, and are so ready in the Scriptures of the O. T. relating to it, that the most learned judge on the bench is not able to answer them, or to enter the lists with them. They were *ignorant men*,—*private men*, (so, perhaps, the Gr.) that had not any public character or employment; therefore they wondered they should have such high pretensions.

(2.) We are told what made their wonder in a great measure to cease; they *took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus*; they themselves had seen them with Him in the temple, and now recollected it, or some informed them of it. And now they knew what to impute their boldness to; nay, their boldness in divine things was enough to show with whom they had had their education. Those that *have been with Jesus*, in converse and communion, have been attending on his Word, praying in his name, and celebrating the memorials of his death and resurrection, should conduct themselves, in every thing, so that those who converse with them may *take knowledge of them, that they have been with Jesus*. And that makes them so holy, and heavenly, and spiritual, and cheerful; that has raised them so much above this world, and filled them with another. One may know that they have been in the mount, by the shining of their faces.

V. 15—22. We have here the issue of the trial.

I. The consultation and resolution of the court, and their proceeding thereupon.

1. The prisoners were ordered to withdraw, v. 15. the court were willing enough to get clear of them, and not willing they should hear the acknowledgments extorted from them.

2. A debate arose; they *conferred among themselves*. The question was, *What shall we do to these men*, v. 16. When men will not be persuaded to do what they should do, no marvel they are ever and anon at a loss what to do. The truths of Christ, if men would but entertain them as they should, would give them no manner of trouble or uneasiness; but if they *hold them*, or imprison them, *in unrighteousness*, Rom. 1:18. they will find them a burdensome stone, that they will not know what to do with, Zech. 12:3.

3. They came at last to a resolution, in two things. (1.) That it was not safe to punish the apostles for what they had done; they stood now in as much awe as they had formerly, when they durst not lay hands on Christ for fear of the people; for it was a *notable miracle*, a *known miracle*, known to have been done in Christ's name, and in proof of his doctrine; this was an opinion universally received, and the miracle being wrought at the gate of the temple, universal notice was taken of it; and they themselves, with all the craft and all the front they had, *could not deny it* to be a true miracle; every body would have booted at them if they had. They could easily deny it to their own consciences, but not to the world. The proofs of the Gospel were undeniable. Even those that were not persuaded by it to believe in Christ, were yet so affected with it as a mercy to a poor man, and an honor to their country, that they could not but praise God for it; even natural religion taught them to do that. And if the priests had punished Peter and John, for that for which all men glorified God, they would have lost all their interest in the people, and been abandoned as enemies both to God and man. Thus, therefore, their *wrath* shall be made to *praise God*, and the *remainder thereof* shall be *restrained*. (2.) That it is necessary to silence them for the future, v. 17, 18. God will have the knowledge of Christ spread *all the world over*, but the chief priests would have it spread *no further*, which He *that sits in heaven laughs at*. There is not a greater service done to the devil's kingdom, than the silencing of faithful ministers, and the putting them under a bushel that are the lights of the world. Christ had not only charged them to preach the Gospel to every creature, but had promised to bear them out in it, and reward them for it. Now these priests not only forbid them to preach the Gospel, but threaten to punish it as a heinous crime; but those who know how to put a *just value* on Christ's promises, know how to put a *just contempt* on the world's threatenings, though they be *of slaughter*; ch. 9:1.

II. The courageous resolution of the prisoners to go on in their work, notwithstanding, v. 19, 20. Peter and John needed not *confer together*, to know one another's minds, (for they were both actuated by one and the same Spirit,) but agree presently in the

(11.) *The head of the corner*, to which the whole building owes its strength, its union, and its beauty.

V. 15—22. *Ignorant*.] *Idiotai*: opposed to the learned, it means illiterate; to persons of rank, the low; to persons in office, *private* and *plebeian* persons, as here. *Bloomf.* But it is true, that the apostles were, before this body, *idiotai* in all these senses. Ep.—*Unlearned and ignorant*.] This, for three centuries, was the objection against the professors of Christianity: . . . yet it is a great confirmation of the Christian faith; and shows, as Justin Martyr well observes, that it was not of human, but divine original; and that being with Jesus was sufficient to make the ignorant and unlearned wise. *Whitby*.—The instantaneous recovery of one born a cripple, and now more than 40 years old, was a most astonishing effect of divine power!—Not only the energetic and conclusive *discourses* of the apostles are admirable; but the “meekness of wisdom,” united with firmness, which distinguish all their replies;—

replies often made to persons, whose presence must have been suited to damn men of their station and their habits. They never shrink, and they are never disrespectful. They refuse to comply with the injunctions of their hostile superiors no further, than they feel themselves compelled to it by the imperious sense of duty. Their coolness, and self-possession, in the presence of persecutors, is not that affected and ostentatious, and of course irritating coolness, which some have displayed; whose conduct seemed to say, “See how indifferent we are to you! how much we are your superiors! In fact, how much we despise you!” This invites persecution; whereas the apostles always declined and avoided it, if they could.—This smiling, self-complacent coolness may be as very a working of corrupt nature, as fleeing from the cross; and not a much more difficult working, in certain circumstances. It lives upon its own admiration, and the admiration which it expects from by-standers; food which will support nothing that “belongs to the Spirit.”—It should



22 For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed.

23 ¶ And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is :

25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things ?

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

27 For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings : and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

s c. 2:44-46. w c. 3:18. y ver. 13, 31. c. 14: t 2 K. 19:15. x Pr. 21:30. Is. 3. 28:31. Ep. u Ps. 2:1, 2. 46:10. 53:10. 6:19. v Lu. 23:1-8, &c.

same sentiments, and jointly put in the answer; and justify themselves in still preaching on with two things.

1. The command of God; Here they appeal to a settled and acknowledged maxim in the law of nature, that if men's commands and God's interfere, God's commands must take place. It is a rule in the common law of England, that if any statute be made contrary to the law of God, it is null and void. Nothing can be more absurd than to hearken unto weak and fallible men, that are fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects, more than unto a God that is infinitely wise and holy, our Creator and sovereign Lord, and the Judge to whom we are all accountable.

2. The convictions of their consciences; they could not but speak, and speak publicly, those things which they had seen and heard. Like Elihu, they were full of this matter, and the Spirit within them constrained them, they must

be remembered, that this was the first time the apostles were called to encounter opponents armed with power.—(13) Took knowledge.] If John was 'the disciple known to the high priest;' this language concerning him, as well as Peter, would scarcely have been used. SCOTT.

V. 23—23. It is generally supposed, that the company, to which the apostles returned, consisted of the 120 persons before mentioned, who probably were assembled to pray in their behalf.—The language, used in applying this prophecy to Jesus, may refer to his immaculate conception by the Holy Spirit. Thus He received his human nature perfectly holy: and the unction of the same Spirit preserved that holiness, in full perfection, through all the temptations and trials of his life and death.—'The truth is clear, that God decreed that these things should be done; although He decreed not that the Jews should do them; but only permitted them to do what He foresaw they would, if they were thus permitted.' Hammond It is then clear, that God, foreseeing this, decreed to permit them.—'As Peter and Paul, by calling the Jews to repentance for this sin, in crucifying the Lord of life, do evidence, that their sin was not the less, because they did by it fulfil the counsel of God's holy will, and kind intentions to mankind; so they consequently evidence, that God's foreknowledge and determination of a thing future, does not impair the liberty of men's wills in the accomplishment of it; as all the ancient fathers have declared in this particular.' Whitby.—[Comp. on 2:23.] 'We must not consider their work, who were wicked murderers, and profane enemies of the truth; but the work of God, which they fulfilled, without thinking of any such thing. This distinction, rightly observed, will satisfy all moderate men, that they should never separate the counsel and decree of God, from his decreeing foreknowledge; and yet that they should fix all the blame of crimes on second causes, on the devil, for instance, and man. Thus God hard-

speak, that they might be refreshed, Job 32: 18, 20. They felt the influence of it on themselves; and those speak the doctrine of Christ best, that have felt the power of it, and tasted the sweetness of it, and have themselves been deeply affected with it; it is as a fire in their bones, Jer. 20:9. They know the importance of it to others; they look with concern on perishing souls, and know they cannot escape eternal ruin but by Jesus Christ, therefore they will be faithful to them, warning them and showing them the right way. They are things which we have seen and heard, and, therefore, are fully assured of ourselves; and things which we only have seen and heard: and, therefore, if we do not publish them, who will? Who can? Knowing the favor, as well as the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; for the love of Christ, and the love of souls constrain us, 2 Cor. 5:11, 14.

III. The discharge of the prisoners, v. 21. They further threatened them, and thought that they frightened them, as they often did others, John 9:22. and then let them go.

V. 23—31. I. Peter and John's return to their brethren, the apostles and ministers, and, perhaps some private Christians, v. 23. met together, and praying for them, as ch. 12:12. Though God had highly honored them, in calling them out to be his witnesses, and enabling them to acquit themselves so well, yet they were not puffed up thereby; and no advancement, in gifts or usefulness, should make us think ourselves above either the duties or the privileges of the communion of saints. Though their enemies had severely threatened them, yet they went to their own company, and feared not the wrath of their rulers. They were men in a public station, and must seek not so much their own personal satisfaction, as the public good.

II. They related all that had passed to them, 1. That they might know what to expect both from men and from God, in the progress of their work; from men, they might expect every thing terrifying, but from God every thing encouraging; thus the brethren in the Lord would wax confident through their bonds, and their experiences, as Phil. 1:14. 2. That they might have it recorded in the history of the church, for the benefit of posterity, particularly for the confirmation of our faith, touching the resurrection of Christ. These apostles told the chief priests, to their faces, that God had raised up Jesus from the dead, and though they were a body of them together, they had not the confidence to deny it, but, in the silliest and most sneaking manner imaginable, bid the apostles not tell any body of it. 3. That they might now join them in prayers and praises. We should therefore communicate to our brethren the providences of God that relate to us, and our experience of his pres-

ence with us, that they may assist us in our acknowledgment of God therein.

III. Their address to God on this occasion with one accord, v. 24. Not that they all said the same words at the same time, but one in the name of the rest lifted up his voice to God, and the rest joined with him, with one mind, so the word signifies; their hearts went along with him, and so though but one spake, they all prayed; for thoughts are words to God. Moses cried unto God, when we find not a word said. Now, in this solemn address, we have,

1. Their adoration of God as the Creator of the world, v. 24. It is very proper to begin our prayers, as well as our creed, with the acknowledgment of this, that God is the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. Though the apostles were at this time full of the mystery of the world's redemption, yet they do not forget or overlook the history of the world's creation; for the Christian religion was intended to confirm and improve, not to eclipse or justle out, the truths and dictates of natural religion.

2. Their reconciling themselves to the present dispensations of Providence, by reflecting on those Scriptures in the O. T. which foretold, that the kingdom of the Messiah would meet with such opposition as this at its first setting up in the world, v. 25, 26. What is done against Christ, God takes as done against Himself. Christianity was not only destitute of the advantages of the support of kings and rulers, but was opposed and fought against by them, yet it made its way.

3. What was foretold we see fulfilled, v. 27, 28. Herod and Pilate, the two Roman governors, with the Gentiles, the Roman soldiers under their command, and with the people of Israel, the rulers of the Jews and the mob under their influence, were gathered together in a confederacy against the Holy Child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed. But herein they do that which thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. In the height of his glory He is the Lamb of God, and the Child Jesus. The word signifies both a son and a servant. He was the Son of God; yet in the work of redemption He acted as his Father's Servant, Is. 42:1. It was He whom God anointed, and thence He was called the Lord's Christ, v. 26. And this comes in as a reason why they set themselves against Him, because God had anointed Him, and they were resolved not to resign, much less to submit to Him. David was envied by Saul, because he was the Lord's anointed. Now the God that anointed Christ, determined what should be done to Him, pursuant to that anointing; He was anointed to be a Savior, therefore it was determined He should be a Sacrifice, to make



30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that <sup>2</sup>signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

31 ¶ And when they had prayed, <sup>a</sup> the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and <sup>b</sup> they spake the word of God with boldness.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one <sup>c</sup> heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but <sup>d</sup> they had all things common.

33 And with great power <sup>e</sup> gave the apostles witness <sup>f</sup> of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace <sup>g</sup> was upon them all.

34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

z c. 2:43. 5:12. Co. 13:11. Ph. 1 Lu. 1:48,49. c.  
a c. 2:24. 16:26. 2:2. 1 Pe. 3:8. 1:22.  
b ver. 29. d c. 2:14. g Jn. 1:16.  
c Ro. 15:5, 6. 2 e c. 1:8.

atonement for sin; He must die, therefore, He must be slain, yet not by his own hands; therefore, God wisely determined before by what hands it should be done; it must be by the hands of those who will treat Him as a criminal and malefactor, therefore not by the hands either of angels or good men, but of sinners, as Job, ch. 16: 11. Hammond makes this phrase, of God's hand determining it, to be an allusion to the high priest's casting lots upon the two goats on the day of atonement, Lev. 16: 8. Prov. 16: 33. Or, if I may offer a conjecture, it may be meant, not of God's acting hand, but his writing hand, as Job, 13: 26. Dan. 10: 31. Ps. 40: 7. And God's serving his own purposes by what they did, was no excuse for their malice and wickedness, any more than God's making the blood of the martyrs the seal of the church, extenuated the guilt of their bloody persecutors. Sin is not the less evil for God's bringing good out of it, but He is by that the more glorified, and will be so, when the mystery of God shall be finished.

4. Their petition with reference to the case at this time. (1.) That God would now take cognizance of the malice of their enemies, v. 29. There is an emphasis on the now, to intimate, that then is God's time to appear for his people, when the power of their enemies is most daring and threatening. They refer themselves to God, like Hezekiah, Is. 37: 17. (2.) That God, by his grace, would keep up their spirits, and animate them to go on cheerfully with their work. In threatening times, our care should not be so much, that troubles may be prevented, as that

'would stretch forth his hand,' not to perform miracles of vengeance, as many wrought by Moses were; nor yet to defend them; but to 'heal:' for love to the bodies and souls of men had supplanted their selfish passions, and meliorated their zeal, since the time when they desired permission to call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans.—Some expositors have thought, that this prayer was immediately addressed to the Holy Spirit; but this is not evident; and, indeed, there are few passages of Scripture, in which the Holy Spirit is expressly prayed to, personally, separately, and distinctly: perhaps, as prayer is presented both by and for the Holy Spirit, it may be the less proper to address it to Him, except as one with the Father and with the Son, in the unity of the Godhead.

(31.) Doddr. thinks some visible symbol of the Spirit's descent was seen, and Benson, that the cloven tongues fell on them again;—this (Bloomf. judiciously remarks) 'is being wise above what is written, and such temerity [seldom, indeed, chargeable to Doddr.] is carefully to be avoided, since it may lead, according to the temper of mind it meets with, as well to superstition as to skepticism.'

V. 32—35. 'And great grace was upon them all.' Some interpret this of the great favor shown the Christians, by the people in general; but the phrase is different from that before used. The special favor of God manifested to them; and the powerful effects of his sanctifying grace, in forming them to be such holy, lovely, and happy characters,

we may be enabled to go on with cheerfulness and resolution in our work and duty, whatever troubles we may meet with. Observe, Those that are sent on God's errands, ought to deliver their message with boldness, with all boldness, with all liberty of speech. God is to be sought unto, and may be depended upon, for this ability. And are they daring, that fight against Christ? For shame, let not us be sneaking, that are for Him. (3.) That God would still give them power to work miracles for the confirmation of the doctrine they preached. Nothing imboldens faithful ministers more in their work, than the tokens of God's presence with them, and a divine power going along with them. They pray, that God would stretch forth his hand to heal, both the bodies and souls of men; that signs and wonders might be done by the name of the holy Child Jesus, which would be convincing to the people, and confounding to the enemies. Christ had promised them a power to work miracles, for the proof of their commission, Mark 16: 17, 18, yet they must pray for it; and, though they had it, must pray for its continuance. Christ Himself must ask, and it shall be given Him. Observe, It is the honor of Christ they aim at in this request.

IV. God's gracions answer,—not in word, but in power: there was a strong, mighty wind, such as that when the Spirit was poured out upon them, ch. 2: 1, 2. which shook the house, which was now their house of prayer. This was to show them what reason they had to fear God more, and then they would fear man less. God gave them greater degrees of his Spirit, which was the thing they prayed for. Those that were endued habitually with the powers of the Holy Ghost, had yet occasion for fresh supplies of the Spirit, according as the various occurrences of their service were; at the bar, v. 3. and now in the pulpit; which teaches us to live in an actual dependence on the grace of God, according as the duty of every day requires. As in the providence of God, so in the grace of God, we not only in general live, and have our being, but move in every particular action, ch. 17: 28. We have here an instance of the performance of that promise, that God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, Luke 11: 13. and also of the improvement of that gift, which is required of all on whom it is bestowed; have it and use it, use it, and have more. Talents must be traded with, not buried. When they find the Lord God help them by his Spirit, they know they shall not be confounded, Is. 50: 7.

V. 32—37. We have a general idea, and a very beautiful one, of the spirit and state of this truly primitive church; it is a view of that age of infancy and innocence.

I. The disciples loved one another dearly, v. 32. and there was no such thing as discord or division among them. Observe here,

1. Multitudes believed, even in Jerusalem, 3000 on one day, and 5000 on another, beside those added daily; and, no doubt, all

were baptized, and made profession of the faith; for the same Spirit that endued the apostles with courage to preach the faith of Christ, endued them with courage to confess it. The increase of the church is its glory.

2. All were of one heart, and of one soul. Though of different ages, tempers, and conditions, before they believed, and perfect strangers to one another, yet, when they met in Christ, they were intimately acquainted. This was the blessed fruit of Christ's dying precept to his disciples, to love one another, and his dying prayer for them, that they all might be one. We have reason to think they divided themselves into several congregations, or worshipping assemblies, according as their dwellings were, under their respective ministers; and yet that occasioned no jealousy or uneasiness; for they were all of one heart, and one soul, notwithstanding; and loved those of other congregations, as truly as those of their own. Thus it was then, and we may not despair of seeing it so again, when the Spirit shall be poured out upon us from on high.

II. The ministers went on in their work with great vigor and success, v. 33. The doctrine they preached, was, the resurrection of Christ: a matter of fact, which served not only for the confirmation of the truth of Christ's holy religion, but, being duly explained and illustrated, with the proper inferences from it, served for a summary of all the duties, privileges, and comforts, of Christians. The resurrection of Christ, rightly understood and improved, will let us into the great mysteries of religion.

By the great power, wherewith the apostles attested the resurrection, may be meant, 1. The great vigor, spirit, and courage, with which they published and avowed this doctrine; Or, 2. The miracles they wrought to confirm their doctrine.

III. The beauty of the Lord our God shone upon them, and all their performances; Great grace upon all the apostles, on all the believers; grace that had something great in it, magnificent and very extraordinary. Some think it includes the favor they were in with the people.

IV. They were very liberal to the poor, and dead to this world. This was as great an evidence of the grace of God in them as any other, and recommended them as much to the esteem of the people.

1. They insisted not on property, which even children seem to have a sense of, and a jealousy for, and which worldly people triumph in, as Laban, Gen. 31: 43. and Nabal, 1 S. 25: 11. These believers were so taken up with the hopes of an inheritance in the other world, that this was as nothing to them, v. 32. They did not take away property, but were indifferent to it. They did not call what they had, their own, in a way of boasting of it, or trusting in it; they had, in affection, forsaken all for Christ, and were continually expecting to be stripped of all for their adherence to Him. No man said what he had was his own,—his peculiar; for he was

seen to be especially intended.—The language used, concerning the liberal communication of all the property of the more affluent, with their poor brethren, who were thus exempted from all want; and of their confidence in the disinterested faithfulness of the apostles, is suited, as by a specimen, to show, what Christianity would effect, in meliorating the condition of mankind, if universally and cordially embraced. [See 'Mammon,' by Harris.]

(33.) Grace.] 'Rather: and they were in great favor with the people; gained by their mutual love, harmony, and liberality to the poor.' Bloomf., as Kuin., Grot., Casaubon, Pearce, Ros., Beza, Pricens, Heumann, Whitby, and Doddr. understand favor of God; Bengel, the favor of God and man.

(34.) As many.] 'Not all, as many,—as in 5:36. Mat. 7:12, 13, 44, and the adj. *osoi* [as many] is elsewhere put indefinitely, 9:36. So Calvin and Heumann rightly remark, that it cannot be here inferred, that all and every one of those who had farms or houses, sold part of the possessions. This view is strongly confirmed by 5:4, and see on 2:44.' Bloomf., after Kuin., who remarks, that to place at the feet denotes, to commit (reverentially, says Peuceaius) to the care of; see Wetstein's examples. 'A present or offering to a priest, spiritual guide, or distinguished scholar, [in the E.] is not given into his hands by the offerer, but laid at his feet; it is called the *patha-kanaki*, i. e. feet-offering.'

ROBERTS.



35 And <sup>b</sup>laid *them* down at the apostles' feet : and <sup>i</sup>distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

37 Having land, sold *it*, and brought the money, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

#### CHAP. V.

<sup>1</sup> After that Ananias and Sapphira his wife, for their hypocrisy at Peter's rebuke, had fallen down dead, <sup>12</sup> and that the rest of the apostles had wrought many miracles, <sup>14</sup> to the increase of the faith : <sup>17</sup> the apostles are again imprisoned, <sup>19</sup> but delivered by an angel bidding them to preach openly to all : <sup>21</sup> when, after their teaching accordingly in the temple, <sup>29</sup> and before the council, <sup>33</sup> they are in danger to be killed, through the advice of Gamaliel, a great counsellor among the Jews, they are kept alive, <sup>40</sup> and are but beaten : for which they glorify God, and cease no day from preaching.

**B**UT a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

2 And kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy *to it*, and brought a certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

h ver. 37. c. 5:2. i c. 2:45. 6:1. a c. 4:34,37.

ready to distribute, willing to communicate ; what he had to spare from himself and family, his poor neighbors were welcome to. They that had estates, were not solicitous to lay up, but very willing to lay out, and would straiten themselves to help their brethren. No marvel that *they were of one heart and soul*, when they sat so loose to the wealth of this world ; for *mine and thine* are the great make-baits. Men's holding *their own*, and grasping at more than *their own*, are the rise of wars and fightings.

2. They abounded in charity, so that, in effect, *they had all things common* ; for, v. 34. *there was not any among them that lacked*, but care was taken for their supply. The Gospel hath laid *all things common*, not so that the poor are allowed to rob the rich, but so that the rich are appointed to relieve the poor.

3. They did many of them sell their estates, to raise a fund for charity, v. 34. Lightfoot computes, that this was the year of jubilee in the Jewish nation, the 50th year, the 28th since they settled in Canaan, 1400 years

PRACT. OBS. The zeal of avowed infidels to make proselytes, and their unwillingness that others should believe a future state of retributions, seem at first sight unaccountable : for if *this* be a delusion, it can do men no harm ; if *their* sentiments be true, they can do no good. But the honor of being thought wiser than others, and qualified to undeceive a deluded multitude, has abundant charms for the vain-glorious mind. Moreover, infidels have their misgivings, and firmly believe their own reasonings only in proportion as others seem convinced by them : when therefore contrary doctrines are taught with confidence and success ; they are secretly alarmed, lest after all they should find themselves mistaken.—The harmless and useful servants of God have often been indicted as criminals, for 'their work and labor of love,'\* when profligates [gamblers, duellists, and other murderers] have escaped with impunity ; and ungodly priests and elders, and their connexions, have commonly been most forward in these prosecutions. Nay, to this day, instances

\* Oh that our country, our whole country, were free from any stain like this ! Ed.

V. 36. Barnabas.] 'Son of doctrine, i. e. doctor.' KUIN.

V. 37. He could not have sold his Levite patrimony, but this land might have been in Cyprus, or a legacy or purchase, in Judca, to which he had a title till the next jubilee. See Doddr. The tribe had no inheritance with the others, Num. 18:20. 23:24. but this did not hinder any Levite from holding lands in Judca, either by purchase, gift, or in right of his wife. Josephus, a Levite, and a priest too, speaks of his lands about Jerusalem. See Pearce. Ed.

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1—11. This apparent severity, on two detected hypocrites, was real mercy to numbers : and a Divine attestation to the apostles' integrity and veracity, fully intelligible by their enemies. God would never have inflicted such a judgment, at their word, on inferior dissemblers, if *their* testimony to the resurrection of Jesus had been a deception : and it showed that they [above being influenced by motives of gain themselves] would not connive at iniquity in those of their own party, or for the sake of their private interest, or that of the society.—Many expositors suppose, that Ananias had made a vow, (either publicly or secretly,) to give his estate for the support of the Christian cause ; and that *sacrilege* was the crime, for which he was visited : but the history never mentions this. He had, from corrupt mo-

ago, so that what was sold that year being not to return till the next jubilee, lands then took a good price, and so the sale of those lands would raise the more money.

(1.) The money so raised was not hoarded up, but *distribution made*, by proper persons, to every man according as he had need. Great care ought to be taken in the distribution of public charity, that it be given to such as *have need*, and above all, those that are reduced to want for well doing, and for the testimony of a good conscience ; and that it be given to every man, for whom it is intended, according as he had need, without partiality or respect of persons. It is a rule, in dispensing charity, as well as in administering justice, that those who are equally needing and equally deserving, should be equally helped.

(2.) One particular person is mentioned, remarkable for this generous charity, Barnabas, afterward Paul's colleague. His name was Joses, of the tribe of Levi, born in Cyprus, a great way off from Jerusalem. Notice is taken of the apostles' changing his name after he associated with them. Probably he was one of the 70 disciples, and, as he increased in gifts and graces, grew eminent, and was respected by the apostles, who, in token of their value for him, gave him a name, Barnabas,—the son of prophecy, so it properly signifies ; a son of exhortation, so some ; one that had an excellent faculty of healing and persuading ; we have an instance of it, ch. 11:22, 24. A son of consolation, so we read it ; one that did himself walk very much in the comforts of the Holy Ghost ; a cheerful Christian, one that was eminent for comforting the Lord's people, and speaking peace to wounded, troubled consciences. There were two among the apostles that were called Boanerges,—Sons of thunder, Mark 3:17. but here was a son of consolation with them. Each had his several gift, neither must censure the other, but both ease one another ; let the one search the wound, and then let the other heal it and bind it up.

Here is an account of his charity, and great generosity to the public fund ; particularly noticed, because of the eminency of his services afterward, especially in carrying the Gospel to the Gentiles : that this might not appear to come from any ill-will to his own nation, we have here his benevolence to the Jewish converts ; or, perhaps this is mentioned, as an example to others ; *he having land*, whether in Cyprus, or in Judca, or elsewhere, *sold it*, and laid the price at the apostles' feet, to be given in charity.

are not wanting, in which reading the Scriptures, social prayer, and religious conversation meet with frowns and checks ; when indolent, and dissipated, profligate, heretical, if not openly infidel churchmen escape uncensured, or are distinguished by preferments ! If however, we observe the instructions and obey the precepts of Christ, He will bear us out ; and the teaching of his Spirit will render the most timid bold in his cause.—Believers may, in various ways, be confined among those who fear not God ; but, 'being let go, they will return to their own company.'—Whatever trials we meet with, fervent prayer is our never-failing resource ; and the more we unite in it, as 'with one heart,' the more signal answers may be expected. Our prayers should especially be presented in love, even for our bitterest persecutors ; we should request that the Lord's 'hand may be stretched out to heal,' and to save, not to avenge and destroy. Thus we may expect to be effectually answered, and to be filled with inward confidence and comfort.

SCOTT.

atives, attempted to impose on the apostles and on the Holy Spirit ; and his wife had joined him, in this impious and hypocritical attempt.—The papists adduce this passage, as a proof that the successors of Peter (i. e., the pope and the ecclesiastics devoted to him,) are invested with the secular as well as spiritual sword. Let them, therefore, use the weapons of Peter, whenever they will, but none else ; and let them see whether the same effects will follow.—(9.) *Tempt, &c.* 'As often as anything is done with an evil conscience ; so often men bring this sentence on themselves, and as much as lieth in them provoke God to wrath ; as if they purposely aimed to make trial, whether He be just and almighty or not.' Beza. The case, however, of Ananias and Sapphira was very peculiar, and their guilt exceedingly atrocious.—This single example of severity was made, not on avowed enemies and persecutors, but on false friends. [Showing that the church has more to fear from internal corruption, than external enemies.] Thus Judas, not Caiaphas, was marked out by his awful end, as the first object of Divine vengeance on the murderers of Christ. [See Amos 3:2.]

SCOTT.

(1. &c.) 'No wickedness is more capital than that of those who, when most deceiving, thus pass themselves off for good.' Cic. 'It is not necessary to notice the conjectures of Mich., Ros., and Heinrichs, so destitute



5 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan<sup>b</sup> filled thine heart<sup>c</sup> to lie to<sup>d</sup> the Holy Ghost, and to keep<sup>e</sup> back part of the price of the land?

4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but<sup>f</sup> unto God.

5 And Ananias hearing these words<sup>g</sup> fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great<sup>h</sup> fear came on all them that heard these things.

6 And the young men arose, wound<sup>i</sup> him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

b Lu. 22:3. e Nu. 30:2. De. g ver. 10, 11.  
c or, to deceive. 23:21. Ec. 5:4. h Ps. 64:9  
d ver. 9. f Ps. 139:4. i Jn. 19:40.

and what should they do in a time of need, if they should leave themselves nothing to take to? They could not take God's Word, that they should be provided for, but thought they would play a wiser part than the rest had done, and lay up for a rainy day. Thus they thought to serve both God and mammon, —God, by bringing part of the money to the apostles' feet,—and mammon, by keeping the other part in their own pockets; as if there were not an all-sufficiency in God to make up the whole to them, except they retained some in their own hands, by way of caution-money. Their hearts were divided, so were they found faulty, Hos. 10:2. They halted between two; if they had been thorough worldlings, they would not have sold their possession; if thorough Christians, they would not have detained part of the price.

3. They thought to deceive the apostles, and came with as good an assurance, and as great a show of piety and devotion, as any, and laid the money at the apostles' feet, as if it were their all. They dissembled with God and his Spirit, with Christ and his church and ministers; and this was their sin.

II. The indictment of Ananias, which proved both his condemnation and execution for this sin. When he brought the money, and expected to be commended and encouraged, as others were, Peter, without any inquiry or examination of witnesses, charges him peremptorily with the crime, aggravates it, and loads him for it, showing it him in its own color, v. 3, 4. The Spirit of God in Peter, not only discovered the fact without any information, but likewise discerned the principle of reigning infidelity in the heart of Ananias, at the bottom of it, and therefore proceeded against him so suddenly. Had it been a sin of infirmity, through the surprise of a temptation, Peter would have taken Ananias aside, and have bid him go home, and fetch the rest of the money, and repent of his folly in attempting to cheat them; but he

knew his heart was fully set in him to do this evil, and, therefore, allowed him not space to repent. He here showed him,

1. The origin of the sin. Satan filled his heart; not only suggested it to him, and put it into his head, but hurried him on to do it. Whatever is contrary to the good Spirit, proceeds from the evil spirit; and those hearts are filled by Satan, in which worldliness reigns, and has the ascendant.

2. The sin itself. He lied to the Holy Ghost; a sin of such a heinous nature, that he could not have been guilty of it, if Satan had not filled his heart. The phrase we render lying to the Holy Ghost, some read, to belie the Holy Ghost; which may be taken two ways: (1.) That he belied the Holy Ghost in himself; so Lightfoot; and he supposes Ananias was not an ordinary believer, but a minister, and one that had received the gift of the Holy Ghost with the 120; (for mention is made of him immediately after Barnabas;) yet he durst thus, by dissembling, belie and shame that gift. Or, thus, They who had sold their estates, and laid the money at the apostles' feet, did it by the special impulse of the Holy Ghost, enabling them to do an act so very great and generous; and Ananias pretended he was moved by the Holy Ghost to do what he did, as others were; whereas, it appeared by his baseness, that he was not under the influence of the good Spirit at all; for had it been his work, it would have been perfect. (2.) That he belied the Holy Ghost in the apostles, to whom he brought the money, either by a suspicion that they would not faithfully distribute what they were intrusted with, or by an assurance that they could not discover the fraud; [which would have proved them liars, when they said they were endued with the Holy Spirit; and thus their influence would have been destroyed]. He belied the Holy Ghost, when by what he did he would have it thought, that those who are endued with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, might as easily be imposed on as other men, 2 K. 5:26. Thus Ananias thought the apostles were altogether such as himself, and this was belying the Holy Ghost in them, as if He were not in them a Discerner of spirits, whereas they had all the gifts of the Spirit in them, which to others were divided severally. See 1 Cor. 12:8, 10.

But we read it, to lie unto the Holy Ghost; which reading is countenanced by v. 4. Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. He told a deliberate lie, or expressed himself in words capable of a double meaning; or perhaps he said nothing; but it was all one, he did as the rest did, who brought the whole price, and would be thought to do so, and expected the praise of it, with the privilege of access to the common stock as they had; therefore it was an implicit protestation, that he brought the whole price, as they did; and this was a lie, for he kept back part. Many are brought to gross lying, by reigning pride, and affectation of the applause of men; particularly in works of charity to the poor. He told this lie to the Holy Ghost. It was not so much to the apostles, as to the Holy Ghost in them, that the money was brought, and that was said, which was said, v. 4. Thou hast not lied unto men, not to men only, not to men chiefly, though the

apostles be but men; but thou hast lied unto God. From hence it is justly inferred, that the Holy Ghost is God; for he that lieth to the Holy Ghost, lieth to God. 'They that lied to the apostles, acted and acting by the Spirit of God, are said to lie to God, because the apostles acted by the power and authority of God. From whence it follows, (as Dr. Whitby well observes,) that the power and authority of the Spirit must be the power and authority of God.' And, as he further argues, 'Ananias is said to lie to God, because he lied to that Spirit in the apostles, which enabled them to discern the secrets of men's hearts and actions, which, being the property of God alone, he that lies to Him, must therefore lie to God, because he lies to one who has the incommunicable property of God, and consequently the divine essence.'

3. The aggravations of the sin, v. 4. While it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Which may be understood two ways: (1.) 'Thou wast under no temptation to keep back the price, this property was unincumbered, thou hadst no debts to pay, perhaps no children to provide for;' Or, (2.) 'Thou wast under no necessity of selling thy land at all, or bringing any of the money to the apostles' feet. Thou mightest have kept the money, and the land too, and never have pretended to this piece of perfection.' This rule of charity the apostle gives, that it be not urged as of necessity, because God loves a cheerful giver, 2 Cor. 9:7. and Philemon must do a good work, not as it were of necessity, but willingly, Phil. 14. It is better not to vow, than to vow and not to pay. In giving our hearts to God, we are not admitted to divide them: God will have all or none.

4. All this guilt, thus aggravated, is charged upon him. Though Satan filled his heart to do it, yet he is said to have conceived it in his own heart; which shows that we cannot extenuate our sins, by laying the fault of them on the devil; the evil thing, whatever it is, that is said or done, the sinner has conceived it in his own heart. The close of the charge is very high, but very just; Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. What emphasis does the prophet lay on that of Abaz, Is. 7:13. and Moses on that of Israel, Ex. 16:8. So here. If we think to cheat God, we shall prove in the end to have fatally cheated our own souls.

III. The death and burial of Ananias, v. 5, 6.

1. He died on the spot. It does not appear whether Peter designed and expected that this would follow on what he said to him; but probably he did; for to Sapphira, his wife, Peter particularly spake death, v. 9. Some think, an angel struck him, that he died, as Herod, ch. 12:23. Or, his own conscience smote him with such horror and amazement at the sense of his guilt, that he sunk and died away under the load of it. See the power of the Word of God in the mouth of the apostles! As it was to some a savor of life unto life, so it was to others a savor of death unto death.

This punishment may seem severe, but we are sure it was just. (1.) It was designed to maintain the honor of the Holy Ghost, as now lately poured out on the apostles, in order to the setting up of the gospel-kingdom. It

of proof and little probable. As to those who endeavor to account for all upon natural principles, their hypothesis, (no novelty, for it was broached by Origen,) involves more difficulties than it removes; so that, if we had not so many proofs of the credulous incredulity of skeptics, or at least latitudinarians, we should be surprised at seeing them seriously maintain such a position. Though instances of death by fright are on record; yet that any two given persons dwelling together shall die of fright, is too improbable even to think of. For Peter to threaten death, would have given the magistracy that handle against the apostles they desired. Possession.] Klēma: it must mean land here, for it is interchanged v. 3. with chōrion, [country.] Bloomf. Ed.

(3.) Filled, &c.] 'The Hebrews thus express a person's being emboldened [impelled, invited] to a thing. Esth. 7:5. Eccl. 8:11. Lie.] Bos has abundantly shown, that the Gr. signifies to lie, or impose upon, [so Knin. ;] but I cannot recollect that it ever signifies to belie a person, as Benson translates.'

DODDRIDGE.

(4.) Thine own.] So none were compelled by law or institution, to it. Unto God.] The direct workings of the Divinity being so evident in the apostles, &c., and in late events connected with this case. See also, Whitby, for the nature and extent of this crime. Ed. 'The Gr. is τὸ θεῷ; where [as here] theos is thus used with the article, it always means God the Father. Now Ananias and his wife did not deceive ordinary men, but the apostles, who were filled with the Spirit of God, and Christ, and therefore they insulted both the Spirit, Christ, and God the Father. Of the Holy Spirit we have express mention in this v., also in v. 3, 9; of Christ, in v. 1; of the Father in this and v. 32. 1 Cor. 6:19. 3:16. 1 Thess. 4:8. Ex. 16:8. Is. 7:13.'

(5.) 'The ancient commentators agree that this was sacrilege, the punishment of which (says Eusebius) was death. It was here aggravated by hypocrisy, vain-glory, avarice, &c.' Bloomf. Some Jews, and Porphyry, charge Peter with cruelty! But if they acknowledge he actually did it, they acknowledge it was by God, and so was God's act.



9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

10 Then <sup>k</sup> fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

11 And <sup>l</sup> great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

12 ¶ And by the hands of the apostles were <sup>m</sup> many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch:

13 And <sup>n</sup> of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but <sup>o</sup> the people magnified them.

14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes <sup>p</sup> both of men and women;)

15 Insomuch that they brought forth the sick <sup>q</sup> into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing <sup>r</sup> sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and <sup>s</sup> they were healed every one.

j Ps. 50:13. ver. 3. n Jn. 12:42. street.  
k ver. 5. o c. 4:21. r Ma. 16:17, 18.  
l c. 2:43. p c. 2:47. Jn. 14:12.  
m c. 4:30. Ro. 15: q or, in every s Ja. 5:16.  
19. He. 2:4.

was a great affront Ananias put on the Holy Ghost, as if He could be imposed on: and it had a direct tendency to invalidate the apostles' testimony; for if they could not by the Spirit discover this fraud, how could they by the Spirit discover the deep things of God, which they were to reveal to the children of men? It was therefore necessary, that the credit of the apostles' gifts and powers be supported, though at this expense. (2.) It was designed to deter others from the like presumptions, now at the beginning of this dispensation. Simon Magus afterward was not thus punished, nor Elymas; but Ananias was made an example now at first, that with the sensible proofs given what a comfortable thing it is to receive the Spirit, there might be also sensible proofs given what a dangerous thing it is to resist the Spirit, and do despite to Him. How severely was the worshipping of the golden calf punished, and the gathering of the sticks on the sabbath-day, when the laws of the second and fourth commandment were now newly given! So was the offering of strange fire by Nadab and

Abihu, and the mutiny of Korah and his company, when the fire from heaven was now newly given, and the authority of Moses and Aaron now newly established.

2. He was buried immediately, for that was the manner of the Jews, v. 6. The young men, who, it is probable, were appointed to the office of burying the dead, as among the Romans the *libitinarii* and *pollinctores*; or the young men that attended the apostles, they wound up the dead body in grave-clothes, (John 11: 44. note,) carried it out of the city, and buried it decently, though he died in sin, and by an immediate stroke of divine vengeance.

IV. The reckoning with Sapphira, found guilty of sharing with her husband in his sin, by a question that Peter asked her, v. 8. Ananias and his wife agreed to tell the same story, and, the bargain being private, and by consent kept to themselves, nobody could disprove them; therefore, they thought they might safely stand in the lie, and should gain credit to it. How sad, to see those relations who should quicken one another to that which is good, harden one another in that which is evil.

Before he passes sentence, he shows her the evil of her sin. They both tempted the Spirit of the Lord; as Israel tempted God in the desert, when they said, *Is the Lord among us? Or is He not?* 'Can the Spirit in the apostles discover this fraud? Can they discern that this is but a part of the price, when we tell them it is the whole?' They saw they had the gift of tongues; but had they the gift of discerning spirits? Those that presume on security and impunity in sin, tempt the Spirit of God; they tempt God, as if He were altogether such an one as themselves. Then fell she down straightway! With some sinners God makes quick work, while with others He bears long; for which difference, doubtless, there are good reasons; but He is not accountable to us for them. Many sudden deaths there are, which are not to be looked upon as the punishment of some gross sin, like this; but here it is plainly in judgment. Some put the question concerning the eternal state of Ananias and Sapphira; but secret things belong not to us. Some ask, whether the apostles kept this money? I think they did; they had not the superstition of those who said, *It is not lawful for us to put it into the treasury: for unto the pure all things are pure.* What they brought, was not polluted to them they brought it to; but what they kept back, was to them that kept it back. Use was made of the censurers of Korah's mutineers.

V. The impression this made on the people; notice is taken of this in the midst of the story, v. 5. for, no doubt, it was all the talk of the city. And again, v. 11. 1. They that had joined themselves to the church, were hereby struck with an awe of God, and of his judgments, and with a greater veneration of this dispensation of the Spirit which they were now under. It was not a damp or check to their holy joy, but it taught them to be serious in it, and to rejoice with trembling. All that laid their money at the apostles' feet after this, were afraid of keeping back any part of the price. 2. All that

heard it, were put into a consternation by it, and were ready to say, *Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God,* and his Spirit in the apostles? As 1 Sam. 6: 20.

V. 12—16. Here is an account of the progress of the Gospel.

1. Of the miracles the apostles wrought, v. 12. many miracles of mercy for one of judgment. The miracles they wrought proved their divine mission; they were not a few, but many, of divers kinds and often repeated; they were signs and wonders, such wonders as were confessedly signs of a divine presence and power; they were not done in a corner, but among the people, who were at liberty to inquire into them, and, if there had been fraud or collusion, would have discovered it.

II. The effects of these miracles. 1. The church was hereby kept together, and confirmed in its adherence both to the apostles, and to one another; *They of the church were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.* It was strange the rulers of the temple suffered them to keep their meeting there. But God inclined their hearts to tolerate them there a while, for the more convenient spreading of the Gospel; and thus early was the institution of public-worship observed in the church, which must by no means be forsaken, for in that a profession of religion is kept up. Their being united, shows also that there was no discontent or murmuring at them about the death of Ananias and Sapphira, as there was against Moses and Aaron, about the death of Korah and his company, Num. 16: 41. The separation of hypocrites, by distinguishing judgments, should make the sincere cleave so much the closer to each other, and to the gospel-ministry.

2. It gained the apostles very great respect. (1.) The other ministers kept their distance; *Of the rest of their company, though endued with the Holy Ghost, durst no man join himself to them, as their equal or associate;* for none of them at this time did such signs and wonders as the apostles did: and therefore they acknowledged their superiority, and in every thing yielded to them. (2.) All the people magnified them, and had them in great veneration; spake of them with respect, and represented them as the favorites of Heaven, and unspeakable blessings to this earth. Observe, The apostles were far from magnifying themselves, they transmitted the glory of all they did, very carefully and faithfully, to Christ, and yet the people magnified them; for they that humble themselves shall be exalted, and those honored, that honor God only.

3. The church increased in number, v. 14. So far from being deterred by the example made of Ananias and Sapphira, they were rather invited by it into a society that kept such a strict discipline. Notice is taken of the conversion of women as well as men, more notice than generally was in the Jewish church; as among those that followed Christ while He was on earth, so among those that believed on Him after He went to heaven, great notice was taken of the good women.

4. The apostles had abundance of patients,

Had the rich or the lazy attempted thus to live on the common fund contributed by others' labor, it would have been the inevitable ruin of the church, from the first, &c. See *Wetstein*, in *Bloomf.* Ed.

(9.) *Tempt.*] 'So to act, as to seem to doubt of the omnipotence, veracity, or any other of the attributes of God.' *Beza.* Ros.

(10.) *Ghost.*] I. e., spirit, Anglo-Saxon, *gust*, innate, spirit; the Gr. here is *εξέψυχε*, *breathed out*, expired. Ed.

V. 12—16. (13.) *Join himself, &c.*] 'As if he had been a believer, and by way of putting a cheat on the apostles. Such unbelievers as were displeased with the apostles, and hated the cause, would have been glad to put any trick on them, that they might thereby lessen their esteem among the people, yet durst not: seeing it might prove no less than fatal for any to go about to deceive them.'—As Peter was the readiest speaker, and stood foremost in every transaction, and as he was one of the first who experienced persecution; it seems he was more noticed by the people, than any of the other apostles, in these miracles. (19:12.) SCOTT.

(11—15.) 'These things: and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women: and they [the new converts, perhaps, *Bloomf.*] were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the rest [i. e., those, perhaps, who were not converts, but thought and spoke well of them; *Bloomf.*] durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought. Insomuch that, &c., *Sherlock. Bed.] Klinē: a couch, or bed of richer persons. Couch.] Krabbaton, a mean and low couch, or bed for a poorer person. So the rich and poor both applied. Shadow.] Ros. thinks this is only mentioned, not approved, and it was but an ineffectual superstition. But the context clearly suggests they were healed.'*

(13.) 'And none of the rest, who were not really converted to Christianity, presumed to join himself to them, as some mean-spirited creatures might possibly otherwise have done, for a while, in a low view of some transient advantages, by a share in the distributions that were made.' *Doddr. The rest.*] 'I. e., of the different Jewish sects.' CALM. [25]



17 ¶ Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the 'Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

18 And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

19 But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

21 And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

22 But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told,

23 Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.

24 Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.

t c. 4:1,2.

23-27.

17:8.

u or, envy.

w Ex. 24:3.

y c. 4:5,6.

v c. 12:5-7.

x Jn. 6:62,63.

z c. 4:1.

and gained abundance of reputation both to them and their doctrine, by the cure of them all, v. 15, 16. It should seem, even the shadow of Peter had the desired effect, as the woman's touch of the hem of Christ's garment had; and in this, among other things, that word of Christ was fulfilled, *Greater works than these shall ye do.* And if such miracles were wrought by Peter's shadow, we have reason to think they were so by the other apostles, as by the handkerchiefs from Paul's body, ch. 19:12. no doubt, both being with an actual intention in the minds of the apostles thus to heal; so that it is absurd hence to infer a healing virtue in the relics of saints that are dead and gone; we read not of any cured by the relics of Christ Himself, after He was gone, as certainly we should, if there had been any such thing.

V. 17-25. In these vs. we have the malice of hell and the grace of heaven struggling about the apostles; the one to drive them off from their good work, the other to animate them in it.

I. Their enemies were, the high priest, as ringleader, *Annas* or *Caiaphas*, who saw their wealth and dignity, their power and tyranny, their all inevitably lost, if the spiritual and heavenly doctrine of Christ prevailed; and the sect of the *Sadducees*, who had a particular enmity to the Gospel of Christ, because it confirmed and established the doctrine of the invisible world, the resurrection of the dead, and the future state, which they denied. These were exasperated to the last degree, when they heard and saw what flocking there was to the apostles, and how considerable they were become, they rose up in a passion, as men that could no longer bear it, being filled with

indignation at the apostles, for preaching the doctrine of Christ, and curing the sick; at the people for hearing them, and bringing the sick to them to be cured; and at themselves and their own party, for suffering this matter to go so far, and not knocking it on the head at first. Thus are the enemies of Christ and his Gospel a torment to themselves.

They laid their hands on them, perhaps their own hands, (so low did their malice make them stoop,) or, rather, the hands of their officers, and put them in the common prison, among the worst of malefactors; hereby designing to restrain, terrify, and to disgrace them. They could lay nothing criminal to their charge, yet, while they had them in prison, they kept them from going on in their work. Satan has carried on his design against the Gospel, very much, by making the preachers and professors of it despicable.

II. God sent his angel to release them, and to renew their commission to preach the Gospel; for the Lord will never desert his witnesses, his advocates! This deliverance is not so particularly related as that of Peter, ch. 12:7, &c. but the miracle here was the very same. When miraculously set at liberty, they must not think it was, that they might save their lives by making their escape from their enemies. No; it was, that they might go on with their work with so much the more boldness. Recoveries from sickness, releases out of trouble, are granted us, not that we may enjoy the comforts of our life, but that God may be honored with the services of our life. *Let my soul live, and it shall praise Thee, Ps. 119:175. Bring my soul out of prison, as the apostles here, that I may praise thy name, Ps. 142:7. See Is. 38:22.*

Now in the charge given them, observe, 1. They must preach in the temple. One would think it had been prudent in a more private place; but, no; 'Speak in the temple, for that is the place of concourse, that is your Father's house.' It is not for the preachers of Christ's Gospel to retire into corners, as long as they can have any opportunity of preaching in the great congregation. 2. They must preach to the people; not to the princes and rulers, for they will not hearken; but to the people, who are willing and desirous to be taught, and whose souls are as precious to Christ, as the souls of the greatest. 3. How; Go, stand, and speak: which intimates, not only that they must speak publicly, but boldly, resolutely, i. e. 'Speak it as persons resolved to stand to it, to live and die by it.' 4. What; all the words of this life. This life which you have been speaking of among yourselves. Or, 'of this life which the Sadducees deny.' Or, 'of this life emphatically; this heavenly, divine life, in comparison with which the present earthly life does not deserve the name.' Or, 'these words of life, the very same you have preached, these words which the Holy Ghost puts into your mouth.' The words of the Gospel are the words of life; quickening words; they are spirit, and they are life; words whereby we may be saved; that is the same with this here, ch. 11:14.

III. They went on with their work, v. 21. when they heard that it was the will of God, v. 12. Perhaps, they began to question whether they should preach as publicly in the temple as they had done, because they had been bid, when persecuted in one city, to flee to another. But now that the angel ordered them to go preach in the temple, their way was plain, and they ventured without any difficulty, and feared not the face of man, but set themselves immediately to their

duty. They entered into the temple early in the morning, as soon as the people began to come together there, and taught them the Gospel of the kingdom. The case, here, was extraordinary; [the command express on this particular point;] the whole treasure of the Gospel is lodged in their hands; if they be silent now, the whole work falls to the ground; which is not the case of ordinary ministers, who, therefore, are not, by this example, bound to throw themselves into the mouth of danger; and yet, when God gives opportunity of doing good, though we be under the restraint and terror of human powers, we should venture far, rather than let go such an opportunity.

IV. The high priest and his party went on with their prosecution, v. 21. They called the council together, a great and extraordinary council, all the senate of the children of Israel.

Before, they had convened only a committee of the kindred of the high priest, who were obliged to act cautiously; but now they call together all the eldership, i. e. says Lightfoot, all the three courts or benches of judges, not only the Sanhedrim, consisting of 70 elders, but the other two judicatories, erected, one in the outer court-gate of the temple, the other in the inner or beautiful gate, consisting of 23 judges each. So that, if there were a full appearance, here were 116 judges. Thus God ordered it, that the confusion of the enemies might be more public, and the apostles' testimony against them; and that those might hear the Gospel, who would not hear it otherwise than from the bar. Howbeit, the high priest meant not so, but it was in his heart to cut the apostles all off at once.

We may suppose the high priest makes a solemn speech to them, setting forth the occasion of their coming together; that a very dangerous faction was now lately raised, by the preaching of the doctrine of Jesus, which it was needful, for the preservation of their church, speedily and effectually to suppress; that it was now in their power to do it, for he had the ringleaders of the faction now in prison, to be proceeded against, if they would but agree to it, with the utmost severity. An officer is despatched immediately to fetch the prisoners to the bar. But see how they are baffled, disappointed, and shamed.

1. The report the officers make, is, 'The prison-doors truly found we shut with all safety;' nothing had been done to weaken them; 'the keepers had not been wanting to their duty; we found them standing without before the doors, and knowing nothing to the contrary, but that the prisoners were all safe; but when we went in, we found no man therein, none of the men we were sent to fetch.' Probably they found the common prisoners there. Which way the angel fetched them, whether by some back way, or opening the door, and fastening it close again, (the keepers all the while asleep,) we are not told; however it was, they were gone.

Now think how blank the court looked, v. 24. They were extremely perplexed, were at their wits'-end, having never been so disappointed of a thing they were so sure of. It occasioned various speculations; some suggesting, that they were conjured out of the prison; others, that the keepers had played tricks with them, not knowing how many friends these prisoners had, that were so much the darlings of the people. Some feared that, having made such a wonderful escape, they would be the more followed; others, that though perhaps they had frightened them from Jerusalem, they should hear

V. 17. Sect.] 'Haeresis [whence heresy]: a choosing, election; a taking up an opinion; and, lastly, the persons, or party, who maintain them.'

V. 19. 'Thless, Eekermann, Heinrichs, Eichhorn, &c. by endeavoring to account for this liberation, independently of Divine agency, create (as

usual) more difficulties than they remove. Their vain speculations have been overturned by Storr.'

V. 21. Senate.] 'Gerousian: elderhood. So the Lacedaemonians called their senate. Pausanias.'

V. 24. Chief priests.] 'The chiefs of the 24 classes of priests.' Kuin.



25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for <sup>a</sup> they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.

27 And when they had brought them, they set *them* before the council: and the high priest asked them,

28 Saying, Did not we <sup>b</sup> straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood <sup>c</sup> upon us.

29 ¶ Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We <sup>d</sup> ought to obey God rather than men.

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged <sup>e</sup> on a tree.

31 Him hath God exalted <sup>f</sup> with his right hand to be a <sup>g</sup> Prince and a <sup>h</sup> Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

32 And we are his witnesses <sup>i</sup> of these things; and *so is also the Holy Ghost*, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

33 ¶ When they heard *that*, they <sup>k</sup> were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.

<sup>a</sup> Mat. 21:26. <sup>d</sup> c. 4:19. <sup>h</sup> Mat. 1:21.  
<sup>b</sup> c. 4:13. <sup>e</sup> Ga. 3:13. <sup>i</sup> Pe. 1 Lu. 24:47.  
<sup>c</sup> Mat. 27:25. <sup>f</sup> c. 2:24. <sup>j</sup> c. 2:4.  
<sup>2:23, 26. 3:15.</sup> <sup>g</sup> Ph. 2:9. <sup>k</sup> c. 7:51.  
<sup>7:52.</sup> <sup>l</sup> Is. 9:5.

of them again in some part or other of the country, where they would do yet more mischief, and it would be yet more out of their power to stop the spreading of the infection; and now they began to fear, that instead of curing the ill, they have made it worse. Those distress and embarrass themselves, that think to distress and embarrass the cause of Christ.

2. Their doubt is, in part, determined; and yet their vexation is increased by another messenger, who brings them word that their prisoners are preaching in the temple, v. 25. Prisoners, that have broken prison, abscond, for fear of being retaken: but these prisoners, that here made their escape, dare to show their faces even there where their persecutors have the greatest influence. Now this confounded them more than anything.

V. 26—42. I. The seizing of the apostles

V. 26. 'Tyrants, not fearing God, are constrained to fear their own subjects.' *Beza*. Perhaps the expectation of a temporal kingdom was revived by the miracles of the apostles, among the bulk of the common people: so that, while they neither understood nor embraced the Gospel, they favored the cause, and excited the fears of their persecuting rulers.

V. 29. *Name*.] 'I. e., person; so Pearce, Ros., Kuin., "respecting this person." *This*.] The Gr. phraseology, here, denotes contempt, so *Pricæus*; and see *Schoettgen*.

V. 30. *Tree*.] *Xulon*: timber, and "tree," once meant the same. *Id.*

V. 31. It is the evident doctrine of Scripture, that true repentance is 'the gift of God;' and to exclude this most obvious meaning of the words, as many expositors do, is, in fact, an attempt to improve the language of Scripture, and to obscure one evidence of our Savior's Deity, and of all salvation coming wholly from his fulness of grace. 'Repentance was not indeed actually wrought in Israel, by his efficacious grace;' I. e., not in all Israel; for it certainly was in great numbers: but if any who heard the apostles were convinced that they must repent or perish, yet found their hearts still hard and their wills rebellious; was it not a most important and seasonable instruction, to be assured, that Jesus was exalted 'to give repentance,' as well as pardon to the penitent? that, as one with tears cried to Him, 'Help my unbelief; they might cry to Him, 'Turn Thou me, that I may be turned: 'Pour on me the Spirit of grace and supplications, that I may look unto Thee,

a second time. We may think, if God designed this, 'Why were they rescued from their first imprisonment?' But that was designed to humble the pride, and check the fury, of their persecutors; and now God would show that they were discharged; not because they feared a trial, for they were ready to surrender themselves, and appear before the greatest of their enemies. They brought them with all respect. One would think they had reason to do so, in reverence to the temple, that holy place, and for fear of the apostles, lest they should strike them, as they did Ananias, or call for fire from heaven on them, as Elias did; but all that restrained their violence, was, their *fear of the people*, who had such a veneration for the apostles, that they would stone them if they offered [such good men] any abuse.

II. Their examination; being brought before this august assembly, the high priest, as the mouth of the court, told them what it was they had to lay to their charge, v. 23.

1. They who make void the commandments of God, are commonly very strict in binding on their own commandments. 2. Besides this disobedience, they spread false doctrine among the people, or at least a singular doctrine, which was not allowed by the Jewish church, nor agreed with what was delivered from Moses' chair; *Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine*. Some take this for a haughty, scornful word; despising their doctrine as silly, they are angry that men, whom they looked upon as despicable, should make themselves thus considerable. The third charge is, they had a malicious design against the government, and aimed to stir up the people against it, by representing it as wicked and tyrannical, and that had made itself justly odious both to God and man; '*Ye intend to bring this man's blood, the guilt of it before God, the shame of it before men, upon us.*' See here how those that with a great deal of presumption will do an evil thing, yet cannot bear to hear of it afterward, or to have it charged on them. When they were in the heat of the persecution, they could cry, daringly enough, '*His blood be on us, and on our children; let us bear the blame for ever.*' But now that they have time for a cooler thought, they take it as a heinous affront to have his blood laid at their door.

III. Their answer; Peter and the other apostles all spake to the same purport, (whether severally examined, or answering jointly,) depending on the promise, that, when brought before councils, it should be given them in that same hour what they should speak, and courage to speak it.

1. They justified themselves in their disobedience to the commands of the Sanhedrim, v. 29. They do not plead the power they had to work miracles, but simply appeal to a maxim universally owned, which even natural conscience subscribes to, and which comes home to their ease.

2. They justify themselves in doing what they could to fill Jerusalem with the doctrine of Christ; 'Now,' say they, 'we will tell you who this Christ is, and what his Gospel is, and then do you judge whether we ought not to preach it; nay, and we shall take this opportunity to preach it to you, whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear.' People's being unwilling to hear of their faults, is no good reason why they should not be faithfully told of them. It is a common excuse made for not reproving sin, that the times will not bear it. But they whose office it is to reprove, must not be awed by that; the times must bear it, and shall bear it; Cry aloud, and spare not; cry aloud and fear not.

They are told also what honors God put upon this Jesus, and then let them judge who was in the right, the persecutors of his doctrine, or the preachers of it. He calls God the God of our fathers, not only ours, but yours, to show that, in preaching Christ, they did not preach a new god, nor entice people to come and worship other gods, nor set up an institution contrary to that of Moses and the prophets, but adhered to the God of the Jewish fathers, and that that name of Christ which they preached, answered the promises made to the fathers, and the covenant God entered into with them, and the types and figures of the law He gave them. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; see what honor He did Him. (1.) He raised Him up; i. e. qualified Him for, and called Him to, his great undertaking. It seems to refer to the promise God made by Moses, *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you*. Or, it may be meant of his raising Him up from the grave. (2.) He exalted Him with his right hand; hath lifted Him up. 'You loaded Him with disgrace, but God has crowned Him with honor; and ought we not to honor Him whom God honors?' God has exalted Him,—with his right hand, i. e. by his power put forth; Christ is said to live by the power of God. Or, to his right hand, to sit there, to rest there, to rule there. (3.) 'He has appointed Him to be a Prince and a Savior, therefore we ought to preach in his name, and to publish the laws of his government, as He is a Prince; and the offers of his grace, as He is a Savior.' Observe there is no having Christ to be our Savior, unless we be willing to take Him for our Prince. (4.) He is appointed, as a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins. Therefore they must preach in his name to the people of Israel, for his favors were designed, primarily and principally, for them; and none that truly loved their country, could be against that. Had He been exalted to give deliverance to Israel from the Roman yoke, and dominion over the neighboring nations, the chief priests would have welcomed Him with all their hearts. But repentance and remission of

whom I have pierced, and mourn' with 'that godly sorrow, which worketh repentance unto salvation.' *Repentance*.] '*Metanoia*: when it signifies the awakening and change of the mind for the better, is the gift of God, of his mere grace.' *Beza*. *Scott*.

V. 32. 'The testimony, arising from this miraculous communication of the Spirit to Christians, at that time, entirely removes the objection from Christ's not appearing in public, after his resurrection. For had there been any imposture, it had been easier, of the two, to have persuaded the people at a distance, that He had so appeared to the Jewish rulers, or even to the multitude, and yet had been rejected; than that He had given his servants such extraordinary powers. Since, had this assertion been false, every one might have been a witness to the falsehood of such a pretence, without the trouble and expense of a journey to Jerusalem, or any other distant place.' *Doddr*. *Obey*.] See on 29. 'There is no true obedience, without faith, or true faith without obedience.' *Beza*. *Scott*. If man could and would obey every law of the mixed constitution God has given him, how much more accessible to spiritual influences might he become! What now unknown developments of his higher nature might he not expect! *Ep*.

V. 33—39. 'Origen, who had read Jos., and declares that he examined things relating to the Scripture, . . . out of a love to truth, speaks thus: "We say there was one Theudas before the birth of Christ, who among the Jews declared himself to be somebody." And again, "that Judas Galileus, and Theudas who was before him, being not of God, perished." And a third time, "Because they gathered from the scriptures, that the



34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space ;

35 And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.

36 For before these days <sup>m</sup> rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody ; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves : who was slain ; and all, as many as <sup>n</sup> obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.

37 After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him : he <sup>o</sup> also perished ; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone : <sup>p</sup> for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought :

39 But if <sup>q</sup> it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it ; lest haply ye be found even to fight <sup>r</sup> against God.

l c. 22:3. A. D. 8:10. Mat. 15:13.  
m In the 3d year n or, believed. q Job 34:29. 1Co.  
before the ac. o Lu. 13:12. 1:25.  
count called p Pr. 21:30. Is. r c. 9:5. 23:9.

sins are blessings they neither value, nor see their need of, therefore, they can by no means admit his doctrine. Observe, wherever repentance is wrought, remission is without fail granted, and on the other hand, there is no remission without repentance. It is also *Jesus Christ* that gives, and is authorized to give both. (5.) All this is well attested; the *apostles themselves* are ready to testify on oath, if required, that they saw Him alive after his resurrection, and saw Him ascend into heaven; and, also, that they experienced the power of his grace on their hearts, raising them up to that which was far above their natural capacities. But that is not all, *the Holy Ghost is witness*, a witness from heaven; for *God hath given his gifts and graces to them that obey Christ.* Therefore we must preach in his name, because for this end the Holy Ghost is given us, whose operations we cannot stifle.

Note, The giving of the Holy Ghost to obedient believers, not only to bring them to

the obedience of faith, but to make them eminently useful therein, is a very strong proof of the truth of Christianity. God gave the Holy Ghost by *his Son* and *in his name*, John 14:26. and in answer to his prayer, John 14:16. nay, Christ sent Him from the Father, John 15:26. 16:17. and this proves the glory to which the Father has exalted Him. The great work of the Spirit being not only to justify Christ, 1 Tim. 3:16. but to glorify Him, and all his gifts having a direct tendency to exalt his name, proves that his doctrine is divine, else it would not be carried on thus by a divine power. And, lastly, the giving of the Holy Ghost to them that obey Christ, both for their assistance in their obedience, and as a present recompense for their obedience, is a plain evidence that it is the will of God that Christ should be obeyed; and then judge whether we ought to obey you in opposition to Him.

IV. The impression the apostles' defence of themselves made on the court; instead of yielding to it, they raged against it, and were filled,

1. With indignation; they were cut to the heart, not, as the people, in remorse and godly sorrow, ch. 2:37. but with rage and indignation. Thus the same Gospel is to some a savor of life unto life, to others of death unto death.

2. With malice; since they see they cannot stop their mouths any other way than by stopping their breath, they take counsel to slay them, hoping that so they should cause the work to cease. While the apostles went on in the service of Christ, with a holy security and serenity of mind, perfectly composed, and in a sweet enjoyment of themselves, their persecutors went on in their opposition to Christ, with a continual perplexity and perturbation of mind, and vexation to themselves.

V. The grave advice of Gamaliel, a leading man in the council, on this occasion, the scope of which was to moderate the fury of these bigots, and check the violence of the prosecution. Gamaliel is here said to be a Pharisee by profession and sect, by office a doctor of the law, one that studied the scriptures of the O. T., read lectures on the sared authors, and trained up pupils in the knowledge of them; Paul was brought up at his feet, ch. 22:3. and tradition says, Stephen and Barnabas. Some say he was the son of that Simeon that took Christ in his arms, when presented in the temple; and grandson of the famous Hillel. He is here said to be in reputation among all the people for his wisdom and conduct; it appearing by this passage that he was a moderate man, and not apt to go in with furious measures. Men of temper and charity are justly had in

reputation, for checking the incendiaries that otherwise would set the earth on fire. Observe,

1. His necessary caution; putting the apostles forth a little while; he might speak the more freely, and be the more freely answered, and then he reminds the house of the importance of this matter, which in their heat they were not capable of considering as they ought, v. 35. 'You are men, that should be governed by reason; men of Israel, that should be governed by revelation. Have regard then to God and his Word. Take heed to yourselves, now you are angry, lest you meddle to your own hurt.' The persecutors of God's people had best look to themselves, lest they fall into the pit they dig. We have need to be cautious whom we trouble, lest we be found making the hearts of the righteous sad.

2. To pave the way to his opinion; he cites two instances of factious, seditious men, such as they would have the apostles thought, whose attempts came to nothing of themselves; whence he infers, that if these men were indeed such as they represented them, their cause would sink with its own weight, and Providence would infatuate and defeat them, and then they needed not persecute them.

3. His opinion, (1.) That they should not persecute the apostles, v. 38. As the matter now stands, my advice is, 'Refrain from these men; neither punish them for what they have done, nor restrain them for the future. Connive at them.' It is uncertain whether he spake this out of policy, for fear of offending either the people or the Romans, and making further mischief; or, whether he was under some present convictions, at least of the probability of the truth of the Christian doctrine, and thought it deserved better treatment, at least a fair trial; or, whether it was only the language of a mild, quiet spirit, that was against persecution for conscience-sake; or, whether God put this word into his mouth beyond his own intention, for the deliverance of the apostles at this time; we are sure there was an overruling Providence in it, that the servants of Christ might not only come off, but honorably. (2.) That they should refer this matter to Providence. That which is apparently wicked and immoral, must be suppressed, else the magistrate bears the sword in vain; but that which has a show of good, and it is doubtful whether it be of God or men, it is best not to use any external force to suppress. Christ rules by the power of truth, not of the sword. But, 'If this counsel, this work, this forming of a society, and incorporating it in the name of Jesus, be of men, it will come to nothing.' If it be the

time of the Messiah was come; first Theudas, and after him Judas, tumultuated, in the time of the taxing." Hence do the fathers unanimously say, that those words of Christ, "All that came before Me were thieves and robbers," relate to these two, Theudas, and Judas of Galilee; which shows their belief, that both of them were before the time of Christ's preaching. So that it is extremely evident, that the ancient fathers agreed in this, that there was a Theudas pretending to great things, even before the coming of our Lord; though Jos. has taken no notice of him. Whitby, in Scott. Lightfoot supposes, that the Theudas, mentioned by Josephus, was the son of this Theudas; and that he took his name, as engaging in the same enthusiastic attempts. Luke 2:2. Luke merely records Gamaliel's speech; and it indisputable, that he spake of facts well known to his hearers. As to Josephus, his mistakes and omissions are so numerous and palpable, that his authority ought not to be opposed to other authentic histories; or to facts, which, at the time, were known and allowed to have occurred. According to this opinion, [Gamaliel's,] which was the verdict of common sense, and supported by the most conclusive arguments, the continuance of Christianity to this day, a religion, neither supported by human authority, nor paying court to any man's corrupt passions; nay, opposed by all the power, wealth, philosophy, learning, superstition, idolatry, open profaneness, false religion, vices, and popular prejudices, of the whole world; and declaring exterminating war against all the corrupt propensities of the human heart, without favoring one more than another; and also the ruin of the Jewish church and nation, and other persecuting powers, are irrefragable demonstrations, that it 'was no work or counsel of men,' but indeed a revelation from God; and, that those who opposed it actually fought against Him, and incurred his righteous displeasure for so doing.—How different the introduction of Christianity in the world, and its preservation and continuance to this day, from those of Paganism and Mohammedism!

Scott.

(36, 37.) Theudas. A common name. It seems most probable (and so Origen, Seal., Beza., Can., Lightf., Dru., Cnsaubon, Grot., Ham., Basnage, Heum., Krebs, Limborch, Whitby, Doddr., Lardner, Morus, Ros., and Kuin.) there were two: Jos. mentions one more recent, Gamaliel another, who (so Casaubon and Krebs) lived about the time of Christ's birth. Beza and Kuin., however, think in the time when (as Jos., Ant. 17, 24.) innumerable seditions, which Varus could hardly suppress, reigned in Judea. For those events (as they observe) which happened at the time in which, after the death of Herod the Great, there was an interregnum in Judea, while Archelaus had gone to Rome, to obtain the confirmation of his father's will, and when Jesus was yet in Egypt, Jos. has passed over in silence, as he has done this insurrection of Theudas, which probably occurred at that time; not to mention many other events, of which, nevertheless, the truth is unquestionable. The second Theudas they suppose to have been a son or grandson of the first, and who again brought together his scattered followers; similar instances of which may be remarked in long-buried and almost forgotten sects, which sometimes revive. But this second may have simply adopted a name already popular. Bloomf. Judas of Galilee. Schoettgen, from the Rabbins, finds that this Judas "began a third sect, besides the Pharisees and Sadducees, the Essenes. Judas Galileus was the founder of the Nasireans, called also, Essenes. They stirred rebellion against the Romans, holding that no man ought to command other men, nor be called Lord, save God only." Juchasin. Taxing. Apographē: a census, of property as well as persons, Luke 2:1. This census was not that of Herod's reign, by Augustus' order, but that by Quirinus, after Archelaus, the son of Herod, had been exiled by Augustus to Vienna, and his kingdom reduced to the form of a Roman province. See Deyling. KUIN.

\* The object of moral culture is to regulate, not exterminate the native propensities of the human constitution: to harmonize and properly subordinate the propensities, sentiments, and intellectual faculties: not to destroy any one of them. Ed.



40 And to him they agreed : and when they had called the apostles, and <sup>1</sup>beaten *them*, they commanded <sup>2</sup>that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

41 ¶ And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing <sup>3</sup>that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

42 And daily <sup>4</sup>in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

### CHAP. VI.

<sup>1</sup> The apostles, desirous to have the poor regarded for their bodily sustenance, as also careful themselves to dispense the Word of God, the fool of the soul, <sup>2</sup> appoint the office of deaconship to seven chosen men. <sup>3</sup> Of whom Stephen, a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost, is one. <sup>4</sup> Who is taken of those, whom he confounded in disputing, <sup>5</sup> and afterward falsely accused of blasphemy against the law and the temple.

AND in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians <sup>1</sup>against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in <sup>2</sup>the daily ministration.

Mat. 10:17. 12:10. Ph. 1:29. v 2 Ti. 4:2.  
t c. 4:13 Ja 1:2. 1 Pe. 4: a c. 9:29. 11:20.  
u Mat. 5:12. 2 Co. 13—15. b c. 4:35.

counsel and work of foolish men, that know not what they do, they will run themselves out, and they will make themselves ridiculous. If it be the counsel and work of politic and designing men, who, under color of religion, are setting up a secular interest, let them alone a while, and they will throw off the mask, and make themselves odious; Providence will never countenance it, and your persecuting and opposing it is very needless; there is no occasion for giving yourselves so much trouble, and bringing such an odium on yourselves, to kill that, which, if you give it a little time, will die of itself. The unnecessary use of power is an abuse of it. On the other hand, 'If it should prove, that these preachers have their commissions and instructions from God, that they are as truly his messengers to the world as the O. T. prophets were; then what do you think of persecuting them, of this attempt of your's, v. 33. to slay them? It must be fruitless; if it be of God, you cannot overthrow it; and it may be dangerous. Pray let it alone, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God; I need not tell you who will come off by the worst in that contest.'

Such was the advice of Gamaliel; we wish it were duly considered by those that persecute for conscience-sake, for it was a good thought, and natural enough, though we are uncertain what he was. The tradition of the Jewish writers is, that, for all this, he lived and died an inveterate enemy to Christ and his Gospel; and though now he was not

for persecuting the followers of Christ, yet he was the man who composed that prayer which the Jews use to this day, for the extirpating of Christians and Christianity. On the contrary, the traditions of the Papists is, that he turned Christian, and became an eminent patron of Christianity, and a follower of Paul, who had *sat at his feet*. If that had been so, it is very probable we should have heard of him somewhere in *the Acts* or *Epistles*.

VI. The determination of the council, v. 40.

1. Thus far they agreed with Gamaliel, that they let fall the design of putting *the apostles to death*

2. Yet they could not forbear giving some vent to their rage. Therefore they *beat them*, scourged them as malefactors, stripped them, and whipped them, as they used to do in the synagogues, notice of the ignominy of which is taken, v. 41. Thus they thought to make them ashamed of preaching, and the people ashamed of hearing them.

VII. The wonderful courage and constancy of the apostles, in the midst of all these injuries and indignities; when dismissed, *they departed from the council*, and we do not find one word they said by way of reflection on the court, and their unjust treatment; all their business was, to preserve the possession of their own souls, and *to make full proof of their ministry*, notwithstanding the opposition; and both these they did to admiration.

1. They bore their sufferings with an invincible cheerfulness, v. 41. When *they went out*, perhaps, with the marks of the lashes appearing, hissed at by the servants and rabble, it may be, or public notice given of the infamous punishment they had undergone, instead of being ashamed of Christ, and their relation to Him, *they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name*. [They had not been hardened by sin, but were of delicate sensibility,] yet they reckoned it an honor, *to suffer this shame*,—*were honored, to be dishonored for Christ*. They rejoiced, not only though *they suffered shame*, but *that they suffered shame*; their troubles increased their joy.

2. They went on in their work with indefatigable diligence, v. 42. They were punished for preaching, and commanded *not to preach*, and yet *they ceased not to teach and preach*; they omitted no opportunity, nor abated anything of their zeal or forwardness. They preached *daily*; not only on sabbath-days, or on Lord's days, but every day, not fearing they should either kill themselves, or cloy their hearers. They preached both publicly *in the temple*, and privately *in every house*; in promiscuous assemblies, to which all resorted; and in the select assemblies of Christians for special ordinances. They visited the families, and gave particular instructions to them, according as their case required; even to the children and servants. And the subject matter of their preaching was *Jesus Christ; not themselves*,

but *Christ*, making it their business to advance his interest. This was the preaching that gave most offence to the priests; who were willing *they should preach anything but Christ*; but they would not alter their subject to please them. It ought to be the constant business of gospel-ministers to *preach Christ; Christ, and Him crucified; Christ, and Him glorified*; nothing beside this, but what is reducible to it.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—7. Hitherto *the disciples*, (for so Christians were at first called, learners of Christ,) *were all with one accord*; this had been often noticed to their honor; but now that *they were multiplied*, there arose [as is usual] *a murmuring*, not an open falling out, but a secret heart-burning.

1. The *Grecians*, or Hellenists, were Jews scattered in Greece, and other parts, who ordinarily spake Greek, and read the O. T. in the Greek version, and not the original Hebrew. The *Hebrews* were native Jews, that used the original Heb. of the O. T. It seems their joint embracing of the *faith of Christ* did not prevail, as it ought, to extinguish their little jealousies before conversion; not understanding, or not remembering, that *in Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew*, no distinction of Hebrew and Hellenist, but all are alike welcome to Christ, and should be, for his sake, dear to one another.

2. The complaint was, *that their widows were neglected in the daily administration*, i. e. in the distribution of the public charity, and the Hebrew widows had more care. Observe, the first contention in the Christian church was about a money-matter; pity *the little things of this world* should be make-baits among those that profess to be taken up with *the great things of another world*. A great deal of money was gathered for the relief of the poor, but, as often happens in such cases, it was impossible to please every body in the laying of it out. *The apostles, at whose feet it was laid*, did their best to dispose of it, so as to answer the intentions of the donors, and, no doubt, were far from respecting the Hebrews more than the Grecians; yet here they are complained to, and implicitly complained of. Perhaps this complaint was groundless and unjust; those who, on any account, lie under disadvantages, (as *the Grecian Jews* did, in comparison with them that were *Hebrews of the Hebrews*,) are apt to be jealous that they are slighted, when really they are not so; envy and covetousness are to be found among the poor as well as among the rich, notwithstanding the humbling providences they are under, and should accommodate themselves to. Some suggest, that though their other poor were well provided for, yet *their widows were neglected*, because the managers governed themselves by an ancient rule which *the Hebrews* observed, *that a widow was to be maintained by her husband's children*. See 1 Tim. 5:4. But, I take it, *the widows* are here put for all the poor.

PRACT. OBS. No state of the church has yet occurred entirely free from hypocrites, and other evils resulting from human depravity and the subtlety of Satan: nor is there anything so excellent, which artful men will not counterfeit, to gratify their avarice, or their love of applause and honor from men.—And does not the narrative, with which this ch. opens, most solemnly warn us, to watch against, and subjugate all our passions, not only the violent and disgraceful, but the plausible likewise, the love of money and of reputation, the ambition, not only of honor from worldly men, but also of consequence in the church?—Deceit and lies are, in all things, hateful to the God of truth; but most of all, when introduced into the immediate concerns of religion. If any of us are conscious of having committed so enormous a crime, let us be thankful, that the doom of Ananias has not been ours; and let us show our deep repentance, by keeping at the utmost distance from a repetition of the atrocious provocation.—On special occasions, the Lord interposes, in an extraordinary manner, to detect such offenders, as are about to become

V. 41, 42. The apostles went away rejoicing; 'rightly judging, that a punishment of this kind, though generally shameful, became a glory to them, when borne in so excellent a cause, and for the sake of Him, who... had submitted not only to stripes, but to death, for them.' [Alas! how seldom is true glory associated with the huzzas of men; yea, though the happiness of the race so much depends on the exertions of kindred spirits with the apostles, and its misery has been so much increased by the glorified ones of the earth!] *Doddr.*

SCOTT.

a snare to some, and a scandal to others.—Whatever conduces to the purity and reputation of the church, eventually promotes its enlargement. When unsound professors of the Gospel are excluded or detected, the surest method is taken to bring in an increase of true believers; and, if the apparent severity of reproof or censure, which ministers must at some times necessarily exercise, be connected with manifest and enlarged benevolence, that unfavorable impression, which might otherwise be made on the minds of men, will be prevented; and they will notwithstanding possess confidence and affection. But how wretched must they be, whose vexation is increased by the success of the Gospel! For God will surely destroy all those, who 'will not have Him to reign over them:' this every man will perceive, in proportion as he regards the testimony of his apostles; and of the Holy Spirit, whom God has always given as the Teacher, Sanctifier, and Comforter of those who obey his beloved Son.

SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. VI. V. 1. *Grecians*.] 'Foreign Jews, who spoke Greek. Erasmus, Drusius, Heinsius, Scal., Lightf., Ham., Le Clerc, Schoettg., Beng., Ros., &c. Proselytes were in origin and religion Gentiles, but afterwards made Jews, by circumcision, and now finally converted to Christianity. Camerar., Beza, Salmasius, Wolf, Zeigler, &c. Foreign Jewish proselytes, who spoke Greek. Wetstein, Heum., Paulus, Kuin., Heinrichs.'

BLOOMF.



2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them*, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

c Ex. 18:17-26. e c. 16:2. 1 Ti. 3: f 1 Ti. 4:15.  
d De. 1:13. 7,8,10.

Those that administer public justice or charity, ought in a particular manner to protect widows, Is. 1:17. Luke 18:3. See 1 Tim. 5:3. And, observe, the widows here, and the other poor, had a daily ministrations; they lived from hand to mouth. Perhaps those that disposed of the money, considered there was more brought into the fund by the rich Hebrews, than by the rich Grecians, who had not estates to sell, as the Hebrews had, and therefore the poor Grecians should have less out of the fund; this, though there was some tolerable reason for it, they thought hard and unfair. Note, In the best ordered church in the world, there will be something amiss, some mal-administration or other, some grievances, or, at least, some complaints; they are the best, that have the least and fewest.

3. The apostles had hitherto the directing of the matter; applications were made to them, and appeals, in case of grievances; they were obliged to employ persons under them, who did not take all the care they might, nor were so well fortified against temptations to partiality; therefore some persons must be chosen to manage this mat-

ter, who have more leisure than the apostles had, and were better qualified for the trust than those they employed. But the apostles themselves would not determine anything without the multitude of the disciples, the heads of the congregations of Christians in Jerusalem; in a concern of this nature they might be best able to advise, who were more conversant in affairs than the apostles. Receiving and paying money was serving tables, too like the tables of the money-changers in the temple; it was foreign to the business they were called to; they were to preach the Word of God; and, though they had not such occasion to study for what they preached, as we have, it being given in that same hour what they should speak, yet they thought that was work enough for a whole man, and to employ all their thoughts, cares, and time, though one of them was more than ten of us, than ten thousand. If they served tables, they could not attend their preaching work so closely as they ought. These minds of ours admit not of two distinct, anxious employments. It is not reason, it is not fit or commendable, that we should neglect the business of feeding souls with the bread of life, to attend the business of relieving the bodies of the poor. Note, preaching the Gospel is the best, the most proper and needful work a minister can be employed in, and that which he must give himself wholly to, 1 Tim. 4:15. which, that he may do, he must not entangle himself in the affairs of this life, 2 Tim. 2:4. no, not in the outward business of the house of God, Neh. 11:16. They therefore desire that 7 men might be chosen, well qualified for the purpose, whose business it should be to serve tables, to be deacons to the tables, v. 2. They might be occasionally employed in the Word, and prayer, but were not so entirely devoted to it as the apostles were; these must take care of the church's stock, must review, and pay, and keep accounts; must buy those things which they had need of against the feast,

John 13:29. and attend to all those things which are necessary, in order to spiritual exercises, that everything might be done decently and in order, and no person or thing neglected. The people are to choose, and the apostles to ordain; but the men must be fit for the office; Look out seven men: so many they thought sufficient for the present, more might be added afterward if there were occasion; these must be, 1st. Of honest report, free from scandal, men of integrity, and faithful, well attested, as men that might be trusted; not under a blemish for any vice, but, on the contrary, well spoken of for every thing that is virtuous and praiseworthy; men that can produce good testimonials concerning their conversation. Note, Those that are employed in any office in the church, ought to be men of a blameless, nay, of a beautiful character. 2dly. They must be full of the Holy Ghost, those gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, necessary to the right management of this trust; not only be honest, but men of parts and of courage; such as were to be made judges in Israel, Ex. 18:21. able men, fearing God; men of truth, and hating covetousness; and hereby appearing to be full of the Holy Ghost. 3dly. They must be full of wisdom. It was not enough that they were honest, good men, but they must be discreet, judicious men, that could not be imposed on, and would order things for the best, and with consideration: full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom, i. e. of the Holy Ghost as a Spirit of wisdom. 1 Cor. 12:8. In many editions of our English Bibles, there has been an error of the press here, for they have read it, whom ye may appoint; as if the power were in the people; whereas it was certainly in the apostles; whom we may appoint.

(4.) The apostles engage to addict themselves wholly to their work, as ministers, v. 4. The two great gospel-ordinances,—the Word, and prayer; by these two, communion between God and his people is kept up and

V. 2—6. We read nothing more concerning any of the seven, [the seven deacons.] except Stephen and Philip; unless Nicolas ('a proselyte,' as distinguished from those who were of Jewish extraction) were the founder of the heretical sect, called Nicolaitans, which is not at all probable. It is evident, that they were appointed to take care of the property of the church, and not to the pastoral office; and the argument hence deduced to prove that every congregation ought to choose its own spiritual pastors, or for popular elections of ministers in any way, proves nothing. Men are generally careful enough, to entrust their property in the hands of suitable persons; but their souls are seldom more in danger, than when they follow 'teachers after their own hearts.' Beza indeed seems to think, that if the apostles would not appoint deacons, except by the choice of the church, much less would they ordain ministers, or spiritual pastors: but this only proves, that scriptural ground for that plan which he zealously supported, was not easily found, and that arguments were scarce.—Whatever may be said about the expediency or in expediency of these arrangements; the divine authority of them should be considered as another question. It must, however, be allowed, that matters are far removed from what is reasonable, scriptural, or profitable, respecting the general management of these most important concerns, in almost every part of the visible church; and that pastors should not be forced on congregations, \* against whom they can bring just and reasonable objections, whether in respect of doctrine or character.—It has been generally taken for granted, that these seven persons were ordained, or appointed, to the office of 'deacons;' yet they are not so called, either in this chapter, or elsewhere: and as the word rendered 'deacon' is often translated servant, or minister, and used concerning Christ himself, (Rom. 15:8. Gr.) some have questioned whether there were such a distinct order in the church, during the times of the apostles. Nothing, however, can be more evident, than that such an order existed, and was well known, when Paul wrote his epistle to the Philippians, and his first epistle to Timothy. Phil. 1:1. 1 Tim. 3:8—13. 'Now if they' (the deacons,) 'were not instituted here by the apostles, I desire to know when, where, and by whom, they were instituted, and what other record we have left us of such an institution of them.' Whitby. If, then, the office of deacons was instituted on this occasion; it seems undeniable, that they were appointed solely to take care of the temporal concerns of the church; and not, as deacons, to preach, or to administer sacred ordinances, except by assisting the elders, presbyters, or bishops, as some think they did, in distributing the bread and wine at the Lord's supper.—This is as true of the deacons, mentioned by Paul, 1 Tim. 3: : there is not a word said of their ministering at the altar.' Whitby. He might have added, 'or of their preaching.' Yet it is plain, that Stephen did preach, and that Philip both preached and baptized; and he is even called 'the evangelist.' (21: 8.) It therefore occurs to inquire, whether they were preachers of the Gospel, before their appointment as deacons, or became preachers afterwards. The following remarks are of some importance in this question. 'The choice was committed to them;' (the laity;) 'yet this was done, 1st. by the particular appointment of the apostles, for "the twelve called the multitude," and said unto them, "Look ye out seven men." 2dly. They specify the number, and the qualifications, of the persons to be

chosen to this office. 3dly. They reserve to themselves the appointment of them to this work: saying, "Look ye out seven men, whom we may appoint over this business." And, lastly, "they only laid their hands on them." . . . It seems very unlikely, that the apostles would have made this one requisite of the persons to be chosen, that they should be "full of the" extraordinary gifts of the "Holy Ghost;" . . . if their office had confined them to the ministry of the widows at Jerusalem, [though to be strictly just and honest in money-matters needs more of grace than falls to the lot of more than a very few.] . . . Being "men full of the Holy Ghost;" and of that wisdom which enabled them to teach others; we cannot reasonably conceive, that they were disabled, by their ordination to this office, from doing that work for which they were fitted, and as it were appointed, by these gifts of the Spirit conferred on them. . . This distribution, therefore, must be made by them. . . Now surely, that work which the apostles personally performed for a season, must be consistent with their commission to "teach and baptize all nations." Whitby. This statement does not prove, what the learned author seems to have intended, that the deacons, as such, were appointed to preach and baptize: but, to me, at least, it renders it highly probable, that some of the seven were previously ministers, or evangelists; and that they spared time from the ministry of the Word, for this service, as the apostles had done before the appointment of these assistants. In the abundance of spiritual and miraculous gifts, communicated at this favored season, it is highly probable, that many were thus qualified for important services, who had not at present a call or opening to perform them. The apostles, in counselling the church, make no distinction between such as had been employed in the ministry, and others; and probably some of each were chosen. Stephen and Philip, we may suppose, were of the former, and when Stephen was martyred, and Philip fully engaged at a distance, others might be chosen as deacons. And it appears to me very likely, that, both at this and future periods, many, who were appointed deacons in the first instance, afterwards became evangelists or pastors; and when they were fully employed, other deacons were appointed. 1 Tim. 3:8—13. SCOTT.

(2.) To serve tables.] 'Diakonon trapezais: "attend, see to the providing for the tables of the poor." Doddr. Later commentators, "superintend the collection and distribution of the alms to be expended on the poor." See Krebs. Trapeza is sometimes a banquet in the N. T., as Luke 19:23. and since (as Krebs) diakonein is, in 2 Cor. 8:4, 19. to minister alms, and diakonia, the alms themselves, in Acts 11:29. it seems best from the context so to explain here. But the words seem to require both meanings, and so *Æcum*.' BLOOMF.

(3.) 'These seven *Kuim*. (after *Mosheim*) thinks were all Hellenists, and added to other Hebrews, already acting as almoners. It appears the diaconal office was adopted from the Jewish Synagogue, which had three almoners, or treasurers of the poor's chest, called *Shepherds*, who took care of the poor, especially strangers, and distributed money every 7th day. *Maimon*. On the office here, see Hughes, Whit., Hamon., &c. *Full, &c.*] The earlier commentators understand the faculty of miracles; the recent ones no more than ardor, enthusiasm, and a desire for the propagation of the Gospel: a middle opinion seems most judicious. *Wisdom*.] I. e. prudence, judgment, knowledge of the world and acquaintance with business. *May*.] Will: so the best MSS. and *Verss.*, and *Griesb.* In.

\* See Hooker's Survey, &c.



5 ¶ And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus; and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

7 ¶ And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

8 ¶ And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

g c. 11:24. k c. 9:17. 13:3. 1 24. 19:20.  
h c. 8:5,26. 21:8. Ti 4:14. 5:22. m Ps. 132: 9, 15.  
l Re. 2:6,15. 2 Ti. 1:6. Jn. 12:42.  
j c. 1:24. 1 Is. 55:11. c. 12.

maintained; by these two the kingdom of Christ must be advanced, and additions made to it; by the Word and prayer other ordinances are sanctified to us, and sacraments have their efficacy. The great business of gospel-ministers is, to give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word; they must still be either fitting and furnishing themselves for those services, or employing themselves in them; either publicly or privately; in the stated times, or out of them.

5. How this proposal of the apostles was agreed to, and presently executed, by the disciples; it was not imposed on them by an absolute power, though they might have been bold in Christ to do that, Philem. 8. but proposed, as what was highly convenient, and then the saying pleased the whole multitude, v. 5. It pleased them to see the apostles so willing to discharge themselves from intermeddling in secular affairs, and so to transmit them to others; it pleased them to hear, that they would give themselves to the Word and prayer; therefore they neither disputed the matter, nor deferred the execution of it: the majority of votes fell on the persons here named; and the rest acquiesced, as the members of societies in such cases ought. We may conjecture, that they were such as had sold their estates, and brought the money into the common stock; and all of the Grecian or Hellenist Jews, for they have all Greek names, and this would be most likely to silence the murmurings of the Grecians. Nicolas, it is plain, was one of them, for he was a proselyte of Antioch; and some think, that the manner of expression intimates, that they were all proselytes of Jerusalem, as he was of Antioch.

The first named is Stephen, the glory of them all; a man full of faith and of the Holy

(5.) 'Mosh., Mich., Morus, Hehr., as Camer., and Grot. think the seven were all Hellenists, and only had charge of the Hellenistic widows: see on v. 3. Mosh. and Kuin., think (but precariously) the whole multitude, v. 2. of the Jerusalemite Christians was divided into seven parties or families, for which there were as many places of public worship. The number seven was chosen as a favorite with the Jews; and so Hehr.'

V. 7. 'A happy event of a time of trial.' Beza. Indeed, the triumph of the Gospel, without this, would in some respects have been incomplete. It seems probable, that some of these converted priests became ministers of the Gospel: yet no intimation is given in the N. T., of any priest, of the family of Aaron, being employed as a Christian minister. John the Baptist was a priest; Barnabas was a Levite: but nothing else, in this respect, is said either of priests or Levites. It may, then, be a matter of inquiry, whether this circumstance were not intentionally ordered, to mark, not a gradual transition, but an immediate and entire change, in the external administration of the church. SCOTT.

V. 8. 'It appears plainly, from the foregoing history, that it was not as a deacon that he' (Stephen) 'preached: but the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit he received eminently qualified him for that work. And no doubt many Christians, not stately devoted to the ministry, and whose furniture was far inferior to his, would be capable of declaring Christ and his Gospel to strangers, in an edifying and useful manner, and would not fail accordingly to do it, as Providence gave them a call and an opportunity.' Doddr., in SCOTT.—'He that will plead a commission from

Ghost; he had a strong faith in the doctrine of Christ, and was full of it, above most; full of fidelity, full of courage, so some; for he was full of the Holy Ghost, of his gifts and graces; he was an extraordinary man, and excelled in everything that was good; his name signifies a crown. Philip is next, because he, having used this office of a deacon well, thereby obtained a good degree, and was afterward ordained to the office of an evangelist, a companion and assistant to the apostles, for so he is expressly called, ch. 21:8. Comp. Eph. 4:11. And his preaching and baptizing, which we read of, ch. 8:12. were certainly not as a deacon, for it is plain that that office was serving tables, in opposition to the ministry of the Word, but as an evangelist; and when he was preferred to that office, we have reason to think he quitted this, as incompatible. As for Stephen, nothing we find done by him, proves him to be a preacher of the Gospel; for he only disputes in the schools, and pleads for his life at the bar, v. 9. and ch. 7:2.

The last named is Nicolas, who, some say, afterward degenerated, and was the founder of the sect of the Nicolaitans, Rev. 2:6, 15. But some of the ancients clear him from that charge, and tell us, that though that vile, impure sect denominated themselves from him, yet it was unjustly, and because he only insisted much on it, that they that had wives, should be as though they had none; thence they wickedly inferred, that they that had wives, should have them in common; which therefore Tertullian, when he speaks of the community of goods, particularly excepts, all things are common among us, except our wives, Apol. eap. 39.

The apostles, (1.) Prayed with them, and for them, that God would give them more and more of the Holy Ghost, and of wisdom. All that are employed in the service of the church, ought to be committed to the conduct of the Divine grace by the prayers of the church. (2.) Laid their hands on them, that is, blessed them in the name of the Lord, for laying on hands was used in blessing; so Jacob blessed both the sons of Joseph; and, without controversy, the less is blessed of the greater, Heb. 7:7. the deacons, by the apostles, and the overseers of the poor by the pastors of the congregation. Having by prayer implored a blessing on them, they did by the laying on of hands assure them that the blessing was conferred in answer to the prayer; and this was giving them authority to execute that office, and laying an obligation on the people to be observant of them therein.

6. The advancement of the church hereupon, v. 7. (1.) The Word of God increased; now that the apostles resolved to stick more closely than ever to their preaching, it spread the Gospel further, and brought it home with the more power. Ministers, disentangling themselves from secular employments, and addicting themselves entirely and vigorously to their work, will contribute very much, as

a mean, to the success of the Gospel. (2.) The number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly. When Christ was upon earth, his ministry had least success in Jerusalem; yet now that city affords most converts. God has his remnant even in the worst of places. (3.) A great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. Then is the word and grace of God greatly magnified, when those are wrought upon by it, that were least likely, as the priests here, who either had opposed it, or at least were linked in with those that had. But they evidenced the sincerity of their believing the Gospel of Christ, by a cheerful compliance with all its rules and precepts.

V. 8—15. Stephen, no doubt, was diligent and faithful in his office, and though it appears here that he was a man of uncommon gifts, and fitted for a higher station, yet, being called to that office, he did not think it below him to do its duty. And being faithful in a little, he was intrusted with more; and though we do not find him propagating the Gospel by preaching and baptizing, yet we find him here called out to very honorable services, and owned in them.

I. He proved the truth of the Gospel, by working miracles in Christ's name, v. 8.

1. He was full of faith and power, i. e. of a strong faith, by which he was enabled to do great things. By faith we are emptied of self, and so are filled with Christ, who is the wisdom of God, and the power of God.

2. Being so, he did great wonders and miracles among the people, openly, and in the sight of all; for Christ's miracles feared not the strictest scrutiny. It is not strange that Stephen, though not a preacher by office, did these great wonders, for we find that these were distinct gifts of the Spirit, and divided severally, 1 Cor. 12:10, 11. And those signs followed not only them that preached, but them that believed, Mark 16:17.

II. He pleaded the cause of Christianity against those that opposed it, and argued against it, v. 9, 10.

1. His opponents, v. 9. Hellenist Jews, who seem to have been more zealous for their religion than the native Jews; they were of the synagogue of the Libertines; the Romans called those Liberti or Libertini, who, either being foreigners, were naturalized, or, being slaves by birth, were manumitted, or made freemen. Some think that these Libertines were such of the Jews as had obtained the Roman freedom, as Paul had, ch. 22:27, 28. and probably he was the most forward man of this synagogue of the Libertines in disputing with Stephen, and engaged others in the dispute; for we find him busy in the stoning of Stephen, and consenting to his death. There were others that belonged to the synagogue of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, of which synagogue the Jewish writers speak; and others that belonged to their synagogue, who were

God to preach the Gospel, without an ordinary mission, must show the like extraordinary gifts or miraculous assistances: God never sending any person to do his work, without some testimony from Himself, or from persons commissioned by Him.' Whitby, in SCOTT.—It is most likely Stephen was previously a preacher: but if not, it can hardly be supposed he would undertake that important office, however qualified, at Jerusalem, and amidst the apostles, without their sanction; or that others, in such circumstances, would do this. At the same time, it must fairly be allowed, that extraordinary cases may arise, which would justify the dispensing with ordinary rules; and remarkable persons may be raised up, though not endued with miraculous powers, who may be fully warranted to teach the ignorant, not only privately, but in the most public manner; though not expressly appointed to the ministry. John the Baptist wrought no miracles; yet his ministry, as entirely distinct from the priesthood, was from God, without any human appointment: and it is far from clear, that all the prophets wrought miracles; indeed it is recorded of only a few of them that they did; and they were not sanctioned, but opposed, by the stated ministers of religion; yet their calling was divine. This appeared by the agreement of their instructions with the Scripture, and by the effects of their labors. General rules, however, though they admit of some exceptions, form the measure of our conduct in all ordinary cases: and it is extremely dangerous to give a kind of unlimited sanction to all who suppose themselves, or are supposed by their favorers, to be qualified for the public ministry, to engage in it, without any appointment from the church and its ministers. SCOTT.



9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called *the synagogue* of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.

10 And they were not able <sup>n</sup> to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.

11 Then they suborned <sup>o</sup> men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God.

12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon *him*, and caught him, and brought *him* to the council,

13 And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law:

14 For <sup>p</sup> we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall <sup>q</sup> destroy this place, and shall change the <sup>r</sup> customs which Moses delivered us.

15 And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his <sup>s</sup> face as it had been the face of an angel.

<sup>n</sup> Lu. 21:15. <sup>p</sup> c. 25:8. <sup>r</sup> or, rites.  
<sup>o</sup> 2 K. 21:10, 13. <sup>q</sup> Da. 9:26. <sup>s</sup> Ex. 34:30, 35.  
Mat. 26:59, 60.

of Cilicia and Asia; and if Paul, as a free-man of Rome, did not belong to the synagogue of the Libertines, he belonged to this, as a native of Tarsus, a city of Cilicia; it is probable that he might be a member of both. The Jews that were born in other countries, and had concerns in them, had frequent occasion, not only to resort to, but to reside in, Jerusalem. Each nation had its synagogue, as in London there are French, and Dutch, and Danish churches: and those synagogues were the schools, to which the Jews of those nations sent their youth to be educated in the Jewish learning. Now those that were tutors and professors in these synagogues, seeing the Gospel grow, and the rulers conniving at the growth of it, and fearing what would be the consequence of it to the Jewish religion, which they were jealous for, being confident of the goodness of their cause, and their own sufficiency to manage it, would undertake to run down Christianity by force of argument; it was a fair and rational way of dealing with it, and what religion is always ready to admit. But why did they dispute with Stephen, and not with the apostles themselves? (1.) Some think, because they despised the apostles as *unlearned and ignorant men*, but Stephen was

bred a scholar, and they thought it their honor to meddle with their match. (2.) Others think, it was because they stood in awe of the apostles, and could not be so free and familiar with them, as they could be with Stephen, who was in an inferior office. (3.) Perhaps, they having given a public challenge, Stephen was chosen and appointed by the disciples to be their champion; for it was not meet that the apostles should leave the preaching of the Word of God, to engage in controversy. (4.) Some historians say, that Stephen had been bred up at the feet of Gamaliel, and that Saul and the rest of them set on him as a deserter, and with a particular fury made him their mark. (5.) Probably they disputed with Stephen, because he was zealous to argue with them, and convince them. And this was the service God had called him to.

2. We are here told how he carried the point in this dispute, v. 10. They could neither support their own arguments, nor answer his: though not convinced, yet they were confounded. It is not said, They were not able to resist *him*, but, They were not able to resist the *wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake*, that Spirit of wisdom which spake by him. Now was fulfilled that promise, Luke 21:15.

III. At length, he sealed it with his blood; so we shall find in the next ch., here we have some steps taken by his enemies towards it. When they could not answer his arguments as a disputant, they prosecuted him as a criminal, and suborned witnesses against him, to swear blasphemy on him. 'On such terms,' saith Baxter here, 'do we dispute with malignant men. And it is next to a miracle of Providence, that no greater number of religious persons have been murdered in the world, by the way of perjury and pretence of law, when so many thousands hate them, who make no conscience of false oaths.' They suborned men, instructed them what to say, and then hired them to swear it. Observe,

1. How, with all possible art and industry, they incensed both the government and the mob against him, that, if they could not prevail by the one, they might by the other, v. 12. They stirred up the people, that, if the Sanhedrim should still think fit to let him alone, yet they might run him down by a popular tumult; they also find means to stir up the elders and the scribes against him, that, if the people should countenance and protect him, they might prevail by authority.

2. How they got him to the bar; They came upon him in a body, and flew upon him as a lion on his prey; so the word signifies. Having caught him alone, they brought him triumphantly, and, as it should seem, so hastily, that he had none of his friends with him.

3. How they were prepared with evidence ready to produce against him, resolved

not to be run aground, as they were when they brought our Savior on his trial, and then were to seek for witnesses. These were got ready beforehand, and were instructed to make oath, that they had heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God, v. 11, 13, 14. Probably he had said something to that purport; and yet they who swore it against him are called *false witnesses*, because, though there was something of truth in their testimony, yet they put a wrong and malicious construction on what he had said, and perverted it. Christ, and the preachers of his Gospel, never said anything that looked like blaspheming Moses; they always quoted his writings with respect, appealed to them, and said no other things than what Moses said should come. But,

Let us see how this charge is supported and made out; why, truly, when the thing was to be proved, all they can charge him with, is, that he hath spoken blasphemous words against the holy place and the law; and this must be deemed and taken as blasphemy against Moses, and against God Himself. This holy place, some understand of the city of Jerusalem, which was the holy city, but it is rather meant of the temple, that holy house. He is charged, also, with blaspheming the law; of which they made their boast, and in which they put their trust, then when through breaking of the law they dishonored God, Rom. 2:23.

Well, but how can they make this out? Why, here the charge dwindles again; for all they can accuse him of, is, that they had themselves heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth, who was so much talked of, shall destroy this place, and change the customs which Moses delivered us. He could not be charged with having said anything to the disparagement either of the temple or of the law. He had said, *Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place*; destroy the temple, destroy Jerusalem; probably he might say so; and what blasphemy in that; or in this, that the just and holy God would not continue the privileges of his sanctuary to those that abuse them? Had not the prophets given the same warning to their fathers, of the destruction of that holy place by the Chaldeans? Nay, when the temple was first built, had not God Himself given the same warning, 2 Chr. 7:21. He had said, *This Jesus shall change the customs Moses delivered us*. And it was expected the Messiah should change them, and that the shadows should be done away when the substance was come; yet this was no essential change of the law, but the perfecting of it; and if the Jewish church had not obstinately adhered to the ceremonial law, for aught I know, their place had not been destroyed; so that for putting them into a certain way to prevent their destruction, and for giving them certain notice of their destruction if they did

PRACT. OBS. Unless partial and carnal self-love could be wholly destroyed out of every heart; envies, murmurs, jealousies, and discontents will creep in, and, in some degree, disturb every community on earth, however collected and governed. We should, however, repress the first risings of selfish passions in our own hearts; and endeavor to prevent them in others, or to remove all occasions of them from others, as far as we can: and, if they begin to appear, such concessions and regulations should be made, without delay, as may disappoint that enemy, who thus seeks to divide the house and kingdom against itself. In general, the ministers of Christ should leave to other men, as far as they can, the management of *secular* concerns, even such as belong to the church, or to charitable institutions; that they may keep clear of all suspicion of partiality or injustice, and be more at leisure, and unincumbered in attending to their proper office. But, if it be unreasonable

and sinful for them 'to leave the Word of God,' even to superintend the care of the poor, and those secular concerns which have an intimate connexion with piety and charity: how inexcusable must they be, who leave the public ministry, and even the care of the poor and sick, to others, and waste their time in dissipated pleasures, luxurious indulgence, ambitious and covetous pursuits, or such studies as are foreign to the clerical profession! or who spend their time, abilities, and zeal, in political [or sectarian] disputes!—How irrational a creature is man! To assert, that an intelligent being is capable of deliberately supporting a system of religion, by subornation, perjury, lying testimony, and murder, might have been deemed a libel on human nature, and on reason itself, had it not been done in numberless instances. But the blame rests not on the understanding, so much as on the 'desperately wicked' heart.

SCOTT.

V. 9—14. No doubt Stephen foretold, that Jesus would destroy the city and temple, in case the nation of the Jews persisted in opposition to Him: but the apostles did not understand, till long after, that the Mosaic law was to be abrogated; so that this was their inference from his doctrine: and as the temple and city had before been destroyed, and yet the ritual law of Moses had not been altered; this inference was precarious, and their testimony false.—(14.) *The customs.*] 'The rites.' The traditions of the elders, or what was called the *oral law*, as well as the written institutions of Moses, seem to have been meant. SCOTT.

(9.) *Libertines.*] 'Of Libertina, a town or district (which afterwards had an Episcopal See) of Lybia. Pearce. But if a people, the phrase

"called" would not be used. Most, from Chrysostom's time, think they were, as is most probable, Jews, who, taken by the Romans in war, and carried to Rome, were afterwards freed: at whose expence this synagogue was built. See Faccioliati's Lexicon. *Alexandrians.*] 'Jews of Alexandrian origin. These had two-fifths of Alexandria, and, so Philo, were very numerous there, having the freedom of the city, and their own prefect.' Jos.

(11.) *Blasphemous.*] 'Impious, abusive, and contumelious. This constituted a capital offence, since it involved contempt of the Temple and Religion (*Deyling*), which implied contempt of the Deity, who gave the Law, and was believed to be present in the Temple.' Id.





ALEXANDRIA, Egypt. Acts 6 : 9, 18 : 24, 27 : 6. P. 32.







## CHAP. VII.

1 Stephen, permitted to answer to the accusation of blasphemy, 2 sheweth that Abraham worshipped God rightly, and how God chose the fathers, 20 before Moses was born, and before the tabernacle and temple were built: 37 that Moses himself witnessed of Christ: 44 and that all outward ceremonies were ordained according to the heavenly pattern, to last but for a time: 51 reprehending their rebellion, and murdering of Christ, the Just One, who the prophets foretold should come into the world. 54 Whereupon they stone him to death, who commendeth his soul to Jesus, and humbly prayeth for them.

THEN said the high priest, Are these things so?

2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

3 And said<sup>b</sup> unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

4 Then<sup>c</sup> came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell.

5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised<sup>d</sup> that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.

6 And God spake on this wise, That<sup>e</sup> his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four<sup>f</sup> hundred years.

7 And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve<sup>g</sup> me in this place.

8 And<sup>h</sup> he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so<sup>i</sup> Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac<sup>j</sup> begat Jacob; and Jacob<sup>k</sup> begat the twelve patriarchs.

a c. 22:1. e Ge. 15:13, 16. i Ge. 21:1-4.  
b Ge. 12:1. f Ex. 12:40, 41. j Ge. 25:26.  
c Ge. 12:5. g Ex. 3:12. k Ge. 29:32, &c.  
d Ge. 13:15. h Ge. 17:9-11.

not take that way, he is accused as a blasphemer!

Lastly, We are here told how God owned him when brought before the council, v. 15. All that sat in the council, the priests, scribes, and elders, looking steadfastly on him, being a stranger they had not yet had before them, they saw his face as if it had been the face of an angel. It is usual for judges to observe the countenance of the prisoner, which sometimes is an indication either of guilt or innocence. Now Stephen appeared at the bar with the countenance as of an angel, never better pleased in his life than now, when called out to bear his testimony to the Gospel thus publicly, and stand fair for the crown of martyrdom. Such an undisturbed serenity, such an undaunted courage, and

such an unaccountable mixture of mildness and majesty, there was in his countenance, that every one said, he looked like an angel. It should seem there was a miraculous splendor and brightness on his countenance, like that of our Savior, when transfigured; or of Moses, when he came down from the mount; God designing thereby to honor his faithful witness, and confound his persecutors and judges, whose sin would be highly aggravated, and would be indeed a rebellion against the light, if, notwithstanding this, they proceeded against him. Wisdom and holiness make a man's face to shine, yet these will not secure men from the greatest indignities; and no wonder, when the shining of Stephen's face would not be his protection; though it had been easy to prove, that, if he had been guilty of putting any dishonor on Moses, God would not thus have put Moses' honor on him.

CHAP. VII. In this ch. we have the martyrdom of Stephen, the first martyr of the Christian church, who led the van in that noble army. Therefore his sufferings and death are more largely related than any other's, for direction and encouragement to all who are called out to resist unto blood. Here is, 1. His defence of himself before the council, in answer to the matters and things he stood charged with, the scope of which is to show, that it was no blasphemy against God, nor any injury at all to the glory of his name, to say, that the temple should be destroyed, and the customs of the ceremonial law changed. This he shows by going over the history of the O. T., and observing, that God never intended to confine his favors to that place, or that ceremonial law; and that they had no reason to expect He should; for the Jews had always been a provoking people, and had forfeited the privileges of their peculiarity; nay, that that holy place and that law were but figures of good things to come, and it was no disparagement at all to them to say, that they must give place to better things. He then applies this to them that prosecuted him, and sat in judgment on him, sharply reproofing them for their wickedness, by which they had brought on themselves the ruin of their place and nation, and then could not bear to hear of it. 2. His death by stoning, and his patient, cheerful, pious submission to it.

V. 1-16. I. The high priest calls on Stephen to answer for himself, v. 1. *Guilty or not guilty?* This carried a show of fairness, yet seems to have been spoken with haughtiness; and thus far he seems to have prejudged the cause, that, if it were so, that he had spoken such and such words, he shall certainly be adjudged a blasphemer, whatever he may offer in justification or explanation.

II. He begins his defence, and it is long; but it seems by his breaking off abruptly, just when he came to the main point, v. 50. it would have been much longer, had his enemies given him leave to say all he had to say. In general, 1. In this discourse he appears to be a man ready and mighty in the Scriptures, and thereby thoroughly furnished for every good word and work. They that are full of the Holy Ghost, will be full of the Scripture. 2. He quotes the Scrip-

tures, according to the Sept., by which it appears he was one of the Hellenist Jews, who used that version in their synagogues. His following that, occasions divers variations from the Heb. original, in this discourse, which the judges of the court did not correct, because they knew how he was led into them; nor is it any derogation to the authority of that Spirit by which he spake, for the variations are not material. These vs. carry on this his compendium of church-history to the end of Gen. Let us see what this is to Stephen's case.

(1.) They had charged him as a blasphemer of God, and an apostate from the church; therefore he shows he is a son of Abraham, and values himself on being a faithful worshipper of the God of Abraham, whom, therefore, he here calls the *God of glory*. He also shows that he owns divine revelation, and that particularly by which the Jewish church was founded and incorporated. (2.) They were proud of their being circumcised; therefore he shows that Abraham was taken under God's conduct, and into communion with Him, before he was circumcised, v. 8. With this argument Paul proves, that Abraham was justified by faith, because he was justified when he was in uncircumcision: and so here. (3.) They had a mighty jealousy for this *holy place*: the whole land of Canaan; called the *holy land*, *Immanuel's land*; the destruction of the *holy house*, inferred that of the *holy land*. 'Now,' says Stephen, 'you need not be so proud of it; for you came originally out of *Ur of the Chaldees*, where your fathers served other gods, Josh. 24:2. and you were not the first planters of this country. Further, God appeared in his glory to Abraham a great way off in Mesopotamia, before he came near Canaan, nay, before he dwelt in Charran; so that you must not think God's visits are to this land: no; He that brought the seed of the church from a country so far east, can, if He pleases, carry the fruit of it to another country as far west. Neither did God make haste to bring him into this land, but let him linger some years by the way, and his children 400 years: which shows that God has not his heart so much on this land as you have, neither is his honor, nor the happiness of his people, bound up in it. It is therefore neither blasphemy nor treason to say, It shall be destroyed.'

But how does this serve Stephen's purpose. [1.] Since things are thus as to the Jewish nation, what need is there of so much ado, as if their ruin, when they bring it on themselves by sin, must be the ruin of the world, and of all God's interest in it? No; He that brought them out of Egypt, can bring them into it again, as He threatened, Deut. 28:68. and yet be no loser, while He can, *out of stones*, raise up children unto Abraham. Besides, [2.] The slow steps by which the promise made to Abraham advanced toward the performance, and the many seeming contradictions here taken notice of, plainly show that it had a spiritual meaning, and that the land principally intended to be conveyed and secured by it, was, the *better country*, i. e. the *heavenly*: as the apostle shows from this very argument, Heb. 11:9, 10. It was therefore no blasphemy

NOTES. CHAP. VII. V. 2. *God of glory.* [I. e. most worthy of glory and honor; it is meant to refute the crimination of blasphemy against God. Stephen here follows the tradition of the Jews, that God appeared twice to Abraham; once when he was in Chaldea, and again at Charran. So Philo.]

V. 4, 5. Both 'Ur of the Chaldees,' and Charran, or Haran, were, properly speaking, in Mesopotamia; though Haran was much nearer to the promised land than Ur was. *Not so much, &c.* When Sarah died, Abraham had no land for a burying-place, till he bought it. Scott.

(4.) *After.* [I think with Mieh., Krauser, Morus, Ros., &c. that Stephen here also followed the Jewish tradition, that Abraham, after the death (i. e. the moral and allegorical death) of his father, migrated into Canaan. So Philo. For the Jews maintain, that Moses relates Terah's death by anticipation, because, from being a worshipper of God, he now became an idolater, and thus might be accounted dead (as the apostle says sinners are dead while they live), see Josh. 24:2. Judith 5:6,

7. *Kuin.* Bp. Lloyd, however, thinks the seventy yrs., at Gen. 11:26. relates only to the birth of Haran; and that Terah was 130 when he begat Abraham, and that, if so, A. was seventy-five, and T. (who died at 205) might have been dead when A. left Charran. Bp. Pearce? Bl.

V. 6. *Four hundred.* [I. e. in round numbers; 430 actually, as Jos., who in another place speaks [roundly] of 400. The Israelites abode 243 yrs. (as Koppe proves) in Egypt.] (So Bl.)

V. 7. [These words are not found in Gen. 15:13, &c. Krebs and others observe, that we have them in substance, in Gen. 15:12. but some, more justly, in Ex. 3:12. For it was a custom with the Jewish doctors (followed by the writers of the N. T., and Stephen here) when they cited any oracle of the O. T., to add some words elsewhere employed on the same subject, and those sometimes a little changed, and this, in order to amplify the thing. See Surenhusius. Besides, Stephen does not say the words were spoken to Abraham, but, [simply,] "God thus spake." Id. [See Woods's Lect. on Quotations.]



9 ¶ And the patriarchs, moved with <sup>l</sup>envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but <sup>m</sup>God was with him,

10 And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he <sup>n</sup>made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

11 Now <sup>o</sup>there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance.

12 But <sup>p</sup>when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

13 And at the second *time* Joseph <sup>q</sup>was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh.

14 Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to *him*, and all <sup>r</sup>his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls.

15 So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers,

16 And <sup>s</sup>were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor *the father* of Sychem.

17 ¶ But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had

l Ge. 37:28. Ps. o Ge. 41:54. r Ge. 46:7. De. 105:17. p Ge. 42:1,2. 10:22. m Ge. 39:2,21. q Ge. 45:4,15. s Jos. 24:32. n Ge. 41:40.

to say, *Jesus shall destroy this place*, when at the same time we say, 'He shall lead us to the heavenly Canaan, and put us in possession of that, of which the earthly Canaan was but a type and figure.' [3.] The building up of Abraham's family, with the entail

of divine grace upon it, and the disposals of Divine Providence concerning it, which take up the book of Genesis.

1st. God engaged to be a God to Abraham and to his seed; and, in token of that, appointed that he and his male seed should be circumcised, Gen. 17: 9, 10. by which he was both obliged by the divine law, and interested in the divine promise; for circumcision had reference to both. 2dly. Joseph, the darling and blessing of his father's house, was abused by his brethren; thus early did the children of Israel begin to grudge those among them that were eminent and outshone others; of which, their enmity to Christ, who, like Joseph, was a *Nazarite among his brethren*, was a great instance. 3dly. God owned Joseph in his troubles, and was with him, Gen. 39: 2, 21. by the influence of his Spirit, both on his mind, giving him comfort, and on the minds of those he was concerned with, giving him favor in their eyes. And thus he not only arrived at great preferment among the Egyptians, but became the *shepherd and stone of Israel*, Gen. 49: 24. 4thly. Jacob was compelled to go into Egypt, by a famine forcing him out of *Canaan, a dearth, a great affliction*, to that degree, that *our fathers found no sustenance*, even in Canaan, v. 11—14. They are said to be *70 souls*, Gen. 46: 27. But the Sept. there makes them 75, and Stephen or Luke follows that, as Luke 3: 36. where Caiman is inserted, that is not in the *Heb.* text, but in the Sept. Some, by excluding Joseph and his sons, who were in Egypt before, which reduces the number to 64, and adding the sons of the 11 patriarchs, make the number 75. 5thly. Jacob and his sons died in Egypt, v. 16. but were carried over to be buried in Canaan, v. 17. A very considerable difficulty occurs here: it is said, *They were carried over into Sychem*, whereas Jacob was buried not in Sychem, but near Hebron, in the cave of Machpelah, where Abraham and Isaac were buried, Gen. 50: 13. Joseph's bones, indeed, were buried in Sychem, Josh. 24: 32. and it seems by this, (though it is not mentioned in the story,) that the bones of all the other

patriarchs were carried with his, each of them giving the same commandment concerning them that he had done; and of them this must be understood, not of Jacob himself. But then the sepulchre in Sychem was bought by Jacob, Gen. 33: 19. and by that it is described, Josh. 24: 22. How then is it here said to be bought by Abraham? Dr. Whitby's solution of this is very sufficient. *Jacob went down into Egypt and died, he and our fathers*; and (*our fathers*) were carried over into Sychem; and he, i. e. Jacob, was laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money, Gen. 23. (Or, they were laid there, i. e. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.) And they, namely, the other patriarchs, were buried in the sepulchre bought of the sons of Emmor, the father of Sychem.

Let us now see what this is to Stephen's purpose.

1. He still reminds them of the *mean beginning* of the Jewish nation, as a check to their priding themselves in its glories; but if they answer not the intention of their being so raised, they can expect no other than to be destroyed. The prophets frequently put them in mind of the bringing of them out of Egypt, as an aggravation of their contempt of the law of God; and here it is urged on them as an aggravation of their contempt of the Gospel of Christ. 2. He reminds them likewise of the wickedness of those that were the patriarchs of their tribes, in envying their brother Joseph, and selling him into Egypt; and the same spirit was still working in them toward Christ and his ministers. 3. Their holy land, which they doted so much upon, their fathers were long kept out of the possession of, and met with *dearth and great affliction* in it; therefore let them not think it strange, if, after it has been so long polluted with sin, it be at length destroyed. 4. The faith of the patriarchs, in desiring to be buried in the land of Canaan, plainly showed that they had an eye to the heavenly country, which it was the design of this Jesus to lead them to.

V. 17—29. I. Stephen here goes on to

V. 9—13. The argument of this passage seems to be, that, as the patriarchs must have perished, if Joseph, whom they had envied and injured, had not been advanced to authority, and thus enabled to preserve them; so must the Jews and their rulers perish, unless Jesus, whom they had despised and crucified, but whom God had highly exalted, should graciously save them. As therefore Joseph's brethren at length submitted to him, and were forgiven; so ought they to submit, and seek forgiveness from the glorified Messiah. (10) *Favor*.] Many understand this of the courteous and graceful deportment of Joseph, as conciliating the favor of all men, in connexion with his wisdom. SCOTT.

(10.) *Gave, &c.*] 'Gave him favor in the sight of Pharaoh by his wisdom.' Grot., Ros., Kuin., Bloomf., &c. Ed.

V. 14. Seventy persons, including Jacob and Joseph, and Joseph's two sons, are reckoned up by Moses; among whom were some grandchildren of Benjamin, who was not above twenty-five years of age, when Jacob went down into Egypt. And several grand-children of Joseph are named in Chr., who are not mentioned in Gen. (1 Chr. 7: 16, 20.) It is undeniable, that some of the grand-children of Jacob's sons, who afterwards became heads of families in their tribes, were included in the number stated by Moses: and is it not the most obvious way of settling the difficulty, between his account, and that of Stephen from the Sept., to include five grand-children of Joseph? Some learned men indeed would make up the number, by the wives of the patriarchs: but it must have been very extraordinary at least that, with so many sons and grandsons, there should have been no more than five women! and, if there were many more, why should five only be here added to the number? Only two females (Dinah, and Serah, a descendant of Gad) are mentioned in Gen.: and the Sept., which Stephen seems to have referred to, may be thus tr.: 'All the souls which came with Jacob into Egypt, who came out of his loins, apart from the wives of Jacob's sons, all the souls were sixty-six. But the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in the land of Egypt, were nine. All the souls of the house of Jacob, who went down with Jacob into Egypt, were seventy-five souls.' Joseph, and his two sons, and Jacob himself, complete the seventy of our version: and though the Sept. is not very accurate or perspicuous in this statement, three things are sufficiently clear: 1. That the additional five mentioned in it were not women. In fact, with what propriety could the wives of Jacob's sons be said to come out of his loins? 2. That they were sons, or male descendants of Joseph. And, 3. That the family of Jacob, containing some born in Egypt, and Joseph who was carried thither long before, as well as Jacob, and those who went down with him, are included.—'Reckoning some of the children born in Egypt, together with Joseph and his sons, and his sons' sons, made up seventy-five persons.' Hammond. SCOTT. 'The most probable [reconciliation of Acts with Gen.] says *Kuin.*, is that adopted by Hammond, Cappellus, Wetst., Mich., Kreuse, Ros., &c. who remark, that the Sept. numbered among the posterity of Jacob the five sons of Manasseh and Ephraim, born in Egypt [who in scripture-style might be said to be [34]

in his loins, and are by a figure said to have gone down with him, the greater part, too, here denominating the whole. Ed.] and that these five were omitted by Moses, because they were born after Jacob's departure, but by the Sept. at Gen. 46: 20. are expressly added from 1 Chr. 7: 14. (&c.) That there were in Stephen's time various calculations of this number (and so no inaccuracy to be supposed in the SS.) is evident from *Philo.*, who, touching on this matter in an allegory, mentions both numbers. *Kuin.* The very perplexed and dubious question, as *Bloomf.* (whom see) remarks, is, like most such, of little importance. Ed.

V. 15, 16. It appears from this passage, and it is indeed highly probable in itself, and confirmed by ancient tradition, that the bodies of all Jacob's sons were embalmed, and carried up by their descendants, to be interred in Canaan. Jacob was buried in the cave of the field of Machpelah, with his fathers, Abraham and Isaac. This Abraham bought of Ephron the Hittite. But Joseph, and probably his brethren, were buried at Sychem, or Shechem, in the piece of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Emmor, or Hamor, the father of Shechem; and which he left as an inheritance to the descendants of Joseph. 'Jacob died, he and our fathers, and they' (our fathers) 'were carried over to Sychem and buried, he' (that is Jacob) 'in the sepulchre which Abraham bought for a sum of money; and they' (the other patriarchs) 'in that of the sons of Emmor, the father of Sychem.' This rendering has been proposed by several eminent men, to remove the obvious difficulty of reconciling the passage with the history in *Gen.* 33: 19. *Gen.* 48: 22. *Josh.* 24: 29—32, v. 32. But it is rather a paraphrase than a tr.; and not a fair paraphrase of the present text. SCOTT.

(16.) 'The difficulties here may be satisfactorily solved, if "carried over" and "laid" be referred only to the words "our fathers," and "Abraham" be cancelled as spurious. Then tr. thus: "they were removed to Sychem, and were buried in a sepulchre which had been bought for a sum of money from the sons of Emmor, father of Sychem." Now it was a common tradition of the Jews, not only that the bones of Joseph, but also of his *eleven brethren*, were buried at Sychem; as appears by the rabbinical passages in Lightf. and Wetst. And so Jer. But Jos. says, the patriarchs were buried at *Hebron*. The tradition therefore was two-fold and different. And since we learn from Scripture, that at *Hebron* were buried *Abraham, and Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob*, and (according to report) *Adam and Eve*; especially too, as nothing is said in the SS. of the burial-place of the *brethren*, so arose the tradition that the *brethren also* of Joseph were buried there.—At "bought," Beza, Boeh., and Pierce, siband "Jacob," from the context (comp. v. 15); and they think that "Abraham" was *foisted in*. So also Bayer, Wasenburger, Valckn., and Tittman, who refer the word (with great probability) to the glosses. It is unquestionable, that sometimes *all* the MSS. unite in a false reading (see [my] note on Mark 15: 25); and the introduction of the present one may be easily accounted for.' BLOOMF.

V. 17—20. The words here rendered, 'exceeding fair,' some have rendered, 'Beloved by God;' but this is not a just tr. Neither is there



sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,

18 Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.

19 The same dealt subtly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.

20 In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months :

21 And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.

22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

23 And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian :

25 For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them : but they understood not.

26 And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another ?

27 But he that did his neighbor wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us ?

28 Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday ?

t Ex. 1:7-9. w or, fair to God. z Ex. 2:11, &c.  
u Ex. 1:22. x Ex. 2:10. a or, Now.  
v Ex. 2:2, &c. y Lu. 24:19.

relate, the wonderful increase of the people of Israel in Egypt, in a little time, from a family into a nation, v. 17; and the extreme hardships they underwent there, v. 18, 19.

any ground to conclude, either that Moses prophesied, as some have supposed, or indeed had true faith and grace, till a short time before he visited his brethren. The clause 'fair to God,' seems to refer to the Lord's purposes concerning Moses, which induced Him to preserve him, when other children were destroyed; and by means of his extraordinary beauty to accomplish this. Moses might be 'mighty in words,' as capable of calm, forcible, and conclusive reasoning; and yet be slow of speech, and destitute of the graces of elocution, as he modestly pleaded concerning himself. He had received some general intimation, that he should deliver his people; but it does not appear, that he was expressly commissioned to attempt their deliverance at this time. From some general computation, it is probable he supposed the appointed time was at hand; but forty years more must elapse, before that event actually took place. He also concluded, that when so distinguished a person, as he had been in Pharaoh's court, renounced all his prospects, to join interests with his enslaved people, as the deliverer whom God had raised up; they too, remembering the prediction and promise to Abraham, would readily attach themselves to him: but in this he found himself mistaken. 'The speech of this single person is represented (35), as expressing the sentiments of the whole body of the people: as their slowness afterwards to believe the mission of Moses, when attested by miracles, seems evidently to show that it was.' *Doddr.* *Scott.*

(18.) *Another king, &c.* Of another family or dynasty; as we learn from *Jos. Bloomf.* — who understands *knew not*, to mean *carred not*. But comp. *Wiseman's Lects. and Notes*, end of Gen., Ex. 1:8. Ps. 105:23-25. *Ed.*

(19.) 'To *egyptize*, came to be used for to act cunningly, use wicked devices.' *Dr. A. C. Pricæus* best paraphrases, 'By oblique arts and crafty counsel he plotted our destruction, by imposing upon us heavier burdens than we were able to bear, that we might, without open force, be reduced to extinction.' So an expression in *Ezekiel* the Tragedian, and *Philo*, on this very subject: and not only by imposing severe labors, that they should be thereby deterred from matrimony, or abandon their children (as some savages do) and [but] be themselves worn out by excessive fatigues. [Comp. note, Ps. 81:6.] The words "cast out," &c. refer to the Israelites exposing their own children.' *Bloomf.*

(20.) *Exceeding fair, Mar., fair to God.* 'The Hebrews, inasmuch as the excellence of the God of nature and of all virtue is considered as

Now he seems to observe this to them, not only that they might further see how mean their beginnings were, Ezek. 16:4. and how much they were indebted to God for his care of them, which they had forfeited, and made themselves unworthy of; but also that they might consider, that what they were now doing against the Christian church in its infancy, was as impious and unjust, and would be in the issue as fruitless, as that the Egyptians did against the Jewish church in its infancy.

II. Stephen was charged with having spoken *blasphemous words against Moses*; in answer to which charge, he here speaks very honorably of him.

I. Moses was born when the persecution of Israel was at the hottest, v. 20. and was himself in danger, as soon as he came into the world, as our Savior also was at Bethlehem, of falling a sacrifice to that bloody edict. God is preparing for his people's deliverance, then when their day is darkest, and their distress deepest. 2. *He was exceeding fair*; he was sanctified from the womb, which made him beautiful in God's eyes. 3. He was wonderfully preserved in his infancy, first, by the care of his tender parents, and then by a favorable providence, that threw him into the arms of Pharaoh's daughter, v. 21. Whom God designs to make special use of, He will take special care of. And did He thus protect the child Moses? Much more will He secure the interests of his holy Child Jesus, ch. 4:27. from the enemies gathered against Him. 4. He was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, v. 22. then famed for all manner of polite literature, particularly philosophy, astronomy, and (which perhaps helped to lead them to idolatry) hieroglyphics. Moses, having his education at court, had opportunity of improving himself by the best books, tutors, and conversation, in all the arts and sciences, and had a genius for them. Only we have reason to think he had not so far forgotten the God of his fathers, as to acquaint himself with the unlawful studies and practices of the magicians of Egypt, any further than was necessary to confute them. 5. He became a prime minister of state in Egypt; that seems to be meant by his being *mighty in words and deeds*. And in business none went on with such courage, and conduct, and success. Thus was he prepared, by human helps, for those services, which, after all, he could not be thoroughly furnished

for without divine illumination. Now, by all this, Stephen will make it appear, that notwithstanding the malicious insinuations of his persecutors, he had as high and honorable thoughts of Moses as they had.

III. Stephen notes the attempts Moses made to deliver Israel, which they spurned. This he insists much on, and it serves for a key to this story, Ex. 2:11-15. as does also that other construction of the apostle's, Heb. 11:24-26. There it is represented as an act of holy self-denial, here as a designed entrance on the public service he was to be called out to, v. 23. *When he was full 40 years old*, in the prime of his time for preferment in the court of Egypt, *it came into his heart* (for God put it there) *to visit his brethren the children of Israel*, and to see which way he might do them any service; and he showed himself as a public person, with a public character:

1. As Israel's savior, v. 24. which, if he had been only a private person, he could not lawfully have done; but he knew his commission from heaven would bear him out; and he supposed that his brethren (who could not but have some knowledge of the promise made to Abraham, that the nation that should oppress them, God would judge) would have understood that God by his hand would deliver them; for he could not have had, either presence of mind, or strength of body, to do what he did, if he had not been clothed with such a divine power as evidenced a divine authority. 2. As Israel's judge; offering to accommodate matters between two contending Hebrews, wherein he plainly assumed a public character, v. 26. *He showed himself to them as they strove*, and, putting on an air of majesty and authority, *he would have set them at one again*, and as their prince have determined the controversy between them, saying, *Sirs, ye are brethren*, by birth and profession of religion; *why do ye wrong one to another?* He gave them excellent laws and statutes, and determined on their complaints and appeals made to him, Ex. 18:16.

But the contending Israelite, that was most in the wrong, thrust him away, v. 27. would not bear the reproof, though a just and gentle one, for proud and litigious spirits are impatient of check and control, but was so enraged, that he upbraided Moses with the service he had done to their nation, in killing the Egyptian, which, if they had pleased, would have been the earnest of further and greater service, v. 28. Charging that upon

Supreme, [comp. note Ex. 22:28, used, in order to express the magnitude or preëminence of anything, to adjoin to the positive, names of God, and even of the angels, which thus had the force of adjectives. So Ps. 36:7. 30:4. Cant. 8:6,7. Rev. 21:11. Wisd. 16:20. (See *Glass* and *Nold.*) In the Greek writers we have not the name of God, but the adjective *theios, daimonios, ouranios*. [God-ish, deity-like, heavenly, sometimes serving a similar purpose, and denoting personal beauty, as *theoides*, and *theotikëlos* [god-like.] See *Elsner* and *Abresch*. The Hebrews, too, are accustomed to indicate the excellence or complete perfection of anything, by prefixing to the name of God the particle *L (to)*, so that *lelohyim* [lelohym] or *lyhvvh* [to Gods, to Jehovah] may be equivalent to *lpyy or lãyny*, before, in the sight of God, i. e. *judice Deo*. Thus *Jon.* 3:11. *Gen.* 10:9. See on *Luke* 1:6. And *Jos.* calls Moses *paida morphë Theion*, [divinely beautiful. *Bloomf.*]

(22.) *Wisdom of Egypt.* Astrology, (including astronomy,) the interpretation of dreams, physic, magic (so called, the innocent part), medicine, mathematics, &c. (*Bloomf.*); the arts, mechanical, chemical, ornamental; the science of government, military tactics, &c. See their remaining monuments, and *Rosellini, Wilkinson, Champollion, &c.* Note, end of *Jer.* ch. 43. *Himerius* calls Egypt 'the mother of wise words'; *Athen.* says, *Helen* derived much learning from the 'wise men of Egypt'; *Aristides* and *Herod.* call the Egyptians 'the wisest of all men'; *Macrob.* calls Egypt 'the mother of the arts.' See also *Lucian, Val., Max., Diog. Laert., Strabo, Appian, Jos., &c.*, and an immense number of citations in *Wetst.* Comp. 1 K. 4:30. *Bloomf. In words.* Though, as to *utterance*, stammering, yet in Pharaoh's court eloquent, able, persuasive, solid, powerful, and wise in his oratory. See *Krebs, Hamm., Doddr., Newc., &c.* *In deeds.* *Jos.* relates, that Moses made a successful campaign against the Ethiopians, and the Ed. sees no improbability in the tradition, though, as *Bloomf.* remarks, it is very uncertain if this is alluded to here. *Ed.*

(24.) *Oppressed.* 'Properly, worn down, or out, [see on v. 19.] with labor, affliction, ill-treatment, [sickness.] It cannot be proved that Moses meant to slay the Egyptian; his act was justifiable as living under a tyrant who afforded them no legal protection; they had thereby returned to a state of nature, and were at liberty to use its rights, which *Grot.* says, gave [the power of death] to an innocent person, and his defender. The Pentateuch neither praises nor blames the action.' *Bloomf.*



29 Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons.

30 And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.

31 When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him,

32 Saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold.

33 Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground.

34 I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt.

35 This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer, by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

36 He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, forty years.

37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

38 This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness, with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sina, and with our fathers; who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

h Ex. 3:2, &c. f Ex. c. 7, 8, 9, 10, k He. 2:2.  
 c Mat. 22:32. He. 11, 14. l Is. 63:9. Ga.  
 11:16. g Ex. 16:35. 3:19.  
 d Jos. 5:15. Ec. h De. 18:15, 18. c. m Ex. 19:3, 17.  
 5:1. 3:22. n De. 5:27, 31. Ju.  
 e Ex. 14:19. Nu. l or, as myself. 1:17.  
 20:16. j Mat. 17:5. o Ro. 3:2.

him as his crime, and threatening to accuse him for it, which was the hanging out of the flag of defiance to the Egyptians, and

the banner of love and deliverance to Israel: hereupon *Moses fled into the land of Midian*, and made no more attempt to deliver Israel till 40 years after; he settled as a stranger in Midian, married, and had two sons, by Jethro's daughter, v. 29.

Now let us see how this serves Stephen's purpose. (1.) They charged him with blaspheming Moses, in answer to which he retorts on them the indignities their fathers did to Moses, which they ought to be ashamed of, and humbled for, instead of picking quarrels thus, under pretence of zeal for the honor of Moses, with one that had so great a veneration for him. (2.) They persecuted him for disputing in defence of Christ, and his Gospel; 'but,' saith he, 'you had best take heed,' [1.] 'Lest you hereby do as your fathers did, refuse and reject one whom God has raised up to be to you a Prince, and a Savior; you may understand, if you will not wilfully shut your eyes against the light, that God will, by this Jesus, deliver you out of a worse slavery than that in Egypt; take heed then of thrusting Him away, but receive Him as a Ruler and a Judge over you.' [2.] 'Lest you hereby fare as your fathers fared, who, for this, were justly left to die in their slavery, for the deliverance came not till forty years after.' Mat. 23: 38, 39.

V. 30—41. Stephen here proceeds in his story of Moses; and let any one judge, if anything could be spoken more honorably of him. Here is,

I. His vision of the glory of God at the bush, v. 30. Stephen notices this, and its being called holy ground, v. 33. as a check to those who prided themselves in the temple, that holy place, as if there were no communion to be had with God but there; whereas God met Moses, and manifested Himself to him, in a remote, obscure place in the wilderness of Sinai. Moses wondered at a sight all his Egyptian learning could not solve. He had the curiosity at first to pry into it; but the nearer he drew, the more he was struck with amazement. He trembled, and durst not look wistly upon it; for he was soon aware that it was not a fiery meteor, but no other than the Angel of the covenant, the Son of God Himself. Stephen was accused for blaspheming Moses, ch. 6: 11. as if Moses had been Divine; but by this it appears, that he was a man subject to like passions as we are; and particularly that of fear, on any appearance of the Divine Majesty and glory.

II. The declaration he heard of the covenant of God, v. 32. the covenant God made with Abraham some ages ago, I will be to thee a God, a God all-sufficient. 'Now,' saith God, 'that covenant is still in full force; and now I will make it to appear so;' for all the favors, all the honors God put upon Israel, were founded upon this covenant with Abraham, and flowed from it. If the covenant be good, then God will be a

God to their souls, and is so now they are separated from their bodies. Our Savior; by this, proves the future state, Mat. 22: 31. Those therefore who stood up in defence of the Gospel, and endeavored to propagate that, so far from blaspheming Moses, did the greatest honor imaginable to Moses, and that glorious discovery God made of Himself to him at the bush.

God, in declaring Himself thus the God of their fathers, intimated his kindness also to their seed, that they should be loved for the fathers' sakes, Rom. 11: 28. Deut. 7: 8. Now the preachers of the Gospel preached up this covenant, the promise made of God unto the fathers; unto which promise, those of the 12 tribes, that did continue serving God, hoped to come, ch. 26: 6, 7. And shall they, under color of supporting the holy place, and the law, oppose the covenant which was made with Abraham and his seed, his spiritual seed, before the law was given, and long before the holy place was built? Since God's glory must be for ever advanced, and our glorying for ever silenced, God will have our salvation to be by promise, and not by the law; the Jews, therefore, who persecuted the Christians, under pretence that they blasphemed the law, did themselves blaspheme the promise, and forsook all their own mercies that were contained in it.

III. The commission God gave him to deliver Israel out of Egypt. The Jews set up Moses in competition with Christ, and accused Stephen as a blasphemer, because he did not do so too. But Stephen here shows that Moses was an eminent type of Christ, as he was Israel's deliverer. It should seem, though God is present in all places, yet the expression, coming down to deliver them, is used, because that deliverance was typical of what Christ did, when, for us men, and for our salvation, He came down from heaven.

IV. His acting in pursuance of this commission, wherein he was a figure of the Messiah. And Stephen notices here again the slights they had put upon him, the affronts they had given him, and their refusal to have him to reign over them, as tending very much to magnify his agency in their deliverance. Now, by this example, Stephen would intimate to the council, that this Jesus whom they now refused, as their fathers did Moses, even this same has God advanced to be a Prince and a Savior, a Ruler and a Deliverer; as the apostles had told them a while ago, ch. 5: 30. that the Stone which the builders refused, was become the head-stone in the corner, ch. 4: 11. For it does not at all derogate from Moses' just honor to say, that he was but an instrument, and that he is outshone by this Jesus, whom he encourages these Jews yet to elose with, and to come into his interest, not fearing but that then they should be received into his favor, and receive benefit by Him, as the people of Israel

V. 29, 30. 'Pharaoh, as soon as he knew that Moses [so distinguished a person] acted the patron and advocate of the Israelites, sought him out for punishment; and Moses fled, perceiving the time for their deliverance was not yet come.' *Kuin.* 'Midian.' Gr. *Midiam*: note, end of ch. *Sinoi*.] Comp. Ex. 3:1. 'Horeb': they were two peaks of the same mountain: note, end of ch. Ed.

V. 30—36. Some make the expression, that 'God sent Moses, by the hand of the angel,' an objection to the conclusion, that this was not a created angel, but the 'Angel Jehovah,' the Angel or Messenger of the covenant, the Word and Son of God, by whom He has always been declared unto men. *Mal.* 3:1—4, v. 1. *John* 1:18. But it only implies the distinct personality of the Father and the Son; and that the Son, having undertaken to become incarnate, always was the medium of communication between the invisible God and sinful man: and though He often appeared in human form, yet was He 'the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob;' being One with and equal to the Father. 'It would be too frigid an interpretation to say, that the Lord called Moses by the ministrition of an angel; when, (unless I am deceived,) this also is signified, that Moses was armed by his hand and power, seeing that Angel, namely Christ, (as the apostle explains it, 1 Cor. 10: 9.) was the true Deliverer and Leader, whose servant Moses was.' *Beza.* (34) *I have seen, &c.*] This varies considerably from the Sept., Ex. 3:7. and also from the Heb. [for Stephen, of course, quotes from memory.] But it gives the general meaning very clearly. Scott.

(33.) 'In all ages, and among all nations, cleanliness [note, Ex. 29: 4.] in the celebration of sacred rites has been thought especially requi-

site; so it was usual to direct the shoes or sandals of the worshipper to be taken off, previous to his entrance into a sacred edifice.' *Bloomf.*

V. 38. *Lively oracles.*] *Logia zōnta*: 'As the subject is plainly the promulgation of the Law, by *logia tou Theou* (answering to the Heb. *amroth rbay* in Ps. 139:38 and 58. Num. 24:4.) are meant my divine oracles. See the examples in Raphael. Now this, in respect of the context, is to be understood of promises and divine precepts. They are moreover said to be *zōnta*, which *Pisc.*, *Alb.*, and *Heum.*, explain *delivered viva voce*. But this signification is unauthorized. Others, as *Heinrichs*, explain *zōnta*, *valid*, strong, *efficacious*, quoting Heb. 4:2. where the apostle speaks of divine threatenings which will assuredly have their event, and in *Soph.*, where *panteia zōnta* means *oracles of certain fulfillment*. Now *zōn* is, not unfrequently, used metaphorically of what flourishes, exerts its force, &c., and *Morus* would explain *zōnta*, 'efficacious for procuring rewards and blessings.' But there is no need to resort to any such *ambages*. *Zēn* is often, in the Sept. and N. T., equivalent to *zoopoiein*; [life-causing;] ns in 6:51. Heb. 10:20. where *odos zōsa* is explained by *Theophylact*, *zoopoiousa*, [life-making,] *cis zēn ogousa*, [leading to life.] And in Deut. 32:47. the Law is said to be *zōt*, *salvation*. Therefore *logia zōnta*, are most salutary precepts. *Kuin*. In this last mode of interpretation I must acquiesce. It had been long ago brought forward by *Drusius*, *Beza*, *Vntabul*, and *Grot.*, (confirmed by the *Vulg.* "vivifica"); as also by *Pearce*, *Valckn.*, and *Schleusner*. Now *logion* denotes an oracular response, delivered in *prose*; *chrēsmos*, one in *verse*. So *Thucyd.* The name *logia* came nt length to denote the Scriptures. So *Procop.*, who mentions *ta Christianōn logia.* Id.



39 To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt,

40 Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

41 And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.

42 Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven: as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts, and sacrifices, by the space of forty years in the wilderness?

43 Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made, to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

44 Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen.

45 Which also our fathers that came after, brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David;

46 Who found favor before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.

47 But Solomon built him an house.

p Ex. 32:1. u or, who spake. y Ne. 9:24. Ps.  
q De. 9:16. Ps. v Ex. 25:10. 26: 44:2. 73:55.  
105:19,20. 30. He. 8:5. z 1 Sa. 16:1.  
r Ps. 81:12. w Jos. 3:14. a 1 Ch. 22:7.  
s De. 4:19. 2 K. x or, having re- b 1 K. 6:1, &c.  
17:16. Je. 19:13. ceived. 8:20.  
t Am. 5:25:26.

were delivered by Moses, though they had once refused him.

V. His prophecy of Christ and his grace, v. 37. This is spoken of, as one of the greatest honors God put upon Moses, that by him He gave notice to the children of Israel of the great Prophet that should come into the world, raised their expectation of Him, and obliged them to receive Him. When his bringing of them out of Egypt is spoken of, it is with an emphasis of honor, *this is that Moses!* Ex. 6:26. And so it is here, *this is that Moses!* Now this is very full to Stephen's purpose; in asserting [insinuating, perhaps?] that Jesus should change the cus-

V. 40. *To go before.*] 'It seems to have been the custom of the Oriental nations of antiquity, to bear the images of the gods [cuts Is. 46:1,2. Am. 5:26.] before the people in journeys or military expeditions, or in going out to battle; since thus, they imagined, they should more effectually enjoy their guidance, protection, and support. Num. 10:33. Deut. 31:8, 15. 4:3, 25. 3:21.'

V. 41. *Calf.*] Thinking (so *Le Clerc*) they were left to make their own laws, Ex. 33:1. the Israelites, after an Egyptian fashion, of symbolizing their divinities, [note, Jer. 43. end.] made this symbol of the true God. 'Under the figure of *Apis*, who was a bullock, [note, and cut, 1 K. 12:28.] the Egyptians worshipped *Osiris*, who formerly was an Egyptian king, and was supposed to have invented or introduced agriculture, horticulture, &c. That the *ox*, which among the ancients was a symbol of agricultural labor, was to the Egyptians a symbol of *Osiris*, we learn from Plutarch.'

V. 43. *Tabernacle, &c.*] Cut and note, Am. 5:26. 'Moloch was a hollow image, (of brass, *Jarchi*), with the face of a calf and the hands outstretched. *Drusius*, *Witsius*. *Grot.*, *Drusius*, *Mich.*, *Gabler*, &c., understand *Saturn*; *Spencer*, *Deyling*, *Braun*, *Wits.*, *Kraus*, *Morus*, *Ros.*, *Heinr.*, &c., after *Theophylact*, make *Moloch* to be the sun. For the Egyptians worshipped the sun, and believed that the soul of *Osiris* [see on v. 41.] had migrated into it. (*Euseb.*) See *Spencer*. Hence *Moloch*,

to the ceremonial law, he was so far from blaspheming Moses, that really he did him the greatest honor imaginable, by showing how the prophecy of Moses was accomplished, which was so clear, that, as Christ told them Himself, *if they had believed Moses, they would have believed Him*, John 5:46.

He charged them, therefore, to hear that Prophet, to receive his dictates, to admit the change He would make in their customs, and to submit to Him in everything, as the greatest honor they can do to Moses and to his law, who said, *hear ye Him*; and came to be a witness to the repetition of this charge by a voice from heaven, at the transfiguration of Christ, and, by his silence, gave consent to it, Mat. 17:5.

VI. The eminent services Moses continued to do to the people of Israel, after he had been instrumental to bring them out of Egypt, v. 38. And herein, also, he was a type of Christ, who yet so far exceeds him, that it is no blasphemy to say, 'He has authority to change the customs that Moses delivered.' 1. Christ is the President and Guide of a more excellent and glorious church than that in the wilderness was, and is more in it, as the life and soul of it, than Moses could be in that. 2. Moses was immediately conversant with God, but never lay in his bosom as Christ did from eternity. Or, these words, v. 38. may be taken thus; *Moses was in the church in the wilderness*, but it was with the angel that spake to him in mount Sinai, that is, at the burning bush; for that was said to be at mount Sinai, v. 30. that angel went before him, and was guide to him, else he could not have been a guide to Israel; of this, God speaks, Ex. 23:20, and 33:2. And see Num. 20:16. He was in the church with the angel, without whom he could have done no service to the church; but Christ is Himself that Angel, which was with the church in the wilderness, and therefore has an authority above Moses. 3. Moses received the lively oracles from God, and delivered nothing as an oracle to the people, but what he had first received from God. It was the principal privilege of the Jews, that to them were committed the oracles of God: and it was by the hand of Moses that they were committed. As Moses gave them not that bread, so neither did he give them that law from heaven, John 6:32. but God gave it them; and He that gave them those customs by his servant Moses, might, no doubt, when He pleased, change the customs by his Son Jesus, who has received more lively oracles to give unto us, than Moses.

VII. The contempt that was, after this, and notwithstanding this, put on him by their own ancestors, v. 35. They murmured, mutinied, refused to obey his orders, and, sometimes were ready to stone him. They made a calf, as if that were as capable of going before them as he was. Observe, their secret disaffection to Moses, and inclination to Egyptianism, (if I may so call it,) were, in effect, turning back to Egypt, it was doing it in heart; many that pretend to be going toward Canaan, by keeping up a show of

religion, are in their hearts turning back to Egypt, like Lot's wife to Sodom; and will be dealt with as deserters, for it is the heart God looks at. Now if the customs Moses delivered to them, could not prevail to change them, wonder not that Christ comes to change the customs, and to introduce a more spiritual way of worship.

V. 42—50. Two things we have in these verses.

I. Stephen upbraids them with the idolatry of their fathers, which God gave them up to, as a punishment for their early forsaking Him, in worshipping the golden calf. Comp. Deut. 4:19. with Jer. 8:2.

For this he quotes a passage out of Amos 5:25, as less invidious. Some think *Remphan* signifies the moon, as *Moloch* does the sun; others, take it for *Saturn*, for that planet is called *Remphan*, in the Syriac and Persian languages. The Sept. puts it for *Chion*, as being a name more commonly known. They had images representing the star, like the silver shrines for *Diana*, here called the figures which they made to worship. *Lightfoot* thinks they had figures representing the whole starry firmament, with all the constellations, and the planets, and these are called *Remphan*, 'the high representation,' like the celestial globe.

Now for this it is threatened, *I will carry you away beyond Babylon*. In *Amos* it is *beyond Damascus*, meaning to *Babylon*, the land of the north. But Stephen changes it, with an eye to the captivity of the ten tribes, who were carried away beyond *Babylon*, by the river of *Gazan*, and in the cities of the *Medes*, 2 K. 17:6. Let it not therefore seem strange to them, to hear of the destruction of this place, for they had heard of it many a time from the prophets of the O. T. who were not therefore accused as blasphemers by any but the wicked rulers. It was observed, in the debate on *Jeremiah's* case, that *Mical* was not called to an account, though he prophesied, saying, *Zion shall be ploughed as a field*, Jer. 26:18, 19.

II. He gives an answer particularly to the charge exhibited against him relating to the temple, that he spake blasphemous words against that holy place, v. 44—50. He was accused for saying, that Jesus would destroy this holy place; 'And what if I did say so?' saith Stephen; 'the glory of the holy God is not bound up in the glory of this holy place, but that may be preserved untouched, though this be laid in the dust;' for,

1. It was not till our fathers came into the wilderness, in their way to Canaan, that they had any fixed place of worship; and then at first it was but a tabernacle, mean and movable, speaking itself to be short-lived, and not designed to continue always, a tabernacle of witness only, or of testimony, a figure for the time then present, Heb. 9:9. 8:2. framed just as God appointed, and according to the fashion Moses saw in the mount; which plainly intimates, that it had reference to good things to come; its rise being heavenly, its meaning and tendency were so; therefore, since the case was such as to the temple, and

as the Mexican idols (*Humboldt*), had the head of an ox. See *Munthe's Bloomf.* Ed.

V. 44—50. The language of their prophets, as well as the Bab. captivity, should have taught the Jews to expect, that the temple would be destroyed, whenever their presumption and rebellion provoked God to be their enemy. 1 K. 8:27. 9:3—9. Is. 66:1, 2. Jer. 7:1—15. The chosen race, Abraham and his seed, had served God above 400 years, before the law of Moses was promulgated, or the tabernacle erected; and Solomon's temple was not built till 480 years afterwards. So that nearly half the time, from the calling of Abraham till the coming of the Messiah, the true worshippers had served God, without the temple: and could those things be essential to true religion, which had not existed during so many ages? (49, 50) *Heaven*, &c.] The quotation is not made exactly from the LXX; (*Is.* 66:1, 2.) and it varies both from that and the Heb., by putting the last clause as a question: 'Hath not?' 'As Stephen had been accused of blaspheming the temple; he, with great propriety, takes occasion to speak of their sacred places with due reverence, as raised by special direction from God; and yet corrects that extravagant regard to them, and confidence in them, which the Jews were ready to entertain.

SCOTT. Daddr. (44.) *Of witness.*] 'Marturion also means teaching.' *Hammon.*

KUIN.



48 Howbeit, <sup>e</sup> the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet,

49 Heaven <sup>d</sup> is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?

50 Hath not my hand made all these things?

51 Ye <sup>e</sup> stiff-necked, and <sup>f</sup> uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye.

52 Which <sup>e</sup> of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the <sup>b</sup> Just One, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

53 Who have received the law by <sup>i</sup> the disposition of angels, and have not kept *it*.

54 ¶ When they heard these <sup>j</sup> things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with *their* teeth.

55 But he, being <sup>k</sup> full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

c 1 K. 8:27. f Le. 26:41. Je. h c. 3:14.  
c. 17:24. 9:26. Ro. 2:28, i Ga. 3:19.  
d Is. 66:1,2. 29. j c. 5:33.  
e Ex. 32:9. g 2 Ch. 36:16. 1 k c. 6:5.  
Is. 43:4. Th. 2:15.

the patriarchs worshipped acceptably in the open air, it was no diminution at all to its glory, to say, *that this temple made with hands should be destroyed*, in order to the building of *another made without hands*; which was Christ's crime, Mark 14: 58. and Stephen's.

2. That tabernacle was pitched first in the wilderness; it was not a native of this land of yours, but was brought in, in the next age, by our fathers, who came after those who first erected it, into the possession of the Gentiles, into the land of Canaan, *whom God drove out before the face of our fathers*; and why may not God set up his spiritual temple, as He did the material tabernacle, in countries now *the possession of the Gentiles*? That tabernacle was brought in by those who came *with Jesus*, that is, *Joshua*, as, for distinction-sake, and to prevent mistakes, it ought to be read, both here and Heb. 4: 8. *Joshua* being named here, which, in Greek, is *Jesus*, by way of tacit intimation, that as the O. T. *Joshua* brought in that typical tabernacle, so the N. T. *Joshua* should bring in the true tabernacle into the possession of the Gentiles.

3. That tabernacle continued *even to the days of David*, above 400 years, before there was any thought of building a temple, *v. 45*. God had his heart so little on a temple, or, such a *holy place* as they were so jealous for, that, when David desired to build one, he was forbidden to do it; God was in no haste for one, as He told David, 2 S. 7: 7. therefore it was not he, but his son Solomon, some years after, that built Him a house. David had all that sweet communion with

God in public worship, which we read of in his Psalms, before there was any temple built.

4. God often declared, that temples, made with hands, were not his delight, nor could add anything to the perfection of his rest and joy. And as the world is God's temple, wherein He is manifested, Rom. 1: 20. so it is God's temple in which He will be worshipped. It was therefore no reflection at all on this holy place, however they might take it, to say *that Jesus shall destroy this temple*, and set up another, into which all nations shall be admitted, *ch. 15: 16, 17*. And it would not seem strange to them who considered that scripture Stephen quotes, Is. 66: 1—3. which, as it spake God's comparative contempt of the external part of his service, so it plainly foretold the rejection of the unbelieving Jews, and the welcome of the Gentiles into the church, that were of a contrite spirit.

V. 51—53. Stephen was going on in his discourse, (as it should seem by the thread of it,) to show that, as the temple, so the temple-service must come to an end, and it would be the glory of both to give way to that *worship of the Father in spirit and in truth*, which was to be established in the *kingdom of the Messiah*, stripped of the pompous ceremonies of the old law; and so he was going to apply all he had said, more closely to his present purpose; but he perceived they could not bear it. If he tell them their power and tyranny must come down, and the church must be governed by a spirit of holiness and love, and heavenly-mindedness, they will not so much as give him the hearing. Probably he perceived they were going to silence him; therefore he breaks off abruptly, and by that spirit of wisdom, courage, and power, wherewith he was filled, he sharply rebukes his persecutors; for if they will not admit the testimony of the Gospel to them, it shall become a testimony against them.

I. They, like their fathers, were stubborn and wilful, and would not be wrought upon by the various methods God took to reclaim and reform them: but were enraged and incensed against them; *Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost*.

1. They resisted the Holy Ghost speaking to them by the prophets, whom they contradicted, hated, and ridiculed; this seems especially meant here, by the following explication, *Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?* Their fathers resisted the Holy Ghost in the prophets that God raised up to them, and so did they in Christ's apostles and ministers, who spake by the same Spirit, and had greater measures of his gifts than the prophets of the O. T. had, and yet were more resisted.

2. They resisted the Holy Ghost striving with them by their own consciences, and would not comply with their convictions and dictates. There is that in our sinful hearts, that always resists the Holy Ghost; a flesh that lusts against the Spirit, and wars against his motions; but in the hearts of God's elect, when the fulness of time comes, this resistance is overpowered, the throne of Christ set up in the soul, and every thought that had *exalted itself* against it, *brought into captivity* to it, 2 Cor. 10: 4, 5. That grace, therefore, which effects this change, might more fitly be called *victorious* grace, than *irresistible*.

II. They, like their fathers, persecuted and slew those whom God sent unto them to call them to duty, and make them offers of mercy. 1. What aggravated the sin of their fathers, was, that the business of the prophets they were so spiteful at, was, to *show before of the coming of the Just One*; to give notice of God's kind intentions toward that people, to send the Messiah among them in the fulness of time. 2. They, however, had been the *betrayers and murderers of the Just One* Himself, as Peter had told them, *ch. 3: 24. 5: 30*. They had hired Judas to betray Him, and had, in a manner, forced Pilate to condemn Him; therefore, it is charged upon them, that they were his betrayers and murderers. Thus they were the genuine seed of those who slew them that foretold his coming, which, by slaying Him, they showed they would have done if they had lived then; and thus, as our Savior had told them, they brought on themselves the guilt of the blood of all the prophets.

III. They, like their fathers, put contempt on divine revelation, and would not be guided and governed by it; and this was the aggravation of their sin, that God had given, as to their fathers his Law, so to them his Gospel, in vain. 1. The law is said, *v. 53. to be received by the disposition of angels*, because angels were employed in the solemnity of giving it; in the thunderings and lightnings, and the sound of the trumpet, Gal. 3: 19. Deut. 33: 2. Heb. 2: 2. This put an honor both on the law and the Law-giver, and should increase our veneration for both. 2. They received the Gospel now, by the disposition, not of angels, but of the Holy Ghost; not with the sound of a trumpet, but, which was more strange, in the gift of tongues, and yet they did not embrace it.

Stephen, probably, had much more to say, and would have said it, if they would have suffered him; but they were wicked and unreasonable men with whom he had to do, that could no more *hear*, than *speak*, reason.

V. 54—60. We have here the death of the first martyr of the Christian church; and there is, in this story, a lively instance of the outrage and fury of the persecutors, and of the courage and comfort of the persecuted. Here is hell in its fire and darkness, and heaven in its light and brightness; and these here serve as foils to set off each other. It is not here said, that the votes of the council were taken on his case, and that by the majority he was found guilty, and then condemned and ordered to be stoned, according to the law, as a blasphemer; but, it is likely, so it was, and that it was not by the violence of the people, without order of the council, that he was put to death; for here is the usual ceremony of regular executions,—he was *cast out of the city, and the hands of the witnesses were first upon him*.

Let us observe, here, the wonderful discomposure of the spirits of his enemies and persecutors, and the wonderful composure of his spirit.

I. See the strength of corruption in the persecutors of Stephen; malice in perfection, hell itself broken loose, men become incarnate devils, and the serpent's seed spitting their venom!

1. *When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, v. 54.* the same word used

V. 51—53. The supposition [that he here broke off, as suggested in Henry] is the more probable, as Stephen began his defence in the most calm and respectful language, and touched on such topics, as were suited to conciliate and gain the attention of the audience: but nothing can well exceed the marked severity of his conclusion. Had it not been expressly stated, that he was 'full of the Holy Ghost,' when he spake it, many would have been ready to censure him: but probably he was sensible, that the council were determined on his death, out of desperate enmity to his Lord; and he was moved to bear this awful testimony against them, and thus to warn them against that destruction, which they were about to bring on themselves; without further respect to their rank, or fear of their vengeance; but not without tender compassion for their souls, as his dying prayer evinced. 'Stephen, fired with a divine zeal, at length judges those who sat in judgment on him.' *Beza.*

The crucifixion of Christ was the most flagrant violation of the sixth commandment, which ever was committed: and if David, having shed blood in war, or even having shed the blood of Uriah, must not build the temple; could it be supposed that the temple would be continued to those, who had shed the blood of the prophets, and filled up the measure of their crimes by 'crucifying the Lord of glory?' *SCOTT.*

(53.) *Angels.*] 'The ancient Jews believed that God, on all solemn occasions when He declares his special presence, was thus accompanied.'

V. 55. *Standing, &c.*] 'This does not (like the phrase sit at the right hand of God) denote the royal dignity and majesty of God, but (as is remarked by Oecumen., from Chrys., and other Fathers) the present and perpetual assistance of God. So Grot., Taylor, Doddr., Ros., Knappe, Kuin.'

BLOOMF.



56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!

1 Eze. 1:1. 13:12,13. q Ps. 31:5. Lu.  
ni Da. 7:13. o c. 6:13. 23:46.  
n Lu. 4:29. He. p c. 8:1,3. 22,20.

Heb. 11:37. and translated, *they were sawn asunder*. They were put to as much torture in their minds, as ever the martyrs were put to in their bodies. They were filled with indignation at the unanswerable arguments Stephen urged for their conviction, and that they could find nothing to say against them. They were not pricked to the heart with sorrow, as those were *ch. 2:37*. but cut to the heart with rage and fury, as *ch. 5:33*. Note, Rejecters of the Gospel, and opposers of it, are really tormentors to themselves. Enmity to God is a heart-cutting thing; faith and love are heart-healing. Gnashing with the teeth is often used to express the horror and torments of the damned. Those that have the malice of hell, cannot but have with it some of the pains of hell. *They cried out with a loud voice, v. 50*. to irritate and excite one another, and to drown the noise of the clamors of their own and one another's consciences: when he said, *I see heaven opened*, they cried with a loud voice, that he might not be heard to speak. It is very common for a righteous cause, particularly the righteous cause of Christ's religion, to be endeavored to be run down, by noise and clamor; what is wanting in reason is made up in tumult, and the cry of him that ruleth among fools, while the words of the wise are heard in quiet. *They stopped their ears*, under pretence, perhaps, that they could not bear to hear his blasphemies; *Mat. 26:64, 65*. a manifest specimen of their wilful obstinacy, and a fatal omen of that judicial hardness to which God would give them up. *Make the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy*; thus was Stephen's character of them answered, *Ye uncircumcised in heart and ears*. 2. *They ran upon him with one accord*; the people, and the elders of the people, judges, prosecutors, witnesses, and spectators, they all flew upon him, as beasts on their prey; violent, in haste, unanimous, one and all, envying him his composure and comfort in soul, with which he wonderfully enjoyed himself in the midst of this fury. *They cast him out of the city, and stoned him*; as if he were not worthy to live in Jerusalem, nay, in the world; pretending, herein, to execute the law of Moses, *Lev. 24:16*. Thus they had put Christ to

death, when this same court had found Him guilty of blasphemy, but that, for his greater ignominy, they were desirous that He should be crucified, and God overruled it for the fulfilling of the Scripture. The witnesses against him were the leaders in the execution, according to the law, *Deut. 17:7*. and particularly in the case of blasphemy, *Lev. 24:14*. *Deut. 13:9*. Thus they were to confirm their testimony. Now the stoning being laborious, the witnesses put off their upper garments, and laid them at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul, now a pleased spectator of this tragedy; it is the first time we find mention of his name; we shall know it and love it better when we find it changed to Paul, and him from a persecutor to a preacher, *ch. 22:20*.

II. See the strength of grace in Stephen, and the wonderful instances of God's favor to him, and working in him. As his persecutors were full of Satan, so was he full of the Holy Ghost, fuller than ordinary, anointed with fresh oil for the combat, that as the day, so might the strength be. Now here we have a remarkable communion between this blessed martyr and the blessed Jesus, in this critical moment. Observe, 1. Christ's gracious manifestation of Himself to Stephen, both for his comfort and for his honor, in the midst of his sufferings; when they were cut to the heart, and gnashed on him with their teeth, then he had a view of the glory of Christ, sufficient to fill him with joy unspeakable; which was intended not only for his encouragement, but for the support and comfort of all God's suffering servants, in all ages. Lifting up his soul with his eyes to God in the heavens, in pious ejaculations, calling on God for wisdom and grace to carry him through this trial in a right manner; some think his sight was so raised above its natural pitch, by a supernatural power, that he saw into the third heavens, as Moses' sight was enlarged to see the whole land of Canaan. Others think it was a representation of the glory of God set before his eyes, as before Isaiah and Ezekiel; the heavens were opened, to give him a view of the happiness he was going to, that he might, in prospect of that, go cheerfully through so great a death.

He saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God, *v. 55*. the Son of man, so it is, *v. 56*. Jesus having taken our nature with Him to heaven, and being there clothed with a body, might be seen with bodily eyes, and so Stephen saw Him. When the O. T. prophets saw the glory of God, it was attended with angels; in Isaiah's vision, with seraphim; in Ezekiel's, with cherubim; both signifying the angels, the ministers of God's providence. But here no mention is made of the angels; instead of them, Stephen sees Jesus at the right hand of God, the great Mediator of God's grace, from whom more glory redounds to God than from all the ministrations of the holy angels. The glory of God shines brightest in the face of Jesus Christ; for there shines the glory of his grace, which is the most illustrious instance of his glory. Here is a proof of the exal-

tation of Christ to the Father's right hand; the apostles saw Him ascend, but Stephen saw Him there; and was abundantly satisfied with the sight. He is usually said to sit there; but Stephen sees Him standing there, as one more than ordinarily concerned at present for his suffering servant; He stands ready to receive him and crown him, and in the mean time to give him a prospect of the joy set before him. Nothing so comfortable to dying saints, nor so animating to suffering saints, as to see Jesus at the right hand of God; and, blessed be God, by faith we may see Him there. What was so cordial to him, ought to have been a conviction to them, and a caution to take heed of proceeding against one on whom heaven thus smiled; therefore, what he saw he declared, *v. 56*. If some were exasperated by it, others perhaps might be wrought upon to consider this Jesus whom they persecuted, and to believe in Him.

2. His pious addresses to Jesus Christ, *v. 59*. It is good to die praying; then we need help,—strength we never had, to do a work we never did; and how must we fetch in that help and strength, but by prayer? Two short prayers Stephen offered up to God, in his dying moments, and in them as it were breathed out his soul. (1.) For himself; *Lord Jesus receive my spirit*. We are here taught to resign our spirit into the hands of Christ, as Mediator, by Him to be recommended to the Father. It is necessary that we have an eye to Christ when we come to die, for there is no venturing into another world but under his conduct; no living comforts in dying moments, but what are fetched from Him. We ought to be in care about this while we live, that Christ may receive our spirits when we die; for if He reject and disown them, whither will they betake themselves?

(2.) For his persecutors, *v. 60*; herein following the example of his dying Master. Prayer may preach; this did so to those who stoned Stephen; and therefore he knelt down, that they might take notice he was going to pray, and cried with a loud voice, that they might take notice of what he said, and might learn, that what they did was a sin, a great sin, which, if divine mercy and grace did not prevent, would be laid to their charge, to their everlasting confusion; and yet, that, notwithstanding their malice and fury against him, he was in charity with them, and was so far from desiring that God would avenge his death on them, that it was his hearty prayer to God, that it might not, in any degree, be laid to their charge: it might teach them, too, that, though the sin was very heinous, yet they must not despair of pardon, on repentance. 'Do you think,' saith Austin, 'that Paul heard Stephen pray thus? It is likely he did,' saith he, 'and ridiculed it, then, but afterward he had the benefit of it.'

3. His expiring with this; observe, He fell asleep when praying for his persecutors; it is expressed as if he thought he could not die in peace till he had done that. It contributes very much to our dying comfortably,

V. 59. The prayer of Stephen was a most direct act of divine worship rendered to Jesus, appearing in human nature, as the Son of man, and attended by a vision of the glory of God. The word God does not occur in the original. To receive a departing soul to glory, and to pardon the guilt of most aggravated murder, are acts of divine power and authority; and it would be evidently most unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to make such requests to any mere creature, whether present, or absent. (*Mat. 9:2—8*.) Indeed the Socinians are most grievously perplexed by this undeniable fact: after many other attempts to evade our inference from it, in which they have been evidently baffled in the argument; some very learned men have lately ventured to say, 'that the example of a man, in an ecstasy of devotion, and in the agonies of death, is not proper to be imitated by the whole church of God.' As if modern reasoners could better direct our faith and practice, than this apostolical Protomartyr, when 'full of the Holy Ghost,' when immediately favored 'with the visions of God,' and when replete with the very light, joy, and temper of heaven itself!—And let it here be observed, that we bring a very large number of positive evidences, to support the truth of this doctrine. If then objectors make very feeble efforts to invalidate the testimony of each of them, considered as detached from

the rest, so that each still evinces the point in question; how very powerful must be the combined proof of the whole! For if twenty, or forty, or more, such texts were expunged out of the Bible, we should not want sufficient, yea, unanswerable evidence of the Deity of Christ. It is here also inquired, By what authority did the Jewish council put Stephen to death? In the case of Jesus, they allowed, that they had no such authority: and it is probable that their situation was still the same. (*John 18:28—32*.) Had they proceeded to pass a legal sentence on Stephen, they would perhaps have obtained permission from Pilate to execute it: but they stoned him in a popular fury, without any regular sentence, and the governor might choose to connive at it, as he did at some of their subsequent persecutions. (*8:1—4. 9:1, 2*.) 'The Jews were more than once ready to stone Christ, not only when by their own confession they had not power to put any one to death; but when nothing had passed which had the shadow of a legal trial. (*John 8:59. 10:31. 18:31*.)' *Dodtr.*—When the Jews would afterwards have put Paul to death, the chief captain and the governor hindered them: and yet, if he had been killed, it is not unlikely that the irregularity would have been connived at, had it not been discovered that he was a Roman citizen.



60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge! And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

### CHAP. VIII.

<sup>1</sup> By occasion of the persecution in Jerusalem, the church being planted in Samaria, <sup>5</sup> by Philip the deacon, who preached, did miracles, and baptized many, among the rest Simon the sorcerer, a great seducer of the people: <sup>14</sup> Peter and John come to confirm and enlarge the church: where, by prayer and imposition of hands giving the Holy Ghost, <sup>18</sup> when Simon would have bought the like power of them, <sup>20</sup> Peter sharply reproving his hypocrisy and covetousness, and exhorting him to repentance, together with John preaching the Word of the Lord, return to Jerusalem. <sup>25</sup> But the angel sendeth Philip to teach and baptize the Ethiopian eunuch.

AND Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

r Mat. 5:41. Lu. 23:34. a c. 7:58. b c. 11:19.

to die in charity with all men; we are then found of Christ in peace. He fell asleep; the vulgar Latin adds, *in the Lord*; in the embraces of his love.

CHAP. VIII. In this ch. we have an account of the persecutions of the Christians, and the propagating of Christianity thereby. It was strange, but very true, that the disciples of Christ, the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied. Thus in different ways and methods the Gospel was dispersed

PRACT. OBS. We should be ready to 'give a reason of the hope that is in us,' to inquirers of every description: this ought indeed to be done in meekness, and with cautious fear of disgracing a cause, which should be dearer to us than our lives; but we may confidently rely on the Lord to 'give us in the same hour what we should speak,' if called to answer for ourselves before the enemies of his truth. In all addresses to those who allow the truth of the Scriptures, we should call their attention to them, lodge our appeal with them, and thence deduce our arguments.—It is very lawful and expedient to express approbation of men's opinions, as far as consistent with truth, and even to avoid the mention of their more harmless prejudices; in order that we may reason with them from their own principles, and so oppose their erroneous

V. 60. The early loss of so eminent a minister of Christ, in this manner, must indeed have been a heavy affliction to the church; but how animated was his end! how suited to confirm the faith of the disciples! What an example also were his boldness and tenderness, even for his murderers! The instruction and encouragement of this single scene might produce the most beneficial effects on multitudes, and that permanently; even far greater, than the long-continued labors of many eminent ministers. Such in general has been the event of bloody persecution; and 'the noble army of martyrs' have done more, perhaps, towards the success of the Gospel, by their sharp but transient sufferings, than the whole company of those who have professed and preached the truth, in quiet times; and without being called forth, thus to show, in the fiery trial, the energy of their principles, and the power of divine grace, to the confusion of their enemies, and the encouragement of their brethren. SCOTT. *Lay.* 'Stēsēs, from *istēmi*, which, like the Heb. *shql*, signifies to try weight by the balance. The Jews (so Elsner) used to say, that the virtues and vices of all men would, at the last day, be cast into the scales of two balances, and they would be everlastingly happy or eternally miserable, as those or these preponderated. A dogma adopted into the Mahometan system. [Comp. Job 31:6. Ps. 90:8. and note and out, Dan. 5:27.]

#### BLOOMF.

Concluding Note. *Madian*, v. 29. *Wilderness*. *Sina*, &c. v. 30.] Part of this region is thus described by Laborde and Burckh., whom see. 'The route I followed, [from Sinai, E. then N. W. up Wady Sahal, then S. E. down Wady Cheick and Wady Zackal to Dahab, on the Gulf of Akaba, E. of Mt. Sinai, then back through Wady Zackal into Wady Cheick, then N. E. through Wady Safran to Akaba,] passed through a series of long ravines, [Wadys,] running in different directions. . . In Wady Cheick, in the middle of the valley, at the place called El Boueb, is an isolated rock, 7 ft. high. It is at an angle made by two turnings of this narrow and gigantic defile of perpendicular limestone, chalk, and granite rocks, at the point where its seclusion protects it from the rays of the sun, and the voice of man and the cry of the camel are reflected back in sonorous echoes. Our Arabs dismounted silently from their camels, and, approaching the rock, passed the right hand over its surface, smooth by the frequency of these touches, and then drew it back again to the forehead, crying out "El Fatha," the usual invocation during journeys and dangers of any description. Tradition relates, that Moses rested on this stone while yet a shepherd, meditating his projects of delivering Israel. Another version of the story makes it Mahomet's resting-place, while a camel driver; and here he is said to have composed some verses of his Koran. . . On quitting this passage, the traveller perceives Mt. Sinai, whose prominent point is overhung by Mt. St. Catharine, [the Horb of the SS. and a peak of Sinai,] which is more rounded in its form; [so that the burning bush, if in the top of Sinai, would ever appear also as on Floreb.] They were both then capped with snow. Crossing an intersecting ridge, we descended into Wady Zackal, a valley, which continues on to the gulf. Our road was the most singular that the imagination can picture. The valley shut in within a width of about 50 paces, by masses of granite, 1000 to 1200 ft. high, often perpendicular to their very tops, looked like a Cyclopean street, from which, on each side, seemed to be adjoining streets, all belonging to some ancient and abandoned town. The extraordinary shapes and immensity of the masses accumulated on the right and left, were calculated to terrify [Deut. 1:19] and almost to overwhelm the mind; an effect not a little augmented by the enormous fissures here and there, presenting huge fragments, tumbled from the mountain-tops. The silence around was that of the grave: the wind was unheard, amidst these almost subterranean passages, the sun touched with its golden hue only the most elevated points, every step and sound of our voice was reechoed. This curious passage leads

among the nations, and, one way or other, Have they not all heard?

V. 1—3. I. Christ had told his disciples, when parting with them, John 16: 20. *Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.* Accordingly here is,

1. Stephen's death rejoiced in by many, no doubt, but by one in particular, and that Saul, afterward called Paul; he was *consenting to his death, consented with delight*; so the word signifies; hoping it would stop the growth of Christianity. We have reason to think Paul ordered Luke to insert this, for shame to himself, and glory to free grace. Thus he owns himself guilty of the blood of Stephen, and aggravates it.

2. Stephen's death bewailed by others, v. 2. *Devout men*, which some understand of those that were properly so called, *proselytes*, one of whom Stephen himself, probably, was. Or, it may be taken more largely; some of the church more devout and zealous than the rest, went, and gathered up the poor, crushed remains, to which they gave a decent interment; probably in the *field of blood*, which was bought some time ago to bury strangers in. They buried him solemnly, and made great lamentation over him. Though his death was of great advantage to himself, and great service to the church, yet they bewailed it as a general loss, so well qualified was he to be useful, both as a deacon and as a disputant. It is an ill symptom, if, when such men are taken away, it is not laid to heart.

II. An account of this persecution of the church, which begins on the martyrdom of Stephen. When the fury of the Jews ran

with such violence, and to such a height, against Stephen, it could not quickly either stop itself, or spend itself. The bloody are often in Scripture called *blood-thirsty*; for when they have tasted blood they thirst for more. One would have thought Stephen's dying prayers and dying comforts should have overcome them, and melted them into a better opinion of Christians and Christianity. 1. As Christ often intimated, that tribulation and persecution would arise *because of the Word*; and particularly that persecuting Jerusalem would soon be made too hot for his followers, Mat. 23: 37. so here it begins, and many were put to death, for Paul owns that at this time he persecuted this way *unto the death*, ch. 22: 4. and ch. 26: 10. that *when they were put to death he gave his voice against them*. 2. None was so zealous, so busy in it, as Saul, a young Pharisee, v. 3. *He made havoc of the church*, did all he could to lay it waste and ruin it; aimed at no less than the cutting off of the Gospel-Israel, Ps. 83: 4. He was the fittest tool the chief priests could find to serve their purposes; he was informer-general against the disciples, a messenger of the great council, to be employed in searching for meetings, and seizing all that were suspected. Bred a scholar, a gentleman, yet he did not think it below him to be employed in the vilest work of that kind: entering into every house where they used to keep their meetings, or every house that had any Christians in it, or was thought to have. No man could be secure in his own house, though it is his castle. Both men and women he dragged along the streets, without

conclusions and evil practices.—It is also profitable to recur to the first rise of those usages or sentiments, which have been warped or perverted. Would we know the nature and effects of justifying faith, we should study the character of 'the father of the faithful.' Jesus is the great 'Angel of the covenant,' who brings his people from bondage, through the wilderness to their promised rest; and all the scenes exhibited in Egypt, at the Red Sea, at Sinai, and in Canaan, shadowed forth his excellences and his glorious salvation. But any kind of false religion, or irreligion, however absurd, by which men rejoice in their own works and imaginations, is more suitable to the carnal mind, than the spiritual truth and worship set before us in the sacred Scriptures! SCOTT.

gently down to the sea-coast, to the palm trees of Dahab, which, without any assistance from cultivation, are constantly increasing in number, at a point where the sand and the rocks, driven down through the valley by the winter torrents, form a boundary to the sea. This place, now inhabited only by 4 poor Arabs, and visited by wretched caravans, for its well, *I take to be the Midian of Jethro.* Laborde. 'To the N. of Dahab (which is properly the Dizahab, Deut. 1:1.) is a bay, with good anchorage, except in N. winds. The plantations of date-trees (close to the shore of the low promontory) are enclosed by low walls, and have many wells of indifferent water, but are 25 ft. deep; and, 50 yds. from the sea, had the best water on any part of this coast. 2 miles S. of the date-groves, in shallow ponds, filled at high tide, salt is made, which supplies all the peninsula, as well as the fishermen, for curing their fish. Dahab is a favorite resort of the fishermen.' Burckh. Ed.

NOTES. CHAP. VIII. V. 1. The whole subsequent history shows, that a great number of believers continued at Jerusalem: though it is probable, that the most of those, who commonly resided in other countries, returned home at that time: and many others doubtless fled from the storm.—It is a very ancient tradition, that our Lord assigned 12 years after his ascension, for the conversion of the unbelieving Jews in Judea, saying to his apostles, Go ye out into the world after 12 years. It shows the reason, why the apostles continued at Jerusalem, while the rest of the disciples were scattered abroad, *Whitby*. As the Scripture says nothing of this, it is far more probable, especially after the command before given, (5:20.) that the apostles, considering the importance of their station at this crisis, and the necessity of showing both friends and enemies, that they were not to be intimidated; and, depending on special protection, acted as Daniel did on a similar occasion, and left the event to God. (Dan. 6.)—As the disciples had before lived in much harmony and comfort together, they would not perhaps have thought of separating so soon, if this storm had not arisen: thus the efforts of Satan and his servants were overruled for the promulgation of the Gospel; while the apostles were competent for all the work which was to be done in Jerusalem, and the persecution would not prevent, but forward their success. SCOTT. 'There now commences a new period of Christian history, in the first epoch of which (narrated ch. 1—7.) the Christian society consisted of Jews only, who had hitherto remained in Jerusalem. For although many of those who, on the day of Pentecost, had come hither from various regions, seem, after their return home, to have communicated to their countrymen some idea, however imperfect, of Christian doctrine; yet the apostles had hitherto continued within Jerusalem, nor had they yet taught in any other country. The congregation, therefore, at Jerusalem, was tolerably numerous; but it had not yet entirely separated itself from the Jewish communion; since we read that, during the whole of this first period, the apostles and all other Christians yielded obedience to the Jewish Sanhedrim, frequented the temple at the stated hour of prayer, and taught in it. In one respect only, was there seen any vestige of a private society, namely, that the Christians had their funds for the relief of the poor, the administration of which they committed to the care of seven persons, whom they called Deacons. Now follows Luke's narration of the further propagation and the fortunes of the Christian religion.' Ros.



2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house; and haling men and women, committed them to prison.

4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word.

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing, and seeing the miracles which he did.

7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

c c. 26:10, 11. Ga. e 2 Ch. 30:12. h Ma. 2:3—11. c.  
1:13. f Jn. 4:41, 42. 9:33, 34.  
d c. 6:5. g Ma. 16:17. t Mat. 11:5.

any regard to the tenderness of the weaker sex, so extremely bigoted was he; he committed them to prison, in order to their being tried and put to death, unless they would renounce Christ; and some, we find, were compelled by him to blaspheme, *ch. 26: 11*. 3. The effect of this persecution. They were all scattered abroad, *v. 1*. not all the believers, but all the preachers, \* they being principally struck at, and remembering our Master's rule, *When they persecute you in one city, flee to another*; they looked upon it as an intimation of Providence to them to scatter; their Master had told them that they must be his witnesses in Jerusalem first, and then in all Judea and in Samaria, and then to the uttermost parts of the earth, *ch. 1: 8*. The preachers were all scattered except the apostles, who, probably, were directed by the Spirit to continue at Jerusalem yet for some time, they being, by the special providence

\* Was not every believer, *v. 4*. required to be, more or less, a preacher, and witness? See Note, *Lu. 24:36—43. Ed.*

V. 2. Thus honorably and publicly to bury one stoned by the council, as a blasphemer, and as such accused, was a very courageous display of faith, zeal, and confidence in God. It must also have greatly offended the persecutors; and, perhaps, served as a pretence for their subsequent violence. 8.

V. 3. 'It was the Sanhedrim's duty, to take care that no false doctrines should be promulgated, and to make inquisition after those who were introducing innovations into the church.'

V. 4. *They that were scattered, &c.* [Not the whole church of Jerusalem, or the body of the laity; . . . for what authority had they to preach the Word? but the hundred and eight that were "full of the Holy Ghost." *Whitby*.—The whole company, after our Lord's ascension, was about one hundred and twenty, that is, one hundred and eight besides the twelve apostles: but it clearly appears from the history, that the women formed a part of this number. After so great an increase of the church, as had since that time taken place, it may well be supposed, that many had been set apart for the ministry before the martyrdom of Stephen. So that, even allowing that none were scattered, except the ministers, (which is extremely improbable,) it is incongruous to limit the number in this manner.—'There is no room to inquire where these poor refugees had their orders. They were endued with miraculous gifts; and if they had not been so, the extraordinary call they had to spread the knowledge of Christ, wherever they came, among those who were ignorant of Him, would abundantly justify them in what they did.' *Dodd*.—Were then all the Christians endued with miraculous powers? or might none, who were not, declare, what they had seen and heard?—'Some difference may perhaps be here observed between *euaggelizesthai* [pron. *euaggelizesthai*] and *kerussein*, not in respect of the matter of their preaching, but of the manner of it. The latter doth generally signify a public, solemn proclaiming of Christ, as when a herald or crier doth by way of office proclaim anything: but the former imports no more, than the telling it, making it known; as good news is published, without the voice of a herald or crier, by all that have heard it, to all they meet with. Not that *euaggelizesthai* is never used of that public, authoritative proclaiming; for it is sometimes used of the apostles: and the word Evangelist is the name of an office in the apostles' times. But, I say, that sometimes, and particularly in this place, it may belong to whatsoever publishing the Gospel of Christ, and by whomsoever, i. e. by those who have no calling to it. For when the doctrine of Christ was first preached by the apostles, and a multitude of Jews and proselytes received the faith, and for doing so professedly, were presently persecuted and driven out of Jerusalem; it is not to be imagined, but that all, wheresoever they came, both men and women, published what they knew, both of the doctrine, and the miracles by which it was confirmed, and of their own sufferings for it. When of Philip, who was a

of God, screened from the storm, and by special grace enabled to face it. They tarried, that they might be ready to go where their assistance was most needed by the other preachers, sent to break the ice; as Christ ordered his disciples to go to those places where He Himself designed to come, *Luke 10: 1*. They continued longer at Jerusalem than one would have thought, considering the command, and commission, to go into all the world, and to disciple all nations; see *ch. 15: 6*. *Gal. 1: 17*. But what was done by the evangelists whom they sent forth, was reckoned as done by them.

V. 4—13. The persecution designed to extirpate the church, was, by overruling Providence, made an occasion of its enlargement.

I. A general account of what was done by them all, *v. 4*. *They went every where, preaching the Word*. They did not go to hide themselves for fear of suffering; no, nor to show themselves as proud of their sufferings; but to scatter the knowledge of Christ in every place where they were scattered, into the way of the Gentiles, and the cities of the Samaritans, which before they were forbidden to go into, *ch. 10: 5*. Christ and his disciples had conversed much in Judea; so they had a foundation laid there for them to build on; and it would be requisite to let the people there know, what that doctrine Jesus had preached there some time ago was come to.

II. A particular account of what was done by Philip, the deacon, now advanced to the degree of an evangelist, which when he entered upon, being obliged by it to give himself to the Word and prayer, he was, no doubt, discharged from the office of a deacon; for how could he serve tables at Jerusalem, (as by that office he was obliged to do,) when preaching in Samaria? Now observe,

I. Philip's success. He came to Samaria, the head city of the country Samaria; it stood where the city of Samaria was built, *1 K. 16: 24*. now called *Sebaste*, the same, so some, with *Sychem* or *Sychar*, where Christ was, *John 4: 5*. The doctrine he preached, was, *Christ*; he proclaimed Christ to them, so the word signifies; as a king,

it is related, that "he preached Christ," it follows that he baptized also.—But of these other disciples, there is no more said, but that they passed along publishing this good news, the Gospel which they had received; but no mention of gathering disciples, or baptizing. Accordingly when there is mention of these very men, that, being scattered by the persecution, they spake the Word, or published the Gospel, the phrase used is observable: (*11: 19*. Gr.) the word *lalein* being known to belong to my way of reporting, or relating, by talk or discourse. And upon the success of this, through God's prospering hand, and many receiving the faith, it follows, that the church of Jerusalem sent Barnabas to visit and confirm them. Thus *Apollos* (*18: 25*) spake and taught exactly the things concerning the Lord, knowing only the baptism of *John*. *Hammond*.—It appears to me, that the remarks contained in this quotation, are suited to throw much light on a difficult and disputed subject. Whether the learned author's criticism on the original words be exact, or not; the difference between stately and authoritatively, as a herald, and by office and authority, preaching to regularly convened congregations; and simply declaring what a man knows of Christ and salvation, among relations, juniors, ignorant neighbors, or ignorant persons of any sort, without assuming any authority,\* seems of great importance. No doubt, in this way, a man's sphere will often gradually enlarge, till he appears something like an authoritative preacher: but would it not then be proper, that pastors and rulers should send some Barnabas, to confirm what has been done, and to confer the due authority? and would it not be right, in this case, for the person himself to seek, from the pastors and teachers of the church, their regular sanction to his labors, now become more public, than he at first either expected or intended?—To authorize all who choose, without any human appointment, and in ordinary cases, to become authoritative preachers, seems a dangerous extreme: and to suppose that no man, in an ignorant family, or among poor children, or illiterate, neglected persons, may expound a chapter of sacred Scripture, or talk to them about their souls, except previously ordained to the ministry; appears suited to destroy all zeal in the laity for the success of the Gospel, and to prevent all communication of knowledge to a deluded and perishing world; except by those, who are so fully employed in their own several charges, as to have little opportunity of attempting anything further; and who are often restricted, by peculiar circumstances, from every exertion out of their own line and department.

V. 5—8. It is evident, that Philip the apostle was not here meant, for he continued at Jerusalem; and the mission of Peter and John to Samaria evinces the same: (*14—17*.) and as Philip, one of the seven, was the only person of that name, whom the historian had mentioned,

\* See *Rev. 22: 17*, 2d cl.



8 And there was great joy in that city.

9 ¶ But there was a certain man called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used <sup>1</sup>soreery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out <sup>k</sup> that himself was some great one:

10 To whom <sup>1</sup>they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.

11 And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched <sup>m</sup> them with sorceries.

12 But when they believed <sup>n</sup> Philip preaching the things <sup>o</sup> concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the <sup>p</sup> miracles and signs which were done.

14 ¶ Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

j c. 13:6. Re. 1 2 Co. 11:19. o c. 1:3.  
22:15. m Ga. 5:1. p signs and great  
k c. 5:36. 2 Ti. n ver. 37. c. 2:41. miracles.  
3:2,5.

men, and gave up themselves to the conduct and government of it: without scruple (though Samaritans); and, without delay they were baptized, openly professed the Christian faith, and were solemnly admitted into the communion of the Christian church, and owned as brethren by the disciples. Men only were capable of being admitted into the Jewish church by circumcision; but in Jesus Christ there is neither male nor female, Gal. 3:28. Hence it is easily gathered, that women are to be admitted to the Lord's supper, though it does not appear that there were any among those to whom it was first administered. All this occasioned great joy. The spreading of the Gospel in the world, is often prophesied of in the O. T. as the diffusing of joy among the nations, Ps. 67:4. 1

Thess. 1:6. The Gospel of Christ does not make men melancholy, but fills them with joy, if it be received as it should be; for it is glad tidings of great joy to all people, Luke 2:10.

2. What in particular at Samaria made the success of the Gospel there more than ordinarily wonderful. (1.) Simon Magus had been busy there, and gained great interest among the people. He had been a long time in this city, using sorceries; he had no design to reform their lives, or improve their worship and devotion, but only to make them believe he was some divine person, some great one. Justin Martyr says, he would be worshipped as the chief God. He gave out himself to be the Son of God, the Messiah, so some; or, to be an angel, or a prophet; perhaps uncertain what title of honor to pretend to; but he would be thought some great one. Pride, ambition, and an affectation of grandeur, have always been the cause of abundance of mischief, both to the world and to the church. What he thus assumed, the people all ascribed to him, from the least to the greatest; and to him they had regard, v. 10, 11. perhaps the more, because the time fixed for the coming of the Messiah was now expired; which had raised a general expectation of the appearing of some great one about this time. They said of him, this man is the great power of God; the power of God, that great power, so it might be read; that power which made the world. See how ignorant, inconsiderate people mistake what is done by the power of Satan, as if it were done by the power of God! Thus, in the Gentile world, devils pass for deities; and in the antichristian kingdom all the world wonders after a beast, to whom the dragon gives his power, and who opens his mouth in blasphemy against God, Rev. 13:2, 3. They were brought to it by his sorceries; he bewitched the people of Samaria, v. 9. with sorceries, v. 11. i. e. by magic arts doing many signs and lying wonders, which seemed miracles, but were not so; like those of the magicians of Egypt, and of the man of sin, 2 Thess. 2:9. When acquainted however with Philip's miracles, they saw plainly, that the one was real and the other a sham, and that there was as much difference as between Aaron's rod and those of the magicians.

Thus, notwithstanding Simon's influence, and the lothness there generally is in people to own themselves in an error, and to retract

it, yet they gave heed no longer to Simon, but to Philip: and thus you see how strong the power of Divine grace is, by which they were brought to Christ, who is Truth itself, and was, as I may say, the great Deceiver. Let us not despair of the worst, when even those whom Simon Magus had bewitched were brought to believe.

(2.) What is yet more wonderful, Simon Magus himself became a convert, in show and profession, for a time, v. 13. He was convinced that Philip preached a true doctrine, because he saw it confirmed by real miracles, which he was the better able to judge of, as conscious of the trick of his own pretended ones. The present conviction went so far, that, [1.] He was baptized, admitted, as other believers, into the church, by baptism; and we have no reason to think that Philip did amiss in baptizing him; no, nor in baptizing him quickly. For, as great wickedness, before conversion, excludes not true penitents from the benefit of God's grace, so neither should it keep professing ones from church-fellowship. Nay, though he was now but a hypocrite, and really in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity all this while, and would soon have been found to be so, if he had been tried a while, yet Philip baptized him; for it is God's prerogative to know the heart: the church and its ministers must go by a judgment of charity, as far as there is room for it. It is a maxim in the discipline of the church,—The secrets of the heart God only judges. [2.] It lasted so long, that he continued with Philip, courted his acquaintance; and he that had given out himself to be some great one, is content to sit at the feet of a preacher of the Gospel. Even bad men, very bad, may sometimes be in a good frame, very good; and they whose hearts still go after their covetousness, may possibly not only come before God as his people come, but continue with them. [3.] The present conviction was wrought and kept up by the miracles; he wondered to see himself so far outdone in signs and miracles. Many wonder at the proofs of divine truths, who never experience their power.

V. 14—25. God had wonderfully owned Philip in his work as an evangelist at Samaria, but he could do no more than an evangelist; there were some peculiar powers reserved to the apostles, and here we have an account of what was done by two of them here,—Peter and John. If Peter had been, as some say he was, the prince of the

he was doubtless here spoken of. (6:2—6, v. 5.)—As Jesus had stayed two days among the Samaritans, and had mentioned them among those, to whom the apostles were to preach; (1:4—3. John 4:39—42.) the apostles do not seem to have hesitated about the admission of the Samaritans into the church, notwithstanding the bigoted enmity of the Jews against them.

V. 9—13. It is evident that Simon actually used sorcery, and produced many extraordinary effects by satanical influence, and not merely by human imposture.—Ecclesiastical historians have given us strange accounts of the horrid blasphemies, which this man propagated; but these seem to have been subsequent to the events here recorded.—Perhaps Philip exposed the nature and tendency of Simon's magical arts; or Simon deemed Philip a magician of superior skill and attainments, and hoped to get acquainted with the secret of his art, by which he produced effects, far exceeding all that he himself had been able to perform.—“Simon believed, also,” that this Jesus, who enabled Philip to do these things, was some power superior to any he conversed with. Whitby. Id.

(9.) Sorcery . . bewitched.] Mageuōn . . existōn: had [practised magic] exercised the magic art, and had thrown into amazement. Mageuēin is rare, but is found in Plutarch and Hippocrates. It comes from Magoi, the Magi, Mat. 2:1. In process of time the name was assumed by many who had little pretension to anything more than a similarity of studies, and (as Kuin. observes) the appellation was often given even to strolling quacks, who had some knowledge of natural philosophy and astrology, and abused it to the deception of the people [see Brewster's Natural Magic, pretended] to predict future events from the stars, to cure disorders by the recitation of certain formulas, and even by muttering certain incantations, to bring up departed spirits, and compel them to reveal secrets; as also by the repetition of certain verses, and the use of particular herbs, to terrify and drive-away demons. Bl.

V. 14—17. The apostles acted in concert, as a collective body; no one arrogating authority over the others, but every one paying a great regard to the determination of the whole company.—Without doubt, Peter and John were sent by the other apostles, partly that they might confirm the doctrine of Philip the deacon; and partly that they might establish a church in that city by apostolical authority. Beza. It is probable, that many received the gift of the Holy Spirit, by the laying on of the apostles' hands, and that, from among these persons, the min-

isters were generally selected, by those who were entrusted with that important concern. (13:1—3. 14:21—23. 19:1—7. 2 Tim. 2:1,2. Tit. 1:5—9.)—It may be supposed, that Peter and John ordained ministers in this city of the Samaritans. But it does not appear, that their laying of hands on some, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, after having prayed for the company in general that they might partake of these benefits, implied previous ordination.—The right of confirmation, as practised by many Christian churches, has often been and still is, spoken of, as a continuation of this apostolical imposition of hands, for the confirmation of new converts, by the Holy Spirit thus given to them. But it is far from evident, that this was done universally by the apostles, or by those who immediately succeeded them. As, however, miraculous powers, rather than sanctifying grace, were thus conferred; unless miraculous powers were now connected with that rite, the parallel must wholly fail. How far something of this kind, properly regulated and conducted, may be rendered subservient to the edification of young persons, descended from Christian parents, and baptized when infants, is another question: but to advance this observance into a sacrament, and even above a sacrament, (as it certainly is advanced, when the Holy Spirit is supposed to be conferred by imposition of hands, and by using words in prayer like those of Peter and John,) puts the subject in a very different light. Doubtless it was at first thus magnified, in order to exalt the episcopal order, to whom the administration of it was confined, as if they were entrusted with apostolical authority: but as miracles are out of the question, so to follow the apostles in faith, humility, diligence, in ‘preaching in season, out of season,’ in piety, and self-denial, is the only scriptural or adequate method of magnifying either the episcopal or the clerical office. Assuredly, as this matter is very often conducted, it must be allowed to be an evil; and it ought either to be attended to in another manner, or not at all.—It appears indisputable, that Philip was, before these transactions, a regularly ordained minister, or evangelist. (Note, 6:2—6.)

(14.) The apostles seem to have laid down a rule, that, after being baptized and catechized, the proselytes should have the imposition of hands, accompanied with prayer, in order to their receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Hence in Heb. 6:2. we find mention made first of baptism, then of instruction, and finally of imposition of hands, the last in the primitive ages only, being done by the apostles; in process of time,



15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost :

16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them ; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus : )

17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

18 ¶ And when Simon saw, that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter : for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness ; and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee :

23 For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

q c. 19:2. u 2 K. 5:15,16. y Da. 4:27. 2 Ti. r c. 2:33. 10:43. Mat. 10:8. 2:25. 19:5,6. 1 Co. 1: v c. 10:45. 11:17. z Jo. 4:18. He. 13. w Joa. 22:25. 12:15. s c. 6:6. He. 6:2. x Pa. 73:36,37. a Ps. 116:13. Pr. t 1 Ti. 6:5. Eze. 14:3. 5:22. Is. 28:22.

apostles, he would have sent some of them, or, if he had seen cause, would have gone himself, of his own accord ; but, so far from that, he submitted to go as a servant to the body, whither they sent him. Two apostles were sent to encourage Philip, and carry on the good work that was begun. Now observe,

I. How they advanced and improved those of them that were sincere. It is said, v. 16. *The Holy Ghost was as yet fallen upon none of them*, in those extraordinary powers which were conveyed by the descent of the Spirit on the day of pentecost ; they were none of them endued with the gift of tongues, which seems then to have been the most usual, immediate effect of the pouring out of the Spirit. See ch. 10: 45, 46. This was both an eminent sign to them which believed not, and of excellent service to them that did. This, and

other such gifts, they had not, *only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*, and so engaged to Him, and interested in Him, which was necessary to salvation, and in that they had joy and satisfaction, v. 8. though they could not speak with tongues. The apostles conferred the Holy Ghost on some, not all that were baptized, and it should seem, on such as were designed for some office in the church, or at least to be eminent, active members of it ; and on some of them, *one gift of the Holy Ghost*, and on others, *another*. See 1 Cor. 12:4, 8. 14:26. Now, in order to this,

1. *The apostles prayed for them*, v. 15. The Spirit is given, not to ourselves only, Luke 11:13. but to others also, in answer to prayer, Ez. 36:27, 37. We may take encouragement from this example, in praying to God to give the renewing graces of the Holy Ghost to them whose spiritual welfare we are concerned for ; for our children, for our friends, for our ministers ; we should pray, and pray earnestly, *that they may receive the Holy Ghost* ; for that includes all blessings.

2. They laid their hands on them, to signify that their prayers were answered, and that the gift of the Holy Ghost was conferred upon them ; for, upon the use of this sign, they received the Holy Ghost, and spake with tongues. The laying on of hands was anciently used in blessing, by those who blessed with authority.

II. How they discovered and discarded Simon Magus, as a hypocrite, for they knew how to separate between the precious and the vile. Now observe here,

1. The wicked proposal Simon made, by which his hypocrisy was discovered, v. 18, 19. He does not desire them to lay their hands on him, that he might receive the Holy Ghost himself, but that they would convey to him a power to bestow the gift on others. He was ambitious to have the honor of an apostle, but not at all solicitous to have the spirit and disposition of a Christian. He was more desirous to gain honor than to do good. Now, in making this motion, (I.) He put a great affront on the apostles, as if they were mercenary men, would do anything for money, and loved it as well as he did ; whereas they had left what they had, for Christ, so far were they from aiming to make it more ! (2.) He put a great affront on Christianity, as if the miracles wrought for the proof of it, were done by magic art, only of a different nature from what he himself had practised formerly. (3.) He showed that, like Balaam, he aimed at the rewards of divination ; for he would not have bid money for this power, if he had not hoped to get money by it. (4.) He showed that

he had a very high conceit of himself, and that he had never his heart truly humbled. Such a wretch as he had been before his baptism, should have asked, like the prodigal, to be made as one of the hired servants. But as soon as he is admitted into the family, no less a place will serve him than to be one of the stewards of the household, and to be intrusted with a power which Philip himself had not, but the apostles only. 2. The just rejection of his proposal, and the cutting reproof Peter gave him for it, v. 20—23. (1.) Peter shows him his crime, v. 20. He had overvalued the wealth of this world, and undervalued the gift of the Holy Ghost. He thought the power of an apostle might as well be had for a good fee, as the advice of a physician or a lawyer ; which was the greatest despite that could be done to the Spirit of grace. (2.) He shows him his character, which is inferred from his crime. This was such a fundamental error, as could by no means consist with a state of grace ; it was an incontestable evidence that he was yet under the power of a worldly and carnal mind. Therefore, Peter tells him plainly, his heart was not right in the sight of God, v. 21. We are as our hearts are ; our hearts are that which they are in the sight of God, who cannot be deceived ; and if they be not right in his sight, whatever our pretensions be, our religion is vain, and will stand us in no stead. Some refer this particularly to the proposal he made ; what he asked is denied him, because his heart is not right in the sight of God in asking it ; he does not aim at the glory of God or the honor of Christ in it, but to make a hand of it for himself ; he asks, and has not, because he asks amiss, that he may consume it upon his lusts, and be still thought some great one. He is in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity ; I perceive that thou art so, says Peter, v. 23. This is plain dealing, and plain dealing is best when we are dealing about souls and eternity. Note, It is possible for a man to continue under the power of sin, and yet to put on a form of godliness. I perceive it, saith Peter. It was not so much by the spirit of discerning, with which Peter was endued, that he perceived this, as by Simon's discovery of it in the proposal he made. The disguises of hypocrites many times are soon seen through. Now the character here given of Simon is really the character of all wicked people. They are in the gall of bitterness ; odious to God, as that which is bitter as gall is to us ; they are vicious in their own nature, Deut. 29:18. The faculties are corrupted, and the mind imbibbered against all good, Heb. 12:15. It speaks likewise the pernicious consequences of sin ; the end is

other teachers obtained this power.' KURN. 'The several uses of imposition of hands are fully detailed in [my] note on 1 Tim. 4: f. Three in the O. T., 1, as a ceremony in prayer ; 2, in paternal benediction ; 3, in creating officers. And proportionable to them many more in the New : 1, for curing diseases ; 2, for absolution of penitents ; 3, for blessing of infants, or those that are to be baptized, to prepare them for it ; 4, in confirmation ; 5, in ordination of officers for the church. The three former cannot, the fourth appears to be here meant.'

HAMMOND. V. 18—24. Many teachers, and probably private Christians, wrought miracles, and spake with tongues, 'as the Spirit gave them utterance ;' but the honor of communicating those gifts, by imposition of hands and prayer, was, generally at least, restricted to the apostles. Simon aspired, with horrible pride and ambition, at equality with the apostles in power and authority ; while he meant to prostitute the sacred operations of the Holy Spirit, to gratify his love of filthy lucre, and of human applause ; and attempted to seduce the apostles to concur in the detestable sacrifice !—Whatever miraculous power of discerning men's spirits Peter might possess, and on some occasions exercise, he had no need of it in this case : but, perceiving the extreme wickedness and hypocrisy of Simon, he expressed his abhorrence of his money, and of his crime, in the most decided manner. This was not a wish that Simon might perish ; but an awful warning, that he was in most extreme danger of perdition, which he could not escape if he proceeded further in his present course. If he would then escape perdition, let him deeply repent of this most horrid wickedness, and pray earnestly to God, that this blasphemous thought of his depraved heart might be pardoned. For though 'all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven' to the true penitent ; yet Simon's crime came at least so near to that against the Holy Spirit, which never can be pardoned, that it was a very doubtful case, whether God would ever give him true repentance.—Nothing can be more evident, than that the apostle here exhorted an unconverted sinner to repentance and prayer, yea, one who he feared had committed the unpardonable sin, though he did not look upon his case as absolutely hopeless.

—Credible historians inform us, that he retained a sort of profession of Christianity, which he distorted by the most horrible and senseless blasphemies ; and thus he became the founder of a most multifarious sect of heretics, who were long the trial and the scandal of the church.—From his infamous attempt, to bargain for the power of conferring the Holy Spirit, all mercenary contracts for church benefices, and other methods of turning the concerns of religion into a lucrative trade, are called *Simony* ; of which there have been, and are, a great variety of species ; and will be, so long as men continue covetous and ambitious, and verily suppose that 'gain is godliness.' It is, therefore, much easier to expose and declaim against such impious practices, than to find an effectual remedy for them.—Alas, Simon Magus has left far more indisputable successors, than Simon Peter has done : especially in that church which grounds its claims on succeeding to St. Peter's authority ; but not in that church alone.—'It' (the sin of Simon) 'struck at the very foundation of the Christian faith ; supposing that the apostles, and other Christians, did their miracles, by some higher art of magic, than that which he had learned ; and so they by the same art could teach others to do the same works for any other end.' Whitby. (Ex. 7:13,22,23.)—'They who buy and sell sacred things are the successors, not of Simon Peter, but of Simon Magus.' Beza.

SCOTT. (20.) 'There is no imprecation here ; the sense may be, Keep your money to yourself for your own ruin, not mine.'

(21, 22.) See Doddridge for a judicious view of the expressions here.

(23.) *Gall of bitterness.* Put for bitter gall, comp. Deut. 29:18. Heb. 12:15. Transferring the Heb. metaphor, the sense will be, 'I see that thou art a most pernicious person, like to a bitter, poisonous plant, a pest to the Christian society, and so disposed as to be calculated to ruin and corrupt many.' BL. Bond.] Cuts and notes, Pref. to Lam., 2 K. 17:6. Is. 58:6. Ps. 18:5.



24 Then answered Simon, and said, Pray <sup>b</sup> ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.

25 And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

26 ¶ And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto <sup>c</sup> Gaza, which is desert.

27 And he arose and went : and, behold, a man of <sup>d</sup> Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come <sup>e</sup> to Jerusalem for to worship,

28 Was returning ; and, sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet.

29 Then <sup>f</sup> the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

<sup>b</sup> Ex. 8:8. Nu. 21:7. 6. Job 42:8. Ja. 5:16. <sup>c</sup> Jos. 15:47. d Zep. 3:10. e Is. 53:3-5. <sup>f</sup> 2 Ch. 6:32,33. g Is. 65:24. Ho. 6:3.

bitter as wormwood. They are, too, in the bond of iniquity; bound over to the judgment of God by the guilt of sin, and bound under the dominion of Satan by the power of sin. (3) He reads him his doom in two things: he shall sink with his worldly wealth which he overvalued; *Thy money perish with thee.* Hereby Peter rejects his offer with the utmost disdain and indignation, and warns him of his danger of utter destruction if he continued in this mind. He shall come short of the spiritual blessings he undervalued, v. 21. Thou hast nothing to do with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, thou dost not understand them; thou canst not receive the Holy Ghost thyself, nor power to confer the Holy Ghost on others, for *thy heart is not right in the sight of God*, if thou thinkest that Christianity is a trade to live by in this world; therefore *thou hast no part nor lot in the eternal life in the other world which the Gospel offers.* Many who profess the Christian religion, have *no part in Christ*, John 13:8. *no lot in the heavenly Canaan.* (4.) He gives him good counsel, notwithstanding, v. 22. Those that have said and done amiss, must, as far as they can, unsay it and undo it again

by repentance. He must pray to God, must pray that God would give him repentance, and pardon on repentance. Penitents must pray, which implies a desire toward God, and a confidence in Christ. He encourages him; *if perhaps the thought of thy heart, this wicked thought, may be forgiven thee.* There may be great wickedness in the thought of the heart, its false notions, corrupt affections, wicked projects, which must be repented of, or we are undone. The thought of the heart, though ever so wicked, shall be forgiven, on our repentance, and not laid to our charge. When Peter here puts a *perhaps* upon it, the doubt is of the sincerity of his repentance, not of his pardon, if his repentance be sincere. *If indeed the thought of thy heart may be forgiven*, so it may be read. Or, it intimates, that the greatness of his sin might justly make the pardon doubtful, though the promise of the Gospel had put the matter out of doubt, in case he did truly repent; like that, Lam. 3:29. *If so be there may be hope.* Simon was startled, and begged the prayers of the apostles for him, v. 24. wishing to have an interest in them, who, he believed, had a good interest in heaven. Yet while he begged of them to pray for him, he did not pray for himself; and, in desiring them to pray for him, his concern is more, that the judgments he had made himself liable to might be prevented, than that his corruptions might be mortified, and his heart, by divine grace, be made right in the sight of God. See Ex. 8:8. 10:17. Some think, Peter had denounced some particular judgments against him, as against Ananias and Sapphira, which, on his submission, at the apostle's intercession, were prevented: or, from what is related, he might infer, that some token of God's wrath would fall upon him, which he thus dreaded and deprecated.

Lastly, The apostles return to Jerusalem, when they had finished the business they came about; for as yet they were not to disperse: but though they came hither to do that work which was peculiar to them as apostles, yet, opportunity offering itself, they applied themselves to that which was common to all gospel-ministers, preaching on their way, as they passed through many villages of the Samaritans. Though the congregations were inconsiderable, yet their souls were precious, and the apostles did not think it below them to preach the Gospel to them.

V. 26—40. Here is the story of the conversion of an Ethiopian eunuch to the faith of Christ; by whom, we have reason to think, the knowledge of Christ was sent into that country where he lived, and that scripture fulfilled, *Ethiopia shall soon stretch*

out her hands, one of the first of the nations, unto God, Ps. 68: 31.

I. Philip, the evangelist, is directed by an angel, where he would meet this Ethiopian, v. 26. We cannot now expect such guides in our way; but doubtless there is a special providence of God about the removes and settlements of ministers. He must go S., to the way that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza, through the desert or wilderness of Judah. Philip would never have thought of going thither; yet thither he is sent, according to our Savior's parable, foretelling the call of the Gentiles, *Go ye into the highways, and the hedges*, Mat. 22 : 9. Sometimes God opens a door of opportunity to his ministers in places very unlikely.

II. An account of this eunuch, v. 27. 1. He was a black, a foreigner, of Ethiopia; there were two Ethiopians, one in Arabia, but that lay E. from Canaan; it should seem, this was in Africa, which lay S. W., beyond Egypt, a great way off from Jerusalem. 2. He was a person of quality, a great man in his own country, an eunuch; not in body, but in office; lord chamberlain or steward of the household; and, either by the dignity of his place, or by his personal character, of great authority, under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, probably successor to the queen of Sheba, who is called the queen of the S.; that country being governed by queens, to whom Candace was a common name, [so Pliny,] as Pharaoh to the kings of Egypt; he had the charge of all her treasure; so great a trust did she repose in him! *Not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but some are.* 3. He was a proselyte to the Jewish religion, for he came to Jerusalem for to worship. Some think he was a proselyte of righteousness, who was circumcised, and kept the feasts; others, that he was only a proselyte of the gate, a Gentile, but who had renounced idolatry, and worshipped the God of Israel occasionally, in the court of the Gentiles: but, if so, then Peter was not the first that preached the Gospel to the Gentiles, as he says he was. Some think there were remains of the knowledge of the true God in this country, ever since the queen of Sheba's time; and probably the ancestor of this eunuch was one of her attendants, who transmitted to his posterity what he learned at Jerusalem.

III. Philip and the eunuch are brought together into a close conversation; and now Philip shall know the meaning of his being sent into a desert, for there he meets with a chariot, that shall serve for a synagogue, and one man, the conversion of whom shall be in effect, for aught he knows, the conversion of a whole nation.

1. Philip is ordered to fall into company

V. 25. John was one of those, who formerly asked leave to call for fire from heaven, to consume certain of that nation; but his Lord had now taught him better things.

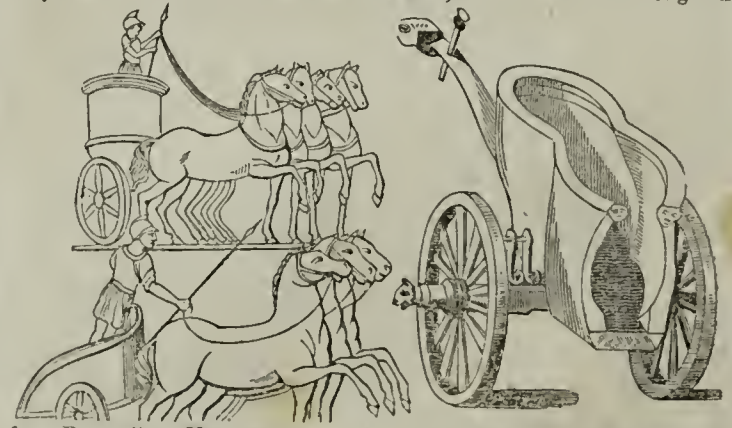
V. 26—31. Philip seems to have continued some time among the Samaritans, after the return of the apostles. He [the eunuch] had been to worship at Jerusalem; but it cannot be supposed, he had heard anything favorable concerning Jesus, from the priests, scribes, and rulers.—(26) *Which is desert.*] This may be understood either of Gaza, or of the road: but the latter is the more obvious interpretation, as more immediately connected with the context. (30) *Understandest, &c.*] 'Dost thou indeed understand, &c.'—Gen. 26:9. Sept.—The passage of Scripture was a difficult prophecy; and the question seems to imply surprise, that he should understand it, or select it. Id.

(26.) *Desert.*] 'I incline with some, to regard the words as a remark of Luke, and refer them to the desolated city, whether new or old Gaza, not to the road.' Bloomf. whom see. En.

(27.) *Eunuch.*] 'Not necessarily one mutilated: the word is from eunē, a bed, or couch, and echein, to keep, guard. In the courts of Oriental monarchs these were generally mutilated, hence eunuch came to mean such.' Bloomf. This abuse is not near so common in the E. as is generally thought, see Niebuhr. Id.

(28.) 'Schoettgen thus cites from the Rabbinical writings: "R. Joshua said, whoever was going on a journey, and had no companion, should study the Law." That Jewish students used to read aloud, appears from his other citations. It is not improbable, that the eunuch had heard of Jesus, and was now revolving the prophecy, and comparing it.' Kuin. Chariot.] *Harna:* 'Those of princes and heroes were not only contrived for service but ornament, being richly embossed with gold and other metals.' Potter. The Romans of the times of the apostles had many kinds of carriages among them; *Alam* speaks of one 'with two wheels, for travelling expeditiously, (called *cisium*.) drawn usually by three mules; its body of basket-work:' also of 'a larger carriage with

four wheels, called *rheda*, sometimes adorned with silver: also 'an open carriage with four wheels, for persons of inferior rank, as some think.' 'In the war-chariots of the ancients, there were usually two persons, one who fought, and another who directed the horses.' 'The driver commonly sat behind the pole, sometimes dressed in red or scarlet, sometimes he walked.' 'The Roman magistrates, consuls, praetors, censors, and chief ediles, used the *currus*, (two wheels,) and the *seal* (made to fold up) on which these magistrates sat in the senate-house, the rostra, or tribunal of justice, was called *curulis*, because they carried it with them in their chariots;' cut 18:16. A cut is given



from Pompeii, or Herculaneum, of a 'biga': also a 'triga,' and 'quadriga,' of those times. Ed.



30 And Philip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

32 The place of the scripture which he read was <sup>k</sup> this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

<sup>h</sup> Mat. 13:23, 51. <sup>i</sup> Ro. 10:14. <sup>k</sup> Is. 53:7, 8.  
<sup>Ep.</sup> 5:17. <sup>j</sup> Ps. 25:9.

with this traveller, that is going home from Jerusalem toward Gaza, thinking he has done all the business of his journey, when the great business which the overruling providence of God designed in it, was yet undone. He had been at Jerusalem, where the apostles were preaching the Christian faith, and multitudes professing it, yet there he had taken no notice of it, and made no inquiries after it; nay, it should seem, had slighted it, and turned his back upon it; yet the grace of God pursues him, overtakes him in the desert, and there overcomes him. Thus God is often found of those that sought Him not, Is. 65: 1. Philip has this order, not by an angel, as before, but by the Spirit whispering it in his ear, v. 29. 'Go near, and join thyself to this chariot; go so near as that the gentleman may notice thee.' We should study to do good to those we light in company with on the road: thus *the lips of the righteous may feed many*. We should not be so shy of all strangers as some affect to be. Those of whom we know nothing else, we know this of, that they have souls.

2. He finds him reading his Bible, as he sat in his chariot, v. 28. he read aloud, for the benefit of those with him, v. 30. Perhaps the eunuch was now reading over again those portions of Scripture which he

had heard read and expounded at Jerusalem, that he might recollect what he had heard. Note, It is the duty of every one to converse much with the Holy Scriptures, persons of quality and men of business; time is [the most precious of God's gifts,] and it is the best husbandry in the world to gather up the fragments of time, that none be lost, to fill up every minute with something that will turn to a good account. When returning from public worship, we should use means in private to keep up the good affections there kindled, and preserve the good impressions there made, 1 Chr. 29: 18. Those that are diligent in searching the Scriptures, are in a fair way to improve in knowledge; for *to him that hath shall be given*.

3. He questions him; *Understandest thou what thou readest?* Not in reproach, but with design to offer him his service. We should often ask ourselves, when we read the Scripture, whether we understand it or no? Mat. 13: 51. We cannot profit by the Scriptures unless we do in some measure understand them, 1 Cor. 14: 16, 17. And, blessed be God, what is necessary to salvation, is easy to be understood.

4. He, in a sense of his need of assistance, desires Philip's company, v. 31. He speaks as one that had very low thoughts of himself and his own capacity and attainments. He takes the question kindly, and makes a very modest reply, *How can I?* We have reason to think he was an intelligent man, and as well acquainted with the meaning of Scripture as most were, yet he modestly confesses his weakness. Those that would learn, must see their need to be taught, Zech. 4: 13. He speaks as one very desirous to have *some one to guide him*. Observe, He read the Scripture, though there were many things in it which he did not understand; though there are many things in the Scriptures, which are *dark and hard to be understood*, nay, often misunderstood, yet we must not therefore throw them by, but study them for the sake of those things that are easy, which is the likeliest way to come by degrees to the understanding of those things that are difficult; for knowledge and grace grow gradually. In order to our right understanding of the Scripture, it is requisite we should have some one to guide us; some good books, and some good men, but above all, the Spirit of grace, to lead us into all truth.

IV. The portion of Scripture the eunuch

perceived, with some hints of Philip's discourse upon it.

1. The ch. he was reading, was, Is. 53. two verses of which are here quoted, v. 32, 33. part of vs. 7, 8.; they are set down according to the Sept., which in some things differs from the original Heb. Grotius thinks the eunuch read it in the Heb., but Luke takes the Sept., as readier to the language in which he wrote; and he supposes the eunuch had learned from the many Jews in Ethiopia, both their religion and language. But, considering the Sept. was made in Egypt, the next country adjoining to Ethiopia, and betwixt them and Jerusalem, I rather think that translation was most familiar to him. It appears by Is. 20: 4. that there was much communication between those two nations,—Egypt and Ethiopia. The greatest variation from the Heb. is, that what in the original is, *He was taken from prison and from judgment*, is here read, *In his humiliation his judgment* [i. e. chance of justice] *was taken away*; so the sense is much the same with that of the Heb. So that these vs. foretold of the Messiah. (1.) That He should die; should be led to the slaughter, as sheep offered in sacrifice; with what little reason then was the death of Christ a stumbling-block to the unbelieving Jews, when it was so plainly foretold by their own prophets, and was so necessary to the accomplishment of his undertaking? Then is the offence of the cross ceased. (2.) That He should die wrongfully; by violence, should be hurried out of his life, and *his judgment shall be taken away*; no justice done Him; for He must be cut off, but not for Himself. (3.) That He should die patiently; like a lamb dumb before the shearer, nay, before the butcher too, so He opened not his mouth; never was such an example of patience as our Lord Jesus was in his sufferings; when accused, when abused, He was silent, reviled not again, threatened not. (4.) That yet He should live for ever, to ages which cannot be numbered; for so I understand those words, *Who shall declare his generation?* The Heb. word properly signifies, *the duration of one life*, Eccl. 1: 4. Now who can conceive or express how long He shall continue, notwithstanding this; *for his life is only taken from the earth?* in heaven He shall live to endless ages, as it follows in Is. 53: 10.

2. The eunuch's sensible question on this, v. 34. He does not desire Philip to give critical remarks on the words and phrases,

V. 32—35. The Gr. tr. of the O. T. was first begun at least in Egypt; thence it had found its way into Ethiopia. Greek was understood by superior persons there; and from this tr., it is highly probable, that, without any other teacher, this Ethiopian obtained the knowledge of the true God; and thus became first a proselyte to Judaism, and then a convert to Christianity: what an abundant encouragement to translating, and dispersing translations of the sacred oracles! We may suppose, that [Philip] showed him the circumstantial and exact accomplishment of the prediction, in the Person, doctrine, conduct, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus; concerning whom it is most likely, that he had heard many disadvantageous reports, whilst at Jerusalem: and also the necessity and nature, the benefit and efficacy of faith in Him, as the Savior of the lost. 'It is probable, that it was in the familiar way of dialogue, . . . that Philip continued to instruct this stranger in the doctrine of Christ.' Campbell. (Note, 4.) 'Who can be named either of kings or prophets, to whom these things agree? No one truly.' Grotius de Veritate. Yet in his notes on the ch., this learned writer endeavors to interpret the words concerning the prophet Jeremiah:—(32, 33.) *He was led, &c.* From the LXX: the variations from the Heb. do not materially alter the meaning. Lowth tr. the Heb. of the clause here rendered 'in his humiliation his judgment was taken away,' 'by an oppressive judgment He was taken off.'—Man's oppressive judgment was, in our Lord's 'humiliation,' suffered to take effect, and God did not interpose to hinder it. [See on Zech. 6:12, &c. Ed.] Who shall declare the age of Him, (33) 'whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting?' Mic. 5:1. His race, who is the Father of the age, or world to come? Is. 9:6. His eternal generation? SCOTT.

(32.) See Hengstenberg on this of Is. and his tr. at Zech. 6:12, &c. Ed. 'Prophets, divine legates, and kings, were, by way of eminence, named worshippers and ministers of Jehovah.' By this appellation, therefore, Isaiah ch. 53) might, with propriety, distinguish the Messiah, who, we may observe, is here also described as a King (comp. 53:12); and thus the oracle of Is. (who lived at the Bah. captivity) teaches the same as the other prophets had taught. Now by David, and other meritorious leaders and deliverers of the state, much was to be endured, and a great conflict to be maintained, in order to remove all impediments thrown in their way by their enemies. Of the prophets, and divine legates, many had been

persecuted by the hatred of the corrupt populace; nay, not a few had been put to death. (Mat. 23:34.) In a later age, however, the Jews represented the Messiah to themselves as a King, Prophet, High Priest. (See 1 Mac. 14:41, 47. comp. with 13 [?]:15. They regarded their evils and misfortunes as punishments inflicted by the angry Deity. (See Job 9:1.) They believed also that an innocent person would suffer punishment in the place of the guilty, and thus reconcile them to the favor of God. See Jos. de Mac. 1:17. Now the wiser Jews who were living in captivity were aware, that they had brought this calamity upon themselves by their own wickedness. Peculiar sacrifices had been offered up by them; and at that time they anxiously longed for some expiator, and represented the Messiah to themselves as the author of every kind of felicity; from Him especially expecting the restoration of true piety and religion; and therefore hoped also that he would expiate the sins of the people, &c. See Schoettg. Thus there is no reason to be surprised that the author of this passage, together with the other wiser Jews, should have come to the opinion that the Messiah would die, in order to expiate the sins of the people, (See on Luke 23:42. John 1:29.) and would, for their sins, suffer heavy afflictions; all which must take place till his kingdom were established: but that He would finally overcome these various calamities, reign gloriously, and that all the citizens of his kingdom would be most studious of piety and virtue. Comp. Joel 3. (Kuin.) I assent to most of these positions, yet cannot but except to the *fundamental principle*, which seems to refer the language of the prophet to the ideas and notions of the Jews of his time, but which is inconsistent with the full inspiration we are accustomed to attribute to this most distinguished of the prophets. BLOOMF.

(33.) 'Heb. from straits and trial (put by hendiadys for straits of trial, oppression, Ps. 107:39. i. e. severe, violent judgment) He is led away. The Sept. seem to have read [the Heb. a little differently from our copies], and Mich., Heusler, and Thiess, on the authority of the Syr. tr. the Sept. thus, "He opened not his mouth, since great was his misery." Thiess tr. also, "his judgment was taken away; He was condemned." I would however tr. thus: "in his humility, when his condition was exceedingly miserable, was his judgment. (i. e. He was condemned,) He was taken off, destroyed." Kuin. 'Doddr. says, to take a person's judgment is a known proverb for oppressing him. He also re-



35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began <sup>1</sup> at the same scripture, <sup>m</sup> and preached unto him Jesus.

36 And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth <sup>n</sup> hinder me to be baptized?

37 And Philip said, If <sup>o</sup> thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And, he answered and said, I <sup>p</sup> believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch: and he baptized him.

39 And when they were come up out of the water, the spirit of the <sup>q</sup> Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way <sup>r</sup> rejoicing.

40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through, he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cesarea.

1 Lu. 24:27. o Ma. 16:16. ver. 12. q 1 K. 18:12.  
m c. 18:28. p Jn. 11:27. 1 Co. Eze. 3:12, 14.  
n c. 10:47. 12:3. 1 Jn. 4:15. r Ps. 119:14. 111.

and the idioms of the language, but to acquaint him with the general scope and design of the prophecy, to furnish him with a key, in the use of which he might, by comparing one thing with another, be let into the meaning of the particular passages. Prophecies had usually in them something of obscurity, till explained by the accomplishment of them, as this now was. Though the modern Jews will not allow it to be spoken of the Messiah, yet their an-

**PRACT. OBS.** The Lord does not want the services of the most eminent men: if He permit them to be cut off, when they seem scarcely to have begun their work, or if persecution 'make havoc in the church?' He can override these events to the glory of his name, and the more extensive promulgation of his Gospel. The glory of his grace often shines forth with peculiar lustre in our view, when we are informed of the manner, in which his most honored servants spent the years preceding their conversion. Wherever the true believer is driven, he carries with him his knowledge of the Gospel, as an inestimable treasure, not only for his own benefit, but to make others also truly rich; and in one way or other he will make known the preciousness of Christ in every place: for when a simple desire of doing good influences the heart, it will be found impossible to exclude a man from all opportunity of usefulness.—Facts authenticate the truth of the Gospel, when it is faithfully preached: and though miracles are no longer wrought, yet sinners are converted; and unclean spirits reluctantly quit possession of those, over whom they have long reigned with uncontrolled sway: and the Gospel brings with it substantial and permanent joy to every heart, house, village, city, or country, in which it is cordially received. But, whoever compares the juggles and ambiguous pretences to miracle, or extraordinary operation, that shrink from investigation, which every age produces and fosters, and then detects and despises; with the open, beneficent, incontestable, and disinterested miracles of Christ and his apostles, will easily discern the most manifest difference, or rather the most entire contrariety. The one can only subvert the credit or interest of designing men, and abet delusion, hypocrisy, or immorality; the other evidently tended to promote the best of all causes, even that of truth and holiness.—The abundant unction of the Holy Spirit divests men of their narrow and selfish prejudices, and teaches them to own all as brethren, who receive the Word of God, and to impart to them some

marks, that this is one of the many passages of the O. T. in which it is not so difficult to find a sense fairly applicable to Christ, as to know which to prefer. His paraphrase of the next clause, differing little from *Han.* and *Kuin.*, is: "Who can describe the obstinate infidelity and barbarous injustice of that generation of men among whom He appeared, and from whom He suffered such things." **BLOOMF.**

V. 36—40. The discourse of Philip, no doubt comprising abundant instruction, with animated exhortations and persuasions; and the prophecy as shown to coincide with its accomplishment in so wonderful a manner; fully convinced the eunuch, through the concurrent teaching and illumination of the Holy Spirit, that Jesus was the promised Messiah: and he was enabled to understand the nature of his kingdom and salvation. Accordingly, he desired to be numbered among his disciples. Doubtless Philip had shown him the nature of baptism, as the initiatory ordinance of Christianity. Men will form their conjectures, concerning the mode in which Philip baptized him, according to their different sentiments on that subject. History informs us, that this eunuch became a preacher of the Gospel, in Ethiopia and the adjacent regions; and there founded a flourishing church, which continued for several ages afterwards; and it is supposed, on very probable grounds, that

[46]

cient doctors did so interpret it; and perhaps the eunuch knew it, and did partly understand it so himself, only he proposed this question, to draw on discourse with Philip.

3. Philip takes occasion to open to him the great mystery of the Gospel, concerning *Jesus Christ and Him crucified*. He began at *this scripture*, took that for his text, and preached unto him *Jesus*, v. 35. That is all the account given us of Philip's sermon, because it was the same in effect with Peter's sermons, which we have had before. The business of gospel-ministers is to preach Jesus, and that is the preaching likely to do good. Here is an instance of speaking of the things of God, and to good purpose, not only as we *sit in the house*, but as we *walk by the way*, Deut. 6:7.

V. The eunuch is baptized in the name of Christ, v. 36—38. Probably he had heard at Jerusalem of the doctrine of Christ, so that it was not altogether new to him. But, if he had, what could that do toward this speedy conquest of his heart for Christ? It was a powerful working of the Spirit, with and by Philip's preaching, that gained the point. Now here we have,

1. The modest proposal the eunuch made of himself to baptism, v. 36. *As they went on their way*, discoursing of Christ, the eunuch asking more questions, and Philip answering them to his satisfaction, they came unto a certain water, a well, river, or pond, the sight of which made the eunuch think of being baptized. The eunuch knew not how little a while Philip might be with him, nor where he might afterwards inquire for him; he could not expect his travelling with him to his next stage; therefore, if Philip think fit, he will take the present convenience which offers itself, of being baptized. Observe, (1.) He does not demand baptism, for if Philip have anything to offer to the contrary, he is willing to waive it for the present. The most forward zeal must submit to order and rule. But,

spiritual good as they have opportunity and ability: for in these things, there is no room for competition, as no man is impoverished by others being enriched. Though simoniacal practices are everywhere exclaimed against, they almost universally insinuate themselves into all things relative to religion!—Commonly those who aspire to be the chief, have 'neither part nor lot in the matter;' for a proud and covetous heart cannot be 'right in the sight of God.' But when we most plainly perceive, that men are 'in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity;' and when we most solemnly warn them of their guilt and danger; we should still exhort them to repent of their wickedness, and to pray to God, if peradventure it may be forgiven.—Men often imagine that their thoughts are free, and have no sin in them; yet 'the thought of the heart' may possibly be so atrocious, as to exclude a man from repentance and forgiveness. We ought not to be discouraged, when called to minister in obscure places, or to few hearers: seldom was more effectual and extensive good done in the most numerous assembly, than followed Philip's preaching to one stranger in a desert: and implicit obedience and submission become the servants of God. Those who seek the truth will improve their leisure time in searching the Scripture; even when they have but small advantages for understanding it. But alas! how few of our nobles, and ministers of state, study that sacred volume, as they ride in their chariots! or willingly take long journeys to inquire after God, or worship Him! Surely this Ethiopian will rise up in judgment against them, and condemn them!—When God, by means of the Bible alone, excites serious inquiries after the truth; He will send an expositor to obviate difficulties and perplexities: thus while one society disperses the sacred Scriptures, another sends missionaries: both are needful, and there should be no competition between them, but most cordial concurrence in their most excellent designs. **SCOTT.**

he was endued with the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, to qualify him for that service. **SCOTT.**

(37.) 'This v. is wanting in A. C. G. and very many other MSS., as also in the Syr., Arab., Copt., Sahidic, and Æth.; and in others there is much of variation and transposition. It has been, therefore, rightly thrown out by Griesb. and Matth.' *Kuin.* But *Bloomf.* would only include it in brackets. See *Dr. A. C.* **ED.**

(38.) 'It would be very unnatural to suppose they went down to the water, merely that Philip might take a little up in his hand to pour on the eunuch.' *Doddr.* But, though frequent bathing be a custom of religion in hot climates, and immersion be an old form of baptism, we know not if the 'water' was a pool, stream, tank, well, or fountain, or deep enough for immersion. And see *Henry*, with Is. 52:15. **ID.**

(39.) 'The most enlightened commentators are now agreed that *εραπασε* [tr. 'caught away'] may very well be understood of the imperative suggestions of the Holy Spirit, which Philip doubtless well knew how to distinguish from ordinary thoughts. Comp. 1 K. 18:12. Herodot. 4, 13.' **BLOOMF.**

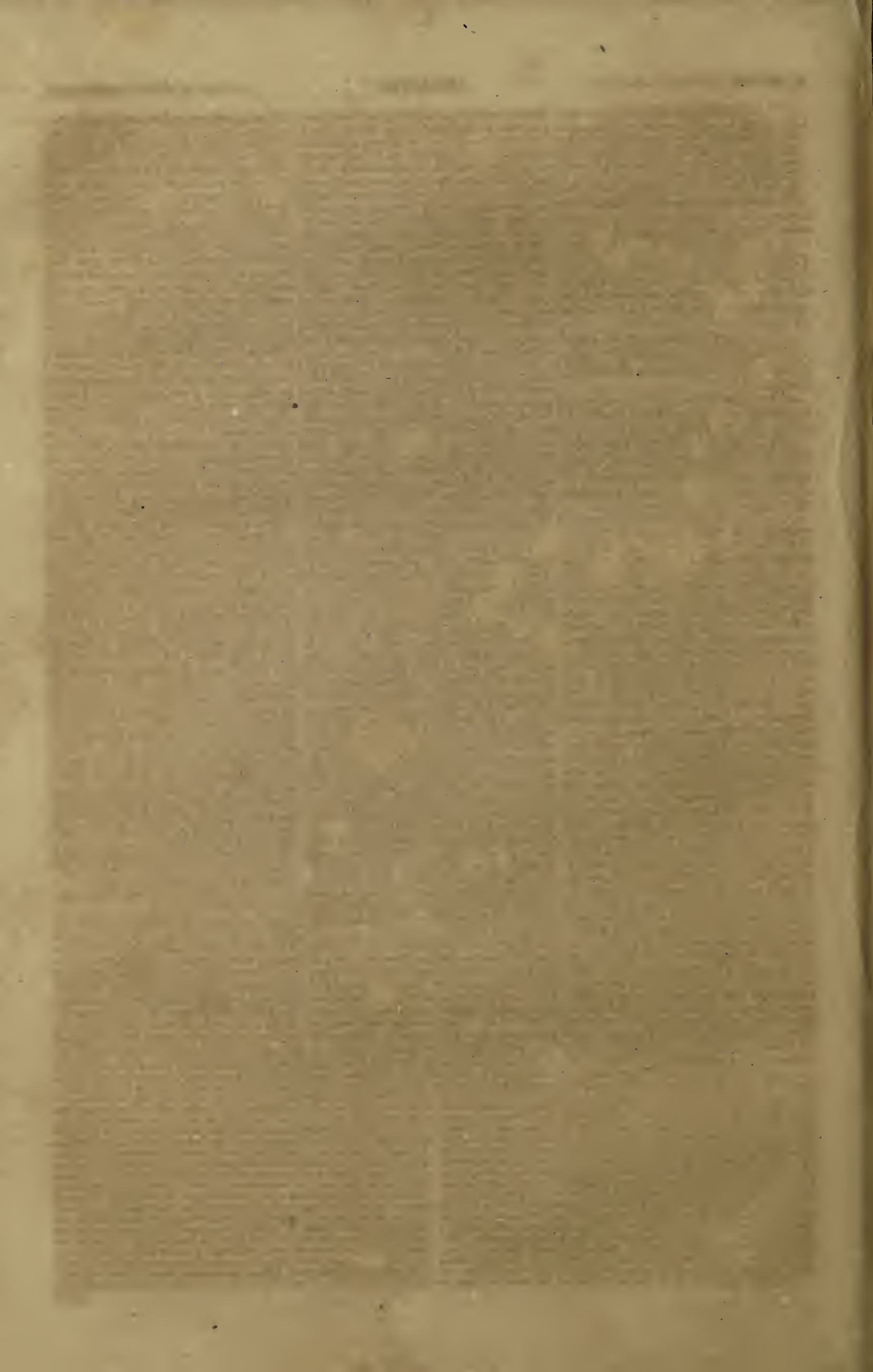
(40.) *Cesarea*.] 'This was *Cesarea in Palestine*, formerly called *Strato's Tower*, built by Herod the Great, in honor of Augustus. There





DAMASCUS. P. 47.







## CHAP. IX.

1 Saul, going towards Damascus, 4 is stricken down to the earth, 10 is called to the apostleship, 13 and is baptized by Ananias. 20 He preacheth Christ boldly. 23 The Jews lay wait to kill him: 29 so do the Grecians, but he escapeth both. 31 The church having rest, Peter healeth Eneas of the palsy, 35 and restoreth Tabitha to life.

AND Saul, yet <sup>a</sup>breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

2 And desired of him letters to Damaseus to the synagogues, that, if he found any of <sup>b</sup>this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

3 And <sup>c</sup>as he journeyed, he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou <sup>d</sup>me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: *it is hard for thee to kiek <sup>e</sup>against the prieks.*

a c. 8:3. Ga. 1:13. c 1 Co. 15:8. e c. 5:39.  
b the way. d Mat 25:40,45.

they went down both into the water, for they had no convenient vessels with them, being on a journey, wherewith to take up water, and must therefore go down into it; not that they stripped off their clothes, and went naked into the water, but, going barefoot, according to the custom, they went, perhaps, up to the ankles or mid-leg into the water, and Philip sprinkled water upon him, according to the prophecy which this eunuch had probably but just now read, for it was but a few vs. before those which Philip found him on, and was very apposite to his case, Is. 52:15. Observe, Though Philip had very lately been deceived in Simon Magus, and had admitted him to baptism, though he afterward appeared to be no true convert, yet he did not, therefore, scruple to baptize the eunuch on his profession of faith immediately, without putting him on a longer trial than usual. If some hypoerites crowd into the church, that afterward prove a grief and scandal to us, yet we must not, therefore, make the door of admission any straiter than Christ has; they shall answer for their apostasy, and not we.

VI. Philip and the eunuch are unexpectedly parted, presently; as soon as they were come up out of the water, before the eunuch went into his chariot again, *the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip*, v. 39. and did not give him time for an exhortation, as is usual after baptism; but his sudden departure was sufficient to make up the want of that, for it seems to have been miraculous, and that he was caught up in the air, in the eunuch's sight, and so carried out of his sight; and the working of this miracle on Philip, was a confirmation of his doctrine, as much as the working of a miracle by him would have been. He was caught away, and the eunuch

saw him no more, but, having lost his minister, returned to the use of his Bible again.

1. The eunuch went on his way rejoicing; business called him home, and he must hasten to it; for it was no way inconsistent with his Christianity, which places no sanctity or perfection in men's being hermits or recluses, but is a religion which men may and ought to carry about with them into the affairs of this life. He rejoiced that he himself was joined to Christ, and had an interest in Him; and that he had these good tidings to bring to his countrymen, for he returned, not only a Christian, but a minister. Some copies read: *And when they were come up out of the water, the Holy Spirit fell upon the eunuch, (without the ceremony of the apostle's imposition of hands,) but the angel of the Lord caught away Philip.*

2. Philip, v. 40. was found at Azotus or Ashdod, formerly a city of the Philistines; there the angel or Spirit of the Lord dropped him, which was above 30 miles from Gaza, whither the eunuch was going, and where Lightfoot thinks he took ship, and went by sea into his own country. But Philip, wherever he was, would not be idle; *passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Cesarea: there he settled; and, for aught that appears, had his principal residence ever after; for at Cesarea we find him in a house of his own, ch. 21:8.*

CHAP. IX. V. 1—9. Mention was made of Saul twice or thrice in the story of Stephen; and now, not quite taking leave of Peter, henceforward the sacred penman is mostly taken up with Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles. His name in Heb. was *Saul*,—desired; his Roman name was *Paul*,—little. He was born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, a free city of the Romans, and himself a freeman of that city. His father and mother were both native Jews, therefore he calls himself a *Hebrew of the Hebrews*; he was of the tribe of Benjamin, which adhered to Judah. His education was in the schools of Tarsus first, a little Athens for learning; there he acquainted himself with the philosophy and poetry of the Greeks. Thence he was sent to Jerusalem, to study divinity and the Jewish law; his tutor was Gamaliel, an eminent Pharisee; he had extraordinary natural parts, and improved mightily in learning; he had likewise a handicraft trade, was bred to tent-making; which was common with those among the Jews that were bred scholars, so Lightfoot, for the earning of their maintenance, and the avoiding of idleness.

This is the young man on whom the grace of God wrought this mighty change, about a year after the ascension of Christ, or little more. We are told,

I. How bad he was, how very bad, before his conversion; not that he was a man of ill morals: as *touching the law he was blameless*; but he was an inveterate enemy to Christianity, a blasphemer of Christ, a persecutor of Christians, and injurious to both, 1 Tim. 1:13. And so ill informed was his conscience, that he thought he ought to do what he did against the name of Christ, ch. 26:9. and that he *did God service* in it, as was foretold, John 16:2. His breathing out threatenings and slaughter intimates,

that it was natural to him, and his constant business, that he still persisted in it; though it intimates, also, that he shall shortly be of another mind. To Damaseus was the Gospel now lately carried, by those that fled from the persecution at Stephen's death, who thought to be safe and quiet there, and were connived at by those in power there: but Saul cannot be easy if he knows a Christian is quiet; so resolves to give them disturbance, and applies himself to the high priest for a commission, v. 1. to go to Damascus, v. 2. The high priest was forward enough to do it; but it seems the young persecutor drove more furiously than the old one. Leaders in sin are the worst of sinners: and the proselytes which the Scribes and Pharisees make, often prove seven times more the children of hell than themselves. He saith, ch. 22:5. that this commission was had from the whole estate of the elders: and proud enough this furious bigot was, to have a commission to him directed, with the seal of the great Sanhedrim affixed.

Now the commission was, to empower him to inquire among the synagogues, or congregations, of the Jews at Damascus, whether any that belonged to them inclined to favor this new sect or heresy, that believed in Christ; and if he found any such, whether men or women, to bring them up prisoners to Jerusalem, to be proceeded against according to law, by the great council there. The high priest and Sanhedrim claimed a power over the Jews in all countries, and had a deference paid to their authority in matters of religion, by all their synagogues, even those that were not of the jurisdiction of the civil government of the Jewish nation.—And such a sovereignty the Roman pontiff now claims, as the Jewish pontiff then did, though he has not so much to show for it. By this commission, all that worshipped God in the way they called *heresy*, though agreeing exactly with the original institutes, even of the Jewish church, whether men or women, were to be persecuted. Thus was Saul employed when the grace of God wrought that great change in him. Let not us then despair of renewing grace for the conversion of the greatest sinners; nor let such despair of the pardoning mercy of God for the greatest sin; for Paul himself obtained mercy, that he might be a monument, 1 Tim. 1:13.

II. How suddenly and strangely a blessed change was wrought in him, not in the use of any ordinary means, but by miracles. The conversion of Paul is one of the wonders of the church.

1. He was near Damascus, almost at his journey's end, ready to enter the city, the chief city of Syria. Damascus had been infamous for persecuting God's people formerly, Amos 1:3. and now it was likely to be so again. The cruel edict and decree he had with him drew near to be put in execution; and now it was happily prevented. Christ has many ways of delivering the godly out of temptation, and sometimes does it by a change wrought in their persecutors, either restraining their wrathful spirits, Ps. 76:10. and mollifying them for a time, as the O. T. Saul, who relented toward David

was an excellent harbor here, made by Herod; and after the destruction of Jerusalem it became the capital of the whole land of Judea. It must be always distinguished from *Cesarea Philippi*, which was an inland town not far from the springs of the Jordan. Whenever the word *Cesarea* occurs, without *Philippi*, the former is intended. As Philip preached in all the cities of Palestine till he came to *Cesarea*, he must have preached in the different cities of the *Philistine* country, *Ashdod*, *Akkaren*, and *Jamnia*, and also in the principal parts of *Samaria*; as these lay in his way from *Gaza* to *Cesarea*.

DR. A. CLARKE.  
NOTES. CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. It is not certainly known, in what year Saul was converted: perhaps it might be two or three years after our Lord's ascension. 7:58. *Philem.* 9. It does not clearly appear under whose authority Damascus was at this time; but probably the ruling powers were disposed to concur in the execution of the commission, granted by the high priest and council of the Jews. SCOTT. *High Priest.*] This was Theophilus, son of Anan, whom Vitellius [the Roman emperor] had in A. D. 37, appointed, having removed his brother

Jonathan, on whom he had conferred the office at the Passover of that same year.

BLOOMFIELD.  
(2.) The Romans had granted the Sanhedrim the power of trial and condemnation in all religious matters: and Aretas k. of Arabia, then ruling in Damascus, was well affected to the Jews, and some think a Jewish proselyte; as he had married his daughter to Herod Antipas. In.

V. 3, &c. The hypotheses which would explain these vs. without reference to supernatural causes, require more 'belief,' and 'produce more difficulties than they remove.' See Bloomf. 'Neither phōs ["light?"] nor periastraptēin [shined round] are applied to lightning.' Ed.

V. 5. Kick, &c.] 'A proverbial form, common to the Heb., Gr., and Latin.' Bloomf. From "it is hard," to "unto him," inclusive, making twenty words in the original, and thirty in our version, are not in any Greek MS. yet discovered, nor in the Itala, Erpen's Arabic, Syr., Copt., Sahidic; and most of the Slavonian, the Complutensian, Bengel, and Griesbach omit them. The Æth., Armenian, one Arabic, and Vulg., have them.'  
DR. A. CLARKE.



6 And he trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.

8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.

9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

more than once, 1 S. 24:16. 26:21. or, renewing their spirits, and fixing on them durable impressions, as on the N. T. Saul, here. It was also a very great mercy to Saul himself, to be hindered from executing his wicked design, in which, if he had now proceeded, perhaps it had been the filling up of the measure of his iniquity. It is to be valued as a signal token of the divine favor, if God, either by the inward operations of his grace, or the outward occurrences of his providence, prevent us from prosecuting and executing a sinful purpose, 1 S. 25:32.

2. The appearance of Christ to him, in his glory; here it is only said, that there shined round about him a light from heaven; but it appears by what follows, v. 17. that the Lord Jesus was in this light, and appeared to him by the way. He saw that Just One, ch. 22:14. and see ch. 26:13. It is not inconsistent with what is said of the heavens' receiving Christ till the end of time, ch. 3:21. to suppose that He did, on such an extraordinary occasion as this, make a personal visit, but a very short one, to this lower world; it was necessary to Paul's being an apostle, that he should have seen the Lord, and so he did, 1 Cor. 9:1. 15:8. This light shined on him suddenly, when Paul never thought of any such thing, and without any previous warning. It shone round about him, on every side; and this was designed not only to startle him, and awaken his attention, for well may he expect to hear, when he is thus made to see something very extraordinary, but to signify the enlightening of his understanding with the knowledge of Christ. The first thing in this new creation, as in that of the world, is, light, 2 Cor. 4:6. Hence all Christians are said to be children of the light and of the day, Eph. 5:8.

3. The arresting of Saul, and his detachment; He fell to the earth, v. 4. Some think he was on foot, and that this light, which perhaps was accompanied with a thunder clap, so terrified him, that he fell on his face, usually a posture of adoration, but here of astonishment; but probably he was mounted, for he was now in a public post, in haste, and the journey was long, so it is not likely he should travel on foot. Being by the fall taken into custody, and as it were set to the bar, he heard a voice, (distinguishing to him

only, for those with him heard a sound, v. 7. yet knew not the words,) ch. 22:9. the voice of Christ, ch. 22:14. Then the Word we hear is likely to profit us, when we hear it as the voice of Christ, 1 Thess. 2:13. No voice but his can reach the heart. He was called twice by his name, which brought the conviction home to his conscience, and put it past dispute to whom the voice spake this. Some think, allusion is had to Saul, David's persecutor. Calling him by name, intimates Christ's particular regard to him, Is. 45:4. Ez. 33:12. also Saul's deep sleep in sin. It is like Martha, Martha, Luke 10:41. or Simon, Simon, Luke 22:31. or O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Mat. 23:37. He speaks to him as to one in imminent danger, at the pit's brink, and just ready to drop in, 'Saul, Saul, dost thou know whither thou art going, and what thou art doing?'

4. The charge against him, is, Why persecutest thou Me? Observe here, Before Saul was made a saint, he is made to see himself a sinner, a great sinner, a sinner against Christ. A humbling conviction of sin is the first step towards a saving conversion from sin. He is convinced of one particular sin, persecution, which he was most notoriously guilty of, and had justified himself in, and thereby way is made for his conviction of all the rest. It is a very affectionate expostulation, enough to melt a heart of stone. Observe, 1st. The person sinning; 'It is thou; not one of the ignorant, rude, unthinking crowd, but thou, that hast a learned education, and the knowledge of the Scriptures, which, if duly considered, would show thee the folly of it. It is worse in thee than in another.' 2dly. The person sinned against; 'It is I, who never did thee any harm, who came from heaven to earth to do thee good; who was not long since crucified for thee; and was not that enough, but must I afresh be crucified by thee?' 3dly. The kind and continuance of the sin. It was persecution, and he was at this time engaged in it; 'Not only thou hast persecuted, but thou persecutest, thou persistest in it.' They that are designing mischief, are, in God's account, doing mischief. 4thly. The question put to him on it; 'Why dost thou do it?' It is complaining language. 'Why dealest thou unjustly, thus unkindly, with my disciples?' Christ never complained so much of those who persecuted Him in his own person, as here of those who persecuted Him in his followers. It is convincing language, 'Canst thou give any good reason for it?' Why persecutest thou Me? He thought he was persecuting only a company of poor, weak, silly people, that were an offence and eye-sore to the Pharisees, little imagining that it was One in heaven that he was all this while insulting; for surely if he had known, he would not have persecuted the Lord of glory. Those who persecute the saints, persecute Christ Himself, and He takes what is done against them as done against Himself, and accordingly will be the judgment in the great day, Mat. 25:45.

5. Saul's question on his indictment, and the reply to it, v. 5. The name of Jesus he knew, but little did he think to hear it from

heaven, or from the midst of such a glory as now shone round about him. Christ brings souls into fellowship with Himself, by manifesting Himself to them. He said, I am Jesus, a Savior, I am Jesus of Nazareth, so it is, ch. 22:8. Saul used to call Him so when he blasphemed Him; 'I am that very Jesus whom thou usedst to call in scorn Jesus of Nazareth: that Jesus whom thou persecutest, and therefore it is at thy peril if thou persist in this wicked course.' There is nothing more effectual to awaken and humble the soul than to see sin to be against Christ, an affront to Him, and a contradiction to his designs. Observe, how gentle his reproof; It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks, or goads; to spurn at the spur. Those kick at the goad, that stifle and smother the convictions of conscience, that rebel against God's truths and laws, that quarrel with his providences, and that persecute and oppose his ministers, because they reprove them, and their words are as goads and as nails.

6. His surrender of himself to the Lord Jesus, at length, v. 6. See here, (1.) The frame and temper he was in. He trembled as one in a great fright. Strong convictions set home by the blessed Spirit, will make an awakened soul tremble. How can those but tremble, that are made to see the eternal God provoked against them, the whole creation at war with them, and their own souls on the brink of ruin! He was astonished, filled with amazement, as one brought into a new world, that knew not where he was. The convincing, converting work of Christ, is astonishing to the awakened soul, and fills it with admiration. 'What is this that God has done with me, and what will He do?' (2.) His address to Jesus Christ, in this frame; Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? Which may be taken, [1.] As a serious request for Christ's teachings. A serious desire to be instructed by Christ in the way of salvation, is an evidence of a good work begun in the soul. Or, [2.] As a sincere resignation of himself to the conduct and government of the Lord Jesus. This was the first word that grace spake in Paul, and with this began a spiritual life. Note, The great change in conversion is wrought on the will, and consists in the resignation of that to the will of Christ. (3.) The general direction Christ gave him, in answer to this; Arise, go into the city of Damascus, which thou art now near to, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. It is encouragement enough to have further instruction promised him. Christ manifests Himself to his people by degrees; and both what He does, and would have them to do, though they know not now, they shall know hereafter.

7. His fellow-travellers fell to the earth, as he did, but rose without being bidden, which he did not, for he lay under a heavier load; but when up, (1.) They stood speechless, as men in confusion, and that was all, v. 7. They were going on the same wicked errand he was, and, perhaps, to the best of their power, were as spiteful as he; yet we do not find that any of them were converted, though they saw the light, and were struck down, and dumb, by it. No external

V. 7. We find from the account [Paul] afterwards repeatedly gave of this transaction, that much more passed between the Lord and him, than is here recorded. 22:14-16. 26:16-18. 1 Cor. 15:3-11. SCOTT.

V. 8, 9. This effect [blindness] proved the whole transaction to have been a reality, and not merely an illusion of the imagination. It is impossible to describe what Saul thought, felt, and experienced, during this awful and important interval [of 3 days.] There is, however, abundant reason to conclude, that the Holy Spirit enlightened his mind, at this time, with a just view of the divine law, in its spirituality and excellency; and thus showed him the worthlessness of his pharisaical righteousness; and his exceedingly heinous guilt, not only in persecuting the Messiah, in his followers, but also in his whole conduct, and the state of his heart. This seems to be intimated in some parts of his epistles; and indeed was essentially necessary to a right understanding of that Gospel, which he was to spend the rest of his life in preaching. Rom. 7:9-12. Gal. 1:11-24. 2:17-21.—With this narrative in view, can we wonder, that one, thus 'saved by grace,' and made an apostle, at the very moment when he might most justly have been sent down 'quick into hell,' should especially delight in expatiating on the divine sovereignty, [48]

and on the riches and freeness of 'the grace of our God and Savior,' in saving his chosen people? The same doctrines may be distinctly traced in the other parts of Scripture, and abundantly proved from them: but this apostle, snatched as a brand from the burning, and rejoicing with most grateful exultation in his stupendous deliverance and astonishing felicity, with a noble, but highly rational enthusiasm, delights in recurring to the source of all his hopes and joys, and in calling on his brethren, to ascribe unreservedly all the glory of their salvation to God alone. Were our humiliation equally deep, and our views of the way in which we have been 'called out of darkness into marvellous light,' as distinct as his were; few objections to these doctrines, or difficulties concerning them, would trouble our minds: and we should soon perceive the holy tendency and efficacy of them. (8) They led him by the hand.] This seems to imply, they were on foot, and not riding, as generally pictured. SC.

(8.) This blindness seems to have been inflicted, to typify to Paul the ignorance of his former state, and by withdrawing his attention from external objects, and turning his thoughts inward, to favor self-examination and promote repentance. We may suppose, too, that the *scals*, v. 18. were to make his blindness more manifest to others. BLOOM.



10 ¶ And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named <sup>h</sup> Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, <sup>i</sup> I am here, Lord.

11 And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth,

12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this <sup>i</sup> man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:

14 And here he <sup>j</sup> hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call <sup>k</sup> on thy name.

15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for <sup>l</sup> he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before <sup>m</sup> the Gentiles, and <sup>n</sup> kings, and the <sup>o</sup> children of Israel.

16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer <sup>p</sup> for my name's sake.

17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting <sup>q</sup> his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and <sup>r</sup> be filled with the Holy Ghost.

18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized:

h c. 22:12. i 1 Ti. 1:13. j ver. 21. k 1 Co. 1:2. 2 Ti. 2:22. l c. 13:2. Ro. 1:1. I Co. 15:10. Ga. 1:15. Ep. 3:7,8. m Ro. 11:13. Ga. 2:7,8. n c. 25:23, &c. o c. 28:17, &c. p c. 20:23. 2 Co. 11:23-27. 2 Ti. 1:11,12. q c. 8:17. r c. 2:4.

means will, of themselves, change the soul, without the Spirit and grace of God, which distinguishes between some and others: among these that journeyed together, one is taken, and the others left. *They stood speechless*, but none of God's children are born dumb. (2.) *They heard a voice, but saw no man*; they heard Paul speak, but saw not Him to whom he spake, nor heard distinctly what was said to him; which reconciles it

with ch. 22: 9. *They saw the light, and were afraid*; which they might do, and yet see no man in the light, as Paul did; and *they heard not the voice of Him that spake to Paul*, so as to understand what He said, though they did hear a confused noise. Thus they who came hither to be the instruments of Paul's rage against the church, serve for witnesses of the power of God over him.

8. Saul's condition after this, v. 8, 9. (1.) *He arose from the earth*, when Christ bid him, but, probably, not without help, the vision had made him so faint and weak; like Daniel, when, on the sight of a vision, no strength remained in him, Dan. 10:16, 17. (2.) *When his eyes were opened*, he found that his sight was gone, and *he saw no man*, none of the men that were with him, and began now to be busy about him. It was not so much this glaring light, that, *by dazzling his eyes, had dimmed them*; for then those with him would have lost their sight too; but it was a sight of Christ. Thus a believing sight of the glory of God, in the face of Christ, dazzles the eyes to all things here below. (3.) *They led him by the hand into Damascus*; thus he who thought to have led the disciples of Christ prisoners and captives to Jerusalem, was himself led a prisoner and a captive to Christ into Damascus. (4.) *He lay without sight, and without food, neither did eat nor drink for three days, v. 9.* I do not think, as some do, that now he had his rapture into the third heavens, which he speaks of, 2 Cor. 12. So far from that, we have reason to think he was, all this time, rather in the belly of hell, suffering God's terrors for his sins, which were now set in order before him: he was in the dark, concerning his own spiritual state, and so wounded in spirit for sin, that he could relish neither meat nor drink.

V. 10—22. Christ here takes care of the work of his own hands; He that hath torn, will heal; that hath smitten, will bind up; that hath convinced, will comfort.

I. Ananias is here ordered to go and look after Saul, to heal and help him. Ananias was a native of Damascus; for it is said, ch. 22: 12. *he had a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, as a devout man according to the law*; he had lately embraced the Gospel, and, as it should seem, officiated as a minister, at least, *on this occasion*, though it does not appear he was apostolically ordained. He is directed to go and inquire at such a house, probably an inn, for *one Saul of Tarsus*. Two reasons are given him why: 1. Because this stranger prays, and his coming to him must answer his prayer. There is no question, saith Christ, but he is a true convert, *for behold, he prayeth. Behold*, notes the certainty of it; *Assure thyself it is so; go, and see.* It notes also the strangeness

of it. Saul was a Pharisee, and we have reason to think he did, as the rest of them did, make long prayers in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets? But now he began to pray after another manner; then he *said* his prayers, now he *prayed* them. Regenerating grace evermore sets people on praying; you may as well find a living man without breath, as a living Christian without prayer; if breathless, lifeless; and so if prayerless, graceless. Ananias must go to him with all speed; it is no time to linger, *for behold, he prayeth*; if the child cry, the tender nurse hastens to it. 'Oh! go to him quickly, and tell him he is a dear son, a pleasant child, and *since I spake against him, for persecuting Me, I do earnestly remember him still,*' Jer. 31:18—20. The setting of sin in order before us should drive us to prayer. He was blind and sick; and, *Is any afflicted? Let him pray.* Christ had promised him, it should be further told him what to do, v. 6. and he prays that one may be sent to instruct him. What God has promised, we must pray for; He will for this be inquired of, and particularly for divine instruction. 2. Because Ananias' coming to him must answer his dream, for it was of God, v. 12. He had, in prayer, spread the misery of his own case before God; and God presently manifests Himself, and the intentions of his grace to him; and it is very encouraging to know God's thoughts to us ward. He would readily welcome Ananias as a messenger from God, when told beforehand, in vision, that one of that name would come to him. See what a great thing it is to bring a spiritual physician and his patient together; here are two visions in order to it!

II. Ananias objects against going, and the Lord answers the objection. See, v. 15, 16. how condescendingly the Lord admits his servant to reason with Him. So, 1. Ananias delivered his message to Saul, v. 17. It was promised, as one of the signs that shall follow them that believe, that they should lay hands on the sick, and they should recover, Mark 16: 18. and it was for that intent that he *put his hands on him*. He called him *brother*, because he was made a partaker of the grace of God, though not yet baptized. He produces his commission from the same hand that had laid hold on him by the way, and now had him in custody. Ananias might deliver his message to Saul very appositely in the prophet's words, Hos. 6: 1, 2. He assures him, he shall not only have his sight, but be filled with the Holy Ghost: he must himself be an apostle, and in nothing come behind the chief of the apostles, and, therefore, must receive the Holy Ghost immediately, and not, as others did, by the interposition of the apostles;

V. 10—14. Ananias had previously been a 'devout' person, according to the law of Moses; . . . though it is not likely he was one of the seventy disciples. (22:6—16. vv. 12—16.) 'To call on the name of Jesus,' is here used as the distinguished characteristic of a believer.—'The unbelieving Jews say of him, preaching Christ in their synagogues, "Is not this he who wasted those, who called on that name in Jerusalem?"' (21.) Thus Paul writes to saints, . . . under the title of "all that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in every place;" (1 Cor. 1:2.) and then, in the very next v., he himself prays, that "grace and peace may be derived on them from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." . . . And he bids Christians "follow after peace with all those that call upon the Lord with a pure heart;" i. e., with all believers; it being the same thing to believe in, and to call upon, the name of the Lord Jesus. Hence, St. Paul saith, "He that believeth in Him shall not be ashamed, because it is written, Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Joel 2:32.) And hence we learn, who that Lord is, whom Ananias bids Paul invoke, when he saith, "Arise and be baptized, calling upon the name of the Lord," even the Lord Jesus who appeared to him; (22:16.) . . . and what is meant by that phrase, namely, "Profess thy faith, by being baptized in, and by calling on his name." This was a thing so continually practised by the first Christians, that Pliny mentions it in his epistle to Trajan, telling him, that it was the custom of the Christians to sing a hymn to Christ, as God. For, Paul, in his first thirteen epistles, prays for "grace and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus;" and John, in his second epistle, v. 3. doth the same.' *Whitby*. Some indeed would render the clause, 'are called by thy name:' but the direct meaning of the original, the repetition of the same language in different connexions, and the remarks contained in the quotation just made, are sufficient to show, that this tr. is absolutely inadmissible.

(10, &c.) 'Many German commentators, as Eiehn., Heinr., Kuini., make a desperate attempt to *imagine* how the event, here, *might have happened*, (or in fact *did happen*.) in the regular course of ordinary life; and, what is more, they endeavor to reconcile and *intermix* this view of the subject with the extraordinary and preternatural method recorded by Luke. But surely never was there anything more hypothetical, contorted, and far-fetched; so totally dissimilar to the plain and obvious sense of the passage, as it would appear to any man of plain, good sense, reading it for the first time, and without any preconceived opinions.' Bl.

(12.) *A man named Ananias:* put instead of "thee," after the Heb. manner of putting proper names for pronouns, Job. 4:1. Luke 3:19. Gen. 4:23. *Kuini*. Indeed, it is a characteristic of the primitive style in general.'

V. 15, 16. It should be noted, that this precedes in the history the admission of any uncircumcised Gentiles into the church. *Rom.* 9:22, 23. *2 Cor.* 4:7. *2 Tim.* 2:20—22. Some think a distinct representation was made in a vision to Saul's mind of all the various persecutions he afterwards underwent: at least, he had such a discovery made of them, as rendered his subsequent ministry a lively copy of Christ's own example, who foresaw everything that He was to endure, from the very first. He did not, however, fully know the particulars, as many subsequent passages prove.

V. 17—22. 'Ananias, who at most is only supposed to have been one of the seventy disciples, only laid his hands on him, "that he might receive his sight;" and . . . he was replenished with the Holy Ghost by the immediate gift of Christ; he being an "apostle not of man, nor by man, but by Christ alone." *Gal.* 1:1.' *Whitby*, in *Scott*. This appears to have been the case; especially as the conferring of the Holy Spirit, in his miraculous gifts, seems in all cases, previous to that of Cornelius and his friends, to have taken place after baptism. (10:44—48.) 'It is more



19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at <sup>s</sup>Damascus.

20 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

21 But all that heard *him* <sup>t</sup>were amazed, and said, Is not this he <sup>u</sup>that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests ?

22 But Saul increased the more in strength, <sup>v</sup>and confounded the <sup>w</sup>Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

23 ¶ And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel <sup>x</sup>to kill him.

24 But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched <sup>y</sup>the gates day and night, to kill him.

25 Then the disciples took him by night, and let <sup>z</sup>him down by the wall, in a basket.

26 ¶ And when Saul was come to <sup>a</sup>Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples : but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

27 But <sup>b</sup>Barnabas took him, and brought *him* to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly <sup>c</sup>at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

28 And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.

29 And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians : but they <sup>d</sup>went about to slay him.

30 <sup>e</sup>Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

<sup>f</sup> c. 26:20. Ga. 1:17. t Ga 1:13,23. u c. 8:3. v Ps. 84:7.

and Ananias' putting his hands on him before he was baptized, was for the conferring of the Holy Ghost.

2. Ananias saw the good issue of his mission, (1.) In Christ's favor to Saul. At the word of Ananias, Saul receives sight. He is delivered from the spirit of bondage, (comp. Is. 61 : 1. with Luke 4 : 18.) by his receiving sight, v. 18. signified by the falling of scales from his eyes; and this immediately, and forthwith: the cure was sudden, to show that it was miraculous. The cloud was scattered, and the Sun of righteousness

probable, that Ananias did not lay hands on him a second time; as we do not elsewhere find, that any but the apostles had the power of conferring the Holy Spirit. *Doddr.*, in *Scorr.* From his own account, it appears, that he received his complete knowledge of the Gospel, immediately by revelation from Jesus Christ. 1:11-14. *Proving.*] 16:10. 1 Cor. 2:16. Eph. 4:16. Col. 2:2,19. *Sumbibazon*: taken from mechanics.—Proving by quotations from Scripture, skillfully arranged, and compared together, and connected with each other. 17:1-4. *Scorr.*

(20.) *Son of God.*] 1. c. the Messiah of the O. T. prophets. For "Christ," many ancient MSS. and Verss. read "Jesus," which is approved by Grot., Mill, Bengel, Mich., Morus, Ros., Valck., &c., and rightly received in the text by Griesb. For that Christ was the Son of God, Paul had never denied, nor did the Jews deny that. They only denied that Jesus was the Son of God. *Christon* doubtless crept into the text from the marg. *Kuin.*

V. 23-30. It seems that Aretas, an Arabian king, had got possession

rose on his soul, with healing under his wings. (2.) In Saul's subjection to Christ; he was baptized, and thereby submitted himself to the government of Christ, and cast himself on the grace of Christ: devoting himself entirely to his service and honor.

III. The good work begun in Saul, is carried on wonderfully, this new-born Christian, though he seemed *as one born out of due time*, yet presently comes to maturity. 1. He received his bodily strength, v. 19. his three days' fasting, with the mighty weight all that time on his spirits, having made him very weak. 2. He associated with the disciples at Damascus, went to their meetings, and joined in communion with them. Now *the wolf dwells with the lamb, and the leopard lies down with the kid*, Is. 11 : 6. Those that take God for their God, take his people for their people. 3. *He preached Christ in the synagogues*, v. 20. To this he had an extraordinary qualification, God having immediately revealed his Son to him and in him, that he might preach Him, Gal. 1:15,16. He was so full of Christ himself, that *the Spirit within him constrained him* to preach Him to others, and, like Elisha, *to speak, that he might be refreshed*, Job. 32:20. The Jews; they were to have the first offer; the synagogues were their places of concourse, and there he would face the enemies of Christ, where they were most daring; and openly profess Christianity where he had most opposed it. He preached *Christ, nothing but Christ, and Him crucified*. He preached concerning Christ, *that He is the Son of God, his beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased, and with us in Him, and not otherwise*. Doubtless this was looked upon by many, v. 21. as a great confirmation of the truth of Christianity, that such a notorious persecutor of it, came, on a sudden, to be such an intelligent, strenuous, and capacious preacher of it. This miracle on the mind of such a man, outshone the miracles on men's bodies; and giving a man such another heart, was more than giving men to speak with other tongues. 4. He confuted and confounded those that opposed the doctrine of Christ, v. 22. He signalized himself, not only in the pulpit, but in the schools, and showed himself supernaturally enabled, not only to preach the truth, but to maintain and defend it when he had preached it. Instead of being discouraged by the various remarks made on his conversion, he was thereby so much the more imboldened, finding he had enough at hand wherewith to answer the worst they could say of him. In all his discourses with the Jews, he was still *proving that this Jesus is very Christ, is the Christ, the Anointed of God, the true Messiah promised to the fathers*. He was proving it, *affirming it and confirming it*; teaching with perswasion. And we have reason to think he converted many.

V. 23-31. Luke here makes no mention of Paul's journey into Arabia, which he tells us himself was immediately after his conversion, Gal. 1 : 16, 17. And what is recorded here, took place three years after his conversion, on his return to Damascus. Here are,

I. Difficulties at Damascus, and a narrow

escape of being killed. Observe, 1. His danger, v. 23. *The Jews took counsel to kill him*, being more enraged at him than at any other preachers of the Gospel; not only because of his zeal and success, but because he had been such a remarkable deserter, and his being a Christian was a testimony against them. Saul was no sooner a Christian than a preacher; no sooner a preacher than a sufferer; so quick did he rise to the top of his preferment! Where God gives great grace, He commonly exercises it with great trials. 2. How he was delivered. The design against him was discovered by some intelligence, whether from heaven or from men, we are not told. The disciples contrived to help him away, hid him, it is likely, by day, and *in the night the gates being watched*, that he could not get away through them, *they let him down by the wall, in a basket*, as he himself relates it, 2 Cor. 11 : 33. This story, as it shows us that when we enter into the way of God we must look for temptation, and prepare accordingly; so it shows, *that the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that we may not be by it deterred or driven from the way of God*.

II. Difficulties at Jerusalem, the first time he went thither, v. 26. He came to Jerusalem. This is thought to be that journey to Jerusalem which he himself speaks of, Gal. 1:18. But I rather incline to think it was a journey before that, because *his coming in and going out, his preaching and disputing*, v. 28, 29. seem to be more than would consist with his 15 days' stay; and besides, now he came a stranger, but then he came, *to confer with Peter*, as one he was intimate with; however, it might possibly be the same. Now observe,

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(24.) *Watched the gates.*] Note, 2 Cor. 11:32. (27.) *Took.*] 'Literally, taking him by the hand.'

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31 Then <sup>e</sup> had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were <sup>f</sup> edified; and walking <sup>g</sup> in the fear of the Lord, and in the <sup>h</sup> comfort of the Holy Ghost, were <sup>i</sup> multiplied.

32 ¶ And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda.

33 And there he found a certain man named Eneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy.

34 And Peter said unto him, Eneas, Jesus Christ maketh <sup>k</sup> thee whole; arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately.

35 And all that dwelt in Lydda and <sup>l</sup> Saron saw him, and turned <sup>m</sup> to the Lord.

36 ¶ Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called <sup>n</sup> Dorcas: this woman was full <sup>o</sup> of good works and alms-deeds which she did.

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid <sup>p</sup> her in an upper chamber.

38 And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring <sup>q</sup> him that he would not <sup>r</sup> delay to come to them.

e Zec. 9:1. c. 8: 1 Jn. 14:16,17. n or, Doe, or, 1. k Zec. 8:20-22. Roe. f Ps. 94:13. j c. 3:6,16. 4:10. o 1 Ti. 2:10. Tit. g Ro. 14:19. l 1 Ch. 5:16. 2:7,14. h Ps. 85:11. Col. m c. 11:21. 2 Co. p or, be grieved. 1:10. 3:16.

2. How sharp his enemies were upon him. It vexed the unbelieving Jews, to see Saul a trophy of Christ's victory, and a captive to his grace, who had been such a champion for their cause; to see him coming in, and going out, with the apostles, v. 28. and to hear them glorying in him, or rather glorifying God in him. He appeared vigorous in the cause of Christ, and this was yet more provoking to them, v. 29. The Grecians, or Hellenist Jews, were most offended at him, because he had been one of them; and they drew him into a dispute, in which, no doubt, he was too hard for them, as he had been for the Jews at Damascus. For that same natural quickness [force] and fervor of spirit, which, while he was in ignorance and unbelief, made him a furious, bigoted persecutor of the faith, made him a most zealous, courageous defender of the faith.

This brought him into peril of his life, with which he narrowly escaped. That is a bad cause, that has recourse to persecution for its last argument. But notice was given of this conspiracy too, and effectual care taken to secure this young champion,

V. 31. When Saul, the grand instrument of persecution, was become a zealous preacher, other causes likewise concurring, the persecution was suspended, and the churches were left in peace. The conversion of Saul, from a furious and most active persecutor, to a zealous, unwearied, and self-denying preacher of the Gospel, and his subsequent labors and sufferings in the cause, for a long course of years, is an undoubted fact, which ought to be accounted for by all, who have the least doubt of the divine original of Christianity. If his own narrative be admitted, Christianity is without doubt divine, and the only true religion; and those who hesitate to admit his testimony in its full latitude, are required, in support of their cause, to give some other rational and probable account of so unparalleled an event.

V. 34. 'In comparing this with the manner of Christ's miracles, "The different characters of the servant and the Son, the creature and the God, are everywhere apparent." 'The beds [at Aleppo, &c.] consist of a mattress, laid on the floor, and over this a sheet, (in winter a carpet, or some such woollen covering,) the other sheet being sewed to the quilt. A divan cushion often serves for a pillow and bolster. The mattresses

v. 30. Yet it was also by direction from heaven that he left Jerusalem at this time, as he tells us himself, ch. 22: 17, 18. that Christ now appeared to him, and ordered him to go quickly out of Jerusalem, for he must be sent to the Gentiles, v. 21.

III. The churches had now a comfortable gleam of liberty and peace, v. 31. Then, when Saul was converted, so some; or, then, when he was gone from Jerusalem, the fury of the Grecian Jews was a little abated, and they were the more willing to bear with the other preachers, now Saul was gone out of the way. Observe, 1. The churches had rest. The churches that were already planted, were mostly in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, within the limits of the Holy Land. There were the first Christian churches, where Christ had Himself laid the foundation. 2. Instead of growing secure, they abounded more in their duty, and made a good use of their tranquillity; they were more exemplary, and lived so as that all who conversed with them might say, Surely the fear of God reigns in those people. They were not only faithful, but cheerful in religion. Observe the connexion of these two; when they walked in the fear of the Lord, then they walked in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. Those are most likely to walk cheerfully, that walk circumspectly. 3. God blessed it to them for their increase in number. Sometimes the church multiplies the more for its being afflicted, as Israel in Egypt; yet at other times its rest contributes to its growth, as it enlarges the opportunity of ministers, and invites those in, who at first are afraid of suffering. Or, then, when they walked in the fear of God and his comforts, then they were multiplied. Thus they that will not be won by the Word, may be won by the conversation of professors.

V. 32-35. Here we have, 1. The visit Peter made to the churches newly planted by the dispersed preachers, v. 32. as an apostle, to confirm the doctrine of inferior preachers, to confer the Holy Ghost on them that believed, and to ordain ministers. Reference is had, in the word all, to the churches of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, mentioned in the foregoing ch. He came to the saints at Lydda; this seems the same with Lod, a city in Benjamin, mentioned 1 Chr. 8: 12. Ezra 2: 33. The Christians are called saints, not only some particular eminent ones, as Peter and Paul, but every sincere professor of the faith of Christ. These are the saints on the earth, Ps. 16: 3.

II. The cure Peter wrought on Eneas, a man that had been bedrid eight years, v. 33. and we may suppose he and all about him despaired of relief for him. Christ chose such patients, whose diseases were incurable in a course of nature, to show how desperate the case of fallen mankind was, when He undertook their cure. When we were without strength, as this poor man, He sent his Word to heal us. 2. His cure was very admirable, v. 34. (1.) Peter does not pretend to do it himself, by any power of his own, but declares it to be Christ's cure, immediate and entire. He does not express himself by way of prayer to Christ, that He would make

him whole, but as one having authority from Christ, and that knew his mind, he declares him made whole. 'Arise and make thy bed, that all may see thou art thoroughly cured.' Let none say, that because Christ, by the power of his grace, works all our works in us, therefore we have no work, no duty, to do.

III. The good influence this had upon many, v. 35. We can scarcely think every individual in those countries, took cognizance of the miracle, and was wrought upon by it, but [the phrase all is, after a common figure, meaning] many, the generality of the people. 1. They all made inquiry into the truth of the miracle, saw him that was healed, and saw that it was a miraculous cure that was wrought upon him by the power of Christ, in his name, and with a design to confirm and ratify that doctrine of Christ now preached to the world. 2. They all submitted to the convincing proof and evidence there was in this of the divine original of the Christian doctrine, and turned to the Lord, to the Lord Jesus; from Judaism to Christianity; embraced the doctrine of Christ, and submitted to his ordinances; and turned themselves over to Him, to be ruled and taught and saved by Him.

V. 36-43. Here we have a greater miracle wrought by Peter, to confirm the Gospel,—the raising of Tabitha to life, when she had been for some time dead. Here is,

1. The life, death, and character of Tabitha, on whom this miracle was wrought, v. 36, 37. Tabitha, in Heb., in Greek, is Dorcas; both signify a doe, or hind, or deer, a pleasant creature: the wife, to the kind and tender husband, is as the loving hind, and as the pleasant roe, Prov. 5: 19. She was one that had embraced the faith of Christ and was baptized; and not only so, but was eminent above many for works of charity. Observe, she is praised not only for the alms which she gave, but for the alms-deeds which she did. Those that have not estates wherewith to give in charity, may yet be able to do in charity, working with their hands, or walking with their feet, for the benefit of the poor. And they who will not do a charitable deed, whatever they may pretend, if they were rich would not bestow a charitable gift. She was full of alms-deeds; there is an emphasis on her doing them, because what her hand found to do of this kind she did with all her might, and persevered in. 2 Cor. 8: 11. 9: 7. This is the life and character of a certain disciple, and should agree to all the disciples of Christ; for if thus we bear much fruit, then are we his disciples indeed, John 15: 8. She was removed in the midst of her usefulness, v. 37. It is promised to those who consider the poor, not that they shall never be sick, but that the Lord will strengthen them upon the bed of languishing, at least with strength in their soul, and so will make all their bed in their sickness, will make it easy, Ps. 41: 1, 3. They cannot hope that they shall never die, but they may hope they shall find mercy of the Lord in that day, 2 Tim. 1: 18. Her friends and those about her did not presently bury her, as usual, because they were in hopes Peter would come and raise her to life again; but they washed the dead body, according to the

are rolled up, carried away, and placed in cupboards at night.' See Bush's Illustrations.

V. 35. Lydda, a town near the shore of the Mediterranean. Saron is supposed to have been a plain or valley, extending from Cesarea to Joppa.—The success of the Gospel, on this occasion, seems to have been very great; for it is supposed, that the neighborhood was populous.—Philip preached in the cities, from Azotus (or Ashdod) to Cesarea; and Lydda and Saron doubtless were among them. (8:40.) It is highly probable, that the Gospel was introduced at Lydda by his ministry: and that Eneas was made known to Peter, as an afflicted person favorable to the Gospel.

V. 36-43. 'The reason why Luke gives this interpretation seems to be this, that she being a græcizing Jewess, was called Tabitha by the Jews, and Dorcas among the Greeks.' Whitby. In performing this miracle Peter was doubtless assured, that this request was granted, before he addressed Dorcas. His words were not, 'I say unto thee, Arise,' in the language of authority, but simply, 'Tabitha, arise,' as an intimation that Jesus had restored her life: and it should also be remembered, that



39 Then Peter arose, and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them.

40 But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed: and turning him to the body, said, 'Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

41 And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up: and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

42 And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord.

43 And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa, with one Simon a tanner.

q Ec. 9:10. s Ma. 5:41, 42. t 1 K. 17:23.  
r Mat. 9:25. Jn. 11:43. u Ju. 12:11.

custom, which, they say, was with warm water, which, if there were any life remaining in the body, would recover it; so that this was done to show that she was really and truly dead; they tried all the usual methods to bring her to life, and could not,—the last cry was uttered. They laid her out in her grave-clothes, in an upper chamber; probably, so Lightfoot, the public meeting-room for the believers of that town, that Peter, if he would come, might raise her to life the more solemnly in that place.

2. The request her Christian friends sent to Peter, to come to them with all speed, not to attend the funeral, but, if it might be, to prevent it, v. 38. Lydda, where Peter now was, was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples at Joppa had heard that Peter was there, and that he had raised Eneas from a bed of languishing; therefore, they sent to him two men, to make the message the more solemn and respectful.

3. The posture in which he found the surviving, when he came to them, v. 39. They did not tell him what they wanted him for, yet he was willing to go with them, believ-

ing it was on some good account he was sent for. Let not faithful ministers grudge to be at every body's beck, as far as they have ability, when the great apostle made himself the servant of all, 1 Cor. 9:19. He found the corpse in the upper chamber, and attended by widows, (probably of the church, poor widows,) (1.) Commending the deceased; a good work, when there was that in them which was truly commendable, and recommendable to imitation, and it is done modestly and soberly, and without flattery of the survivors, or any sinister intention, but purely for the glory of God, and the exciting of others to that which is virtuous and praiseworthy. The commendation of Tabitha was like her own virtues, not in word, but in deed. Here were no encomiums of her in orations, or poems inscribed to her memory; but the widows showed the coats and garments which she made for them, and bestowed on them while she was with them, Job 31:20. And it is much more honorable to clothe a company of decrepit widows, with needful clothing for night and day, who will pray for their benefactors when they do not see them, than to clothe a company of lazy footmen with rich liveries, who, perhaps, behind their backs, will curse them that clothe them, Eccl. 7:21. and it is what all that are wise and good will take a greater pleasure in; for goodness is true greatness, and will pass better in the account shortly. They showed the coats. Those are horribly ungrateful, indeed, who have kindness shown them, and will not make at least an acknowledgment of it, by showing it. Those who receive alms, are not obliged so industriously to conceal it, as those are who give alms. When the poor reflect on the rich, as uncharitable and unmerciful, they ought to reflect on themselves, and consider whether they are not unthankful and ungrateful. Their showing, tended to the praise not only of her charity, but of her industry, according to the character of the virtuous woman, Prov. 31:19—22. (2.) They were here lamenting the loss of her; the widows stood by Peter, weeping. Observe, they notice the good Dorcas did while she was with them; those that are charitable will find that the poor they have always with them; but it is well if those that are poor, find that the charitable they have always with them. It should seem, the widows wept before Peter, as an inducement to him, if he

could do anything, to have compassion on them and help them, and restore one to them that used to have compassion on them.

4. She was raised to life, (1.) Privately; it should seem, there was great crowding about the dead body, in the upper room, in expectation of what would be done; but Peter put them all forth, all the weeping widows, all but some few relations of the family, or perhaps the heads of the church, to join with him in prayer; as Christ did, Mat. 9:25. Thus Peter declined everything that looked like vainglory and ostentation; and might with the more freedom pour out his soul before God in prayer upon this occasion, and not be disturbed with the [usual] noisy and clamorous lamentations. (2.) By prayer; in his healing Eneas there was an implicit prayer; but in this greater work he addressed himself to God, by solemn prayer, as Christ, when He raised Lazarus. (3.) By the word, a quickening word, a word which is spirit and life; he turned to the body, (intimating that when he prayed he turned from it, lest the sight of it should discourage his faith,) and spake in his Master's name, and according to his example, 'Tabitha, arise; return to life again.' Power went with this word, and she came to life, opened her eyes which death had closed; he gave her his hand and lifted her up; thus as it were welcoming her to life again. And lastly, he called the saints and widows, who were all in sorrow for her death, and presented her alive to them, to their great comfort, particularly of the widows, who laid her death much to heart, v. 41.

5. The good effect of this miracle. (1.) Many were by it convinced of the truth of the Gospel, that it was from heaven, and not of men, and believed in the Lord, v. 42. The thing was known throughout all Joppa; it would be in every body's mouth, quickly, and it being a town of seafaring men, [the port of Jerusalem, through which Palestine traded with Europe,] the notice of it would be the sooner carried from thence to other countries; and though some never minded it, many were wrought upon by it. This was the end of miracles, to confirm a divine revelation. (2.) Peter was hereby induced to continue some time in this city, v. 43. Not in the house of Tabitha, though she was rich, lest he should seem to seek his own glory; but he took up his lodgings with one Simon:

PRACT. OBS. The power of doing evil has seldom been adequate to the inclination, even in those who have been most successful persecutors and destroyers in the church, or in the world; for could scourges of God execute their threatenings, as readily as they utter them, their very breath would be fatal to mankind, and especially to the disciples of the Lord.—Even when sinners are most eager to execute their rebellious purposes, the Lord sometimes discovers his designs of mercy towards them: and thus the extremity of their wickedness illustrates the infinite riches and power of his grace.—The manifested light and glory of the divine justice, holiness, and power, would sink the stoutest rebel on earth to despair at once, if it were not accompanied with some indications of mercy and grace: but the Lord sends convictions and terrors to abase men in the dust, that their hearts may be prepared for 'peace and joy in believing.' When a sinner is brought to a proper sense of his own state, character, and conduct, he will submit, without reserve; allowing that he might justly be left to perish; casting himself wholly on the mercy of the divine Savior, and inquiring what He would have him to do. This will thenceforth be the language of his heart and prayers continually.—Under great remorse of conscience, and when the soul is deeply engaged about eternal things, a man loses his desire after animal recreation: so that fasting in such circumstances is often a matter of course, rather than an imposed duty. But happy are they, who thus sow in tears, that they may reap in joy! 'Behold he,' the proud Pharisee, or the prouder infidel, 'prayeth;' in that manner which the Savior notices with cordial approbation! Behold the licentious profligate, the iniquitous publican, the unmerciful oppressor, or the daring blasphemer, 'prayeth!' What happy tidings are these, when well authenticated, to such as understand the nature and efficacy of prayer; of such prayer, as the humbled sinner presents before a merciful God, for the blessings of eternal salvation!—Converting grace renders believers the children of the same Father, abolishes their former distinctions, and terminates their enmities: and, when the bitterest foe, or the vilest malefactor, becomes a real disciple, we are required to own and to love him as a 'brother,' without any upbraidings, prejudice, or resentment; and

we should rejoice to be useful to him, either in his temporal or spiritual concerns.—The efficacious teaching of the Holy Spirit, causes 'the scales' of ignorance, prejudice, and pride to fall from the eyes of the understanding, which before excluded the clear light of the Gospel: then the sinner receives his sight, and professes the faith which once he despised: then he passes from the kingdom of Satan to that of God; (Notes, Eph. 1:15—23, vv. 15—18. Col. 1:9—14.) and, being a new creature, he lives in a new element, and joins himself to new companions. (Note, 1 Sam. 10:10—13.) and, as he has opportunity and ability, he endeavors to recommend Jesus, the anointed Savior and the Son of God, to the attention of his former associates in iniquity or infidelity: and this is often done with an energy of argument and persuasion, which confounds those, who are the most hardened against the truth: but while many, who witness the effects of the Gospel, are amazed, only a few in comparison are effectually convinced by them. Even Saul's conversion, though it is, not this day, a real demonstration of the truth of Christianity, a fact that can neither be doubted, nor accounted for on any other principle; even when it first took place, and when it concurred with his convincing arguments, and most stupendous miracles, could not of itself effect the conversion of one enemy to the Gospel: for nothing can produce true faith, but that power which new creates the heart.—When believers walk conscientiously, 'in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit,' they appear to be an excellent and happy people, and are generally multiplied: and it behooves us to watch against dejection or melancholy, as much as against known sin; for it prejudices the minds of unbelievers against the truth, and renders them afraid of it, as only productive of dejection and discomfort.—How mean is the grovelling ambition of those numerous females, who aspire to no higher distinction, than that of external personal decoration and accomplishment, and who waste their lives in trifling pursuits; when multiplied charities, and labors of love, might have rendered them, at less expense of time and treasure, a blessing to multitudes, and an ornament to Christianity!

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there was no witness to the transaction. It is remarkable, that there is no instance in Scripture of a prophet, or eminent minister of religion, being raised from the dead; (for it does not appear, that Paul was entirely dead, when he had been stoned at Lystra, 14:19, 20.) and but few of their miraculous recoveries from sickness: though we should perhaps

have thought, that these were the most proper cases for a divine interposition.

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(41.) Widows.] Dr. A. C. thinks, that 'in the primitive times the widows formed a distinct part of the Christian church.' Where polygamy prevailed, widows would be numerous; and where, as in the E., women



## CHAP. X.

<sup>1</sup> Cornelius, a devout man, <sup>5</sup> being commanded by an angel, sendeth for Peter: <sup>11</sup> who by a vision <sup>15</sup>, <sup>20</sup> is taught not to despise the Gentiles. <sup>31</sup> As he preacheth Christ to Cornelius and his company, <sup>44</sup> the Holy Ghost falleth on them, <sup>48</sup> and they are baptized.

**T**HERE was a certain man in Cesarea, called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

<sup>2</sup> A devout man, and one that <sup>b</sup> feared God with all <sup>c</sup> his house, which gave much alms to <sup>d</sup> the people, and prayed <sup>e</sup> to God alway.

a c. 8:2. 22:12. 101:2—7.c.18:8. e 7s. 119:2. Pr.  
b Ec. 7:18. d Ps. 41:1. 2:3—5.  
c Ge. 18:19. Ps.

and though Peter might seem to be buried in obscurity, here in the house of a poor tanner, [a trade stigmatized by the Jews, *Schoettg.*] by the sea-side, yet hence God fetched him to a noble piece of service in the next ch.; for *those that humble themselves shall be exalted.*

CHAP. X. V. 1—8. The story of this ch. gives to the Acts a turn very new and remarkable; hitherto, both at Jerusalem and everywhere else, where the ministers of Christ came, they preached the Gospel only to the Jews, or Greeks circumcised and proselyted to the Jews' religion; but now, Lo, we turn to the Gentiles; and to them

are not taught to read and write, they would peculiarly need protection. And such a state of society, as is well known, more exposes them to temptation. Ed.

NOTES. CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. It may be supposed, that Cornelius, if a native of Italy, would think it a trial, to be sent so far from his country and all his connexions; for the *Cornelii* were an illustrious family at Rome. Yet in Judea, he became acquainted with the true God; and, renouncing idolatry, he worshipped Him with reverence and obedient attention.—Many writers are very full and exact, about two sorts of proselytes to the Jewish religion; and others argue against that distinction; but the nature of the case, and the facts recorded in Scripture render it evident, that some of the Gentiles were circumcised, professed obedience to the whole Mosaic law, and were completely incorporated among the native Jews; and that others became worshippers of the true God, and professed obedience to the moral precepts, who were not circumcised, nor observant of the ceremonial law. Of this latter description Cornelius was; and therefore considered entirely as a Gentile, though of good report among the Jews.—‘The Jews accounted them unclean, as well as the other Gentiles: . . . yet . . . they deemed the alms they gave to the Jews clean; . . . and because Cornelius was free in giving to the Jews of Cesarea, he was a man of good report among them all.’ (22) *Whitby*. There was evidently a preparation in the heart of Cornelius, for the reception of the Gospel; he had doubtless a true faith in the Word of God, as far as he understood it, though he had not an explicit faith in Christ. (8:26—31.) This preparation and faith were the fruits of the regenerating Spirit of God, who was given to him through the mediation of Jesus, even before he knew Him; and this indeed is the case with every man, when ‘God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith He loved him, even when dead in sin,’ at first ‘quickens him together with Christ.’ *Eph.* 2:4—10, *vv.* 4, 5. Had it been possible for Cornelius, in this state of mind, to have refused the salvation of Christ when proposed to him; he would not have been saved by his works; but this could not be, for God had prepared and inclined him to welcome the Gospel, because He intended to call him to believe it; so that he could neither be saved without faith in Christ, nor could he perish through want of it. It is mere trifling to inquire, as many have done, what his estate would have been, had he died after his prayers were heard, and before he had believed in Christ; for it goes on the absurd supposition of the Lord's beginning a work, and not bringing it to the intended completion. It is a universal rule, that whatever is from God, of a *spiritual* and *holy* nature, will for Christ's sake be accepted by Him; but it may be doubted whether He ever communicates regenerating grace to an adult person, where He has not given, or does not mean to send, some measure of the light of His Word; though it does not behoove us to limit His mercy; nor can we tell how small a portion of divine truth may be the seed or the food of divine life in the soul. This we may know certainly, that no regenerate man will finally reject the Gospel, when proposed to him.—Many objections and reasonings, and much perplexity on this subject, among persons of contrary systems, seem to arise from inattention to this truth; that *nothing spiritually good, or acceptable to God, can be produced from the heart of fallen man, except by the regenerating Spirit of Christ*: where that is communicated, all things necessary to salvation will in due time follow; yet when, or in what order, cannot be previously ascertained. *John* 1:10—13, *vv.* 12, 13. 3:3—8. But many things good, in the estimation of man, and many specious appearances of evangelical religion, are as distinct from *spirituality* and *holiness*, or the choice and love of the holy excellency of God and heavenly things, as polished brass, in its highest perfection, is different from pure gold. *Luke* 16:14, 15. Perhaps these observations may assist the reader, in understanding this interesting ch.; which cannot easily be made to accord with the exactness of systematical writers of different creeds, on these subjects.—(1.) *The Italian band.*] ‘Many, with *Grotius*, have explained this, as if the meaning were, that Cornelius was a centurion of one of the cohorts belonging to the Italian legion. . . . But I refer the reader to the many learned and judicious things which *Mr. Biscoe* has said, (*Boyle's Lectures*), to show that the Italian legion did not exist at

the door of faith is here opened: good news indeed to us sinners of the Gentiles. Peter is the first man employed to admit uncircumcised Gentiles into the Christian church; and Cornelius, a Roman centurion or colonel, is the first that, with his family and friends, is so admitted. It is not unlikely some Gentiles might, before now, have stepped into a synagogue of the Jews, and heard the Gospel preached; but the Gospel was never yet designedly preached to the Gentiles, nor any of them till now baptized. And here we have,

I. An account of Cornelius; he was a great man and a good man; two characters that seldom meet; and where they do, they put a lustre on each other; goodness makes greatness truly valuable, and greatness makes goodness much more serviceable.

1. He was an officer of the army, *v.* 1; at present quartered in Cesarea, a strong city, lately re-edified and fortified by Herod the Great, and called *Cesarea*, in honor of Augustus Cæsar. It lay on the sea-shore, very convenient for correspondence between Rome and its conquests in those parts. The Roman governor, or proconsul, ordinarily resided here, *ch.* 23:23, 24. 25:6. [Note, 8:40.] Here was a band, or cohort, or regiment, of the Roman army, which probably was the governor's life-guard, and is here called *the Italian band*; because, that they might be the more sure of their fidelity, they were all native Romans, or Italians. The name, *Cornelius*, was much used among the

Romans, among some of the most ancient and noble families. He was an officer of considerable rank and figure, a centurion. *Mat.* 8:10. When a Gentile must be pitched upon to receive the Gospel first, it is not a Gentile philosopher, much less a Gentile priest, (who are bigoted to their notions and worship, and prejudiced against the Gospel of Christ,) but a Gentile soldier, who is a man of more free thought; and he that truly is so, when the Christian doctrine is fairly set before him, cannot but bid it welcome. Fishermen, unlearned and ignorant men,\* were the first of the Jewish converts, but not so of the Gentiles; for the world shall know, that the Gospel has that in it which may recommend it to men of polite learning and a liberal education, as we have reason to think this centurion was. Let not soldiers and officers of the army plead, that their employment frees them from the restraints some others are under, and, giving them an opportunity of living more at large, may excuse them if they be not religious; for here was an officer of the army that embraced Christianity, and yet was neither turned out of his place, nor turned himself out. And lastly, it was a mortification to the Jews, that not only the Gentiles were taken into the church, but, that the first who was taken in, was an officer of the Roman army,

\* Yet this class are said to have had considerable intelligence, capital, consideration, and intercourse with nations and foreigners, by extensive trade. Ed.

this time. . . . I think it exceedingly probable, for the reasons which he urges, that this was a cohort different from any of the legiourary ones; (the life-guard of the governor, perhaps;) and consequently that Luke has here expressed himself with his usual accuracy; and that the mistake lies, as it generally does, in those who think they have learning enough to correct him. It is probable, that this was called the Italian cohort, because most of the soldiers belonging to it were Italians.’ *Doddr.* Instead of *generally, always* would have been more proper. S.

(1.) *Cesarea.*] Note, 8:40. *Band.*] ‘*Speira: cohort.* This consisted sometimes of 555 infantry and 66 cavalry; but the *cohors prima*, or first cohort, of 1105 infantry, and 132 cavalry, in the time of *Vegetius*. But the horse are to be considered, not as a part of it, but as a company joined to it. A Roman legion had 10 cohorts; the first was most honored.’ *Dr. A. C.* In *Gruter's* inscriptions (found in the Forum *Sempronii*), a volunteer cohort of Italian soldiers in Syria is mentioned. *Jos.* relates, that most of the recruits were derived from Syria, for the legions serving there. But this was of Romans, the others being *provincials*. *Arrian* mentions an Italian cohort; *Tacitus* and others, an Italian legion. See *Bl.* ‘We learn, from the Roman historians, that the 5th, 10th, and 15th legions were stationed in Judea; and the 3d, 4th, 6th, and 12th, in Syria.’ *Dr. A. C.* Ed.

(2.) *Feared God.*] 1. ‘*Phoboumenos ton Theon*: “a name given to proselytes of the gate, see 13:16. 26:43. For proselytes of justice, i. e. Gentiles, who had embraced the Jewish faith and undergone circumcision, were considered as having become part of the Jewish people, and were called *Jews*. 2. Cornelius offered up his prayers at the hours usual among the Jews, (see 3:30.) and had read the O. T., for Peter appeals to it as known to him. He had, too, conferred many benefits on the people, (*v.* 2.) not only Gentiles, but Jews. 3. Although the Jews did not refuse to mix with the proselytes of the gate, (as we learn from *Jos.*, *War.* 6, 3, 3.) yet the more rigid ones despised them, since they had not undergone circumcision, nor used to observe the precepts of the Mosaic law concerning clean and unclean meats.” But the above reasons (adduced by *Fecht*, *Hamm.*, *Wolf*, *Benson*, *Maschius*, *Ernesti*, *Ziegler*, &c.) seem, says *Kuin.*, not very convincing. For, (1.) The words *phoboumenos*, or *sebomenos ton Theon*, or *eulabeis*, are also used of any persons studious of piety, and filled with reverence towards God. *Sec Acts* 18:11. 19:27. 22:12. *Luke* 1:50. 2:25. 2 *Pet.* 2:9. *Rev.* 11:13. (2.) Cornelius is called by Peter, *alophulos*, [tr. of another nation,] with whom it was not lawful for Jews to associate, 10:28. But there was nothing in the whole law which forbade the holding society with *proselytes of the gate*. Nay, the Law of Moses permitted to foreigners a perpetual abode among Jews, on condition that they should renounce idolatry, and abstain from whatever had reference thereto; as meats offered up to idols, food formed from blood. See *Lev.* 17:10. 11:13. The Law had moreover enjoined the Israelites to treat such proselytes as fellow-countrymen, and love them as themselves, *Lev.* 19:33, 34. See *Mich.* and *Nitch.* Hence also to such was permitted free access to the synagogues (*Acts* 14:1.) and familiar intercourse with the Jews. (*Luke* 7:3. note, *Mat.* 8:5.) Besides, had Cornelius been a proselyte of the gate, the news of his conversion would not have occasioned such astonishment to the apostles and others, 11:1, &c. (3.) Cornelius is, in 11:1. expressly numbered with *Gentiles*. See also 10:34, 35. Now what is predicted of Cornelius is *transferred* to the *Gentiles*; and in the council of Jerusalem Peter claims to himself the glory of first preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, 15:7. On all which accounts it seems far more probable that Cornelius was a Gentile.’ *Kuin.* *BL.*—‘One that feared God.’ ‘It is a very unwarrantable liberty, in the vers. of 1727, to tr. this clause a *proselyte*. . . . There is no sufficient authority for the *distinction*, so generally admitted by learned men, between *proselytes of righteousness*, who by circumcision became debtors to the whole law, and *proselytes of the gate*, who, worshipping the true God, renouncing idolatry, and submitting themselves to the observation of the 7 (supposed) precepts of *Noah*, were allowed, though uncircumcised, to live among the Jews, and converse familiarly with them.’ *Doddr.*—See on chapter 11:2. Ed.



3 He saw in a vision evidently, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter.

6 He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

7 And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually:

8 And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

9 ¶ On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the house-top to pray, about the sixth hour:

f He. 1:14. h c. 9:43. j c. 11:5, &c.  
g Is. 45:19. i c. 11:14.

which was to them the abomination of desolation.

2. He was, according to the measure of the light he had, a religious man; a very good character is given of him, v. 2. He was no idolater, nor allowed himself in any of those immoralities the greater part of the Gentile world were given up to, to punish them for their idolatry. (1.) He possessed a principle of regard to the true and living God, was devout, and feared God; he believed in one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, revered his glory and authority, and dreaded offending Him by sin; and though a soldier, it was no diminution to the credit of his valor to tremble before God. (2.) He kept up religion in his family; he feared God, with all his house. He would not admit any idolaters under his roof; but took care that not himself only, but all his, should serve the Lord. (3.) He was a very charitable man; he gave much alms to the people, the people of the Jews, notwithstanding the singularities of their religion. Though a Gentile, he was willing to contribute to the relief of one that was a real object of charity, without asking what religion he was of. (4.) He was much in prayer; he prayed to God always. He kept up stated times for prayer, and was constant to them. Wherever the fear of God rules in the heart, it will appear both in works of charity and of piety, and neither will excuse us from the other.

V. 3—8. Philip, the evangelist, seems to have been at Cesarea, at this time; yet it did not please God to employ him in the case of Cornelius, as he had done in that of the Ethiopian treasurer. It does not appear, that Cornelius had the least acquaintance with the Christians at or near Cesarea.—His intercourse with the unbelieving Jews was suited rather to increase than remove his prejudices; and, as far as it can now be judged, the reading of the Greek translation of the Scriptures was the principal and almost sole means, by which effects so beneficial and excellent had been produced.

(3.) Evidently.] *Phanerōs*: added, to show that Cornelius was awake. Lightf.—He saw, &c.] The text is as plain as it can be, that an angel of God did appear to Cornelius. It was something similar to the angelic appearance made to Daniel, ch. 9:20—23. and that especially to Zachariah, the father of John the Baptist. Luke 1:11, &c.] Dr. A. C.

(6.) By the sea.] The ancients had their tanners' houses and workshops apart (50 cubits at least, so the Jewish Mischna) from towns, (on account of the fetid odor,) and near rivers, for convenience of water, necessary in preparing the skins. Simon was not a currier, but a tanner. Kuin. Perhaps, then, Peter chose this house, partly for its retirement. Ed.—What thou oughtest to do.] From this it appears, that matters of great moment had occupied the mind of Cornelius. He was not satisfied with the state of his own soul, nor with the degree he possessed of religious knowledge. . . . Perhaps he had heard of Jesus, and had been perplexed with the different opinions that prevailed concerning

II. The orders given him from heaven.

1. He had a vision, about 3 of the clock in the afternoon, with us an hour of business and conversation; but then, because it was in the temple the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, it was made by devout people an hour of prayer, to intimate that all our prayers are to be offered up in the virtue of the great Sacrifice. Cornelius was now at prayer, v. 30. and saw an angel, evidently with his bodily eyes, not in a dream, presented to his imagination, but in a vision, presented to his sight. He called him by his name, *Cornelius*, to intimate the particular notice God took of him. This put Cornelius for the present into some confusion, v. 4. Therefore Cornelius cries, *What is it, Lord? What is the matter?* This he speaks as one afraid of something amiss, and longing to be eased of that fear, by knowing the truth; or as one desirous to know the mind of God, and ready to comply with it.

2. The message. (1.) He is assured God accepts of him in walking according to the light he had, v. 4. Observe, prayers and alms must go together. Cornelius prayed, and gave alms, not as the Pharisees, to be seen of men, but in sincerity, as unto God; and he is here told, that they were come up for a memorial before God. The sacrifices under the law are said to be for a memorial. See Lev. 2:9, 16. 5:12. 6:15. And prayers and alms are our spiritual offerings, which God is pleased to take cognizance of, and have regard to. The divine revelation communicated to the Jews, as far as the Gentiles were concerned in it, not only as it directed and improved the light and law of nature, but as it promised a Messiah to come, Cornelius believed and submitted to; what he did, he did in that faith, and was accepted of God in it; for the Gentiles, to whom the law of Moses came, were not obliged to become circumcised Jews, as those to whom the Gospel of Christ comes, are to become baptized Christians. (2.) He is appointed to inquire after a further discovery of divine grace, now lately made to the world, v. 5, 6. Cornelius prays and gives alms in the fear of God; is religious himself, and keeps up religion in his family, and all this so as to be accepted of God in it; yet there is something further, that he ought to do; it is indispensably necessary that he embrace the Christian religion, now that God has established it among men. He that believed the promise of the Messiah, must now believe the performance of that promise. Now that God had given a further record concerning his Son than what had been given in the O. T. prophecies, He requires that we receive that, when it is brought to us. And now, neither our prayers nor our alms come up for a memorial before God unless we believe in Jesus Christ; for it is that further which we ought to do. This is his commandment, that we believe; prayers and alms are accepted from those that believe that the Lord is God, and have not opportunity of

knowing more. But from those to whom it is preached, that Jesus is Christ, it is necessary to the acceptance of their persons, prayers, and alms, that they believe that, and rest on Him alone for acceptance. Cornelius has now an angel from heaven talking to him, yet he must not receive the Gospel from him, nor be told by him what he ought to do; but all that the angel has to say, is, *Send for Peter, and he shall tell thee.* As the former observation puts a mighty honor on the Gospel, so does this on the gospel-ministry. And as it was an honor to the apostle, that he must preach what an angel might not, so it was a further honor, that an angel was despatched on purpose from heaven to order him to be sent for. To bring a faithful minister and a willing people together, is a work worthy of an angel, and what therefore the greatest of men should be glad to be employed in.

III. His immediate obedience, v. 7, 8. Having a family, and kinsmen, and friends, v. 24. a little congregation of them, that could not go with him to Joppa, he sends for Peter; and that as soon as ever the angel was departed. Where souls are concerned, no time is to be lost. He sent two of his household servants, who all feared God, and a devout soldier, one of them that waited on him continually. A devout centurion had devout soldiers; officers in an army, that have such a great power over the soldiers as we find the centurion had, Mat. 8:9. have a great opportunity of promoting religion, at least of restraining vice and profaneness, in those under their command, if they would but improve it. When this centurion was to choose some of his soldiers to attend his person, and to be always about him, he pitched on such of them as were devout; they shall be preferred and countenanced, to encourage others to be so; he went by David's rule, Ps. 101:6. As Peter's coming was a thing in which they were all concerned, for they had souls to save as well as he, v. 8. he does not only tell them where to find Peter, but on what errand he was to come, that they might importune him.

V. 9—18. Here Peter, to remove his difficulty about going to Cornelius, because Cornelius was a Gentile, and to prepare him to go, has a vision, as Ananias had to prepare him to go to Paul. The Scriptures of the O. T. had spoken plainly of the bringing in of the Gentiles into the church; Christ had given plain intimations of it, when He ordered them to teach all nations; yet even Peter himself, who knew so much of his Master's mind, cannot understand it, till it is here revealed by vision, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, Eph. 3:6.

I. The circumstances of this vision. God is pleased often to bring things to the minds of his ministers, which they had not thought of, just then when they have occasion to use them. It was when Peter, who was much in prayer, went up to pray, after David's example, Ps. 55:17. about noon. From morning

Him; and now prayed to God that he might know what part to take.

Dr. A. CLARKE.

(8.) House-top.] That the Jews were accustomed to offer their prayers on the roofs of their houses, is plain from 2 K. 23:12. Jer. 19:13. 32:15. Zeph. 1:5. Neh. 8:16. Job. 3:11, 17. Dan. 6:10. [where, see note and cut.] Ps. 55:17. So also Taanith, (cited by Wetst.) "Let us go up to the roof, and implore mercy,—they went upon the roof, and he stood in one corner, and she stood in the other, &c." BL.

V. 9—16. Peter, after he had received the Holy Spirit, needed to make daily proficiency in the knowledge of the benefit of Christ. Beza, in Scott.—While his senses were closed to external objects, invisible things were presented to his mind, as if he saw them with his eyes.—(15) Call not thou common.] Do not thou pollute. Gr. 'It was the priests' office, in case of leprosy, and other matters of a like nature, to pronounce the thing or person under examination, clean or unclean. In the Heb. it is thus expressed, "The priest shall cleanse," "The priest shall pollute him." What God hath cleansed, i. e. by this vision and command declared to be clean, do not thou pollute, i. e. pronounce unclean. Whitby. To inform a Jew, that God had cleansed those animals, which before had been declared unclean, and that they were no longer to be deemed common, or rejected as such, was, in fact, to announce the abrogation of the Mosaic law, and the introduction of another and more enlarged dispensation: and it plainly intimated, that uncircumcised Gentiles, whom God cleansed by faith and grace, were to



10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,

11 And saw <sup>k</sup> heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth;

12 Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is <sup>l</sup> common or unclean.

15 And the voice *spake* unto him again the second time, What God hath <sup>m</sup> cleansed, *that* call not thou common.

16 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

17 ¶ Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry <sup>n</sup> for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,

18 And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

19 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit <sup>o</sup> said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.

k c. 7:56. Re. 19: 11. l Le. 11:2, &c. 20: 25. De. 14:3, &c. Eze. 4:14. m Mat. 15:11. ver. 23. Ro. 14:14, &c. 1 Co. 10:25. t Ti. 4:4. n c. 9:43. o c. 11:12.

to night we should think too long to be without meat; yet who thinks it too long to be without prayer? He prayed upon the house-top, [Note and cut, Dan. 6: 10.] where he could neither hear nor be heard, and so might avoid both distraction and ostentation. He had this vision immediately after he had prayed, as an answer to his prayer for the spreading of the Gospel; and because the ascent of the heart to God in prayer is an excellent preparative to receive the discoveries of the divine grace and favor. He had it when *very hungry*, waiting for his dinner, v. 10. probably, he had not eaten before that day, though doubtless he had prayed before;

be received into the church, without regard to the ceremonial law, or to their uncleanness according to it.

(9, 10.) *Eighth.*] A usual time for prayer among the Jews. So Schabboth (cited by *Wetst.*) All operatives eat at the 5th hour, but the disciples of the wise, at the 6th. *Eaten.*] The Gr. is perpetually used of taking a meal, without reference to any precise quantity; of which examples in abundance are in Limb., Elsn., Raph., and Valck. *Made ready.*] The Gr. is perpetually used, (as here,) to denote *cooking*. *Trance.*] *Ekstasis*: properly, a removal of anything from any former state: but it is especially applied to that alienation, or (as we call it) *absence*, of mind, by which, even though awake, our senses are so far from conveying to us the impression of external objects, that the mind seems, as it were, to have retired from the body, and to be wholly absorbed in the contemplation of internal and spiritual images or objects. So *Dodd.*, who observes, that the word properly signifies such a rapture of mind, as gives the person who falls into it a look of astonishment, and renders him insensible of the external objects round him, while in the mean time his imagination is agitated in an extraordinary manner with some striking scenes which pass before it, and take up the attention. See some extraordinary instances, mentioned by *Gualtperius*; [and by the 2d commission of the French Academy, appointed to report on "Animal Magnetism." Ed.]—*Light.* observes, that there were 7 ways in which God formerly revealed himself to men; 1. by dreams: 2. by apparitions while they were awake: 3. by visions while they slept: 4. by a voice from heaven: 5. by Urim: 6. by inspiration, or auricular revelation: 7. by a sort of rapture or ecstasis; of all the other modes the most excellent, by which a man was *snatched into heaven*, (2 Cor. 12: 2.) and was *in the Spirit*: (Rev. 1:10.) and which is the one here meant, as in Gen. 2:21.

(9.) 'From Joppa to Cesarea was about 12 or 15 leagues; the messengers could not have left the house of Cornelius till about 2 hours before sunset; therefore they must have travelled part of the night, in

and now *he would have eaten*, lit. *have tasted*, which intimates his great moderation and temperance in eating. Now, this hunger was a proper inlet to the vision about meats, as Christ's hunger in the wilderness was to Satan's temptation to turn stones into bread.

II. The vision; not so plain as that to Cornelius, but more figurative and enigmatical, to make the deeper impression.

1. He *fell into a trance or ecstasis*, not of terror, but of contemplation, which was so great that he quite lost himself to this world, and so had his mind entirely free for converse with divine things; as Adam in innocency, when the deep sleep fell upon him.

2. He *saw heaven opened*; that he might be sure that his authority to go to *Cornelius was indeed from heaven*; that it was a divine light which altered his sentiments, and a divine power which gave him his commission.

3. He *saw a great sheet full of all manner of living creatures, let down to him, to the roof of the house*. Some make this sheet, thus filled, to represent the church of Christ. All the benefit we have from the inferior creatures, comes down to us from heaven; it is the gift of God, Ps. 8: 4—8. How should it double our comfort in the creatures, and our obligations to serve God in the use of them!

4. Peter was ordered, by a voice from heaven, to use this plenty and variety, v. 13. The distinction of meats which the law made, was intended to put a difference between Jew and Gentile, that it might be difficult to them to dine and sup with a Gentile, because they would have that set before them, which they were not allowed to eat; and now, the taking off of that prohibition was a plain allowance to converse with the Gentiles, and to be free and familiar with them.

5. Peter stuck to his principles, though hungry, v. 14. not knowing at first but that *kill, and eat*, was a command of trial, whether he would adhere to the *more sure Word*, the written law; and if so, his answer had been very good, *Not so, Lord*. Temptations to eat forbidden fruit must not be parleyed with, but peremptorily rejected: and if God, by his grace, has preserved us from gross sin unto this day, we should, like Peter, use that as an argument with ourselves, to abstain from *all appearance of evil*. So strict were the pious Jews in this matter, that the seven brethren, those glorious martyrs under Antiochus, chose rather to be tortured to death in the most cruel manner, than to eat swine's flesh.

6. God, by a second voice from heaven, proclaimed the repeal of the law in this case, v. 16. He that made the law, might alter

it when He pleased, and reduce the matter to its first state. God had, for reasons suited to the O. T. dispensation, restrained the Jews from eating such and such meats, which, while that dispensation lasted, they were obliged in conscience to submit to; but He has now, for reasons suited to the N. T. dispensation, taken off that restraint, and set the matter at large, and we ought to make use of, and *stand fast in, the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free*, and not call that common or unclean, which God has now declared clean: welcoming it as a great mercy, that we are freed from the distinction of meats, which was made by the law of Moses, and that now *every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused*; chiefly because conscience is hereby freed from a yoke, in things of this nature, *that we might serve God without fear*. Though the Gospel has made duties which were not so by the law of nature, yet it has not, like the law of Moses, made sins that were not so. Those who command to abstain from some kinds of meat, at some times of the year, and place religion in it, call that *common* which God hath cleansed; and, in that error, more than in any truth, are the successors of Peter.

7. *This was done thrice, v. 16*; but, whether Peter's refusal was repeated the second and third time, is not certain; surely not, when his objection had *the first time* received such a satisfactory answer. The doubling of Pharaoh's dream, and so the trebling of Peter's vision, were to show that *the thing was certain*, and engage him so much the more to notice it. But at last *the vessel was received up into heaven*. Those who make this vessel to represent the church, including both Jews and Gentiles, as this did both clean and unclean creatures, make this very aptly to signify the admission of the believing Gentiles into the church, and into heaven too, into the Jerusalem above.

III. The providence which very opportunely explained this vision to Peter, v. 17, 18. 1. *Peter* had no reason to doubt the truth of it, as a heavenly vision; all his doubt was concerning the meaning. 2. Yet he was made to know presently, for *the men sent from Cornelius* were just now come to *the house*. God knows what services are before us, and therefore how to prepare us; and we *then* better know the meaning of what He has taught us, when we find what occasion we have to use it.

V. 19—33. We have here the meeting between Peter and Cornelius. Paul was designed to be *the apostle of the Gentiles*, and to gather in the harvest among them, and Peter to be *the apostle of the circumcision*; yet it is ordered, that Peter shall reap the first-

order to arrive at Joppa next day towards noon.' *Calmet*, in Dr. A. C. 'Joppa was 9 [Germ.] miles [above 40 Eng.] from Cesarea. On the day that the angel had appeared to Cornelius, when fasting and praying, he sent messengers to Peter (3—7.) The messengers on the 2d day are received with hospitality (v. 23.); and on the 3d day they return with Peter to Cesarea. On the 4th day they approach to Cesarea, v. 24, 30.'

(10.) *Hungry.*] 'It appears they were making ready for the family.—The dinner, among the ancients, was a very slight meal; and they had no breakfast; their supper was their principal meal: and in very ancient times they ate only *once* in the day. The supper was the meal at which they saw their friends, their daily business being finished.' Dr. A. C.

(12.) 'The apostles, while they thought that the distinction of clean and unclean animals and meats was to continue, and the Gentiles were *unclean*, had forgotten, or never understood, the contrary declaration of Christ, in Mat. 15:17, 18. Nay, even our Lord's precept, "Go, proselyte all nations, baptizing them," &c. (Mat. 28:19.) they had misunderstood, thinking the command applied only to those who had previously embraced the Jewish religion: for which reason they had hitherto avoided the society of Gentiles, and had not communicated to them the doctrines of Christ. [So we see how *necessary* it was, that this intention of God should be manifested more strongly than language could do it, by a most impressive exhibition of the *thing itself*, which could not be mistaken. Ed.] The removal of the distinction of meats need not have seemed strange to the apostles, since we find from the Rabbinical writings, that the Jewish masters maintained, that this would take place in the time of the Messiah. See the citations in *Wetst.*'

V. 17—23. Peter did not readily understand the import of this vision; though he knew that it contained some weighty instruction, which he diligently applied his mind to discover. (*Marg. Ref. n.*) Whilst he was thus engaged in deep reflection, the messengers of Cornelius arrived and inquired for him; but to satisfy his mind more fully, in a case that



20 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

21 Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?

22 And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel, to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.

23 Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

24 And the morrow after they entered into Cesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

25 ¶ And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.

26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

28 And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

29 Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for. I ask, therefore, for what intent ye have sent for me?

p c. 15:7. q ver. 1, &c. r c. 22:12. He. 11:2. s ver. 45. t c. 14:14, 15. Re. 19:10. 22:9. u Jn. 4:9. v c. 15:8, 9. Ep. 3:6.

fruits of the Gentiles; that the believing Jews, who retained too much of the old leaven of ill-will to the Gentiles, might be the better reconciled to their admission into the church, when they were first brought in by their own apostle, which Peter urgeth against those that would have imposed circumcision on the Gentile converts, *ch. 15:7*.

1. Peter is directed by the Spirit to go with Cornelius' messengers, *v. 19, 20*, and now the riddle is unriddled. So far from being shy of them, he went to them himself, and told them he was the person they were inquiring for! And, with abundance of openness and condescension he asks, what their business is, and they frankly tell him their errand, *v. 22*, how that Cornelius, an officer of the Roman army, a very honest gentleman, and one who, though not a Jew himself, is of good report among all the people of the Jews, as a conscientious, sober, charitable man, so that it will be no discredit to thee to be seen in his company; he was warned, *lit. had an oracle from God*, sent him by an angel, by which he was ordered to send for thee to his house, (where he is expecting thee, and ready to bid thee welcome,) and to hear words of thee: they know not what words, but they are such as he may hear from thee, and not from any one else so well. *Faith comes by hearing*. When Peter repeats this, he tells us more fully, they are words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved, *ch. 11:14*. He kindly entertained the messengers, *v. 23*, as it becomes Christians and ministers to be hospitable.

2. He went with them to Cornelius, accompanied by certain brethren from Joppa, *v. 23*, six, as we find, *ch. 11:12*. This was one way in which the primitive Christians very much showed their respect to their ministers, they accompanied them in their journeys, to keep them in countenance, to be their guard, and, as there was occasion, to minister to them; with a further prospect, not only of doing them service, but of being edified by their converse. It seems it was above a day's journey, near two, from Joppa to Cesarea; for it was the day after they set out that they entered into Cesarea, *v. 24*, and the afternoon of that day, *v. 30*. Probably they travelled on foot; the apostles generally did so. When they came, Peter found Cornelius waiting for them, and that he was expected by many. As Peter brought some with him, so Cornelius had called together, not only his own family, but his kins-

men and near friends, which would give Peter a larger opportunity of doing good. It ought to be both given and taken as a kindness and respect to our kindred and friends, to invite them to join us in religious exercises, to go with us to hear a good sermon.

3. At the first interview, Cornelius, instead of embracing Peter as a friend, which would have been very acceptable, fell at his feet, and worshipped him; some think, as a prince, and a great man, according to the usage of the eastern countries; [cut, *Is. 49:23*.]; others, as an incarnate deity, or as if he took him to be the Messiah Himself. His worshipping a man was indeed culpable; but, considering his present ignorance, it was excusable, nay, an evidence of something in him very commendable,—a great veneration for divine and heavenly things: no wonder if, till he was better informed, he took him to be the Messiah, and therefore worshipped him, whom he was ordered to send for by an angel from heaven. But the worshipping of his pretended successor, who is not only a man, but a sinful man, the man of sin himself, is altogether inexcusable, and such an absurdity as would be incredible, if we were not told before, that all the world would worship the beast, *Rev. 13:4*. But Peter shrunk [with horror] from this worship; as did the angel, *Rev. 19:10, 22:9*. And how careful was Paul that no man should think of him above what he saw in him! *2 Cor. 12:6*. Christ's faithful servants could better bear to be vilified than deified.

4. The account Peter and Cornelius give to each other, and to the company, of the hand of heaven in bringing them together, *v. 27*. Peter went in, talking familiarly with Cornelius; endeavoring, by the freedom of his converse, to take off that dread he seemed to have of him. Those Gentiles, *v. 28, 29*, knew it had never been allowed by the Jews, but always looked upon as unlawful, for a native Jew, to keep company, or come unto one of another nation, a stranger, an uncircumcised Gentile. It was not made so by the law of God, but by the decree of their wise men, which they looked upon to be no less obliging. They did not forbid them to converse or traffic with Gentiles, but to eat with them, *Gen. 43:32, Dan. 1:8*. They might not come into the house of a Gentile, for they looked upon it to be ceremonially polluted. Thus scornfully did the Jews look upon the Gentiles, who were not behindhand in contempt, as appears by many

implied in its consequences the abolition of the ritual law, which God Himself had given to Israel, this fact was immediately revealed to him; and he was ordered to go with the messengers without scruple or hesitation.—God had directed Cornelius, by the angel, to send these messengers, yet 'the Spirit said to Peter, I have sent them;' this is the language of Deity and personality. 20. Peter took with him [in a matter so weighty, note, *v. 9—16*, *lat. part.*] some of the believers, who dwelt at Joppa, that they might witness, and be ready to attest, the whole of what passed on this unprecedented occasion.

(23.) 'It was reckoned 15 hours from Cesarea to Joppa.' *BL.*—In the E. has a man from a distant village some business with you, he comes not alone, but brings a large company of his neighbors and friends. Ask why they came, the answer is "because he did." People are often thus seen far from their homes, with no other reason than "we came with him." See the man going to a court of justice, he is accompanied by a large band of his acquaintances, who canvass all the probabilities of the case, and have a salvo for every exigency. Perhaps a love of show is one motive; but the desire to have witnesses of what is said or done, or to have help at hand in case of any emergency, are other reasons for their love of company. The Oriental is like the granivorous animals of his native deserts, who are all more or less gregarious in their habits; and as it is, so it was in the most remote antiquity. *Comp. Ps. 34:7, Prov. 27:17*, and many other scriptures.

V. 25, 26. 'If Cornelius had desired to kiss Peter's toe, would Peter have allowed him? Yet truly it is Peter's vicegerent, who requires kings to kiss his slipper!' *Beza*.

(25.) *Worshipped.* 'Proskunein denotes, a total and reverential prostration of the body to the earth: a mark of profound respect, which the Jews and other Orientals rendered, not to kings only, but also to persons of high dignity. But the Romans yielded this homage to the Deity only; and therefore Peter declines it, by saying, I myself also am a man. Yet it does not follow that Cornelius meant to have transferred the honor due to the Deity, to Peter; for he was devout and fearing God, (*v. 2*.) but, struck with reverential awe at the sight of a divine legate, he could not preserve the due distinction between the honor to be rendered to the ambassador and the Principal. *Quin.* So Chrysostom. There is no reason to suppose, (with *Grot.*) that Cornelius took Peter for an angel, whatever the Lystrians might do, *14:11, 13*. Moreover, if Pe-

ter was justified in declining this mark of profound respect, knowing that among the Romans it was reserved for divinities only, yet the centurion may be held in some degree excused for offering it; knowing, as he did, that the custom of the E. allowed of such reverential homage from man to man; though Peter, most judiciously, discourages it, as leading to evil.' *BL.*—The *Codex Bezae*, and the latter *Syriac*, in the margin, read this very differently from all other MSS. and vers.; thus, *But as Peter drew nigh to Cesarea, one of the servants ran before, and told that he was come: then Cornelius leaped up, and met him, and falling at his feet he worshipped him.*

V. 28. 'Schoettgen and Mich. observe, that there is no command in the Law of Moses, forbidding familiar intercourse with the Gentiles, [*comp. on v. 2*.] but that this was an interdict of the Jewish Doctors, who had burdened the Mosaic Law with many added injunctions. *Bp. Pearce*, here, cites *Jos.* "those strangers who came to us on any other account but that of religion, he (Moses) permitted not to be mixed with us in any familiarities." And so elsewhere in *Jos.* *Tacitus* says, the Jews entertained "Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, adversus omnes alios hostile odium." [Among one another obstinate faith, ready mercy; towards all others hostility and hate.]—*Schoettgen* remarks, that even the Jews acknowledged, that God would not wholly reject the Gentiles; citing *Schemoth Rabba*, on *Joh 31:32*. (The stranger did not lodge in the street.) "For God doth not account any one profane, but receiveth all. The gates are open at all hours, (*comp. Acts 14:27*.) and he that will, may enter."—Now (says *Schoett.*) considering that the above tradition was not unknown among the Jews, it may justly be thought strange, that Peter should have been censured, *11:3*. But, the truth in question, though, beyond all doubt, known to the more ancient Jews, was afterwards choaked by the arrogance of the Pharisees, of which our Lord often complains. This pernicious prejudice, therefore, the Jewish converts having first contracted from the Pharisees, still retained."

V. 29. 'Peter asks, "for what, &c." hecnise (and so Chrysostom) he wished them to make confession, and become engaged to the faith. *Quin.*, too, observes, it was done to inform his companions. And so *Doddr.*, who with his accustomed good taste observes, that the repetition of the circumstance gives a dignity and spirit to Peter's succeeding discourse, beyond what we could otherwise so sensibly receive. *Id.*



30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house; and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,

31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.

32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter: he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner, by the seaside; who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee: and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

34 ¶ Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ; (he is Lord of all;)

37 passages in the Latin poets. Ceremonial characters were abolished, that more regard might be had to moral ones. Peter thought it necessary to let them know, how he came to change his mind in this matter, by a divine revelation, lest he should be upbraided with lightness. God having thus taken down the partition-wall, he assures them of his readiness to do them all the good offices he can, and inquires wherein he

may be serviceable to them. Cornelius, on the other hand, declares, it was purely in obedience to God's directions that he had sent for him: directions received while he was fasting, by which it appears, that religious fasting, in order to the greater seriousness and solemnity of praying, was used by devout people that were not Jews; as at Jonah 3: 5. He describes the messenger, (Comp. 1: 10. Luke 24: 4.) and repeats the message that was sent him, v. 31, 32. just as we had it, v. 4—6. Only here it is said, *Thy prayer is heard.* We are not told what his prayer was, but we may suppose, that, finding the deficiency of natural light, it was that God would make some further discoveries of Himself to him, and of the way of salvation. 'Peter shall give thee such a discovery.' He declares his own and his friends' readiness to receive the message he had to deliver, v. 33. Observe, The religious, serious state of their minds, their reverent respect, and their docility, v. 33. The truths of Christ were not communicated to the apostles to be published or stifled as they thought fit, [nor are they to us,] but intrusted with them [and us] to be published to the world. [Note, Luke 24: 36—48.]

V. 34—43. We have here an abstract or summary of Peter's sermon to Cornelius and his friends. It is admirably suited to the circumstances of those to whom he preached it.

I. Because they were Gentiles: he shows that, notwithstanding, they were interested in the Gospel of Christ, which he had to preach, and entitled to the benefit of it, on an equal foot with the Jews. It was necessary that this should be cleared, or else with what comfort could either he preach or they hear? He therefore lays down this as an undoubted principle, *that God is no respecter of persons; doth not know favor in judgment,* as the Heb. phrase is; which magistrates are forbidden to do, Deut. 1: 17. 16: 19. Prov. 24: 23. and are blamed for doing, Ps. 82: 2. And it is often said of God, *that He doth not respect persons,* Deut. 10: 17. 2 Chr. 19: 7. Job 34: 19. Rom. 2: 11. Col. 3: 25. 1 Pet. 1: 17. He doth not give judgment in favor of a man, for the sake of any external advantage foreign to the merits of the cause. God, as a Benefactor, gives favors arbitrarily and by sovereignty, Deut. 7: 7, 8. 9: 5, 6. Mat. 20: 10. but not, as a Judge;

but in every nation, and under every denomination, he that fears God, and works righteousness, is accepted of Him, v. 35.

The case is plainly thus. Though God has favored the Jews, above other nations, yet He will not therefore accept any particular persons, if they allow themselves in immoralities contradictory to their profession; and particularly in persecution, which was now, more than any other, the national sin of the Jews. He never did, nor ever will, reject or refuse an honest Gentile, who, though he has not the privileges and advantages the Jews have, yet, like Cornelius, fears God, and worships Him, and works righteousness, is just and charitable towards all men, who lives up to the light he has, both in a sincere devotion, and in a regular conversation, whatever nation he is of, though ever so far remote from kindred to the seed of Abraham; though ever so despicable, nay, though in ever so ill a name, that shall be no prejudice to him. God judges of men by their hearts, not by their country or parentage; and wherever He finds an upright man, He will be found an upright God, Ps. 18: 25. Observe, *Fearing God, and working righteousness,* must go together; for as *righteousness* toward men is a branch of true religion, so religion toward God is a branch of universal *righteousness.* Not that any man, since the fall, can obtain the favor of God, otherwise than through the mediation of Jesus Christ, and by the grace of God in Him; but those that have not the knowledge of Him, and therefore cannot have an explicit regard to Him, may yet receive grace from God for his sake, to fear God, and to work righteousness; and wherever God gives grace to do so, as He did to Cornelius, He will, through Christ, accept the work of his own hands.

Now, I. This was always a truth, before Peter perceived it; it was the fixed rule of judgment from the beginning, Gen. 4: 7. God will not ask, in the great day, what country men were of, but what they were, what they did, and how they stood affected toward Him and toward their neighbors. 2. Yet now it was made more dear than it had been; this great truth had been darkened by the covenant of peculiarity made with Israel; the ceremonial law was a wall of partition between them and other nations; in it,

V. 31. *Thy prayer is heard.*] 'Cornelius prayed and fasted and gave alms. It was in this way he looked for salvation; not to purchase it: a thought of this kind does not appear to have entered into his mind; but these were the means he used to get his soul brought to the knowledge of the truth.'

V. 33. The circumstances, preceding Peter's coming to Cornelius and his friends, rendered an implicit faith in his words most reasonable and proper, even previous to a comparison of them with the sacred oracles, the standard and test of truth.

V. 34, 35. 'To respect persons,' is entirely different from *discriminating characters, or conferring unmerited favors on one man, and not on another.* A judge respects persons, if he condemns one and acquits another, or decides in favor of the injurious party, from partiality to his friend, or to one of his own nation, sect, or party: yet in private life, he may send a present to what friend he pleases, or dispense his alms to what poor persons he chooses, without giving others a ground for charging him with 'respect of persons.' Mat. 20: 1—16, v. 15. [So the Creator, who maketh men, and maketh them to differ from each other, from brutes, trees, or angels, may make them to differ in privileges.] If God had accepted a man's worship because he was a Jew, and rejected that of another man, of exactly the same dispositions and character, because he was a Gentile; there would have been some reason to assert, that He was 'a respecter of persons;' or if He had favored a proud, wicked, or hypocritical Jew, merely on account of his circumcision, or relation to Abraham; and rejected a humble, pious, believing, sincere worshipper, because of his uncircumcision, or his Gentile extraction; there would have been an evident ground for the charge. Yet the Jews in general carried their ideas of God's special favor to their nation so far, as fully to involve these consequences. It does not, however, follow, that God will accept from any man that service, which is destitute of spiritual good; or that any man will do what is *spiritually* good, without 'regenerating grace;' or that God is bound in justice to give his special grace to an unconverted man, because of his external decency of character, or formal services; or that He may not confer this unmerited favor on any one, as He sees good, without 'respecting persons;' or that the fruits of grace can claim, or meet acceptance, on any other ground, than that of the covenant of mercy, through the righteousness and atonement of our Divine Surety. In short, where the essence of true religion is found, God graciously accepts it without regarding names, forms, or sects.—'I think this text proves, that God would sooner send an angel to direct pious and upright persons to the knowledge of the Gospel, than suffer them to perish by ignorance of it. But so far from

intimating, that such persons may be found among those that reject Christianity, . . . it determines nothing as to their existence in every nation.' *Doddr. Rom. 2: 7—16.* Does universal history, ancient and modern, bring to our knowledge one person, who, without revelation, in some way or degree, was a humble penitent, a spiritual worshipper of God, a conscientious worker of righteousness, in his habitual conduct; in one word, a Cornelius? If it do not, all advanced from this passage about virtuous heathens is wholly foreign to the purpose. Their virtue was not and is not good 'before God.'

(35.) 'Let it be observed, that no man can be accepted with God, who does not live up to the advantages of that state in which Providence has placed him. . . . Many irreligious men, in order to get rid of the duties and obligations of Christianity, quote this v. in their favor, while they reject all the Gospel besides, and roundly assert, as they think on the authority of this text, that they need neither believe in Jesus Christ, attend to his Gospel, nor use his ordinances; for if they fear God and work righteousness, they shall infallibly be accepted of Him. Let such know . . . that, as they are born and live under the Gospel of Jesus Christ, God, the Judge, will require that they fear Him, and work righteousness, according to the LIGHT afforded by that very GOSPEL. . . . In the face of such a requisition as this, how will the poor heathen virtue of one born in the pale of Christianity appear?' Dr. A. CLARKE.

V. 36—43. The apostle next proceeded to state the substance of the instruction, he was sent to communicate. This indeed would scarcely have been necessary, if Cornelius had been so 'accepted' for his good works, as not to need the righteousness and atonement of Christ; or if, as numbers argue, every man might be saved by his own religion, if sincere in it.—This should be considered as only an abstract of Peter's discourse; and as he was interrupted in it, by the descent of the Holy Spirit, we need not wonder, that various points of Christian doctrine are not explicitly stated in it; for they were left to be communicated afterwards, and by degrees.—(41) *Chosen before.*] Here only. Our Lord 'called whom He would . . . and He ordained twelve.' Mark 3: 13, 14. Thus they were 'chosen of God:' for says Jesus, 'I and the Father are One.'

(36, 37.) 'Passing over rash emendations, I accede to Erasmus, (adopted by the Eng. vers., Schmid, Heumann, Bolten, Beck, Heinr., and Kuin.) and tr. "The doctrine which God caused to be delivered to the Israelites, announcing salvation by Jesus Christ, (He is the Lord of all.) you yourselves know; the doctrine, I say, which was promulgated through all Judea," &c.—Lord of all.] And so intends the salvation of all.—*Know.*] *Ositate:* here, not full and accurate knowledge, but, in a



37 That word, *I say*, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached :

38 How God anointed <sup>d</sup> Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power ; who <sup>e</sup> went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed <sup>f</sup> of the devil : <sup>g</sup> for God was with him.

39 And <sup>h</sup> we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem ; whom they slew and hanged on a tree.

40 Him God raised up <sup>i</sup> the third day, and shewed him openly ;

41 Not <sup>j</sup> to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before <sup>k</sup> of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

42 And he commanded us <sup>l</sup> to preach unto the people, and to testify that <sup>m</sup> it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead.

43 To him <sup>n</sup> give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, <sup>o</sup> whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

d Lu. 4:18. He. c. 2:32. 17:31. 2 Co. 5:1:9. 1 Mat. 28:1,2. 10. 1 Pe. 4:5. e Mat. 12:15. f 1 Jn. 3:8. g Jn. 3:2. h Lu. 24:48. j Jn. 14:22,20&21. k Jn. 15:16. l Mat. 28:19,20. m Jn. 5:22,27. c. Ro. 10:11.

it was true, *God favored that notion*, Rom. 3:1,2. 9:4. and from thence particular persons among them were ready to infer, that they were sure of God's acceptance, though they lived as they listed ; and that no Gentile could possibly be *accepted of God*. God had said a great deal by the prophets to prevent and rectify this mistake, but now at length He doth it effectually, by abolishing the covenant of peculiarity, and repealing the ceremonial law, and so setting the matter at large, and both Jew and Gentile on the same level before God ; and Peter is here made to perceive it, by comparing the vision which he had with that Cornelius had. Now *in Christ Jesus*, it is plain, *neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision*, Gal. 5:6. Col. 3:11.

II. Because they were Gentiles, inhabiting a place within the confines of the land of Israel, he refers them to what they themselves could not but know concerning the life and doctrine, the preaching and miracles, the death and sufferings of our Lord Jesus ; for these were things, the report of which spread into every corner of the nation, v. 37, &c.

1. They knew in general *the Word*, i. e. the Gospel, *which God sent to the children of Israel*, v. 37. Though the Gentiles were not admitted to hear it, yet they could not but hear of it, it was all the talk, both of city and country. We are often told in the gospels, how *the fame of Christ went into all parts of Canaan*, when He was on earth, as afterward *the fame of his Gospel went into all parts of the world*, Rom. 10:18. That Word, that Divine Word, that Word of power and grace, *you know*, what the purport of this Word was, *peace by Jesus Christ ; reconciling the world to Himself* : and to whom it was sent, to the children of Israel, in the first place : this all their neighbors heard of, Ps. 126:3.

2. They knew the several matters of fact relating to this Word of the Gospel sent to Israel. (1.) The baptism of repentance, which John preached by way of introduction to it, Mark 1:1. What an extraordinary man John was, and what a direct tendency his preaching had to *prepare the way of the Lord*. (2.) That immediately after John's baptism, the Gospel of Christ, that word of *peace*, was published throughout all Judea, and that it took rise from Galilee. (3.) That *Jesus of Nazareth*, when here on earth, *went about doing good*, both to the souls and the bodies of men, and never did hurt to any. (4.) More particularly, that he *healed all that were oppressed of the devil* ; by this it appeared, not only that He was sent of God, as it was a kindness to men ; but that He was sent to *destroy the works of the devil* ; for thus He obtained many a victory over him. (5.) They knew the Jews put Him to death ; *slew Him, by hanging Him on a tree*.

All this they knew ; but lest they should think it was only a report, and magnified, as reports usually are ; Peter, for himself and the rest of the apostles, attests it, v. 39. *We are witnesses, eyewitnesses, and earwitnesses of the doctrine He preached*.

3. They did know, or might know, by all this, that He had a commission from heaven to preach and act as He did. This he still takes occasion to hint to them. Let them know, (1.) That this Jesus is *Lord of all* ; it comes in in a parenthesis, but is the principal proposition intended to be proved, that Jesus Christ, by whom peace is made between God and man, is *Lord of all* ; not only as *God over all blessed for evermore*, but as *Mediator, all power both in heaven and in earth* is put into his hand, and all judgment committed to Him. He is Lord of angels, Lord of the powers of darkness, for He hath triumphed over them. He is King of nations, has a power over all flesh ; He is King of saints, all the children of God are his scholars, his subjects, his soldiers. (2.) That *God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost and with power*, He was both authorized and enabled to do what He did by a divine anointing ; whence He was called *Christ*,—i. e. *the Messiah*,—i. e. *the Anointed One*. The Holy Ghost descended on Him, at his baptism, and He was full of power, both in

preaching and working miracles, which was the seal of a divine mission. (3.) That *God was with Him*, v. 38. His works were wrought in God ; God not only sent Him, but was present with Him all along, owned Him, stood by Him, and carried Him on in all his services and sufferings. Those whom God anoints He will accompany ; He will Himself be with those to whom He has given his Spirit.

III. Because they had heard no more for certain concerning this Jesus, Peter declares to them his resurrection from the dead, and the proofs of it. Probably, they had heard at Cesarea—some talk of this ; but it was soon silenced by that vile suggestion of the Jews, that *his disciples came by night and stole Him away*. Therefore Peter insists on this, as the main support of that Word which preacheth peace by Jesus Christ.

1. The power by which He rose is incontestably divine, v. 40. *Him God raised up the third day* ; which not only disproved all the calumnies and accusations He was laid under by men, but effectually proved God's acceptance of the satisfaction He made for the sin of man by the blood of his cross.

2. The proofs of his resurrection were incontestably clear ; for *God showed Him openly*. He gave Him to be made manifest, to be visible, evidently so ; so He appears, as that it appears beyond contradiction to be He, and not another. It was such a showing of Him, as amounted to a demonstration of the truth of his resurrection. He showed Him not publicly, indeed, (it was not open in that sense,) but evidently ; *not to all the people*, who had been the witnesses of his death ; but a sufficient number saw Him, to attest the truth of his resurrection ; the testator's declaring his last will and testament need not be before all the people, it is enough that it be before a competent number of credible witnesses ; so the resurrection of Christ was proved before sufficient witnesses. (1.) They were not so by *chance*, but were *chosen before of God* to be witnesses of it, and, in order to that, had intimate converse with Him ; that, having known Him so intimately before, they might the better be assured it was He. (2.) They had not a sudden and transient view of Him, but a great deal of free conversation with Him ; they did *eat and drink with Him, after He rose from the dead* ; they saw Him without any terror or consternation, which might have rendered them incompetent witnesses, for they saw Him so frequently, and He conversed with them so familiarly, that *they did eat and drink with Him*. It is brought as a proof of the clear view the nobles of Israel had of the glory of God, Ex. 24:11. that *they saw God, and did eat and drink*.

IV. He concludes with an inference from all this, that therefore that which they all ought to do, was, to believe in this Jesus. Observe,

1. Why ; faith has reference to a testimony, and the Christian faith is *built on the foundation of us the apostles, and the prophets*,

popular way, "*hear and know* ;" as in 2:22. 5:7. 9:13. and so *Kuiv*. Philip had preached at Cesarea, 8:42.

(37.) *That word*.] 'The report concerning Jesus they had heard.' Doddr. But, says BL., *rēma* is here put for *logos, doctrine* ; as in Rom. 10:8. Eph. 5:26. Heb. 6:5. John 3:34.

(38.) *Anointed*.] '*Echrisen* : *chriein* properly signifies to sprinkle, anoint with oil, or unguents : and since anointing formed a solemn rite of inaugurating and appointing *kings*, so it came to denote *generally, create, appoint, &c.* : and as unction was supposed to confer certain powers, so the word came to mean, as here, *invest, endue with power*. In the phrase, "with the Holy Ghost and with power," we have an *hendiadis* for "the powers and endowments of the Holy Spirit." BL.

(41.) *Not to all*.] Compelled belief loses its moral value, and ceases to be an index of the character : the state of the heart, the will, has much to do with belief. Now the tendency to believe spiritual truth, on sufficient evidence, indicates a preparedness to profit by it, and to digest and assimilate it, till it becomes a part of the immortal nature : not so, when truth is thrust upon the unwilling ; then the greatest miracles only harden, excite opposition, shut out truth, in fact : the whole N. T. is full of instances. Besides, if each one then living had a right to demand ocular, logical, or mathematical demonstration, instead of moral, then *each* person now has a right to demand, horrid thought ! that Christ should be again crucified before his eyes, and that he should, with those

same eyes, see Him ascend to heaven ! ED.—*Not to all the people*.] 'Many valuable writers (see Ditton, Burnet, Sykes, Fleming, Blackwall, Atterbury, &c.) have vindicated the wisdom and righteousness . . . which ordered, that Christ should not appear publicly after his resurrection. . . . I shall only observe, in one word, that as God was by no means obliged to give that perverse people, *the Jews*, the highest and most striking degree of evidence that could be imagined ; so it is certain, that the evidence He gave of this fact [the resurrection of Christ] by the *miraculous gifts* conferred on chosen witnesses of it, was of a nature capable of being conveyed to the world in general, in a much more convincing manner, than Christ's appearance in the temple, for several succeeding days, could have been.' Doddr.

V. 41—43. (11:4—17.) It does not appear that the descent of the Holy Spirit, on this occasion, was accompanied by the same circumstances, as on the day of Pentecost ; but the effects were evident, and similar to those then produced.—(47) *Forbid water, &c.*] 'These words contain a plain and convincing demonstration of the falsehood of the Quaker's doctrine, that water-baptism is unnecessary to them, who have received the inward baptism of the Spirit : since the apostle here not only declares, that water-baptism ought therefore to be administered to these persons, because they had already been baptized with the Holy Ghost ; but also commands them to be baptized on that account.' *Whitby*.—It was not necessary for the sacred historian, on such occasions, to



44 ¶ While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost <sup>r</sup> fell on all them which heard the word.

45 And <sup>q</sup> they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost :

46 For they heard them <sup>r</sup> speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

47 Can <sup>r</sup> any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we ?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

p c. 4:31. q ver. 23. r c. 2:4. s c. 8:12.

to whose writings we have reason to think Cornelius and his friends were no strangers.

2. What they must believe concerning Him. (1.) That we are all accountable to Christ as our Judge; this the apostles were commanded to testify to the world; that this Jesus is *ordained of God to be the Judge of the quick and dead*, v. 42. He hath assured us of this, *in that He hath raised Him from the dead*, ch. 17:31. so that it is the great concern of every one of us, in the belief of this, to seek his favor, and to make Him our Friend. (2.) That if we believe in Him, we shall all be justified by Him as our Righteousness, v. 43. The prophets, when they spake of the death of Christ, did witness this, *that through his name, for his sake, and on the account of his merit, whosoever believeth in Him, Jew or Gentile, shall receive remission of sins*. That is the great thing we need, without which we are undone, and which the convinced conscience is most inquisitive after, which the carnal Jews promised themselves from their ceremonial sacrifices and

purifications, yea, and the heathen, too, [did and do,] from their atonements, but all in vain; it is to be had only *through the name of Christ*, and only by those that *believe* in his name; and they that do so, may be assured of it; their sins shall be pardoned, and there shall be no condemnation to them. And the remission of sins lays a foundation for all other favors and blessings, by taking that out of the way, that hinders them.

V. 44—48. Here is the issuic of Peter's sermon.

I. God's owning Peter's word, by conferring the Holy Ghost on the hearers, immediately on their hearing it, v. 44. *while Peter was yet speaking*, even as on the apostles at first; so Peter saith, ch. 11:15. Therefore, some think, it was with a *rushing mighty wind*, and *in cloven tongues*, as that was. Observe,

1. When the Holy Ghost fell on them; while Peter was preaching. Thus were the *signs of an apostle wrought among them*, 2 Cor. 12:12. Though Peter could not give the Holy Ghost, yet the Holy Ghost being given along with the word of Peter, by that it appeared he was sent of God. The Holy Ghost fell on others after they were baptized, for their confirmation; but on these Gentiles before they were baptized: to show that God is not tied to a method, nor confines Himself to external signs. The Holy Ghost fell on those that were neither circumcised nor baptized; for *it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing*.

2. How it appeared that the Holy Ghost was fallen upon them, v. 46. *They spake with tongues* which they never learned; perhaps it intimated that they were all designed for ministers, and by this first descent of the Spirit on them were qualified (both to read the O. T. and) to preach the Gospel. But observe, when they spake with tongues, they *magnified God*, they spake of Christ and the benefits of redemption, which Peter had been preaching of, to the glory of God. Thus did they on whom the Holy Ghost first descended, ch. 2:11. With whatever gift we are endued,

we ought to honor God, and particularly with the gift of speaking, and all the improvements of it.

3. What impression it made on the believing Jews that were present, v. 45. those six that came with Peter; it surprised them exceedingly, perhaps gave them some uneasiness, because that *upon the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost*, which they thought had been appropriated to their own nation. Had they understood the Scriptures of the O. T., which pointed at this, it would not have been such an astonishment to them; but by our mistaken notions of things, we create difficulties to ourselves in the methods of divine providence and grace.

II. Peter's owning God's work, in baptizing those on whom the Holy Ghost fell. Observe,

1. Though they had received the Holy Ghost, yet it was requisite they should be baptized; though God is not tied to instituted ordinances, we are; and no extraordinary gifts set us above them, but rather oblige us so much the more to conform to them. Some in our days would have argued, 'These are baptized with the *Holy Ghost*, and therefore what need have they to be baptized with *water*? It is below them.' No; it is not below them, while water-baptism is an ordinance of Christ, and the door of admission into the visible church, and a seal of the new covenant.

2. Though Gentiles, yet, having received the Holy Ghost, they might be admitted to baptism, v. 47. The argument is conclusive; can we deny the sign to those who have received the thing signified? Surely, they that have *received the Spirit as well as we*, ought to receive baptism as well as we; for it becomes us to take those into communion with us, whom God hath taken into communion with Himself. Now it appears, why the Spirit was given them before they were baptized,—because otherwise Peter could not have persuaded himself to baptize them, any more than to have preached to them, if he had not been ordered to do it by a vision; at least,

PRACT. OBS. What will become of those who, without one tenth of the external appearance of Cornelius' piety and charity, presume that they shall go to heaven on the score of their good works, and reject the way of salvation, by faith in Jesus Christ?—The sublime subjects, which pertain to redemption through the blood of the Son of God, seem more proper for the tongues of angels to proclaim, than for us poor worms of the earth. Doubtless in many respects, they could preach them unspeakably better: yet our humiliating and thankful experience may balance something on the other side. In that case, however, it would not be so evident, that 'the excellency of the power,' which makes the Word successful, is wholly 'of God:' nor would their presence and language be so suited to man's weakness, or so conducive to his comfort.—When pious persons conscientiously deny themselves, in obedience to what they deem the command of God, without self-righteousness or spiritual pride; their conduct may evidence their sincerity, and exhibit to others a very useful example; even should it appear that they were mistaken in their scruples; and in this view, the apostle's readiness to endure hunger rather than eat forbidden food, and his scrupulous exactness in this respect, during his whole past life, convey to us important and humiliating instructions.—The company of those, who are collected together into the church of God, being truly converted, will become all of 'one mind and judgment,' in the grand concerns of religion; they have the same faith, hope, and love, and the same motives and distinguishing principles; and their several natural dispositions, being corrected, regulated, and moderated by sanctifying grace,

render them more qualified in different ways to serve the common cause of the Gospel. Let us then learn 'not to call those common' whom God has cleansed, or to despise those whom He has received; and not to neglect or despair of those, whom He may yet call to the knowledge of Himself.—But how strong must prejudice be, when so many divine motions were requisite, to induce an apostle to attend on a man of fair character and good report, who by the warning of an angel had sent for him, that he might receive the instructions of life from his lips!—This inward baptism of the Spirit is especially to be valued; yet outward ordinances should not be neglected; and those who conclude that they have no occasion for the external signs, because they have received the internal grace of the covenant, speak and act in a very unscriptural manner, and give reason for suspecting that they deceive themselves; yet if we have both the 'outward sign and the inward spiritual grace,' it is not of much importance, in what order we have received them.—But surely, we sinners of the Gentiles should read this ch. with peculiar gratitude and admiring praise: thus the partition-wall was broken down, the law of ordinances that was against us was abolished, the door of mercy was opened to us; that we might become fellow-heirs with the ancient people of God, in all the blessings of his covenant and salvation. May the Lord speedily recal the Jews into the church, and bring in the 'fulness of the Gentiles;' that 'his name may be hallowed,' his kingdom established, and 'his will done,' throughout the whole earth, as it is by all the angels and saints in heaven!

SCOTT.

repeat the *appointed form* [if there was any, ED.] of Christian baptism; and therefore the special confession of Jesus, as the Messiah, the Son of God, is alone noticed. But there seems no ground to doubt, that the form also was adhered to. It is rather taken for granted, that the apostles, and primitive teachers, adhered to the instruction of their Lord just before his ascension; and it was therefore needless to mention that circumstance in the narrative.—It is not said, that the brethren who accompanied Peter were pastors; but it is probable, that some of them were. There had been Christians at Joppa for a considerable time: and either those who first collected a church in that city, appointed pastors; or, Peter, when he went thither, 'set in order this which was wanting.' *Tit.* 1:5—9. Now it is most natural to suppose, that on so interesting an occasion, Peter would take with him, as witnesses, some of the pastors of the church, and not exclusively private Christians. Ananias is not said to have been a minister, or pastor; yet it can scarcely be doubted that he was.—(49) *To tarry, &c.* It cannot be supposed, but that Peter lived with these converted Gentiles, according to their usual habits, as to eating, and other things of that nature, after all which had preceded his going among them, without any special regard to the ceremonial law. This may be of use, if recollected, in forming our judgment on some other portions of this history. SCOTT.

(44—46.) 'Peter must be understood as meaning, that they had re-

ceived the miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit, as he himself had, and the rest of the apostles.'

(45.) *They of the circumcision,—were astonished.* 'The Jews had long ago a proverb among them, "That the Holy Spirit never rests on a heathen." This *astonishment* shows, that notion prevailed even in these Christians, whether the proverb was so old or not.' DODDR.

(47.) *Can any man forbid water, &c.* 'It seems most natural to understand this as Dr. Whitby does, "who can forbid that water should be brought?" In which view of the clause, one would naturally conclude, they were baptized by pouring water upon them, rather than by plunging them into it.' *Id.*—This is in Doddridge's usual style of modest courtesy; but the case in our day justifies and even requires a more decided and positive manner. Not only is Whitby's understanding of the passage 'most natural,' but there is no propriety in supposing it can be consistently understood in any other sense; and *sprinkling* may as 'naturally' be supposed as *pouring*: in no sense is *plunging* ever to be thought of as having been the method; the application of *the element to the subject*, and not *the subject to the element*, is necessarily and plainly implied.

(48.) 'Peter chooses his brethren should baptize, that thus the expression of their consent might be the more explicit.' DODDR.



## CHAP. XI.

<sup>1</sup> Peter, being accused for going in to the Gentiles, <sup>5</sup> maketh his defence, <sup>18</sup> which is accepted. <sup>19</sup> The Gospel being spread into Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, Barnabas is sent to confirm them. <sup>26</sup> The disciples there are first called Christians. <sup>27</sup> They send relief to the brethren in Judea in time of famine.

AND the apostles and brethren, that were in Judea, heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

<sup>2</sup> And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they <sup>a</sup> that were of the circumcision contended with him,

<sup>3</sup> Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.

<sup>4</sup> But Peter rehearsed *the matter* from the beginning, and expounded *it* by order unto them, saying,

<sup>5</sup> I was in the city of Joppa, praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:

<sup>6</sup> Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

<sup>7</sup> And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay, and eat.

<sup>8</sup> But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

<sup>9</sup> But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common.

<sup>10</sup> And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

<sup>11</sup> And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me.

<sup>12</sup> And the Spirit <sup>b</sup> bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover, these six brethren accompanied me; and we entered into the man's house:

<sup>13</sup> And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

<sup>14</sup> Who shall tell thee <sup>c</sup> words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

<sup>15</sup> And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as <sup>d</sup> on us at the beginning.

<sup>16</sup> Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John <sup>e</sup> indeed baptized with water; but <sup>f</sup> ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

<sup>17</sup> Forasmuch then as God <sup>g</sup> gave them the like gift as *he did* unto us

who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what <sup>h</sup> was I, that I could withstand God?

a c. 10:23,28. Ga. 6:63,68. f Is. 44:3. Joel 2:12. c. 10:9, &c. d c. 2:4. 2:23.  
b Jn. 16:13. e Mat. 3:11. Jn. g c. 15:8,9.  
c Ps. 19:7-11. Jn. 1:26,33. c. 1:5. h Ro. 9:21-26.

he could not have avoided the censure of *those of the circumcision that believed*. Thus is there one unusual step of divine grace taken after another to bring the Gentiles into the church. How well is it for us, that the grace of God is so much more extensive than the charity even of good men!

<sup>3</sup> Peter did not baptize them himself, but *commanded them to be baptized, v. 48*. Probably some of the brethren, who came with him, did it by his order, and he declined it for the same reason Paul did,—lest those baptized by him should think the better of themselves for it; or he should seem to *have baptized in his own name, 1 Cor. 1:15*. The business of baptizing was ordinarily devolved on the inferior ministers; these acted by the orders of the apostles, who might therefore be said to do it.

*Lastly*, Their owning both Peter's work and God's work in their desire of further advantage by Peter's ministry. *They prayed him to tarry certain days*. Note, 1. Those who have some acquaintance with Christ, cannot but covet more. 2. Even those that have received the Holy Ghost, must see their need of the ministry of the Word.

CHAP. XI. V. 1-18. I. Intelligence of the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, was presently brought to the church in Jerusalem, and thereabouts. Some for good-will, and some for ill-will, would spread the report; so that before Peter was returned to Jerusalem, *the apostles and the brethren there, and in Judea, heard that the Gentiles also had received the Word of God, i. e. the Gospel of Christ; which is not only a word of God, but the Word of God; for it is the summary and centre of all divine revelation*. They received Christ; *for his name is called, the Word of God, Rev. 19:13*. Not only that dispersed Jews and proselyted Gentiles, but Gentiles themselves, with whom [Jewish bigotry] had hitherto thought it unlawful to hold common conversation, were taken into church communion, had *received the Word of God*. It is likely they had got a notion, that if the Gospel were preached to the Gentiles, it would be to no purpose, because the proofs of the Gospel were fetched so much out of the O.T. which the Gentiles did not receive; they looked upon them as not inclined to religion, nor likely to receive the impressions of it; and therefore were surprised to hear that they had. We are too apt to despair of doing good to those who yet, when [properly] tried, prove very tractable.

II. Offence was taken at it by the believing Jews, v. 2, 3. *They of the circumcision, Jewish converts that still retained a veneration for circumcision, contended with Peter, charged it on him as a crime, that he went into men uncircumcised, and did eat with them; so far were they from looking upon him as infallible, or as the supreme head of the church that all were accountable to, and he to none*. See here, 1. How much it is the bane and damage of the church, to monopolize it, and to exclude those from it, and from the benefit of the means of grace, that are not in everything as we are. These men were of Jonah's mind, who, in a jealousy for his people, was angry that the Ninevites re-

ceived the Word of God, and justified himself in it. 2. Christ's ministers must not think it strange, if they be censured and quarrelled with, not only by their professed enemies, but by their professing friends; and not only for their follies and infirmities, but for their good actions, seasonably and well done; but if we have proved our own work, we may have rejoicing in ourselves, as Peter had, whatever reflections we may have from our brethren. Those that are zealous and courageous in the service of Christ, must expect to be censured by those who, under pretence of being cautious, are cold and indifferent. Those who are of catholic, generous, charitable principles, must expect to be censured by such as are conceited and strait-laced; who say, *Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou*.

III. Peter gave such a full and fair account of the matter of fact, as was sufficient, without any further argument or apology, both to justify him, and to satisfy them, v. 4. for it appeared all along God's own work, and not his. It is a good reason why we should be moderate in our censures, and sparing of them, because if we rightly understood that which we are so forward to run down, perhaps we should see cause to run in with it. And when we see others do that which looks suspicious, instead of contending, we should inquire of them what ground they went upon; and if we have not an opportunity to do that, should ourselves put the best construction on it that it will bear, and *judge nothing before the time*. But it is a debt we owe both to ourselves and to our brethren, to set those actions of ours in a true light, which at first looked ill, and gave offence; that we may remove stumbling-blocks out of our brethren's way.

Peter pleads, 1. That he was instructed by a vision no longer to keep up the ceremonial distinctions; he relates the vision, vs. 5, 6, 13, &c. as we had it before, ch. 10: 9, &c. That which put the matter past all dispute, was, the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Gentile hearers; this completed the evidence, that it was the will of God that he should take the Gentiles into communion. As the apostle argues, Gal. 3:2.

2. By the descent of the Holy Ghost, Peter was put in mind of a saying of his Master's, when leaving them, ch. 1:5. *John baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, v. 16*. This plainly intimated, that the Holy Ghost was the gift of Christ, the product and performance of that great promise He left them when He went to heaven, and the gift of it a kind of baptism, more excellent than that of even the Baptist himself. Comparing that promise, so worded, with this gift just now conferred, when the question was started, whether these persons should be baptized or no, he concluded, that the question was determined by Christ Himself, v. 17. *Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did to us; gave it to us as believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to them on their believing in Him, What was I, that I could withstand God?* Those who hinder the conversion of souls, withstand God; and those take too much upon them, who contrive how to exclude those from their communion, whom God has taken into communion with Himself.

IV. This account not only satisfied them, but turned their censures into praises to God, for what He had done by and with Peter's ministry; *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life!* Note, 1. Re-

NOTES. CHAP. XI. V. 1-3. If the believers from among the Jews were so alarmed and offended at Peter, for eating, on such an occasion, with persons of so good a report as Cornelius and his friends; what must have been the thoughts of the Jews in general, concerning the state of the idolatrous and licentious Gentiles? (10:34,35.)—It is not said, that 'the apostles contended' with Peter on this account: yet, if the general opinion had not been unfavorable to his conduct, none would have publicly called him to an account, or have warmly contested the point with him.—This fact is likewise an unanswerable proof, that the

primitive church had no idea of Peter's supremacy and infallibility: indeed, the persons concerned by no means rendered due respect to his apostolical authority.

V. 14. *Thou, &c.*] This is far more full and explicit than the narrative in the preceding ch. Cornelius must himself be saved, not by his prayers and alms, his piety and equity, and charity; but by the words which Peter would speak to him, and by faith in those words; and thus also salvation would come to his family.

Id.



18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles<sup>i</sup> granted repentance unto life.

19 ¶ Now they<sup>j</sup> which were scattered abroad, upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but<sup>k</sup> unto the Jews only.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the<sup>l</sup> Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And the<sup>m</sup> hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned<sup>n</sup> unto the Lord.

22 ¶ Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth<sup>o</sup> Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.

<sup>i</sup> Ro. 10:12,13. <sup>k</sup> Mat. 10:6. <sup>n</sup> c. 15:19. <sup>l</sup> Th. 15:9,15. <sup>l</sup> c. 6:1. <sup>o</sup> 29. <sup>o</sup> c. 1:9. <sup>j</sup> c. 8:1. <sup>m</sup> Lu. 1:66. <sup>o</sup> c. 9:27.

repentance, if true, is unto life, spiritual life; all that truly repent of their sins, evidence it by living a new life, a holy, heavenly, and divine life. 2. Repentance is God's gift; it is not only his free grace that accepts it, but his mighty grace that works it in us; that takes away the heart of stone, and gives us a heart of flesh. The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; it is He that provides Himself that Lamb. 3. Wherever God designs to give life, He gives repentance; for that is a necessary preparative for the comforts of a sealed pardon and a settled peace in this world, and for the seeing and enjoying of God in the other world. 4. It is [infinite] comfort to us, that God hath exalted his Son Jesus, not only to give repentance to Israel,

and the remission of sins, ch. 5:31. but to the Gentiles also.

V. 19—26. We have here an account of the planting and watering of a church at Antioch, the chief city of Syria, reckoned afterward the third city of the empire, only Rome and Alexandria being preferred before it; next to whose patriarch that of Antioch took place. It stood where Hamath or Riblah did, which we read of in the O. T. It is suggested that Luke, the penman of this history, and Theophilus, to whom he dedicates it, were of Antioch; which might be the reason why he takes more notice of the success of the Gospel at Antioch; as also because there it was Paul began to be famous, toward the story of whom he is hastening.

Now concerning the church at Antioch, observe,

1. The first preachers of the Gospel there, were such as were dispersed from Jerusalem by persecution, that persecution which arose five or six years ago, as some compute, at the time of Stephen's death, v. 19. 1. They travelled, preaching, as far as Phenice. When they had preached successfully in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, they got out of Canaan, and travelled into Phenicia, into the island of Cyprus, and into Syria; though the further they travelled, the more they exposed themselves. Therefore God suffered them to be persecuted, that thereby they might be dispersed in the world. Those that fled from persecution, did not flee from their work; nay, they threw themselves into a larger field of opportunity than before. They carried their religion along with them, not only that they might take the comfort of it themselves, but that they might communicate it to others. Thus the wrath of man is made to praise God.

2. They preached the Word to none but the Jews only, who were dispersed in all those parts, and had synagogues of their own; they did not yet understand that the Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs, but left them either to turn Jews, and so come into the church, or else remain as they were.

3. They particularly applied themselves to the Hellenist Jews, here called the Grecians, that were at Antioch. Many of the preachers were natives of Judea and Jerusalem; some of them, by birth, of Cyprus and Cyrene, as Barnabas himself, ch. 4:36. and Simon, Mark 15:21. but they had had their education in Jerusalem; and these, being themselves Grecian Jews, had a particular concern for those of their own denomination, and applied themselves closely to them at Antioch. Lightfoot says, they were there called Hellenists, or Grecians, because they were Jews of the corporation or enfranchisement of the city; for Antioch was a Syro-grecian city. To them, they preached the Lord Jesus. That was the constant subject of their preaching; what else should the ministers of Christ preach, but Christ, Christ and Him crucified; Christ, and Him glorified?

4. They had wonderful success, v. 21. (1.) The hand of the Lord was with them; which some understand of power to work miracles to confirm their doctrine, Mark 16:20. Heb. 2:4.; but I, rather, of the power of divine grace working on the hearts of the hearers, and opening them, as Lydia's heart was opened, because many saw the miracles who were not converted; but when by the Spirit the understanding was enlightened, and the will bowed to the Gospel of Christ, that was a day of power, in which volunteers were enlisted under the banner of the Lord Jesus, Ps. 110:3. These were not apostles, but ordinary ministers, yet they had the hand of the Lord with them, and did wonders. (2.) Abundance of good was done; A great number believed, and turned unto the Lord; many more than could have been expected; some of all sorts. Observe, what the change was. They believed; they were convinced of the truth of the Gospel, and subscribed to the record God had given in it concerning his Son. The effect and evidence of this was, that they turned unto the Lord; they could not be said to turn from the service of idols, for they were Jews, worshippers of the true God only; but they turned from a confidence

V. 18. It may hence be inferred, that even the disciples did not before consider the professed repentance of a Gentile, however attended with 'works meet for repentance,' to be acceptable with God, unless it led him unreservedly to embrace the religion of the Jews. This proves, that many things, which learned men have stated concerning the proselytes of the gate, and their privileges, rather show what ought to have been the case, than what it really was.—Whitby has here a long note, to evince, that the language of this v. and of similar passages, which state, that repentance and faith are the gift of God, does not imply that they are not conditional, and that they give encouragement to those alone, who perform the conditions; in which important truths are contained, but blended, as it appears to me, with much error.—That repentance and faith, and every kind of obedience, are the duties of every man; that means should be used, by such as desire to perform these duties; and that none receive the gift and grant of God, who live and die in the neglect of the appointed means of grace; are propositions not in the least to be contested. But this learned divine, and many others, seem to forget, that 'the heart of stone,' 'the uncircumcised heart,' 'the carnal mind which is enmity against God,' effectually prevents every man from doing these duties, or properly using those means, or even heartily desiring spiritual blessings, till it be removed by regeneration. 7:51—53. Deut. 30:1—10. Jer. 4:3,4. Ez. 11:17—20. 36:25—27. Rom. 8:5—9. Eph. 2:4—10. Phil. 2:12,13. Hence it is 'God, who worketh in us to will,' as well as to do. 'We have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.' Art. x.—'He has not only made them the overtures of it; but has graciously wrought it in some of their hearts.' Doddr., in Scott. The inseparable connexion of repentance and eternal life should not pass unnoticed, in this place. SCOTT.

V. 19—21. The words here tr. 'preaching,' do not necessarily imply a public and authoritative proclamation. 8:4, 32—35. 'Speaking the Word to none, but unto the Jews only.' 'They spake unto the Grecians, declaring the glad tidings concerning the Lord Jesus.'—'As in this place the Hellenists are opposed to the Jews; and as the church of Antioch was, as it were, a new Jerusalem for the Gentiles; it appears, that under this term, those were included who had so far profited by their acquaintance with the dispersed Jews, that, condemning idolatry, they acknowledged God, who had spoken by Moses and the prophets, though they remained uncircumcised; of which description Cornelius was, as it is evident from the preceding history.' Beza.—'Instead of Hellenistas, Hellenists, the Alexandrian manuscript, which is favored by the Syriac and some other ancient versions, reads Hellenas, Greeks; which common sense would require us to adopt, even if it were not supported by the authority of any manuscript at all. For as the Hellenists were Jews, there would, on the received reading, be no opposition between the conduct of these preachers, and those mentioned in the preceding verse. Here undoubtedly we have the first account of preaching the

Gospel to the idolatrous Gentiles: for it is certain, there is nothing in the word Greeks, to limit it to such as were worshippers of the true God. . . As the Greeks were the most celebrated of the Gentile nations near Judea, the Jews called all the Gentiles by that general name. Rom. 10:12. Gal. 3:23. Col. 3:11.' Doddr.—'It would, in my mind, be far preferable to leave the point undecided, or even to adopt Beza's exposition; than to alter the text, 'without the authority of any manuscript;' for who can say, how far men may proceed in altering the Scriptures by conjectural criticisms, pleading at the same time, that 'common sense requires it?' This, however, is not here the case, for there is good ground to conclude that Greeks is the genuine reading. [So Grot., Beng., Ros., Heinr., Kuin., &c.] The distance of Antioch and Cyprus from Jerusalem, renders it probable, that no worshippers of God, according to the law, except 'Grecians,' or Jews using the Greek and not the Heb. or Syr. language, and reading the Greek translation of the Scriptures in their synagogues, resided in those parts; (Note, 6:1.) and if there were synagogues of Jews, who used the Heb. or Syr., no good reason can be assigned, why the Word of God should be spoken to them only, and not to their brethren, who differed from them in nothing but language. It is, therefore, highly probable, that the persons spoken of addressed, for a considerable time, none but Jews and circumcised proselytes: but that at length, the report of Cornelius' conversion having reached Antioch, which cannot be shown to have been even improbable; some of them were encouraged to preach to uncircumcised persons also: and their great success, by the immediate power of the Lord, accompanying the Word, gave a divine sanction to their proceedings. Upon the whole it is most likely, that at Antioch, and about this time, the Gospel was first preached to idolatrous Gentiles.—Was not the extraordinary success of the Word, and the holy effects which followed by 'the hand of the Lord,' as real a sanction, both to the mission of the preachers, and to their conduct in preaching to the Gentiles, as outward miracles would have been? SCOTT.

(20.) 'Grot., Beng., Ros., Heinr., &c., maintain, that Hellenas, (Greeks,) which is found in some very ancient MSS. Verss. and Fathers, is to be adopted, [instead of Hellenistas,] as being confirmed by the whole context; since Luke, after having narrated the conversion of Cornelius, (v. 19, &c.) goes on to say that, from this time, the Christian doctrine was more widely propagated among the Gentiles, and first at Antioch. Thither, after the martyrdom of Stephen, certain Jerusalemite Christians had come, 8:1. but preached the doctrine of Christ to Jews only. Afterwards, however, when the conversion of Cornelius had been noised abroad, some Cyprians and Cyreneans, converted to Christianity by these Jerusalemite Christians, came to Antioch, and, as being Hellenists, dwelling among Gentiles, and thus so much the more disposed to tolerate and admit pagans, they communicated the doctrine of Christ to the Gentiles dwelling at Antioch.' BLOOMF.

V. 22. 'The apostles do not rashly condemn the extraordinary vocation, but judge of it by its effects.' Beza. SCOTT.



23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

p 3 Jo. 4. s Pr. 23:15, 26. v c. 9:27, 30.  
q c. 13:43. 14:22. t c. 6:5. w or, in.  
r Ps. 17:3. 2 Co. u ver. 21. x Mat. 23:19.  
1:17.

in the righteousness of the law, to rely only on the righteousness of Christ; the righteousness which is by faith: they turned from a loose, careless, carnal way of living, to live a holy, heavenly, spiritual, and divine life; they turned from worshipping God in show and ceremony, to worship Him in the spirit, and in truth. They turned to the Lord Jesus, and He became all in all with them.

II. The good work thus begun at Antioch, was carried on to a great perfection; and this church, thus founded, grew to be a flourishing one, by the ministry of Barnabas and Saul; who built on the foundation the other preachers had laid, and entered into their labors, John 4:37, 38.

1. The church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas thither, to strengthen the hands both of preachers and people, and put a reputation on the cause of Christ there. (1.) The apostles there were inquisitive how the work went on, in the countries about; and, it is likely, kept up a correspondence with all parts where preachers were, so that the good tidings of these things, of the great numbers that were converted at Antioch, soon came to the ears of the church that was in Jerusalem, v. 22. Those that are in the most eminent stations in the church, ought to concern themselves for those in a lower sphere. (2.) They despatched Barnabas to them with all speed; they desired him to go, and assist and encourage these hopeful beginnings. They sent him forth, as a representative of their body, to congratulate them on the success of the Gospel among them, as matter of rejoicing both to preachers and hearers, and with both they rejoiced. It was a great way, but, far as it was, he was willing to undertake the journey for a public service. It is probable Barnabas had a particular genius for work of this kind, was active and conversable, and loved to be in motion, de-

lighted in doing good abroad, as much as others in doing good at home, was as much of Zebulun's spirit, who rejoiced in his going out, as others are of Issachar's, who rejoiced in his tent; and his talent lying this way, he was fittest to be employed in this work. God gives various gifts for various services. (3.) Barnabas was wonderfully pleased to find that the Gospel got ground, and that some of his countrymen, men of Cyprus, of which country he was, ch. 4:36. were instrumental in it, v. 23. We must be glad to see the grace of God in others, and the more, when we see it there where we did not expect it. (4.) He did what he could to fix them; to confirm them in the faith, who were converted to the faith. He exhorted them. It is the same word with that by which the name of Barnabas is interpreted, ch. 4:36. a son of exhortation; his talent lay that way, and let him that exhorteth, attend to exhortation, Rom. 12:8. Or, being a son of consolation, (for so we render the word,) he comforted, or encouraged them with purpose of heart to cleave to the Lord. To cleave to the Lord Jesus, is to live a life of dependence on Him, and devotedness to Him; not only to hold Him fast, but to hold fast by Him, to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. (5.) Herein he gave a proof of his good character, v. 24. He showed himself to be a good man, a good-tempered man, of a very sweet, affable, courteous disposition, that had himself, and could teach others, the art of obliging. Ministers that are so, recommend themselves and their doctrine very much to those that are without. He was a good man, i.e. charitable; so he had approved himself, ch. 4:37. By this it appeared, that he was richly endued with the gifts and graces of the Spirit. The goodness of his natural disposition, would not have qualified him for this service, if he had not been full of the Holy Ghost, and so full of power, by the Spirit of the Lord. He was full of faith, of the Christian faith, of the grace of faith, and the fruits of that faith that works by love; sound in the faith, and therefore pressed others to be so. (6.) He was instrumental to do good, by bringing in those that were without, as well as by building up those that were within; much people were added.

2. The last news we heard of Saul, was, that when his life was sought at Jerusalem, he was sent away to Tarsus, the city where he was born; and, it should seem, he continued there ever since, doing good, no doubt. But now Barnabas takes a journey on purpose to Tarsus, to see what was become of him; to tell him what a door of opportunity was opened at Antioch, and to desire him to come and spend some time with him there, v. 25, 26. And here also it appears, that Barnabas was a good sort of a man, in that he would take so much pains to bring an active, useful man out of obscurity; and, who, being a chief speaker, ch. 14:12.

and, probably, a more popular preacher, would be likely to eclipse him there; but Barnabas is very willing to be so when it is for the public service. If God by his grace enables us to do what good we can, according to the ability we have, we ought to seek the things of Christ more than our own things, and rejoice if others, that have also larger capacities, have larger opportunities, and do more good than we can.

Now here we are further told,

(1.) What service was now done to the church at Antioch. Paul and Barnabas continued a whole year, presiding in their religious assemblies, and preaching the Gospel, v. 26. Observe, the church frequently assembled. Ministers were the masters of those assemblies, and teaching the people is one part of the work of ministers, when they preside in religious assemblies. They are not only to be the people's mouth to God in prayer and praise, but God's mouth to the people in opening the Scriptures, and teaching out of them the good knowledge of the Lord. It is a great encouragement to ministers, when they have opportunity of teaching much people; for preaching is not only for the conviction and conversion of those that are without, but for the instruction and edification of those that are within. A constituted church must have its teachers.

(2.) What honor was now put on the church at Antioch; there the disciples were first called Christians. Probably they called themselves so, incorporated themselves by that title; whether by some solemn act of the church, or ministers, or whether this name insensibly obtained there by its being frequently used in their praying and preaching, we are not told; but it should seem that two such great men as Paul and Barnabas, continuing there so long, being exceedingly followed, and meeting with no opposition, Christian assemblies made a greater figure there than anywhere, and became more considerable, which was the reason of their being called Christians, first, there; which, if there were to be a mother-church to rule over all other churches, would give Antioch a better title to the honor than Rome can pretend to. Hitherto, they who gave up their names to Christ, were called disciples, learners, scholars, trained up under Him, in order to their being employed by Him; but now henceforward they were called Christians. 1st. Thus the reproachful names, their enemies had hitherto branded them with, would, perhaps, be wiped away, and disused. They called them Nazarenes, ch. 24:5. the men of that way, that by-way, which had no name; and thus they prejudiced people against them; to remove which prejudices they gave themselves a name, which their enemies could not but say was proper. 2dly. Thus they, who before their conversion had been distinguished by the names of Jews and Gentiles, might after their conversion be called

V. 24. Good.] 'Agathos: integrity, benignity, and gentleness, united.' Bloomf.

V. 25, 26. Nothing is recorded of [Paul's] success at Tarsus. Mat. 15:54—58. There were, however, churches in Cilicia. (15:36—41.)—(26) Were called Christians.] 'It came to pass, that they' (Paul and Barnabas) 'called the disciples Christians.' This is indisputably the natural construction of the v.—But the word [tr. 'called'] implies, that this was done by divine revelation: for it has generally this signification in the N. T., and is tr. 'warned from God,' or 'warned of God' even when there is no word for God in the Gr. 'The believing Jews and Gentiles, being made one church, that the name of Jew and heathen might no more continue the distance that was betwixt them, this new name was given to them both; as some conceive, according to the prophecy mentioned, Is. 65:15. 'Whitby, in Scott. Their enemies had hitherto called them Nazarenes, or Galileans; and the disciples had called each other 'brethren,' 'believers,' and 'saints;' which names were not sufficiently distinguishing; but the word Christian, aptly denoted their reliance on that anointed Prince and Savior, who was generally rejected with disdain by Jews and Gentiles: it also implied, that they were partakers of an unction by the Holy Spirit, [Temples of that Spirit.] Doubtless it was afterwards used as a term of reproach by their persecutors, though it was so honorable in its meaning and original. At present it is applied promiscuously to so vast and heterogeneous a multitude, that it scarcely implies either honor or reproach: and those who seriously profess to believe and obey Christ are generally distinguished by other names, whether they are spoken of with respect, or in derision. Scott.

(26.) Christians.] 'Was this name given by themselves or others?

That they first applied it to them selves, is not only devoid of authority, but may be disproved by many weighty arguments. For, 1. They would thereby have excited a greater enmity against themselves. 2. Luke, had the Antioch Christians done so, in recording the origin of the name, would undoubtedly in the rest of his work have so employed it; which he has not done. On the contrary, he calls them the believers, the disciples, the brethren, &c.; the very same names by which he had, in the former part of his book, designated them. Furthermore, if at the time when Paul was teaching at Antioch, Christ's followers had voluntarily taken this name, he would have used it in his Epistles; whereas he always employs other terms. Finally, whenever in the N. T. the term Christians occurs, it is applied by persons not professing the Religion; as Acts. 26:23. 1 Pet. 4:14, 16. which see. The name seems meant, therefore, for a reproach. Was it then given by the Jews? Certainly not. By them they were called Nazarenes, Acts 24:5. and, indeed, they would have called them by any name, rather than that which would seem to admit the pretensions of Jesus to the Messiahship.—Beyond all controversy the name was given them by Gentiles, and, very probably, the Romans dwelling at Antioch; as indeed the very Latin form of it suggests: for by that were characterized the partizans of any great man; as Cesariani, Pompeliani, &c. Now by the Antiochians (who, as we learn from Zosimus, and Amm. Marcel., and others cited by Wetst., were not a little prone to scoffs and coarse jokes) they were called Christiani, in derision of the pretensions of Jesus to be King of the Jews. Tacitus says: 'Nero punished with refined cruelty those, hated for their crimes,



27 ¶ And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.

28 And there stood up one of them, named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cesar.

29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea:

y c. 2:17. 13:1. z c. 21:10. 1 Co. 16:1. 2  
Ep. 4:11. a Ro. 15:26. Co. 9:1,2.

by one and the same name; which would help them to forget their former dividing names, and prevent their bringing their former marks of distinction, into the church. 3dly. Thus they studied to do honor to their Master, and showed that they were not ashamed to own their relation to Him, but gloried in it; as the scholars of Plato called themselves *Platonists*, and so the scholars of other great men. They took their denomination, not from the name of his person, *Jesus*, but of his office, *Christ*.—Anointed; so putting their creed into their name, *that Jesus is the Christ*; and they are willing all the world should know that this is the truth they will live and die by. 4thly. Thus they now owned their dependence on Christ, and their receivings from Him; not only that they believed in Him who is *the Anointed*, but that through Him they themselves had *the anointing*, 1 John 2:20, 27. And God is said to have *anointed us in Christ*, 2 Cor. 1:21. 5thly. Thus they laid on themselves, and all that should ever profess that name, a strong and lasting obligation to submit to the laws of Christ, to follow the example of Christ, and to devote themselves entirely to the honor of Christ; *to be to Him for a name, and a praise*. Are we Christians? Then we ought to think, and speak, and act, in everything, as becomes Christians, and to do nothing to the reproach of that worthy name by which we are called; that that may not be said to us, which Alexander said to a soldier of his own name, that was noted for a coward,—*Either change thy name, or mend thy manners*. And as we must look upon ourselves as Christians, and carry ourselves accordingly, so we must look upon others as Christians, and carry ourselves toward them accordingly. A Christian, though not in everything of our mind, should be loved and respected for his sake whose name he bears, because he belongs to Christ. 6thly. Thus

whom the vulgar called *Christiani*. The author of this name, Christ, (i. e. they got their name from the name of their Leader,) was punished by the procurator Pontius Pilate, while Tiberius was emperor. The Christians, however, felt no aversion to the name, but rather reckoned it an honor and retained it. *Kuin., Wetst.* 'In this view of the subject, I must, upon the whole, acquiesce. The common opinion, however, is, that they applied the name to themselves, or had it given them by Barnabas, or Saul, or Enodius, the first bishop of Antioch. But this is destitute of authority. I must not omit to notice a strange mistake into which *Doddr.* has fallen, misled by Benson, who explains *chrēmatisai* [tr. were called] "was done by divine direction;" [so does Dr. A. C.] Into such errors do those commentators run, who, without attending to the *usus loquendi*, [the current meaning,] dwell on some fancied etymological sense.' *Bloomf.* 'How very few of those who profess this religion are satisfied with this title! When all return to the spirit of the Gospel, they will probably resume the appellation of *Christians*.'

Dr. A. CLARKE.

V. 27—30. These prophets were evidently endowed by the Holy Spirit, with the power of foretelling future events; and were a superior order of extraordinary ministers, however the word may sometimes be used. The scarcity, predicted by Agabus, was to extend 'throughout all the world,' as the Roman empire was ostentatiously called. Some, indeed, would explain it of the land of Judea and Galilee; but the expression is incapable of that meaning: and the famine might be very general, and severely felt in the various provinces of the empire; though some places might be less straitened than others.—'Eusebius saith of this famine, that it oppressed almost the whole empire; and that it was recorded by historians most averse to our religion; viz. by Suetonius, in the life of Claudius, who saith, it happened (*ob assiduas sterilitates*) through a long barrenness. Josephus saith, that it raged so much in Judea, .. that many perished for want of victuals: and Dion Cassius,

the Scripture was fulfilled, for so it was written, Is. 62:2. concerning the gospel-church, *Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name*. And, Is. 65:15. it is said to the corrupt and degenerate church of the Jews, *the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name*.

V. 27—30. I. A visit some prophets made to Antioch, v. 27. In these days, during that year that Barnabas and Saul lived at Antioch, there came prophets from Jerusalem to Antioch; we are not told how many, nor is it certain whether these were any of those prophets that we afterward find in the church at Antioch, ch. 13:1. Barnabas came to exhort them, and they, having received the exhortation well, now have prophets, (a great confirmation to Christianity,) sent them to show them things to come, as Christ had promised, John 16:13. The faithful in little, shall be intrusted with more.

II. A particular prediction of a famine approaching, by one of these prophets, his name Agabus; we read of him again, prophesying Paul's imprisonment, ch. 21:10. Here he stood up, probably in one of their public assemblies, and prophesied, v. 28. Observe, 1. Whence he had his prophecy: *by the Spirit, the Spirit of prophecy*; as Joseph, by the Spirit enabling him, understood Pharaoh's dreams, foretold the famine in Egypt; and Elijah—the famine in Israel in Ahab's time. Thus God revealed his secrets to his servants the prophets. 2. The prophecy: *There should be great dearth, not in one particular country, but through all the world, all the Roman empire, which they in their pride, like [the Persians, and] Alexander before them, [and Jenghiz Khan and Tamerlane since,] called the world*. 3. Its accomplishment; *in the days of Claudius Cesar*; it began in the second year of his reign, and continued to the fourth, if not longer; several of the Roman historians make mention of it, as does also Josephus. God sent them the Bread of life, and they rejected it, therefore God justly broke the staff of bread, and punished them with famine; and herein He was righteous.

III. Their good use of this prediction. When told of a famine at hand, they did not, as the Egyptians, hoard up corn for themselves; but, as became Christians, every man, according to his ability, laid by for charity to relieve others, which is the best preparative for our own sufferings and want. It is promised to those that consider the poor, *that God will preserve them, and keep them alive, and they shall be blessed upon the earth*, Ps. 41:1, 2. Many give it for a reason why they should be sparing, but the Scripture gives it as a reason why we should be liberal, *to seven, and also to eight, because*

*we know not what evil shall be upon the earth*, Eccl. 11:2. Observe, 1. The persons recommended to them as objects of charity, were, *the brethren that dwell in Judea*, v. 29. Though we must, as we have opportunity, *do good to all men*, yet we must have a special regard to the household of faith. Gal. 6:10. The care which every particular church ought to take of their own poor, we were taught by the early instance of that in the church at Jerusalem, where the ministration was so constant, *that none lacked*, ch. 4:31. But the communion of saints, in that instance, is here extended farther, and provision is made by the church at Antioch for the relief of the poor in Judea, whom they call their brethren. It seems it was the custom of the Jews of the dispersion, to send money to those Jews which dwelt in Judea, for the relief of the poor that were among them, and to make collections for that purpose. Tully speaks of such a thing in his time, *Orat. pro Flacco*, which supposes there were many poor in Judea, more than in other countries, so that the rich among them were not able to bear the charge of keeping them from starving; either, because their land was grown barren, though it had been a fruitful land, *for the iniquity of them that dwell therein*, [which prevented their developing the resources of the country,] or because they had no traffic with other nations. Now we may suppose that the greatest part of those who turned Christians, in that country, were the poor, Mat. 11:5. and it were easy to foresee, that if there came a famine, it would go very hard with them; and if any of them should perish for want, it would be a great reproach to the Christian profession; and therefore this early care was taken, on notice of this famine coming, to send them a stock beforehand, lest, if deferred till the famine came, it should be too late. 2. The agreement among the disciples about it; that every man should contribute, according to his ability. The Jews, in other countries, grew rich by trade, and many rich Jews became Christians, whose abundance ought to supply the want of their poor brethren at a great distance; for the case of such ought to be considered, and not only theirs that live among us. What may be said to be according to our ability, we must judge for ourselves, but must be careful that we judge righteous judgment.

They not only talked of this, but did as they determined, v. 30. The collection was made, and was so considerable, that they thought it worth while to send Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem, to carry it to the elders there, though they should want their labors in the mean time at Antioch. Josephus tells us, that at this time King Izates sent his

that it was a very great famine.' *Whitby*.—This is the first time 'elders' are mentioned in the church of Christ; but we shall have more favorable opportunities of considering several questions relative to their office, 20:17. Without doubt they were pastors of the Christian church; and as both Peter and John call themselves *Elders*, 1 Pet. 5:1, 2. 2 John 1. it is not clear that the apostles were not included. (30) *The Elders.* *Tous Presbyterous*: 14:23. 15:2. 20:17. *Presbyteros*, whence comes *presbyter*, and by contraction *prester*: hence the English word *priest*; which by no means signifies a *sacrificer*, as many suppose. SCOTT.

(27.) *Prophets.* Commentators agree not on its exact sense. It seems to denote teachers, who, with more or less of the *afflatus Divinus*, applied themselves to both public preaching and teaching, and appear to have occasionally foretold future events. In dignity inferior to the apostles, but superior to other teachers. Eph. 2:20. 3:5. BLOOMF.

(28.) *World.* I. e. land: Judea alone is meant, (so most modern commentators,) as in Luke 2:1. note. From v. 39, 40, (so Bp. Pearce,) it appears, the dearth was not expected in Syria where Antioch was: besides, when Jos. speaks of this dearth in Claudius' reign, as having happened in Judea, he not only says nothing of it elsewhere, but tells us, large quantities of corn [grain] were sent up to Jerusalem from other countries; for the feast of unleavened bread. See *Lardn.* and *Doddr. Kuin.*, to prove the words must be meant of Palestine only, describes, from the original historians, four famines of the reign of Claudius. 1. At Rome, in his 1st and 2d yr. See Dio Cassius, and Aurel. Vict. Its principal cause was the difficulty of importing provisions to Rome by sea, during the winter (see Dio); which induced Claudius to form, at a great expense, the port of Ostia. 2. Towards the end of his 4th yr. It especially afflicted Judea; and was alleviated by Helena, queen of Adiabene, who had embraced Judaism. (See Scal. on Euseb., and Wesseling.) Of this, mention is made in Jos. 3. In Greece, in his 9th yr. So Euseb. 4. At Rome, in his 11th yr. So Sueton. and Tac. Id.



30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

## CHAP. XII.

1 King Herod persecuteth the Christians, killeth James, and imprisoneth Peter : whom an angel delivereth upon the prayers of the church. 20 In his pride, taking to himself the honor due to God, he is stricken by an angel, and dieth miserably. 24 After his death, the Word of God prospereth.

NOW about that time, Herod the king stretched forth his hands, to vex certain of the church.

2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

3 And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)

b c. 12:25. b Mat. 4:21. 20:23. d Jn. 21:18.  
a or, began. c c. 24:27. e Ex. 12:14,15.

charity to the chief men of Jerusalem, for the poor of that country; and Helena, queen of the Adiabeni, being now at Jerusalem, and hearing of many that died of famine there, and in the country about, sent for provisions from Cyprus and Alexandria, and distributed them among the people; so says Lightfoot, who also computes, by the date of Paul's rapture, '14 years before he wrote the second Epistle to the Corinthians,' 2 Cor. 12:1, 2. that it was in this journey of his to Jerusalem, with these alms and offerings, that he had his trance in the temple, which he speaks of, ch. 22:17. and in that trance was rapt up into the third heaven; and then it was, that Christ told him He would send him from thence unto the Gentiles; which accordingly He did, as soon as ever he came back to Antioch. It is no disparagement, in an extraordinary case, for ministers of the Gospel to be messengers of the church's elarity; though, to undertake the constant care of that matter, would ordinarily be too great a diversion from more needful work, to those who have given themselves to prayer, and the ministry of the Word.

CHAP. XII. V. 1—4. Ever since the conversion of Paul, we have heard no more of the agency of the priests in persecuting the saints at Jerusalem, and here the storm arises from another point; the civil power,

PRACT. OBS. The imperfection of human nature, even in its best estate, appears, when pious persons are offended and grieved at those things, which should excite in them the most lively joy and gratitude. Sometimes true believers are displeased to hear, even of the Word of God being preached and received, because the peculiarities of their own church, sect, or system, have not been adhered to: and they are ready to find fault with the Lord's plan of bringing sinners to repentance, and faith in Christ, and with those who execute it; because their own plan and prejudices have been broken in upon. Jon. 4:1—4. Mark 9:38—40. Luke 9:46—50, v. 50. Hence it is, that the zealous servant of God may expect to be censured, on account of those very things, in which his Master has peculiarly prospered him, and by those whom he most esteems and loves! We should, however, meekly bear with the infirmities of our brethren: and, instead of taking offence, or answering with warmth, we ought candidly to explain our motives, and show the nature of our proceedings, in order to satisfy and conciliate their minds.

(30.) Elders.] Presbyterous: here first mentioned in the Christian Church, which was (as Vitrina and Casaubon observe) formed almost wholly on the model of the Synagogue. Hammond has here a profoundly learned, curious, and instructive annotation, on the origin and various uses of this important word, in which he proves, that these elders were the same in office with those called *episcopoi*: [tr. bishops:] and he thinks there is no certain evidence from Scripture, that the name of elders or presbyters was given so easily [early] to another order between them and deacons.

NOTES. CHAP. XII. V. 1—4. This Herod, surnamed Agrippa, [also Major] was grandson to Herod the Great, by Aristobulus; [slain by his own father;] nephew to Herod Antipas, who slew John the Baptist; brother to Herodias, his incestuous paramour; and father to king Agrippa, of whom we shall read hereafter. 25:13—27. 26: Mat. 14:1—5. The emperor Caligula made him tetrarch of Galilee; and Claudius afterwards made him king of Judea, because he had been serviceable to him in obtaining the empire. [He was made king by Caligula, and put in possession of all the territories formerly held by his uncle Philip, and by Lysanias; viz. Iturea, Traehonitis, Abilene, with Gaulonitis, Bataanea, and Paneas. To these, Claudius afterward added Judea and Samaria, which were nearly all the dominions possessed by his grandfather Herod the Great. Dr. A. C.] Judea had been before, and was again, soon after, under the dominion of a Roman governor. Herod being invested [64]

not now, as usual, stirred up by the ecclesiastics, acts by itself in the persecution. Herod, though originally of an Edomite family, yet seems to have been a proselyte to the Jewish religion; for Josephus says, he was zealous for the Mosaic rites, a bigot for the ceremonies. He was not only (as Herod Antipas was) tetrarch of Galilee, but had also the government of Judea committed to him by Claudius the emperor, and resided most at Jerusalem, where he was at this time. Three things he did:

1. He stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church, v. 1. laid hands upon some of the church to afflict them, so some read it. He began with some of the members of the church, certain of them that were of less note and figure; but afterward flew at the apostles themselves. His spite was at the church, and with regard to those he gave trouble to, it was not on any other account, but because they belonged to the church, and so belonged to Christ. He began with vexing them only, or afflicting them, imprisoning them, fining them, spoiling their houses and goods, and other ways molesting them; but afterward he proceeded to greater instances of cruelty. Christ's suffering servants are thus trained up by less troubles for greater, that tribulation may work patience, and patience experience.

II. He killed James the brother of John; so called, to distinguish him from the other James, the brother of Joses. This was called, James the greater; that, the less. This was one of the first three of Christ's disciples, one of those that were the witnesses of his transfiguration and agony, one of those whom Christ called Boanerges,—Sons of thunder; one of those sons of Zebedee, whom Christ told, that they should drink of the cup that He was to drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that He was to be baptized with, Mat. 20:23. And now those words of Christ were made good in him; but it was in order to his sitting at Christ's right hand; for, if we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. But why would God permit it? Perhaps hereby to awaken the rest of the apostles to disperse themselves among the nations, and not to nestle any longer at Jerusalem; and to show them what they must expect, that they might prepare accordingly. The Romish tradition, that this James had been before this in Spain, and

had planted the Gospel there, is altogether groundless. His head was cut off with a sword, which was looked upon by the Romans to be a more disgraceful way of being beheaded than with an axe; so Lorinus. Beheading was not ordinarily used among the Jews; but when kings gave verbal orders for private and sudden executions, this manner of death was used, as most expeditious; and it is probable this Herod killed James, as the other Herod killed John Baptist, privately in the prison. Thus this martyr sealed to us the truth with his blood.

III. He imprisoned Peter, also, for blood to the blood-thirsty does but make them more so; and the way of persecution, as of other sins, is downhill; they that take one bold step in a sinful way [strengthen the erring propensity, and] give Satan advantage against them to tempt them to take another step, and provoke God to leave them to themselves, to go from bad to worse. It is therefore our wisdom, to take heed of the beginnings of sin.

1. He did this, because he saw it pleased the Jews. Observe, The Jews made themselves guilty of the blood of James by showing themselves well pleased with it afterward, though they had not excited Herod to it; they will be reckoned with as persecutors, who take pleasure in others' persecuting, for they thus encourage persecutors, and harden their own hearts. Herod, though he had no reason to fear displeasing the Jews, yet he hoped to please them by doing as he did, and so to make amends for displeasing them in something else. Those make themselves an easy prey to Satan, who make it their business to please men.

2. Notice is taken of the time; the days of unleavened bread, the feast of the passover, when their celebrating the memorial of their typical deliverance should have led them to the acceptance of their spiritual deliverance; instead of that, they, under pretence of zeal for the law, were most violently fighting against it, and, in the days of unleavened bread, were most soured and embittered, with the old leaven of malice and wickedness. At the passover, when the Jews came from all parts to Jerusalem to keep the feast, they irritated one another against the Christians and Christianity, and were then more violent than at other times.

3. Here is an account of Peter's impris-

When the Lord Jesus is preached in simplicity, and according to the Scripture; his power will attend the Word to give it success: and when sinners are brought 'to believe, and turn unto the Lord;' 'good men,' who are 'full of faith and of the Holy Ghost,' will discern, admire, and rejoice in the grace of God bestowed on them; and exhort all, who profess the Gospel, 'to cleave to the Lord' Jesus, 'with purpose of heart,' knowing how many efforts Satan and his servants will employ to draw them aside. We, at this day, are called by the name given to these ancient disciples: may we be anointed with the same Spirit, and walk in their steps! Such Christians will sympathize with their brethren in all their afflictions: the various dispensations of Providence will give them opportunity of showing their love, by distributing, according to their ability, to 'the necessity of the saints;' thus God will be glorified, the harmony among believers promoted, the faith and hope of the poor encouraged, their prayers and praises excited; and fruit brought forth, which will abound to the account of those by whom it is produced. Sc.

with his new dignity, endeavored by all means to ingratiate himself with the Jews: and this probably combined with his hereditary enmity to the Gospel, in exciting him to persecute the church. Even if Easter were observed at that time, in the Christian church, of which nothing is mentioned in the sacred records; Herod would certainly pay no regard to it; it is therefore surprising, that the venerable translators of the Bible should have used that word, instead of 'the passover,' in this connexion!—This Herod 'was a great zealot for the Mosaic law, dwelt much at Jerusalem, and was fond of all opportunities of obliging the Jews. This early execution of one of the apostles, would illustrate the courage of the rest in going on with their ministry; as it would evidently show, that all their miraculous powers did not secure them from dying by the sword of their enemies.' Dodd.

(2.) Killed.] Aneile: i. e. "beheaded him." For he had the power of life and death, as had the Roman procurators before him. Wetst. here cites Sanhedrim 52, 2. Beheading was considered among the Jews the most ignominious kind of death. "The accuracy of the sacred writer, (says Paley,) in the expressions he uses, is, in this instance, remarkable. There was no portion of time for thirty years before, or ever afterwards, in which there was a king at Jerusalem, a person exercising that authority in Judea, or to whom that title could be applied, except the three last years of this Herod's life, within which period the transaction here recorded took place." See also Watch. Bloomf. Dr. A. C., also, at 10:1.



4 And when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four quaternions of soldiers, to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

5 Peter therefore was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

6 And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and the keepers before the door kept the prison.

7 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon *him*, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.

8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals: and so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9 And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.

10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city, which opened to them of his own accord; and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

For, instant and earnest prayer was made. 2 Co. 1:11. Ep.

6:18, 19. 1 Th. 5:17. Ja. 5:16. Ps. 37:32, 33. c. 5:19. h. c. 16:26. i. Pa. 126:1. j. c. 10:3, 17.

ment, v. 4. some say, in the same prison into which he and the other apostles were cast some years before, ch. 5: 18. He was delivered to four quaternions of soldiers, i. e. to 16, who were to guard him, 4 at a time, that he should not escape, or be rescued. Thus they thought they had him fast.

4. Herod's design was, after Easter, to bring him forth unto the people. Probably, he had put James to death privately; which the people had complained of, not because it was unjust to put a man to death, without a public hearing, but because it deprived them of the satisfaction of seeing him executed; therefore Herod, now that he knows their minds, will gratify them with the sight of Peter in bonds, of Peter on the block, that they might feed their eyes with such a pleasing spectacle. And very ambitious surely he was to please the people, who was willing thus to please them! He would do this after Easter, pascha, the passover, cer-

tainly so it ought to be read, for it is the same word that is always so rendered; and to insinuate the introducing of a gospel-feast, instead of the passover, when we have nothing in the N. T. of such a thing, is to mingle Judaism with our Christianity. Herod would not condemn him till the pass-over was over, some think, for fear lest he should have such an interest among the people, that they should demand the release of him, according to the custom of the feast: or, after the hurry of the feast was over, and the town was empty, he would entertain them with Peter's public trial and execution. Thus was the plot laid, and both Herod and the people long to have the feast over, that they may gratify themselves with this barbarous entertainment.

V. 5—19. We have here an account of Peter's deliverance, by which Herod's design against him was defeated, and his life preserved for further service, and a stop given to this bloody torrent.

1. What magnified his deliverance, was, 1. It was a signal answer to prayer, v. 5. Prayers and tears are the church's arms; therewith she fights, not only against her enemies, but for her friends: and to those means they have recourse. (1.) Delay gave time for prayer. Probably James was hurried off, so suddenly, so privately, they had not time to pray for him; but Peter must be continued to them, and therefore prayer for him is stirred up, and time is given them for it, by Herod's [apparently casual] putting off of the prosecution. (2.) They were very particular and fervent in their prayers for him; the death of James alarmed them to a greater fervency in their prayers for Peter; they fear the enemy will make a full end. Prayer was made without ceasing; it was fervent prayer; it is the word used concerning Christ's praying in his agony more earnestly; it is the fervent prayer of the righteous man that is effectual, and availeth much. Some think, it denotes the constancy and continuance of their prayers; so we take it; they prayed without ceasing: it was an extended prayer; they prayed in public, then in their families, then in their closets, and so without ceasing: or first one knot of them, and then another, and then a third, kept a day of prayer, or rather a night of prayer, for him, v. 12. Times of public distress and danger should be praying times with the church; we must pray always, but then especially.

2. That when the king's commandment and decree drew near to be put in execution, then his deliverance was wrought, as Esth. 9: 1, 2.; the very night before Herod designed to bring him forth. God's time to help is, when things are brought to the last extremity, when there is none shut up or left, Deut. 32: 36. Further, it was when he was fast bound with two chains, between two soldiers; so that if he offer to stir, he wakes them; and besides this, though the prison doors, no doubt, were locked and bolted, yet, to make sure work, the keepers before the door kept the prison, that no one might so much as attempt

to rescue him. Never could the art of man do more to secure a prisoner! It was, too, when he was sleeping between the soldiers; fast asleep; not terrified with his danger, though very imminent, and there was no visible way of escape; not expecting deliverance. Thus the church, Ps. 126: 1. We were like them that dream.

3. That an angel was sent from heaven on purpose to rescue him; which made his escape both practicable and warrantable. (1.) The angel of the Lord came upon him, lit. stood over him; he seemed as one abandoned by men, yet not forgotten of his God. Gates and guards keep all his friends from him, but cannot keep the angels of God from him, who invisibly encamp round about them that fear God, to deliver them, Ps. 34: 7. Wherever the people of God are, and however surrounded, they have a way open heavenward, nor can anything intercept their intercourse with God. (2.) A light shined in the prison; Peter shall see his way clear. The soldiers, to whom Peter was chained, were either struck into a deep sleep for the present, (as Saul and his soldiers were when David carried off his spear and cruse of water,) or struck with consternation, as the guard set on Christ's sepulchre. (3.) The angel awaked Peter, by a blow on his side, a gentle touch, enough to rouse him, though the light that shone on him did not awake him. The language of this stroke, was, Arise up quickly; not as if the angel feared coming short by his delay, but Peter must not be indulged in it. (4.) His chains fell from his hands: for it seems they had handcuffed him, to make him sure. Tradition tells a formal story about these chains, that one of the soldiers kept them for a sacred relic, and they were long after presented to Eudoxia the empress, and I know not what miracles are said to be wrought by them; and the Romish church keep a feast on the first of August, yearly, in remembrance of Peter's chains,—The feast of Peter's chains; whereas this was at the pass-over. Surely they are thus fond of Peter's chains, in hopes with them to enslave the world! (5.) He was ordered to dress himself presently, and follow the angel; and he did so, v. 8, 9.

It is said, when Peter went out after the angel, he wist not that what was done by the angel, was really matter of fact, but thought he saw a vision; by this it appears that a heavenly vision was so plain, and carried so much of its own evidence along with it, that it was hard, to distinguish between what was done in fact, and what was done in vision. Ps. 126: 1. Peter thought the news was too good to be true. (6.) He was led safe by the angel out of danger, v. 10. Guards were kept at one pass and at another, but Peter and the angel made their way through without opposition; nay, for aught that appears, without any discovery; so it was, they safely passed the first and second ward. But still there is an iron gate, after all, that will stop them, no, it opened to them; they did not so much as put a hand to it, but it opened of

remarks, 'Wherever he sees it necessary, Luke carefully gives dates and facts, to which any might have recourse who might be disposed to doubt his statements.'

V. 4, 5. 'Herod had his own soldiers in the city (see Jos.), and they guarded Peter in the mode usual with the Romans, whose customs (except in matters of religion) Agrippa, who had been educated at Rome, studiously imitated. See Jos. Among the Romans, the night watch was distributed among quaternions, or detachments of four soldiers, each of whom watched three hours; and since Herod chose that Peter should be watched by four soldiers, of whom two should be in the prison, and two he stationed at the gates, four quaternions were necessary. See Veget. A quaternion was the regular number for a guard, as a file is with us. So Polyb. Philo.'

(4.) Easter.] 'A Saxon goddess, whose festival was in April; how improper and absurd then is this translation!' Dr. A. C. Similar is the objection made to the use of the idol names of the months and days of the week.

V. 6. 'It was the Roman custom, to fasten the prisoner with a small and light chain to some soldier, who was appointed to guard him; one end of which chain was fastened to the right hand of the prisoner, and the other end of it to the left hand of the soldier. Seneca, Pliny, and

Lucian, allude to the custom. Two chains connected to two soldiers were used for the better securing Peter.' Pearce.

V. 7. 'Hezel thinks the light here mentioned was lightning, which melted Peter's chains, and caused the doors to open, &c.!! Wolf conjectures the prison had an outer iron gate, v. 10. and was in the city, near the judgment-hall. De Dieu and Fessel (from Adrichomius), suppose it was Herod's private prison, in his palace court; and from this area and prison, (F. thinks,) extended a street, through which was the outlet from the palace to the city, closed by an iron gate. Walch observes, from Jewish writers, that Jerusalem had three walls, the interior and most ancient having sixty, the outer ninety towers, and the middle fourteen; in one of which, with an iron entrance-gate, Peter was confined. This, Knin. thinks not improbable, as jails were formerly in towers. On the side.] The usual method of waking one, see examples Id.

V. 8. Sandals, &c.] Cnts, end of Jer. 'Thus the angel reassures him, hinting his deliverance is certain, and cannot be hindered during his preparation.'

V. 10. The wards or watches here mentioned, seem to have included the stated guard of the prison, as well as the soldiers especially appointed to keep Peter.



11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety that the Lord hath sent<sup>k</sup> his angel, and hath<sup>l</sup> delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many<sup>m</sup> were gathered together, praying.

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came<sup>n</sup> to hearken, named Rhoda.

14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his<sup>o</sup> angel.

16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.

17 But he beckoning<sup>p</sup> unto them with the hand, to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go, shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

k 2 Ch. 16:9. Ps. 97:10. 2 Co. 1: 34:7. Da. 3:23. 10. 2 Pe. 2:9. was there. o Mat. 18:10. 6:22. He. 1:14. m ver. 5. p c. 13:16. l Ps. 33 : 18, 19. n or, to ask who q Ps. 66:16.

its own accord, by an invisible power; and, probably, shut again of itself, that none of the guards might pursue Peter. When God will work salvation for his people, no difficulties are insuperable. (7.) When this was done, the angel departed from him, and left him to himself; for he was out of danger, knew where he was, and how to find out his friends. Miracles are not to be expected, when ordinary means are to be used.

II. Having seen how his deliverance was magnified, we are next to see how it was manifested both to himself and others.

1. So many strange and surprising things coming together upon a man, just waked out of sleep, put him for the present into some confusion; so that he knew not where he was, what he did, nor whether it was fancy or fact; but, at length, Peter came to himself, was thoroughly awake, and found that it was not a dream, but a real thing. Thus souls who are delivered out of a spiritual bondage, are not at first aware what God has wrought in them; many have the truth of grace, that want the evidence of it. But when the Comforter comes, whom the Father will send, sooner or later, He will let them know of a surety what a blessed change is wrought in them, and what a happy state they are brought into.

2. Peter came to his friends, and told them the particular account of this, and it is very entertaining.

(1.) He considered the thing, v. 12. how imminent his danger was, how great his de-

liverance; and now what has he to do, what improvement must he make of this deliverance? What must he do next? God's providence leaves room for the use of our prudence.

(2.) He went directly to a friend's house, which, it is likely, was near the house of Mary, a sister of Barnabas, and mother of John Mark, whose house, it should seem, was frequently used for the private meeting of the disciples.

(3.) There he found many gathered together praying, at the dead of night, praying for Peter's deliverance. Observe, [1.] They continued in prayer, in token of their importunity; as long as we are kept waiting for a mercy, we must continue praying for it. [2.] It should seem that now, when the affair came near to a crisis, and the very next day was to determine the event, they were more fervent in prayer than before; and it was a good sign that God intended to deliver Peter, when He thus stirred up a spirit of prayer for his deliverance, for He never said to the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain. [3.] They gathered together for prayer on this occasion; though that would make them obnoxious to the government if discovered, yet they know what an encouragement Christ gave to joint prayer, Mat 18: 19, 20. And it was always the practice of God's praying people, to unite their forces in prayer, as Esth. 4: 16, 2. Chr. 20: 4. [4.] They were many, as many perhaps as the room would hold; and first one prayed, and then another. It was in the night, when others were asleep, which was an instance both of their prudence and of their zeal. It is good for Christians to have private meetings for prayer, especially in times of distress, and not to let fall or forsake such assemblies. [5.] Peter came to them when thus employed: which was an immediate, present answer to their prayer. It was as if God should say, 'You are praying that Peter may be restored to you; now here he is.' Is. 65: 24. Thus the angel was sent to Daniel, Dan. 9: 20, 21. Ask, and it shall be given.

(4.) He knocked at the gate, and had much ado to get them to let him in. v. 13—16. He knocked, designing by it to awaken them out of their sleep, and, for aught that appears, not knowing that he disturbed them in their devotions. Now when he knocked there, [1.] A damsel came to hearken; not to open the door till she knew who was there, a friend or a foe, and what their business was, fearing informers; it should seem by her being named, that she was of note among the Christians, and more zealously affected to the better part than most of her age. [2.] She knew Peter's voice, having often heard him pray, and preach, and discourse, with a great deal of pleasure. But instead of letting him in immediately, out of the cold, she opened not the gate for gladness. Thus sometimes, in a transport of affection to our friends, we do that which is unkind. In an ecstasy of joy she forgets herself, and opened not the gate. [3.] She ran in, and probably went up to an upper room, where they were together, and told them that Peter was certainly at the gate. But when she spake of Peter's being there, they said, 'Thou art mad; it is impossible it should be he, for he is in prison.' Sometimes that which we most earnestly wish for, we are most backward to believe, because we are afraid of imposing on ourselves; as the disciples, who, when Christ was risen, believed

not for joy. However, she stood to it, that it was he. Then said they, It is his angel, v. 15. 'A messenger from him, that makes use of his name,' so some, as Dr. Hammond; his guardian angel, or some other angel, that has assumed his shape and voice, and stands at the gate in his resemblance, so some, supposing his angel to appear as a presage of his death approaching; and this agrees with a notion which the vulgar have, that sometimes before persons have died, their ward has been seen, i. e. some spirit exactly in their likeness for countenance and dress, when they themselves have been at the same time in some other place; they call it their ward, that is, their angel, who is their guard. If so, they concluded this an ill omen, that their prayers were denied, and that the language of the apparition was, 'Let it suffice you, Peter must die, say no more of that matter.' And if we understand it so, it only proves that they had then such an opinion of a man's ward being seen a little before his death, but does not prove that there is such a thing. Others think, they took this to be an angel from heaven, sent to bring them a grant to their prayers. But why should they imagine that angel to assume the voice and shape of Peter, when we find not anything like it in the appearance of angels? Perhaps, they herein spake the language of the Jews, who had a fond conceit, that every good man has a particular tutelary angel, that has the charge of him, and sometimes personates him. The heathen called it a good genius that attended a man; but since no other scripture speaks of such a thing, this alone is too weak to bear the weight of such a doctrine. We are sure, that the angels are ministering spirits for the good of the heirs of salvation; that they have a charge concerning them, and pitch their tents round about them; and we need not be solicitous that every particular saint should have his guardian angel, when we are assured he has a guard of angels.

(5.) He continued knocking; though they delayed to open to him, yet at length they let him in, v. 16. But when they saw him, they were astonished. It was both surprising and pleasing to them, in the highest degree.

(6.) The company, that came together with so much zeal to pray for him, gathered about him with no less zeal to congratulate him on his deliverance; and herein they were so noisy, that when Peter himself begged them to consider what peril he was yet in, if they should be overheard, he could not make them hear him, but was forced to beckon to them with the hand to hold their peace, and had much ado thereby to command silence, while he declared unto them how the Lord Jesus had by an angel brought him out of prison; and, it is very likely, having found them praying for his deliverance, he did not part with them, till he and they had together solemnly given thanks to God for his enlargement; or if he could not stay to do it, it is likely, they stayed together to do it; for what is won by prayer must be worn with praise; and God must always have the glory of that which we have the comfort of. Ps. 66: 16, 20.

(7.) Peter sent the account to others of his friends; Go, show these things to James, and to the brethren with him; who, perhaps, were met together in another place at the same time, on the same errand to the throne of grace; which is one way of keeping up

V. 12—17. The other apostles seem to have been absent from Jerusalem: but James, the son of Alphaeus, who wrote the epistle, was in some place of concealment in the neighborhood.—'It is utterly incredible, that he [Peter] now went to Rome, and made an abode of twenty-five years, which the popish writers pretend.' Doddr., in SCOTT. It would be easy to multiply similar instances, in which the legends of the Romish church as much contradict the sacred history, as its traditions make void both the commandments and testimonies of God. See.

(12.) Mark.] 'That this was Mark the evangelist, is a general and highly probable opinion of the commentators.' BLOOMF.

(15.) Angel.] Note, Mat. 18:10. 'The Jews believed tutelary angels were appointed to all men; so did the Gentiles, for Censorinus says,

'the Genius is a god, in whose protection so far as each one is, he lives: it is appointed so assiduous an observer of us, that it is never absent longer than an instant; but accompanies us from birth to the last day of life.' And Martianus says, 'Genius—the guardian and most faithful brother keeps the hearts and minds of all.' See also Macrobius. The Gentiles thought, moreover, (continues Kuin.) that the gods assumed the figures of this or that man, and his voice. So Homer. And the Jews (see Debbani Rabbai, and Midras Coheleth) had the same persuasion respecting angels.' BLOOMF.

(16.) Beckoned.] 'Kataseisas: waved down; a motion usual for enjoining silence; see the classics, quoted by Wtst.' BLOOMF.



18 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter.

19 And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Cesarea, and there abode.

20 ¶ And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country.

21 And upon a set day, Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them.

22 And the people gave a shout, saying, *It is the voice of a god, and not of a man.*

r or, have a hostile mind, intending war. s That was over the king's chamber. t Ezr. 27:17. u Jude 16.

the communion of saints, acting in concert, though at a distance; like Esther and Mordecai. He would have James and his company to know of his deliverance, not only that they might be eased of their painful fears concerning Peter, but might return thanks to God with and for him.

(S.) Peter had nothing more to do for the present than to shift for his own safety, which he did accordingly; he departed, and went into another place more obscure, and therefore more safe. He knew the town very well, and knew where to find a place that would shelter him. Even the Christian law of self-denial and suffering for Christ, has not abrogated and repealed the natural law of self-preservation, and care for our own safety, as far as God gives an opportunity of providing for it by lawful means.

III. Having seen the triumph of Peter's friends in his deliverance, let us next observe the confusion of his enemies thereupon; which was so much the greater, because people's expectation was so much raised of the putting of him to death.

1. The guards were in the utmost consternation upon it, for they knew how highly penal it was to them to let a prisoner escape, v. 18. Thus have the persecutors of the Gospel of Christ been often filled with vexation, to see its cause conquering, notwithstanding their opposition.

2. Houses were searched in vain for the rescued prisoner, v. 19. Who can find whom God hath hidden? Jer. 36:26. In times of public danger, all believers have God for their hiding-place; which is such a secret, that there the ignorant world cannot find them; such a strength, that the impotent world cannot reach them.

3. The keepers were reckoned with for a permissive escape; Herod examined the keepers, and, finding that they could give no satisfactory account how Peter got away, he commanded that they should be put to death, according to the Roman law, and that, 1 K. 20:39. Probably these keepers had been more severe with Peter than they needed to be, as the jailor, ch. 16:24. and with others

V. 18, 19. The astonishment of the soldiers, and their dread of Herod's vindictive rage, may easily be conceived. Indeed they had cause to tremble: for that tyrant, exasperated at his disappointment, and unwilling it should be thought that Peter had been miraculously delivered, ordered them to immediate execution; alleging, no doubt, that Peter's escape was owing to their negligence and sleeping on guard. Yet, it is highly probable, he himself perceived that Peter had been rescued in a supernatural manner, as all the apostles had before been; 5:17-25. and we may suppose, that this intimidated him, and induced him to suspend the persecution: [though it so aggravated his criminality as to render signal punishment the more necessary.] SCOTT.

that had been their prisoners on the like account; and now justly are they put to death for that which was not their fault, and by him too that had set them to work to *rev the church*. Or, if they had not thus made themselves obnoxious to the justice of God, and it be thought hard\* that innocent men should suffer thus for what was purely the act of God; we may easily admit the conjecture of some, that though they were commanded to be put to death, to please the Jews, who were sadly disappointed by Peter's escape, yet they were not executed; but Herod's death, immediately after, prevented it.

4. Herod himself retired upon it; he went down from Judea to Cesarea, and there abode. He was vexed to the heart, as a lion disappointed of his prey; and the more because he had so much raised the expectation of the people of the Jews concerning Peter, how he would very shortly gratify them with the sight of Peter's head; it is such a mortification to his proud spirit, that he cannot bear to stay in Judea, but away he goes to Cesarea. Josephus mentions his coming to Cesarea, at the end of the third year of his reign over all Judea, *Antiq.* 19:7. and says, he came thither to solemnize the plays that were kept there, by a vast concourse of the nobility and gentry of the kingdom, for the health of Cesar, and in honor of him.

V. 20-25. In these verses, we have,

I. The death of Herod. God reckoned with him, not only for putting James to death, but for designing and endeavoring Peter's death; for sinners will be called to an account, not only for the wickedness of their deeds, but of their endeavors, Ps. 28:4. Some sinners, God makes quick work with, Observe,

1. How the measure of his iniquity was filled up; it was pride that did it; that is it that commonly goes more immediately before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall, as with Nebuchadnezzar. Dan. 4:30, 31. It is the glory of God to look on every one that is proud, and bring him low, Job 40:11. The instance of it here is very remarkable, and shows how God resists the proud.

(1.) Tyre and Sidon had, it seems, offended Herod; those cities were now under the Roman yoke, and some misdemeanors they had been guilty of, which Herod highly resented, and was resolved they should feel his resentment.

(2.) The offenders truckled, being convinced, if not that they had done amiss, yet that it was in vain to contend with such a potent adversary, who, right or wrong, would be too hard for them; they submitted, and were willing on any terms to make peace with him. Observe, [1.] The reason why they were desirous to have the matter accommodated; because their country was nourished by the king's country. Tyre and Sidon were trading cities, and were always supplied with corn from Canaan, Ezr. 27:17. Now if Herod should prohibit the exportation of corn to Tyre and Sidon, their country would be undone; so that it was their interest to keep in with him. [2.] The method they took to prevent a rupture; They made Blastus, the king's chamberlain, their friend; it is very likely, with bribes and good presents; that is usually the way for men to make

\* Every mortal's life is at each moment forfeit to God, Rom. 5:12. besides being in his hands as its Author, for the creature has no rights with the Creator. Life can be taken when and how He pleases, without wrong, or the shadow of injustice: and He has an eternity, also, in which to be just, were He to seem unjust in Time. Ed.

V. 20-23. It is remarkable that the sacred historian does not represent the awful death of Herod, as a judgment on him for persecuting the church, though he had so inviting and so just an occasion of doing it; but assigns another cause of that event. This is a striking contrast to the usual practice of enthusiasts; who generally, without any adequate reason, take pleasure in representing all the calamities which befall those who even in a slight degree oppose them, as divine judgments on them for so doing.

(20.) Some suggest, that this trouble was occasioned by commercial jealousies between the new and doubtless privileged port of Cesarea, (note, 8:40.) and Tyre, Sidon, &c., with whose interests it interfered. Ed.

courtiers their friends. [See the accounts of every traveller in those regions now. Ed.] And it is the hard fate of princes, that they must have not only their affairs, but their affections too, governed by such mercenary tools: yet such men as Herod, that will not be governed by reason, had better be so governed, than by pride and passion. Blastus had Herod's ear, and has the art of mollifying his resentments; and a time is fixed for the ambassadors of Tyre and Sidon, to come and make a public submission, to beg his majesty's pardon, throw themselves on his clemency, and promise never again to offend in the like kind; and that which will thus feed his pride, shall serve to cool his passion.

(3.) Herod appeared in all the pomp and grandeur he had, v. 21. Josephus (*Antiq.* lib. 19. cap. 7.) says, Herod at this time wore a robe of cloth of silver, so richly woven, and framed with such art, that when the sun shone, it reflected the light with such a lustre as dazzled the eyes of the spectators, and struck an awe upon them. Foolish people value men by their outward appearance; and no better are they who value themselves by the esteem of such; who court it, and recommend themselves to it, as Herod did, who thought to make up the want of a royal heart, with his royal apparel; and sat upon his throne, as if privileged to trample on all about him as his footstool.

(4.) He made a speech to the men of Tyre and Sidon, a fine oration, in which, probably, after he had aggravated their fault, and commended their submission, he concluded with an assurance that he would pass by their offence, and receive them into his favor again; having, probably, kept them in suspense as to their doom, till he made this oration to them, that the act of grace might come to them with the more pleasing surprise.

(5.) The people applauded him, the people that had a dependence on him, and had benefit by his favor, they gave a shout; and this was it they shouted, *It is the voice of a god, and not of a man, v. 22.* It may be, it was not from any real good thoughts they had of him; but how meanly soever they thought of him, they were resolved thus to curry favor, and strengthen the new-made peace between him and them. Thus great men are made an easy prey to flatterers, if they lend an ear to them, and encourage them. Grotius, here, observes, that though magistrates are called gods, Ps. 82:1. yet kings or monarchs, i. e. single persons, are not, lest countenance should thereby be given to the Gentiles, who give divine honors to their kings, alive and dead, as here; but they are a college of senators, or a bench of judges, that are called gods. Those that live by sense, vilify God, as if He were altogether such an one as themselves; and deify men, as if they were gods; having their persons in admiration, because of advantage. This is not only a great affront to God, giving that glory to others, which is due to Him alone, but a great injury to those who are thus flattered, as it makes them forget themselves, and so puffs them up with pride, that they are in the utmost danger possible of falling into the condemnation of the devil.

(6.) These undue praises he took to himself, pleased himself with them, and prided himself in them; and that was his sin: he did not rebuke their flattery, nor disown the title they had given him, nor give God the glory, v. 23. but took it to himself, was very

SCOTT.



23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

24 ¶ But the word of God grew and multiplied.

25 ¶ And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.

### CHAP. XIII.

<sup>1</sup> Paul and Barnabas are chosen to go to the Gentiles. <sup>7</sup> Of Sergius Paulus, and Elymas the sorcerer. <sup>14</sup> Paul preacheth at Antioch, that Jesus is Christ. <sup>42</sup> The Gentiles believe: <sup>45</sup> but the Jews gainsay and blaspheme: <sup>46</sup> whereupon they turn to the Gentiles. <sup>48</sup> As many as were ordained to life believed.

NOW there were in the church that was at Antioch, certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, <sup>a</sup> which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

v Col. 1:6. 11:29,30.  
w or, charge. c. a or, Herod's foster-brother.

willing it should terminate in himself, and that he should be thought a god, and have divine honors paid him. *Si populus vult decipi, decipiatur.*—If the people will be deceived, let them. And it was worse in him who was a Jew, and professed to believe one God only, than it was in the heathen emperors, who had gods many and lords many.

2. Observe, How his iniquity was punished; *Immediately, v. 23.* He was reckoned with now for vexing the church of Christ, killing James, imprisoning Peter, and all the other mischiefs he had done. Observe in the destruction of Herod,

(1.) It was no less than an angel that was the agent; *the angel of the Lord*, that angel that was ordered and commissioned to do it, or that angel that used to be employed in works of this nature, the destroying angel: or *the angel*, i. e., that angel that delivered Peter in the former part of the chapter,—*that angel smote Herod.* For, those ministering spirits are the ministers either of divine justice or of divine mercy, as God is pleased to employ them. The angel smote him with a sore disease, just at that instant when he was strutting at the applauses of the people, and adoring his own shadow. As the king of Tyre, Ez. 28:2, 9. so Herod here. The angel smote him, because he gave not the glory to God; angels are jealous for God's honor, and as soon as ever they have commission, are ready to smite those that usurp his prerogatives, and rob God of his honor.

(2.) It was no more than a worm that was the instrument of Herod's destruction; he was eaten of worms,—he became worm-eaten, so it must be read. The body in the grave is destroyed by worms; but Herod's

PRACT. OBS. The lives of eminent saints are more desired by their brethren, than by themselves. A peaceful conscience, a lively hope, and the consolations of the Holy Spirit, produce the most entire composure in the immediate prospect of death, even in those very persons, who have at other times been the most distracted with terrors on that account. The instruments of persecution are exposed to the most imminent danger; and those who thus 'fight against God,' ripen apace for more signal vengeance; while they are buoyed up, with success and flattery, into the most extravagant pride and arrogance.—We may, however, learn

(23.) 'The historical faith of Luke is exceedingly confirmed by his making no mention of this fable, [of the owl, see *Jos. in Henry's*] *Kevin*. *Jos.* relates the secondary, Luke the primary cause. As to the manner of the angel's agency, as we cannot comprehend the mode of existence of natures superior to our own, we cannot say how he might produce the disease, or whether visibly or invisibly, though we can imagine many ways of depositing the seeds of disease, unseen and unknown. The narrative appeals to faith not experience. *Jos.* makes no mention of worms, but seems to refer all to dysentery, willing perhaps to conceal the odious truth, out of regard to Herod and his family. En.

body putrefied while he was yet alive, and bred the worms that began to feed on it betimes; so Antiochus, that great persecutor, died. See here, what vile bodies those are which we carry about with us; what weak and contemptible creatures God can make the instruments of his justice, when He pleases,—and how God delights not only to bring down proud men, but to bring them down in such a way as is most mortifying, and pours most contempt upon them.

This story of the death of Herod is particularly related by Josephus, a Jew, *Antiq. lib. 19. cap. 7.* thus: That Herod came down to Cesarea, to celebrate a festival in honor of Cesar; that the second day of the festival, he went in the morning to the theatre, clothed with that splendid robe mentioned before; that his flatterers saluted him as a god, begged that he would be propitious to them; that hitherto they had revered him as a man, but now they would confess to be in him something more excellent than a mortal nature. That he did not refuse or correct this impious flattery; (so the historian expresses it;) but, presently after, looking up, he saw an owl perched over his head, and was at the same instant seized with a most violent pain in his bowels, and gripes in his belly, which were exquisite from the very first; that he turned his eyes on his friends, and said to this purpose; Now I, whom you called a god, and therefore immortal, must be proved a man, and mortal. That his torture continued without intermission, or the least abatement, and then he died, in the 54th year of his age, when he had been king seven years.

II. The progress of the Gospel after this.

1. *The Word of God grew and multiplied;* wherever preached, multitudes embraced it, and were added to the church by it, v. 24. When such a persecutor was taken off by a dreadful judgment, many were thereby convinced, that the cause of Christianity was doubtless the cause of Christ, and therefore embraced it.

2. Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch, as soon as they had despatched the business they were sent upon; *When they had fulfilled their ministry*, had paid in their money to the proper persons, and taken care about the due distribution of it to those for whom it was collected, they returned from Jerusalem. They had a great many friends there, yet at present their work lay at Antioch; and where our business is, there we should be; and no longer from it than is requisite. When a minister is called abroad on any service, when he has fulfilled that ministry, he ought to remember that he has work to do at home, which waits him there, and calls him thither. Barnabas and Saul, when they went to Antioch, took with them John, whose surname was Mark, at whose mother's house they had that meeting for prayer which we read of v. 12. She was sister to Barnabas. It is probable Barnabas lodged there, and perhaps Paul with him, while at Jerusalem, and that occasioned the meeting there at that time; and their

wisdom from the policy of the Tyrians and Zidonians: for we have justly offended the almighty Lord, with our sins; we entirely depend on Him for 'life, and breath, and all things;' it surely, then, behooves us to humble ourselves before Him, that, through the appointed Mediator, who is ever ready to befriend us, we may be reconciled to Him, before 'wrath come upon us to the uttermost;' as it did upon proud Herod, who, while others trembled at his impotent rage, would not fear the almighty God!

SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. XIII. V. 1—3. The surname of Niger, or 'Black,' by which Simeon was known, seems to have been given him on account of his complexion; perhaps he was a negro. Some have conjectured that this was Simon the Cyrenian, who was compelled to bear the cross after Jesus; and if so, Lucius was of the same country.—(2) *Separate, &c.*] This language evidently implies the personality \* and Deity of the

\* If this term, *personality*, and *persons*, (used by theologians,) does not mean separate identities, why use it? *Persona* indicates identity, and is a term not applied in the Bible, to Christ, the Spirit, or the Father: if those who make creeds do not intend to teach three identities, three gods, in the blessed Godhead, why employ it? Ed.

intimacy in that family, while at Jerusalem, occasioned their taking a son of that family with them when they returned, to be trained up under them, and employed by them, in the service of the Gospel. Educating young men for the ministry, and entering them into it, is a very good work for elder ministers to take care of, and of good service to the rising generation.

CHAP. XIII. We have not yet met with anything concerning the spreading of the Gospel to the Gentiles, which bears any proportion to the largeness of that commission, Go, and disciple all nations. The door was opened in the baptizing of Cornelius and his friends; but since then we had the Gospel preached to the Jews only, ch. 11:19. It should seem as if the light, which began to shine on the Gentile world, had withdrawn itself. But here in this ch. that great, good work is revived in the midst of the years; and though the Jews shall still have the first offer of the Gospel, yet, on their refusal, the Gentiles shall have their offer of it: so the design of this ch. is, to show how cautiously, how gradually, and with what good reason, the apostles carried the Gospel into the Gentile world, and admitted the Gentiles into the church, which was so great an offence to the Jews, and which Paul is so industrious to justify in his epistles.

V. 1—3. I. The present state of the church at Antioch.

1. How well furnished it was with good ministers, v. 1. men eminent for gifts, graces, and usefulness. Agabus seems to have been a prophet, and not a teacher; and many were teachers, who were not prophets; but those were at times divinely inspired, and had instructions immediately from heaven on special occasions, which gave them the title of prophets; and withal they were stated teachers of the church in their religious assemblies, expounded the Scriptures, and opened the doctrine of Christ with suitable applications. These were the prophets, and scribes, or teachers, which Christ promised to send, Mat. 23:34. such as were every way qualified for the service of the Christian church. Antioch was a great city, and the Christians there were many, so that they could not all meet in one place; it was therefore requisite they should have many teachers, to preside in their respective assemblies, and to deliver God's mind to them. Barnabas is first named, probably because the eldest, and Saul last, probably because the youngest; but afterward the last became first, and Saul more eminent in the church.

Three others are mentioned. (1.) *Simeon*, or *Simon*, who for distinction-sake was called *Niger*, or *Black*, from the color of his hair; like him that with us was surnamed the *Black Prince*. (2.) *Lucius* of *Cyrene*, who, some think, (and Dr. Lightfoot inclines to it,) was the same with this Luke that wrote the Acts; originally a Cyrenian, and educated in the Cyrenian college or synagogue at Jerusalem, and there first receiving the Gospel. (3.) *Manaen*, a person of some quality, as it should seem, for he was



2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate <sup>b</sup>me Barnabas and Saul for the work <sup>c</sup>whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to *their* minister.

6 ¶ And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus:

b Ga. 1.15.

c 1 Ti. 2.7.

brought up with Herod the tetrarch, which gave him a fair prospect of preferment at court, and yet for Christ's sake he quitted all the hopes of it, like Moses; but better to be fellow-sufferer with a saint, than fellow-persecutor with a tetrarch.

2. How well employed they were, v. 2. Diligent, faithful teachers do truly minister unto the Lord. They that minister to the church in praying and preaching, both which are included here, *minister unto the Lord*; ministering unto the Lord, in one way or other, ought to be the stated business of churches and their teachers; religious *fasting*, too, is of use in our ministering to the Lord, both as a sign of our humiliation, and a mean of our mortification.

II. The orders given by the Holy Ghost for the setting apart of Barnabas and Saul; the ministers of the several congregations in the city joining in one public, solemn fast or day of prayer, the *Holy Ghost said*, either by a voice from heaven, or by a strong impulse on the minds of those that were prophets, *Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them*. He does not specify the work, but refers to a former call they knew the meaning of; as for Saul, he was particularly told, he must *bear Christ's name to the Gentiles*, ch. 9:15. *must be sent to the Gentiles*, ch. 22:21. the matter was settled between them at Jerusalem before this, that as Peter, James, and John, laid out themselves among them of the circumcision, so Paul and Barnabas should *go to the heathen*, Gal. 2:7—9. Barnabas, it is likely, knew himself designed for that service

Holy Spirit. 10:17—23. John 14:15—17. 16:7—13. 1 Cor. 12:4—11.—The prophets and teachers, in laying their hands on them, with fasting and prayer, acted by immediate order from the Holy Spirit; thus giving a public testimony to their assured confidence, that they were divinely appointed to that service, and expressing fervent desires for their success in it. Accordingly they are said to have been 'sent forth by the Holy Ghost.' (4)—Barnabas and Saul had, for a considerable time, been ministers of the Word; so that this imposition of hands could not be for the purpose of ordaining them; nor does it appear, that any spiritual gift, or new authority, was conferred by it. 3:14—17.—Paul was 'an apostle, not by man?' Gal. 1:1, 2. his apostolical office could not then be conferred at this time; but his appointment by the Lord Jesus Himself, as the apostle of the Gentiles, might thus be publicly acknowledged, in the principal church of Gentile converts. Barnabas also is afterwards spoken of as an apostle. 14:4,1. Perhaps he was appointed by the Holy Spirit to that office, on this occasion; with some reference to the martyrdom of James, by which the number of the apostles was diminished. 14:24—28.—Which had been brought up with Herod.] 'Herod's foster-brother.' Marg.

(1.) 'From this chap. to the end of the book, Luke narrates Paul's journeys among the Gentiles. Prophets.] Note, 11:27. Teachers.] *Dilaskaloi*: persons, who, for their wisdom and eloquence, were appointed [by whom?] to the office of teaching in the church: [did they not rather undertake it of themselves?] They are also mentioned 1 Cor. 12:20. Eph. 4:11. *The tetrarch*.] Antipas, not Agrippa; see *Walch. Brought up with.*] *Suntrophos*: it denotes, 1. foster-brother; 2. table-fellow; 3. school-fellow. The term was especially applied to children who were brought up as companions to kings, princes, &c., and shared their food and education. See [Xen. and] Diod. Sic., also Muc. 9:29.

as well as Paul. Yet they would not thrust themselves into this harvest, till they received their orders from the Lord of the harvest. Observe, 1. Christ by his Spirit has the nomination of his ministers; for it is by the Spirit of Christ that they are both qualified in some measure for his service, inclined to it, and taken off from other cares inconsistent with it. The Holy Ghost has separated some for the service of Christ, as men that are offered, and that willingly offer themselves to the temple-service; and concerning them, directions are given to those who are competent judges of the sufficiency of their abilities, and the sincerity of their inclination, to separate them. 2. Christ's ministers are separated to Him and to the Holy Ghost; *Separate them to Me*; they are to be employed in Christ's work, and under the Spirit's guidance, to the glory of God the Father. 3. All that are separated to Christ as his ministers, are separated to work; Christ keeps no servants to be idle. *If any man desires the office of a bishop, he desires a good work*; that is it which he is separated to, *to labor in the Word and doctrine*. They are separated to take pains, not to take state. 4. The work of Christ's ministers, to which they are to be separated, is work already settled, which all Christ's ministers hitherto have been called to, and which they themselves have first been, by an external call, directed to, and have chosen.

III. Their ordination, pursuant to these orders; not to the ministry in general, but to a particular service which had something peculiar in it, and required a fresh commission; which commission God saw fit at this time to transmit by the hands of *these prophets and teachers*, for the giving of this direction to the church, that teachers should ordain *teachers*, (for prophets we are not now any longer to expect,) and that those who have the dispensing of the oracles of Christ committed to them, should, for the benefit of posterity, *commit the same to faithful men, who shall be able also to teach others*, 2 Tim. 2:2. So here, Simeon, and Lucius, and Manaen, faithful teachers at this time in the church of Antioch, *when they had fasted and prayed, laid their hands on Barnabas and Saul, and sent them away*, v. 3. according to the directions received. Observe,

1. They *prayed* for them. When good men are going forth about good work, they ought to be solemnly and particularly prayed for, especially by their brethren that are their fellow-laborers.

2. They joined *fasting* with their prayers, as they did in their other ministrations, v. 3. Christ has taught us this by his abstaining from sleep, a night-fast, if I may so call it, the night before He sent forth his apostles, that He might spend it in prayer.

3. They *laid their hands* on them. Hereby they gave them their manumission, or discharge, from their present service in the church of Antioch; acknowledging not only that they went off with consent, but honorably and with a good report: and thus they implored a blessing on them in their present undertaking; and in order to this, that *they might be filled with the Holy Ghost* in their work. This is explained, ch. 14:26. where it is said, concerning Paul and Barnabas, that from Antioch they had been recommended to the grace of God, for the work which they fulfilled.

V. 4—13. In these vs. we have,

I. A general account of Barnabas and Saul coming to Cyprus, perhaps because Barnabas was a native of that island, ch. 4:36. and he was willing they should have the first fruits of his labors, pursuant to his new commission. [Besides, it seems to have been, like Rhodes, a stepping-stone, as it were, from the E. to the European world. Ed.] Observe, 1. If the Holy Ghost send them forth, then they fear no colors, but can cheerfully venture on a stormy sea from Antioch, now to them a quiet harbor. 2. They came to Seleucia, the sea-port opposite to Cyprus, from thence crossed the sea to Cyprus; and in that island the first city they came to, was Salamis, on the E. side of the island, v. 5. and when they had sown good seed there, *thence they went onward through the isle*, v. 6. till they came to Paphos, which lay on the western coast. 3. *They preached the Word of God*, wherever they came, *in the synagogues of the Jews*; so far were they from excluding them, that they gave them the preference, and so left them, who believed not, inexcusable; *they would have gathered them, but they would not*. 4. *They had John to their minister*; not their servant in common things, but their assistant in the things of God; either to prepare their way in places where they designed to come, or to carry on their work in places where they had begun it, or to converse familiarly with those to whom they preached publicly, and explain things to them; and such an one might be many ways of use to them, especially in a strange country.

II. A particular account of their encounter with *Elymas the sorcerer*, whom they met with at Paphos, where the governor resided; a place famous for a temple built to Venus there, thence called *Paphia Venus*; and therefore there was more than ordinary need that *the Son of God should be manifested, to destroy the works of the devil*.

1. There the *deputy*, a Gentile, *Sergius Paulus* by name, encouraged the apostles, and was willing to hear their message. He was governor of the country, under the Roman emperor; proconsul or propraetor, and had the character of a prudent, intelligent,

Erasmus, Grot., &c. refer Manaen to the 2d of these classes; Heumann and Walsh, with more probability, to the 1st. BL.

(2.) 'Before Cornelius' conversion, the apostles (10:1.) had received only circumcised proselytes into the Christian society; nor had they preached the Gospel to the Gentiles. But when Cornelius, a Gentile, was, by God's providence, received into that society, and thus the Jerusalem church had acknowledged that the instruction of the Gentiles was agreeable to the will of God, some Cyprians and Cyrenians had communicated the doctrine of Christ to Gentiles of Antioch (11:20), and the church at Jerusalem had sent Barnabas and Saul thither, to forward the work so happily begun, (11:22 and 25.) And these, sojourning there a year, taught both Jews and Gentiles promiscuously. But now the Christians were anxious that the Gospel should be more widely propagated among the Gentiles; so that from the congregation at Antioch other congregations might be generated, as from a common parent. Therefore the chief teachers of the church met together, to choose, from among them, some who should sustain the weighty office of promulgating the Christian doctrine among the Gentiles.' BL.

V. 4, 5. If the sentence of excommunication, which had been published against those who confessed Jesus to be the Christ, was still in force: (*John* 11:57.) it is evident, that it was little noticed at a distance from Jerusalem: for the apostles were constantly allowed to preach in the synagogues.—John Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas, to perform such services by their direction, as he was capable of; with a view, no doubt, of his being employed more and more, as a preacher of the Gospel.

V. 6—12. Bar-jesus was also called 'Elymas,' from an Arabic word signifying a sorcerer.—Some think he [Sergius Paulus] was the first idolatrous Gentile, who was converted to Christ; but it is not probable,



7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

9 Then Saul (who also is called Paul), filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

10 And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about, seeking some to lead him by the hand.

12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

d 2 Ti. 3:8.

considerate man; which appeared by this, that, having a character of Barnabas and Saul, he sent for them, and desired to hear the Word of God. Those are wise, however they may be ranked among the foolish of this world, who are inquisitive after the mind and will of God.

2. There Elymas, a Jew, a sorcerer, opposed them all he could. This justified the apostles in turning to the Gentiles, that this Jew was so malignant against them. (1.) This Elymas was a pretender to the gift of prophecy, a sorcerer, a false-prophet; one that would be taken for a divine, because skilled in the arts of divination; a conjurer, who took on him to tell people their fortune, and to discover things lost, and probably was in league with the devil for that purpose; his name was Bar-jesus,—the son of Joshua signifies the son of salvation; but the Syriae calls him Bar-shoma, the son of pride,—the son of inflammation. (2.) He was hanging on at court, was with the deputy of the country; it does not appear that the deputy called for him, as he did for Barnabas and Saul; but he thrust himself on him, aiming, no doubt, to make a hand of him, and get money by him. (3.) He made it his business to withstand Barnabas and Saul, as the magicians in Pharaoh's court withstood Moses and Aaron, 2 Tim. 3:8. thus he sought to keep the deputy from receiving the Gospel, v. 8. which he saw him inclined to do. Satan is in a special manner busy with great men, and men in power, to keep them from being religious; because he knows that their example, whether good or bad, will have an

influence on many. And those who are any way instrumental to prejudice people against the truths and ways of Christ, are doing the devil's work. (4.) Saul, who is here for the first time called Paul, and never after Saul, fell on him for this, with a holy indignation. Saul is called Paul, v. 9. his Roman name, now when he is sent forth among the Gentiles, to put reputation on him in the Roman cities; Paulus being a very common name among them. But, some think, he was never called Paul till now that he was instrumental in the conversion of Sergius Paulus to the faith of Christ, and that he took that name Paulus, as a memorial of that victory obtained by the Gospel of Christ; as, among the Romans, he that had conquered a country, took his denomination from it, as Germanicus, Britannicus, Africanus; or rather, Sergius Paulus himself gave him the name Paulus, in token of his favor and respect to him, as Vespasian gave his name Flavius to Josephus the Jew. [1.] Paul was filled with the Holy Ghost on this occasion, with the holy zeal against a professed enemy of Christ, which was one of the graces of the Holy Ghost; a spirit of burning; filled with power to denounce the wrath of God against him, which was one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost; a spirit of judgment. He felt a more than ordinary fervor in his mind, as the prophet did when full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, Mic. 3:8. and another prophet, when his face was made harder than flint, Ez. 3:9. and another, when his mouth was made like a sharp sword, Is. 49:2. What Paul said, did not come from any personal resentment, but from the strong impressions the Holy Ghost made on his spirit. [2.] He set his eyes on him, to face him down, and to show a holy boldness, in opposition to his wicked impudence. He set his eyes on him, as an indication that the eye of the heart-searching God was on him, and saw through him; nay, that the face of the Lord was against him, Ps. 34:16. He fixed his eyes on him, to see if he could discern in his countenance any marks of remorse for what he had done; which, if he could have discerned the least sign of, it had prevented the ensuing doom. [3.] He gave him his true character, not in passion, but by the Holy Ghost, who knows men better than they know themselves, v. 10. He describes him to be an agent for hell; and such there have been on earth, ever since Cain, who was of that wicked one: he was really a child of the devil, bore his image, did his lusts, and served his interests, John 8:44. two things resembling him, as a child his father. In craft, Gen. 3:1. though void of all wisdom, he was full of subtlety, expert in all the arts of deceiving men, and imposing on them. In malice; he was full of all mischief; a spiteful, ill-conditioned man, a sworn, implacable enemy to God and goodness. A fulness of subtlety and mischief together, make a man indeed a child of the devil: and as it follows, of course, an enemy to all righteousness, for the devil is so. [4.] He charged on him his present

crime, and expostulated with him on it; 'Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord, to misrepresent them, to put false colors on them, and so to discourage people from entering into them, and walking in them?' [5.] He denounced the judgment of God on him, in a present blindness, v. 11. This was designed both for the proof of his crime, as it was a miracle wrought to confirm the right ways of the Lord, and consequently to show the wickedness of him who would not cease to pervert them; as also for the punishment of his crime. It was a suitable punishment; he shut the eyes of his mind against the light of the Gospel, therefore justly were the eyes of his body shut against the light of the sun; he sought to blind the deputy, as an agent for the god of this world, 2 Cor. 4:4. therefore is himself struck blind: yet it was a moderate punishment, he was only struck blind, when he might most justly have been struck dead; and it was only for a season; if he will repent, and give glory to God, by making confession, his sight shall be restored; nay, it should seem, though he do not, yet his sight shall be restored, to try if he will be led to repentance, either by the judgments of God or by his mercies. [6.] This judgment was immediately executed; there fell on him a mist and a darkness; this silenced him presently, filled him with confusion, and was an effectual confutation of all he said against the doctrine of Christ. It was also an earnest to him of a much sorer punishment if he repent not. Elymas did himself proclaim the truth of the miracle, when he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand; and where now is all his skill in sorcery, on which he had so much valued himself, when he can neither find his way himself, nor find a friend that will be so kind as to lead him!

3. Notwithstanding all the endeavors of Elymas to turn away the deputy from the faith, he was brought to believe, and this miracle, wrought on the magician himself, (like the boils of Egypt,) Ex. 9:11. contributed to it. The deputy was a very sensible man, and observed something uncommon, and which spake its divine original, (1.) In Paul's preaching; he was astonished at the doctrine of the Lord, the Lord Christ, the doctrine from Him, the discoveries He has made of the Father; the doctrine concerning Him, his Person, nature, offices, undertaking. (2.) In this miracle; when he saw what was done, and how much Paul's power transcended that of the magician, he believed. It is not said that he was baptized, and so made a complete convert, but probably he was. The tradition of the Roman church, which has taken care to find bishoprics for all the eminent converts we read of in the Acts, has made this Sergius Paulus bishop of Narbon in France, left there by Paul in his journey to Spain.

III. Their departure from Cyprus. Probably they did a great deal more there than is recorded, where an account is given only of that which was extraordinary,—the conversion of the deputy. When they had done

that all the Gentile converts at Antioch had previously been proselyted from idolatry; or that Saul and Barnabas had made no converts from idolatry in their progress through Cyprus.—Dr. Lardner has, with great learning, vindicated the accuracy of Luke, in calling the governor a proconsul; and shown, that those who governed the provinces by the appointment of the Senate, were called proconsuls, though they had never been consuls; and that Cyprus was at this time a province of that description.

Scott.

(6, 7.) Sorcerer.] Magos: note, 8:9. Prudent.] 'I. e. clever, capable, intelligent: so Thucyd. uses the Gr. word. This corresponds to what Galeu (see Wetst.) says of this proconsul; ta panta proteuontos ergois te kai logois tois en philosophia; and, en Philabios,—espeukōs de peri tēn Aristotelous philosophian. From which it appears, that he was well versed in natural philosophy; and probably for that reason (especially as he must have seen the folly of polytheism) was cultivating the society of Bar-jesus, who, besides communicating information on the principles of natural philosophy, could instruct him in the knowledge of one true God, as contained in the Jewish religion. His sending for Paul and Barnabas, the preachers of a religion which professed to be an improvement upon Judaism, was what we might expect from so curious an investigator of truth.'

Bl.

(8.) 'Elymas (from Arab. Aliman, wise) signifies magus. And this

(as Kuin. observes) was the name given to the magi in Arabia, (Bl.) because from Elam, where they were the sacerdotal and learned class, called also Chaldeans, Dan. 2:2? Notes, Is. 41: end. Ed.

(9.) 'Kuin. (as Doddr.) adopts the hypothesis of Beza and Grotius, that, having conversed hitherto chiefly with Jews and Syrians, to whom the name of Saul was familiar, and now coming among Romans and Greeks, they [as the Heb. sh, in Shaul, would be unpronounceable to them] would naturally pronounce his name Paul; as one whose Hebrew name was Jochanan, would be called by the Greeks and Latins, Johannes; by the French, Jean; by the Dutch, Hans, and by the English, John. Perhaps Paul resolved to use it now, on this solemn, systematic mission, seeing the inconveniences of his former name.'

Bl.

(10.) Subtlety . . . mischief.] Pretence, cunning, deceit; and light-fingered, expert at slight of hand, though the Greek often means an abandoned and accomplished villain. Dr. A. C. and Bl.

En.

(11.) Mist and darkness.] 'Dimness and blindness.' Bl., who well remarks 'many German writers suspect, (why they do not tell us,) that this came on suddenly from the fright occasioned by Paul's threat [!] It is unnecessary for me to notice the glaring absurdities of this hypothesis, which, like most such, has a tendency to degrade the character of the apostle almost to that of Bar-jesus himself!' Bl.



13 ¶ Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.

14 But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue <sup>f</sup> on the sabbath-day, and sat down.

15 And after the reading <sup>e</sup> of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, *Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word <sup>h</sup> of exhortation for the people, say on.*

16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with *his* hand, said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience.

17 The God of this people of Israel chose <sup>i</sup> our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt <sup>j</sup> as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an <sup>k</sup> high arm brought he them out of it.

18 And about the time of forty <sup>l</sup> years <sup>m</sup> suffered he their manners in the wilderness.

19 And when he had destroyed <sup>n</sup> seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he <sup>o</sup> divided their land to them by lot.

1. They quitted her country, and went to Perga. Those that went, were Paul, and his company, which probably was increased in Cyprus, many being desirous to accompany him. They that were about Paul, loosed from Paphos; which supposes that he went too; but such an affection had his new friends for him, that they were always about him, and by their good-will would be never from him.

2. Then John Mark quitted them, and returned to Jerusalem, without the consent of Paul and Barnabas; either he did not like the work, or he wanted to go see his mother. It was his fault, and we shall hear of it again.

V. 14—41. Paul's sermon to them of Antioch, in these vs. is, it is likely, the substance of what was preached by the apostles generally to the Jews in all places; for in dealing with them, the proper way was, to show them how the N. T., which they would have them to receive, exactly agreed with the O. T. which they not only received, but were zealous for. We have here,

I. Paul and Barnabas' appearance in a religious assembly of the Jews, v. 14. Though lately successful with a Roman deputy, yet, when they came to Antioch, they did not inquire for the chief magistrate, or make their court to him, but applied themselves to

the Jews; a further proof of their good affection to them, and desire of their welfare.

1. They observed their time of worship. *The first day of the week* they observed among themselves as a Christian Sabbath; but if they will meet the Jews, it must be *on the seventh-day Sabbath*; which, therefore, on such occasions, they did as yet sometimes observe. For though by the death of Christ the ceremonial law died, and the morality of the fourth commandment was entirely transferred to the Christian Sabbath, yet it was not incongruous to join the Jews in their sabbath-sanctification.

2. They met them in their place of worship, *in the synagogue*. Sabbath-days should be kept holy in solemn assemblies; they are instituted chiefly for public worship; *the sabbath-day is a holy convocation*, and for that reason *no servile work must be done therein*. Paul and Barnabas were strangers; but wherever we come, we must inquire out God's faithful worshippers, and join them, as those that desire to keep up a communion with all saints; though strangers, they were admitted *into the synagogue*, and *to sit down there*. Care should be taken, in places of public worship, that strangers be accommodated, even the poorest; for of those of whom we know nothing else, we know this, that they have precious souls.

II. Their invitation to preach. 1. The usual service of the synagogue was performed, v. 15. When we come together to worship God, we must do it not only by prayer and praise, but by the reading and hearing of the Word of God; hereby we *give Him the glory due to his name*, as our Lord and Lawgiver. 2. Then they were asked, by the rulers of the synagogue, to give them a sermon, v. 15. Probably the rulers had been in private conversation with them before; and if they had not an affection to the Gospel, yet had at least the curiosity to hear Paul preach; and therefore they begged the favor of a *word of exhortation to the people*. Note, the bare reading of the Scriptures in public assemblies is not sufficient, but they should be expounded, and the people exhorted out of them. Those that preside, and have power, in public assemblies, should provide for a word of exhortation, whenever they come together. Sometimes a word from a strange minister may be of great use.

III. Paul's sermon. He stood up, as one prepared and determined to speak, and beckoned with his hand, to excite and prepare them to hear; he waved his hand as an orator, not only desiring silence and attention, but endeavoring to move affection, and show himself in earnest. Perhaps, there were those in the synagogue, ready to oppose the toleration of Paul's preaching, and that occasioned some tumult and commotion, which Paul endeavored to quiet by that decent and usual motion of his hand; as also by his modest desire of a patient, impartial hearing; *Men of Israel, that are Jews by birth, and ye that fear God, that are proselyted to the Jewish religion, give audience; let me beg your attention a little, for I have something to say to you, which concerns your everlasting peace, and would not say it in vain.*

Now this sermon is recorded, to show that

those who preached the Gospel to the Gentiles, did it not till they had first used their utmost endeavor with the Jews, to persuade them to come in, and take the benefit of it; and everything is touched in this sermon, that might be proper, either to influence the judgment, or affections of the Jews, to embrace Christ as the promised Messiah.

1. Probably, *the Jews of the dispersion*, being more in danger of mingling with the nations, were more jealous of their peculiarity than those that lived in their own land were; therefore Paul is here very careful to notice it, to their honor. But they ought to remember their primitive condition, and God's free love, and infer hence, that God was no debtor to them, and did them no wrong, if He at length plucked up the hedge of their peculiarity. But they were debtors to Him, and obliged to receive such further discoveries as He should make of his will, and to admit such further additions as He should make to his church. For He had, *with a high hand brought them out of Egypt; He had suffered their manners forty years in the wilderness, v. 18*. Some think it should be read, *he educated them*, because that is the word the Sept. use concerning God's fatherly care of them, Deut. 1:31. Both may be included; for God both made great provision for them for forty years in the wilderness, and exercised great patience with them also. So many years as we have each of us lived in this world, we must own that God has thus been as a tender Father to us, has supplied our wants, and *not been extreme to mark what we have done amiss*; we have tried his patience, and yet not tired it. Let not the Jews insist too much on the privileges of their peculiarity, for they had forfeited them a thousand times.

Further, He had put them in possession of the land of Canaan, v. 19. a great honor, he would not in the least derogate from. He had raised up men, spirited from heaven, to deliver them, after their settlement, v. 20, 21. The critics find some difficulty in computing these 450 years. From the deliverance out of Egypt, to David's expulsion of the Jebusites from the strong-hold of Zion, which completed the casting out of the heathen nations, was 450 years; and most of that time they were under judges. Others thus; The government of the judges, from the death of Joshua to the death of Eli, was just 339 years, but it is said to be as it were 450 years; because the years of their servitude to the several nations that oppressed them, though really included in the years of the judges, are yet mentioned in the history as if distinct. Now these, all put together, make 111 years, and those added to the 339, make them 450; as so many, though not really so many. He governed them by a prophet, Samuel, a man divinely inspired to preside in their affairs. He afterward, at their request, set a king over them, v. 21. Samuel's government and his lasted forty years; which was a kind of transition from the theocracy to the kingly government. At last, He made David their king, v. 22. Then, when He had removed one king, He soon raised up another; raised him up from a mean and low estate, raised him up on high, 2 S. 23:1. He quotes the testimony God

e c. 15:38.  
f c. 18:4.  
g ver. 27.  
h 11e. 13:22.  
i De. 7:6,7.  
j Ps. 105:23.  
k Ex. 13:14,15.

l Ex. 16:35.  
m Gr. etropophorēsen, perhaps for etropophorēsen, bore, or, fed them, as a nurse beareth,

or, feedeth her child. De. 1:31. according to the LXX; and so Chrysostom. n De. 7:1.  
o Jos. 14, &c.

V. 14, 15. Sat down.] *Ekathisan*: i. e. (as Wolf and Kuin.) "occupied the seats of the doctors and lawyers:" thus indicating that they entered the synagogue with a disposition to teach. The Pentateuch was so distributed, as to allow of being read through in the year; and to each passage was adjoined a portion, having some affinity with it, from the prophets. [Sec Tables.] The reader, or another, then explained. *Vitringa, de Synag.* Bengel thinks, Deut. 1. and Is. 1. were the lesson, since these chs. are even yet read on one Sabbath, and Paul, at v. 18. refers to Deut. 1:31. *Rulers.*] Governors, in doctrine and discipline, appointing readers, and having power of corporal punishment, and excommunication. These now sent the hyperetēs (or clerk) to Paul, &c.

V. 15. *If ye have any, &c.*] Lit. "If any word of exhortation be in you." "There is some emphasis in this Hebrewism, by which it is understood, that whatever there is in us of divine grace, is derived to us from God, that we may carry it about as a treasure shut up in earthen vessels." Beza.

BLOOMF.

SCOTT.

V. 16—19. Some explain the expression, "Ye that fear God," of the religious proselytes (43): but it is plain, that there were Gentiles, as well as proselytes, in the synagogue (42); perhaps some place was allotted to them, in hopes that they would soon embrace the Jewish religion, as others already had done.

(17.) *Exalted.*] Honored them through Joseph, and during his influence; multiplied them, as Is. 1:1. Gen. 48:19. comp. Deut. 1:10. Acts 7:17; raised them from their calamitous state; and worked illustrious miracles in their behalf. *Buxt., Wolf, Kypke, &c.*

(18.) *Bear with manners.*] The usage of the word in the received text, *etropophorēsen*, is defended and illustrated from Cic., Terence, Aristoph. The other reading is found in some excellent MSS., and the Syr., Arab., Copt., Æth., Slavonic; is recognised by Athanasius, Cyril, Macarius, Hesychius, and Const. Apostol.; is defended by Pauff, Casaub., Hamn., Mill, Beng., Mat., Ern., Pearce, Morus, Ros., Kuin., and Valck.; and has been received into the text by Griesb. Bl. who, however, prefers the former; see his note.



20 And after that, he gave unto them judges, <sup>p</sup> about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.

21 And afterward they <sup>q</sup> desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul <sup>r</sup> the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.

22 And when <sup>s</sup> he had removed him, he raised up unto them David <sup>t</sup> to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the <sup>u</sup> son of Jesse, a man <sup>v</sup> after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

23 Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, <sup>w</sup> raised unto <sup>x</sup> Israel a Savior, Jesus:

24 When John <sup>y</sup> had first preached, before his coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

p Ju. 2:16. q 1 Sa. 8:5. r 1 Sa. 10:1. s 1 Sa. 31:6. t 2 Sa. 5:3. u 1 Sa. 13:14. v Ps. 132:11. w Mat. 1:21. x Mat. 3:1-11.

gave of him, a man after my own heart; such an one as I would have. This character was given of him before he was first anointed, 1 S. 13:14. *He shall fulfil all my will.* [Note, end of 1 K.]

Now all this seems to show not only the special favor of God to Israel, but the further favors, of another nature, He designed them, and which were now, by the preaching of the Gospel, offered to them; therefore they needed not conceive any jealousy at all of the preaching of the Gospel, as if it tended in the least to damage the true excellences of the Jewish church.

2. He gives them a full account of our Lord Jesus, passing from David to the Son of David, and shows, that this Jesus is his promised seed, v. 23. How welcome should the preaching of the Gospel of Christ be to the Jews, and how should they embrace it,

as well worthy of all acceptation, when it brought them the tidings of a Savior, to deliver them out of the hands of their enemies, to save them from their sins, even their worst enemies: a Savior of God's raising up, that has his commission from heaven; raised up to be a Savior unto Israel, to them in the first place; raised up of the seed of David, that ancient, royal family, which the people of Israel gloried so much in; raised up according to his promise, the promise to David, Ps. 132:11. the promise to the O. T. church, in the latter times of it, Jer. 23:5. This promise was it to which the twelve tribes hoped to come, ch. 26:7. why then should they entertain it so coldly, now it was brought to them? Concerning this Jesus, he tells them,

(1.) That John the Baptist was his harbinger and forerunner; that great man, whom all acknowledge to be a prophet, v. 24. 1st. He made way for his entrance, by preaching the baptism of repentance, not to a few select disciples, but to all the people of Israel; to whom Christ's grace would be acceptable, when they were thus brought to know themselves. 2dly. He gave notice of his approach, v. 25. As he fulfilled his course, when he was going on vigorously in his work, and had had powerful success in it, and an established interest; 'Now,' saith he to those that attended his ministry, 'Who think ye that I am? What notions have you of me, what expectations from me? You may be thinking that I am the Messiah, whom you expect; but you are mistaken, I am not He: (see John 1:28.) but He is at the door; behold, there cometh One, immediately after me, who will so far exceed me on all accounts, that I am not worthy to be employed in the meanest office about Him; no, not to help Him on and off with his shoes; and you may guess who that must be.'

(2.) That the rulers and people of the Jews, who should have welcomed Him, and been his willing, forward, faithful subjects, were his persecutors and murderers! Paul cannot charge this on his hearers, as Peter did, ch. 2:23. but he charges it on the Jews at Jerusalem, and the rulers, to show what little reason those Jews of the dispersion

had to be so jealous as they were, for the honor of their nation, when it had brought on itself such a load and stain of guilt as this, and how justly they might have been cut off from all benefit by the Messiah, and yet were not. But, indeed, 1st. *They knew Him not, v. 27.* knew not who He was, nor his errand into the world; for if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Christ owned this in extenuation of their crime, and so did Peter, ch. 3:17. It was also because they knew not the voice of the prophets; they did not understand nor consider, that it was foretold that the Messiah should suffer. Many that read the prophets, do not understand the meaning of them; they have the sound of the Gospel in their ears, but not the sense of it in their heads, or savor of it in their hearts. And therefore men do not know Christ, nor know how to carry it toward Him, because they do not know the voice of the prophets, who testified beforehand concerning Christ. 2dly. God overruled them for the accomplishment of the prophecies of the O. T. Because they knew not the voice of the prophets, which warned them not to touch God's Anointed, they fulfilled them in condemning Him; for so it was written, that *Messiah the Prince shall be cut off; but not for Himself.* Men may be fulfilling scripture-prophecies, even when breaking scripture-precepts; particularly in the persecution of the church, as of Christ. And this justifies the reason sometimes given for the obscurity of scripture-prophecies, that if too plain and obvious, their accomplishment would thereby be prevented. So Paul saith here, because they knew not the voice of the prophets, therefore they have fulfilled them, which implies they would not, if they had understood them. 3dly. All that was foretold concerning the sufferings of the Messiah, was fulfilled in Christ, v. 29. and circumstances are noticed here, that made his resurrection the more illustrious. They laid Him in a sepulchre, and thought they had Him fast.

(3.) That He rose again from the dead, and saw no corruption; this was the great truth to be preached; for it is the main pillar by which the whole fabric of the Gospel

V. 20. This v. has peculiar difficulties connected with it. The time, which elapsed from the departure of Israel out of Egypt, to the building of Solomon's temple, was no more than 480 years. (Note, 1 Kings 6:1.) But, on the lowest computation, 57 years elapsed, from the passage of the Red Sea to the death of Joshua; and 84 years, during the days of Samuel, Saul, and David, and till the 4th year of Solomon; and this leaves only 339 years, from the death of Joshua to the times of Samuel. So that, without adverting to the difficulties of computing the years during the Judges, Judg. 3:11. 11:25, 26. it is evident that this general calculation cannot possibly allow 450 years for that part of the history, even continuing it to 20 years after the death of Eli. Some alteration, therefore, seems unavoidably needful either in this narrative, or in the general statement in Kings. On this ground some think that 350 years, should be read, in this place, instead of 450; and it is evident, that the error might easily be made by a transcriber. This would bring the computation within about 10 or 11 years; and, as the historian says, 'about the space, &c.' it might be improper to expect greater accuracy. There is, however, no authority, which warrants such a change in the text.—Josephus saith, that Solomon began to build the temple . . . 592 years after the children of Israel's departure out of Egypt. Now if you make the time of the Judges 450 years, the computation is exactly 591 years. He' (Paul) 'therefore here, . . . accords with the computation of his nation, at that time, that so they might not except against his words. Wilderness 40, Joshua 17, Judges 450, Samuel and Saul 40, David 40, Solomon 4.—591. . . Luke continually follows exactly the computation of the Sept. and of the Jews, as we learn from his inserting Cainan; (Luke 3:36.) his making Saul to reign 40 years (21); and from this v., where he accords exactly with Josephus.' *Whitby*, in *Scott*.—Perhaps this learned writer did not recollect, that this computation of Josephus alters the whole system of Biblical chronology. For the chronology of the Heb. Scripture to the Exodus, and from the building of the temple till the coming of Christ, is founded on grounds sufficiently firm; but if 112 years more than the general computation, passed between the Exodus and the building of the temple; then the birth of Christ took place, in the year of the world 4115, instead of 4004. It is well known, or at least generally acknowledged, that the chronology, both of the Sept. and of Josephus, is erroneous and perplexed, in no ordinary degree; [note, end of Gen. §] but how far the apostle, and Luke, in recording his discourse, took these unimportant matters, as they found them, is another question; and if they did so, the circumstance of learned men in their studies having discovered that those generally admitted calculations were inaccurate, has, in my view, nothing to do with the divine inspiration, of either the preacher or the historian. For they were inspired, to deliver divine truth to mankind, unsophisticated and unutilated; not to correct genealogies, or give chronological calculations. Even on the supposition, that the apostle was aware of the inaccuracy; it would have obstructed his grand object, to advance any

new opinion, or to go out of his way to correct the current one.—Grocius and Usher note here, that other copies read thus; 'He divided to them their land about 450 years, and after that He gave them judges;' and they begin the time of this computation from the birth of Isaac, and to the end of 7 years, (in Canaan,) when the land was divided to them, was about 450 years.' *Whitby*. I agree with this writer, that this is not the natural or obvious construction of the passage; but could it stand without any alteration of the text, it might be admitted.—'And after these things, which took up about 450 years, He gave them judges, &c.' This would require no change in the text; but I doubt whether it be not wholly inadmissible; and if so, we must recur to the solution above given.

*Scott*. (20.) 'As this passage cannot be reconciled with it, *Kuin*. (whom see) suspects 1 K. 6:1. to be corrupt.'

V. 21. 'David was but 30 years of age, when he began to reign over Judah, which was not till after Saul was slain; (2 Sam. 5:4.) and Samuel did only anoint him, (at which time we cannot suppose David to have been less than 15 years old,) but lived a considerable time after. The authority of Josephus is urged; . . . for he says, that Saul reigned 13 years during Samuel's life, and 22 years after his death; but this is utterly incredible; for then David could not be 8 years old when Samuel anointed him.' *Doddr*.—Indeed, as many subsequent events, which must have occupied several years, took place, between the anointing of David and the death of Samuel; 1 S. 16: 25:1. it is certain, according to the scriptural history, that Saul survived Samuel but a short time; and every circumstance combines to prove, that all the years during which Samuel judged Israel, and Saul reigned, are here intended. 'I suppose, that the years of Samuel also are added to the reign of the king, by Paul; *Sulpitius Severus*; as doubtless they were, they making together just 40 years.' *Whitby*.

V. 22. *My will*. 'The wills.' Implying the several particulars, in which David, a prophet, a king, and a type of Christ, accomplished the commands and purposes of God.

(22.) 'There is no passage of the O. T. which contains precisely these words; which seem to be confounded from Ps. 89:21. 1 S. 13:14. with some slight alteration and amplification; on which mode of citing from the O. T., see note, 7:7.'

V. 24-37. The Jews, who were present, had doubtless heard of John's ministry; and of his declaration that he was not the Messiah, but his forerunner; and probably some report had reached them of his testimony to Jesus. The passage here quoted shows, that the Messiah was 'the Son of God' in a peculiar sense; and the decree there mentioned was confirmed, when He was declared to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead.' *Rom.* 1:1-4. The several quotations are nearly in the words of the Sept., which accord with the Heb.—(33) *The second Psalm*.] The Psalms were arranged in the same order as they are at present.—*His own generation by the will of God.*]



25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not *he*: but, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose.

26 Men *and* brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you <sup>r</sup> is the word of this salvation sent.

27 For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath-day, <sup>r</sup> they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*.

28 And though they found no cause of death *in him*, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.

29 And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took *him* down from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre.

30 But God raised him from the dead:

31 And he was seen <sup>a</sup> many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people.

32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise <sup>b</sup> which was made unto the fathers,

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou <sup>c</sup> art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure <sup>d</sup> mercies of David.

35 Wherefore he saith also, in <sup>e</sup> another *psalm*, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

36 For David, <sup>f</sup> after he had served his own generation by the will of God, <sup>g</sup> fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

37 But he, whom God <sup>h</sup> raised again, saw no corruption.

y Mat. 10:6. LXX, both in e Ps. 16:10.  
z Lu. 24:20,44. the place of Is. f or, after he had  
a c. 1:3. 55: 3, and in g in his own age  
b Ro. 4:13. many others, served the will  
c Ps. 2:7. use for that of God.  
d Gr. *ta osia, holy,* which is in the g 1 K. 2:10.  
or, *just things;* Hebrew mercies. h c. 2:24.  
which word the cics.

is supported, therefore he insists largely on this, and shows, 1st. That He rose by consent, v. 30. *God raised Him*; sent an angel on purpose to roll away the stone from the prison door, returned Him the spirit which at his death He had committed into the hands of his Father, and quickened Him by the Holy Ghost. 2dly. That there was sufficient proof of his being risen, v. 31. Paul says nothing of his own seeing Him, which he mentions, 1 Cor. 15: 8. because it was in

a vision, which was more convincing to himself, than it could be when produced to others; [but he uses *we* in v. 32.] 3dly. That so far are we from designing to put any slur on you, that the doctrine we preach, if you receive it aright, and understand it, brings you the greatest honor and satisfaction imaginable, v. 32, 33.; for it is in the resurrection of Christ, that *the promise which was made to your fathers*, the patriarchs, &c. *is fulfilled to you.* God raised up Jesus to be a Prophet, at his baptism; to be a Priest to make atonement, at his death; and to be a King to rule over all, at his ascension; and *his raising Him up again from the dead*, was the confirmation and ratification of all these commissions, and proved Him raised of God to these offices. This is the fulfilling of the promises made to the fathers, the promise of sending the Messiah, and of all those benefits and blessings which were to be had with Him and by Him. Paul puts himself into the number of the Jews, to whom the promise was fulfilled, *to us their children.* Now if they who preached the Gospel, brought them *these glad tidings*, instead of looking upon them as enemies, they ought to caress them as their best friends, and embrace their doctrine; for if they valued the promise so much, and themselves by it, much more the performance. And the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, the great thing the Jews found themselves aggrieved at, was so far from infringing the promise made to them, that the promise itself, that *all the families of the earth* should be blessed in the Messiah, could not otherwise be accomplished. 4thly. That the resurrection of Christ was the great proof of his being the Son of God; and confirms what was written in the second Ps. *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee.* That the resurrection of Christ from the dead, was designed to evidence and evince this, is plain from that of the apostle, Rom. 1: 4. Abundance of truth there is couched in those words; that this Jesus was *begotten of the Father before all worlds*; was the *Brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person*, as the son is of the father's: that He was the *Logos*, the *eternal Thought of the eternal Mind*; that He was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin; for on that account also, *that Holy Thing* was called *the Son of God*, Luke 1: 35. that He was God's Agent in creating and governing the world, and in redeeming it and reconciling it to Himself, and *faithful as a Son in his own house*; and as such was *Heir of all things*. Now all this which was declared at Christ's baptism, and again at his transfiguration, was undeniably proved by his resurrection. When his eternal generation is spoken of, it is not improper to say, *This day have I begotten Thee*; for *from everlasting to everlasting*, is with God as it were one and the same eternal [present]. Yet it may also be accommodated to his resurrection, in a subordinate sense, 'This day have I made it to appear that I have begotten Thee'; and this day have I begotten all that are given to Thee: ' for it is said, 1 Pet. 1: 3. that *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, as our God and Father, *hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.* 5thly. That his being raised the third day, so as not to see corruption, and to a heavenly life, so as no more to return to corruption, to the state of the dead, as others did who were raised to life, further confirms his being the Messiah promised. He rose to

die no more; so it is expressed Rom. 6: 9. Now this was the fulfilling of that scripture, Is. 55: 3. for in the promise made to David, and in him to Christ, great stress is laid upon the faithfulness of God, Ps. 89: 1, 2, 5, 24, 33. and upon the oath God had sworn *by his holiness*, v. 35. Now this makes them *sure mercies*, indeed, that He who is intrusted with the dispensing of them, is risen, to die no more; so that He ever lives to see his own will executed, and the blessings He hath purchased for us, given out to us. He rose so soon after He was dead, that his body did not see corruption; for it is not till the third day that the body begins to change. Now this was promised to David, it was one of *the sure mercies of David*; for it was said to him in Ps. 16: 10. *Neither wilt Thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption*, v. 35. God had promised to David, that He would raise up the Messiah of his seed, who should therefore be a Man, but should not like other men see corruption. This promise could not be and was not accomplished in David, v. 36. but looked forward to and was accomplished in Christ, v. 37.

3. Having given them this account of the Lord Jesus, and already, in the midst of his discourse, v. 26. tenderly and respectfully told them their intimate and common concern in it, he comes, in closing, to apply it to his hearers. And let all that hear the Gospel of Christ, know:

(1.) That it is an act of indemnity granted by the King of kings to the children of men, who stand attainted at his bar of treason against his crown and dignity; and it is for and in consideration of the mediation of Christ between God and man, that this act of grace is passed and proclaimed, v. 33. *Through this Man*, who died and rose again, *is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.* We are to tell you, in God's name, that your sins, though many and great, may be forgiven, and how it is come about that they may be so, without any injury to God's honor; and how you may obtain their forgiveness.

(2.) That it does that for us, which the law of Moses could not do. The Jews were jealous for the law, and because it prescribed expiatory and pacificatory sacrifices, and a great variety of purifications, fancied they might be justified by it before God. 'No,' saith Paul, 'be it known to you, that it is by Christ only that *they who believe in Him*, and none else, are *justified from all things*, from all the guilt and stain of sin, *from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses*,' v. 39. therefore embrace the Gospel, and adhere not to the Law, because the Gospel is perfective, not destructive, of the law. Note, [1.] The great concern of sinners, is, to be justified, to be acquitted from guilt, and accepted as righteous in God's sight. [2.] Those who are truly justified are acquitted from all their guilt; for if any be left charged on the sinner, he is undone. [3.] It was impossible for a sinner to be justified by the law of Moses; not by his moral law, for we have all broken it, and transgress it daily, so that instead of justifying us, it condemns us: not by his remedial law, for it was not possible that the *blood of bulls and goats* should take away sin, should satisfy God's offended justice, or pacify the sinner's wounded conscience. It was but a ritual and typical institution. See Heb. 9: 9. 10: 1, 4. [4.] By Jesus Christ we obtain a complete justification; for by Him a complete atonement was made for sin. [5.] All that believe

As there is no preposition to either clause, the words may be rendered, 'Having served,' or 'ministered unto the will,' or counsel, 'of God, in his own generation, he fell asleep, &c.' And this seems the more exact view of the subject. 'The counsel of God,' to which David ministered, related to many generations; but he fulfilled his service during his life; whereas Christ fulfils a most important part of his office, subordinate to his death, as risen, and ascended, and glorified. SCOTT.

(25.) *Course.*] A metaphor from racing; note, 1 Cor. 9: 24. Ed.  
(33.) *Second.*] 'Or, first, as the Codex Cant., and some Fathers read,

which, as the more difficult reading, most critics receive. The Ps. in our editions, 2d, was once reckoned the 1st. Ps. 1. being considered but a preface.' BL. Kuin. thinks the kings of Israel, as vicereagents of the Supreme King, were styled sons of God, Ps. 89: 27. 2 S. 7: 14. : hence the Messiah was so called, and gives the sense of the ch., 'Thou art a King appointed by Me. Wetst. quotes the expression, 'this day,' &c. as used by classic writers, of sudden deliverance from a perilous crisis; and as a mode of expressing peculiar tenderness. See BL and Kuin. Ed.

(34.) *Corruption.*] 'Experience putrefaction.'

BLOOMF.



38 Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins :

39 And by <sup>j</sup>him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in <sup>k</sup>the prophets ;

41 Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish : for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in nowise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

42 ¶ And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them <sup>l</sup>the next sabbath.

43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas : who speaking to them, persuaded them to continue <sup>m</sup>in the grace of God.

44 ¶ And the next sabbath-day came almost the whole city together, to hear the word of God.

45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, <sup>n</sup>contradicting and blaspheming.

i Da. 9:24. Lu. k Is. 29:14. Ha. Sabbath between. 24:47. 1 Jn. 2:12. 1:5. m c. 14:22. He j Is. 53:11. Ha. 2: 1 in the week between, or, in the 4. Ro. 3:28. 8:1. n c. 13:6.

in Christ, that rely on Him, and give up themselves to be ruled by Him, are justified by Him, and none but they. [6.] What the Law could not do for us, in that it was weak, that the Gospel of Christ does; therefore it was folly, out of a jealousy for the law of Moses, and the honor of that institution, to conceive a jealousy of the Gospel of Christ, and the designs of that more perfect institution.

(3.) It is at their utmost peril if they reject the Gospel of Christ, and turn their backs on the offer now made them, v. 40, 41. Those to whom the Gospel is preached, must see themselves on trial, and are concerned to beware lest they be found refusers of the grace offered. The threatenings are warnings to us. Now the prophecy referred to; we have, Hab. 1:5. where the destruction of the Jewish nation by the Chaldeans, is foretold as an incredible, unparalleled destruction; and that is here applied to the destruc-

tion that was coming on that nation by the Romans, for their rejecting of the Gospel of Christ. The apostle follows the Sept. tr.; which reads, *Behold, ye despisers*: (for, Behold, ye among the heathen;) because [while] it made the text more apposite to his purpose; [his audience better knew the Sept. than the Heb.] Note, it is the ruin of many, that they despise religion, they look upon it as a thing below them, and are not willing to stoop to it. But they that will not wonder and be saved, shall wonder and perish. Let the unbelieving Jews expect, that God will work a work in their days, which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you. This may be understood as a prediction, either, [1.] Of their sin; that they should be incredulous, that that great work of God, the redemption of the world by Christ, though it should be in the most solemn manner declared unto them, yet they would in no wise believe it, Is. 53:1. Or, [2.] Of their destruction; the dissolving of the Jewish polity, the taking of the kingdom of God from them, and giving it to the Gentiles, the destruction of their holy house and city, and the dispersion of their people, Mat. 24:21. Thus is there a *strange punishment to the workers of iniquity*, especially to the despisers of Christ, Job 31:3.

V. 42—52. The design of this story being to vindicate the apostles, especially Paul, as he doth himself at large, Rom. 11. from the reflections of the Jews on him for preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, it is here observed, that he proceeded therein with all the caution imaginable, and on due consideration, of which here is an instance.

I. Some of the Jews were so incensed against the preaching of the Gospel, not to the Gentiles, but to themselves, that they would not bear to hear it, but resolved they would not be convinced, and went out of the synagogue while Paul was preaching, v. 42. in contempt of him and his doctrine, and to the disturbance of the congregation. Now this spoke an open, obstinate infidelity. Justly therefore was the Gospel taken from them, when they first took themselves from it. God never leaves any till they first leave Him.

II. The Gentiles were as willing to hear the Gospel, as those rude and ill-conditioned Jews were to get out of the hearing of it; They besought that these words, or words to this effect, might be preached to them the next Sabbath; in the week between, so some take it; on the second and fifth day of the week, which in some synagogues were their lecture-days. But it appears, v. 44. that it was the next sabbath-day that they came together. This justifies Paul in his preaching to them, that he was invited to it, as Peter was sent for to Cornelius. Who could refuse to break the bread of life to those who begged so hard for it; and to give that to

the poor at the door, which the children at the table threw under their feet? They had heard the doctrine of Christ, but did not understand it at the first hearing, nor could they remember all that they had heard, therefore they begged it might be preached to them again. It is good to have the Word of Christ repeated to us. To hear the same things should not be grievous, because it is safe, Phil. 3:1.

III. There were some, nay, many of the Jews and religious proselytes wrought upon, who followed Paul and Barnabas, and received further instructions and encouragement from them: submitted to the grace of God, and were admitted to the benefit and comfort of it; that is implied in their being exhorted to continue in it. Paul and Barnabas, speaking to them with all the freedom and friendship imaginable, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God; to hold fast what they had received; to continue in their belief of the Gospel of grace; to continue in their dependence on the Spirit of grace, and attendance on the means of grace. And the grace of God shall not be wanting to those who thus continue in it.

IV. There was a cheerful attendance upon the preaching of the Gospel the next sabbath-day; (v. 44.) proving the fields were white to the harvest, and so justifying Paul. Almost the whole city (the generality of which were Gentiles) came together to hear the Word of God. Probably Paul and Barnabas were not idle in the week-days, but took all opportunities in the week between, (as some think the Gentiles desired,) to bring them acquainted with Christ, and to raise their expectations from Him. They did a great deal in private discourse and conversation, as well as in their public sermons. Some of this vast concourse came out of curiosity, the thing being new; others, longing to see what the Jews would do on the second tender of the Gospel to them; and many who had heard something of the Word of God, came to hear more; and to hear it, not as the word of men, but as the Word of God by which we must be ruled and judged.

V. When the Jews saw the multitudes, and considered what an encouragement it was to Paul to go on in his work; when they saw people thus flying like doves to their windows, and what probability there was, that among these multitudes, some would be, without doubt, wrought upon, and, it is likely, the greater part, to embrace Christ,—this filled them with indignation and envy, v. 45. This was the same spirit that worked in the Pharisees toward Christ, they were cut to the heart, when they saw the whole world go after Him. When the kingdom of heaven was opened, they not only would not go in themselves, but were angry with them that did. They opposed the doctrine the apostles preached; cavilled at those things, start-

V. 38—41. The apostle here applied the doctrine, which he had stated and proved.—There were several crimes, for which no sacrifices were appointed, but to which the sentence of death was annexed, by that law. Ps. 51:16.—This discourse, and the subsequent vs., are worthy of particular consideration; especially for the representation which it gives of the apostle's message; and as it enters so explicitly, in the way of the epistles, into the doctrine of justification by Christ. Rom. 3:19—26. 4:1—8. 5:1, 2.

SCOTT. (39.) 'The Law appointed sin-offerings to expiate smaller offences, so far as that the offender who offered them should be free from all further prosecution on account of them. But this very view of them shows, how absolutely necessary to the being of society it was, that they should not be admitted in cases of murder, adultery, &c. These crimes, therefore, were made capital; nor was the dying criminal, however penitent, allowed to offer them; which would have been quite inconsistent with the temporal pardon connected with them. But the expiatory sacrifice of Christ takes away the guilt of all sins; and though it by no means affects the manner in which offenders would stand in human courts, (which the Mosaic sacrifice did,) it delivers from the condemnation of God in the invisible world, with respect to which the others could have no efficacy at all; as it was a very supposable case, that an impenitent sinner might present them in all their exactest forms. Comp. Rom. 8:3. Gal. 2:16. Heb. 10:4.'

V. 42—48. 'As many as were ordained to eternal life.'—Some interpret the word here used, of the internal disposition of the heart of the hearers; those who were in earnest to obtain eternal life at all adventures, believed the Gospel. This indeed does not seem the meaning of

the word; yet as such a disposition is the effect of preventing grace, it still leads us back to that humiliating [humbling] doctrine, which so much labor is employed in vain to obscure or exclude. Phil. 2:12, 13. Jam. 1:6—18. See Art. x. of the Church of England. 'O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed, &c.' Col. 'The translators of the English Testament give many words a predestinarian sense, which there is no reason for.' Gilpin. The justice of this remark may fairly be disputed: but it shows, at least, what even an opponent allows to have been the creed of the translators; for men do not generally, in translating or commenting, give words a meaning contrary to their own decided opinions, without very strong reasons for so doing.—It is indeed useless, and highly improper, and quite unnecessary, to rest the argument on a word, which may perhaps admit of some other meaning; but the labored discussions of those, who are greatly afraid lest the doctrine of gratuitous personal election to eternal life should be collected from it, leave this impression on my mind, that these writers would themselves have carefully avoided a term, which needs so much guarding against misconception.—(47) I have set, &c.] Nearly, not exactly from the LXX, who well tr. the Heb. Is. 49:5,6. Sc.

(42.) The words 'the Jews,' and 'the Gentiles,' seem to Bl. to have been brought in from the marg., where some glossographer put them as explanatory. See his satisfactory note. Ed. Next.] 'Scal., Grot., Casaub., Beza, Tindal, Schmid, Pearce, Schoettgen, (who proves the Jews had week-day meetings for worship,) and some recent Germans, take it to signify, after the Sabbath, i. e. some intermediate week-day. But Erasmus, Glass, Kypke, Krebs, Morns, Heinr., Kuin., also Syr., Vulg., Arab., Æth., coincide with our Eng. vers.; confirmed by v. 44.' Bl.



46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.

49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

50 ¶ But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.

51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium.

o Mat. 10:6. Lu. 21:43. Ro. 10:19. s 2 Ti. 3:11.  
24:47. Ro. 1:16. q Is. 49:6. t Ma. 6:11. Lu. 9:5. c. 13:6.  
p De. 32:21. Mat. r c. 2:47. Ro. 8:30.

ed objections against them, finding some fault or other with everything he said, contradicting and blaspheming. Literally, contradicting, they contradicted. They did it with the utmost spite and rage imaginable; they persisted in their contradiction, and nothing would silence them. Commonly those who begin with [thus] contradicting, end with blaspheming.

VI. The apostles hereupon solemnly and openly declare themselves discharged from their obligation to the Jews, and at liberty to bring the word of salvation to the Gentiles, even by the implicit consent of the Jews themselves. In declaring this, it is said, v. 46. Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, more bold than they had been, while shy of looking favorably on the Gentiles, for fear of giving offence to the Jews, and laying a stumbling-block in their way. There is a time for the preachers of the Gospel to show as much of the boldness of the lion, as of the wisdom of the serpent, and the harmlessness of the dove. When the adversaries of Christ's cause begin to be daring, it is not for its advocates to be retired and cowardly. Paul and Barnabas own, that the Jews were entitled to the first offer, v. 46. Luke 24:47. Mark 7:27. but charge them with the refusal of it; herein ye judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life. In one sense, we must all judge ourselves unworthy of everlasting life, for there is nothing in us, or done by us, by which we can pretend to merit it, and we must be made sensible of this; but here the meaning is, 'Ye discover, or make it to appear, that ye are not meet for eternal life; ye throw away all your claims and hopes, and give up your pretensions to it; since ye will not take it from his hands, into whose hand the Father has given it, ye do, in effect, pass this judgment on yourselves, and out of your own mouth ye shall be judged; ye will not have it by Christ, by whom alone it is to be had, and so shall your doom be,

ye shall not have it at all.' Upon this they ground their preaching of the Gospel to the uncircumcised; justify themselves in it by a divine warrant, v. 47. 'The Lord Jesus gave us directions to witness to Him in Jerusalem and Judea, first, and after that, to the utmost part of the earth, to preach the Gospel to every creature, to disciple all nations.'

This is according to what was foretold in the O. T. When the Messiah, in the prospect of the Jews' infidelity, was ready to say, I have labored in vain, He was told, to his satisfaction, that though Israel was not gathered yet He should be glorious; that his blood should not be shed in vain, nor his purchase made in vain, nor his doctrine preached in vain, nor his Spirit sent in vain; 'For I have set Thee, not only raised Thee up, but established Thee, to be a Light of the Gentiles, not only a shining Light for a time, but a standing Light, set thee for a Light, that Thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.' Those of any nation should be welcome to Him, some of every nation have heard of Him, Rom. 10:18. and all nations shall at length become his kingdom.

VII. The Gentiles cheerfully embraced that which the Jews scornfully rejected, v. 48, 49. so the apostle shows at large, Rom. 11:12, 15, 17, 19.

1. They took the comfort of it; were glad. Our being put into a condition favorable to salvation, ought to be the matter of our rejoicing; when the Gentiles did but hear that the offers of grace should be made them, they were glad. Many grieve under doubts, whether they have an interest in Christ or no, when they should be rejoicing that they may.

2. They gave God the praise of it; They glorified the Word of the Lord; i. e. Christ, so some, the essential Word; they conceived a mighty veneration for Him, and expressed the high thoughts they had of Him. Or rather, the Gospel; the more they knew of it, the more they admired it. Oh! what a light, what a power, what a treasure, does this Gospel bring along with it! How excellent are its truths, its precepts, its promises! How far transcending all other institutions! How plainly divine and heavenly is its original! Thus they glorified the Word of the Lord, and that is it which He has Himself magnified above all his name, Ps. 138:2. and will magnify and make honorable, Is. 42:21. Those speak best of the honor of the Word of the Lord, that speak experimentally, that have themselves been captivated by its power, and comforted by its sweetness.

3. Many of them became, not only professors of the Christian faith, but sincerely obedient to the faith: As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed. God by his Spirit wrought true faith in them for whom He had in his counsels from everlasting designed a happiness to everlasting. (1.) Those believed, to whom God gave grace to believe; whom, by a secret but mighty operation, He brought into subjection to the Gospel of Christ, and made willing in the day of his power. Those came to Christ, whom the Father drew, and to whom the Spirit made the gospel-call effectual. It is called the faith of the operation of God, Col. 2:12. and is said to be wrought by the same power that raised up Christ, Eph. 1:19, 20. (2.) God gave this grace to believe, to all those among them, who were ordained to eternal life; for whom He had predestinated, them He also called, Rom. 8:30. or, as many as were disposed to eternal life, as many as had a concern about their eternal state, and aimed

to make sure of eternal life, believed in Christ, in whom God hath treasured up that life, 1 John 5:11. and who is the only Way to it; and it was the grace of God that wrought it in them. Those will be brought to believe in Christ, that by his grace are well disposed to eternal life, and make that their aim.

4. When they believed, they did what they could to spread the knowledge of Christ and his Gospel among their neighbors, v. 49. And the Word of the Lord was published throughout all the region; when it was received with so much satisfaction in the chief city, it soon spread itself into all parts of the country. Those that have got acquaintance with Christ themselves, will do what they can to bring others acquainted with Him.

VIII. Paul and Barnabas, having sowed the seeds of a Christian church there, quitted the place and went to do the like elsewhere. We read,

1. How the unbelieving Jews expelled the apostles out of that country. They first turned their back on them, and then lifted up the heel against them, v. 50. Satau and his agents are most exasperated against the preachers of the Gospel, when they see them go on successfully, and therefore then will be sure to raise persecution against them. Thus it has been the common lot of the best men in the world, to suffer ill for doing well. They stirred up the devout and honorable women against them; some ladies of quality in the city, that were well affected to the Jewish religion, and were proselytes of the gate, therefore called devout women. These, according to the genius of their sex, were zealous, and bigoted; and it was easy, by false stories and misrepresentations, to incense them against the Gospel of Christ, as if it had been destructive of all religion, of which really it is perfective. It is good to see honorable women devout, and well affected to religious worship; but it is sad, when, under color of devotion to God, they conceive an enmity to Christ, as those here did. By these devout and honorable women, they stirred up likewise the chief men of the city, the magistrates and rulers, who had power in their hands, and set them against the apostles, and who had so little consideration as to suffer themselves to be made the tools of this ill-natured party, who neither would go into the kingdom of heaven themselves, nor suffer those, that were entering, to go in. They carried it so far, that they expelled them out of their coasts; by downright violence, that they were driven out.\* This was one method which the overruling providence of God took, to keep the first planters of the church from staying too long at a place; as, Mat. 10:23. This was likewise a method God took, to make those that were well disposed the more warmly affected toward the apostles; for it is natural to us to pity those that are persecuted, and to think the better of those that suffer, when we know they suffer unjustly, and to be the more ready to help them.

2. How the apostles abandoned and rejected the unbelieving Jews, v. 51. When they went out of the city, they used this ceremony in the sight of them that sat in the gate; or when they went out of the borders of their country, in the sight of them that were sent to see the country rid of them. Hereby they declared they would have no more to do with them, would take nothing that was theirs, for they sought not theirs,

\* It was the custom to send an officer with such, to see them fairly beyond the frontier. See Thucyd. Ed.

(48.) Ordained.] Well disposed for. Hamm., Whitby: disposed or determined for. Thaleman, Bl.; put themselves in rank for, Doddr.; were destined unto, (without philosophical or metaphysical refinement on the term, but in a popular sense,) Ros., Morus, Schoett., Kuin. 'That it is a popular mode of expression, is proved by Rabbinical citations of Lightf. and Wetst., who give [a score of examples] of the phrase ordained to the future life; to punishment; to life; to hell.' Bl. It would

seem we must look elsewhere for the doctrine of absolute election. Ed. V. 50. 'These "women of figure" (Doddr.) were fired with the characteristic zeal of new converts, and acted from the ardent temperament of their sex.' Bloomf. How much may the social progress expect from the female character, uncompromisingly directed to the assertion of pure principle, when woman shall hold the station for which God designed her!



52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

#### CHAP. XIV.

1 Paul and Barnabas are persecuted from Iconium. 8 At Lystra Paul healeth a cripple, whereupon they are reputed as gods. 19 Paul is stoned. 21 They pass through divers churches, confirming the disciples in faith and patience. 26 Returning to Antioch, they report what God had done with them.

AND it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude, both of the Jews and also of the Greeks, believed.

2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil-affected against the brethren.

3 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

4 But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

5 And when there was an assault made, both of the Gentiles and also of the Jews, with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them,

u Mat. 5:12. a Ma. 16:20. He. b c. 23:24.  
1 Th. 1:6. 2:4.

but them; they expressed their detestation of their infidelity, and that, though Jews by birth, yet, having rejected the Gospel of Christ, they were in their eyes no better than heathen and profane. Thus they set them at defiance, and expressed their contempt of them and their malice, which they looked on as impotent. Thus they left a testimony behind them, that they had had a fair offer made them of the grace of the Gospel, which shall be proved against them in the day of judgment. This dust will prove that the preachers of the Gospel had been among them, but were expelled by them. Thus Christ had ordered them to do, and for this reason, Mat. 10:14. Luke 9:5. When they left them, they came to Iconium, not so much for safety, as for work.

3. What frame they left the new converts in at Antioch, v. 52. The disciples, when they saw with what courage and cheerfulness Paul and Barnabas not only bore the indignities done them, but went on with their work, notwithstanding, were in like manner spirited. (1.) They were very cheerful; one would have expected, when Paul and Barnabas were expelled, and perhaps forbidden to return, on pain of death, the disciples should have been full of grief and full of fear, looking for no other than that it would be their own turn next; no,

**PRACT. OBS.** The Lord raises up instruments for his work, and brings them forth from various places and situations in life; and that zeal for his glory, with which He inspires their hearts, induces them to renounce the most pleasing connexions, and flattering prospects, that they may be employed in promoting his cause.—It does not behoove us, who have no miraculous powers, or infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, to use such decided language, in reproving opposers and deceivers, as Paul did to 'Elymas the sorcerer:' yet we may plainly expose the hypocrisy, disingenuity, malice, and enmity, of those children and servants of 'the wicked one,' who show themselves to be 'enemies to all righteousness,' by deliberately 'perverting the right ways of the Lord,' and the evident truths of the Gospel, to promote their own credit and interest.—Those 'who put their hands to the plough, and look back, are not fit for the kingdom of God.' Yet some, who at first disappointed the expectations of senior ministers, have afterwards been recovered and made useful.—The reading of the Scriptures, in the public assemblies of God's people, is an ancient and excellent usage; and they, who are called to preach the Gospel, will find a peculiar advantage, in laying their cre-

they were filled with joy in Christ, had such a satisfactory assurance of Christ's carrying on and perfecting his own work in them, and among them, and that either He would screen them from trouble, or bear them up under it, that all their fears were swallowed up in their believing joys. (2.) They were very courageous; wonderfully animated with a holy resolution to cleave to Christ, whatever difficulties they met with; that seems especially to be meant by *their being filled with the Holy Ghost*; for that is used of Peter's boldness, ch. 4:8. and Stephen's, ch. 7:55. and Paul's ch. 13:9. The more we relish the comforts and encouragements we meet with in the power of godliness, and the fuller our hearts are of them, the better prepared we are to face the difficulties we meet with in the profession of godliness.

**CHAP. XIV.** We have in this ch., a further account of the progress of the Gospel, by the ministry of Paul and Barnabas among the Gentiles; it goes on yet with opposition, as before, among the unbelieving Jews.

V. 1—7. I. The preaching of the Gospel in Iconium, whither the apostles were forced to retire from Antioch. Observe, They made the first offer of the Gospel to the Jews, in their synagogues; the Jews at Antioch had used them barbarously, yet they did not therefore decline preaching the Gospel to the Jews at Iconium, who perhaps might be better disposed. Let not those of any denomination be condemned in the gross, nor some suffer for others' faults; but let us do good to those who have done evil to us. Though the blood-thirsty hate the upright, yet the just seek their soul, Prov. 29:10. the salvation of it. They went both together into the synagogue, to testify their unanimity and mutual affection; that people might say, See how they love one another, and might think the better of Christianity, and that they might strengthen one another's hands, and confirm one another's testimony, and out of the mouth of two witnesses every word might be established.

II. Their success; a great multitude (Jews and Greeks, i. e. Gentiles) believed. Observe,

1. In the close of the foregoing ch. the Gospel was preached first to the Jews, and some of them believed, then to the Gentiles, and some of them believed; but here, to both together on the same level, both are reconciled to God in one body, Eph. 2:16. together admitted into the church, without distinction.

2. There seems to have been something remarkable in the manner of the apostles' preaching here, which contributed to their success; They so spake, so plainly, so convincingly, with such an evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, and with such power; so warmly, so affectionately, and with such a manifest concern for the souls of men; they spake so from the heart, so earnestly and se-

riously, so boldly and courageously, that they who heard them could not but say, God was with them of a truth. Yet the success was not to be attributed to the manner of their preaching, but to the Spirit of God, who made use of these means.

III. The opposition and trouble created them, lest they should be puffed up.

1. Unbelieving Jews were the first spring of it, here, as elsewhere, v. 2. they stirred up the Gentiles. The influence the Gospel had on many of the Gentiles, and their embracing of it, as it provoked some of the Jews to a holy jealousy, and stirred them up to receive the Gospel too, Rom. 11:14. so it provoked others of them to a wicked jealousy, and exasperated them against the Gospel.

2. Disaffected Gentiles, irritated by the unbelieving Jews, were likely to be the instruments of their trouble; the Jews, by false suggestions, which they were continually buzzing in the ears of the Gentiles, made their minds evil affected against the brethren, whom of themselves they were inclined to think favorably of. Thus they soured and embittered their spirits against both the converters and the converted. It is no wonder, if those, who are ill affected toward good people, wish ill to them, speak ill of them, and contrive ill against them; it is all owing to ill-will. They molested and vexed the minds of the Gentiles; so some; they were continually teasing them with their impertinent solicitations. The tools of persecutors have a dog's life, set on continually.

IV. Their continuance in their work there, notwithstanding this opposition, and God's owning them in it, v. 3. Because the minds of the Gentiles were evil affected against them, one would think they should have withdrawn and hastened out of the way, or, if they had preached, should have preached cautiously; no, on the contrary, therefore they abode there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord. The more they perceived the spite and rancor of the town against the new converts, the more they were animated to go on in their work, and the more needful they saw it to continue among them, to confirm them in the faith, and to comfort them. They spake boldly, not afraid of giving offence to the unbelieving Jews; boldly in the Lord, in his strength, and trusting in Him to bear them out; and Christ is working with the apostles, according to his promise, Lo, I am with you always. When they went on in his name and strength, He failed not to give testimony to the word of his grace, Mark 16:20.

V. The division this occasioned in the city, v. 4. among the rulers and persons of rank, and among the common people, some holding with the unbelieving Jews, and others, with the apostles. Barnabas is here reckoned an apostle, though not one of the twelve, nor called in the extraordinary manner Paul was, because set apart by special designation of the Holy Ghost to the service

and instructions in this manner before the people. Yet, alas! many both hear and read the Word of God, who do not understand or believe it.—The Gospel should be 'preached to every creature;' yet with an especial address to those 'who fear God,' and inquire after the way in which his favor may be obtained.—Every transient view of the dealings of God with his church reminds us of his mercy and long-suffering, and of man's ingratitude and perverseness; but when He grants our inordinate desires, we may expect a scourge instead of a comfort.—As many as are 'ordained to eternal life' will believe; but we know not previously who these are; we should therefore declare, that 'Jesus is placed for a Light of the Gentiles, and for salvation to the ends of the earth;' and we should publish his truth as extensively as we can; and bear our testimony against those who oppose and reject it, however honorable or devout they may appear. Thus the Word of God will be glorified in the midst of persecution; and Jesus will fill his disciples with grace, peace, and 'joy in the Holy Ghost.' SCOTT.

\* So the doctrine of 'predestination' is, practically, of little consequence. Ed.

**NOTES.** CHAP. XIV. V. 1. *Greeks.*] John 12:20. *Greeks, or Gentiles.* Some of these were, perhaps, before favorable to the religion of the Jews, and frequented the synagogue; 13:16—19. but probably others were idolaters, who, on that occasion, were induced to attend. Sc.

V. 2. *Unbelieving.*] 17:5. 19:9. John 3:36. Rom. 2:8. 10:21. 11:30. 31. 15:31. Heb. 3:18. 11:31. 1 Pet. 2:7. 8. 3:1, 20. 4:17. It is often rendered *disobey*. 26:19. *Stirred up.*] 13:50. Not elsewhere. *Made—evil-affected.*] 7:6, 19. 12:1. 18:10. 1 Pet. 3:13. SCOTT.



6 They were ware of *it*, and fled unto Lystra, and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about :

7 And there they preached the gospel.

8 ¶ And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a <sup>d</sup> cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked :

9 The same heard Paul speak : who steadfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith <sup>e</sup> to be healed,

10 Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped <sup>f</sup> and walked.

11 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The <sup>g</sup> gods are come down to us, in the likeness of men.

12 And they called Barnabas, Jupiter ; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.

13 Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and <sup>h</sup> would have done sacrifice with the people.

c Mat. 10:23. e Mat. 9:28,29. g c. 28:6.  
d c. 3:2. f Is. 35:6. h Da. 2:46.

of the Gentiles. 1. We may here see the meaning of Christ's prediction, that He came not to send peace upon earth, but rather division, Luke 12: 51—53. If all had given in unanimously into his measures, there had been universal concord ; but disagreeing here, the breach was wide as the sea. Yet the apostles must not be blamed for coming to Iconium, because before the city was united, but now is divided ; for it is better that part go to heaven than all to hell. 2. We may here take the measures of our expectations ; let us not think it strange, if the preaching of the Gospel occasion division, nor be offended at it ; it is better to be reproached and persecuted as dividers for swimming against the stream, than yield ourselves to be carried down the stream that leads to destruction. Let us hold with the

apostles, and not fear them that hold with the Jews.

VI. The attempt made on the apostles by their enemies, v. 5. Observe, 1. The plotters ; the Gentiles, and the Jews, with their rulers ; Gentiles and Jews at enmity with one another, yet united against Christians, like Herod and Pilate, Sadducees and Pharisees, against Christ ; and like Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek, of old, against Israel. 2. The plot ; to use the apostles despitefully, expose them to disgrace, and then stone them to death ; and thus they hoped to sink their cause.

VII. They, v. 6, 7. got away on notice given them of the design, or the beginning of the attempt on them, which they were soon aware of, and made an honorable retreat, not an inglorious flight, to Lystra and Derbe, there to find work. In times of persecution, ministers may see cause to quit the spot, when yet they do not quit the work.

V. 8—18. In these vs. we have,

I. A miraculous cure wrought by Paul at Lystra on a cripple that had been lame from his birth, such an one as was miraculously cured by Peter and John, ch. 3:2. That introduced the Gospel among the Jews, this among the Gentiles ; both were designed to represent the impotency of all the children of men in spiritual things ; for it was when we were yet without strength, that Christ died for the ungodly, Rom. 5: 6. This poor cripple heard Paul preach, and, it is likely, was much affected ; believed the message was from heaven, and that the messengers, having their commission thence, had a divine power going along with them, and were therefore able to cure him of his lameness. This, Paul was aware of, by the spirit of discerning he had, and perhaps the show of his countenance did in part witness for him ; Paul perceived that he had faith to be healed ; desired it, hoped for it, had such a thing in his thoughts ; which it does not appear the lame man Peter healed, had, for he expected no more than an alms. Now God will not disappoint the desires of his own kindling, nor the hopes of his own raising. Paul spake to him with a loud voice, either because he was at some distance, or to show that the true miracles, by Christ, were far unlike the lying wonders by deceivers, that peeped, and muttered, and whispered, Is. 8: 19. He spake with a loud voice, that the people about might notice, and have their expectations raised of the effect.

Some copies read it, *I say unto thee, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Stand upright on thy feet.* It is certain that is implied, and, very probably, was expressed, by Paul, and power went along with this word ; for presently, he leaped and walked. Herein the Scripture was fulfilled, that, when the wilderness of the Gentile world is made to blossom as the rose, then shall the lame man leap as a hart, Is. 35: 1, 6.

II. The impression this cure made on the people ; they were amazed at it, had never seen or heard the like, and fell into an ecstasy of wonder. Paul and Barnabas were strangers, exiles, refugees, in their country ; everything concurred to make them mean and despicable ; yet the working of this one miracle was enough to make them in the eyes of this people truly great and honorable, though the multitude of Christ's miracles could not screen Him from the utmost contempt among the Jews. We find here,

1. The people take them for gods, v. 11. in agreement with the pagan theology, and the fabulous account they had of the visits their gods made to this lower world. They carried this notion so far here, that they pretended to tell which of their gods they were, according to the ideas their poets had given them of the gods, v. 12. They called Barnabas, Jupiter : probably he was the senior, and the more portly, comely man, that had something of majesty in his countenance. And Paul they called Mercury, who was the messenger of the gods, that was sent on their errands, and also the god of oratory ; for Paul, though he had not the presence that Barnabas had, was the chief speaker, and had a greater command of language, and more agility and vivacity. Note, Jupiter used to take Mercury along with him, they said, and if he make a visit to their city, they will suppose he does so now.

2. The priest thereupon prepares to do sacrifice to them, v. 13. The temple of Jupiter was, it seems, before the gate of their city, as its protector and guardian ; and the priest of that idol and temple, hearing the people cry out thus, took the hint presently, and thought it was time for him to bestir himself to do his duty : many a costly sacrifice he had offered to the image of Jupiter, but if Jupiter be among them himself, it concerns him to do him the utmost honors imaginable ; and the people are ready to join with him in it. See how easily vain minds are carried away with a popular outcry !

V. 8—10. Probably Paul knew, by a divine suggestion, that the man expected a cure from the power of the Lord Jesus, and that it was a proper occasion for him to perform a miracle. SCOTT.

V. 11—13. This was very bold and decided language to zealous idolaters, with their priests at the head of them, in such a critical juncture ; and may be very properly contrasted with the temporizing conduct of heathen philosophers, who, being convinced of the folly and falsehood of the vulgar superstitions, not only conformed to them, but instructed their disciples to do the same, as a part of their duty to the republic.— Let the intelligent reader compare this conduct and declaration of the apostles towards the worshippers of Jupiter, with some modern admired effusions of expanded candor, in which the worship of God, whether men call him JENOVAN, Jove, Lord, or by any other name, is supposed to be equally acceptable to Him. Is it then of no consequence whether JENOVAN, or Jupiter, or Baal, be God ? Surely either the prophets and apostles were bigots, or these men have renounced Christianity, (1 K. 18:11. P. O. 17:29.)—(15) Like passions.] 'The pagans never denied, that their gods were beings of like passions with themselves ; but they attributed to them a total exemption from mortality and disease. . . . Indeed this was not only the principal, but, I may almost say, the sole distinction they made between gods and men. . . . We are your fellow-mortals, as liable as you to disease and death.' Campbell. This appears the direct import of the apostle's words ; yet liability to other infirmities and passions of human nature, needs not to be excluded ; but certainly they pervert the expression, who explain it of the prevalence of sinful passions. (Jam. 5:16—18.) ID.

(11.) Speech of Lycaonia.] Wetst. thinks this mentioned to show, that Paul did not understand what was said, or he would not have let the preparation go so far.' BL. 'The Greek language was indeed used in the regions of Asia ; but the ancient vernacular tongue was retained, and especially spoken by the common people. What precise language the Lycaonian was, cannot be determined. Grot. (on the authority of the ancients) supposes it the same as the Cappadocian ; [note, Job : end ;] Jablonski, a dialect of the Greek, but much assimilated to the Assyrian, and indeed derived from thence. Guhling contends, that the Lycaonian was of [Pelagic] Greek origin, but by migration and coalition with the languages of other nations, by distance of time, carelessness of speakers, and various other causes, had been changed from its original

root, and become in a manner lost.' KUIN.—'The gods have come down, &c.] 'It appears, from numberless passages in the heathen writers, that they suppose this often to have happened ; . . . and Elsner has shown, that this notion particularly prevailed with respect to Jupiter and Mercury. . . . Mr. Harrington well observes, that this persuasion might gain the more easily on the minds of the Lycaonians, on account of the well-known fable of Jupiter and Mercury, who were said (see Ovid) to have descended from heaven in human shape, (to see and reform the degeneracy of man,) and to have been entertained by Lycaon, from whom the Lycaonians received their names.' Doddr.—'The angels visiting Abraham, Jacob, &c. [comp. too, Gen. 11:5, 7. 18:21.] might have been the foundation on which most of those heathen fictions were built.' Dr. A. C.

(12.) 'It was a very common story, (see Ovid,) and, no doubt, familiar to the Lystrians, that Mercury formerly traversed the neighboring country of Phrygia, and was received by Philemon and Baucis.—Mercury is called, in Jamblichus, by precisely the phrase Luke uses, namely, logōn hēgemōn, a leader in discourse.' Jupiter, Mercury.] Zeus, Hermes. BLOOMF.

(13.) Oxen.] Lit. bulls. Garlands, sacrifice.] The carefully selected animals to be sacrificed (with the Romans and Greeks) 'were adorned with fillets, ribands, and crowns ; and their horns gilt.' The cut is a classic relic, showing a sacrifice : for the manner of it, see Potter and Adam. Ep. 'When the gods [in India] are taken out in procession, their necks are adorned with garlands ; the priests also wear them at the same time. On all festive occasions, the men and women [as did the ancient Egyptians] have on their sweet-scented garlands.

Garlands are also offered in token of respect.' Rob. See Bush's Illus.—'There is a meaning here, which ordinary readers will not readily apprehend. Many cities were put under the protection of a particular



14 Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,

15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein :

16 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.

17 Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

18 And with these sayings, scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

19 ¶ And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

i Mat. 26:65. I Co. 8:4. 17:30. j c. 10:26. Ja. 5: 1 Th. 1:9. o Ro. 1:20. 17. Re. 19:10. m Ge. 1:1. Ps. 33: p Job 5:10. Ps. k 1 Sa. 12:21. l 6. 146:6. Re. 147:8. Mat. 5: K. 16:13. Je. 14:7. 45. 14:22. Jo. 2:8. n Ps. 81:12. c. q 2 Co. 11:25.

When Christ, the Son of God, came down, and appeared in the likeness of men, and did many, very many miracles, yet they were so far from doing sacrifice to Him, that they made Him a sacrifice to their pride and malice ; He was in the world, and the world knew Him not ; He came to his own, and his own received Him not ; but Paul and Barnabas, on their working of one miracle, are deified presently. The same power of the god of this world, which prejudices the carnal mind against truth, makes errors and mistakes to find easy admission ; and both ways his turn is served. They brought oxen, to be sacrificed to them, and garlands, with which to crown the sacrifices. [Also, the gods themselves, the priests, and the gates of the temple.] These garlands were made up of flowers and ribbons ; and they gilded the horns of the oxen they sacrificed.

III. Paul and Barnabas protest [with the utmost horror] against this undue respect paid them, and with much ado prevent it. Many of the heathen emperors called themselves gods, and took a pride in having divine honors paid them ; but Christ's ministers, though real benefactors to mankind, while they only pretended to be so, refused those honors when rendered. Whose successor therefore he is, who sits in the temple of God, and shows that he is god, 2 Thess. 2, 4. and who is adored as our lord god the pope, it is easy to say. Observe,

1. The holy indignation Paul and Barnabas conceived at this ; they rent their clothes. We do not find that they rent their clothes when the people vilified them, and spake of stoning them ; they could bear that without disturbance ; but when they deified them, and spake of worshipping them, they could not bear it, but rent their clothes, as being more concerned for God's honor than their own.

deity : and the image of that deity placed at the entrance, to signify that he was the guardian and protector. To this, Luke, everywhere as accurate as he is circumstantial, refers. Dr. A. CLARKE.

(15.) Of like passions.] 'Obnoxious to the same common infirmities. This is also the meaning, James 5:17. and nothing could be more absurd, or injurious to the character of these holy men, than to imagine that it refers, in either of the places, to anything of ungoverned passion.' DODDR.

(17.) 'Raphelius shows, that the pagans spoke of rain as given by [78]

2. The pains they took to prevent it. They did not connive at it, much less suggest to one another, that it might contribute both to the safety of their persons and the success of their ministry, if they suffered the people to continue in this mistake, and so they might make a good hand of an ill thing. No, God's truth [never] needs the service of man's lie ; Christ had put honor enough on them in making them apostles, they needed not assume either the honor of princes, or the honor of gods ; they appeared with much more magnificent titles when called the ambassadors of Christ, and the stewards of the mysteries of God, than when called Jupiter and Mercury.

When they preached to the Jews, who hated idolatry, the apostles had nothing to do but to preach the grace of God in Christ, and needed not, as the prophets in dealing with their fathers, to preach against idolatry ; but when they had to do with the Gentiles, they must, as here, rectify their mistakes in natural religion, and bring them off from the gross corruption of that.

'We call you to worship the God that made you and all the world ; worship the true God, and cheat not yourselves with pretenders ; worship the sovereign Lord of all, and disparage not yourselves in bowing down to his creatures and subjects,' v. 16. In times past, for many ages, unto this day, He suffered all nations to walk in their own ways ; they might think, 'Have we not served these gods hitherto, and our fathers before us, time out of mind ; and why not still ?'—No, it was a trial of God's patience, and a miracle of mercy you were not cut off for it. But all the nations that had not the benefit of divine revelation, i. e. all but the Jews, He suffered to walk in their own ways, for they had nothing to check them, or control them, but their own consciences, their own thoughts, Rom. 2: 15. no scriptures, no prophets ; and then they were the more excusable if they mistook their way : but now that God has sent a revelation into the world, which is to be published to all nations, the case is altered. We may understand it as a judgment on all nations, that God suffered them to walk in their own ways, gave them up to their own hearts' lusts ; but now the time is come when the veil of the covering spread over all nations should be taken off, Is. 25: 7. and you will no longer be excused.

Their having no scriptures did in part excuse them, (therefore God did not destroy them for their idolatry, as He did the Jewish nation,) but not wholly ; they were highly criminal, and deeply guilty, before God ; for there were other witnesses for God, sufficient to inform them that He, and He only, is to be worshipped.

1. The bounties of common providence witness to us, that there is a God, for they are all dispensed wisely and with design. All the powers of nature witness to us a sovereign power in the God of nature, from whom they are derived, and on whom they depend.

2. The benefits we have by these bounties, witness to us, that we ought to make our acknowledgments not to the creatures who are made serviceable to us, but to the Creator who makes them so. He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good. God seems to reckon the instances of his goodness to be more pregnant, cogent proofs of his title to our homage and adoration, than the evidences of his greatness ; for his goodness is his glory. Because the most sensible instance of the goodness of Providence

to each of us in particular, is that of the daily provision made by it of meat and drink for us, the apostle chooses to insist on that. Of all the common operations of Providence, the heathen chose to form their notion of the supreme God by that which speaks terror, but the apostle here, to engage us to worship God, sets before us his beneficence, that we may have good thoughts of Him in everything wherein we have to do with Him, Eccl. 2: 24. Even those nations that had lost the knowledge of Him, and worshipped other gods, yet He filled their houses, filled their mouths, Job 22: 18. Ps. 17: 14. The Gentiles that lived without God in the world, yet lived upon God ; which Christ urges as a reason why we should do good to those that hate us, Mat. 5: 44, 45. Those heathen had their hearts filled with food, that was their felicity and satisfaction, they desired no more ; but these things will not fill the soul, Ez. 7: 19. nor will those that know how to value their own souls, be satisfied with them ; but the apostles put themselves in as sharers in the divine beneficence ; we must all own that God fills our hearts with food and gladness ; not only food, that we may live, but gladness, that we may live cheerfully ; to Him we owe it, that we do not all our days eat in sorrow.

Lastly, The success of this prohibition which the apostles gave to the people, v. 18. By these sayings, with much ado, they restrained the people from doing sacrifice to them ; so strongly were idolaters set upon their idolatry ! It was not enough for the apostles to refuse to be deified, but they resent it, they show them the evil of it, and all little enough, for they scarce restrained them from it ; and some of them were ready to blame the priest, that he did not go on with his business, notwithstanding. We may see here, what gave rise to the pagan idolatry ; it was, terminating those regards in the instruments of our comfort, which should have passed through them to the Author, instead of glorifying God for giving them such power ; which should make us very cautious, that we do not either give that honor to another, or take it to ourselves, which is due to God only.

V. 19—23. I. We have here a further account of the services and sufferings of Paul and Barnabas. 1. How Paul was stoned and left for dead, but miraculously came to himself again, v. 19, 20. They fell upon Paul, rather than Barnabas, because Paul, being the chief speaker, galled and vexed them more. See how restless the rage of the Jews was against the Gospel of Christ ; they could not bear that it should have footing anywhere. They irritated the people to that degree, that the mob rose and stoned Paul, in a popular tumult ; they knocked him down, and then drew him out of the city, as one not fit to live in it, or drew him out on a sledge, or in a cart, to bury him, supposing he had been dead. See how fickle the minds of carnal, worldly people are, that do not know and consider things ! Those that, but the other day, would have treated the apostles as more than men, now treat them as worse than brutes. Today, Hosanna, to-morrow, Crucify ; to-day sacrificed to, to-morrow sacrificed. We have an instance of a change the other way, ch. 28. This man is a murderer, v. 4 ; no doubt, he is a god, v. 6. Popular breath turns like the wind. If Paul would have been Mercury, he might have been enthroned, nay, enshrined ; but if he will be a faithful minister of Christ, he shall be stoned, and thrown out of the city. Thus they who easily sub-

God, and, which is very remarkable, not as coming from the gods ; and this he thinks a remnant of patriarchal piety, in a form of speech, older than the first idolatry. DODDR.

V. 19. Supposing he was dead.] 'So most probably he was.' Dr. A. C. ; who supposes the miracle extended, not only to the healing of the apostle's wounds, but to the restoration of life. Doddr. suggests, that there may have been an extraordinary appearance of the body, which led them to suppose he was dead, while he was not actually so. Ep.



20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

21 ¶ And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch,

22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

<sup>r</sup> had made many disciples. <sup>s</sup> c. 13:43. <sup>t</sup> Ro. 8:17. 2 Ti. 3:12.

mit to strong delusions, hate to receive the truth in the love of it.

2. How he was delivered by the power of God, v. 20. Some, it seems, at Lystra, found the mean between deifying the apostles and rejecting them; and even these new converts had courage to own Paul, when thus run down, though they had reason enough to fear, lest they who stoned him would stone them for owning him. They stood round about him, as a guard; stood to see whether he were alive or dead; and all of a sudden he rose up; though not dead, yet he was ill crushed and bruised, no doubt, and fainted away; he was in a *deliquium*, so that it was not without a miracle that he came so soon to himself, and was so well as to be able to go into the city. God's faithful servants, though cast down are not destroyed, 2 Cor. 4:9.

II. How they went on with their work, notwithstanding. However, their being persecuted here, is a known indication to them to seek for opportunities of usefulness elsewhere; therefore for the present they quit Lystra.

And, 1. They went the next day to Derbe, a city not far off; there they preached, and taught many, v. 21. It should seem Timothy was of that city; and one of the disciples that now attended Paul, had met him

at Antioch, and accompanied him in all this circuit; for, with reference to this story, Paul tells him how fully he had known the afflictions he endured at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, 2 Tim. 3:10, 11. Nothing is recorded that happened at Derbe.

2. They returned, and went over their work again, watering what they had sown; and having stayed as long as they thought fit at Derbe, they came back to Lystra, to Iconium, and Antioch, the cities where they had preached, v. 21. Now, as we have had a very instructive account of the methods they took in laying the foundation, and beginning the good work, so here we have the like of their building on that foundation, and carrying on that good work. Let us see what they did.

(1.) They confirmed the souls of the disciples; inculcated what was proper to confirm them, v. 22. Young converts are apt to waver, a little thing shocks them, old acquaintance beg they will not leave them; and those they look upon to be wiser than they, set before them the absurdity, indecency, and danger, of a change; they are allured, by the prospect of preferment, to stick to the traditions of their fathers; they are frightened with the danger of swimming against the stream. But the apostles come and tell them that *this is the true grace of God wherein they stand*, and this fortifies their pious resolutions in the strength of Christ, to adhere to Christ, whatever it cost them: it is the grace of God, and nothing less, that can effectually confirm the souls of the disciples, and prevent their apostasy.

(2.) They exhorted them to continue in the faith; or, as it may be read, they encouraged them. They told them it was both their duty and interest to persevere; to abide in the belief of Christ's being the Son of God, and the Savior of the world. Note, They that are continually surrounded with temptations to apostasy, have need to be continually attended with pressing exhortations to perseverance.

(3.) What they insisted most on, was, that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. Not only they must, but we; all that will go to heaven, must expect tribulation and persecution in their way thither. But is this the way to confirm the souls of the disciples, and to engage them to continue in the faith? One would think it should rather shock them, and make them

wear. No, as the matter is fairly stated and taken entire, it would help to confirm them, and fix them for Christ. It is true, they will meet with tribulation, with much tribulation. It is so appointed, the matter is fixed, and cannot be altered: all that will be Christ's disciples must take up the cross; when we gave up our names to Jesus Christ, it was what we agreed to; when we sat down and counted the cost, if we reckoned right, it was what we counted upon. It is the lot of the leaders in Christ's army as well as of the soldiers; not only you, but we; therefore as your own sufferings must not be a stumbling-block to you, so neither must ours; see 1 Thess. 3:3. As Christ did not put the apostles on any harder service than what He underwent before them, so neither did the apostles put the ordinary Christians.

(4.) They ordained them elders, or presbyters, in every church. Now, at this second visit, they settled them in some order, formed them into religious societies, under the conduct of a settled ministry, and settled that distinction, between them that are taught in the Word, and them that teach. Every church had its governors or presidents, whose office it was to pray with the members of the church, and to preach to them in their solemn assemblies, to administer all gospel-ordinances to them, and to take the oversight of them, to instruct the ignorant, warn the unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, and to convince gain-sayers. Those governors were then elders, that had in their qualification the wisdom and gravity of seniors, and in their commission the authority and command of seniors: not to make new laws, but to see to the observance and execution of the laws Christ has made; and so far they are to be obeyed and submitted to. These elders were ordained. The qualifications of such as were proposed, or proposed themselves, were judged of by the apostles, as most fit to judge; and they themselves, having devoted themselves, were solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry, and bound to it. These elders were ordained to them, to the disciples, to their service, for their good. Those that are in the faith have need to be built up in it, and have need of the elders' help therein; the pastors and teachers, who are to edify the body of Christ.

(5.) By prayer, joined with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, to the Lord Jesus, on whom they believed. When persons

V. 20. He rose up, &c.] This must certainly be the effect of a miraculous cure, approaching as near as one can conceive, to a resurrection from the dead. This is the more illustrated by his going the next day to Derbe; whereas, in a course of nature, he would then have felt his bruises much more than at first, and probably, after the best care that could have been taken of him, would hardly have been able to turn himself in his bed. Doddr.—Come into the city.] So that his persecutors might see the mighty power of God in his restoration, and the faith of the young converts be confirmed in the truth and goodness of God. Dr. A. C.—Doddr. suggests, here, in addition to what Henry says of Timothy, that, though it was not till Paul's next journey to Derbe, that he formed his intimate acquaintance with Timothy, ch. 16:1, 2. yet since he speaks of Timothy as having been a witness of his sufferings here, and in the neighborhood, 2 Tim. 3:10, 11. whereas we read nothing of any remarkable sufferings in that second progress, Acts 16:4. it seems, he begun his acquaintance now with that hopeful youth, whose pious mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois, 2 Tim. 1:5. seem now to have been entered into the Christian church, though he was not admitted till afterwards. Ed.

V. 21—23. These elders were their stated pastors. In respect of the manner in which they were selected, it cannot be supposed, that the apostles, in their present circumstances, would appoint any to the sacred ministry, who were not acceptable to the people; or that they would ordain any, without their own full satisfaction that they were proper persons, whatever the people might be inclined to. There seems to have been the most perfect harmony in the management of this important concern; yet it can scarcely be doubted, that both the apostles, and those to whom, in some sense, they afterwards delegated this part of their authority, interfered, with their judgment and influence, in the nomination of proper persons to the ministerial office; as well as set them apart by imposition of hands and prayer. In all such questions, the middle, between the extreme points contended for by the zealots of opposite parties, seems to be the nearest to the true state of the case.—As the churches increased, deacons were doubtless chosen, under the superintendency of the elders; but it does not appear that the apostles appointed any at this time.—It is probable the apostles, and those employed by them, selected the presbyters, or pastors, from such as were more signally made partakers of miraculous gifts, by the Holy Spirit; yet, as these endowments might be possessed by those who had not true faith and grace; and, as eminent and intelligent believers do not seem

always to have been endowed with them; it appears unscriptural to suppose that all such were appointed to the pastoral office, and none else.—No impartial person can, as it appears to me, read this passage, without being convinced, that stated resident pastors of each church, and not preachers of the Gospel at large, are here intended; but whether these stated resident pastors were, as some argue, 'bishops,' according to the modern acceptance of the word, is a subject which will hereafter come under our consideration. 20:17. Phil. 1:1. 1 Tim. 3:1.—(23) When they had ordained.] 2 Cor. 8:19. They (Paul and Barnabas) ordained them (the Christians) elders, &c.—If an election by holding up hands be intended, Paul and Barnabas were the sole electors. It may then be fairly asked, whether this is the only scriptural authority, for the people choosing their own spiritual pastors? or whether any other can be adduced? If no other, then surely, whatever may be said on the ground of expediency, the divine authority of this method stands on a very slender foundation! Scott.

(23.) Ordained them elders.] Elder seems to be here the name of an office. These were all young or new converts, and yet among them the apostles constituted elders.—The word ordain, we use in an ecclesiastical sense, to signify the appointment of a person to an office in the church, by the imposition of the hands of those who are rulers in that church. But cheirotonia signifies the holding up, or stretching out the hand, as approving of the choice of any person to a particular work; whereas cheirothesia signifies the imposition of hands. I believe the simple truth to be, that in ancient times the people chose by the cheirotonia (lifting up of hands) their spiritual pastor; and the rulers of the church, whether apostles or others, appointed that person to his office by the cheirothesia, or imposition of hands; and perhaps each of these was thought to be equally necessary; the church agreeing in the election of the person; and the rulers of the church appointing, by the imposition of hands, the person thus elected. Dr. A. C. Mr. Harrington (in Doddr.) renders the words, ordained them elders by the votes of the people, urging the authority of Suidas, who explains cheirotonia by "the election of magistrates, or ratification of laws by many, signified by holding up, or stretching out the hand." Comp. 2 Cor. 8:19. Raphaelus has confirmed the same interpretation: and the old English Bible tr. when they had ordained them elders by election. Doddr. himself renders, constituted presbyters for them in every church. He says, 'I have not rendered it ordained, because custom has, among us especially, affixed to that word, in such a connexion, the idea of laying on hands in



24 And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

25 And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia :

26 And thence sailed to Antioch, <sup>u</sup> from whence they had been recommended <sup>v</sup> to the grace of God, for the work which they fulfilled.

27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed <sup>w</sup> all that God had done with them, and how he had opened <sup>x</sup> the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

28 And there they abode long time with the disciples.

### CHAP. XV.

<sup>1</sup> Great dissension ariseth touching circumcision. <sup>6</sup> The apostles consult about it, <sup>22</sup> and send their determination by letters to the churches. <sup>36</sup> Paul and Barnabas, thinking to visit the brethren together, fall at strife, and depart asunder.

AND <sup>a</sup> certain men which came down from Judea, taught the brethren, and said, Except <sup>b</sup> ye be circumcised <sup>c</sup> after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

u c. 13:1,3. x 1 Co. 16:9. 2 a Ga. 2:12.  
v c. 15:40. Co. 2:12. Re. b Jn. 7:22.  
w c. 15:4. 3:8. c Le. 12:3.

are brought to believe, and that sincerely, there is still that *lacking in their faith*, which needs to be *perfected*. The ministers that take most care of them, must after all commend them to the Lord by prayer; as Christ in his prayer, John 17. commended his disciples to his Father. *Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me. Father, keep them.* In doing this, it is a great encouragement to us, that we can say, 'It is He in whom they believed, we commit them to Him, and know He is able to keep what they and we have committed to Him against that day,' 2 Tim. 1:12. It is good to join fasting with prayer, in token of our humiliation for sin, and in order to add vigor to our prayers. When parting with our friends, the best farewell is to commend them to the Lord, and to leave them with Him.

3. They went on preaching the Gospel in other places where they had been, but, as it should seem, had not made so many converts as now to form churches; therefore thither they came to pursue and carry on conversion

PRACT. OBS. Perseverance in doing good, amidst dangers, hardships, ingratitude, and persecution, is a blessed evidence of grace, an expression of 'the mind which was in Christ,' and a distinguishing mark of his faithful ministers.—In all cities, towns, and villages, where the Gospel is effectually preached, a division takes place among the people; some decidedly favoring, and others earnestly opposing the persons employed; and generally some unconverted persons, for a time, take part with the preachers and professors of the truth, by means of whom the Lord restrains the fury of his enemies, till his own purposes are affected.—The servants of God might often obtain undue honor to themselves, if they would connive at men's errors and vices; but they dread and detest all such sacrilegious homage, more than any reproaches or injuries

prayer, to invest a person with, or mark him for the ministerial office: and this, which I doubt not was here done, seems to be intimated in the following clause. It seemed to me, that the word *constitute* would properly express the apostles presiding in that previous choice, which probably the people signified by *cheirotomia*, the stretching out their hand: and this interpretation appears most naturally to suit the circumstances of things, as well as the import of the original words made use of.—Bl. says, 'There is no point on which learned men, for the last century, have been more agreed than on this, that *cheirotonein* here, simply denotes, to appoint, constitute, or ordain. And so the ancient version.'

V. 24—28. The 13th and 14th chs. contain the first history of a mission among the Gentiles. The missionaries were prepared and selected by the Holy Spirit; they were recommended to the grace of God, and helped forward by their brethren; leaving country, friends, and comforts, to face dangers and endure hardships, from love to Christ, and to the souls of their unknown, perishing fellow-sinners; they suffered much tribulation, but were supported, comforted, and preserved; and they prospered greatly in their 'work and labor of love,' and returning to gladden the hearts of their brethren, and to rejoice with them, they ascribed all the glory to God, who had granted the prayers offered in their behalf, and had wrought by them and with them.

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work. From Antioch they passed through Pisidia, the province in which that Antioch stood, thence they came into the province of Pamphylia, the head city of which was Perga, where they had been before, ch. 13: 13. and came thither again to preach the Word, v. 25. making a second offer. What success they had, we are not told, but that, from thence, they went down to Attalia, a city of Pamphylia, on the sea-coast. They staid not long at a place, but wherever they came endeavored to lay a foundation, which might afterward be built upon, and to sow the seeds which would, in time, produce a great increase.

III. How they at length came back to Antioch in Syria, whence they were sent forth.

1. Why they came thither; because from thence they had been recommended to the grace of God, and such a value did they put on a solemn recommendation to the grace of God, though they had themselves a great interest in heaven, that they never thought they could show respect enough to those who had so recommended them.

2. What account they gave them of their negotiation, v. 27. They gathered the church together. Probably the Christians at Antioch were more than ordinarily met, or could meet, in one place, but on this occasion they called together the leading men of them; or, some met at one time, or in one place, and others at another. But when they had them together, they gave them an account of two things: (1.) Of the tokens they had had of the divine presence with them in their labors. They rehearsed all that God had done with them. They did not tell what they had done, (that would have savored of vain-glory,) but of what God had done with them and by them. God's grace can do anything without ministers' preaching: but ministers' preaching, even Paul's, can do nothing without God's grace; and the operations of that grace must be acknowledged in the efficacy of the Word. (2.) Of the fruit of their labors among the heathen. They told how God had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles; had not only ordered them to be invited to the gospel-feast, but had inclined the hearts of many of them to accept the invitation.

3. How they disposed of themselves for the present, v. 28. longer than perhaps at first they intended; not because they feared their enemies, but because they loved their friends, and were loath to part from them.

CHAP. XV. Hitherto we have, with great pleasure, attended the apostles in their glo-

rious travels to propagate the Gospel in foreign parts; have seen the bounds of the church enlarged, by the accession both of Jews and Gentiles to it; and thanks he to that God who always caused them to triumph! We left them, in the close of the foregoing ch., reposing themselves at Antioch, and edifying the church there, with the rehearsal of their experiences, and it is pity they should ever be otherwise employed; but in this ch. we find other work, not so pleasant, cut out for them. The Christians and ministers are engaged in controversy, and they that should have been now busied in enlarging the dominions of the church, have as much as they can do to compose the divisions of it; when they should have been making war on the devil's kingdom, they have much ado to keep the peace in Christ's kingdom. Yet that occurrence, and the record of it, are of great use to the church, both for warning to us to expect such unhappy discords among Christians, and direction to us what method to take to accommodate them.

V. 1—5. I. A new doctrine started in the church at Antioch, which occasioned this division, v. 1.

1. The persons that urged it; certain which came down from Judea; some think, such as had been of the Pharisees, v. 5. or perhaps of those priests obedient to the faith, ch. 6, 7. They came from Judea, pretending, perhaps, to be sent by the apostles at Jerusalem, or to be countenanced by them. Having a design to spread their notions, they came to Antioch, the head-quarters of those that preached to the Gentiles, and the rendezvous of the Gentile converts; and if they could but make an interest there, this leaven would soon be diffused to all the churches of the Gentiles. They insinuated themselves into an acquaintance with the brethren, pretending to be very glad they had embraced the Christian faith, and congratulated them on their conversion; but tell them, that yet one thing they lack, they must be circumcised. Those that are ever so well taught, have need to stand on their guard, that they be not untaught again, or ill taught.

2. The position they laid down was this, that except the Gentiles, who turned Christians, were circumcised after the manner of Moses, and thereby obliged themselves to all the observances of the ceremonial law, they could not be saved. It did not suffice them, that they were herein indulged themselves, they must have the Gentile converts brought under the same. Note, There is a strange proneness in us to make our own opinion

whatever.—We should show the greatest affection to the persons of men, and bear with many of their mistakes and prejudices, in a candid spirit; but we must not spare decidedly to protest against their delusions and superstitions, which are as ruinous to the soul as the grossest immoralities.—The Lord sav good for a long time to 'suffer all nations to walk in their own ways;' and He still is pleased to leave innumerable multitudes to follow lying vanities; this should lead us to thankfulness for our peculiar advantages, and to adore the depth of his unsearchable wisdom and justice; but it should not induce us to palliate the idolatries or impieties of our apostate race; or to neglect doing all that we can to communicate 'the Light of life' unto them.

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(28.) 'How long the apostles tarried here we cannot tell; but we hear no more of them till the council of Jerusalem, mentioned in the following ch.; which is generally supposed to have been held in A. D. 51: and if the transactions of this ch. took place in A. D. 46, as chronologers think, then there are 5 whole years of Paul's ministry, and that of other apostles, which Luke passes by in perfect silence. It is very likely Paul and Barnabas were all this time extending the work of God through the different provinces contiguous to Antioch, for Paul himself tells us he preached the Gospel as far as Illyria, Rom. 15:19. on the side of the Adriatic gulf. Many of the tribulations and perils through which he passed, are not mentioned by Luke, particularly those of which he himself speaks, 2 Cor. 11:23—27. Probably most of these happened in the five years which elapsed between the apostle's return to Antioch, and the council of Jerusalem.'

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NOTES. CHAP. XV. V. 1—6. The events recorded in this ch. took place probably about seventeen years after Paul's conversion; but some expositors date them three years earlier. Gal. 2:1—5. The apostle informs us, that 'he went up, by revelation;' the Lord having made it known to him, or to some of the prophets residing there, that He would have him do so. As there was not an entire agreement on the subject, it was judged expedient for the apostles, elders, and others of the church [at Jerusalem] to meet together, and to give the important sub-



2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem, unto the apostles and elders, about this question.

3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders; and they declared all things that God had done with them.

5 ¶ But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

6 And the apostles and elders came together, for to consider of this matter.

7 ¶ And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

Helen, queen of Adiabene, embraced the Jews' religion, Ananias declared he might do it *without* circumcision; but Eleazar maintained, that it was a great impiety to remain uncircumcised. And when two eminent Gentiles fled to Josephus, (as he relates in the history of his own life,) 'the zealots among the Jews were urgent for their circumcision; but Josephus dissuaded them from insisting on it.' Such has been the difference in all ages between bigotry and moderation.

It is observable what a mighty stress they laid upon it; they do not only say, 'You ought to be circumcised,' but, 'Except you be circumcised, you cannot be saved.' It is common for proud imposers to enforce their own inventions, under pain of damnation; and to tell people, unless they believe just as they would have them believe, and do just as they would have them do, they cannot be saved, it is impossible they should; not only their case is hazardous, but desperate. None are in Christ, but they that are within their pale. We ought to see ourselves well warranted by the Word of God, before we say, 'Except you do so and so, you cannot be saved.'

II. The opposition Paul and Barnabas gave to this schismatical notion, v. 2. 1. As faithful servants of Christ, they would not see his truths betrayed; they knew Christ came to free us from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and unite both Jews and Gentiles in Himself; and therefore cannot bear to hear of circumcising the Gentile converts, when their instructions were only to baptize them. 2. As spiritual fathers to the Gentile converts, they would not see their liberties encroached upon; they had told them, that if they believed in Jesus Christ, they should be saved; and now to be told, that that was not enough to save them, except they were circumcised, and kept the law of Moses,—this was such a discouragement, and would be such a stumbling-block, as might almost tempt them to turn back into Egypt again; therefore they set themselves against it.

III. The expedient pitched upon to prevent the mischief of this dangerous notion, silence those that vented it, and quiet the minds of the people with reference to it. They determined that Paul and Barnabas, and some others of their number, should go to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, concerning it. 1. Because those who taught this doctrine came from Jerusalem, and pretended to have directions from the apostles there. 2. Because those who were taught this doctrine, would be the better confirmed in their opposition to it, and in the less danger of being shocked and disturbed by it, if they were sure that the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, (which was that Christian church that of all other retained the most affection to the law of Moses,) were against it. 3. Because the apostles at Jerusalem were fittest to be consulted in a point yet not fully settled; and being most eminent for an infallible Spirit, peculiar to them as apostles, their decision would be likely to end the controversy. It

was owing to the subtlety and malice of the great enemy of the church's peace, (as it appears by Paul's frequent complaints of these judaizing teachers, these false apostles, these deceitful workers, these enemies of the cross of Christ,) that it had not that effect.

IV. Their journey, v. 3. Where we find, 1. That they were honored at parting; brought on their way by the church; which was then much used as a token of respect to useful men, and is directed to be done after a godly sort, 3 John 6. 2. That they did good as they went along; they were men that would not lose time, and therefore visited the churches by the way; they passed through Phenice and Samaria, and as they went declared the conversion of the Gentiles; and what wonderful success the Gospel had had among them; which caused great joy to all the brethren. The progress of the Gospel is and ought to be a matter of great joy.

V. Their hearty welcome at Jerusalem, v. 4. 1. They were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders; with all possible expressions of love and friendship. 2. They declared all that God had done with them; the success of their ministry among the Gentiles; as they went they had planted, as they came back they had watered; but in both they were ready to own it was God gave the increase.

VI. The opposition they met with from the same party at Jerusalem, v. 5. When Barnabas and Paul gave an account of the multitude of souls gathered in to Christ there, and all about them congratulated them upon it, there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees, who received the tidings very coldly, and, though they believed in Christ, yet were not satisfied in the admission of those converts, but thought it was needful to circumcise them. Observe here, That those who have been most prejudiced against the Gospel, yet have been captivated by it; so mighty has it been through God to the pulling down of strong holds; but it is very hard for men suddenly to get clear of their prejudices.

V. 6—21. We have here a council called, not by writ, but by consent, on this occasion, v. 6. They did not give their judgment separately, but came together to do it, did not give it rashly, but considered of the matter. Though clear in their own minds, yet they would consider, and hear what was to be said by the adverse party. Nor did the apostles give their judgment concerning it without the elders, the inferior ministers, to whom they thus condescended, and whom they thus honored. Here is a direction to pastors of churches, when difficulties arise, to come together in solemn meetings for mutual advice and encouragement, that they may know one another's mind, and strengthen one another's hand, and act in concert.

Now here we have,

I. Peter's speech in this synod. He did not in the least pretend to any primacy or headship; he was not master of this assembly, nor so much as chairman, or moderator;

d Ga. 2:1. g Lu. 15:7,10. j ver. 1.  
e Ro. 15:24. 1 Co. h c. 21:19. k Mat. 18:20.  
16:6,11 3 Ju. 6. l or, rose up, said l Mat. 16:18 19.  
f c. 14:27. they, certain. c. 10:20.

and practice a rule and a law to every body else; to judge of all about us by our standard, and to conclude, that, because we do well, all do wrong, that do not just as we do. Those Jews hear that Christ's doctrine is received among the Gentiles, and his kingdom begins to be set up in the midst of them; 'Therefore by all means let the brethren be pressed to be circumcised, and keep the law; and then, with our religion, our dominion will be extended, and we shall in a little time be able to shake off the Roman yoke; and not only so, but to put it on the necks of our neighbors, and so shall have such a kingdom of the Messiah as we promised ourselves.' It is no wonder, if those who have wrong notions of the kingdom of Christ, take wrong measures for its advancement, such as really tend to its destruction, as these do.

The controversy about the circumcising of the Gentile proselytes, had been on foot among the Jews long before this. This is observed by Whitby, out of Josephus, *Antiq.* l. 20. c. 2. 'That when Izates, the son of

ject a full discussion, in order that it might be finally determined, to the satisfaction of all concerned in it. This has commonly been called 'The first general council;' and it seems to have also been the last where it could properly be said, 'It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, &c.' (28.)

(2.) *Should go up.* 'It is generally allowed that this is the journey to which Paul refers, Gal. 2:1, 2. when he says, he went up by revelation: which is very consistent with this.' *Doddr.* 'If this is the journey Paul refers to, Gal. 2:1—5. then he had Titus with him. This journey was fourteen years after Paul's conversion.' *Dr. A. C. Elders at Jerusalem.* 'By what authority these have been concluded to be some of the 120, mentioned Acts 1:15. I am yet to learn, notwithstanding what is suggested by Dr. Whitby and Dr. Benson. It seems to me, that any officers of the church, to whom the stated inspection of it was committed, might properly be called elders, an elder, whether they were, or were not, of that number.' *Doddr.* 'They who were officers in the church under the apostles.' *Dr. A. C. They.* 'I. e. the brethren, the united members of the church; not the Præpositi Ecclesiæ, [men set over the church,] as *Hamm.* supposes; still less those Jerusalemite teachers, as *Beza.* In forming this determination, they seem, as usual, to have been guided by the custom which had prevailed in the Jewish church; viz. (and so *Grot.*) when any question arose among the Jews, which gave occasion for schism, of appealing to the Sanhedrim to decide

the controversy. For Jerusalem then was, what Rome afterwards became, the resort of learned persons, both residents and sojourners, who repaired thither from all quarters of the world; so that the Roman synod (which was often consulted by the bishops of other countries) was nearly equivalent to a general council.—*Beza* well remarks, that some others of the brethren were added, lest Paul and Barnabas should seem to make it their own cause, or to dissent from the Antiochian council.'

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(3.) 'It was customary both among Greeks and Romans, (see *Xen. Cic.*, &c.) as well as Jews, to show respect to parting guests, by going part of the way forward with them.'

(4.) *And when they were come, &c.* 'This was Paul's third journey to Jerusalem, after his conversion. See an account of his first, ch. 9:36. and of his second, ch. 11:30.'

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(5.) 'That this assembly, [note v. 12.] though it may be called a council in one sense, yet was very different from those held after the 2d. cent., composed of the governors of the church, and properly called councils, has been shown at large by *Mosheim* and *Heumann.*' *BL.*

V. 7—11. It is not certain that any of the apostles were present, except Peter, James, and John: perhaps the rest were employed in preaching the Gospel at a distance. *Gal.* 2:6—10, v. 9. Those present, however, chose rather to hear the arguments of their brethren, and to show the ground on which their own conclusions rested, than to



8 And God, which <sup>m</sup> knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us ;

9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying <sup>n</sup> their hearts by faith.

10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke <sup>o</sup> upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear ?

11 But we believe, that through <sup>p</sup> the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

12 ¶ Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought <sup>q</sup> among the Gentiles by them.

m c. 1:24. o Ga. 5:1. 2:8. Tit. 3:4,5.  
n He. 9:13, 14. p Ro. 3:24. Ep. q c. 14:27.  
1 Pe. 1:22.

he neither spake first, to open the synod, (*there having been much disputing before he rose up,*) nor last, to sum up the cause and collect the suffrages; but he was a faithful, prudent, zealous member of this assembly, and offered what was very much to the purpose, and would come better from him than from another, because he had himself been the first that preached the Gospel to the Gentiles. When both sides had been heard, *Peter rose up,* and addressed himself to the assembly, *Men and brethren,* as did James afterward, v. 13. And here,

1. He put them in mind of the call and commission he had some time ago *to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles*; he wondered there should be any difficulty made of a matter already settled, v. 7. Ye know I was questioned about it, and cleared myself to universal satisfaction; everybody rejoiced that *God had granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life*, and nobody said a word of circumcising them, nor was there any thought of such a thing. See ch. 11:18.

2. He puts them in mind how remarkably God owned him in preaching to the Gentiles, and gave testimony to their sincerity in embracing the Christian faith, v. 8. See ch. 11:15—17.

God had bid the Gentiles welcome to the privilege of communion with Him, without requiring them to be circumcised, and to keep the law; therefore shall not we admit

them into communion with us but upon those terms? v. 9. God has *put no difference between us and them*: they, though *Gentiles*, are as welcome to the grace of Christ and the throne of grace as we *Jews* are; why then should we set them at a distance, as if we were *holier than they*? Is. 65:5. Now the Gentiles were fitted for communion with God, in *having their hearts purified by faith*, and that faith, God's own work in them; why should we think them unfit for communion with us, unless they submit to the ceremonial purifying enjoined by the law to us?

3. He sharply reproves those, some of whom, it is likely, were present, who went about to bring the Gentiles under the obligation of the law of Moses, v. 10. The thing is so plain, that he cannot forbear speaking of it with some warmth. Here he shows that in this attempt, (1.) They offered a very great affront to God, v. 10. Those *tempt* [try experiments with] God, who prescribe to Him, and say that people *cannot be saved*, but on such and such terms, which God never appointed; as if the God of salvation must come into their measures. (2.) They offered a very great wrong to the disciples; Christ came to proclaim *liberty to the captives*, and they go about to *enslave* those whom He has *made free*. See Neh. 5:8. Now for these teachers to go about to lay that yoke on the neck of the Gentiles, which He came to free even the Jews from, was the greatest injury imaginable to them.

4. Whereas the Jewish teachers had urged that circumcision was necessary to salvation, Peter shows it was so far from being so, that both Jews and Gentiles were to be *saved purely through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and no other way, v. 11. There is not one way of salvation for the Jews, and another for the Gentiles; *neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which works by love*, Gal. 5:6.

II. What Barnabas and Paul said in this synod, did not need to be related; for they only gave in a narrative of what was recorded in the foregoing chs. *the miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them*, v. 12. This they had given in to the church at Antioch, ch. 14:27. *to their brethren by the way*, ch. 15:3. and now again to the synod; and it was very proper to be given in here: that which was contended for, was, that the *Gentiles* ought to submit to the law of Moses; now, in opposition to this, Paul and Barnabas undertake to show, by a plain relation of matters of fact, that God owned the preaching of the pure Gospel to them without the law, and therefore to press the law

on them now, was to undo what God had done. Observe,

1. They declared, or opened in order, and with all the magnifying and affecting circumstances, what confirmation He had given to their preaching, by miracles wrought in the kingdom of *nature*, and what success, by miracles wrought in the kingdom of *grace*. The conversion of the Gentiles, was itself a wonder, all things considered, no less than a miracle. Now if *they received the Holy Ghost by the hearing of faith*, why should they be embarrassed with *the works of the law*? See Gal. 3:2.

2. What attention was given to them; it should seem, all took more notice of their narrative than of all the arguments offered. As in natural philosophy and medicine, nothing is so satisfactory as experiments, and in law, as cases adjudged, so *in the things of God*, the best explication of the Word of grace, is, the accounts given of *the operations of the Spirit of grace*; these *the multitude* will with *silence* give audience to.

III. The speech James made to the synod. He let Paul and Barnabas say what they had to say, and then he made the application of it. The hearing of variety of ministers may be of use, when one truth does not drive out, but clench, another. He addresses himself respectfully to those present; *Men and brethren, hearken unto me*. We are all *brethren*, and equally concerned in this cause, that nothing be done to the dishonor of Christ, and the uneasiness of Christians. He refers himself to what Peter had said concerning the conversion of *the Gentiles*, v. 14. and observes here, That *the grace of God* was the rise of it; it was *God that visited the Gentiles*, and redeemed those that were *not a people*. That the glory of God was the end of it; it was *to take out of them a people for his name*, who should glorify Him, and in whom He would be glorified. Let all the people of God remember, that *therefore* they are thus dignified in God, that God may be glorified in them.

He confirms this with a quotation out of the O. T.; he could not prove the calling of the Gentiles by a vision, as Peter could, or by miracles wrought by his hand, as Paul and Barnabas could, but he would prove that it was foretold in the O. T. therefore it must be fulfilled, v. 15. *To this agree the words of the prophets*; most of the O. T. prophets spake more or less of the calling in of the Gentiles, even Moses himself, Rom. 10:19. It was the general expectation of the pious Jews, that the Messiah should be a *Light to lighten the Gentiles*, Luke 2:32. but

decide the question merely by apostolical authority. 'The heart' (9) may here signify the soul, with all its faculties and powers; and the expression may refer, not only to the sanctification of the soul by the Holy Spirit, but also to the purifying of the conscience through the blood of Christ from the guilt of sin.—This did not relate merely to circumcision, but to the whole ceremonial law; which, though proper and useful for the time, required so many distinctions, burdensome purifications, expensive sacrifices, long journeys, and other things of a similar nature; that it was a very uneasy yoke, in every age, even to the inhabitants of the promised land, and still more to those Jews who resided in other countries: and, while it served to prevent idolatry from being universal, it also tended exceedingly to prevent the general diffusion of true religion.—'Though these words are by most interpreters applied to the numerous ritual precepts, the costly sacrifices, and the frequent tedious journeys up to Jerusalem, required by the law, which made the observance of it difficult and irksome, I would rather refer them to that defect, that the apostle hath observed in it, that it could "not purge the conscience from the guilt of sin;" (Heb. 9:9. 10:1.) that it "could not give life," (Gal. 3:21.) that it was a killing letter, leaving them under condemnation; (2 Cor. 3:6—9.) and so making it necessary for them to believe in Christ, that they might be justified, (Gal. 2:16.) and redeemed from the curse of the law; (Gal. 3:13.) according to those words of the apostle, 13:38, 39. . . . For to this sense the following words incline; "we could not bear this yoke; for we believe that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved." Whitby.—There was, however, no occasion to impose this yoke on the Gentiles, as even the Jewish converts did not expect to be saved, in any degree, by observing the Mosaic law, but merely by faith in Christ, exactly in the same manner with their Gentile brethren; though they deemed it a part of their present duty to observe it. (7) *A good while ago.*] 15:21. 21:16. 2 Cor. 5:17. 2 Pet. 2:5. Rev. 12:9.—Ps. 79:8. 89:49. Sept. As a short time only had passed since the conversion of Cornelius; may not this remarkable language relate rather to the antecedent purpose of God, than to the fulfilment of it by Peter (18)?

(7.) *When there had been much disputation, &c.*] 'The debate which

arose in this assembly cannot, as many have supposed, afford any just argument against *their inspiration*; for this dispute does not appear to have been among the apostles themselves; and if they really had *debated the case* awhile, their decision at last might have been under an unerring direction. and I know not any reason to conclude, that *their inspiration* was always so *instantaneous and express*, as to supersede any deliberation in their own minds, or any consultation with each other.' Doddr. *Made choice among us.*] 'I. e. simply, *chosen us*, an Hebraism; comp. Neh. 9:7. 1 Chr. 28:4, 5. and so Grot., Vorst., Heintz., Kuin.' BLOOMF.

(10.) *Tempt.*] 'They are said to tempt God (so Ros.), who act as if they wished to see what God can and will do, who require new proofs of his divine will and power; when the most unexceptionable ones already exist. Who call in question (Kuin.) his attributes, and require further proofs of them; thus *resisting* God. And so Schl., who comp. Ex. 17:2, 7. Ps. 78:46. Jnd. 3:12. 1 Cor. 10:9. Heb. 5:9. *Could bear*: i. e. *will bear*: for (so Grot.) men are said not to be able to do what is only *difficult*.'

V. 12. (4) It is expressly said, that 'the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter' (6); and on another occasion the apostles and elders are distinguished from the company of believers. (21:17—26.) 'All the multitude,' must therefore here be restricted to the whole of the assembly convened for this special purpose, (perhaps including select persons who were not elders,) the determination of which assembly was afterwards made known to the church at large, who concurred in it. 22—29.

(12.) *Multitude.*] From this word, it is supposed by some that the people were admitted, but the Gr. *plēthos*, is 'a term of middle signification, and often denotes an assembly, without reference to number; as seems to be the case here;' so Bloomf., who adds, 'it is unquestionable, from v. 22, 23. but that *some*, and that *not a few*, were called in besides the apostles and presbyters. I assent to Mosh. and Kuin., that as no building could contain all the Christians, some *select individuals* of the laity, (perhaps delegated from the whole body,) of most knowledge, influence, and credit, are meant.' The Ed. of course, cannot be expected



13 ¶ And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me :

14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

15 And to this agree the words of the prophets ; as it is written,

16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down ; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up :

17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

18 Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world.

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God :

r Lu. 2:31,32. t Nu. 23:19. Is. u 1 Th. 1:9.  
s Am. 9:11,12. 46:10.

James waives the more illustrious prophecies of this, and pitches on one that seemed more obscure ; *It is written*, Amos 9: 11, 12. where is foretold, 1. The setting up of the kingdom of the Messiah, v. 16. The house and family of David are here called his *tabernacle*, because David in his beginning was a shepherd, and dwelt in tents, and his house, that had been as a stately palace, was become a mean and despicable *tabernacle* ; there had not been for many ages a king of the house of David ; *the sceptre was departed from Judah*, the royal family sunk in obscu-

city, and as it should seem, not inquired after ; but God will return, and will build it again, raise it out of its ruins ; and this was now lately fulfilled, when our Lord Jesus was raised out of that family, had the throne of his father David given Him, with a promise, that He should reign over the house of Jacob for ever, Luke 1: 32, 33. And when the tabernacle of David was thus rebuilt in Christ, all the rest of it was, not many years after, wholly cut off, as was also the nation of the Jews itself, and all their genealogies lost. 2. The bringing in of the Gentiles, as the effect and consequence of this, v. 17. *the residue of men*, such as had hitherto been left out of the pale of the visible church, they must now, on this re-edifying of the tabernacle of David, be brought to seek after the Lord, and to inquire how they may obtain his favor, Hos. 3: 5. Jer. 30: 9. *Then Israel shall possess the remnant of Edom ; so it is in the Heb. ; for the Jews called all the Gentiles Edomites*, therefore the Sept. there leave out the particular mention of Edom, and read it just as it is here, *that the residue of men might seek*, (James here adds, *after the Lord*,) and *all the Gentiles*, or heathen, upon whom my name is called. This promise we may depend on the fulfilling of in its season ; and now it begins to be fulfilled, for it is added, *saith the Lord, who doeth this ; who doeth all these things ; so the LXX. there, and the apostle here. The uniting of Jews and Gentiles in one body, and all these things that were done in order to it, which were here foretold, were the Lord's doing, and what God delighted in, and was well pleased with ; for He is the God of the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, and it is his honor to be rich in mercy to all that call upon Him.*

He resolves it into the purpose and counsel of God, v. 18. He not only foretold the calling of the Gentiles many ages ago, by the prophets, but He foresaw and foreordained it in his eternal counsels, which are unquestionably wise, and unalterably firm. It is an excellent maxim here laid down concern-

ing all God's works, both of providence and grace, in the natural and spiritual kingdom, that they were all known unto Him from the beginning of the world, from the time He first began to work, which supposes his knowing them, as other scriptures speak, *from before the foundation of the world*, and therefore from all eternity.

He gives his advice, v. 19. *I give it as my opinion*, (so the Gr.) or judgment ; not as having authority over the rest, but as being an adviser with them. 1. That circumcision and the observance of the ceremonial law be by no means imposed on the Gentile converts ; no, not so much as recommended or mentioned to them. Great care must be taken, not to discourage or disquiet young converts with *matters of doubtful disputation*. Let the essentials of religion, which an awakened conscience will readily receive, be first impressed deeply on them, and those will satisfy them, and make them easy ; and let not things foreign and circumstantial be urged on them, which will but trouble them. 2. That yet it would do well that in some things, which gave most offence to the Jews, the Gentiles should comply with them : because they must not humor them so far as to be circumcised, and keep the whole law, it does not therefore follow that they must act in a continual contradiction to them, and study how to provoke them. It will please the Jews (and if a little thing will oblige them, better do so than cross them) if the Gentile converts abstain, [1.] *From pollutions of idols and from fornication ; which are two bad things, and always to be abstained from ; but writing to them particularly and expressly to abstain from them*, (because in these things the Jews were jealous of the Gentile converts, lest they should transgress,) would very much gratify the Jews ; not but that the apostles, both in preaching and writing to the Gentiles that embraced Christianity, were careful to warn against these things. See 1 Cor. 10: 14, &c. 2 Cor. 6: 14, &c. How large, how pressing, is Paul in his cautions

to go at large into this, or any of the mooted questions of church government and discipline ; and must, once for all, refer the reader to such works as are expressly written on these subjects. Ed.

V. 13. *James answered.* 'It seems plain from hence that the matter was not determined by any authority in Peter.' *Doddr.* 'James was evidently president of the council ; the rest argued on the subject ; James alone pronounced the definitive sentence. Had Peter been prince and head of the apostles, and of the church, he would have appeared here in the character of Judge, not of mere councillor or disputant.' *Dr. A. C.*—'They who have interpreted this, as an instance of the authoritative proceedings of a bishop in his own diocese, have not sufficiently considered the difference between the apostolical and episcopal office, nor how little any supposed episcopal power of James at Jerusalem could give him, to dictate to Peter and his other brethren, in deciding a cause in which the whole Christian world, and not only his own supposed diocese, was concerned.' *Doddr.*—'Popish writers say, that "James presided, because the council was held in his own church." These forget, that there was not then what they term a church on the face of the earth,—that believers then met in private houses, and that there was no building for the exclusive purpose of Christian worship till long after. They also forget, that the pope pretends to be the head of the catholic or universal church ; and consequently no man can preside, when he is present, but himself. Peter did not preside here, nor did the other apostles invite him to it, which they would have done, had they thought that Jesus Christ constituted him head of the church. Hence the most demonstrative evidence, that Peter was not pope ; and the right of his pretended successor is a nonentity.' *Dr. A. C.* 'James' discourse consists of three parts ; *Exordium*, in a form of expression calculated to conciliate the good-will of his auditors, v. 13 ; *Narration*, with its confirmation from the prophets, v. 16, 17, and in v. 18. the reason ; *Proposition*, which is, The Gentiles are not to be compelled to Judaism, but are only to abstain from certain things, v. 19. since Judaism cannot be entirely abolished all at once, v. 20.' SCIOETTE.

V. 14. *Simeon.* 'Simon Peter ; *Symeōn* here, is the Gr. usual for *Smāon*, Gen. 29: 33. but the Greeks generally used instead, *Simōn*, as Sir. 5: 1. Luke follows the Heb. inflexion, as has Peter, in 1 Ep. 1: 1. Luke 2: 25.' BLOOMF.

V. 16, 17. *After this, &c.* The quotation varies from the LXX., and still more from the Heb. The grand outline, however, of the prediction is in all the same. (See on Am. 9: 11, 12.) SCOTT.

(16.) *Tabernacle.* 'Skēnē : Heb. *grh*, properly a hut or booth, (from Ang. Sax. *bogen*, to bend, i. e. a hut of bent twigs or boughs,) formed of boughs of trees and reeds, such as were in use among shepherds. [David was long a shepherd. *Rich* thus describes the booth, John 4: 5. which forms the Koordish 'ordinary accommodation during the hot months, called a *tchardak* ; a *tchardak* is 30 by 15 ft., with three ranges of four seven-foot posts, whose forked tops are connected by long spars with rafters over them. On this are heaped three feet of boughs and leaves, with a few bricks to keep them steady. The floor is of mud, covered with a plaster of clay, mixed in with chopped straw.

They spread their beds on the top, at night, and screen themselves from view by an open reed mat. The largest *tchardaks* have a tank, with sometimes a *jet d'eau* in the centre.] The [Heb. and Gr. also denote] any habitation, Luke 16: 9. here, *house family*. It is, too, a figurative expression for David's kingdom ; as elsewhere, Mt. Zion, where was David's palace, was put for the Jewish State.' *Kuin.*, in Bl. Ed.

V. 18. 'The whole of this v. is very dubious : the principal part of it is omitted by the most ancient MSS., and Griesb. has left "known from the beginning," doubtful, and has thrown the rest out of the text. *White* says, of the former clause, probably it should be blotted out ; of the rest, *most assuredly* so. Some, as *Schl.* contend (supposing all genuine), that *gnōsta* [tr. known] here, has a sense like the Heb. *ydd* in many parts of the O. T., meaning not only to know, but, *approve, love, &c.* They would tr. "All the works of God are ever dear unto Him." And if so, we might naturally expect Him to be merciful to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jews ; and the evidence now afforded, of the conversion of the Gentiles, is an additional proof, that all God's works are equally dear to Him.' *Dr. A. C.* 'So *Thaleman* ; but any proof that *gnōstikē*, primitive of *gnōsta*, has the sense of *dear, &c.* will not be valid as to its derivative. Besides, as *Kuin.* remarks, the subject is not the creatures, but the illustrious works of God in the propagation of religion. He gives the sense "God is immutable," &c.' *Bloomf.* 'This text must remain an unanswerable proof, among a thousand more from the Word of God, that He certainly foreknows future contingencies.' *Doddr.* Note, 2: 23. Ed.

V. 19—21. This [fornication] was by no means held in such abhorrence among the Gentiles, as it ought to have been ; nay, it was generally considered as a trivial matter : and as it was very closely connected with their idolatrous feasts, the new converts might be in peculiar danger of being seduced into it ; to the dishonor of their profession, the injury of their own souls, and the great detriment of domestic comfort, and union in the worship of God. This was no doubt a moral injunction, independent of the ceremonial law. So was likewise the prohibition to eat of things sacrificed to idols, as connected with its consequences ; being in reality communion with idolaters in idolatry : and no doubt it is in force at this day, as a command of the moral law ; and must be charged on the consciences of all such as live among idolaters.—The subsequent injunctions are of another nature, and enforced by other reasons. This prohibition, eating of blood, was given from reverence to the blood of the sacrifices, which, being the life of the animal, was the essence of the atonement, as typical of that of Christ. It would then have needlessly grieved and stumbled the Jewish converts, and prevented their friendly intercourse with their brethren, and further prejudiced the unconverted Jews against the Gospel ; if the Gentile converts had shown so open a disregard to the solemn sacrifices, which were still offered at the temple. This seems to have been the reason of this restriction. As long as the sacrifices continued to be offered, we may suppose that it was observed ; but 'as every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused ;' as there is no intimation to this effect in the apostolical epistles ; and as the reason of it, which is here annexed, has long since ceased ;



20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath-day.

22 ¶ Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders, and brethren, send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia:

24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

v Ex. 20:4, 5. 1 Col. 3:5. 1 Th. 2 c. 1:23. Co. 8:1, &c. 10: 4:3. a ver. 1. 23. Re. 2:14, x Le. 17:14. De. b Ga. 5:12. 20. 9:20. 12:16, 23. c Ga. 5:4. w 1 Co. 6:9, 18. y c. 13:15, 27. d Ga. 2:4.

against fornication and all uncleanness! 1 Cor. 6:9, 15. Eph. 5:3, &c. But the Jews, willing to think the worst of those they did not like, suggested, that the Gentiles, even after conversion, allowed themselves in these things, and the apostles of the Gentiles connived at it. Now, to obviate this suggestion, and to leave no room for this calumny, James advises, that, beside private admonitions, they should be publicly warned to abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication; that herein they should be

very circumspect, and should avoid all appearances of those two evils, which would be in so particular a manner offensive to the Jews. [2.] From things strangled, and from blood; which, though not evil in themselves, as the other two, had been forbidden by the precepts of Noah, Gen. 9:4. before the giving of the law of Moses; and the Jews had a great dislike to them, and to all those that took a liberty to use them; and, therefore, to avoid giving offence, let the Gentile converts abridge themselves of their liberty herein, 1 Cor. 8:9, 13. Thus we must become all things to all men.

He gives a reason for his advice,—That great respect ought to be showed to the Jews, for they have been so long accustomed to the solemn injunctions of the ceremonial law, that they must be borne with a little, v. 21. 'You cannot blame them, if they have a great veneration for the law of Moses; for, besides that they are very sure God spake by Moses,' 'Moses is continually preached to them, and they are called upon to remember the law of Moses,' Mal. 4:4. 'His writings are read in a solemn, religious manner, in their synagogues, and on the sabbath-day, in their meetings for the worship of God; so that from their childhood they have been trained up in a regard to the law of Moses; the observance of it is a part of their religion.' 'This has been done of old time; they have antiquity for it; in every city, so that none of them can be ignorant what stress that law laid on these things; and therefore, though the Gospel has set us free from them, yet they cannot of a sudden be persuaded to look upon them as needless and indifferent, and they must be borne with a while, and we must comply with them, as far as we can without betraying our gospel-liberty.' Thus does this apostle show the spirit of a moderator, i. e. a spirit of moderation, being careful to give no offence either to Jew or Gentile, and contriving, as much as may be, to please both sides, and provoke neither. We are not to think it strange, if people be wedded to customs which they have had transmitted to them from their fathers, and which they had been

educated in an opinion of as sacred; and therefore allowances must be made in such cases, and not rigor used.

V. 22—35. We have here the result of the consultation: the advice James gave, was approved and agreed to unanimously.

I. The choice of the delegates to be sent with Paul and Barnabas, to show their respect to the church at Antioch, as a sister-church, on the same level with them, as also that they were desirous further to know their state; to put a reputation on the letters they carried, that it might appear a solemn embassy, and so much the more regard might be had to the message, which was likely to meet with opposition from some. Also, to keep up the communion of saints, and cultivate an acquaintance between churches and ministers at a distance from each other, and to show, that though many, yet they were one.

Those they sent were chosen men, and chief men among the brethren, men of eminent gifts, graces, and usefulness; for those are the things which denominate men chief among the brethren, and qualify them to be the messengers of the churches. They are here named, Judas, who was called Barsabas, probably the brother of that Joseph who was called Barsabas, that was a candidate for the apostleship, ch. 1:23. The character these men had in the church at Jerusalem, would have some influence on them that came from Judea, as those false teachers did, and engage them to pay the more deference to the message.

II. The drawing up of the letters, to be sent to the churches, to notify the sense of the synod.

1. A very condescending, obliging preamble to this decree, v. 23. nothing haughty or assuming, but, (1.) What speaks the humility of the apostles, that they join the elders and brethren in commission with them, the ministers, the ordinary Christians, whom they had advised with in this case, as they used to do in other cases. Though never men were so qualified as they were for a monarchal power and conduct in the church, nor had such a commission as they had, yet their decrees run not, 'We, the apostles,

so we must conclude that we are left as free in this, as in other similar matters. 1 Tim. 4:1—5. The permission given to the Israelites, to sell the bodies of animals which died of themselves to their heathen neighbors, shows, that the restriction of eating blood was ceremonial, not moral. They would not have been allowed to tempt the Gentiles to immorality. Lev. 17:10—16. Deut. 14:21.—It has been observed by several persons, that if Peter, instead of James, had said, 'My sentence is,' it would have given a more plausible argument for Peter's supremacy, than any which the Papists can adduce. [Fornication.] 23. 1 Cor. 7:2. It seems used as a general word for all sins of that kind. SCOTT.

(19.) My sentence is. I cannot but determine in my own mind. This the word may naturally express, and be taken to imply, judging in our own mind, without pretending to impose that judgment on others. Doddr. This is my sentence. Sentence, formerly meant the same as sentiment; and the best interpreters, ancient and modern, agree that the Gr. here, krinō, has merely the force of the Latin censeo, 'my opinion or sentiment is.' Ita censeo, thus I think, was generally (so Grot.) the concluding phrase with the Latin orators. See Cic. Philipp. So Thucyd. hōs egō krinō. In this sense the word often recurs in Xen.

(20.) Pollutions. The Gentiles, after the sacrifices were concluded, and a portion of the consecrated victim (the thing here intended) had been assigned to the priests, used to hold a sacrificial feast in honor of the god, either in the temple or at private houses, and then ate the residue of the flesh (so Herod., Ovid, Hom., Virg., Plaut., Gellius, Judg. 9:23. 2 Mac. 4:16.): or even from avarice, or poverty, salted and laid up the remnant for future use (see Theophr.), or even gave it to the butchers to sell in the shambles. See Schoettg. The drinking or other use of blood, obtained in the sacrifices of the ancients, in treaties, covenants, and magical rites; they used to drink it, in order thus to bind themselves by a closer covenant to their gods. The Zabians (so Maim.) thought blood a demon, and supposed that he who ate it had communion and might hold familiar intercourse with demons. So thought the Gentiles. See Cudworth, on the Lord's supper. Strangled. Pnikta: applied to all animals, entrapped game, &c., put to death without effusion of blood. The Gentiles used to eat the blood with the flesh, or let it out carefully, and convert it to nourishment, either by mixing it up with flour and oatmeal, and drinking it in a liquid state, or by mixing it with other food, as we do now in black puddings. See Paul. Ægin. This Hom. speaks of, Od. 18:25. See Tertull. Apol. So Apicius gives a receipt for giblet pie. Bloomf. Were we in like circumstances again, Christian charity would surely require us to lay ourselves under the same restraints. Doddr. But see Delany. The Gentiles accounted fornication, or whoredom, as a thing lawful or indifferent, so Terence. They committed it in their temples, at their festivals, &c. Notorious are their Bacchanalia, Lupercalia, the rights of the Bona Dea, &c., in which [84]

the Gentiles indulged with impunity, to the honor of Bacchus, the Bona Dea, &c. Comp. Num. 25:1. &c., Wisd. 14:16. Sir. 6:42. &c., 2 Mac. 6:4. 1 Pet. 4:3. As to mixing moral with positive precepts, (as here in a popular, not scholastic method,) we find the same thing in the Decalogue. See Marsh, as Mich. 1:451. Bloomf. Blood. By blood we are to understand, not only the thing itself, but also all cruelty, manslaughter, murder, &c., as some of the ancient fathers understood it. Dr. A. C.; whom see (at 15: end), on the unhealthiness of eating blood. ED.

(21.) Wetst. thinks this introduced, thus, 'there is no innovation intended, no abolition of the Law, let Jews born read and obey it, &c.' and Grotius supposes a tacit meeting of an objection to conciliate Jewish Christians. Synagogues. Here, the Christian assemblies, which still retained the name appropriated to religious meetings in the Jewish church, from which they had not yet departed, since they still continued in communion with it. Grot. shows, that both the Sabbath and the Lord's day were observed by Christians. (See Clem. Const. 7:24. 8:33 and 67.) And this was in after ages approved of by many fathers, as Asterius, Gregor. Nyssen., and Balsamon. Thus Constantine extended the prohibition of law-proceedings equally to both days; and for a long time afterwards equal marks of respect were shown to both days.—Real. Aloud, and publicly, so the Gr. kērussein [to proclaim, as a herald]. Grot. has shown, that this reading of the books of Moses was continued in the Christian churches up to the council of Laodicea, when, by the 19th canon, it was ordered that the Gospels should be also read.

V. 22—29. Many suppose, that the determination of God, in the case of Cornelius, was exclusively referred to; but it can hardly be supposed, that the apostles and council were left without a satisfactory consciousness, in a matter of such peculiar importance, that they were guided in the decision, by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We may suppose [that more was said and done than is recorded, but] from the harmonious conclusion of the business, that those who at first were of another opinion were at length convinced; and made no further opposition to the general determination of this question. 16:4, 5.—Subverting. Rendering their souls unfit for their work and warfare; as an army would be, if deprived of its baggage. SCOTT.

(22.) Chosen men. Rather, leading men. So in Thucyd. BL.—Silas. Elsewhere called Sylvanus, 2 Cor. 1:19. 1 Thes. 1:1. 2 Thes. 1:1. 1 Pet. 5:12. a most intimate friend and beloved companion of Paul; also, as it seems, a citizen of Rome, Acts 16:37. DODDR.

(23.) Brethren. The apostles and elders, and other brethren. I conclude, with L'Enfant, that these brethren were private Christians, whom the apostles joined with them on this occasion, as well knowing, that their declared concurrence would strengthen their obligation not only to acquiesce in this decree, but to support it. ED.



25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you, with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26 Men that have hazarded <sup>e</sup> their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by <sup>f</sup> mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden <sup>g</sup> than these necessary things ;

29 That ye abstain <sup>h</sup> from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication : from which if ye keep <sup>i</sup> yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

30 So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch : and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle :

31 Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the <sup>j</sup> consolation.

32 And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed <sup>k</sup> them.

33 And after they had tarried <sup>l</sup> there a space, they were let go <sup>l</sup> in peace from the brethren unto the apostles.

e c. 13:50. 14:19. f word. g Re. 2:24. h ver. 20. i 2 Co. 11:9. 1:27. 1 Jn. 5:21. Jude 20:21. j or, exhortation. k c. 14:22. l 1 Co. 16:11. 2 Jn. 10.

Christ's vicars on earth, and pastors of all the pastors of the churches,' as the pope styles himself, 'and sole judges in all matters of faith ;' but *the apostles, and elders, and brethren*, agree in their orders ; herein they remembered the instructions their Master gave them, Mat. 23 : 8. *Be not ye called Rabbi ; for all ye are brethren.* (2.) What speaks their respect to the churches they wrote to ; they *send* them greeting, wish them health and happiness, and joy, and call them *brethren of the Gentiles* ; thereby owning their admission into the church, and giving them the *right hand of fellowship*.

2. A just and severe rebuke to the judaizing teachers, v. 24. 'We have heard, that certain which went out from us, have troubled you with words, and we are very much concerned

(27.) 'It was not unusual among the ancients to send letters by such persons as were able, and had authority, to give further details of any business, and communicate circumstances beyond what were adverted to in the letter. So Thucyd. 7, 10. Comp. Arrian. Ex. Al. 2, 14, 6.' BL.

(28.) *Burden.*] It was an oriental idiom to call all laws, orders, and injunctions, heavy or light, by the term here, *baros, zugos*, [yoke,] &c. Rev. 2:4. Mat. 23:4. ED.—*Necessary things.*] 'They were all undoubtedly necessary, in order to promote a free converse between the Jewish and Gentile Christians, and especially to secure communion at the table of the Lord.'

(29.) *Fare ye well.*] 'An old English form of expressing good wishes and good-will . . . like to that other form of sound words, *God be with you!* corrupted now, into *good bye to ye!* and of the same meaning with, *adieu! à Dieu, to God!* i. e. *I commend you to God.* All these terms savor, not only of good-will, or benevolence, but of piety. Our ancestors believed that nothing was safe, nothing protected, nothing prosperous, over which the shield of God was not extended ; and therefore in their familiar good wishes, they gave each other to God. The Gr. word here has nearly the same signification : *be strong, courageous, active, be in health, and be prosperous.* What a pity that such benevolent and pious wishes should degenerate into *cool formalities, or unmeaning compliments!*'

V. 30—35. Silas, having formed an intimate friendship with Paul, and being delightfully employed, did not choose to return with Judas ; having a prospect of greater usefulness at Antioch, and perhaps having an eye to that service, which he afterwards performed.—(32.) *Being prophets, &c.*] 'That is, saith Dr. Hammond, being two bishops of Judea ; but if so, why "pleased it Silas to abide there still ;" "rather than go back to his charge?" Yea, why, after so long a stay at Antioch, doth he go along with Paul in his travels, through Syria and Cilicia, "confirming the churches?" (41.) Why do we find him still with Paul ; (16: 17: 18:) and preaching at Thessalonica, Corinth, and other places ; but not at all returning to his see?' *Whitby.*

(32.) *Prophets.*] See on 11:27. '*Prophētēs* is undoubtedly often used

to hear it ; now this is to let them know, that those who preached this doctrine were false teachers, both as they produced a false commission, and as they taught a false doctrine.' It is no new thing for apostolical authority to be pleaded in defence of those doctrines and practices, which yet the apostles gave neither command nor encouragement for. How has the church been troubled with words, by the pride of men that loved to hear themselves talk ! They took them off from pursuing pure Christianity, and minding the business of that, by filling their heads with the necessity of *circumcision, and the law of Moses*, which were nothing to the purpose.

3. An honorable testimony to their messengers. (1.) To Paul and Barnabas, whom these judaizing teachers had opposed and censured, as having done their work by the halves, because they had brought the Gentile converts to *Christianity* only, and not to *Judaism*. Sometimes it is good for those that are of eminency, to express their esteem, not only for the despised truth of Christ, but for the despised preachers and defenders of that truth, to encourage them, and weaken the hands of their opposers. 'They are men that have *signalized* themselves in the service of Christ, and therefore have deserved well of all the churches, v. 26. are worthy of double honor, and cannot be suspected of having sought any secular advantage to themselves ; for they have ventured their all for Christ, have engaged in the most dangerous services, as good soldiers of Christ, and not only in laborious services.' (2.) To Judas and Silas ; 'They are chosen men, v. 25. men that have heard our debates, and are perfectly apprized of the matter, and will tell you the same things by mouth,' v. 27. What is of use to us, it is good to have both in writing and by word of mouth.

4. The direction what to require from the Gentile converts ; they should never *eat anything they knew had been offered in sacrifice to an idol*, but look upon it as, though clean in itself, yet *thereby polluted to them*. This prohibition was afterward in part taken off, for they were allowed to *eat whatever was sold in the shambles, or set before them at their friend's table, though it had been offered to idols*, except when there was *danger of giving offence by it*, i. e. of giving occasion either to a weak Christian to think the worse of our Christianity, or to a wicked heathen to think the better of his idolatry ; and in those cases it is *good to forbear*, 1 Cor. 10 : 25, &c. This, to us, is an antiquated case. *That they should not eat blood, or drink it ;*

but avoid everything that looked cruel and barbarous in that ceremony which had been of so long standing. *That they should not eat anything that was strangled, or died of itself, or had not the blood let out.* That they should be very strict in censuring those that *were guilty of fornication*, or marrying within the degrees prohibited by the Levitical law ; which, some think, is principally intended here. See 1 Cor. 5:1. 'These things are in a particular manner offensive to the Jews, and therefore do not disoblige them herein for the present ; in a little time the Jews will incorporate with the Gentiles, and then the danger is over.'

They express themselves with abundance of tenderness and fatherly concern, but with something of authority, to secure respect and deference ; *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us*, i. e. to us under the conduct of the Holy Ghost, as apostles, and others endued with spiritual gifts extraordinary : they knew more of the mind of God than any since those gifts ceased can pretend to ; their infallibility gave an incontestable authority to their decrees. Or, it refers to what the Holy Ghost had determined in this matter formerly, when He descended on the apostles with the *gift of tongues*, in order to their preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles ; which was a plain indication of God's purpose to call them in. When the Holy Ghost descended on Cornelius and his friends, on Peter's preaching, it was plain that Christ designed the taking down of the Jewish pale, within which they fancied the Spirit had been inclosed.

Church rulers should, as here, impose only *necessary things*, that Christ has made our duty, and that have a real tendency to the *edification of the church*, and, as these here, to the uniting of good Christians. They have authority only to see that *the laws of Christ* be duly executed.

They enforce their order with a commendation of those that shall comply with it, rather than with the condemnation of those that shall transgress it ; they do not conclude, 'From which if you do not keep yourselves, ye shall be an anathema, ye shall be cast out of the church, and accursed,' according to the style of after-councils, and particularly that of Trent ; but, 'From which if you keep yourselves, as we do not question but ye will, ye shall do well ; it will be for the glory of God, the furtherance of the Gospel, the strengthening of the hands of your brethren, and your own credit and comfort.' It is all sweetness and love, and good-humor, such as became the followers of Him who, when He called us to take his yoke upon

in the SS. for one who, by divine assistance, declares things which are to happen at some future time : but the word has other significations, likewise, both in the O. and N. T. The things such a *prophētēs* speaks, chiefly relate to religion, or divine commands. So "*prophecies*" seem used in the Eng. vers., Prov. 30:1. 31:1. though only religious and moral reflections, and rules for life, are there found : and thus the *praising God* by spiritual songs, is called a *prophesying*, in 1 S. 10:5. 1 Chr. 25:1. and so when Paul in 1 Cor. 11:4, 5. says, *praying or prophesying*, he means preaching or teaching divine truths ; agreeably to which we find God saying to Abraham, Gen. 20:7. "*he* (Abraham) is a prophet, and shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live ;" i. e. he is a teacher of my will, and therefore his prayers shall prevail for thee. *Prophētēs* is used likewise for him who speaks instead of another, and is, therefore, said to be *to him instead of a mouth*, Ex. 4:16. as Aaron to Moses, 7:1. where *thy prophet*, is explained, v. 2. thus, "Thou shalt speak (*Sept.* to him) all that I command thee, and Aaron, thy brother, shall speak unto Pharaoh," &c. Now if he, who spoke instead of one only, may be called a *prophet*, well may he or they be called so, who speak in the name of many, as teachers do in religious assemblies. Jos. too, has "what Moses has taught (*prophēteutheisi*) them (the Jews) concerning God," Luke 1:67. 24:44. Nor are instances wanting of the same use of *prophētēs*, and its derivations in heathen authors ; thus *Diod.* calls history, "the *prophētēs* (teacher or declarer) of truth." *Aristotle* represents philosophy as comprehending divine things by means of the divine eye of the soul, and teaching (*prophēteuoussa*) them to mankind. Plato, still more explicitly (in *Tiā.*) distinguishes between the prophets, manteis, *prophētai manteuomenōn*, and the expounders of prophecies, who, he says, may most correctly be called, *prophētai manteuomenōn*, i. e. interpreters, pronouncers of vaticinations. In the same sense of *teaching*, and not of *prophesying*, Ovid gives the word *vaticinor*, Mat. 15:17. And, to quote no more instances, though Epimenides is styled a prophet in Titus 1:12. yet *Aristotle*, in *Rhet.* 3:17. says, "he did not teach (*emanteuto*) concerning future things, but concerning things past and obscure."'

Bp. PEARCE.



34 Notwithstanding, it pleased Silas to abide there still.

35 Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 ¶ And some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

37 And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

39 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus:

m. c. 13:4, &c. n. c. 12:12, 25. Col. 4:10. o. c. 13:13.

us, assured us we should find Him meek and lowly in heart. The difference of the style of the true apostles from that of the false is very observable. They that were for imposing the ceremonial law, were positive and imperious; *Except ye keep it, ye cannot be saved, v. 1.* ye are excommunicated at once, and delivered to Satan. The apostles of Christ, who only recommend necessary things, are mild and gentle; *From which, if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well, and as becomes you. Fare ye well; we are hearty well-wishers to your honor and peace.*

III. The delivering of the letters. The people were wonderfully pleased, v. 31. and a great consolation it was to the multitude: they were confirmed in their freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law; those who troubled their minds with an attempt to force circumcision on them, were hereby for the present silenced and put to confusion, the fraud of their pretensions to an apostolical warrant being now discovered; the Gentiles were hereby encouraged to receive the Gospel, and those that had received it to adhere to it; and the peace of the church was hereby restored, and that removed, which threatened a division. All this was consolation which they rejoiced in, and blessed God for.

The Jerusalem ministers, v. 33. when they had spent some time among them, so it might be read,—*having made some stay, and having made it to good purpose, they were let go in peace from the brethren at Antioch, to the apostles at Jerusalem, with all possible expressions of kindness and respect; they thanked them for their coming and*

pains, and the good service they had done, wished them their health and a good journey home; and committed them to the custody of the peace of God.

Silas chose rather to abide still at Antioch, v. 34. I am apt to think the congregations at Antioch were both more large and more lively than those at Jerusalem, and that tempted him to stay there, and he did well: so did Judas; who, notwithstanding this, returned to his post of service at Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas, though their work lay chiefly among the Gentiles, yet continued for some time in Antioch, being pleased with the society of the ministers and people there, which, it should seem by divers passages, was more than ordinarily inviting. They continued there, not to take their pleasure, but teaching and preaching the Word of God. Antioch being the chief city of Syria, it is likely there was a great resort of Gentiles thither from all parts, on one account or other, as there was of Jews to Jerusalem; so that, in preaching there, they did in effect preach to many nations; for they preached to those who would carry the report of what they preached to many nations, and thereby prepare them for the apostles' coming in person to preach to them. There were many others also there, laboring at the same oar. The multitude of workmen in Christ's vineyard does not give us a writ of ease. Even there where there are many others laboring in the Word and doctrine, yet there may be opportunity for us; the zeal and usefulness of others should excite us, not lay us asleep.

V. 36—41. We have seen one unhappy difference among the brethren, of a public nature, brought to a good issue; but here we have a private quarrel between two ministers, no less men than Paul and Barnabas, not compromised indeed, yet ending well.

I. Here is a good motion Paul made to Barnabas, to go and review their work among the Gentiles, and renew it; Antioch was now a safe and quiet harbor for them, but Paul remembered they only put in there to refit and refresh themselves, and therefore begins now to think of putting to sea again; and having been in winter-quarters long enough, he is for taking the field again, and making another campaign, in a vigorous prosecution of this holy war against Satan's kingdom. Barnabas was his old friend and fellow-laborer; two are better than one, and every soldier has his comrade. Note, Those that have preached the Gospel, should visit those to whom they have preached it. As we must look after our praying, and hear what answer God gives to that; so we must look after our preaching, and see what success that has. Faithful ministers cannot but have a particular, tender concern, for those to whom they have preached the Gospel, that they may not bestow on them labor in vain. See I Thess. 3: 5, 6.

IIe intended in this visit to see how they

did. He would see how they do, i. e. 1. What spirit they are of, how they stand affected, and how they behave themselves; it is probable that they frequently heard from them. 2. What state they are in; whether the churches have rest and liberty; or whether they are not in trouble or distress, that we may rejoice with them if they rejoice, and caution them against security; and may weep with them if they weep, and comfort them under the cross, and may know the better how to pray for them.

II. The disagreement between Paul and Barnabas about an assistant; it was convenient to have a young man with them, that should attend on them, and be a witness of their doctrine, manner of life, and patience; and that should be fitted and trained up for further service, by being occasionally employed in the present service. Now,

1. Barnabas would have his nephew John, whose surname was Mark, to go along with them, v. 37. He determined to take him, because he was his relation, and, it is likely, was brought up under him. We should suspect ourselves of partiality, and guard against it in preferring our relations.

2. Paul opposed it, v. 38. He thought not good to take him with them,—he did not think him worthy of the honor, nor fit for the service, who had departed from them, clandestinely, as it should seem, or wilfully, from Pamphylia, ch. 13: 13. and went not with them to the work, either because he was lazy, and would not take the pains that must be taken; or cowardly, and would not run the hazard. If a man deceive me once, it is his fault; but if twice, it is my own, for trusting him. Solomon saith, Confidence in an unfaithful man, in time of trouble, is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint, which will hardly be used again, Prov. 25: 19.

III. The issue of this disagreement; it came to such a height, that they parted upon it. The contention, the paroxysm, so the word is, the fit of passion which this threw them both into, was so sharp, that they departed asunder one from the other. Now here is that which is very humbling, and just matter of lamentation, and yet very instructive. For we see,

1. That the best of men are but men. I doubt there was, as usually there is in such contentions, a fault on both sides; perhaps Paul was too severe on the young man, and did not allow his fault the extenuation it was capable of, did not consider what a useful woman his mother was in Jerusalem, ch. 12: 12. nor make the allowances he might have made to Barnabas' natural affection. But it was Barnabas' fault that he took that into consideration, in a case wherein the interest of Christ's kingdom was concerned, and indulged it too much. And they were certainly both in fault, to be so hot as to let the contention be so sharp, as also to be so stiff, as each to stick so resolutely to his opinion, and neither to

(34.) 'This v. is wanting in A B E G., a great number besides, with the Syr., Ar., Copt., Slav., Vulg., and some Fathers; it seems not to have been originally in the text.' Dr. A. C. 'In others, "but Judas alone went," is added, it would seem, to remove a fancied contradiction to v. 33. But Silas might either have remained at Antioch, and there had been chosen by Paul as a companion; or he might have departed to Jerusalem, [and there would be time for him to have come back again to Antioch, before Paul left A.,] and have been sent for back to A. by Paul. [The text does not permit us to suppose otherwise than that he went to J. B.] Such minute circumstances are usually omitted by Luke. The v. is therefore deservedly expunged by Mill, Griesb., Mat.' KUN.

(35.) Continued at Antioch. 'It is generally thought, that during this time Peter came to Antioch, and, after having for some time conversed freely with the Gentile Christians, changed his behavior towards them, on the arrival of Jewish zealots from Jerusalem, according to the account we have, Gal. 2:11. and seq., which, if v. 1. of that ch. refer to the journey to the council, described above, seems, indeed, to have been the case. Nor do I think, that visit can be referred to Paul's second journey to Jerusalem after his conversion, Acts 11:30. though Barnabas also attended him then, because it was not till after that journey, that the Gospel of the circumcision was so solemnly committed to him, Acts 15:2, 3. which the apostles at Jerusalem acknowledged it to have been at the time spoken of, Gal. 2:7—9. If it be asked, why Paul, in his rebuke to Peter, did not cut short all further arguments, by referring roundly to the Jerusalem decree, if then made? I answer, he might

perhaps do it, though not in that part of his speech, which he mentions in Gal.; yet even there he refers to what Peter himself had laid down as the foundation of that decree: Comp. Gal. 2:16—18. with Acts 15:11. And it likewise seems to be intimated, that Peter had gone farther in his condescensions, than the Jerusalem decree extended its decision, not only in receiving the Gentiles to church communion, or admitting them to converse with him, but living after their manner, as if he had been himself without the law; (as Paul himself in proper circumstances used to do, 1 Cor. 9:19—21.) yet afterwards dissembling his conduct, as being solicitous to make a secret of it; whereas Paul, though just at the crisis of the Jerusalem decree he had thought it his duty to keep in the reserve, and waive a declaration of his sentiments on this head, lest unnecessary debates, as to the obligation on believing Jews to observe the law, should have diverted the council from the business then in hand, and have frustrated the purpose of that journey, Gal. 2:2; yet, when that point was carried, and he had quitted Jerusalem, he used great freedom in declaring his opinion, which was, "not that the Mosaic ceremonies were in conscience to be avoided, but that even to the Jews themselves they were indifferent, any further than as the peace and edification of others were concerned." DONDR.

V. 36—41. It has indeed been maintained, that, though both [Barnabas and Paul] were angry, neither of them sinned; but if the one was angry without cause, or above cause, or expressed his anger unduly, he sinned; and if the other gave him just cause, he doubtless sinned. Certainly this never could have occurred, if both had been perfect.—



40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

### CHAP. XVI.

<sup>1</sup> Paul having circumcised Timothy, <sup>7</sup> and being called by the Spirit from one country to another, <sup>14</sup> converteth Lydia, <sup>16</sup> casteth out a spirit of divination. <sup>19</sup> For which cause he and Silas are whipped and imprisoned. <sup>26</sup> The prison doors are opened. <sup>31</sup> The jailer is converted, <sup>37</sup> and they are delivered.

**T**HEN came he to <sup>a</sup>Derbe and Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named <sup>b</sup>Timotheus, the son of <sup>c</sup>a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:

<sup>2</sup> Which was well <sup>d</sup>reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.

p c. 14:26. 20:32. b c. 19:22. Ro. d c. 6:3. 1 Ti. 5: q c. 16:5. 16:21. 1Co. 4:17. 10. He. 11:2. a c. 14:6. c 2 Ti. 1:5.

yield. We must own it was their infirmity, and is recorded for our admonition; not that we must make use of it to excuse our own intemperate heats and passions, or to rebate the edge of our sorrow and shame for them: No; but it must check our censures of others, and moderate them. If good men are soon put into a passion, we must make the best of it; it was the infirmity once of two of the best men that ever the world had! Repentance teaches us to be severe in reflections on ourselves; but charity teaches us to be candid in our reflections on others. It is only Christ's example that is a copy without a blot.

2. Paul and Barnabas, that were not separated by the persecutions of the unbelieving Jews, nor the impositions of the believing Jews, were yet separated by an unhappy disagreement between themselves. — Oh, the mischief that even the poor and weak remainders of pride and passion, that are found even in good men, do in the world, do in the church! No wonder the consequences are so fatal where they reign!

IV. The good that was brought out of this evil. It was strange that even the sufferings of the apostles, as Phil. 1: 12. but much more strange that even their quarrels should tend to the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ; yet so it proved here.

**PRACT. OBS.** The great enemy of God and man is continually devising measures for obstructing the success of the Gospel. For this purpose, he endeavors to make divisions among those who preach and profess it; and to corrupt its purity, and obscure the glory of divine grace in it, but plausibly substituting another foundation; or by introducing such alterations or appendages, as are calculated to mislead or discourage unestablished inquirers. In these attempts he avails himself of the errors, bigotry, and prejudices of well-meaning persons, and of the ambition and selfishness of false brethren.—When fair argument and scriptural evidence fail to convince gainsayers; we must be careful, that we be not seduced to use improper means of conducting the disputation: and if any method of preserving peace and truth can be suggested, we should submit to very great personal inconvenience, or apparent degradation, to accomplish so desirable an end. Sometimes the opinion of those, 'who seem to be pillars,' will go further than arguments: and we may fairly, in such circumstances, appeal to their judgment, in order to 'stop the mouths' of those, who profess to speak their sentiments; and to satisfy such as have imbibed prejudices, which close their minds to the most conclusive reasoning. But we ought never to be so engaged about any single question, as to neglect opportunities of declaring what God has done for or by us, or of being helpers to the joy of our brethren

in every place.—It may be useful for the ministers and disciples of Christ to meet together, to consider any controverted subject, in order that they may form the more accurate and decided judgment upon it: yet great humility, prudence, temper, candor, and integrity are requisite, to prevent such conventions from degenerating into party-cabals, or scenes of contention and confusion, [as those who speak are usually unaccustomed to contradiction in their pulpits, and so bear it worse.] This has brought ecclesiastical councils and synods into general disrepute: and indeed little good can be expected from them, when they are very numerous; or when they are so constituted, as to give an opening for political contests, or party interests. Yet select companies, meeting in the fear of God, and in the spirit of humble prayer for divine teaching, may help each other to investigate truth, and to decide difficult and important questions. We should, however, remember that the apostles themselves assigned the reasons of their determinations; and did not require the elders and churches to submit to their authority, without knowing the grounds on which they went: and in such discussions, we shall generally, if not always, find, that by examining the source of the subject in question, it will appear to have been already decided by the Lord Himself, and that it would be 'tempting' Him to debate the matter any further.

Thus these two fellow-laborers parted, probably to meet no more on earth: neither of them, however, remitted anything of his zeal and diligence, on account of this disagreement; or said anything, that we know of, to disparage the other. Doubtless Barnabas labored and prospered to the end of life; but the rest of this book relates primarily to the ministry and sufferings of Paul and his companions.—(41) *And Cilicia.* This and v. 23. contain the only intimation of any church being found in Cilicia, the native country of Paul. 11:25, 26. **SCOTT.** (39.) *They separated, &c.* The Gr. does not imply any sinfulness in this difference, see Dr. A. C., &c.; and it appears, not only that Paul and Barnabas were afterwards thoroughly reconciled; (comp. 1 Cor. 9:6. Gal. 2:9.) but also that John was taken into Paul's favor again, and admitted by him as a companion in his labors, (comp. Col. 4:10. Phil. v. 24. 2 Tim. 4:11.) 'It is probable, the exhortations of Barnabas might concur, with these resentments of Paul, to recover him from his former indolent and timorous disposition.' *Doddr. Ed.—Contention.* 'Parox-

1. More places are hereby visited. Barnabas went one way; he sailed to Cyprus, v. 39. that famous island where they began their work, ch. 13: 4. and which was his own country, ch. 4: 36. Paul went another way, into Cilicia, which was his own country, ch. 21: 39. They seem to be influenced by their affection to their native soil, as usual; and yet God served his own purposes by it, to diffuse gospel-light.

2. More hands are hereby employed in the ministry of the Gospel among the Gentiles; for, (1.) John Mark, who had been an unfaithful hand, is not rejected, but is again made use of, against Paul's mind, and, for aught we know, proves very useful and successful; though many think it was not the same with that Mark that wrote the Gospel, and founded the church at Alexandria, he whom Peter calls his son, 1 Pet. 5: 13. (2.) Silas, a new hand, never yet employed in that work, nor designed to be, but to return to the service of the church at Jerusalem, had not God changed his mind, v. 33, 34. he is brought in, and engaged in that noble work. We may further observe,

[1.] That the church at Antioch seemed to countenance Paul in what he did. Barnabas sailed with his nephew to Cyprus, and no notice was taken of him, nor a recommendation given him. Those that in their service of the church are swayed by private affections and regards, forfeit public honors and respect. But when Paul departed, he was recommended by the brethren to the grace of God. They thought he was in the right. Those are happy at all times, and especially in times of disagreement and contention, who are enabled so to carry themselves as not to forfeit their interest in the love and prayers of good people.

[2.] That yet Paul afterward had, though not on second thoughts, yet, on further trial, a better opinion of John Mark; for he writes to Timothy, 2 Tim. 4: 11. *Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry;* and he writes to the Colossians concerning Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, that if he came to them they should receive him, bid him welcome, and employ him, Col. 4: 10. Which teaches us, 1st. That even those whom we justly condemn, we should condemn moderately, because we know not but afterward we may see cause to think better of them, and both to make use of them and make friendship with them; and we should so regulate our

resentments, that if it should prove so we, may not afterward be ashamed of them. 2dly. That even those whom we have justly condemned, if afterward they prove more faithful, we should cheerfully receive, forgive, and forget, and put a confidence in; and, as there is occasion, give a good word to.

[3.] That Paul, though he wanted his old friend and companion, yet went on cheerfully in his work, v. 41. *through Syria and Cilicia*, countries next to Antioch, *confirming the churches.* And observe, Ministers are well employed, and ought to think themselves so, and be satisfied, when used to confirm those that believe, as well as convert those that believe not.

**CHAP. XVI.** It is some rebuke to Barnabas, that after he left Paul we hear no more of him, of what he did or suffered for Christ. But Paul, as he was recommended by the brethren to the grace of God, so his services for Christ after this are largely recorded; we are to attend him in this ch. from place to place, wherever he came, doing good, either watering or planting, beginning new work, or improving what was done.

V. 1—5. I. Paul, as a spiritual father, here adopts Timothy, and takes care of the education of many others, who had been begotten to Christ by his ministry: and in all he appears to have been a wise and tender father.

1. Timothy is taken into his acquaintance, and under his tuition. He was a disciple, one that belonged to Christ, baptized, probably in infancy, when his mother became a believer, as Lydia's household was baptized on her believing, v. 15. His mother was a Jewess, originally, but believed in Christ; named Eunice; his grandmother's name was Lois. Paul speaks of them both with great respect, as women of eminent virtue and piety, and commends them especially for their unfeigned faith, 2 Tim. 1: 5. their sincere embracing of, and adhering to, the doctrine of Christ. His father was a Greek, a Gentile; the marriage of a Jewish woman by a Gentile husband (though some would make a difference) was prohibited as much as the marriage of a Jewish man to a Gentile wife, Deut. 7: 3. yet that seems to have been limited to the nations that lived among them in Canaan, whom they were most in danger of infection from. Now because his

ren in every place.—It may be useful for the ministers and disciples of Christ to meet together, to consider any controverted subject, in order that they may form the more accurate and decided judgment upon it: yet great humility, prudence, temper, candor, and integrity are requisite, to prevent such conventions from degenerating into party-cabals, or scenes of contention and confusion, [as those who speak are usually unaccustomed to contradiction in their pulpits, and so bear it worse.] This has brought ecclesiastical councils and synods into general disrepute: and indeed little good can be expected from them, when they are very numerous; or when they are so constituted, as to give an opening for political contests, or party interests. Yet select companies, meeting in the fear of God, and in the spirit of humble prayer for divine teaching, may help each other to investigate truth, and to decide difficult and important questions. We should, however, remember that the apostles themselves assigned the reasons of their determinations; and did not require the elders and churches to submit to their authority, without knowing the grounds on which they went: and in such discussions, we shall generally, if not always, find, that by examining the source of the subject in question, it will appear to have been already decided by the Lord Himself, and that it would be 'tempting' Him to debate the matter any further.

**SCOTT.**

*usmos*: a whetting, excitement, irritation, and its consequent indignation, disagreement, contention. *Bloomf.* 'The verb is often used in a good sense, for stirred up, see Isocr. and Demosth.: so the very word here, at Heb. 10:24.' Dr. A. C. 'Paul sought what was just; Barnabas what was philanthropic.' *Chrys.* 'Mark profited by this, and was for the futur more zealous and courageous.'

**NOTES.** CHAP. XVI. V. 1—3. Grotius observes, that this was probably the beginning of Luke's acquaintance with Timothy, 'though Paul knew him long before.'—The apostle's manner, in speaking of the persecutions which he endured 'at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, &c.' though, before he wrote it, he had gone through very many others; implies that Timothy had witnessed his sufferings in that neighborhood, and would be peculiarly affected by recollecting them. 2 Tim. 3:10—12.

**SCOTT.**

(2.) *Which was, &c.* 'Words said of Timothy, not of his father.

**DR. A. CLARKE.**



3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised <sup>a</sup> him, because of the Jews <sup>f</sup> which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained <sup>g</sup> of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.

5 And so were the churches <sup>h</sup> established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of <sup>i</sup> Galatia, and were forbidden of <sup>j</sup> the Holy Ghost to preach the word in <sup>k</sup> Asia,

7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.

8 And they, passing by Mysia, came down to <sup>l</sup> Troas.

e Ga. 2:3-8. 5:1-3. f 1 Co. 9:20. g c. 15:28,29. l c. 15:41. i Ga. 1:2. 1Pe. 1:1. j Am. 8:11,12. 1 Co. 12:11. k Re. 1:4,11. l 2 Co. 2:12. 2 Ti. 4:13.

father was a Greek, he was not circumcised; for the entail of the covenant and the seal of it, as of other entails in that nation, went by the father, not by the mother; so that his father being no Jew, he was not obliged to circumcision, nor entitled to it, unless when he grew up he did himself desire it. But observe, though his mother could not prevail to have him circumcised in his infancy, yet she educated him in the fear of God; that though he wanted the sign of the covenant, he might not want the thing signified.

2. He had gained a very good character among the Christians; he was *well reported of by brethren* at Lystra and Iconium; had not only an unblemished but a bright reputation, and great encomiums were given of him, as an extraordinary young man, from whom great things were expected. Not only those in the place where he was born, but those in the neighboring cities, admired him, and spake honorably of him. He had a name for good things with good people.

3. Paul would have him to go forth with him, attend on him, receive instruction from him, and join him in the work of the Gospel; to preach for him when there was occasion, and to be left behind in places where he had planted churches. Paul took a great love to him, not only because he was an ingenious young man, and one of great parts, but because he was a serious young man, and one of devout affections: for Paul was always *mindful of his tears*, 2 Tim. 1:4.

4. Paul had him circumcised. Strange! Had not Paul opposed those with all his might that were for imposing circumcision on the Gentile converts? Had he not at this time the decrees of the council at Jerusalem with him, which witnessed against it? He had, and yet circumcised Timothy, not, as those teachers designed in imposing circumcision, to oblige him to keep the ceremonial law, but only [in a matter otherwise indifferent] to render his conversation and ministry passable, and, if it might be, acceptable

among the Jews that abounded in those quarters. He knew Timothy was a man likely to do great good with them, being admirably qualified for the ministry, if they were not invincibly prejudiced against him; therefore, that they might not shun him as one unclean, because uncircumcised, he took him and circumcised him. He was against those who made circumcision necessary to salvation, but himself used it when conducive to edification; nor was he rigid in opposing, as they were in imposing it. Thus, though he went not in this instance according to the letter of the decree, he went according to its spirit; which was a spirit of tenderness toward the Jews, and willingness to bring them off gradually from their prejudices. Probably it was at this time Paul laid his hands on Timothy, conferring the gift of the Holy Ghost, 2 Tim. 1:6.

II. Here is Paul's confirming the churches he had planted, v. 4, 5. *He went through the cities where he had preached the Word of the Lord, as he intended, ch. 15:36. to inquire into their state.*

1. They delivered them copies of the decrees of the Jerusalem synod, to direct them, that they might have wherewith to answer the judaizing teachers, and to justify themselves in adhering to the *liberty with which Christ had made them free*. Though Paul had, for a particular reason, circumcised Timothy, yet he would not have that drawn into a precedent; therefore he delivered the decrees to the churches, to be religiously observed.

2. This was of very good service, for (1.) The churches were hereby established in the faith, v. 5. particularly in their opinion against imposing the ceremonial law on the Gentiles; when they saw the testimony, not only of the apostles and elders, but of the Holy Ghost in them, against it, they did no longer waver about it. Nay, the design of this decree being to set aside the ceremonial law, and its carnal ordinances, they were by it established in the Christian faith in general, and were the more firmly assured that it was of God, because it set up a spiritual way of serving God, as more suited to the nature both of God and man; and besides, that spirit of tenderness and condescension which appeared in these letters, plainly showed, that the apostles and elders were herein under the guidance of Him who is Love itself. (2.) They increased in number daily. If they had been disposed to turn Jews, they could have done that long since, before the apostles came among them: but now that they find there is no danger of their being enslaved by the yoke of the law, they are ready to embrace Christianity, and join the church: not a day passed but some or other gave up their names to Christ.

V. 6-15. In these verses, we have,

I. Paul's motions up and down to do good.

1. He and Silas went throughout Phrygia and Galatia, where, it should seem, the Gospel was already planted, whether by Paul's hand or no, is not mentioned; it is likely it was, for in his epistle to the Galatians, he speaks of his *preaching the Gospel to them at the first*, and how very acceptable he was among them, Gal. 4:13-15. And it appears by that epistle, that the judaizing teachers had then done great mischief to these churches of Galatia, had prejudiced them against Paul, and drawn them from the Gospel of Christ, for which he there severely

reproves them. But, probably, that was a great while after this.

2. They were forbidden at this time to preach the Gospel in Asia, (that country properly so called,) either because other hands were at work there, or because they were not yet prepared to receive it, as they were afterwards, ch. 19:10. when *all they that dwell in Asia heard the Word of the Lord*; or, as Dr. Lightfoot suggests, because at this time Christ would employ Paul in a new work, which was, to preach the Gospel to a Roman colony at Philippi, for hitherto the Gentiles he had preached to were Greeks. The Romans were more particularly hated by the Jews than other Gentiles, therefore there is this, among other things, extraordinary in his call thither, that he is forbidden to preach the Gospel in Asia, and other places, in order to his preaching it there. It was the *Holy Ghost that forbade them*, either by secret whispers, or by some prophets who spake to the mind of the Spirit. The removes of [faithful] ministers, and the dispensing of the means of grace by them, are in a particular manner under a divine conduct and direction.

3. They would have gone into Bithynia, but were not permitted, v. 7. They came to Mysia, and, as it should seem, preached the Gospel there; for though it was a very mean, contemptible country, even to a proverb, *Mysorum ultimus*, in Cicero, is a *most despicable man*; yet the apostles disdained not to visit it, owning themselves debtors both to the wise and to the unwise, Rom. 1:14. In Bithynia was the city of Nice, where the first general council was held against the Arians; into these countries Peter sent his epistle, 1 Pet. 1:1. And there were flourishing churches here; for though they had not the Gospel sent them now, they had it in their turn, not long after. Observe, Though their judgment and inclination were to go into Bithynia, yet, having then extraordinary ways of knowing the mind of God, they were overruled by them, contrary to their own mind. We must now follow Providence, and what we assay to do, if that *suffer us not*, we ought to acquiesce, and believe it for the best. *The Spirit of Jesus* suffered them not; so many ancient copies read it. *The servants of the Lord Jesus* ought to be always under the check and conduct of the *Spirit of the Lord Jesus*, by whom He governs men's minds.

4. They passed by Mysia, or passed through it, so some; and came down to Troas. Here a church was planted; for here we find one in being, ch. 20:6, 7. and probably planted at this time, and in a little time. It should seem, Luke joined the company here; for from henceforward, for the most part, when he speaks of Paul's journeys, he includes himself, *we* went, v. 10.

II. Paul's particular call to Macedonia, i. e. to Philippi, the chief city, inhabited mostly by Romans, as appears, v. 21. Paul had many visions, sometimes to encourage, sometimes, as here, to direct him in his work. An angel now appeared to him, to intimate to him that it was the will of Christ he should go to Macedonia.

1. He saw a man of Macedonia, who by his habit or dialect seemed so to Paul, or who told him he was so. The angel, some think, assumed the shape of such a man; or, as others think, impressed on Paul's fancy the image of such a man. Christ would have Paul directed to Macedonia, not as the

(3.) *To go forth with him.* 'I. e. as an Evangelist, (2. Tim. 4:5) a name, in the apostles' age, given to their assistants in propagating Christianity, and in establishing and regulating the churches; who took care that proper persons should be set over them, and in various other ways watched over their welfare. See Suicer.' BLOOMF.

V. 4. *Were ordained.* See on 15:19. 'The apostles and elders' alone are mentioned, as ordaining the decree. 15:12, 22-29. SCOTT.

(4.) *Decrees.* 'Dogmata: it always signifies something temporary and ceremonial, and not laws of perpetual and universal obligation. comp. Eph. 2:15. Col. 2:14. L'Enfant.' Doddr. But comp. Delany, at end of eh. 15. in Dr. A. C. ED.

V. 6. *Asia.* 'Since all the other regions here mentioned were in

Asia Minor, by *Asia* must undoubtedly be understood Ionia; as in 2:9. 20:16.' Bloomf. *Asia.* 'That called Proconsular Asia. As all the places mentioned in the former verses lay in Asia Minor, it is evident the word *Asia* must be thus explained.' Doddr. 'It included only Ionia, Æolia, and Lydia. It was in Proconsular Asia that the seven churches were situated.' Dr. A. CLARKE.

V. 7. *The Spirit.* 'Instead of the Spirit merely, the Spirit of Jesus is the reading of A B C D E, several others, with both the Syr., the Copt., Æth., Arm., Vulg., Itala, and several of the fathers. This reading is undoubtedly genuine, and should be immediately restored to the text.' Dr. A. Clarke. Doddr., also, thinks himself 'obliged to insert it.' ED.



9 ¶ And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man <sup>m</sup> of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go <sup>n</sup> into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;

12 And from thence to <sup>o</sup> Philippi, which is <sup>p</sup> the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony. And we were in that city abiding certain days.

13 And on the <sup>q</sup> sabbath we went out of the city by a river-side, where <sup>r</sup> prayer was wont to be made: and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*.

m c. 10:30.  
n 2 Co. 2:13.

o Phil. 1:1.  
p or, the first.

q Sabbath day.  
r c. 21:5.

apostles were at other times, by a messenger from heaven, but by a messenger from thence, because he would afterward ordinarily direct the motions of his ministers, by inclining the hearts of those who need them to *invite* them. Some make this man to be the tutelar angel of Macedonia; supposing angels to have charge of particular places as well as persons, and that so much is intimated, Dan. 10:20. But there is no certainty of that. There was presented either to Paul's eyes, or to his mind, a man of Macedonia, not a magistrate of the country, much less a priest, but an ordinary inhabitant, a plain man, that carried in his countenance marks of probity and seriousness, that came with all earnestness to importune Paul's assistance.

2. This honest Macedonian *prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us;* i. e. 'Come and preach the Gospel to us; let us have the benefit of thy labors.' 'Thou hast helped many; it is thy business, thy delight, to help poor souls; we have need of thy help, in Macedonia; are as ignorant, careless, idolatrous, and vicious, nay, as ingenious and industrious to ruin ourselves as any; therefore, O come, come with all speed among us.' People have great need of help for their souls, and it is their duty to look out for it, and invite those among them that can help them.

(10.) *We.*] 'Luke here first intimates his own attending on the apostles; and it is very remarkable that he does it obliquely; nor does he indeed, throughout the whole history, once mention his own name, or relate any one thing which he said or did for the service of Christianity, though Paul speaks of him in the most honorable terms, Col. 4:14. 2 Tim. 4:11. and probably, 2 Cor. 8:18. as the brother whose praise in the Gospel went through all the churches. The same remark may be made on the rest of the sacred historians, who every one of them show the like amiable modesty.'

V. 12. *Colony.*] 'The critics were long puzzled to find any mention of Philippi, as a Roman colony: but some coins (dug up, I think, within the last century) show, that a colony was planted there by Julius Cesar, and afterwards much augmented by Augustus.' *Doddr.* SCOTT.

(12.) *Chief.*] 'I. e. a principal, most important city, see *Bloomf.*' *Ed.* *A Colony.*] 'Dio Cassius states, that Julius Cesar planted a colony here. See *Spanh.* So also *Digest. Leg. has,* "In the province of Macedonia, the Dyrracheni, Cassandrenses, and Philippians enjoy the *jus Italicum*. Now these were colonies with different species of civil rights. Some were called *Romanæ*, which had not the complete *jus civitatis*, but only the *private* rights of *Quirites*, without the privilege of suffrage, or of bearing offices in the state. Others were styled *Latinæ*, which had not the rights of *Quirites*, but the *jus Latii*. Now those who enjoyed it might bear suffrage at the popular assemblies for legislation, if summoned thereto by the Roman magistracy; and when they had held magistracy in a Latin city, they thereby obtained the Roman citizenship. Others again (as were most of those out of Italy) were *juris Italicæ*; a privilege inferior to the *Latinitas*, and consisting in immunity from tribute, whether land or capitation tax." See *Spanh.* *Kuin.* *Chief city.*] 'Though *Amphipolis* was made the chief city of that one of the four parts of Macedonia, conquered by Paulus Emilius, yet *Philippi* might have been the chief city in the days of Paul, 220 yrs. after the division

From this vision, v. 10. they gathered absurdly, that the Lord had called them to preach the Gospel there; and they were ready to go wherever God directed. We may sometimes infer a call of God from a call of man. Ministers may go on with great cheerfulness and courage in their work, when they perceive Christ calling them, not only to preach the Gospel, but to preach it at this time, in this place, to this people.

III. Paul's voyage to Macedonia hereupon; they set sail by the first shipping, and with the first fair wind from Troas, by a prosperous voyage, to Samothracia; the next day to Neapolis, a city on the confines of Thrace and Macedonia; and at last they landed at Philippi, a city so called from Philip king of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great, said, v. 12. to be *The chief city of that part of Macedonia*; or, as some read it, the first city, the first they came to when they came from Troas; and a colony; the Romans not only had a garrison, but the inhabitants of the city were Romans, the magistrates at least, and the governing part.

IV. Their cold entertainment at Philippi. One would have expected, on such a particular call from God, they should have had a joyful welcome there, as Peter had with Cornelius when the angel sent him. But, no.

1. It is a good while before any notice at all is taken of them; *We were in that city abiding certain days*, probably at a public house, and at their own charge. But so it was ordered for their trial. Let not ministers think it strange, if they be first strongly invited to a place, and yet looked shyly upon when they come.

2. When they have an opportunity of preaching, it is in an obscure place, and to a mean [poor\*] and small auditory, v. 13. There was no *synagogue of the Jews* there, and they never went to the idol temples of the Gentiles, to preach to the auditories there; but here, on inquiry, they found out a little meeting of good women, *that were proselytes of the gate*, who will be thankful to them if they will give them a sermon. The place of this meeting is out of the city, there connived at, but not suffered within the walls; a place where prayer was wont to be made; *proseuchæ*,—where an oratory house of prayer was, so some; a chapel, or less synagogue. I rather take it as we read it, where prayer was appointed, or accustomed to be. They that worshipped the true God, and would not worship idols, met there to pray together, and, according to the description of the most ancient and universal devotion, to call upon the name of the Lord. Each

\* So the word was here improperly used, and the error which occasioned it is not yet banished, even from the church. *Ed.*

prayed apart every day, that was always the practice of them that worshipped God; but beside that, they came together on the sabbath-day; though but a few, discountenanced by the town, though their meeting was at some distance, though, for aught that appears, none but women, yet a solemn assembly the worshippers of God must have, if by any means it be possible, on the sabbath-day; and when we cannot do as we would, we must do as we can; if we have not synagogues, we must be thankful for more private places, and resort to them; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, according as our opportunities are. This place is said to be by a river side, perhaps chosen, as befriending contemplation. Ez. 1:1. Dan. 10:4. Thither Paul and Silas, and Luke, went, and sat down, to instruct the congregation, that they might the better pray with them; they spake unto the women which resorted thither, encouraged them in practising according to the light they had, and led them on further to the knowledge of Christ.

V. The conversion of Lydia, probably the first wrought upon there to believe in Christ.

1. It is an honor to her to have her name recorded here, so that wherever the Scriptures are read, there shall this be told concerning her. We cannot have our names recorded in the Bible, but, if God open our hearts, we shall find them written in the book of life, and that is better, Phil. 4:3. and more to be rejoiced in, Luke 10:20

2. Her calling; she was a seller of purple; either of purple dye, or of purple cloth or silk. Observe, She had an honest calling, which the historian notices to her praise; she was none of those women that the apostle speaks of, 1 Tim. 5:13. who learn to be idle, and not only idle, &c. Those employed in honest callings, if they be honest in the management of them, need not to be ashamed of them, [for it is not the employment, be it hand-work or head-work, which makes true honor, but the character.] She found time to improve advantages for her soul. The business of our particular callings [should be religion in practice, and] may be made to consist very well with the external business of religion, and therefore will not excuse us from religious exercises alone, and in our families, or in solemn assemblies. Everything in its time and place.

3. Thyatira was a great way from Philippi; there she was born and bred, but either married at Philippi, or brought by her trade to settle there. The providence of God, as it always appoints, so it often removes, the bounds of our habitation; and sometimes makes the change of our outward condition, or place of our abode, wonderfully subservient to the designs of his grace con-

by Paulus Emilius. Besides, as it was at this place that Augustus gained that victory which put him in possession of the whole Roman empire, might not he have given to it, what was before enjoyed by Amphipolis? This is the most rational way of understanding the passage.' Dr. A. C.

V. 13—15. This is the first account, transmitted to us, of the Gospel being preached in Europe: though the church at Rome, it is probable, was planted considerably before this time. *Prof. to Rom.* (14) *The Lord opened her heart.*] This implies, that pride, prejudice, the love of sin, the love of the world, [&c.] close the heart against the truths of God, till his grace makes way for admission of them into the understanding and affections. The adult part of her household no doubt were instructed in Christianity, along with her. There is no proof that there were any children in her family, though it is probable there were: the Syr. indeed renders it, 'the children of her house;' but this only shows the sentiments of those, who made that early tr.: and the language here used seems not capable of being consistently used in the narratives of those, who reject infant baptism. 29—34. Lydia's beseeching the apostle and his company, if they really considered her to be a true believer, to lodge in her house, implies that she was a person rather in affluent circumstances.—Many others seem, about this time, or soon afterwards, to have been converted. (*Prof. to Phil.*)—(14) *Opened.*] 'By the grace of God she received the faith.' *Hammond.*—'To open the ear, or the heart, is a phrase used to signify the rendering any person willing or inclined to do anything. Ps. 40:7.' *Whitby.* (*Phil.* 2:12, 13.) SCOTT.

(13.) *City.*] 'Rather gate, and so many MSS. *Where prayer, &c.*] Rather, by a river-side, where it was the custom for a *proseucha* or prayer-meeting to be held, i. e. in a grove, not a building. The most ancient critics and commentators have been long agreed, that the Gr. here, *proseuchæ* means an oratory; such places were in use, and have that name in Jos., Juvenal, and Philo. Elsnor cites a decree of the Halicarnassians, allowing the Jews to make *proseuchæ* near the sea-side, ac-



14 ¶ And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

16 ¶ And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

s Lu. 24:45. v or, Python. y c. 13:26.  
t He 13:2. w c. 19:24 He. 19:20.  
u 1 Sa. 23:7. x Ge. 14:18,22.

cerning our salvation. Providence brings Lydia to Philippi, to be under Paul's ministry, and there, where she met with it, she made a good use of it; so should we improve opportunities.

4. Her religion before the Lord opened her heart. She worshipped God according to the knowledge she had; she was one of the devout women. But it is not enough to be worshippers of God, we must be believers in Jesus Christ, for there is no coming to God as a Father, but by him as Mediator. But those who worshipped God according to the light they had, stood fair for the discoveries of Christ and his grace to them; for to him that has, shall be given.

5. The work wrought on her heart. Observe, (1.) The Author of it, the Lord, the Lord Christ, to whom this judgment is committed; the Spirit of the Lord, who is the Sanctifier. Note, Conversion-work is God's work; it is He that works in us both to will and to do; not as if we had nothing to do; but of ourselves, without God's grace, we can do nothing; nor as if God were in the least chargeable with the ruin of them that perish; but the salvation of them that are saved must be wholly ascribed to Him. (2.) The seat of it, the heart; it is to the heart that this blessed turn is given: conversion-work is heart-work; it is a renewing of the heart, the inward man, the spirit of the mind. (3.) The nature

of the work; she had not only her heart touched, but opened. An unconverted soul is shut up, fortified against Christ. Christ, in dealing with the soul, knocks at the door that is shut against Him, Rev. 3:20. and when a sinner is effectually persuaded to embrace Christ, then the heart is opened for the King of glory to come in; the understanding is opened to receive the divine light, the will, to receive the divine law, and the affections, to receive the divine love; [universal sympathy or philanthropy finds place.] When the heart is thus opened to Christ, the ear is opened to his Word, the lips in prayer, the hand in charity, and the steps enlarged in all manner of gospel-obedience.

6. The effects of this work on her heart. (1.) She took great notice of the Word of God; she attended unto, applied to herself, so some, the things spoken of Paul; and then only the Word does us good, and makes an abiding impression on us, when we apply it to ourselves: wherever the heart is opened by the grace of God, it will appear by a diligent attendance on, and attention to, the Word of God. (2.) She gave up her name to Jesus Christ, and took on her the profession of his holy religion; she was baptized, and by that solemn rite admitted to the Church of Christ; and with her her household also was baptized, those that were infants, in her right, for if the root be holy, so are the branches, and the grown up, by her influence and authority. She and her household were baptized, by the same rule that Abraham and his were circumcised, because the seal of the covenant belongs to the covenanters and their seed.\* (3.) She was very kind to the ministers, and very desirous to be further instructed by them in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; She besought us, saying, 'If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, if ye take me to be a sincere Christian, manifest your confidence in me by this, come into my house and abide there.' Thus she desired an opportunity to testify her gratitude. When her heart was open to Christ, her house was open to his ministers, for his sake. Nay, she is extremely pressing and importunate with them; she constrained us; which intimates that Paul was very backward to go, because he was afraid of being burdensome to the families of the young converts, and would study to make the Gospel of Christ without charge, 1 Cor. 9:18. Acts 20:34. that those that were without might have no occasion given them to reproach the preachers of the Gospel as designing, self-seeking men, and that those that were within might have

\* It seems she only is spoken of as faithful or believing: If ye have judged me faithful; so that her household were baptized on the ground of her faith. Ed.

according to their national custom, which illustrates and confirms the words, by a river-side. "The proseuchæ of this kind, in which the sacred books were read, the Jews had outside of those towns where there were no synagogues, either from the fewness of the Jews, or because the laws, or their administrators, would not permit any (which was probably the case in Roman cities or colonies, since *Juv.* speaks at Rome of *proseuchæ*, not synagogues. *Bloomf.*) These *proseuchæ* were not always edifices (though sometimes, see *Jos.*, they had such, and very large, so that, as *Vitr.* tells us, the name was occasionally applied to a synagogue. *Bloomf.*) but, for the most part, places in the open air, in a grove, in shrubberies, and even under a tree; though always (as we may suppose) near to some water, for the convenience of those ablutions, which (also with the Pagans, nay even, as we find from *Elsner*, the early Christians, *Bloomf.*) always preceded prayer." *Kuin.* *Bloomf.* Did the sexes, (*Bloomf.* suggests) in those tabernacles, booths, or groves, where it would be impracticable to separate them as in the synagogues, attend at the *proseuchæ*? *Sat.*] As was usual in teaching. *Ed.* Spake unto the women, &c.] "Probably this was before the time of their public worship; and while they were waiting for the assembling of the people in general." Dr. A. CLARKE.

(11.) Seller of purple.] "Not of the purple dye, but of purple vests, for the dyeing of which the Lydians were famous; (so Val. Flacc., *Ælian*, *Claudian*, *Plin.*, *Ovid*;) and that this art was especially exercised by the Tyrians, we find from an inscription dug up at Tyre, and to be found in *Spon's* collection." BLOOMF.

V. 16—18. This transaction demonstrates, beyond all controversy, that such pretensions are not always human impostures, but are sometimes real satanical operations. Had this damsel's divination been a mere juggle between her and her masters, the command of the apostle could not have detected it, or prevented them from carrying on the deception: nor could he at once, or indeed at all, have convinced the whole multitude, and the city in general, that it was a mere imposture, for men are

no occasion to complain of the expenses of their religion: but Lydia would have no nay, she will not believe that they take her to be a sincere Christian, unless they will oblige her herein; like Abraham inviting the angels, Gen. 18:3. Those that know something of Christ, cannot but desire to know more, and seek opportunities of increasing their acquaintance with his Gospel.

V. 16—24. Paul and his companions, though for some time buried in obscurity at Philippi, yet now begin to be taken notice of.

1. A damsel that had a spirit of divination, made them to be taken notice of, by proclaiming them to be the servants of God. Observe,

1. The account given of this damsel; she was *pythomissa*, possessed with such a spirit of divination as that damsel was, by whom the oracles of Apollo at Delphos were delivered; she was acted by an evil spirit, that dictated ambiguous answers to those who consulted her, which served to gratify their vain desire of knowing things to come, but often deceived them. Many came to consult this witch for the discovery of robberies, the finding of things lost, and especially to be told their fortune; and none came but with the rewards in their hands, according to the quality of the person, and the importance of the ease.

2. The testimony this damsel gave to Paul and his companions; she met them in the street, as they were going to the house of prayer, or rather to the work of prayer there, v. 16. They went thither publicly, every body knew whither they were going, and what they were going to do. If what she did was likely to distract them, or hinder their work, it is observable how subtle Satan is, that great tempter, to ruffle us, and to put us out of temper then, when we need to be most composed. When she met with them, she followed them, crying, 'These men, how contemptible soever they look and are looked upon, are great men, for they are the servants of the most high God, and men that should be very welcome to us, for they show unto us the way of salvation, both the salvation that will be our happiness, and the way to it, that will be our holiness. This witness is true; it is a comprehensive encomium on the faithful preachers of the Gospel, and makes their feet beautiful, Rom. 10:15. Even the heathen had some notion of the miserable, deplorable state of mankind, and their need of salvation, and it was what they made some inquiries after. But how came this testimony from the mouth of one that had a spirit of divination? Is Satan divided against himself? We may take it either, (1.) As extorted for the honor of the Gospel by the power of God; as the devil was forced to

by no means easily undeceived in matters of this nature. And if mere jugglers had been convinced, that Paul and his friends were indeed 'the servants of the true God,' and teachers of the way of salvation; they would never have ventured to address them in this manner.—But, as the woman was really instigated, and in a sense inspired, by an evil spirit, and as, in the paroxysms of her distraction, and amidst strange and wild actions and gestures, she actually uttered such things as were apparent prophecies and wonderful discoveries; such as Satan could at any time make, by his foresight, and conjectural knowledge, if God would permit him; *Deut.* 18:1—5. the change was manifest, when the dispossession took place.

(16.) Of divination.] 'Puthōnos: a word which probably came from the Eastern languages (perhaps the Sanscrit); but the origin and circumstances, which led to Apollo's being called Puthios, from *ho Puthōn*, are lost in the gray mists of antiquity. Even in Cicero's age it was as much unknown as now. Puthōn is a generic name applied to those who were formerly termed *eggastromuthoi*.' *Bloomf.*, whom see. *Masters.*] 'Walcsh shows that this common possession of a slave was not unfrequent: and he traces the cause of this to the property itself, which often remained common to several heirs, as also to the high price of any slave from whom any great gain was to be expected.' *Bloomf.* Ed. A certain damsel.] 'As Plutarch tells us, that persons inspired with this spirit spake as seeming to send the voice from their bellies, and Galen mentions the same fact, some writers have supposed the whole pretence to such inspiration to have been founded on the art of throwing out the voice [ventriloquism] in some extraordinary manner, and that all the cure wrought by the apostle was only discovering the cheat, and disabling her from playing this trick any more.... But the manner in which Luke relates the story plainly implies, that he thought it a real possession, and that Paul took it himself in that view. Nor can I apprehend that her behavior, or his, or that of her masters afterwards, can be otherwise accounted for.' *Doddr.*—'Every circumstance of this



18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said <sup>z</sup> to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her. And <sup>a</sup> he came out the same hour.

19 ¶ And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains <sup>b</sup> was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the <sup>c</sup> market-place, unto <sup>d</sup> the rulers,

20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble <sup>e</sup> our city,

21 And teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

23 And when they had laid <sup>f</sup> many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely:

<sup>z</sup> Ma. 1:25,34. <sup>c</sup> or, court. <sup>e</sup> 17:6.  
<sup>a</sup> Ma. 16:17. <sup>d</sup> Mat. 10:18. <sup>f</sup> 2 Co. 6:5. 11:  
<sup>b</sup> c. 19:24-27. <sup>e</sup> 1 K. 18:17. <sup>23,25.</sup> 1 Th. 2:2.

say of Christ, Mark 1:24. *I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God.* Or, (2.) As designed by the evil spirit, that subtle serpent, to dishonor the Gospel; some think she designed to gain credit to herself and her prophecies, and so to increase her master's profit, by pretending to be in the interest of the apostles, who, she thought, had a growing reputation, or, to speak Paul fair, not to part between her and her familiar. Others think, Satan designed hereby to disgrace the apostles; as if these divines were of the same fraternity with their diviners, because they were witnessed to by them; and then the people might as well adhere to those they had been used to. Those that were most likely to receive the apostles' doctrine, were such as were prejudiced against these spirits of divination, and therefore would, by this testimony, be prejudiced against the Gospel; and as for those who regarded these diviners, the devil thought himself sure of them.

II. Christ made them to be taken notice

proves it to have been a *real possession*. Luke speaks of the *spirit* and the *damsel* as *distinct* persons. The *damsel* had a *spirit* of divination. Paul turned to the *spirit*, and said, I command thee to come out of her; and he came out in the same hour.

V. 19-24. Had the apostle satisfactorily detected an artful impostor, they who had been convinced of the cheat, would have been enraged at those who had duped them of their money, and not at him who had undeceived them.—It does not appear, that the Jews were forbidden to exercise their religion at Philippi, or in other cities of the Roman empire, at this time; so that the accusation was altogether malicious and groundless. (20) *Being Jews.*] The Christians were here confounded with the unconverted Jews, as both protested against the Pagan worship. But had the worship of JEHOVAH been contrary to any Roman law, then in force, and actually carried into execution, no Jews could have remained in any of the cities where colonies were planted. It appears, that some statutes to this effect had been enacted; but doubtless it was generally found impracticable to execute them; and so they became obsolete, except when an occasion was sought of gratifying malice and cruelty by persecution.

(19, 20.) 'The rulers (archontes) are in v. 20. called *stratēgoi* (magistrates). The former seems to have been the general appellation given to all *magistrates* of the Philippians, (i. e. *kritai*, [judges,]) and *stratēgoi*, a more *special* definition of the persons. The senators in the *municipia* and *coloniæ* [note v. 12.], were styled *decuriones*. (Cic.) Now of those who discharged in them the office of chief magistrates, the name varied with the *number of persons* to whom that function was committed. In some it was committed to 2, in others to 4, or sometimes to 6; hence called either *duumviri*, *quatuorviri*, or *seviri*. So *Sigonius*. *Stratēgos* properly signifies a *commander of troops*. But as *stratos* was also used of the great body of the people (see *Soph.* and *Spanh.*), so *stratēgos* was modified, and thus the word came to denote a *civil magistrate*. Even among the Romans there were *prætors*, both military and civil, which latter used to hear and decide causes. Now *these*, by the Romans styled *prætores urbani*, were by the Greeks styled *stratēgoi*. So *Diod.* uses the word. This title of *Prætor*, the municipal and colonial *duumviri* used especially to take to themselves, (perhaps first given by courtesy, *Bl.*) since the *coloniæ* and *municipia* used studiously to imi-

of, by giving them power to cast the devil out. She continued *many days* clamoring thus, v. 18. and, it should seem, Paul took no notice of her, not knowing but it might be ordered of God for the service of his cause; but, finding perhaps that it did them a prejudice, rather than any service, he soon silenced her, by casting the devil out.

1. He was *grieved*, to see her made an instrument of Satan, to deceive people, and to see the people imposed on by her divinations. It disturbed him to hear a sacred truth so profaned, and good words come out of such an ill mouth, with such an ill design. Perhaps she spoke in an ironical, bantering way, as ridiculing the apostles' pretensions; as when Christ's persecutors complimented Him with *Hail, King of the Jews*; and then justly might Paul be *grieved*, as any good man's heart would be, to hear any good truth of God bawled out in the streets, in a canting, jeering way.

2. He *commanded the evil spirit to come out of her*; and by this he will show that *those men are the servants of the living God*, and are able to prove themselves so, without her testimony; her silence shall demonstrate it, more than her speaking could. Thus Paul shows *the way of salvation* indeed, that it is by breaking the power of Satan, and chaining him up, that he may not deceive the world, Rev. 20:3. and that *this salvation* is to be obtained in the name of Jesus Christ only, as in his name the devil was now cast out, and by no other; for he came out the same hour.

III. The masters of the damsel, made them to be noticed, by bringing them before the magistrates for it, as a crime. Observe here,

1. What provoked them, was, that, the damsel being restored to herself, *her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone*, v. 19. See here what evil *the love of money is the root of!* If the preaching of the Gospel ruin the craft of the *silver-smiths*, ch. 19:24. much more the craft of the *soothsayers*; therefore here is a mighty outcry raised, when Satan's power to deceive is broken; and therefore the priests hated the Gospel, because it *turned men from the blind service of dumb idols*, and so the hope of their gains was gone. The power and goodness of Christ, which appeared in dispossessing the woman, made no impression, when they apprehended they should lose money by it.

2. The course they took, was, to incense the higher powers against them, as men fit to be punished. *They caught them* as they

went along, and with the utmost fury and violence *dragged them into the market-place*, where public justice was administered. They brought them to the rulers, their justices of peace, to do by them as men taken into the hands of the law, the *duumviri*. From them they hurried them to the magistrates, the *prætors* or governors of the city,—the officers of the army, so the word signifies; but it is taken in general for the judges, or chief rulers; to them they brought their complaint.

3. They take it for granted they were Jews, a nation, at this time, as much an *abomination to the Romans*, as, long ago, to the Egyptians. Piteous was the case of the apostles, when it was turned to their reproach that they were Jews, and yet the Jews were their most violent persecutors! (1.) The general charge against them, is, that they troubled the city, sowed discord, and disturbed the public peace, than which nothing could be more false and unjust, as was Ahab's character of Elijah, 1 K. 18:17. If they troubled the city, it was but like the angel's troubling the water of Bethesda's pool, in order to healing; shaking, in order to a happy settlement. (2.) Their proof of their charge, is, their teaching customs not proper to be admitted by a Roman colony, v. 21. The Romans were always very jealous of innovations in religion; right or wrong, they would adhere to that, how vain soever, which they had received by tradition from their fathers; the gods of their country must be their gods, true or false. It was one of the laws of the twelve tables. *Hath a nation changed their gods?* This incensed them against the apostles, that they taught a religion, destructive of polytheism and idolatry, and preached to them to turn from those vanities. This the Romans could not bear; 'If this grow on us, in a little while we shall lose our religion.'

IV. The magistrates, by their proceedings against them, made them to be taken notice of.

1. By countenancing the persecution, they raised the mob upon them, v. 22. *The multitude rose up together against them*, and were ready to pull them to pieces. It has been the artifice of Satan, to make God's ministers and people odious, by representing them as dangerous, when really there has been no ground for such an imputation.

2. By going on to an execution, they further represented them as the vilest of malefactors. *They rent off their clothes*, with rage and fury, not having patience till they were taken off, in order to their being scourged.

tate the form of the Roman republic. So Cic. Hence these *Duumviri* were, in Gr., called *stratēgoi*, and to the class of such *Duumvirs* belonged those whom Luke has here called *stratēgoi*. See *Spanh.*, *Heinsius*, *Krebs*, *Walch*, and *Munthe*. *Kuin*. 'West. remarks, that the appellation still subsists at Messina, where the mayor of the city is called the *Stradigo*.'

(20.) 'As the laws made no provision to repair their loss, the girl's employers cunningly drop any seeming personal object, and pretend the public good. *Kuin*. remarks, that it was not allowed among the Romans, to worship any god, or recommend the worship of any, but such as were ordained by public authority, (so *Serv.*, *Jul. Paulus*, *Suet.*, *Val. Max.*, *Livy*): and though, indeed, (as *Walch* observes,) they permitted foreigners to worship their own gods in the city, yet it was only to be done in private, secretly, and, as it were, by stealth, and in such a manner as should not interfere with, or be any hindrance to, the rites of the established religion, or give any occasion to civil dissensions. "It was, therefore, not lawful (continues he) among the Romans, to recommend a new religion to the citizens, or even attempt to detach them from that which had been established by public authority. Now, taking all these things into due consideration, together with the hatred of the Romans towards the Jews and their religion, and bearing in mind that it was the primary duty of the provincial, colonial, and municipal magistrates to punish severely all seditious persons, or those who in any way stirred up the minds of the people, and to extinguish, by whatever means, rising sedition or tumult, we shall easily see the reason why the accusers resort to the charge of turbulence and sedition, and why they add the circumstance, 'being Jews,' which suggests an aggravation of the offence, as having been committed by those who were bound to show a very different conduct. Moreover, we shall see why they insinuate, v. 21. an attempt to proselyte Romans, who were not to admit any foreign religion. They craftily, too, omit all mention of their loss, lest their impartiality might be suspected, and their accusation be ascribed to malice." *Walch*.'

(22.) *Rent.*] 'The Roman magistrates used to order the lictors to rend open the clothes of the criminal. No care was taken of the garments: but they were suddenly and violently rent open.' *Burder* Note, end of chapter.



24 Who having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 ¶ And at midnight Paul and Silas <sup>g</sup> prayed, and <sup>h</sup> sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so <sup>i</sup> that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately <sup>j</sup> all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28 But <sup>k</sup> Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself <sup>l</sup> no harm; for we are all here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came <sup>m</sup> trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas:

<sup>g</sup> Ja. 5:13.      <sup>j</sup> Is. 42:7. c.5:19.      <sup>l</sup> Th. 5:15.  
<sup>h</sup> Ps. 34:1.      12:7,10.      <sup>m</sup> Ec. 7:15—17.  
<sup>i</sup> c. 4:31.      <sup>k</sup> Pr. 24:11,12.      <sup>n</sup> Je. 5:22.

This the apostle refers to, when he speaks of their being shamefully entreated at Philippi, 1 Thess. 2:2. They commanded that they should be whipped as vagabonds, by the lictors or beakles who attended the prætors, and carried rods with them for that purpose; this was one of those *three times that Paul was beaten with rods*, according to the Roman usage, which was not under the compassionate limitation of the number of stripes not to exceed forty, which was provided by the Jewish law. It is here said, that they laid many stripes on them, v. 23. without counting how many, because they seemed vile unto them, Deut. 25:3.

Now, one would think, this might have satiated their cruelty; but no, they are imprisoned, and, it is probable, their present purpose was to try them for their lives, and put them to death; else why should there be such care taken to prevent their escape? The judges made their commitment very strict; as if they were dangerous men. Thus they endeavored to render them odious, that they might justify their base usage. The jailer was sensible that the magistrates had a great indignation against these men, and were inclined to be severe with them, therefore he thought to ingratiate himself with them, by exerting his power likewise against them to the uttermost. When magistrates are cruel, it is no wonder that the officers under them are so too. He put them into the inner prison, the dungeon, and, as if that were not enough, he made their feet fast in the stocks. Perhaps, having heard a report of the escape of the preachers of the Gospel out of prison,

(24.) *Made their feet fast in the stocks.* It is generally supposed that these were the *cippi*, or large pieces of wood, used among the Romans, which not only loaded the legs of the prisoners, but sometimes distended them in a very painful manner. . . . Beza explains it of the *numella*, in which both the feet and the neck were fastened in the most uneasy posture that can be well imagined. The distressing situation of Paul and Silas, thus in the stocks, [in a damp, muddy pit,] and so lately scourged, renders their joyful frame, expressed by songs of praise, so much the more remarkable.

V. 27. 'Self-murder prevailed much among the Romans, especially about that time, and had, in the memory of some then living, been, as it were, dignified at Philippi by the example of those great men, Brutus and Cassius, among others, who fell on their own swords there.'

V. 28, 29. *Paul cried, &c.* As they were all in the dark, it is not easy to say, how Paul knew of the jailer's purpose, unless it were by hearing some desperate words that declared it, or by some immediate suggestion from God, which, amidst such a scene of wonders, is by no means incredible.

V. 29—34. By being 'saved,' the jailer doubtless meant deliverance from present death, and from future condemnation.—This faith implied [92]

when the doors were fast barred, ch. 5:19. 12:9. he thought he would be wiser than other jailers had been, and therefore would effectually secure them by fastening them in the stocks; and they were not the first of God's messengers thus served, Jer. 20:2. Ps. 105:18. Oh what hard usage have God's servants met with, as in the former days, so in the latter times!\*

V. 25—34. We have here the designs of the persecutors of Paul and Silas baffled and broken.

I. The persecutors designed to dishearten and discourage the preachers of the Gospel; but here,

1. Never were poor prisoners so truly cheerful, nor so far from laying their hard usage to heart. They had felt the smart of the prætors' rods, were very sore, and they had reason to fear the axes next, as their Master, first scourged, then crucified. In the mean time they were in the inner prison, their feet in the stocks, which, some think, not only held them, but hurt them; and yet, at midnight, when they should have been trying, if possible, to get a little rest, they prayed, and sang praises to God. No place, no time, amiss for prayer, if the heart be lifted up to God. No trouble, how grievous soever, should indispose, but rather dispose us for prayer; and in everything we must give thanks. We never want matter for praise, if we do not want a heart. And what should put the heart of a child of God out of tune for that duty, if a dungeon and a pair of stocks will not do it? They praised God that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. They sang praises to Him, in some psalm, or hymn, or spiritual song; either one of David's, or one of their own, as the Spirit gave them utterance. This proves that singing of psalms is a gospel-ordinance, and ought to be used by all good Christians; and that it is instituted, not only to express their joys in a day of triumph, but to balance and relieve their sorrows in a day of trouble. Notice is taken of one circumstance, that the prisoners heard them. It intimates, how hearty they were in singing praises to God, in that they were heard all the prison over. We should sing psalms with all our heart. The saints are called upon to sing aloud upon their beds, Ps. 149:5. They knew the prisoners would hear them, yet they sang aloud, as not ashamed of their Master or of his service. The prisoners were made to hear the prison-songs of Paul and Silas, that they might be prepared for the miraculous favor showed to them, all for the sake of Paul and Silas, when the prison-doors were thrown open. By this extraordinary comfort which they were filled with, it was published, that He whom they preached was the Consolation of Israel. Let the prisoners that mean to oppose Him, hear and tremble before Him; let those that are faithful to Him, hear and triumph, and take of the comfort that is spoken to the prisoners of hope, Zeel. 9:12.

II. The persecutors designed to stop the progress of the Gospel, but here we find, in the prison, trophies of the Gospel's victories, and the jailer, their own servant, become a servant of Christ. Probably, some of the prisoners, if not all, were converted; see Job 36:8, 9, 10. Ps. 107:14, 15. But only the conversion of the jailer is recorded.

1. He is afraid for his life, and Paul makes him easy as to that care, v. 27, 28. He awoke; this signified the awakening of his conscience out of its spiritual slumber, Eph. 5:14. Jonah 1:6. Seeing the prison-doors open, he supposed the prisoners were fled; and then what would become of him? He knew the Roman law in that case, as executed not long ago on the keepers out of whose hands Peter escaped, ch. 12:19. It was according to that of the prophet, 1 K. 20:39, 42. The Roman lawyers, after this, in their readings on the law, *Of the custody of criminals*, take care to except an escape by miracle. In his fright, he was going to kill himself, to prevent a more terrible death, an expected, pompous, ignominious death, which he knew he was liable to for letting his prisoners escape; and the extraordinary strict charge the magistrates gave him concerning Paul and Silas, made him conclude they would be very severe on him if they were gone. The philosophers generally allowed self-murder, as the last remedy those in distress may have recourse to. The Stoics, notwithstanding their pretended conquest of the passions, yielded thus far to them. And the Epicureans, who indulged the pleasures of sense, to avoid its pains

2. God heartened them wonderfully by his signal appearances for them, v. 26. (1.) There was immediately a great earthquake, such a violent shock, that the very foundations of the prison were shaken. While the prisoners were hearkening to Paul and Silas, and perhaps making a jest of them, this earthquake would strike a terror on them, and convince them that those men were the favorites of heaven, and such as God owned. We had the house of prayer shaken, in answer to prayer, and as a token of God's acceptance of it, ch. 4:31. Here the prison shaken. The Lord was in these earthquakes, to show his resentment of the indignities done to his servants, to testify to those whose confidence is in the earth, the weakness and instability of that which they confide in, and to teach his people, that though the earth be moved, yet they need not fear. (2.) The prison-doors were thrown open, and the prisoners' fetters knocked off, every man's bands were loosed. Perhaps the prisoners, when they heard Paul and Silas pray, and sing psalms, admired them, and spake honorably of them; and to recompense them for, and confirm them in, their good opinion of them, they share in the miracle, and have their bands loosed. God hereby signified to these prisoners, as Grotius observes, that the apostles, in preaching the Gospel, were public blessings to mankind, as they proclaimed liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison-doors to them that were bound, Is. 61:1.

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a belief of their testimony concerning Jesus, as the promised Messiah, and concerning his Person, character, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension; and a reliance on Him for all things pertaining to salvation. —They also included his household in this assurance; not that his faith could save them; but his example might lead them to believe in Christ also; and with him they would become a part of the visible church, and have the benefit of the means of grace for their salvation. 2:37—40. 11:4—17, v. 14. Gen. 17:7, 8. Jer. 32:39—41. Luke 19:1—10, v. 9. —When a Gentile householder was converted to the Jewish religion, all the males in his family, including infants, were circumcised with him, unless any of the adults, after instruction, refused to be so; it is therefore obvious to suppose, that the same rule was observed, in the baptism of those households, of which we read in the N. T.; for it has already been shown, that the covenant sealed to Abraham, was the same as the Christian covenant; and that circumcision was the sign of the same blessings of which baptism now is. Gen. 17:9—12. And the language, concerning the baptism of believers and their households, so much accords to that concerning the circumcision of Abraham and his household; that, in connexion with other scriptures; with the general and early use of infant-baptism in the primitive church; and with the consideration that we do not read in the N. T. of one single instance, in which the chil-



30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

n c. 2:37. 9:6. 13:39. r Lu. 5:29.  
o Hab. 2:4. Jn. 3: p e 2:39. s Ro. 5:11.  
16, 36. 6:37. c. q Ro. 1:14, 16.

chose rather to put an end to it. This jailer thought there was no harm in anticipating his own death; but Christianity by this proves itself to be of God, that it keeps us to the law of our creation,—revives, enforces, and establishes that; obliges us to be just to our own lives, and teaches us cheerfully to resign them to our graces, but courageously to hold them out against our corruptions. Paul eagerly stopped him from his proceeding against himself, v. 28. All the cautions of the Word of God against sin, and all appearances of it, and approaches to it, have this tendency, 'Do thyself no harm.' The jailer needs not fear being called to an account for the escape of his prisoners, for they are all here. It was strange some of them did not slip away, when the prison-doors were opened, and they were loosed from their bands; but their amazement held them fast, and, being sensible it was by the prayers of Paul and Silas they were loosed, they would not stir, unless they stirred; and God showed his power in hindering their spirits, as much as in loosing their feet.

2. He is afraid he shall lose his soul, and Paul makes him easy as to that care too. One concern leads him to the other, and a much greater; and being hindered from hastening himself out of this world, he begins to think, if he had pursued his intention, whether death would have brought him, and what would have become of him on the other side death,—a very proper thought

dren of Christian parents were baptized adult; it must be allowed strongly to countenance the sentiments and practice of pædo-baptists; though we suppose, that the change of the initiatory ordinance, as far as infants were concerned, was silently and gradually; like that respecting the Sabbath; the Jewish converts still circumcising their male children, to avoid giving needless offence to the unconverted Jews. 1:3.—It seems also most probable, to me, at least, that Paul and Silas, in their painful condition, and in the jailer's house, did not baptize him and his family by immersion.—(34) *Rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.* 'He rejoiced through all his house, having believed in God.' The participle in Greek, rendered *having believed*, is in the singular number, it denoting the jailer alone.

(30.) *What must, &c.* 'Grotius thinks this inquiry went on the natural principles of the immortality of the soul; Whitby, with much greater propriety, that it refers to the testimony of the Pythoness, v. 17. I apprehend the sense to be very extensive. Probably a vast multitude of ideas rushed on his mind at once; the power and displeasure of God, manifested in the earthquake, the sweetness and joy of Paul and Silas in their bonds, their willing continuance in prison, when they might have escaped, and their generous solicitude for one who had used them so ill,—perhaps some kind, *pious words*, Paul and Silas might have uttered when he was fastening their feet in the stocks; and no doubt the *Spirit of God* added conviction and energy to all.' *Doddr.*—'The only interpretation of the jailer's cry, (as *Kuin.* and *Heinr.* acknowledge,) at all agreeable to the context, is the *common* one, "how shall I attain eternal salvation?" for he would not fear punishment, for the effects of the earthquake; besides, the prisoners were all there; nor of his gods, for confining innocent persons, for that was the magistrate's act. I am surpris'd any competent judge of phraseology should have thought his words of uncertain sense.'

(31.) *Thou shalt be saved and thine house.* 'The meaning cannot be, that the *eternal salvation of his family* could be secured by *his faith*, but that *his believing in Christ* would be the best security of *his family from present danger*, and that, if they also *themselves believed*, they would be entitled to the same *spiritual and everlasting blessings* with himself.'

(33.) *Washed their stripes*, which still remained unhealed. I mention the circumstance, as it serves to show, (and it is of great importance

for such as have been snatched as a brand out of the fire, when there was but a step between them and death. Perhaps, the heinousness of the sin he was running into, helped to alarm him. The Spirit of God, that was sent to convince, in order to his being a Comforter, struck a terror on him, and startled him; but he called for a light, with all speed, and sprang in to the inner prison, and came trembling to Paul and Silas for relief. Observe,

(1.) How reverent and respectful his address to them is; he fell down before them, as one ready to sink under the load of his terror; as one that had on his spirit an awe of them, of the image of God on them, and of their commission from God. Probably he had heard what the damsel said of them, that they were the servants of the living God, which showed to them the way of salvation, and as such he thus expressed his veneration for them. He gave them a title of respect, *Sirs, masters*; it was but now, *Rogues and villains*, and he was their master; but now, *Sirs, lords*, and they are his masters. Converting grace changes people's language, of and to good people and good ministers; and to persons who are thoroughly convinced of sin, the very feet of those are beautiful, that bring tidings of Christ; yea, though disgracefully fastened in the stocks.

(2.) How serious his inquiry is; *What must I do to be saved?* His salvation is now his greatest concern, which before was the furthest thing from his thoughts. It is his own precious soul that he is in care about; convinced something must be done, and by him, too, in order to his salvation; that it is not a thing of course, a thing that will do itself, but a thing about which we must strive, wrestle, and take pains. He is willing to do anything. Those who are thoroughly convinced of sin, and truly concerned about their salvation, will surrender at discretion to Jesus Christ, will be glad to have Christ on his own terms, on any terms. God has appointed his ministers to assist us in consulting the Scriptures, and has promised to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, to be their Guide in the way of salvation.

(3.) They very readily directed him what he must do, v. 31. They were always ready to answer such inquiries; though *cold, sore, and sleepy*, they do not adjourn to a more convenient time and place, but take him now, lest the conviction should wear off; now that God begins to work, it is time for them

to set in as workers together with God. They do not upbraid him with his rude and ill carriage toward them; all this is forgiven and forgotten, and they are as glad to show him the way to heaven, as the best friend they have. They did not triumph over him. No, all is overlooked and easily passed by, if he will but believe in Christ. This is an example to ministers, to encourage penitents, to meet those that are coming to Christ, and take them by the hand; not to be hard on any for unkindness done to them; but to seek Christ's honor more than their own. Here is the sum of the whole Gospel, the covenant of grace in a few words; *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house*, Luke 19:9. Those of thy house that are infants, shall be admitted into the visible church with thee, and thereby put into a fair way for salvation; those that are grown up, shall have the means of salvation brought to them, and, be they ever so many, let them believe in Jesus Christ, and they shall be saved; they are all welcome to Christ on the same terms.'

(4.) They proceeded to instruct him and his family in the doctrine of Christ, v. 32. They spake unto him the Word of the Lord. He was, for aught that appears, an utter stranger to Christ, therefore it is requisite he should be told who this Jesus is, that he may believe in Him, John 9:36. And the substance of the matter lying in a little compass, they soon told him enough to make his being baptized a reasonable service. They spake the Word not only to him, but to all that were in his house. Masters of families should take care that all under their charge partake of the means of knowledge and grace, and that the Word of the Lord be spoken to them; for the souls of the poorest servants are as precious as those of the masters, and are bought with the same price.

(5.) The jailer and his family were immediately baptized, and thereby took on them the profession of Christianity, submitted to its laws, and were admitted to its privileges, on their declaring solemnly, as the eunuch did, that they believed that *Jesus Christ is the Son of God*; he was baptized, he, and all his, straightway. Neither he nor any of his family desired time to consider whether they should come into baptismal bonds or no; nor did Paul and Silas desire time to try their sincerity, and to consider whether they should baptize them or no. But the spirit of grace worked such a strong

to remember it,) that the apostles had not a power of working *miraculous cures* when they pleased; no, not even on their own bodies, or those of their dearest friends. Had they possessed such a power, it would have been their duty to use it, unless they had, (as Christ with such a power in fact had,) a discovery of the *divine will*, that in such or such instances the use of it should be waived. On the other hand, the continual use of such a power would have frustrated many of the noble purposes in providence, which their sufferings answered, and would have introduced many inconveniences, which an intelligent reader will easily apprehend from this general hint. *Doddr.*—*And was baptized, &c.* 'His being thus baptized with his household seems to be the only reason which the Greek commentators had to think this jailer's name was *Stephanus*, and that he is the person referred to, 1 Cor. 1:16. 16:15, 17. But it is much more probable that *Stephanus* was a Corinthian, from all the places here cited.' *Id.*—*Baptized straightway.* 'Immediately, instantly, at the very time, while the thing was doing; and if so, it is by no means likely there was any immersion in the case; indeed all the circumstances of the case, the dead of the night, the general agitation, the necessity of despatch, and the words of the text disprove it. The apostles, therefore, had another method of administering baptism besides immersion. . . . Moreover, as the Jews were accustomed to receive whole families of heathens, young and old, as *proselytes*, by baptism: so here the apostles receive whole families, those of Lydia and the jailer, by the same rite. It is, therefore, pretty evident, that we have in this chap. very presumptive proofs, 1. That baptism was administered without immersion, as in the case of the jailer and his family; and, 2. That children were also received into the church in this way; for we can scarcely suppose that the whole families of Lydia and the jailer had no children in them; and if they had, it is not likely that they should be omitted; for the Jewish method was invariably to receive the heathen children with their proselyted parents.' *Dr. A. C.*—*Grotius* supposes, from the peculiar phraseology, that 'the jailer took them to a bath within the precincts of the prison, and bathed them. Certainly if the distinction laid down by *Campb.* were invariably true, that *nuptō* always signifies to dip, and *louō* always to bathe, there could be no doubt as to this interpretation [of *elouscn* here], which after all may be the true one. Most commentators, however, with the *Vulg.*, tr. "washed." *Same.* At that very hour, unseasonable as it was.'



35 ¶ And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go.

36 And the keeper of the prison told this saying, to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace.

37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay, verily; but let them come themselves, and fetch us out.

38 And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.

39 And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.

t c. 22:25. Mat. 10:16. 3:9.  
u D. 6:13, 19. v Ex. 11:3. Re. w Mat. 8:34.

faith in them, all on a sudden, as superseded further debate; and Paul and Silas knew by the Spirit, that it was a work of God that was wrought in them: so that there was no occasion for demur. This, therefore, will not justify such precipitation in ordinary cases.

(6.) The jailer was hereupon very respectful to Paul and Silas, as one that knew not how to make amends for the injury he had done to them, much less for the kindness he had received from them; he took them the same hour of the night, would not let them lie a minute longer in the innerprison; but washed their stripes, to cool them, and abate the smart of them; probably he bathed them with some healing liquor; as the good Samaritan helped the wounded man, by pouring in oil and wine. He brought them into his house, bid them welcome to the best room he had, and prepared his best bed for them. He set meat before them, such as his house would afford, and they were welcome to it; by which he expressed the welcome which his soul gave to the Gospel. What have we houses and tables for, but, as we have opportunity, to serve God and his people with them?

(7.) The voice of rejoicing, with that of salvation, was heard in the jailer's house; never was such a truly merry night kept there before; he rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house: none in his house refused to be baptized, and so make a jar in the harmony; but they were unanimous in embracing the Gospel, which added much to the joy. Observe, His believing in Christ is called believing in God; which intimates, that Christ is God. Believing in Christ is rejoicing in Christ. Out of the abundance of the joy in his heart, his mouth spake to the glory of God, and their encouragement who believed in God too. One cheerful Christian should make many.

V. 35—40. I. Orders are sent for the discharge of Paul and Silas, v. 35, 36.

1. The magistrates that had so basely abused them the day before, gave the orders early, as soon as it was day, which intimates, that either they were sensible the earthquake was intended to plead the cause of their prisoners, or their consciences had made

them very uneasy. [Two ancient MSS. add, they were terrified by it.] They sent serjeants, those that had the rods, the vergers, the tipstaves, the beadles, those that had been employed in beating them, that they might go and ask them forgiveness. The order was, Let those men go. God turned their hearts, Ps. 76:10.

2. The jailer brought them the news, v. 36. Some think the jailer had betimes transmitted an account to the magistrates of what had passed in his house that night, and so had obtained this order. God could, by his grace, as easily have converted the magistrates, as the jailer; but God hath chosen the poor of this world, James 2:5.

II. Paul's insisting on the breach of privilege the magistrates had been guilty of, v. 37. It is probable the magistrates had some intimation they were Romans, and were made sensible their fury had carried them farther than the law could bear them out; and that was the reason they ordered their discharge. Now.

I. Paul did not plead this before he was beaten, though it is probable it might have prevented it, lest he should seem to be afraid of suffering for the truth which he had preached. Tully tells of one Ganius, who was ordered by Verres to be beaten in Sicily, that all the while he was under the lash he cried out nothing, but I am a citizen of Rome; Paul had nobler things to comfort himself with.

2. He did plead it afterward, to honor his sufferings, and the cause he suffered for; likewise to mollify the magistrates toward the Christians at Philippi, and to beget in the people a better opinion of the Christian religion, when they saw that Paul had a fair advantage against their magistrates, and might have called them to an account for what they had done, and yet did not; which was very much to the honor of that worthy name by which he was called. Now here,

(1.) Paul lets them know how many ways they had run themselves into a *præmunire*, and that he had law enough to know it. [1.] They had beaten them that were Romans; some think, Silas was a Roman citizen as well as Paul; others, that that does not necessarily follow. Paul was a citizen, and Silas his companion. Now both the *lex Porcia* and the *lex Sempronia* did expressly forbid the free body of a Roman citizen to be beaten with rods or otherwise. Roman historians give instances of cities that had their charters taken from them for indignities done to Roman citizens; we shall afterward find Paul making use of this plea, ch. 22:25, 26. To tell them they had beaten the messengers of Christ, and the favorites of heaven, would have had no influence on them; but to tell them they have abused Roman citizens, will put them into a fright; so common is it for people to be more afraid of Cesar's wrath than of Christ's, though He has warned us of the danger of offending his little ones. [2.] They had beaten them uncondemned, without a fair hearing, had not calmly examined what was said against them, much less inquired what they had to say for themselves. It is a universal rule of justice, *Many may be acquitted in consequence of having had a hearing; while without a hearing no one can be condemned.* Christ's servants would not have been abused as they have been, if they and their cause might but have had an impartial trial. [3.] It was an aggravation of this, that they had done it openly, which, as it was so much the

greater disgrace to the sufferers, so it was the bolder defiance to justice and the law. [4.] They had cast them into prison, without showing any cause of their commitment, and in an arbitrary manner, by a verbal order. [5.] They now thrust them out privily; they had not, indeed, the impudence to stand by what they had done, but yet had not the honesty to own themselves in a fault.

(2.) He insists on it, that they should make them an acknowledgment of their error, and give them a public discharge, to make that the more honorable, as they had done them a public disgrace, which made that the more disgraceful; 'Let them come themselves and fetch us out, and give a testimony to our innocency, and that we have done nothing worthy of stripes or of bonds.' It was not a point of honor that Paul stood thus stiffly upon, but a point of justice, and not to himself, so much as to his cause; 'Let them come and stop the clamors of the people, by confessing that we are not the troublers of the city.'

III. The magistrates' submission, and reversing of their judgment, v. 38, 39.

1. The magistrates were frightened, when they were told that Paul was a Roman; lest some of his friends should inform the government of what they had done, and they should fare the worse for it. The proceedings of persecutors have often been illegal, even by the law of nations, and often inhuman, against the law of nature, but always sinful, and against God's law. 2. They came, and besought them not to take the advantage of the law against them, but to overlook the illegality of what they had done, and say no more of it; they brought them out of the prison, owning they were wrongfully put into it, and desired they would peaceably and quietly depart out of the city, as Pharaoh and his servants to Moses, Ex. 11:8. God can make the enemies of his people ashamed of their envy and enmity to them, Is. 26:11. Jerusalem is sometimes made a burdensome stone to them that heave at it, which they would gladly get clear of, Zech. 12:3. Yet if the repentance of these magistrates had been sincere, they would have desired them not to depart, but to stay and continue in their city, to show them the way of salvation. But many are convinced Christianity is not to be persecuted, who yet are not convinced it ought to be embraced, or at least are not persuaded to embrace it. They are compelled to honor Christ and his servants, to worship before their feet, and to know that He has loved them, Rev. 3:9. and yet do not go so far as to have benefit by Christ, or to come in for a share in his love.

IV. The departure of Paul and Silas, v. 40. They left the prison when legally discharged, and not till then, though illegally committed, and then, 1. They took leave of their friends; they went to the house of Lydia, where, probably, the disciples had met to pray for them, and there they saw the brethren, or visited them at their respective habitations; (which was soon done, they were so few;) and they comforted them, by telling them (saith an ancient Greek commentary) what God had done for them, and how he had owned them in the prison, &c. 2. They quitted the town. I wonder they should do so; for, after such an honorable discharge, surely they might have gone on at least for some time in their work without danger; but I suppose they went away on their Master's principle, Mark 1:38. Paul

V. 37. 'It was strictly forbidden by the Roman law (indeed by the common law of all nations) for any citizen to be punished or condemned unheard. Cic. Tacit. See Grot., Wetst.' Bloomf. Being Romans.] Note, end of ch. It appears from this that Silas was also a Roman citizen, how does not appear. See Bl. 'It was only afterwards that prisoners were put in public prisons before confession or conviction; prisoners were held in *custodia liberâ*, either by the magistrate, in his private house, or others, to whom he committed them.' Prisoners, at least in the E., were quite at the mercy of their keeper, who was only bound to produce them when called for.

V. 39. Besought them.] 'Comforted them, so our tr. render the original word in next v., as well as in many other places. Comp. Acts 20:12. Rom. 1:12. 2 Cor 1:4. 7:6. in all which texts, and many others, it can have no other signification, though in several others it must signify exhorted, as it is justly rendered, Acts 11:21. 1 Thess. 2:11. Heb. 3:13. and elsewhere. There are other instances in which it signifies entreat, 1 Cor. 4:13. 1 Tim. 5:1. But I prefer the first sense here, as the latter is expressed in the following clause, and as it gives us an idea of a more respectful treatment, as De Dieu also has hinted.'



40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of <sup>a</sup> Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

### CHAP. XVII.

<sup>1</sup> Paul preacheth at Thessalonica, <sup>4</sup> where some believe, and others persecute him, <sup>10</sup> He is sent to Berea, and preacheth there. <sup>13</sup> Being persecuted at Thessalonica, <sup>15</sup> he cometh to Athens, and disputeth, and preacheth the living God, to them unknown, <sup>31</sup> whereby many are converted unto Christ.

NOW when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

2 And Paul, as his manner was, <sup>a</sup> went in unto them, and three sabbath-days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures,

x ver. 14. a Lu. 4:16. c. 9:20. 13:5,14.

and Silas had an extraordinary call to Philippi; and yet when come thither, they see little of the fruit of their labors, and are soon driven thence; yet they did not come in vain, though the beginnings here were small, the latter end greatly increased; now they laid the foundation of a church at Philippi, which became very eminent, more generous to Paul than any other, as appears from Phil., ch. 1:1. 4:15. Let not ministers be discouraged, though they see not the fruit of their labors presently; the seed sown seems to be lost under the clouds, but it shall come up again in a plentiful harvest in due time.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1—9. I. Here is Paul's coming to Thessalonica, the chief city of this country, called at this day *Saloneeh*, in the Turkish dominions. The opposition and persecution he met with, made him the more resolute. He did but pass through

PRACT. OBS. 'The wisdom that is from above' is peculiarly requisite, that we may know when, and how far, we may bear with men's prejudices, in order to their edification; and when we must resolutely protest against them.—The greatest precaution should be used, that the ministers of Christ be men of good report: lest prejudices against individuals should be added to the carnal enmity of the human heart against the Gospel, to prevent their success; and that such as 'are of the contrary part, may have no evil thing to say of them.' Scriptural regulations, therefore, in this and similar concerns, tend exceedingly to the establishment of believers in the faith, and to the increase of the church in numbers. (1 Tim. 3:7. Tit. 2:7, 8.)—We have no ground to expect to be directed by immediate revelation, in the various actions of our lives; but, while we act according to the best of our judgment, in obedience to the Word, and dependence on the Spirit of God; we shall find circumstances, apparently casual, operate as prohibitions and directions, subverting our plans, and substituting others in their stead.—When we are, by any means, satisfied of the Lord's will respecting us; we should prepare for obedience, to whatever hardship, labor, and peril it may expose us: and those who go in simplicity, faithfulness, and affection, to preach the Gospel among ignorant or careless sinners, do the most for their help and benefit that man can do: though it seldom happens, that persons of this character are forward to invite them. The deplorable condition, however, of our fellow-creatures, in very many parts of the world, and even their insensibility to their own danger and misery, ought to stimulate our exertions, to carry or send them effectual help; and to rid, by our labors, contributions, and prayers, every scriptural attempt for that purpose. [Happily, at length, this subject receives and rewards attention, in several cities.] Satan, the father of lies, can declare the most important truths, when it subserves his purpose of deception and murder: and, if he were permitted, he could do more mischief by ingeniously connecting the doctrines of the Gospel with pernicious errors and im-

Amphipolis and Apollonia, the former a city near Philippi, the latter near Thessalonica; doubtless, he was under divine direction what places to pass through, and what to rest in. Apollonia was a city of Illyricum, which, some think, illustrates that of Paul, that he had preached the Gospel from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, Rom. 15:9. i. e. to the borders of Illyricum, where he now was: and we may suppose, though he be said only to pass through these cities, yet that he staid so long in them as to publish the Gospel there, and to prepare the way for the entrance of other ministers whom he would afterward send.

II. His preaching to the Jews first, in their synagogue, v. 1. which intimates, that one reason why he passed through those other cities mentioned, and did not continue long in them, was, because there were no synagogues in them; finding one in Thessalonica, by it he made his entry. It was always his manner to begin with the Jews, and not to turn to the Gentiles till they had refused it, that their mouths might be stopped from clamoring against him because he preached to the Gentiles; for if they received the Gospel, they would cheerfully embrace the new converts; if they refused it, they might thank themselves if the apostles carried it to those that would bid it welcome. I. He met them in their synagogue on the sabbath-day; thus he would respect both their place and their time of meeting. *Sabbaths and solemn assemblies* are always very precious to those to whom Christ is precious, Ps. 84:10. It is good being in the house of the Lord on his day. 2. He reasoned with them out of the Scriptures. They agreed with him so far as to receive the scriptures of the O. T.; but, therefore, thought they had reason to reject Christ; Paul received the Scripture, and, therefore, saw great reason to embrace Christ. It was requisite, then, in order to their conviction, that he

should, by reasoning with them, the Spirit setting in with him, convince them that his inferences from Scripture were right, and their's wrong. The preaching of the Gospel should be both scriptural and rational; such Paul's was, for he reasoned out of the Scriptures. Reason must not be set up in competition with the Scripture, but it must be made use of in explaining and applying the Scripture. 3. He continued to do this three sabbath-days successively; for precept must be upon precept, and line upon line. All the laborers come not into the vineyard at the first hour, nor at the first call; nor are wrought on so suddenly as the jailer. 4. The drift and scope of his preaching and arguing was, to prove that *Jesus is the Christ*, v. 3. Paul had an admirable method of discourse; and showed he was himself both well apprized of the doctrine he preached, and thoroughly understood it, and that he was fully assured of the truth of it; therefore, he opened it like one that knew it, and alleged it like one that believed it. He showed them,

(1.) That it was necessary the Messiah should suffer, and die, and rise again; the O. T. prophecies made it necessary. The great objection the Jews made against Jesus being the Messiah, was, his ignominious death and sufferings; the cross was to them a stumbling-block, by no means agreed with their idea of the Messiah; but Paul here alleges, and makes it out undeniably, not only that it was possible He might be the Messiah, though He suffered, but that, being the Messiah, it was necessary He should suffer; He could not be made perfect but by sufferings; for if He had not died, He could not have risen again from the dead. This was what Christ Himself insisted on, Luke 24:26. and again, v. 46. He must needs have suffered for us, because He could not otherwise purchase our redemption for us; and He must needs have risen again, because He could not otherwise apply the redemption to us.

moral practices, than by any species of superstition, persecution, and infidelity. Much he actually effects in this way, by means of antinomian, enthusiastical, and scandalous preachers; who, being confounded with the real servants of Christ, bring them also into contempt and abhorrence, with thousands, nay millions of superficial observers. But we must strenuously disclaim such coalitions: and commendations, from bad and suspicious characters, should more excite our grief and indignation, than all their calumnies and reproaches.—Too often indeed the laws of the state interfere with those of God, and the customs of the world contradict the wisdom and holiness of his service; yet, interested opposers frequently make these things a mere pretence for persecution, while they are actuated by avarice, ambition, or revenge alone. The vilest of malefactors may, therefore, expect more favorable treatment than zealous ministers, who will not let sinners go on unmolested in their ways of destruction. But the servants of Christ should suffer persecution peaceably, and forgive injuries readily: yet there may be cases, in which it will be proper for them to claim the protection of the laws, and to protest against the flagrant injustice of oppressive magistrates: especially when they violate the laws of their country which they are commissioned to execute, in vehement zeal against the objects of their contempt and aversion. This (which is far different from resisting the execution of the law itself, when deemed unreasonable,) may conduce to public justice, the peace of the church and of the community, and the credit of their profession. But when proper concessions are made by those who have acted illegally, Christians should never express personal resentment, or insist strictly on reparation; but manifest a disinterested public spirit in everything. Thus their enemies will be ashamed, silenced, or conciliated; the Lord will make them 'more than conquerors' in every conflict; and, instead of being cast down by their sufferings, they shall even become the comforters of their brethren, who have been exempted from so large a share of tribulation. SCOTT.

V. 40. *Departed.* They wisely complied with the request of the magistrates, that they might not seem, (as Brennius well observes,) to express any degree of obstinacy or revenge, or give suspicion of any design to stir up any kind of sedition. DONN.

NOTES. CHAP. XVII. V. 1—4. From the epistles to the Thessalonians, it is evident, that the apostle was remarkably successful among the idolatrous Gentiles also; and that he continued here a considerable time: but after the first three sabbaths, it is probable he left the Jews, and preached chiefly to the Gentiles.—As the historian says they, not we, it is conjectured, that Luke stayed behind at Philippi, and did not join the company till some time after.—Upon inspecting the history, I see nothing in it which negatives the supposition, that Paul pursued the same plan at Thessalonica, which he adopted in other places; and that, though he resorted to the synagogue only three sabbath-days; yet he remained in the city, and in the exercise of his ministry among the Gentile citizens, much longer; and until the success of his preaching had provoked the Jews to excite the tumult and insurrection, by which he was driven away. The Alexandrian and Cambridge manuscripts read "of the worshippers, and of the Greeks a great multitude." . . . If we be not allowed to change the present reading, . . . may not the passage . . .

be considered as describing the success of Paul's discourses, during the three sabbath-days, in which he preached in the synagogue? and . . . that his application to the Gentiles at large, and his success among them, was posterior to this? Paley.—It appears from the epistles to the Thessalonians, that the church at Thessalonica was chiefly formed of converted idolaters; and that Paul and his companions entered very particularly into the several parts of Christian doctrine and duty, in their practical instructions of the new converts, before they left the city: and in writing to the Philippians, the apostle observes, that they had sent twice to supply his wants, when at Thessalonica. Phil. 4:14—20. 1 Thess. 1:9, 10. 4:1—5. These things show, that he labored in this city much longer than the three sabbath-days here mentioned. *Alleging.* Placing it before their eyes; i. e., so manifestly expounding it, that we perceive the things which are proposed to be seen. Beza.

(1.) *Amphipolis.* The metropolis of the first division of Macedonia, as made by Paulus Æmilius: see on ch. 16:10. Cimon, the Athenian general, sent 10,000 thither as a colony. It stood on an island in the river Strymon, and had its name *Amphipolis*, because included between the two grand branches of that river, where they empty themselves into the sea. Doddr. *Thessalonica.* Inhabited by Greeks and Romans,



3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

5 ¶ But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also;

7 Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus.

b Lu. 24:26, 43. c. d c. 28:24. g Lu. 23:5. c. 16: 18:23. Ga 3:1. e 2 Co 8:5. 1 Th. 20. c or, whom, said 1:5, 8. h Lu. 23:2. Jn. 19:12. ue, I preach. f Ro. 16:21.

(2.) That Jesus is the Messiah; 'This Jesus whom I preach unto you, and call on you to believe in, is Christ, the Christ, the Anointed of the Lord, He that should come, and you are to look for no other; for God has, both by the Scriptures and by miracles, and the gift of the Spirit, to make both effectual, borne witness to Him.' Note, Gospel-ministers should preach Jesus; He must be their principal subject; their business is to bring people acquainted with Him. What we are to preach concerning Jesus, is, that He is Christ; and therefore we may hope to be saved, and are bound to be ruled by Him.

III. The success of his preaching there, v. 4.

1. Some of the Jews believed, notwithstanding their rooted prejudices, and they not only associated with Paul and Silas, as friends and companions, but gave up themselves to their direction, as their spiritual guides; they put themselves into their possession, as an inheritance into the possession of the right owner, so the word signifies, 2 Cor. 8:5. They clave to Paul and Silas, and attended them wherever they went. They that believe in Jesus Christ, come into communion with his faithful ministers, and consort with them.

2. Many more of the devout Greeks, and of the chief women, embraced the Gospel. These

were proselytes of the gate; the godly among the Gentiles, so the Jews called them; such as, though they did not submit to the law of Moses, yet renounced idolatry and immorality, worshipped the true God only, and did no man any wrong. These were the *hoi sebomenoi Hellenes, the worshipping Gentiles*; as in America they call those of the natives that are converted to the faith of Christ, the *praying Indians*; these were admitted to join with the Jews in their synagogue-worship. Of these a great multitude believed, more of them than of the thorough-paced Jews, that were wedded to the ceremonial law. And not a few of the chief women of the city, that were devout, and had a sense of religion, embraced Christianity. Particular notice is taken of this, for an example to the ladies, the chief women, and an encouragement to them to employ themselves in the exercises of devotion, and to submit themselves to the commanding power of Christ's holy religion, in all the instances of it; for this intimates how acceptable it will be to God, what an honor to Christ, and what great influence it may have on many, beside the advantages of it to their own souls.

No mention is here made of their preaching the Gospel to the Gentile idolaters at Thessalonica, yet it is certain they did, and that great numbers were converted; nay, it should seem, that church was chiefly composed of the Gentile converts, though notice is not taken of them here; for Paul writes to the Christians there, as having turned to God from idols, 1 Thess. 1:9. and that at the first entering of the apostles among them.

IV. The trouble given Paul and Silas at Thessalonica; wherever they preached, they were sure to be persecuted; bonds and afflictions did abide them in every city.

1. The authors of it; the Jews which believed not, that were moved with envy, v. 5. The Jews were in all places the most inveterate enemies to the Christians, especially to those Jews that turned Christians, whom they had a particular spleen against, as deserters. Paul, in his epistle to this church, notices the rage and enmity of the Jews against the preachers of the Gospel, as their measure-filling sin. 1 Thess. 2:15, 16.

2. The instruments; the Jews made use of certain lewd persons of the baser sort. All wise and sober people looked upon the apostles with respect, and valued them, and none would appear against them but a company of vile men, given to all manner of wickedness. Tertullian pleads this with those that opposed Christianity, that the enemies of it were generally the worst of men. Apologia, cap. 5. It is the honor of religion, that those who hate it, are generally the lewd fellows of the baser sort, that are lost to all sense of justice and virtue.

3. In what method they proceeded. (1.) They set the city in an uproar; began a riot, and then the mob was up presently. See

who are the troublers of Israel,—not the faithful preachers of the Gospel, but the enemies of it. See how the devil carries on his designs; he sets cities in an uproar, sets souls in an uproar, and then fishes in troubled waters. (2.) They assaulted the house of Jason, where the apostles lodged, with a design to bring them out to the people, whom they had incensed and enraged against them, and by whom they hoped to see them pulled to pieces. The proceedings here were altogether illegal; if Jason's house must be searched, it ought to be done by the proper officers, and not without a warrant. What outrages men are carried to, by a spirit of persecution! [conscienceless, headless, heartless, irresponsible, unrepenting.] If men have offended, magistrates are appointed to inquire into the offence, and to judge of it; but to make the rabble judges, and executioners too, as these here designed to do, was to make truth fall in the street; to depose equity, and enthrone fury. (3.) When they could not get the apostles into their hands, then they fall on an honest citizen of their own, who entertained the apostles at his house, a converted Jew, and drew him out with some other of the brethren, to the rulers of the city. The apostles were advised to withdraw, for they were more obnoxious,—Retire before the torrent. But their friends were willing to expose themselves, being better able to weather this storm. For a good man, for such good men as the apostles, some would even dare to die. (4.) They accused them to the rulers, and represented them as dangerous persons, not fit to be tolerated; the crime charged on Jason, is, receiving and harboring them, v. 7. countenancing them, and promoting their interest. And what was the apostles' crime, that it should be no less than misprision of treason to give them lodging? Two very black characters are here given them, enough, if just, to make them odious to the people, and obnoxious to the magistrates.

[1.] That they were enemies to the public peace, and threw everything into disorder, wherever they came. In one sense it is true, that wherever the Gospel comes in its power to any place, to any soul, it works such a change there, that it may be said to turn the world upside down in that place, in that soul. But in the sense they meant it, it is utterly false: they would have it thought, that the preachers of the Gospel were incendiaries and mischief-makers wherever they came; that they sowed discord among relations, set neighbors together by the ears, obstructed commerce, and inverted all order and regularity. Because they persuaded people to turn from vice to virtue; from idols to the living and true God; from malice and envy to love and peace; they are charged with turning the world upside down, when it was only the kingdom of the devil in the world that they thus overturned. Their enemies

chiefly, and many Jews, so Plin. 'Situated on what was called the Thermoic gulf, embellished and enlarged, according to Stephanus Byzantinus, by Philip king of Macedonia, who called it Thessalonica, on account of the victory he obtained there over the Thessalians; but prior to this called Thermo. Strabo, Tzetzes, and Zonaras say, it was called Thessalonica, from Thessalonica, wife of Cassander, and daughter of Philip.' Dr. A. C. It seems to have been (as now in a degree) a great centre of commerce and intercourse, between Asia and Europe. It now has 60,000 inhabitants. Ed.

V. 5—9. Jason seems to have been a relation of Paul, and a Jew, Rom. 16:21. *Lewd fellows.* 'Wicked men.—Of the baser sort.'—Here only, in this sense [graphically describing every mob]. The persons who performed the lowest offices in the markets. SCOTT.

(5.) *Of the baser sort.* 'Agoraios denotes what is connected with a market-place or a forum; and carries various significations, in reference to the different kinds of business accustomed to be done there. Thus in 19:38. *agorai hēmerai* are "days on which business is done in the forum." As applied to persons, it denotes those who keep the market. *Wetst.* has illustrated the various uses of the word, by a vast number of passages from the classical writers; e. g. Herod. and Xen. where it means market-people. But it also denoted not merely buyers and sellers in a market, but those idlers who (like the *lazzaroni* at Naples) almost lived in the market, and even slept by night under the porticoes and other places of shelter. Of such, it would seem, Horace speaks, as *innati triviis ac pene forenses*, born in the streets, and almost forum-dwellers. [vulg. loafers.] Cic. calls them, *subrostrani* [under-stallers]; [96]

Plantus, *subbasilicani* [under-porchers]; Cic. again, the *fax* and *sentina* [dregs and cess-pool] of the city. Hence *agorai* came to denote persons of the lowest and basest sort, the very dregs of society, a sense very frequent in the classical writers; and most of *Wetst.*'s examples tend to illustrate this last signification, which is noticed by Suid., Hesych., &c. *Valckn.* observes, that this use of the word is to be traced to the abhorrence in which the market rabble were held by the respectable citizens, and the notoriously lying and fraudulent character of the petty, huckstering traders; as also to the market-place [especially in such a commercial thoroughfare as Thessalonica] being the usual resort of those *scurrae* in the Grecian cities, who spent the day in utter idleness. *Gathering a company.* Lit. raising a mob: [blind leaders of the blind, as all mobs and mobbers are.] *To the people.* *Demos* is not here the people, or the mob (as *Doddr.*), but the popular assembly in the forum, or elsewhere. So 19:30. *Bloomf.* *Lewd fellows of the baser sort.* 'Probably a low kind of lawyers, (having a certain juridical credit, and so set on to accuse the apostles of sedition,) what we would call *pettifoggers*, or attorneys without principle, who gave advice for a trifle, always attended forensic litigations, and fomented disputes and lawsuits among the people,—wicked men of the forensic tribe.' Dr. A. CLARKE.

(6, 7.) *Crying.* Lit. shouting, bawling, vociferating. See 8:7. 21:34. This verb is often used in *Thucyd.*, as hero, of the shouts and clamors of the populace. These accusers v. 7. take advantage of the ambiguity in the sense of *Kurios*, [Lord,] the name given by the Christians to Christ, [and so *Doddr.*] which was also that applied to kings and emperors.



8 And they troubled <sup>i</sup> the people, and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.

10 ¶ And the brethren immediately sent away <sup>j</sup> Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming *thither*, went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 These were more <sup>k</sup> noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness <sup>l</sup> of mind, and searched the Scriptures <sup>m</sup> daily, whether those things were so.

12 Therefore many of them believed: also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

l Mat. 2:3. Jn. k Ps. 119:99,100. m Is. 34:16. Lu. 11:49. 1 Ja. 1:21. 1 Pe. 16:29. 24:44. J c. 9:25. ver. 14. 2:2. Jn. 5:39.

set the city in an uproar, and then laid the blame on them \*; as Nero set Rome on fire, and then charged it on the Christians. If Christ's faithful ministers, even those that are most *quiet in the land*, be thus invidiously misrepresented and miscalled, let them not think it strange, or be exasperated by it; we are not better than Paul and Silas, who were thus abused. The accusers cry out, 'They are come *hither also*; they have been doing all the mischief they could in other places, and now they have brought the infection hither; it is therefore time for us to bestir ourselves, and make head against them.'

[2.] That they were enemies to the established government, and disaffected to that, and their principles and practices destructive to monarchy, and inconsistent with the constitution of the state, v. 7. They all *do contrary to the decrees of Cesar*; not to any particular decree, for there was as yet no law of the empire against Christianity; but contrary to Cesar's power, in general, to make decrees; for they say, *There is another King, one Jesus*; not only a King of the Jews, as our Savior was Himself charged before Pilate, but *Lord of all*; so Peter called Him, in the first sermon he preached to the Gentiles, *ch. 10:36*. It is true, the Roman government, both while it was a commonwealth, and after it came into the Cesars' hands, was very jealous of any governor under their dominion taking on him the title of *king*, and there was an express law against it. But Christ's *kingdom was not of this world*. His followers said indeed, *Jesus is a King*, but not an earthly king, not a rival with Cesar, nor his ordinances interfering with the decrees of Cesar, but who had made it a law of his kingdom, to *render unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's*. There was nothing in the doctrine of Christ that tended to the dethroning of

\* How exactly will this apply to the mobs in the U.S. Ed.

V. 10—15. It does not appear, that Silas came to Paul, while at Athens: and Timothy, when he arrived, was sent from Athens back to Thessalonica, as we learn from 1 Thess.: and both he and Silas again joined the apostle at Corinth.

(11.) *More noble.* 'Were of a better race, extraction, or birth; but the word refers more to their conduct, as a proof of their better disposition, than to their birth, or any peculiar lineal nobility.' Dr. A. C. 'The Gr. here, *eugenēs*, and the Lat. *ingenuus*, have a metaphorical sense, applied to the mind, and denote ingenuous, liberal, of good disposition and manners. So the classics.' Bloomf. 'The expression, as *Whitby* has observed, has in it a peculiar spirit and propriety, as the Jews boasted that they were *free and noble*, by virtue of their descent from Abraham and the other patriarchs. These Bereans, imitating the rational faith of their great progenitor, were *his more genuine offspring*.' Doddr. *Searching.* 'Lit. diligently examining, scrutinizing with judgment. *Beza* paraphrases thus: diligently and with judgment weighing everything, abandoning all prejudices, and yet not catching up anything lightly and inconsiderately.' Bloomf. It is easier to form a creed, and then go to the Bible and look up proof-texts of it, than to take the pains the Be-

princes, or the depriving them of any of their prerogatives; and they knew it very well, and it was against their conscience that they laid this to their charge. And of all people it ill became the Jews to do it, who hated Cesar and his government, and sought the ruin of him and it, and who expected a Messiah that should be a temporal prince, and overturn the thrones of kingdoms, and were *therefore* opposing our Lord Jesus, because He did not appear under that character. Thus they have been most spiteful in representing God's faithful people as enemies to Cesar, and hurtful to kings and provinces, who have been themselves setting up a *kingdom within a kingdom*, a power not only in competition with Cesar's, but superior to it, that of the papal supremacy.

4. The great uneasiness this gave the city, v. 8. They had no ill opinion of the apostles or their doctrine, could not apprehend any danger to the state from them, and therefore were willing to connive at them; but if they be represented to them by the prosecutors as enemies to Cesar, they will be obliged to take cognizance of them, and to suppress them, for fear of the government; and this troubled them. Claudius, the present emperor, is represented by Suetonius, as a man very jealous of the least commotion, and timorous to the last degree, which obliged the rulers under him to be watchful against everything that looked dangerous, or gave the least cause of suspicion; therefore it troubled them to be brought under a necessity of disturbing good men.

5. The issue of this troublesome affair; the magistrates had no mind to prosecute the Christians; care was taken to secure the apostles, they absconded, and fled, and kept out of their hands; so that nothing was to be done but to discharge Jason and his friends, on bail, v. 9. The magistrates here were not so easily incensed against the apostles as the magistrates at Philippi, but were more considerate, and of better temper; so they *took security of Jason and the other*, bound them to their good behavior; and perhaps they gave bond for Paul and Silas, that they should be forth-coming when they were called for, if anything should afterward appear against them.

Among the persecutors of Christianity, as there have been instances of the madness and rage of brutes, so there have been likewise of the prudence and temper of men.

V. 10—15. In these vs. we have,

1. Paul and Silas removing to Berea, and preaching the Gospel there, v. 10. That command of Christ to his disciples, *When they persecute you in one city, flee to another*, intends their flight to be not so much for their own safety, as for the carrying on of their work, as appears by the reason given, *Mat. 10:23*. Thus the devil was outshot in his own bow. See here,

1. The care the brethren took of Paul and Silas, when they perceived how the plot was laid against them; they *immediately sent them away by night*, incognito, to Berea. This could be no surprise to the young converts, Paul at first told them it would be so, *1 Thess. 3:4*. It should seem Paul and Si-

las would willingly have stayed, and faced the storm, if the brethren would have let them; but they would rather want their help than expose their lives, which, it should seem, were dearer to their friends than to themselves.

2. The constancy of Paul and Silas in their work; when *they came to Berea, they went into the synagogue of the Jews*, and made their public appearance there. Though the Jews at Thessalonica had been their spiteful enemies, and, for aught they knew, the Jews at Berea would be so too, yet they did not therefore decline paying their respect to the Jews, either in revenge, or fear. If others will not do their duty to us, yet we ought to do ours to them.

11. The good character of the Jews in Berea, v. 11. They were better disposed to receive the Gospel than the Jews at Thessalonica, were not so bigoted and prejudiced against it, not so peevish and ill-natured, *they were more noble,—better bred*; 1. They had a freer thought, lay more open to conviction, were willing to hear reason, and admit the force of it, and to subscribe to what appeared to be truth, though contrary to their former sentiments; this was more noble. 2. They had a better temper, were not so sour and morose, and ill-conditioned towards all that were not of their mind. As they were ready to come into a unity with those that by the power of truth they were brought to concur with, so they continued in charity with those that they saw cause to differ from; this was more noble. 3. They neither prejudged the cause, nor were moved with envy at the managers of it, but very generously gave both it and them a fair hearing, without passion or partiality; for,

(1.) *They received the Word with all readiness of mind*; were very willing to hear it, presently apprehended the meaning of it, and did *not shut their eyes against the light*, did not quarrel with the Word, nor find fault, nor seek occasion against the preachers of it; but bid it welcome, and put a candid construction on everything said; herein *they were more noble than the Jews in Thessalonica*, but walked in the same spirit, and in the same steps, with the Gentiles there, of whom it is said, *that they received the Word with joy of the Holy Ghost, and turned to God from idols, 1 Thess. 1:6, 9*. This was true nobility; and these were the most noble, if I may so say, the most gentleman-like men. *Virtue and piety are true nobility, true honor*: and without that, *What are pedigrees and pompous titles worth?*

(2.) *They searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so*. Their readiness of mind to receive the Word, was not such, as that they took things on trust, on an implicit faith: no; but since Paul reasoned out of the Scriptures, and referred to the O. T., they had recourse to their Bibles, turned to the places he referred to, read the context, considered the scope and drift, compared other places, examined whether Paul's inferences from them were natural and genuine, and his arguments on them cogent, and determined accordingly. Observe, The

reans did. Doddr. remarks, 'Not that Christianity cannot be proved otherwise than from the prophecies of the O. T. It might be demonstrated from various topics of external and internal evidence to those who never heard of any former revelation. Another very important additional argument does indeed arise from the accomplishment of prophecies; and when it has been asserted (as we know it has), by the authorized teachers of the Gospel, not only that Christ is a divine messenger, but also that his appearance was foretold to the Jews, then it is impossible to vindicate Christ's mission without showing that it was so. But in examining the particular texts in question, we are not only to inquire whether the sense given by the apostles be, in itself considered, most easy and natural, which is generally the case; but (especially on account of the obscurity which must of course attend prophecy) we are to consider whether the improbability of the sense they give in any particular instance, or in all instances, be sufficient to balance the other proofs they produced of being under divine guidance, before we can draw any conclusion to the prejudice of their plenary inspiration; so far should we be from concluding, without such an overbalance, that Christianity is false, which has generally been the way of indolent half-thinkers.' Ed.



13 ¶ But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up <sup>n</sup> the people.

14 And then immediately the brethren sent away <sup>o</sup> Paul, to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.

15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus, <sup>p</sup> for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

16 ¶ Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, <sup>q</sup> his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city <sup>r</sup> wholly given to idolatry.

17 Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout <sup>s</sup> persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

n Lu. 12:51. o Mat. 10:23. p c. 13:5. q Ps. 119:136. 2 Pe. 2:8. r or, full of idols. s c. 8:2.

doctrine of Christ does not fear a scrutiny; advocates for his cause desire no more, than that people will not say, *These things are not so*, till they have first, without prejudice and partiality, examined *whether they be so* or no. The N. T. is to be examined by the Old. The Jews received the O. T., and those that did so, if they considered things aright, could not but see cause sufficient to receive the New, because in it they see all the prophecies and promises of the Old fully and exactly accomplished. Those that read and receive *the Scriptures*, must *search them*, John 5: 39. study them, consider them, both that they may find out the truth, and not mistake the sense, and so run into error, or remain in it; and that they may find out the whole truth contained in them, and have an intimate acquaintance with the mind of God revealed in them. Searching the Scriptures must be our daily work; they that heard *the Word in the synagogue on the sabbath-day*, did not think that enough, but were searching it every day in the week, that they might improve what they had heard the Sabbath before, and prepare for what they were to hear the Sabbath after. Those are truly noble, and in a fair way to be more and more so, that make the Scriptures their oracle, touchstone, [and standard,] and consult them accordingly; they have their minds filled with noble thoughts, fixed to noble principles, and formed for noble aims and designs. *These are more noble.*

III. The preaching of the Gospel at Berea had the desired success; the people's hearts being prepared, much work was done suddenly, v. 12. 1. *Of the Jews many believed*; at Thessalonica, only some, v. 4. but at Berea, where they heard with unprejudiced minds, *many believed*; many more

(13.) *Stirred up the people.* [*Raising a storm among the populace.* Blackwall has rightly observed, that this is the exact import of the original word here, which expresses a violent agitation of the sea, and admirably illustrates the rage and fury of a seditious multitude.] DODD.

(14.) *As it were.* [*Hōs*: sometimes, especially with *epi*, and a verb of motion, expressed or understood, it signifies, *usque ad, hōs, right to.* See many examples in *Wetst.*, &c. It is very frequent in Thucyd. The sense seems to be *to-wards.* *To the sea.*] *Pydna* (35 miles off) was doubtless the place where Paul took ship for Athens: for *Alorus*, though near, seems not to have been a port; and as to *Dinni*, it is much further off than *Pydna.* *Bloomf.*—*To go as it were to the sea.* [*This passage is generally understood to mean, that the disciples took Paul towards the sea, as if he had intended to embark, and return to Troas, but with the real design to go to Athens.* But it is more likely his conductors, in order to his greater safety, left the public, or more frequented road, and took him coastwise to Athens. . . . As the text does not necessarily point out any sleights or feints, so we need not have recourse to any.]

V. 16, 17. It is probable, that the apostle did not at first intend to enter on his ministry at Athens, till Silas and Timothy joined him; perhaps, he had not determined whether he should attempt to publish the Gospel there, or pass over into Asia. The Athenians always import-

Jews than at Thessalonica. God gives grace to those whom He first inclines to make a diligent use of the means of grace, and particularly to search the Scriptures.

2. *Of the Greeks* likewise, the Gentiles, *many believed*, both of the honorable women, the ladies of quality, and of men not a few, men of the first rank, as should seem by their being mentioned with the honorable women. The wives [perhaps Jewesses, whose marriage with Gentiles, often served for proselyting] first embraced the Gospel, and then they persuaded their husbands to embrace it. *For what knowest thou, O wife, but thou shalt save thy husband?* 1 Cor. 7: 16.

IV. The persecution raised against Paul and Silas at Berea, which forced Paul thence.

1. *The Jews at Thessalonica* were the mischief-makers at Berea; as if they had a commission from the prince of darkness to go from place to place to oppose the Gospel, as the apostles had to preach it. Thus we read before, *that the Jews at Antioch and Iconium came to Lystra*, on purpose to incense the people against the apostles, ch. 14: 19. See how restless Satan's agents are in their opposition to the Gospel of Christ, and the salvation of souls! We must not think it strange, if persecutors at home extend their rage to stir up persecution abroad.

2. This occasioned Paul's remove to Athens. The Berean brethren showed themselves sensible, active men, by the care they took of Paul, v. 14. Aware of the coming of the persecuting Jews from Thessalonica; and fearing what it would come to, they lost no time, but *immediately sent Paul*, against whom they were most prejudiced, and enraged, away, hoping that would pacify them, while they retained Silas and Timothy, who, now Paul had broken the ice, might be sufficient to carry on the work without exposing him. *They sent Paul to go even to the sea*, so some; *to go as it were to the sea*, so we read it. He went out from Berea, in that road which went to the sea, that the Jews, if they inquired after him, might think he was gone to a great distance; but he went by land to Athens, in which there was no culpable dissimulation at all. *They that conducted Paul*, (as his guides and guards, he being both a stranger in the country, and one that had many enemies,) *brought him to Athens.* The Spirit of God directed him to that famous city; famous of old for its power and dominion, when the Athenian commonwealth coped with the Spartan; famous afterward for learning, it was the rendezvous of scholars; those that wanted learning, went thither to get it, because those that had learning went thither to show it. It was a great university, much resorted to from all parts, and therefore, for the better diffusing of gospel-light, Paul is sent thither, and is not ashamed or afraid to show his face among the philosophers there, and there to preach Christ crucified, though he knew it would be as much *foolishness to the Greeks*, as it was *to the Jews a stumbling-block.*

3. He ordered *Silas and Timothy to come*

to him to Athens, when he found there was a prospect of doing good there; or, because there being none there that he knew, he was solitary and melancholy without them. Yet, it should seem, that, great as was the haste he was in for them, he ordered Timothy to go about by Thessalonica, *to establish*, and bring him an account of that church, 1 Thess. 3: 1, 2.

V. 16—21. A mere scholar, where Paul now was, would have had a great many curious questions to ask; but Paul, though bred a scholar, and an ingenious, active man, minds other work; it is not the improving of himself in their philosophy that he aims at, he has learned to call it a *vain thing*, and is above it, Col. 2: 8. his business is, in God's name, to correct their disorders in religion, and *to turn them from the service of idols*, and of Satan in them, *to the service of the true and living God* in Christ.

1. Here is the impression the abominable ignorance and superstition of the Athenians made on Paul's spirit, v. 16.

1. The city was *wholly given to idolatry.* This agrees with the account the heathen writers give of it, that there were more idols in Athens, than in all Greece besides; and that they had twice as many sacred feasts as others had. Whatever strange gods were recommended, they admitted them, and allowed them a temple, and an altar, *so that they had almost as many gods as men.* And this city, after the empire became Christian, continued incurably addicted to idolatry; and all the pious edicts of the Christian emperors could not root it out, till, by the irruption of the Goths, that city was in so particular a manner laid waste, that there are now scarcely any remains of it. It is observable, that there, where human learning most flourished, idolatry most abounded, and the most absurd and ridiculous idolatry; which confirms that of the apostle, that when they *professed themselves to be wise, they became fools*, Rom. 1: 22. and, in the business of religion, were of all other the most *vain in their imaginations.* *The world by wisdom knew not God*, 1 Cor. 1: 21. They might have reasoned against polytheism and idolatry [and how did the religion of reason first break forth in Socrates and Plato!], but, it seems, the greatest pretenders to reason were the greatest slaves to idols; so necessary was it to the re-establishing, even of natural religion, that there should be a divine revelation, and that centering in Christ.

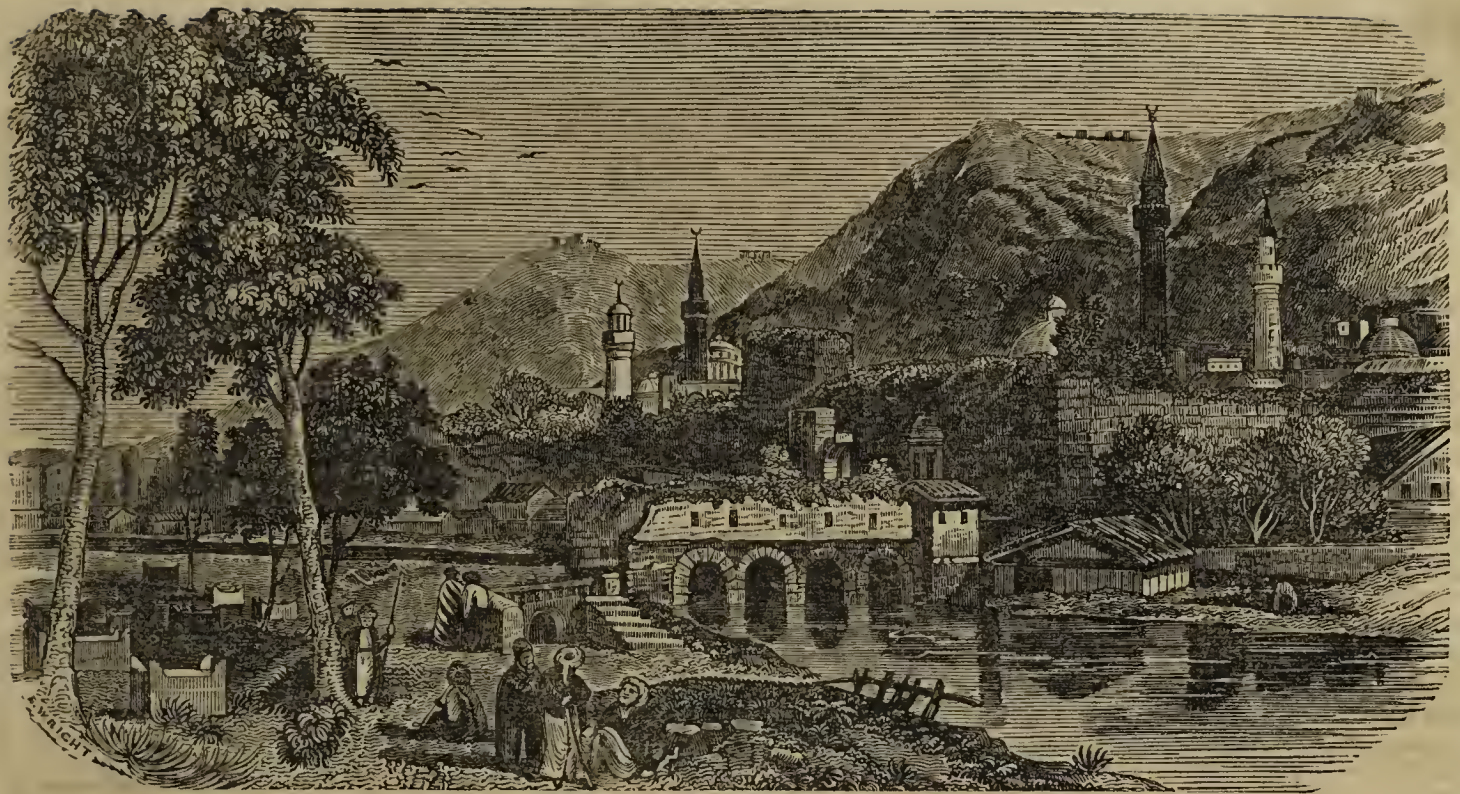
2. The disturbance the sight of this gave to Paul; Paul was not willing to appear publicly, till *Silas and Timothy came to him*, that out of the mouth of two or three witnesses the Word might be established; but in the mean time *his spirit was stirred within him*; he was filled with concern for the glory of God, which he saw *given to idols*, and with compassion to the souls of men, which he saw thus enslaved to Satan, and led captive by him at his will. He had a holy indignation at the heathen priests; that led the people such an endless trace of idolatry; and at their philosophers, that knew better, and yet

ed the deities and superstitions of every nation, along with their arts and learning; so that a satirist [Petronius] ludicrously observed, 'It was easier to find a god, than a man, in that city.' This fact most completely demonstrates the insufficiency of science and philosophy to guide men in matters of religion. The barbarous Scythians, the wild Indians, nay, the stupid Hottentots, have never deviated further from truth, or sunk into grosser darkness, in respect of God and religion, than the ingenious and philosophical Athenians did!—The apostle, however, was thus excited to begin his labors without delay, first in the synagogue with the Jews and proselytes; but he does not appear to have had great success among them. This was probably on the sabbath-day.

(16.) *Wholly given to idolatry.* [*What need have we, in the most improved state of human reason, of being taught by a divine revelation!*]

(17.) *Devout persons.* [*It appears plainly from this text, and perhaps also from v. 4. I think beyond any other, that the character of *sebomenoi*, or *devout*, is at least sometimes given by Luke to persons who used to worship the true God, and yet were not circumcised, which if they had been, I think they would not have been distinguished from Jews. But that the title was appropriated to such, and especially that such could properly be called *proselytes of the gate*, in the technical sense in which Maimonides, and almost all our modern writers from*





ANTIOCH.



ATHENS.



CYRENE, Africa, Acts 2 : 10, 13 : 1.  
P. 98.







18 Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbling say? Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

19 And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

<sup>t</sup> Col. 2:8. <sup>u</sup> or, base fellow. <sup>v</sup> or, Mars' hill. <sup>It was the high-est court in Athens.</sup> <sup>w</sup> Jn. 13:34. <sup>1</sup> Jn. 2:7,8.

never said a word against it, but themselves went down the stream.

II. The testimony he bore against their idolatry, and his endeavors to bring them to the knowledge of the truth. He did not, [fanatic-like,] as Witsius observes, in the heat of his zeal, break into the temples, pull down their images, demolish their altars, or fly in the face of their priests; [for such demonstrations would have excited the same lower propensities in others;] nor did he run about the streets crying, 'You are all the bond-slaves of the devil,' though it was too true; but he observed decorum, doing that only which became a prudent man.

1. He went to the synagogue of the Jews, who, though enemies to Christianity, were free from idolatry, and joined with them in that among them which was good, and took the opportunity given him there of disputing for Christ, v. 17. He discoursed with the Jews, reasoned fairly with them, and put it

to them, what reason they could give, why, since they expected the Messiah, they would not receive Jesus. There he met with the devout persons, that had forsaken the idol-temples, but rested in the Jews' synagogue, and he talked with these, to lead them on to the Christian church, to which the Jews' synagogue was but as a porch.

2. He entered into conversation with all that came in his way about matters of religion. In the market, agora, forum; i. e. the exchange, or place of commerce, he disputed daily, as he had occasion, with them that met with him, or that he happened to fall into company with, that were heathen, and never came to the Jews' synagogue. The zealous advocates for the cause of Christ will be ready to plead it in all companies, as occasion offers. The ministers of Christ must not think it enough to speak a good word for Christ once a week, but should be daily speaking honorably of Him to such as meet with them.

III. The inquiries some of the philosophers made concerning Paul's doctrine.

1. Some of the philosophers thought him worth making remarks upon, and they were those whose principles were most directly contrary to Christianity. (1.) The Epicureans, who thought God altogether such an one as themselves, an idle, inactive Being, that minded nothing, nor put any difference between good and evil; they would not own, either that God made the world, or that He governs it; nor that man needs to make any conscience of what he says or does, having no punishment to fear, or rewards to hope for; all which loose, atheistical notions, Christianity is levelled against. The Epi-

curians, [unlike their founder,] indulged themselves in all the pleasures of sense, and placed their happiness in them, in what Christ has taught us in the first place to deny ourselves. (2.) The Stoics, who thought themselves altogether as good as God, and indulged themselves as much in the pride of life as the Epicureans did in the lusts of the flesh and of the eye; they made their virtuous man to be no way inferior to God Himself, nay, to be superior. There is that in which a wise man excels God, so Seneca: to which Christianity is directly opposite, as it teaches us to deny ourselves, and abase ourselves, and to come off from all confidence in ourselves, that Christ may be all in all.

2. Their different sentiments of him, v. 18. (1.) Some called him a babbling, and thought he spoke, without any design, whatever came uppermost, as men of crazed imaginations do; What will this babbling say? this scatterer of words, that goes about, throwing here one idle word or story, and there another, without any intendment or signification; or, this picker up of seeds. Such a pitiful, contemptible animal, they took Paul to be, or supposed he went from place to place, venting his notions to get money, a penny here, and another there, as a little, worthless sort of bird, that hops here and there, and picks up here and there a grain. They looked upon him as an idle fellow, and regarded him, as we say, no more than a ballad-singer. (2.) Others called him a setter forth of strange gods, and thought he spoke with design to make himself considerable by that method. And if he had strange gods to set forth, he could not bring them to a better market than to Athens. He did not, as

him, explain the word, will by no means follow.' *Doddr.—Market.* 'Agora: of the market-places at Athens, of which there were many, the most celebrated were the Old and New Forum. The former was in the Ceramicus, a very ample space, part within and part without the city. See Meurs. and Potter. The latter was outside of the Ceramicus, in a place called Eretria. See Meurs. And this seems to be the one here meant. For no forum, except the Ceramicus and the Eretriacum, was called, absolutely, agora, but had a name to denote which was meant, as Areopagiticum, Hippodamium, Piræum, &c. In process of time, and at this period when Paul was at Athens, the forum was transferred from the Ceramicus into the Eretria; a change which, indeed, had been introduced in the time of Augustus; and that this was the most frequented part of the city, we learn from Strabo. Besides, the Eretriac forum was situated before the stoa, or portico, in which the Stoics, v. 18. used to hold their discourses. It was moreover called kuklos, from its round form.' *With them.* 'With any whom he met with. It is well observed, by *Harm.*, that though, with us, the carrying on religious disputations in the markets, would be thought improper, and the effect of intemperate zeal; yet it would, even now, not be strange in Arabia, and other parts of the E., where people meet in such places for conversation. And, what is most to the purpose, this was common at Athens, v. 21. See also Dio, Theonist., Diog. Laert., &c.' BLOOMF.

V. 18. In the forum, the apostle was encountered by certain philosophers, of different sects. The Epicureans were gay and superficial infidels, who amused themselves and others with various curious speculations. They ascribed the original of all things to chance; they professed to allow the existence of the gods, yet contended, that they did not interfere in the creation or government of the world, but indolently satisfied themselves with their own undisturbed felicity; they deemed the enjoyment of this present world the supreme good, and denied a future state of rewards and punishments. The Stoics allowed the existence of the gods, but supposed them to be bound by eternal and irresistible fatality; they affected almost to extinguish their own feelings and passions; they were most extravagantly proud and obstinate; they judged a virtuous man, according to their notions of virtue, to be independent of their deities, and in some respects superior to them; and spoke as if he might defy fate itself; they maintained, that virtue was its own reward, and expressed themselves very obscurely about a future state of retributions. [Note, end of ch.]—These two sects of philosophers, being alike opposite in their tenets to the doctrines of the Gospel, and being full of the pride of superior learning, encountered Paul, and thought of silencing him in the argument; and some of them despised him. *Gods.* 'Daimoniōn: the Gentiles used it for the objects of their worship in a good sense, not as we Christians use it at present, invariably in a bad sense.' *Compb.* Ought Christians to use a word in a good sense, which, in its best meaning, signifies the objects of abominable idolatries? Holy angels are never called demons in Scripture; but either evil spirits, or the supposed invisible objects of idolatrous worship; and this, with every object of it, is especially 'an abomination to the Lord.' SCOTT.

(18.) Epicureans.] 'The followers of Epicurus, who was born at Athens, about A. M. 3603, B. C. 341.—Stoics.] 'The followers of Zeno, who was born in the Isle of Cyprus, about 30 years B. C. His disciples were called Stoics, from Stoa, a famous portico at Athens, where they studied.' Dr. A. C. —'The attentive reader will easily see, how opposite the genius of each of these sects was, to the pure and humble spirit of Christianity, and how happily the apostle levels his incomparable discourse at some of the most distinguishing and important errors of each, while, without expressly attacking either, he seems intent on giving a plain summary of his own religious principles, in which he appears a most charming model of the true way of teaching and reforming man-

kind.' *Babbling.* 'Spermologos: it admirably expresses the contempt they had of an unknown foreigner, that pretended to teach all the several professors of their learned and illustrious body of philosophers.' *Doddr.—Spermologos* was the deadliest term that Demosthenes there (300 years before) bestowed on the most eager and decided of his rivals and antagonists, Aeschines.' *Scott.* Properly used, of those little insignificant birds, which support a precarious existence by picking up seeds scattered by the sower, or left above ground after the soil has been harrowed. See Max. Tyr., Aristoph., &c. It was metaphorically applied also to paupers, who prowled about the market-place, and lived by picking up anything which might be dropped by buyers and sellers; and likewise to persons who gleaned in the cornfields. See Eustath. on Hom. Od. Hence, it was at length applied to all persons of mean condition, who, as we say, "live on their wits." Thus it is explained by Harpoer., entelēs, mean and contemptible; and so Philo. See Kypke. Finally, it was applied to parasites, who, by flattery and buffoonery, contrived to pick up a living from the provisions of other men's tables. Furthermore, as sparrows, and other such minute birds as live by gathering up seeds, are especially noisy and garrulous, so the term was applied to insignificant praters and chatters. *Kuin., Schl., Kypke.* The Greek philosophers brought everything to the test of reason, and thought the greatest excellence of reasoning, consisted in conciseness of thought and brevity of diction. (*Quintill., Walch.*) But as Paul's oratory was not in persuasive words of man's wisdom (1 Cor. 2:4.), but consisted chiefly in the ubertas et copiosa dicendi vis, [a fertile and copious diction,] his disputers thought him loquacious, so *Kuin.* thinks. *The resurrection.* Not only of Christ, but of all the dead, by Christ.' *Bloomf.* 'Those philosophers thought, doubtless, that some such a hero, or inferior god, [as they expressed by daimōnes, or daimōnia, sometimes distinguished, as the dii minores,] was preached by Paul, when they heard him teaching that Jesus was the Son of God, the Savior of men, who had been a mighty benefactor to the human race, and after death had been received up into heaven.' *Kuin.* How like to this description are some modern (not heathen) ideas of Christ! ED.

V. 19—21. (19) New doctrine.] The word signifies newer: the new imagination, or system, of the preceding year, month, or week, soon became like an almanac out of date: it was the taste of the age and place, to discard and antiquate every hypothesis, as soon as it became vulgar; and to substitute some newer scheme in its place; and lively, ingenious students, especially in metaphysics, commonly run into this humor. If Paul, therefore, could start some newer speculation, than the newest fashion of philosophy among them, his doctrine would at least gratify and amuse them.—*Areopagus.* Some learned men think the word Areopagus is not properly translated 'Mars' hill,' or the hill of Mars, as it does not appear that a temple was built to Mars, in the place where the Areopagus convened. They argue, that the name was derived from the trial of murderers by the court there held. See on Mat. 5:44. The nature and functions of this court, or senate, which was highly celebrated in those ages and countries, must be learned from the Greek antiquaries; being far too complicated a subject for this publication.—The contemptuous neglect, and the interruption, which the apostle's admirable address met with from it, constrains the impartial inquirer to question, how far such a court, or council, deserved the encomiums so lavishly bestowed upon it. SCOTT.

(19.) Brought him.] 'Conducted him. Beza, Hammond, and some other critics, have thought Paul was brought to a formal trial before the judges; but it evidently appears to be a mistake, not only from the title by which Paul addresses them, (so Limborch,) but from the whole tenor of the story, and particularly as the persons bringing him are represented, not as accusing him, but only desiring to be informed.'



20 For thou bringest certain <sup>x</sup>strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.

21 (For all the Athenians, and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.)

22 ¶ Then Paul stood in the midst of <sup>y</sup>Mars' Hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too <sup>z</sup>superstitious.

<sup>x</sup> Ho. 8:12.

<sup>y</sup> or, the court of the Areopagites.

<sup>z</sup> Je. 50:38.

many did, directly set forth new gods, nor avowedly; but they thought *he seemed* to do so, because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection; from his first coming among them, he ever and anon harped upon these two strings, which are, indeed, the principal doctrines of Christianity,—Christ, and a future state; Christ our Way, and heaven our end; and though he did not call *these gods*, yet they thought he meant to make them so. 'Jesus they took for a new god, and *anastasis*, the resurrection, for a new goddess.' Thus they lost the benefit of the Christian doctrine, by dressing it up in a pagan dialect.

3. Their proposal to give him a free, full, fair, public hearing, v. 19, 20. (1.) They look upon it as strange and surprising. By this it should seem, that among all the learned books they had, they either had not, or heeded not, the books of *Moses and the prophets*, else the doctrine of Christ would not have been so perfectly new and strange to them. There was but one book in the world that was of divine inspiration, and that was the only book they were strangers to; which, if they would have given a due regard to it, would, in its very first page, have determined that great controversy among them, about the origin of the universe. (2.) They desire to know more of it, only because it was *new and strange*; 'May we know what this new doctrine is? Or, is it, like the mysteries of the gods, to be kept as a profound secret? If it may be, we would gladly know, and desire thee to tell us, what these things mean, that we may be able to pass a fair judgment on them.' (3.) The place they brought him to, in order to this public declaration of his doctrine; it was to *Areopagus*, the same word that is translated, v. 22. *Mars-hill*; it was the town-house, or guild-hall of their city, where the magistrates met on public business, and the courts of justice were kept; and it was as the theatre in the university, or the schools, where learned men met to communicate their notions. The court of justice which sat here, was famous for its equity, which drew appeals to it from all parts; if any denied a god, he was liable to the censure of this court; Diagoras was

by them put to death, as a contemner of *the gods*; nor might any *new god* be admitted, without their approbation; hither they brought Paul to be tried, not as a criminal, but as a candidate.

4. The general character of the people of that city given on this occasion, v. 21. *All the Athenians*, i. e. natives of the place, and strangers, which sojourned there for their improvement, *spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing*; which comes in as the reason why they were inquisitive concerning Paul's doctrine, not because it was *good*, but because it was *new*. It is a very sorry character here given of these people, yet many transcribe it. (1.) They were all for *conversation*. Paul exhorts his pupil to *give attendance to reading and meditation*, 1 Tim. 4:13, 15. but these people despised those old-fashioned ways of getting knowledge, and preferred *that of telling and hearing*. It is true, that good company is of great use to a man, and will polish one that has laid a good foundation in study; but that knowledge will be very flashy and superficial, which is got by conversation only. (2.) They affected novelty; they were for *telling and hearing some new thing*; they were for new schemes and new notions in philosophy; new forms and plans of government in politics; and in religion, for *new gods that came newly up*, Deut. 32:17. new demons, new-fashioned images, and altars, 2 K. 16:10. they were given to change. Demosthenes, an orator of their own, had charged this on them, long before, in one of his philippics, that their common question in the markets, or wherever they met, was, *if there was any news*. (3.) They meddled in other people's business, and were inquisitive concerning that, and never minded their own. *Tattlers are always busy bodies*, 1 Tim. 5:13. (4.) *They spent their time in nothing else, and a very uncomfortable account they must needs have to make of their time, who thus spend it*. Time is precious, and we are concerned to be good husbands of it, because eternity depends on it, and it is hastening apace into eternity, but abundance of it is wasted in unprofitable converse. *To tell and hear the new occurrences of providence concerning the public, in our own or other nations, and concerning our neighbors and friends, is of good use, now and then; but to set up for news-mongers, and to spend our time in nothing else, is to lose that which is very precious for the gain of that which is worth little*.

V. 22—31. We have here Paul's sermon at Athens, a sermon to heathens, that worshipped false gods, and *were without the true God*; the object of which is, to lead his hearers, by the common works of Providence, to the knowledge and worship of the Creator. One discourse of this kind we had before, to the rude idolaters of Lystra, that

deified the apostles, ch. 14:15. this recorded here, is to the more polite and refined idolaters at Athens, an admirable discourse, every way suited to his auditory, and the design he had upon them.

I. He lays down this as the scope of his discourse, that he aimed to bring them to *the knowledge of the one only living and true God*, as the sole and proper Object of their adoration; when he preached against the gods they worshipped, he had no design to draw them to atheism, but to the service of the true Deity. Socrates, who had exposed the pagan idolatry, was indicted in this very court, and condemned, not only because he did not esteem those to be gods whom the city esteemed to be so, but because he introduced new demons; and this was the charge against Paul. Now he tacitly owns the former part of the charge, but guards against the latter, by declaring that he does not introduce any new gods, but reduces them to *the knowledge of one God, the Ancient of days*.

1. He shows them that they needed to be instructed herein; for they had lost the knowledge of the true God that *made* them, in the worship of false gods that *they* made. The crime he charges on them, is, *giving that glory to others which is due to God only*; that they feared and worshipped demons, spirits that they supposed inhabited the images to which they directed their worship. 'You are in all things too superstitious; you easily admit everything that comes under show of religion, but it is that which corrupts it more and more; I bring you that which will reform it.' Their neighbors praised them for this as a pious people, but Paul condemns them for it. Yet it is observable, how he mollifies the charge, does not aggravate it, to provoke them; he uses a word which among them was taken in a good sense; *You are every way more than ordinary religious, so some; you are very devout in your way*: or, if it be taken in an ill sense, it is mitigated; 'You are, as it were, more superstitious than you need be;' and he says no more than what he himself perceived; *I see it, I observe it*. They charged Paul with setting forth new demons; 'Nay,' says he, 'you have abundance already, I will not add to them.'

2. He shows them that they themselves had given a fair occasion for the declaring of this *one true God* to them, by *setting up an altar, To the unknown God*; which intimated, an acknowledgment that there was a *God*, which was yet to them an *unknown God*; and it is sad to think, that at Athens, a place which was supposed to have the monopoly of wisdom, the true God was an *unknown God*, the only God that was unknown. There, where we are sensible we are defective and come short, just there, the Gospel takes us up, and carries us on. Various

Doddr.—May.] This helps to prove, that those of the Areopagists who were there, were so, simply as philosophers, and that this place, the Areopagus, on Mars' hill, W. of the Acropolis, was chosen for convenience. It was called Mars' hill, so consecrated to him, or to the fabled place where, when he had slain the son of Neptune, Mars first pleaded a capital cause before the 12 gods. The whole seems to be an affair with philosophers, and not judges.

(20.) The 3 classes of Athens were, the *politai*, *metoikoi*, (both incl. here under the term *Athenians*), and the *xenoi*, here called *epidemountes xenoi*, tr. 'strangers which were there,' and including all who had not citizenship, though they had a fixed habitation, and were not mere sojourners. Such seems to be *Kypke's* view; whom see, and also *Pricæus*, who differs. Eo. 'The reason for the immense concourse of strangers, from every part of the world, arose (says *Bl.*), from the boundless liberality (see *Thucyd.* 2:33, 37.) of the Athenian government towards them.' Paris alone, in modern civilization, gives to the world this free use of knowledge, which made Athens 'the university of the Roman empire and of the world.' When will nations learn, that the advancement in civilization of any nation is a blessing to each and all others, not a matter for jealousy, 'protective systems,' and wars? See *Wayland's Political Economy*.

(21.) On the loquacity, and rage for novelty, of the Athenians, and of their busy and prying curiosity, into both public and private affairs, in which the inquirer could have no concern, all ancient writers coincide with Luke. See abundant examples in *Wetst.*, &c. Their love of gossiping and news, is evident from the fact, that there were at Athens places called *teschai*, i. e. gossiping-houses, (corresponding to our *coffee*

*see-houses* [rather to the French *cafés*],) devoted to the reception of persons who met together to hear and tell news. Of these *Meurs*, tells us there were 360. The more respectable inhabitants used to resort to the *shops of the surgeons* (*hiatreia*) and *koureia* (shops of the barbers).<sup>2</sup>

BLOOMF.

V. 22. *Too superstitious.*] Exceedingly addicted 'to the fear of demons,' or the worship of invisible beings. The word is ambiguous, and might be understood either as commendation or a censure; and doubtless he chose it for that reason, to convey the implied censure in the most inoffensive manner. Xenophon uses the word, when commending one as a religious man.

SCOTT.

(22.) 'The plan of Paul's discourse ["so eminently characterized by depth of thought, solidity of sentiment, and energy of diction,"] is this: *Exordium*, relating what led to his address, viz. their religiousness, and worship of an unknown god, v. 22, 23.; *Proposition*: I announce who that unknown god is, v. 23.; *Confirmation*, containing, 1st. an annunciation of the true doctrine, v. 24—28., 2dly, an indirect exhortation to his hearers, to regulate their lives according to its precepts, v. 29, 30. with the reason added, v. 31.' *Schoettg.*—*Too superstitious.*] *Deisidaimonesterous*. 'Exceedingly addicted to the worship of the invisible powers. This English phrase, which is very agreeable to the etymology of the original word, has, what I think a translation of Scripture should always, if possible, have, the ambiguity of the original; whereas neither *superstitious* nor *religious* have that ambiguity.' *Doddr.* *Bloomf.* contends, (after the 'best critics of the last two cent.')] that the good sense is *alone* intended here, and refers to *Hammond's* 'masterly dissertation' on this word.

Eo.



23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

24 God that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing; seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

a or, gods that ye worship. Ga. d c. 7:43. e Ps. 50:3. f Job 12:10. Zec. 12:1. b Mal. 2:10. i Ps. 31:15. j Is. 45:21. c Mat. 11:23.

conjectures the learned have concerning this altar dedicated to the unknown God.

(1.) Some think the meaning is, To the God whose honor it is to be unknown, and that they intended the God of the Jews, whose name is ineffable, and whose nature is unsearchable. It is probable they had heard from the Jews, and from the writings of the O. T., of the God of Israel, who had proved Himself to be above all gods, but was a God hiding Himself, Is. 45:15. The heathen called the Jews' God an uncertain God, the uncertain Deity of Moses, and the God without name. Now this God, says Paul, this God, who cannot by searching be found out to perfection, I now declare unto you.

(2.) Others think the meaning is, To the God whom it is our unhappiness not to know; which intimates, that they would think it their happiness to know Him. Some tell us, that on occasion of a plague that raged at Athens, when they had sacrificed to all their gods, one after another, for the staying of the plague, they were advised to let some sheep go where they pleased, and where they lay down, to build an altar, to the proper God, or the God to whom that affair of staying the pestilence did belong; and, because they knew not how to call Him, they inscribed it, To the unknown God. Others, from some of the best historians of Athens, tell us, they had many altars inscribed, To the gods of Asia, Europe, and Africa; To the unknown God: and some of the neighboring countries used to swear by the God that was unknown at Athens; so Lucian.

Now observe, how modestly Paul mentions this; that he might not be thought a spy, or one that had intruded himself, more than became a stranger, into the knowledge of their mysteries; he tells them he observed it, as he passed by, and saw their devotions, or their sacred things; it was public, and he could not forbear seeing it, and it was proper enough to make his remarks on the reli-

gion of the place; and observe how prudently and ingeniously he takes rise from this to bring in his discourse of the true God; [1.] He tells them, that the God he preached to them, was one that they did already worship, and therefore he was not a setter-forth of new or strange gods. [2.] He was one whom they ignorantly worshipped, which was a reproach to them who were famous all the world over for their knowledge. 'I come to take away that reproach, and it cannot but be acceptable, to have your blind devotion turned into a reasonable service.'

If He confirms his doctrine of one living and true God, by his works of creation and providence; 'The God whom I declare unto you to be the sole Object of your devotion, and call you to worship, is the God that made the world, and governs it; and by the visible proofs of these, you may be led to this invisible Being, and be convinced of his eternal power and Godhead.' The Gentiles in general, and the Athenians particularly, in their devotions, were governed, not by their philosophers, many of whom spake clearly and excellently well of one supreme Numen, and of his infinite perfections, and universal agency and dominion; (witness Plato, and long after, Cicero;) but by their poets and their idle fictions. Homer's works [with Hesiod's] were the Bible of the pagan theology, or demonology rather; and the philosophers tamely submitted to this, rested in their speculations, disputed them among themselves, and taught them their scholars, but never made the use they ought to have made of them in opposition to idolatry; so little certainty were they at concerning them, and so little impression did they make on them! Nay, they ran themselves into the superstition of their country, and thought they ought to do so.

Now Paul here sets himself, in the first place, to reform the philosophy of the Athenians, and to give them right notions of the one only living and true God, and then to carry the matter further than they ever attempted, to reform their worship, and to bring them off from their polytheism and idolatry. Observe what glorious things Paul here says of that God whom he served, and would have them to serve:

1. He is the God that made the world, and all things therein; the Father almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth. This was admitted by many of the philosophers; but those of Aristotle's school denied it, and maintained, 'that the world was from eternity, and everything always was what now it is.' Those of the school of Epicurus fancied, 'that the world was made by a fortuitous concourse of atoms, which, having been in a perpetual motion, at length accidentally jumped into this frame.' Against both these, Paul here maintains, that God, by the operations of an infinite power, according to the contrivance of an infinite wisdom, in the beginning of time made the world and all things therein; the rise of which was owing, not as they fancied, to an eternal matter, but to an eternal mind.

2. He is therefore Lord of heaven and

earth, i. e. rightful Owner, Proprietor, and Possessor, of all the beings, powers, and riches of the upper and lower world, material and immaterial, visible and invisible. This follows from his making of heaven and earth. If He created all, without doubt He has the disposing of all; and where He gives being, has an indisputable right to give law.

3. He is, in a particular manner, the Creator of men, of all men, v. 26. He made of one blood all nations of men; He made the first man, He makes every man, is the Former of every man's body; and the Father of every man's spirit; He has made the nations of men, all nations in their political capacity; He made all of one blood, of one and the same nature, He fashions their hearts alike: descended from one and the same common ancestor, in Adam they are all akin, so they are in Noah, that hereby they might be engaged in mutual affection and assistance, as fellow-creatures and brethren, Mal. 2:10. He hath made them for to dwell on all the face of the earth, not to live in one place, but to be dispersed over all the earth; one nation, therefore, ought not to look with contempt, [or jealousy,] on another,\* as the Greeks

\* So Wayland, in another view. 'The most favorable commerce to any one country, is that, by which the riches of both countries are the most rapidly increased. A merchant, whose gains were all derived from the impoverishment of his customers, would very soon have none but paupers for neighbors. A nation, whose traffic caused the impoverishment of another nation, would very soon be obliged to discontinue commerce. The only traffic of this sort is the African slave-trade, and the result has been the almost entire depopulation of the slave coast. And thus we see in political economy, as in morals, every benefit is mutual: and we cannot, in the one case, any more than in the other, really do good to ourselves, without doing good to others; nor do good to others, without doing good to ourselves.'

'A good harvest in one country, is a benefit to every other country; because the favored country desires a larger amount of the productions of her neighbors, and has a larger fund wherewith to pay them. On the contrary, a famine, or a war, or any other calamity happening to one country, is a calamity to every other country, because the unfortunate country wants less of the productions of its neighbors; since it has less wherewith to pay for them. Hence that merchant is short-sighted, as well as morally thoughtless, who expects to grow rich by short crops, civil dissensions, calamity, or war, in the country with which he traffics. A wiser and farther-sighted reflection would teach him, that it is very difficult to grow rich by tradings with beggars, and that the benefit of one, is the benefit of all. What would be the amount of exchanges effected by the inhabitants of Great Britain, France, and the United States, either among themselves or with each other, if the productiveness of these several countries, were no greater than it was in the time of Julius Cæsar?'

Again: 'where virtue, frugality, and respect for right exist, riches will, by natural consequence, accumulate; and intellectual cultivation will, of necessity, succeed. So that all true benevolence may be defended, no less upon principles of political economy, than of philanthropy. The circulation of the Scriptures, the inculcation of moral and religious truth upon the mind of man, by means of Sabbath schools, and the preaching of the Gospel, are of the very greatest importance to the productive energies of a country. Intelligence, virtue, and equitable laws, will render men industrious, frugal, and consequently rich, and raise them from a savage to a civilized state. Just in proportion as a nation is thus transformed, are its products increased; the riches of the whole world are augmented; the portion of wealth which falls to the share of each man is rendered greater; and the ratio of capital to labor is higher. Just as a nation becomes intelligent and rich, its wants are multiplied, and the means of supplying them are provided. Hence, it becomes a better customer to other nations; it gives an additional impulse to their industry; and it repays them for their products, with whatever God has bestowed upon it, which will add to the happiness of others. . . . How much greater benefits does North America confer upon the world, than it would if it were peopled by its aboriginal inhabitants? How great a stimulus would be given to the industry of the world, at this time; and how greatly would the comforts and luxuries of men be increased, if Africa were peopled by civilized and Christianized men? . . . Civilized nations, then, could in no way so successfully promote their own interests, as by the universal dissemination of the principles of religion, and the means of education and religion.' *Elts. Polit. Economy.*

V. 23. Altar.] The ent, a classic relic, shows the form of some of these, with inscriptions. Their forms varied with the taste of the worshippers. To the unknown God.] Note, end of chapter. Ed.

(23.) There were several altars (in Athens, &c.) inscribed to 'the unknown gods;' (erected, so some, before sculpture was used, to deities forgotten in the lapse of time;) but we read not elsewhere of the one in Athens, 'to the unknown God,' of which Paul here speaks. See Bloomf. but Dr. A. Clarke also. Id.

V. 25. Wetst. here remarks, that Paul, with consummate art, so tempers his discourse, that at one time he contests on the side of the vulgar, against the philosophers: at another time with the philosophers, against



the vulgar; and sometimes against both. 'Now the Stoics believed in the existence of one God, but the vulgar, thinking that all things could not be governed by one Being, divided the governance among many. The Stoics ascribed the origin of the human race to God. The common people of Athens thought that their nation had existed from all eternity: while the Epicureans ascribed the origin of men to fortuitous chance. The Stoics believed those only to be virtuous who had attained perfection. Paul teaches them that a conversion, or change for the better, is necessary for them also. The Stoics, moreover, taught that all things are bound by a fatalis necessitas: Paul, on the contrary, maintains, that the actions of men are to be imputed to themselves; so that they may be rewarded or punished for having done those things which it was in their power not to have done. Wetst.'

Bloomf. V. 26. Hath made of one blood.] Note, end of ch. Ed. 'In A. B., some others, with the Copt., Æth., Vulg., Itala, Clement, and Bede, the word blood is omitted; but blood is often used by the best writers, for race, stock, kindred. See many examples in Kypke.' Dr. A. C.—'By this expression the apostle showed them, in the most unaffected manner, that, though a Jew, he was not enslaved to any narrow views, but looked on all mankind as his brethren.' Doddr.—'Determining certain times and certain boundaries of the regions which they should inhabit.' Id.



27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us :

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

k c. 14:17. l Col. 1:17. m Tit. 1:12. n Is. 40:18, &c.

did on all other nations; for those on all the face of the earth are of the same blood. The Athenians boasted that they sprung out of their own earth, were *aborigines*, and nothing akin by blood to any other nation; which proud conceit of themselves the apostle here takes down.

4. That He is the great Benefactor of the whole creation, v. 25. *He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things*; He not only breathed into the first man the breath of life, but still breathes it into every man; He gave us these souls; He formed the spirit of man within him; He not only gave us our life and breath, when He brought us into being, but He is continually giving it us; his providence is a continued creation; *He holds our souls in life*; every moment *our breath goes forth*, but He graciously gives it us again the next moment; it is not only *his air that we breathe in, but it is in his hand that our breath is*, Dan. 5: 23. *He gives to all the children of men their life and breath*; for as the meanness of the children of men live on Him, and receive from Him, so the greatest, the wisest philosophers, and mightiest potentates, cannot live without Him; *He gives to all*, not only to all the children of men, but to the inferior creatures, to all animals, *everything wherein is the breath of life*, Gen. 6: 17. they have their life and breath from Him; and where He gives life and breath, He gives all things, all other things needful for the support of life. *The earth is full of his goodness*, Ps. 104: 24, 27.

5. That He is the sovereign Disposer of all the affairs of the children of men, according to the counsel of his will, v. 26. See here, (1.) The sovereignty of God's disposal concerning us; *He hath determined every event, the matter is fixed*; the disposals of Providence are incontestable, unchangeable, [Note, 2: 23.] (2.) The wisdom of his disposals; *He hath determined what was before appointed*; the determinations of the Eternal Mind are not sudden resolves, but the counterparts of an eternal counsel, the copies of divine decrees, Job 23: 14. *Whatever comes forth from God, was before all worlds hid in God*. (3.) The things about which his providence is conversant; these are time and place: the times and places of our living in this world, are determined and appointed by the God that made us. [1.] *He has determined the times that are concerning us*; times to us seem changeable, but God has fixed them. *Our times are in his hands*, to lengthen or shorten, imbitter or sweeten, as He pleases. He has appointed and determined our *time to be born*, and our *time to die*, Eccl. 3: 1, 2. and all that little that lies between them; the time

of all our concerns in this world, whether prosperous times, or calamitous, He has determined them; and on Him we must depend, with reference to the times yet before us. [2.] He has also *determined and appointed the bounds of our habitation*; He that *appointed the earth to be a habitation for the children of men*, has appointed to the children of men a distinction of habitations on the earth; has instituted such a thing as *property*, to which He has set bounds, to keep us from trespassing one on another. The particular *habitations* in which our lot is cast, the place of our nativity and of our settlement, are of God's determining and appointing; which is a reason why we should accommodate ourselves to the habitations we are in, and make the best of that which is.

6. That *He is not far from every one of us*, v. 27. He is everywhere present, not only is *at our right hand, but has possessed our reins*, Ps. 159: 13. has his eye on us at all times, and knows us better than we know ourselves. Idolaters made images of God, that they might have Him with them in those images, which the apostle here shows the absurdity of; for He is an infinite Spirit, *that is not far from any of us*, and never the nearer, but in one sense the further off from us, for our pretending to realize or presentiate Him to ourselves by any image. He is *nigh unto us*, both to receive the homage we render Him, and to give the mercies we ask of Him, wherever we are; though near no altar, image, or temple. The Lord of all, as *He is rich*, Rom. 10: 12. so *He is nigh*, Deut. 4: 7. *to all that call upon Him*. He that will us to *pray everywhere*, assures us; that He is *nowhere far from us*; whatever country, nation, or profession, we are of, whatever our rank and condition in the world are, be we in a palace or in a cottage, in a crowd or in a corner, in a city or in a desert, in the depths of the sea or afar off on the sea, this is certain, *God is not far from every one of us*.

7. That *in Him we live, and move, and have our being*, v. 28. We have a necessary and constant dependence on his providence, as the streams on the spring, and the beams on the sun. (1.) *In Him we live*; i. e. the continuance of our lives is owing to Him and the constant influence of his providence; *He is our Life, and the length of our days*; if He suspend [his influence, or] the positive acts of his goodness, we die of ourselves. (2.) *In Him we move*; it is by the uninterrupted concurrence of his providence, that our souls move themselves in their outgoings and operations, that our thoughts run to and fro about a thousand subjects, and our affections run out toward their proper objects. It is likewise by Him that our souls move our bodies; we cannot stir a hand, or a foot, or a tongue, but by Him, who, as He is the *first Cause*, so He is the *first Mover*. (3.) *In Him we have our being*; not only from Him we had it at first, but in Him we have it still; to his continued care and goodness we owe it, not only that we have a being, and are not sunk into nonentity, but that we have our being, have this *being*, were and still are of such a noble rank of *beings*, capable of knowing and enjoying God; and are not thrust into the meanness of brutes, or the misery of devils.

8. That, upon the whole matter, we are *God's offspring*; He is our *Father that begat us*, Deut. 32: 6, 18. and He hath *nourished and brought us up as children*, Is. 1: 2. The

confession of an adversary, in such a case, is always looked upon to be of use, therefore the apostle here quotes a saying of one of the Greek poets, Aratus, a native of Cilicia, Paul's countryman, who, in his *Phænomena*, in the beginning of his book, speaking of the heathen *Jupiter*, i. e. in the poetical dialect, the supreme *God*, says this of Him, *'for we are also his offspring.'* And he might have quoted other poets to the purpose of what he was speaking, that *in God we live and move*, Virgil, Ovid, Lucan. But he chooses this of Aratus, as having much in a little. By this it appears, not only that Paul was himself a scholar, but that human learning is both ornamental and serviceable to a gospel-minister, especially for the convincing of those that are without; for it enables them to beat them at their own weapons, and to cut off Goliath's head with his own sword. How can the adversaries of truth be beaten out of their strong-holds by those that do not know them? It may likewise shame God's professing people, who forget their relation to God, and walk contrary to it, that a heathen poet could say of God, *We are his offspring*, formed by Him, formed for Him, more the care of his providence than ever any children were the care of their parents; and therefore are obliged to obey his commands, and acquiesce in his disposals, and to be unto Him for a name and a praise; since in Him and upon Him we live, we ought to live to Him; since in Him we move, we ought to move toward Him; and since in Him we have our being, and from Him we receive all the supports and comforts of our being, we ought to consecrate our being to Him, and to apply ourselves to Him for a new being, a better being, an eternal well-being.

III. From all these great truths concerning God, he infers the absurdity of their idolatry, as the prophets of old had done. If this be so,

1. Then God cannot be represented by an image. If we are the offspring of God, as we are spirits in flesh, then certainly He who is the *Father of our spirits*, is Himself a *Spirit*, and we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, *graven by art and man's device*, v. 29. We wrong God, and put an affront on Him, if we think so. God honored man in making his soul after his likeness; but man dishonors God, if he makes Him after the likeness of his body. The Godhead is spiritual, infinite, immaterial, and incomprehensible, therefore it is a very false and unjust conception which an image gives us of God, be the matter ever so rich, *gold or silver*; be the shape ever so curious, and be it ever so well *graven by art and man's device*, its countenance, posture, or dress, ever so significant, it is a *teacher of lies*.

2. Then *He dwells not in temples made with hands*, v. 24. He is not invited to any temple men can build for Him, nor confined to any. A temple is convenient for us to come together in to worship God; but God needs not any place of rest or residence, or the magnificence and splendor of any structure, to add to the glory of his appearance. A pious, upright heart, *a temple not made with hands*, but by the *Spirit of God*, is that which *He dwells in, and delights to dwell in*. See 1 K. 8: 27. Is. 66: 1, 2.

3. Then He is *not worshipped*, He is *not served*, or *ministered unto, with men's hands*, as though He needed anything, v. 25. He that

V. 28. *In Him, &c.* 'I. e. by,' Bloomf. In speculating on this text, we must avoid Spinosism, Soofeism, &c. the offspring of reasoning pride. Note, Dan. 3: 5. Ed.—*For in Him we live, and move, and have our being.* 'Live and are moved, and do exist.' No words can better express that *continual and necessary dependence* of all derived things, in their existence and all their operations, on their *first and almighty Cause*, which the truest *philosophy*, as well as *theology*, teaches. The thought, in words just like these, is found in an old *Greek poet*; but Paul does not mention it as a *quotation*; so that I rather think, with Le Clerc, that the *poet* borrowed it from hence, though to be sure, many of the *ancients* had before expressed themselves much to the same purpose. DODDR.

V. 29. *Forasmuch then, &c., we ought, &c.* 'Every man in the Areopagus must have felt the power of this conclusion.' Dr. A. C. *Are the offspring of God.* 'These words are well known to be found in Aratus, a poet of Cilicia, Paul's own country, who lived almost 300 years before this time. I wonder so few writers should have added, that they are, with the alteration of one only, to be found in the *Hymn of Cleanthes to Jupiter*, or the Supreme God, which I willingly mention as beyond comparison, the purest and finest piece of *natural religion*, of its length, which I know in the world of *Pagan antiquity*: and which, so far as I can recollect, contains nothing unworthy of a *Christian*, or, I had almost said, of an *inspired pen*.' DODDR.



30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent :

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained ; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

o Ro. 3:25. 2:11,12. r or, offered faith.  
p Lu. 24:47. Tit. q Ro. 2:16.

made all, and maintains all, cannot be benefited by any of our services, nor needs them. What need can God have of our services, or what benefit can He have by them, when He has all perfection in Himself, and we have nothing that is good but what we have from Him ? The philosophers, indeed, were sensible of this truth, that God has no need of us or our services ; but the vulgar heathen built temples, and offered sacrifices to their gods, with an opinion that they needed [and were obliged to them for] houses and food. See Job 35:5—8. Ps. 50:8, &c.

4. Then it concerns us all to inquire after God, v. 27. *That they should seek the Lord*, i. e. fear and worship Him in a right manner. Therefore God has kept the children of men in a constant dependence on Him for life, and all the comforts of life, that He might keep them under constant obligations to Him. Nothing, one would think, should be more powerful with us, to convince us that there is a God, and to engage us to seek his honor and glory in our services, and to seek our happiness in his favor and love, than the consideration of our own nature, especially the noble powers and faculties of our own souls. If we reflect on those, and contemplate these, we may perceive both our relation and obligation to a God above us. Yet, [as our natures have degenerated from the Adamic perfection of form and harmony,] so dark is this discovery, in comparison with that by divine revelation, and so unapt are we to receive it, that they who have no other, could but *haply feel after God, and find Him*. It was very uncertain whether they could by this searching *find out God*; it is but a peradventure, *if haply* they might. If they did find out something of God, yet it was but some confused notions of Him; they did but *feel after* Him, as men in the dark, or blind men, who lay hold on a thing that comes in their way, but know not whether it be that which they are in quest of or no.

V. 30, 31. God had indeed long borne with men's apostasy, ignorance, and idolatry : but 'the times of this ignorance' were expiring; and by his servants He now 'commanded all men, everywhere, to repent' of their idolatry and all other sins, and not to attempt any excuse or vindication of their conduct.—This was a most bold demand on the self-wise and self-admiring Stoics; and as opposite to their notions of virtue and of fatality, as to the Epicurean sentiments of chance and pleasure.—Thus far the apostle was permitted to proceed in *introducing* his subject; for much more he certainly intended to say, had not the levity and petulance of his audience constrained him to desist.—Contrast this address with the speculations of the Greek philosophers; with those of the Epicureans and the Stoics in particular. In this contrast, it appears dignified, rational, sublime. It asserts the Being and Unity of God; that He created the world, and all things in it; his universal providence; the intimate relation of men, all over the world, to each other; (though his hearers, the *Greeks*, had been accustomed to call the rest of mankind *barbarians*;) the palpable folly of idolatry, and its criminality, with calls to repentance: and it sets before them a future judgment, and a life beyond the grave: all this, in the compass of a few verses, in which not a word seems redundant, yet nothing is defective! Whence reflects on the endless mazes, in which these wise philosophers of Athens, and indeed all those of the ancient world, were wandering, on all these subjects, so awfully interesting; and compares the solid rationality of the sentiments, here so simply proposed, with their vain but ostentatious wisdom, must be very much struck indeed.—Then with regard to *evidence*. They had nothing to offer, but abstruse and bewildering reasonings, which were perfectly incomprehensible by the mass of mankind, and which brought home no effectual conviction to the mind of any one. All was among them without certainty, and without authority. But the apostle was able to confirm his doctrine, by arguments intelligible to all; the conclusiveness of which human nature *feels*, and cannot but feel. He would have appealed to miracles, (particularly the resurrection of Christ,) and to various other proofs; but his tired audience refused to hear him out.—The manner of the apostle, likewise, in addressing these idolaters and philosophers, who were

It is a very confused notion which this poet of their's has of the relation between God and man, and very general, that *we are his offspring*: as was also that of their philosophers. Pythagoras said, *Men have a sort of a divine nature*. And Heraclitus being asked, *What men are?* answered, *Mortal gods*; and, *What are the gods?* answered, *Immortal men*. And Pindar saith, *God and man are near akin*. It is true, that by the knowledge of ourselves, we may be led to the knowledge of God, but it is a very confused knowledge. This is but *feeling after* Him. We have therefore reason to be thankful, that by [and in] Christ, we have notices given us of God, much clearer than we could have by the light of nature; we do not now *feel after* Him, but *with open face behold, as in a glass, the glory of God*.

IV. He proceeds to call them all to repent of their idolatries, and to turn from them, v. 30, 31. This is the practical part of Paul's sermon before the university; having declared God to them, v. 23. from thence he properly presses on them *repentance toward God*; and would have taught them also *faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*, if they would have had the patience to hear him. Having showed them the absurdity of their worshipping other gods, he persuades them to go on no longer in that foolish way of worship, but to return from it to the living and true God. Observe,

1. The conduct of God toward the Gentile world, before the Gospel came among them; *The times of this ignorance God winked at*. (1.) They were times of great ignorance; human learning flourished more than ever in the Gentile world, just before Christ's time; but in the things of God they were grossly ignorant. (2.) These times of ignorance *God winked at*. Understand it, [1.] As an act of divine justice. *God despised or neglected* these times of ignorance, and did not send them his Gospel, as now He does. Or rather, [2.] As an act of divine patience and forbearance; He winked at these times; He did not restrain them from these idolatries by sending prophets to them, as He did to Israel; He did not punish them in their idolatries, as He did Israel; but gave them the gifts of his providence, *ch. 14:16, 17. Ps. 50:21*. He did not give them such calls and motives to repentance as He does now; *He let them alone*; because they did not improve the light they had, but were willingly ignorant, He did not send them greater lights. Or, He was not quick and severe with them, but was *long-suffering* toward them, because they did it ignorantly, I Tim. 1:13.

strangers to the ancient Scriptures, and his reasoning with them on such principles as they allowed, or could not deny, should be compared with his addresses to the Jews, who professed to believe the Scriptures, and with whom he argued on the ground of that profession. Christianity might indeed be established by proofs, wholly independent of the O. T.; yet it called men to believe nothing, as actually accomplished, but what had been predicted, typified, or promised. Of this the inspired preachers never failed to avail themselves, in addressing the Jews; both as a most conclusive proof that their doctrine was from God, in addition to all miracles, and other internal and external evidences; and also, as peculiarly interesting to those who possessed, and professed to reverence, the sacred oracles. But to have brought proofs, from Scripture, to idolatrous or philosophizing Gentiles, would have been highly irrational; and Paul's example, especially in this particular, cannot be too carefully studied and copied by all, who are called to address infidels, or idolaters, or persons totally ignorant and careless in the concerns of religion.

SCOTT.

(30.) *God winked at.* 'The beams of his eye did in a manner shoot over them.' Mr. Howe, in *Doddr.*—*But now commandeth, &c.* 'There is a dignity in this latter expression, becoming one who was conscious that he was indeed an ambassador from the King of heaven, who could (to allude to Livy's remarkable story) draw a circle about the greatest monarch, and demand a *decisive answer* before he stirred out of it.'

DODDR.

(31. Whereof *He hath given assurance.*) 'The sense of the argument is this: Jesus Christ, whom we preach as the Savior of men, has repeatedly told his followers that He would judge the world; and has described to us, at large, the whole of the proceedings of that awful time, Mat. 25:31. &c. John 5:25. Though He was put to death by the Jews, and thus became a victim for sin, yet God raised Him from the dead. By raising Him from the dead, God has set his seal to the doctrines He has taught: one of these doctrines is, that *He shall judge the world*; his resurrection, established by the most incontrovertible evidence, is therefore proof, an incontestable proof, that He [will] judge the world, according to his own declaration.'

DR. A. CLARKE.



32 ¶ And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

33 So Paul departed from among them.

34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

s. c. 26:3.

t. Lu. 14:18. c. 24:25.

redeemed it, by Him He governs it, and by Him He will judge it. (5.) God's raising Christ from the dead, is the great proof of his being appointed and ordained the Judge of quick and dead. His doing Him that honor, evidenced his designing Him this honor. God hath given assurance unto all men, sufficient ground for their faith to build on, both that there is a judgment to come, and that Christ will be their Judge; the matter is not left doubtful, but is of unquestionable certainty. (6.) The consideration of the judgment to come, and of the great hand Christ will have in that judgment, should engage us all to repent of our sins, and turn from them to God. This is the only way to make the Judge our Friend in that day, which will be a terrible day to all that live and die impenitent; but true penitents will then lift up their heads with joy, knowing that their redemption draws nigh.

V. 32—34. Here is a short account of the issue of Paul's preaching at Athens.

I. Few were the better: the Gospel had as little success there, as anywhere; for the pride of the philosophers there, as of the Pharisees at Jerusalem, prejudiced them against it.

PRACT. OBS. It is most evident, from this history, that the zealous servants of Christ must be despised and hated, by all kinds of unconverted persons, for his sake. Nothing, however, shall in any wise hurt them; and nothing should dismay them, or deter them from publishing the glad tidings of salvation.—But how strange is it, that men should grudge and envy others those privileges, of which they will not themselves accept! and that zeal for religious creeds or systems should induce them 'to take to themselves wicked men of the baser sort,' to set cities in an uproar, to assault and destroy men's houses, and to lay wait for their lives! Such proceedings disgrace and betray every cause they are brought to support; and the friends of truth and piety must mourn and lament, if any of their professed associates, take weapons of this kind from the enemies of God and his people, and use them to their annoyance. Mobs are always incompetent judges of liberty and privileges; and how egregiously absurd it is, for them and their leaders, to exclaim against others, as disturbers of the peace and order of the community!—But the kingdom of Christ is not of this world; and his most faithful servants will be the most peaceable subjects to that authority, which Providence places over them; they will be ready to obey the decrees of Cesar, unless he command them to break the laws of their other and more exalted 'King,' even 'Jesus,' 'the Prince of the kings of the earth;' and then they will meekly endure persecution for conscience' sake.—True dignity and nobleness of spirit greatly consist in an enlarged and unprejudiced mind, open to conviction, willing to investigate the truth, to examine the evidence adduced in support of men's opinions, and to treat religious inquirers with candor, seriousness, and diligence.—Nothing can be more ignoble and base, than bigotry and persecution; and many, who appear devout in their way, have, in every age and place, been most inveterate against the truth, and most active in stirring up others to oppose it.—The spiritual mind, however ingenious or cultivated, can take little delight in contemplating the most admired productions of science and genius, while it observes, that the persons concern-

V. 32. *Given assurance.* [*Pistin paraschōn*: Raphael, Krebs, Locsner, and Fischer, have learnedly illustrated this formula, and satisfactorily proved that it has no reference to what theologians call the "saving word," by which God operates faith in those who obey it, but merely signifies, "produce faith," by bringing forward arguments sufficient for the proof of anything; and thus confirm and establish its truth. So Polyb., Jos. The above critics have, moreover, shown, that *pistis* often signifies the arguments serving to establish any truth. See Appian, Thucyd., Strabo, &c.]

V. 34. *Dionysius.* 'Humanly speaking, his conversion must have been an acquisition of considerable importance to the Christian religion; for no person was a judge in the Areopagus, who had not borne the office of *archon*, or chief governor of the city, and was not of the highest reputation among the people, for his intelligence and exemplary conduct. The stories of the popish writers, about Dionysius being raised to the dignity of first bishop of Athens, by Paul himself, the judicious Calmet says, "have little foundation."'

Dr. A. CLARKE.

Concluding Notes. — On the Philosophies of Greece, v. 18. Epicureans and Stoics, v. 18. — There were then two other sects at Athens, viz. the Academic (or Platonic) and the Peripatetic. But of these there is no mention; either because the Platonic dogmas seemed, for the most part, to make nearer approaches to Christianity, inasmuch that those of that sect, (as Valck. thinks,) would probably listen

1. Some ridiculed Paul and his preaching; they heard him patiently till he came to speak of the resurrection of the dead, v. 32. and then some began to hiss him, they mocked; what he had said before, was somewhat like what they had sometimes heard in their own schools; and some notion they had of a resurrection, as it signifies a future state; but if he speak of a resurrection of the dead, though it be of Christ Himself, it is altogether incredible to them, and they cannot so much as hear it, as being contrary to a principle of their philosophy,—Life, when once lost, is irrecoverable. They had deified their heroes after their death; but they never thought of their being raised from the dead, therefore they could by no means reconcile themselves to this doctrine of Christ's being raised from the dead. We are not to think it strange, if sacred truths, of the greatest certainty and importance, are made the scorn of profane wits.

2. Others were willing to take time to consider of it; they would not at present comply with what Paul said, or oppose it; but we will hear thee again of this matter of the resurrection from the dead. It should seem, they overlooked what was plain, and shifted off the application and the improvement of that, by starting objections against what would admit a debate. Thus many lose the benefit of the practical doctrines of Christianity, by wading beyond their depth into controversy; or rather, by objecting against that which has some difficulty in it; whereas, if any man were disposed and determined to do the will of God, as far as it is discovered to him, [and did it,] he should [constantly advance in the discovery of God's will, should, in particular,] know of the doctrine of Christ, that it is of God, and not of man, John 7:17. Those that would not yield to the present convictions of the Word, thought to get clear

of them, as Felix did, by putting them off to another opportunity; they will hear of it again some time or other, but they know not when; and thus the devil cozens them of all their time, by cozening them of the present time.

3. Paul thereupon left them, for the present, to consider of it, v. 33. He departed from among them, as seeing little likelihood of doing any good with them at this time; but, it is likely, with a promise to those that were willing to hear him again, that he would meet them whenever they pleased.

II. Yet some were wrought upon, v. 34:

1. There were certain men that clave to him, and believed; when he departed from among them, they would not part with him so; wherever he went, they would follow him, with a resolution to adhere to the doctrine he preached, which they believed. 2. Two are particularly named; one was an eminent man, *Dionysius the Areopagite*; one of that high court, or great council, that sat in Areopagus, or Mars-hill. The accounts the ancients give of him is, that he was bred at Athens, had studied astrology in Egypt, where he took notice of the miraculous eclipse at our Savior's passion, that, returning to Athens, he became a senator; disputed with Paul, and was by him converted from his error and idolatry; and, being by him thoroughly instructed, was made the first bishop of Athens. So Eusebius, *lib. 5. cap. 4. lib. 4. cap. 22.* The woman, named *Damaris*, was, as some think, the wife of Dionysius; but rather, some other person of quality; and though there was not so great a harvest gathered in at Athens as there was at some other places, yet these few being wrought upon there, Paul had no reason to say he had labored in vain, [for how shall we estimate the worth of but a single soul!]

ed are wholly enslaved to sin, or given up to impiety and infidelity.—None are more childish in their superstitions, more impious in their speculations, or more credulous of absurd impostures, than some most eminent for genius and learning have been and are. The truths of the Gospel are, in some respects, as old as the fall of man; yet they are often 'strange things' in the ears even of the learned; and they, whose lives have been almost entirely spent in studying, hearing, or telling 'some new thing,' are frequently totally unacquainted with 'the good old way' to heaven; and talk about it in the most obscure and perplexed manner.—In addressing mankind about their souls, and eternal salvation, or its awful reverse, we should study their peculiar dispositions and opinions; and inquire what truths they admit, and what errors they maintain. Thus we may be able to combat them, from their own principles, and gradually point out the absurdity of their tenets, and the inconsistency of their conduct; and we may often graft the truth on such sentiments as they allow.—Sometimes we may produce the testimony of poets and prophets of their own, in confirmation of our sentiments; and if a man have acquired classical learning and general knowledge, he may thus make a good use of them; yet it is scarcely advisable for those, who are intended for the ministry, to spend any very great proportion of their valuable time, about these indecent fables and corrupt principles and practices, which must engross much attention, from those who aspire to proficiency in this kind of learning.—Notwithstanding all the renown of Athens, and of ancient Greece, God deemed those 'the times' and places 'of ignorance;' and He commanded them, yea, He commands us, and 'all men everywhere to repent;' nor will any proud pretensions to virtue, or vain reasonings about necessity or contingency, or any philosophical or theological system, excuse men in neglecting this call.

SCOTT.

\* They should certainly be left out of the hands of youth in the forming state of their minds, principles, and manners.

to Paul with some interest, when he discoursed, as was his custom, on the immortality of the soul, while the Peripatetics were, in that age, of far less celebrity; or, because they did not attend Paul's discourse; which, indeed, is not improbable, since their places of philosophical discussion, the *Academia* and *Peripatus*, were out of the city, and far removed from the Eretrian forum, [note v. 17.]

The Epicureans were, in fact, *Atheists*, maintaining that the world was not created by God, nor had any care been bestowed on it by Him. They accounted pleasure as the *summum bonum*; and therefore they directed, that virtue was to be cultivated for the sake of the pleasure, but not for itself. They maintained, that the soul would, after its departure from the body, perish together with it, and that thus there was nothing to be hoped or feared after death. See Cic., Seneca, Plut., Diog. Laert., Lucret., Clem. Alex., Brucker, and Borne.

The Stoics were of opinion, that the nature of God was fiery, and that it was diffused throughout all parts of the world. See Stob., Plut., Cic., Sen. They acknowledged that the world was created by God, but maintained that all things were bound by a kind of fatal necessity, to which they imagined even the Deity Himself to be subject. See Plut., Gellius, Sen. They denied that the wise man yielded in any respect to Jupiter. So Sen. Epistles 53 and 73. They denied the immortality of souls; though on the condition of souls after death, they varied in opinion. Cleanthes maintained the existence of all souls until the burning of the world. See Laert., Cic. Chrysippus, however, limited this to the souls of the good and wise. See Plut. and Laert. Others maintained, that the soul, when released from the bonds and imprisonment of the body, immediately returned to the celestial fire, namely, to God Himself. No wonder, then, Paul's doctrines, opposite as possible to these, seemed to them so unaccountable and unacceptable. *Klein.*

To the above accurate account of these two sects, a few particulars may be added from our own theologians. 'The Epicurean notions (says Dodd.) came near to those



## CHAP. XVIII.

8 Paul laboreth with his hands, and preacheth at Corinth to the Gentiles. 9 The Lord encourageth him in a vision. 12 He is accused before Gallio the deputy, but is dismissed. 18 Afterwards passing from city to city, he strengtheneth the disciples. 24 Apollos, being more perfectly instructed by Aquila and Priscilla, 28 preacheth Christ with great efficacy.

AFTER these things, Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth :

2 And found a certain Jew named <sup>a</sup> Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla ; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome ; ) and came unto them.

3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and <sup>b</sup> wrought : for by their occupation they were tent-makers.

a Ro. 16:3. b c. 20:34.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1—6. Paul was not persecuted at Athens, but, having little prospect of doing good there, he departed, leaving the care of those there who believed, with Dionysius ; and from thence he came to Corinth, where he was now instrumental in planting a church that became, on many accounts, considerable. Corinth was the chief city of Achaia, now a province of the

of our gay world ; and as to the Stoics, though different writers, according to their fondness for, or prejudices against, the philosophy of the pagans, and of this sect in particular, have represented their doctrines in a very different view ; and, indeed, the notorious inconsistency between some of their own writers and some of the ancients in their accounts of them, has greatly perplexed the matter : yet I think Dr. Benson has expressed himself, on the whole, in a very impartial and judicious manner. "Some of them exempted the human will from fatality ; and maintained, that virtue was its own sufficient reward, and vice its own sufficient punishment. As to their belief of future rewards and punishments, they exceedingly fluctuated ; though they had some expectations of a future state of existence, as well as of the conflagration and renovation of the world ; with relation to which, several of them seem to have expected a continual revolution of exactly similar events, at equally distant periods of time." DODDR.

Ep. Pearce has, with equal brevity, spirit, and truth, observed : "The Epicureans acknowledged no gods, except in name only ; and they absolutely denied that they exercised any providence over the world : and while the Stoics professed to believe both the existence of the gods, and their providence in the world, they attributed all human actions to fate ; and so destroyed the foundation of all religion, as much as the atheistical Epicureans did." Bloomf.

On the Unity of the Human Race, v. 26.

Some having disputed that men are all of one blood, i. e. race, the physiological proofs, in part, were (in Vol. I.) promised. The Ed. finds nothing more to the purpose than Wiseman's Lects. 1—4, (to which the reader is referred,) whose object is to show "how the very sciences whence objections have been drawn against [revealed] religion, have themselves [being more deeply studied] in their progress entirely removed them."

Blumenbach distinguishes the inhabitants of the earth, by the width of the skull, into 3 varieties, Mongul (olive or yellow), Caucasian (white), Negro (black), and 2 intermediate classes, the Malay (between the Caucasian and Negro), and the American (between the Caucasian and Mongul) ; the Malay being tawny, and the American red, or copper-colored. In every race, there is occasionally a morbid variety, called *albino*. The Caucasian comprehends all the nations of Europe, excepting the Laplanders, Finlanders, and Hungarians ; the inhabitants of W. Asia, including Arabia, Persia, and upwards as far as the river Oby, the Caspian Sea, and the Ganges ; and those of N. Africa. The Negro race comprises all the rest of Africa. The Mongul embraces all Asia, but the Caucasian and Malayan, the Hungarian, Finlander, Laplander, and Esquimaux. The Malayan embraces the natives of Malacca and the Papuans, i. e. the Australians and Polynesians. The American includes all the aborigines of the new world, except the Esquimaux.

The great problem to be solved is, how could such varieties as we have seen, have taken their rise in the human species ? Was it by a sudden change, which altered some portion of one great family into another ; or are we to suppose a gradual degradation, as naturalists call it, whereby some nations or families passed gradually through successive shades, from one extreme to the other ? And, in either case, what is to be considered the original stock ? It must be owned, that the present state of this science does not warrant us in expressly deciding in favor of either hypothesis ; nor, consequently, in even discussing the last consequence. But, independently of this, it has arrived so far, as to leave no reasonable room to doubt the common origin of every race. For, I think we may say, after looking through all that has been done in this yet infant science, that the following points, embracing all the elements of the problem, have been satisfactorily solved :

(1.) Accidental, or, as they are called, sporadic varieties, may arise in one race, tending to produce in it the characteristics of another. A close analogy exists, of course, between man and other animals : now, the skull of the wild boar (so Blumenb.) differs not less from the tame swine, its undoubted descendant, than do the skulls of any two human races from one another. The mastiff's and greyhound's skulls differ far more. So of all domestic cattle. Changes in the hair are no less ordinary and remarkable. Fowls and dogs in Guinea are as black as the inhabitants. Swine and sheep in Italy are mostly black, in England white. Sheep in the West Indies and other hot climates entirely lose their wool, and become covered with hair. Around Angora, almost every animal, sheep, goats, rabbits, and cats, have beautiful long silken hair ; dogs and horses carried into the hills, from India, are soon covered with wool, like the shawl-goats of that climate. Contrast the slow, massive, long-horned ox of Rome, with the small-headed, clean-limbed breed an English farmer most prizes. On the Gold Coast, dogs strangely degenerate ; their ears grow long and stiff, and their color reddish, like the fox, their barking in 3 or 4 broods turns to a howl or yelp. Comp. the one and two bumped camel, the bunch of the zebu, the tail of the Syrian sheep, and the formation on the loins of the Bosjan Hottentots.

(2.) These varieties may be perpetuated. Witness the number of albino animals, as white rabbits, or cream-colored horses, which probably arose originally from disease. A sheep, deformed by the accident of being born with very short legs, transmitted this to its posterity, which are the valued *ancon* or otter breed, in England. Why may not the same causes have similarly operated in the human race ? Buckingham relates a case, on the E. of Jordan, of a family of unmixed Arab descent, who, except the father, had negro features, a deep black color, and crisped hair. Red hair is occasionally noticed, not only in the Caucasian, but among the Esquimaux, Papuans, Tahitians, and negroes. Indeed, all the Arabs of the Jordan valley, have flatter features, darker skins, and coarser hair than any other tribes. The peculiarity of 6 fingers, runs in some families, &c. The most remarkable case of transmission of varieties, is that in the family of Lambert, (called the *porcupine man*.) who, with his children and grandchildren, were covered except the soles, palms, and face, with "warts as thick as packthread, and half an inch long," or "a series of horny excrescences (shed once a year) of a reddish brown, hard, elastic," of that length, which rustled against one another when rubbed by the hand. "Past all doubt, then, a race may be

empire, [and the seat of government of Greece,] a rich and splendid city. Now here we have,

1. Paul working for his living, v. 2, 3.

1. Though bred a scholar, yet he was master of a handicraft trade. He was a tent-maker, an upholsterer ; he made tents for the use of soldiers and shepherds, of cloth or stuff, or (as some say, tents were then generally made) of leather or skins, as the outer covering of the tabernacle. Hence to live in tents was to live *under skins*. Dr. Lightfoot shows, that it was the [laudable] custom of the Jews, [still prevalent in the E.] to bring up their children to some trade, yea, though they gave them learning or estates. Rabbi Judah says, 'He that teaches not his son a trade, is as if he taught him to be a thief.' And another saith, 'He that has a trade in his hand, is as a vineyard that is fenced.' 2. Though entitled to a maintenance from the churches, yet he worked to get bread ; which is more to his praise, who did not ask for supplies, than to their's, who did not supply him unasked, knowing what straits he was reduced to. See how humble Paul was ; but he had learned of his Master, who came not to be ministered to, but to minister. See how industrious he was ; even those that are *redeemed from the curse of the law*, are not exempt from that sentence, *In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread*. See how careful

Paul was to recommend his ministry ; he therefore maintained himself with his own labor, that he might not make the Gospel of Christ *burdensome*, 2 Cor. 11:7, &c. 2 Thess. 3:8, 9. 3. We may suppose he was master of his trade, yet he wrought with *Aquila and Priscilla*, who were of that calling ; so that he got no more than day-wages. Poor tradesmen must be thankful if their callings bring them in a maintenance for themselves, and their families, though they cannot do as the rich merchants that raise estates by their callings. 4. Though himself a great apostle, yet he chose to work with Aquila and Priscilla, because he found them intelligent in the things of God, as appears afterward, v. 26. and he owns they had been *his helpers in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 16:3. This is an example to those who go to service, to seek for those services in which they may have the best help for their souls.

Concerning this Aquila we are here told, he was a Jew, born in Pontus, v. 2. Many Jews of the dispersion were seated in that country, as appears, 1 Pet. 1:1. He was lately come from Italy to Corinth, because by a late edict of the emperor Claudius Cesar, all Jews were banished from Rome ; for the Jews were generally hated ; every occasion was taken to put hardship and disgrace on them ; God's heritage was as a *speckled bird*, the birds round about were against her, Jer. 12:9. The Gentiles had such confused no-

propagated by this man, with this same rugged coat, and if the accidental origin should be forgotten, it is not impossible they might be deemed a different species of mankind." Might not the different races owe their origin to some similar ancestral accident ? It has been proved by Le Cat, Camper, and Lawrence, that the skin of the fairest European, may, under certain circumstances, become as black as a negro's, over the whole or a great part of the body ; so may we suppose, that the principle which causes the change, and which is evidently inherent in the white, may, under the influence of peculiar climate, be brought into activity, and rendered perpetual by descent.

(3.) Climate, food, civilization, &c., may strongly influence the production of varieties, or, at least, render them fixed, characteristic, and perpetual. Some changes from climate, &c., are above noted : generally speaking, the whitest nations are nearer the pole, and the darkest more under the influence of tropical heat ; but we know not the principles on which color depends ; for the negro child of ten days, however sheltered from the sun, turns black, as well as the European exposed to a tropical sun ; scarce a shade of difference can be discovered in the color of the aborigines from one extremity of America to the other. But that climate gives color, though by laws not fully known, is evident, for the features of the Caucasian race are found perfectly black in Abyssinia ; Burckhardt notes Turks and Arabs by origin, becoming black in Africa ; and the Portuguese, in 300 years residence in India, have become black as Caffres ; a negro brought to Europe, was known to have got quite a light complexion ; not only on the coast, but in the very heart of Central Africa, are many nations of various races and physiognomy, some without a sign of negro features, who yet are perfectly of a glossy black. The Mogul children and women are remarkably white ; smoke and exposure to the sun give the men their yellow tint. Cuvier has noticed that domestication makes the greatest changes in animals ; civilization comes nearest to this agent in man, and adds moral influences. House slaves improve physically, while field slaves remain the same, in the U. S. Wandering Arabs are spare, thin-bearded, small ; sedentary ones, stout, thick-bearded, large. So the well-fed chiefs are taller and stouter than their half-starved subjects. In some nations, probably from the use of food requiring great mastication, the incisor teeth become blunt and rounded, and the canine teeth are undistinguishable from the grinders. This is the case with many, perhaps most, Egyptian mummies, and with the Greenlanders and Esquimaux, who eat their meat uncooked, with most extraordinary contortions of jaw.

After showing that races, proved to be the same by language, have run into and become identified with races quite different in color and physical characteristics, and learnedly following out the above propositions more fully, Dr. Wiseman thus sums up the results :—

"Imperfect as the study yet remains, we have seen it established : 1. Among animals acknowledged to be of one species, there have arisen varieties similar to those in the human race, and not less diverse from one another. 2. Nature tends, in the human species, to produce varieties in one race approaching to the characteristics of the others. 3. Sporadic varieties, of the most extraordinary sort, may be propagated by descent. 4. We can find sufficient proofs in the languages and in the characteristics of larger bodies, or entire nations compared, of their transition from one race to another. 5. Though the origin of the black race is yet involved in mystery, yet are there sufficient facts collected to prove the possibility of its having arisen from another ; particularly if, in addition to the action of heat, we admit that of moral causes acting upon the physical organization." Wiseman.

The Ed. thinks the most conclusive argument of the unity of origin contended for, is derived from the complete uniformity throughout the human race in the number of the primitive faculties (with their organs) of every individual, as shown by the science of phenology. Ed.

NOTES. CHAP. XVIII. V. 2. 'There had been a congregation of Christians at Rome, from the earliest periods of the Gospel, which originated (as some think) with certain of those who had been present at the feast of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was imparted ; and was doubtless fostered and promoted by those Jewish Christians who had occasion to repair to that city on commercial or other business. Pontus.] Many Jews were settled in this province, probably on account of the considerable commerce which was carried on thence with most parts of the civilized world. Priscilla.] Diminutive of Prisca, as she is called, 2 Tim. 4:19. Anciently, names of persons, especially of females, were sometimes pronounced in the simple, and sometimes in the diminutive form ; as Terentilla, Catullus, &c.' Bloomf.—Command all Jews, &c.] 'I pretend not certainly to determine, whether that Christus, whom Suetonius mentions as the occasion of those tumults among the Jews, for which they were expelled from Rome, were, as Usher and Vandale suppose, a seditious Jew, or whether, as it is generally thought, the name be a corruption of Christus : yet I think the latter much more probable, and that the spread of Christianity, which was looked upon as a sect of the Jews, and which we know prevailed at Rome about this time, gave that jealous and wretched emperor an unnecessary alarm. the occasion of which Suet., not thoroughly understanding it, has misrepresented. And if this were the case, it might be, as Lardner well observes, an additional reason why Jos., who is always cautious on this head, has passed over it without notice.' DODDR.



4 And he reasoned in the <sup>c</sup>synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

5 And when <sup>d</sup>Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus <sup>e</sup>was Christ.

6 And when they opposed <sup>f</sup>themselves, and blasphemed, he shook <sup>g</sup>his raiment, and said unto them, Your <sup>b</sup>blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.

7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8 And <sup>i</sup>Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord, with all his house: and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.

9 ¶ Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:

c c. 17:2. f 2 Ti. 2:25. h Eze. 33:4.  
d c. 17:14, 15. g Ne. 5:13. i 1 Co. 1:14.  
e or, is the Christ.

tions, they could not distinguish between a Jew and a Christian. Suetonius, in the Life of Claudius, speaks of this decree in the ninth year of his reign, and says, The reason was, because the Jews were a turbulent people,—*assiduo tumultuantes*; and that it was *impulsore Christo*,—upon the account of Christ; some zealous for Him, others bitter against Him, which occasioned great heats, such as gave umbrage to the government, and provoked the emperor, who was a timorous, jealous man, to order them all to be gone. If Jews persecute Christians, it is not strange if heathens persecute both.

II. Paul preaching to the Jews, both the native Jews and the Greeks, i. e. those that were more or less proselyted to the Jewish religion, and frequented their meetings.

1. He reasoned with them in the synagogue publicly every Sabbath. See in what way the apostles propagated the Gospel, by fair arguing; God invites us to come and reason with Him, Is. 1:18. 41:21. Paul was a rational as well as scriptural preacher.

2. He persuaded them; it denotes, either the urgency of his preaching; he followed his arguments with affectionate persuasions: or, its good effect; he persuaded them, i. e. prevailed with them; so some. He brought them over to his own opinion. Some were convinced by his reasonings, and yielded to Christ.

V. 1—6. Some think the preaching about this time at Rome, that Jesus was the promised Messiah, and 'the King of Israel,' gave occasion to this severity; but this is very uncertain. Paul, however, being acquainted with the character of these two excellent persons, went to lodge with them; and having in his youth learned their trade of making tents, which were much used in those warm climates, he wrought at it for his livelihood.—Whatever assistance Paul received from the churches at Antioch, or Philippi, or other cities, he was often reduced to great necessity, by the expenses of his journeys; and we learn from many intimations in his writings, that he frequently wrought with his own hands for his subsistence, lest he should be chargeable to his converts.—On the sabbath-days, however, as usual, 'he reasoned' with the Jews at Corinth in the synagogue, concerning the kingdom and salvation of Christ, and endeavored to 'persuade' both them, and the Gentiles, who joined in their worship, to believe in Jesus as the Messiah.—(5.) *Pressed in Spirit.*] It is not to be supposed, that the apostle was excited, or constrained, by a vehemence of natural temper, to act improperly on this occasion; and if the ardor of his own spirit was holy, no doubt it was excited by the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, how can it be supposed, that the Holy Spirit urged and constrained him, except by exciting and invigorating holy affections in his heart?

(5.) *Pressed in spirit.*] Rather, now, when his help was come, *instabat verbo*, (Vulg.) he applied himself closely to the work of teaching. So *Kuin.*; and most commentators of the last century prefer the reading *logō* (of MSS. and Verss.), i. e. word, &c., instead of *pneumatī*, [106]

3. He was yet more earnest in this matter when his fellow-laborers came, v. 5. and brought him good tidings from the churches in Macedonia, and were ready to assist him, and strengthened his hands, then Paul was more than before *pressed in spirit*, which made him more than ever pressing in his preaching. He was grieved for the obstinacy and infidelity of his countrymen the Jews, was more intent than ever on their conversion, and the love of Christ constrained him to it, 2 Cor. 5:14. it is the word used here, it *pressed him in spirit* to it. And being thus pressed, he testified to the Jews, with all possible solemnity and seriousness, as that which he was perfectly well assured of himself, and attested to them as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah promised to the fathers, and expected by them.

III. He abandons the unbelieving Jews, v. 6.

1. Many, indeed most of them, persisted in their contradiction; opposed and blasphemed; they set themselves in battle array, so the word signifies, against the Gospel. They resolved they would not believe it themselves, and would do all they could to keep others from believing it; they could not argue against it, but what was wanting in reason they made up in ill language; they blasphemed, spake reproachfully of Christ, and in Him of God Himself, as Rev. 13:5, 6. To justify their infidelity, they broke out into downright blasphemy.

2. Paul, that was *pressed in spirit* to testify to them, v. 5. when they opposed that testimony, and persisted in their opposition, was *pressed in spirit* to testify against them, v. 3. and his zeal herein also he showed by a sign, he shook his raiment, shaking off the dust of it, as before they shook off the dust of their feet, ch. 13:15. for a testimony against them. He had done his part, and was clean from the blood of their souls; it is very comfortable to a minister to have the testimony of his conscience for him, that he has faithfully discharged his trust by warning sinners. They would certainly perish if they persisted in their unbelief, and the blame would lie wholly on themselves; if anything would frighten them at last into a compliance with the Gospel, surely this would.

3. Having given them over, yet he does not give over his work; *From henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles*; and the Jews cannot complain. The guests that were first invited will not come, and the provision must not be lost, guests must be had therefore from the highways and the hedges. Thus the fall and diminishing of the Jews were the riches of the Gentiles; and Paul said this to their faces, not only as what he could justify, but to provoke them to jealousy, Rom. 11:12, 14.

V. 7—11. Here we are told,

I. That Paul changed his quarters, v. 7.

It should seem, not to lodge, for he continued with Aquila and Priscilla, but to preach; it was not the first time God's ark had taken up its lodging in a private house. The man was one that worshipped God: not an idolater, though a Gentile, but a worshipper of the God of Israel, and Him only, as Cornelius: that Paul might give the less offence to the Jews, though he had abandoned them, he set up his meeting [in some large room, comp. 19:9. in] that man's house, which was next door to the synagogue; not chosen to draw people from the synagogue to the meeting; but I rather think in charity, to show that he was ready to return to them if they were but willing to receive his message, and would not contradict and blaspheme as they had done.

II. That Paul saw the good fruit of his labors presently, both among Jews and Gentiles.

1. Crispus a Jew, an eminent one, believed on the Lord Jesus, with all his house, v. 8. It was for the honor of the Gospel, that there were some rulers, and persons of the first rank both in church and state, that embraced it. This would leave the Jews inexcusable, that the ruler of their synagogue, who may be supposed to have excelled the rest in knowledge of the Scriptures, and zeal for their religion, believed the Gospel, and yet they opposed and blasphemed it. Not only he, but his house, believed, and, probably, were baptized with him by Paul. 1 Cor. 1:14.

2. Many of the Corinthians, who were Gentiles, and some of them of an ill character, as appears, 1 Cor. 6:11. hearing, believed, and were baptized: probably most came only for curiosity, but hearing, they believed, by the power of God working on them; and believing, they were baptized, and so fixed for Christ.

III. That Paul was encouraged by a vision to go on with his work at Corinth, v. 9. when musing on his work, communing with his own heart upon his bed, and considering whether he should continue here or no, what method he should take here, and what probability there was of doing good, then Christ appeared very seasonably to him, and in the multitude of his thoughts within him delighted his soul with divine consolations.

1. He renewed his commission and charge to preach the Gospel, 'Be not afraid of the Jews, though very outrageous, (and perhaps the more enraged by the conversion of the chief ruler of their synagogue,) or of the magistrates of the city, for they have no power against thee but what is given them from above. It is the cause of heaven thou art pleading, do it boldly; speak out, use all the liberty of spirit that becomes an ambassador for Christ.'

2. He assured him of his presence with him, which was sufficient to put life and spirit into him; *I am with thee*, to protect thee, bear thee out, and deliver thee from all thy fears. The same promise ratified the

*spirit.* Our English critics have contended for it with ability.' Bloomf., whom see.

(6.) *Blood, &c.*] The phrase is thought to have had origin in 'the custom of the Hebrews, Egyptians, &c., to put their hands on the heads of victims, imprecating on them the evils which hung over the sacrificer or the people.' The Turks, &c., still have a custom of swearing 'upon their head,' placing the hand there.

V. 8. 'Several persons bore office in a Jewish synagogue (like the Ruling Elders in the Scottish church): the chief was called simply, the Archisynagogus (synagogue-ruler). See 13:15. Mat. 9:18.' Bloomf.

V. 9—11. The apostle, at this time, seems to have been greatly discouraged in respect of his ministry, by the virulent enmity of the Jews, and the dissolute character of the Gentiles; and especially by a consciousness of his own insufficiency, and manifold infirmities. 1 Cor. 2:3—5. 2 Cor. 10:7—11. 12:7—10. Gal. 4:12—16. (10.) In this he evidently spake of those, who were his by election, the gift of the Father, and the purchase of his atonement, though at that time in an unconverted state. John 6:36—40. 10:14—18. 11:49—53.—*People, &c.*] 'So they are called, who are still heathens, not because of any absolute decree of their election to eternal life; but because Christ saw that they were disposed to believe, and by faith become his people; as elsewhere, (John 10:16.) he calls those his sheep who should hereafter believe in Him.' Whitby. Thus, in opposing the doctrine of God's decrees, and predestination, the original depravity and carnal enmity of the human heart, and the necessity of regeneration,



10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee, to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.

11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 ¶ And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment-seat,

13 Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.

14 And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong, or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you;

Mat. 28:20. k sat there. 1 Ja. 2:6. m Ro. 13:3.

general commission, Mat. 28:19, 20. They that have Christ with them, need not to fear, and ought not to shrink.

3. He gave him a warrant of protection to save him harmless; 'No man shall set on thee to hurt thee.' He does not promise, that no man should set on him, for the next news we hear, is, that he is set upon, and brought to the judgment-seat, v. 12. but 'No man shall set on thee to hurt thee; the remainder of their wrath shall be restrained; thou shalt not be beaten and imprisoned here, as thou wast at Philippi.' Or, we may take it more generally, No man shall set on thee, to do evil to thee; whatever trouble they may give thee, there is no real evil in it. They may kill thee, but they cannot hurt thee; for I am with thee, Ps. 23:4. Is. 41:10.

4. He gave him a prospect of success; 'For I have much people in this city.' The Lord knows them that are, yea, and that shall be his: for it is by his work on them that they become his, and known unto Him are all his works. I have them, though they yet know Me not; for the Father has given them Me; I have them written in the book of life; and of all that were given Me I will lose none; I have them, for I am sure to have them; whom He did predestinate, them He called. In this city, though a very profane, wicked city, full of impurity, and the more so, for a temple of Venus there, to which there was a great resort; yet in this heap, that seems to be all chaff, there is

wheat; in this ore, that seems to be all dross, there is gold. Let us not despair concerning any place, when even in Corinth, Christ had much people.

IV. That upon this encouragement he made a long stay there, v. 11. of a year and six months, not to take his ease, but to follow his work, teaching the Word of God among them; and it being a city flocked to from all parts, he had an opportunity there [as at Jerusalem and Antioch] of preaching the Gospel to strangers, and sending notice of it thence to other countries. The people Christ has at Corinth must be called in by degrees, some by one sermon, others by another. Those that are converted, too, have particular need at Corinth to be taught by Paul himself: for no sooner was the good seed sown, than the enemy came and sowed tares, the false apostles, those deceitful workers, whom Paul, in his epistles to the Corinthians complains so much of, judaizing preachers, who, under color of the Christian name, undermined the very foundations of Christianity. Soon after Paul came to Corinth, it is supposed, he wrote 1 Thess., which, in order of time, was the first of all the epistles he wrote by divine inspiration; and the second epistle to the same church was written not long after. Ministers may be promoting the great ends of their ministry, by good letters, as well as by good sermons.

V. 12—17. We have here an account of some disturbance given to Paul and his friends at Corinth, but no great harm done, nor much hinderance given to the work of Christ there.

I. Paul is accused by the Jews before the Roman governor, v. 12, 13. Gallio, deputy of Achaia, i. e. pro-consul; for Achaia was a consular province of the empire. This Gallio was elder brother to the famous Seneca; in his youth he was called Novatus, but took the name of Gallio on his being adopted into the family of Julius Gallio; he is described by Seneca, his brother, to be a man of great ingenuity and great probity, and a man of a wonderful good temper; he was called Duleis Gallio, — Sweet Gallio, for his sweet disposition; and is said to have been universally beloved.

1. The Jews, ringleaders in every mischievous confederacy against Paul, with one accord came upon him, with violence and fury, to the disturbance of the public peace, and hurried him away to the judgment-seat, and, for aught that appears, allowed him no time to prepare for his trial.

2. Paul is falsely accused before Gallio,

v. 13. They could not charge him with persuading men not to worship God at all, or to worship other gods, Deut. 13:2. but only to worship God in a way contrary to the law. The Romans allowed the Jews in their provinces the observance of their own law; what then? Does their toleration include a power of imposition? But the charge was unjust; for their own law had in it a promise of a Prophet, whom God would raise up to them, and Him they should hear. Now Paul persuaded them to believe in this Prophet, who was come, and to hear Him, which was according to the law; for He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. The law relating to the temple-service those Jews at Corinth could not observe, because of their distance from Jerusalem, and there was no part of their synagogue-worship which Paul contradicted. Thus when people are taught to worship God in Christ, and to worship Him in the Spirit, they are ready to quarrel, as if they were taught to worship Him contrary to the law; whereas this is indeed perfective of the law.

II. Gallio, on the first hearing, or rather without any hearing at all, dismisses the cause, and will not take any cognizance of it, v. 14, 15. 1. He shows himself very ready to do the part of a judge, in any matter proper for him to take cognizance of. 'If you could charge the prisoner with theft or fraud, with murder or rapine, or any act of immorality, I should think myself bound to bear with you in your complaints, though they were clamorous and noisy.' But, 2. He will by no means allow them to make a complaint to him of a thing that was not within his jurisdiction, v. 15. therefore, when they were urgent, and pressing to be heard, he drove them from the judgment-seat, v. 16. and ordered another cause to be called.

Now, (1.) Here was something right in Gallio's conduct, and praise-worthy,—that he would not pretend to judge of things he did not understand; or himself be the tool of the Jews' malice, to give judgment against Paul: he looked upon the matter to be not within his jurisdiction, and therefore would not meddle with it. But, (2.) It was certainly wrong to speak so slightly of a law and religion which he might have known to be of God, and which he ought to have acquainted himself with. In what way God is to be worshipped, whether Jesus be the Messiah, whether the Gospel be a divine revelation, were not questions of words and names, as he scornfully and profanely called them; they are questions of vast impor-

are virtually denied, or at best, totally lost sight of. 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'—'God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; by grace are ye saved.' 13:42—48, v. 48. John 3:3—8. Eph. 2:4—10. Tit. 3:3—7.—Were such persons as the idolatrous, licentious Corinthians disposed of themselves, independently of divine grace 'preventing them,' to embrace the humbling, pure Gospel of Christ; and to change their jovial and sensual rites, for the spiritual worship of the heart-searching, holy God? Sc.

(10.) I have much people in this city.] Comp. John 10:16. 'Many who have not resisted my Spirit, and consequently are now under its teachings, and are ready [very soon, so the use of the present tense intimates, Bl.] to embrace my Gospel as soon as thou shalt declare it.' Dr. A. C.—'The expression takes in all who should, according to the gracious purpose of Christ, be converted to Christianity, whatever their tempers then were, even not excepting those very vicious, ill-disposed, corrupt persons, whose character in their unregenerate state is described in such strong terms, 1 Cor. 6:9, 10, 11. where the apostle speaks of what they were before they were converted.' DODDR.

V. 12—17. (17) Sosthenes.] Some think he was the same person as Crispus, before mentioned (8); others, that he succeeded him as chief ruler of the synagogue, when Crispus embraced Christianity. Some think he was the leading person in the prosecution of Paul, and that he was contemptuously and cruelly treated by those Greeks, who favored the apostle: others conjecture, he was a Christian, and that the Jews excited the Greeks to abuse him, when they could not prevail to wreak their malice on Paul. We afterwards read of Sosthenes, among the apostle's chief friends: (1 Cor. 1:1.) if this was the same person, as it is probable from the manner in which Luke mentions him; the latter opinion is favored by it; for the conversion of a leading persecutor would scarcely have been passed over in silence.—The Alexandrian manuscripts and some ancient versions read Jews, instead of Greeks; and it has been conjectured that (they all) was the original reading, and that some transcribers took the liberty of inserting Greeks, and others Jews, in the copies which they wrote. This indeed would remove the difficulty, and clearly show that Sosthenes was a Christian; but

the authority for the alteration, is scarcely sufficient to warrant the conclusion. See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*.—Gallio probably deemed both Jews and Christians to be ignorant and deluded fanatics; and concluded that it was of no consequence who was right or wrong, in disputes of this nature. A mixture of philosophical skepticism, and political contempt of religious concerns, compared with affairs of state, seems to have influenced his conduct.—(12) Was the deputy.] Here only.—See on 13:7.—'Dr. Lardner justly observes, that this is another instance of the exact propriety with which Luke expresses himself. For though the province of Achaia, which comprehended all the rest of Greece, had a more various fortune than that of Cyprus, and frequently changed its form of government; yet, A. D. 44, (which is generally supposed to have been about 8 years before this event,) it was restored to the senate, and so became proconsular.' DODDR.

(12.) When, &c.] 'Rather, on Gallio's entering on the proconsulship, Kuin., Beza, Pisc. The Jews, it seems, waited for the arrival of a new proconsul, to make their request, as thinking they should then be less likely to meet a refusal.' Bloomf.—Achaia.] 'All that part of Greece which lay between Thessaly and the southernmost coasts of Peloponnesus.' Dr. A. C. 'After conquering Greece, the Romans divided it into 2 provinces, Macedonia (comprehending Illyricum, Macedonia proper, Epirus, Thessaly) and Achaia, i. c. all Greece proper.' BLOOMF.

(13.) Contrary to the law.] 'Jewish worship was allowed by law, and Roman was established by law. The Jews probably intended to accuse Paul of acting contrary to both laws. "He is not a Jew, for he does not admit of circumcision; he is not a Gentile, for he preaches against the worship of the gods. He is setting up a worship of his own, in opposition to all laws; and persuading many people to join him; he is, therefore, a most dangerous man, and should be put to death." Id.

(14.) Wrong . . . Wicked lewdness.] 'Adikēma . . . hradiourgēma: the former (so some) means violation of the law of the city; the latter, crime. But there seems a climax, from the greater to the less, thus, "felony or misdemeanor." Our word rogue is doubtless from this latter word, and roguery (perhaps in ridiculing their ceremonies, by tricks, &c.) being a term of equally extensive signification, would be no bad translation.' Id.



15 But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters.

16 And he drave them from the judgment-seat.

17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.

18 ¶ And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.

19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

20 When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not;

21 And he departed from thence, and came to Cenchrea, and in which, if he had understood them himself aright, he would have seen himself nearly concerned. He speaks as if he boasted of his ignorance of the Scriptures, and took a pride in it; as if it were below him to notice the law of God, or make any inquiries concerning it.

III. The abuse done to Sosthenes, and Gallio's unconcernedness in it, v. 17.

I. The parties put a great contempt on the court, when they took Sosthenes and beat him before the judgment-seat. It is uncertain who this Sosthenes was, and who the Greeks were, that abused him. Most probably he was a Christian, and Paul's particular friend; that appeared for him, and conveyed him away, when Gallio dismissed the cause: so that, when they could not light on Paul, they fell foul on him who protected him. It is certain there was one Sosthenes, a friend of Paul, and well known at Corinth; it is likely he was a minister, for Paul calls him his brother, and joins him with himself in his first epistle to the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. I. 1. as he does Timothy in his sec-

ond, and it is probable that this was he; he is said to be a ruler of the synagogue, either joint ruler with Crispus, v. 8. or a ruler of one synagogue, as Crispus was of another. As for the Greeks that abused him, very probably they were either Hellenist Jews, or Jewish Greeks, those that joined with the Jews in opposing the Gospel, v. 4, 6. and that the native Jews put them on to do it, thinking it would in them be less offensive. They were so enraged against Paul, that they beat Sosthenes; and so enraged against Gallio, because he would not countenance the prosecution, that they beat him before the judgment-seat, whereby they did, in effect, tell Gallio, that they cared not for him; if he would not be their executioner, they would be their own judges.

2. The court put no less a contempt on the cause, and the persons too; Gallio cared for none of these things. If by this be meant that he cared not for the affronts of bad men, it was commendable; while he steadily adhered to the laws and rules of equity, he might despise their contempts; but if it be meant, (as I think it is,) that he concerned not himself for the abuses done to good men, it carries his indifference too far, and gives us but an ill character of him. Here is wickedness done in the place of judgment, (which Solomon complains of, Eccl. 3: 16.) and nothing done to discountenance and suppress it.) Gallio, as a judge, ought to have protected Sosthenes, and restrained and punished the Greeks that assaulted him; for a man to be mobbed in the street or in the market, perhaps, may not be easily helped; but to be so in his court, the judgment-seat, the court sitting and not concerned at it, is an evidence that truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

V. 18—23. I. Paul's departure from Corinth, v. 18. not till some time after the trouble he met with there; from other places he had departed when the storm rose, but not from Corinth, because there it was no sooner risen than it fell again. Some tell us Gallio privately countenanced him, and that this occasioned a correspondence between Paul and Seneca, which some of the ancients speak of. After this he tarried there yet a good while, some think, beyond the year and half, mentioned v. 11.

1. When he went, he took leave of the brethren, solemnly, and with much affection, with suitable comforts and counsels, and

prayers, commending what was good, reproving what was otherwise, and giving them necessary cautions against the wiles of the false apostles; and his farewell sermon would leave impressions on them.

2. He took with him Priscilla and Aquila, because, being strongly attached, they had a mind to accompany him; or they seemed not inclined to stay long at a place; a disposition which may come from a good principle, and have good effects, and therefore ought not to be condemned in others, though it ought to be suspected in ourselves.

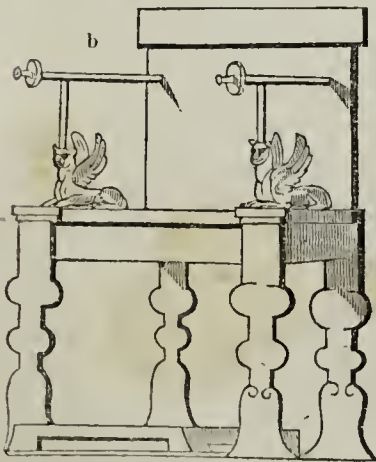
3. At Cenchrea, hard by Corinth, the port where those that went to sea from Corinth took ship, either Paul or Aquila (for the original does not determine which) had his head shaved, to discharge himself from the vow of a Nazarite. Those that lived in Judea were, in such a case, bound to do it at the temple; but those who lived in other countries might do it in other places. Some throw it on Aquila, who was a Jew, v. 2. and retained, perhaps, more of his Judaism than was convenient; but I see no harm in admitting it of Paul, of whom we must admit the same thing, ch. 21: 24, 26. not only in compliance for a time with the Jews, 1 Cor. 9: 20. but because the vow of the Nazarites, though ceremonial, and as such ready to vanish away, had yet a moral and very pious significance, and therefore was fit to die the last of all the Jewish ceremonies. The Nazarites are joined with the prophets, Amos 2: 11. and were very much the glory of Israel, Lam. 4: 7. and therefore it is not strange if Paul bound himself for some time with the vow of a Nazarite from wine and strong drink, and from being trimmed, to recommend himself to the Jews; and from this he now discharged himself.

II. Paul's calling at Ephesus, the metropolis of Asia the Less, and a sea-port.

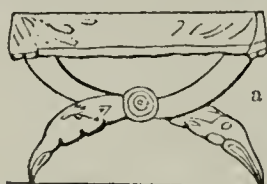
1. There he left Aquila and Priscilla, intending shortly to settle there for some time; Aquila and Priscilla might, by private conversation, being very intelligent, judicious Christians, dispose the minds of many to give Paul, when he should come among them, a favorable reception, and to understand his preaching; therefore he calls them his helpers in Christ Jesus, Rom. 16: 3.

2. There he preached to the Jews in their synagogue; though he did but call there in his journey, yet he would not go without giving them a sermon. We must not con-

(16.) *Drave.*] 'The word so tr. does not signify here an act of violence, but simply an authoritative dismissal.' Dr. A. C.—*Judgment-seat.*] 'The Roman magistrates, consuls, prætors, censors, and chief ediles, used in the senate-house, rostra, or *tribunol of justice* . . . a stool or seat, [cut a, of one found in Herculaneum.] without a back, with four crooked feet, fixed to the extremities of cross-pieces of wood, joined by a common axis, like the letter X, and covered with leather; so that it might be occasionally folded together for the convenience of carriage, to set down wherever the magistrate chose to use it, adorned with ivory. It was first used by the kings, borrowed



be as easy as possible to the provincials.' Bloomf.—*Before the judgment-seat.*] 'One cannot imagine Gallio so little understood the dignity of his office, as to suffer a person, uncondemned, to be scourged, or beaten with rods, in his immediate presence. I apprehend, therefore, the real case was, that just as Sosthenes came out of the court, the mob laid hold of him, in a riotous manner, and beat him, probably with their fists; and though some flying report of their assault might reach Gallio, he did not seem to take any notice of it, perceiving no great mischief was likely to follow, and willing to leave so troublesome a plaintiff as Sosthenes to feel some of the consequences of that confusion which his own bigotry and ill-nature had occasioned.'



from the Tuscans, in later times adorned with engravings.' Adam. Cut (b) represents a curule chair, (with its footstool,) of the consuls; in which they seem to have sat on occasions of special state; it is from a painting in Pompeii. ED.

(17.) *Beat.*] 'This the Gentiles did, (with thumps,) to make the importunate Jews go away the faster. Things.] The accusation, and the cuffs, to neither of which the [good-natured] proconsul paid much attention; and this, from disgust at the litigious conduct of the Jews; as also from the custom (mentioned by Pricæus) of the Roman governors to pass by any conduct which did not directly tend to degrade the dignity of the Roman name, or weaken its influence, in order that the yoke might

V. 18—23. Before he embarked, he cut off his hair at Cenchrea, on account of a vow he had taken, respecting some of his multiplied deliverances. Perhaps some casual defilement made it necessary for the apostle to cut off his hair, and begin again the appointed term; and being at so great a distance [from Jerusalem] it might be judged allowable to do this at Cenchrea; and to offer the required sacrifices when he came to the temple. It is not indeed recorded, that he did offer them; but this by no means proves that he did not.—The voyage and circuit here briefly stated must have taken up a long time; yet they are related in very few words; which shows, that the design of the narrative is not so much to gratify curiosity, as to give an instructive specimen of the manner, in which Christianity was at first propagated. The travels, labors, and success of the apostle, also, were far greater than a superficial reader would suppose; for the events of years, and the conversion of thousands, are sometimes recorded in a few verses. SCOTT.

(18.) *Vow.*] 'The obligation of a Nazarite's vow could only be fulfilled in Jerusalem, nor is it probable Paul would have bound himself by any ritual ceremony. The vow, Acts 21: 23. was not voluntary, but at the apostle's instigation: so this should rather seem a civil vow, so Salmasius, who observes, that such were often undertaken by the Jews; as, for instance, when travelling, not to shave their heads before they arrived at a certain place; not to take food or drink till they had effected something purposed. See Acts 23: 14.; also after recovering from a disorder, or escaping any other peril or calamity. See Jos. So the Gentiles used to consecrate their hair to the gods who had preserved them. See Juv., &c. Wetst. But such a civil vow, savors too much of Jewish and Gentile manners, to have been adopted by Paul. I prefer to follow the Vulg. and Chrysostom; and, removing the stop after "Aquila," refer



21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

22 And when he had landed at Cesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch.

23 And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

24 ¶ And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

a c. 19:21. 20:16. v c. 14:22. 15:32. x Ro. 12:11. Ja. 1 Co. 4:19. Ja. 4:15. w 1 Co. 1:12. 3: y c. 19:3. u Ga. 1:2. 5,6. Tit. 3:13.

demn a whole body or denomination of men, for the sake of some that conduct themselves ill; for,

3. The Jews at Ephesus, so far from driving Paul away, courted his stay with them, v. 20. to instruct them in the Gospel, being more noble, and better bred than those Jews at Corinth, and other places; and it was a sign God had not quite cast away his people, but had a remnant among them.

4. Paul would not stay with them now; he had further to go; he must by all means keep this feast at Jerusalem; not that he thought himself bound in duty to it, he knew the laws of the feasts were no longer binding, but he had business at Jerusalem, which would be best done at the time of the feast; which of the feasts it was, we are not told, probably the passover, the most eminent.

5. He intimated his purpose, after this journey, to come and spend some time at Ephesus; being encouraged by their kind invitation to hope he should do good among them; it is good to have opportunities in reserve, when one good work is over, to have another to apply ourselves to; but he inserts that necessary proviso, *if God will*. Our times are in God's hand; we purpose, but He disposes; therefore we must make all our promises with submission to the will of God, ch. 16:7. [Jam. 4:13—15.]

III. Paul's visit to Jerusalem; a short visit, but it served as a token of respect to that truly mother-church.

1. He came by sea to that port that lay next to Jerusalem, v. 21, 22. He chose to go by sea, for expedition and safety. Joppa had been the port for Jerusalem, but Herod

having improved Cesarea, and the port at Joppa being dangerous, that was generally made use of.

2. He went up, and saluted the church; I think plainly the church at Jerusalem, emphatically called *The Church*, because there the Christian church began, ch. 15:4. Paul thought it requisite to show himself among them, that they might not think his success among the Gentiles had estranged him from them; or that the honor God had put on him, made him unmindful of the honor he owed to them. The ministers at Jerusalem were constant residents, Paul a constant itinerant; but he took care to keep up a good correspondence with them, that they might rejoice with him in his going out, and he with them in their tents, and they might both congratulate and wish well to one another's comfort and success. God's people are the salt of the earth, dispersed and scattered; yet it is good to see one another sometimes, that we may confirm mutual love, may the better keep up our spiritual communion, and long the more for that heavenly Jerusalem, in which we hope to be together for ever.

#### IV. His return.

1. He spent some time in Antioch, among his old friends there, ch. 13:1; to refresh himself with the sight and conversation of the ministers there; and a very good refreshment it is to a faithful minister, to have for a while the society of his brethren; for as iron sharpeneth iron, so doth a man the countenance of his friend. Paul's coming to Antioch would bring to remembrance the former days, which would furnish him with matter for fresh thanksgiving.

2. Thence he went over the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, where he had preached the Gospel, and planted churches; which, though very briefly mentioned, ch. 16:6. was yet a glorious work, as appears by Gal. 4:14, 15. where Paul speaks of his preaching of the Gospel to the Galatians at the first, and their receiving him as an angel of God. These country-churches, for such they were, Gal. 1:2. and we read not of any city in Galatia where a church was, Paul visited in order as they lay, watering what he had been instrumental to plant, and strengthening all the disciples. His very coming among them, and owning them, were a great strengthening to them and their ministers. Disciples need to be strengthened, for they are compassed about with infirmity; ministers must do what they can to strengthen them, to strengthen them all, by directing them to Christ, and bringing them to live on Him, whose strength is perfected in their weakness, and who is Himself their Strength and Song.

V. 24—28. The sacred history leaves Paul on his travels, and meets Apollos at Ephesus, to give us some account of him, which was necessary to our understanding some passages in Paul's epistles.

#### I. His character.

1. He was born at Alexandria, in Egypt, of Jewish parents; for there were abundance

of Jews in that city, since the dispersion, as it was foretold, Deut. 28:68. Apollos, some think the same with Apelles, Rom. 16:10.

2. He was a man of excellent good parts, and well fitted for public service, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures of the O.T. in the knowledge of which he was, as a Jew, brought up. (1.) He had a great command of language, was an eloquent man, a prudent man, so some; a learned man, so others; a good historian, an excellent qualification for the ministry: one that could speak well, so it properly signifies; he was famous for speaking pertinently and closely, fully and fluently, on any subject. (2.) He had a great command of scripture-language, which was the eloquence he was remarkable for; he came to Ephesus, being mighty in the Scriptures, so the words are placed; having an excellent faculty of expounding scriptures, he came to Ephesus, a public place, to trade with that talent, for the honor of God and the good of many. He was mighty in the Scriptures; understood their sense and meaning, knew how to apply them, how to reason out of them, and strongly; a convincing, commanding, confirming power went along with all his expositions and applications of the Scripture.

3. He was instructed in the way of the Lord; i. e. had some acquaintance with the doctrine of Christ, some general notions of the Gospel, and the principles of Christianity, that Jesus is the Christ, and that Prophet that should come into the world; the first notice of this would be readily embraced by one so mighty in the Scriptures as Apollos was, and therefore understood the signs of the times. He was instructed, catechised, so the word is, either by his parents or by ministers; he was taught something of Christ, and the way of salvation by Him.

4. Yet he knew only the baptism of John; the preparing of the way of the Lord, by that voice crying in the wilderness, rather than the way of the Lord itself. We cannot but think he had heard of Christ's death and resurrection, but he was not let into the mystery of them, had not had opportunity of conversing with any of the apostles, since the pouring out of the Spirit; or he had himself been baptized only with the baptism of John, but not with the Holy Ghost, as the disciples were at the day of Pentecost.

II. The employment and improvement of his gifts at Ephesus; seeking opportunities of doing and getting good, he found both.

1. Though he had not the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, as the apostles had, he made a very good use of the gifts he had; for the dispensation of the Spirit, whatever the measure of it is, is given to every man to profit withal. And our Savior, by a parable, designed to teach his ministers, that though they had but one talent they must not bury that.

We have seen how Apollos was qualified with a good head and a good tongue; he had a good stock of useful knowledge, and an excellent faculty of communicating it. Let us now see what he had further to re-

the words, "having shaved," &c. to Aquila [so Valck.]: which mode is favored by the construction, and removes all difficulties. We are not, however, with Grot., Hamon., Schl., &c., to understand a vow of Naziritishness, but (as Alb., Heum., and Heinr.) a civil vow, because of deliverance, or some good event.

(21.) *Must by all means, &c.* Because he desired to seize that opportunity of meeting a great number of his countrymen at Jerusalem, to whom he might preach the Gospel, or whom, if already converted, he might further instruct, or might remove the prejudices that were groundlessly imbibed against him.

(22.) *Go up.* The phrase is often used absolutely in the SS. of going up to Jerusalem: Xen. uses the Gr., in the very same sense, of persons going from Greece to the capital of Persia. Bloomf.—Went down to Antioch. [I. e. Antioch in Syria, as the word is generally to be understood when without addition.]

(23.) *Over all the country, &c.* As this would take him up a great deal of time, most commentators, very reasonably, allow 4 years for this journey, including his stay at Ephesus: i. e. from the year 54 to 58. Doddr.—Went over . . . in order. [If Paul went up to Jerusalem at this time, which we are left to infer, for Luke has not expressed it, v. 22. it was his fourth journey thither: and this is generally supposed to have been the 21st year after his conversion. His first journey is men-

tioned, ch. 9:26., his second, ch. 11:30., his third, ch. 15:4., and his fourth, ch. 18:22. above.]

V. 24. Apollos.] Contracted for Apollonios (read in Cod. Cant.): as Artemas for Artemonius, &c.

V. 25—27. It does not appear that Apollos had ever been among the Christians; nor is it known when, and by whom, he received Christian baptism. (27.) *Believed through grace.* [I. e. through the Gospel, says Dr. Hammond, or through the favor of God in vouchsafing them the knowledge of it.] *Whitby.* (9—11. John 1:10—13. Eph. 2:4—10. Tit. 3:4—7.)—The best comment on these words is what we are told elsewhere: "Paul planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." Doddr. (1 Cor. 3:4—9.)

(25.) *Knowing only the baptism of John.* [It is generally supposed he had been in Judea when John was baptizing, and having been baptized by him into the faith of a Messiah shortly to appear, on hearing something more of the Gospel, he believed in Christ, under that character, but had not yet been baptized in the name of Christ, nor received the gifts of the Spirit, which were then often miraculously communicated in that ordinance. If this was indeed the case, as John the Baptist was beheaded more than 20 years before, Apollos could not now be, as is generally supposed, though I think nowhere asserted, a young man; and consequently his condescension in submitting to the instruc-



26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more <sup>z</sup> perfectly.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, <sup>a</sup> helped them much which had believed <sup>b</sup> through grace:

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that publicly*, shewing by <sup>c</sup> the Scriptures that Jesus <sup>d</sup> was Christ.

z He. 6:1. 2 Pe. 1 Co. 3:6. c Jn. 5:39. 3:18. b Ep. 2:8. d or, is the Christ, ver. 5.

commend him as a preacher; and his example is recommended to all such: (1.) He was a lively, affectionate preacher, *ferucut in spirit*; had in him a great deal of divine fire as well as divine light; was burning, as well as shining. He was full of zeal for the glory of God, and the salvation of precious souls. This appeared both in his forwardness to preach, when called to it by *the rulers of the synagogue*, and in his fervency in preaching; he preached as one in earnest, and that had his heart in his work. What a happy composition was here! Many are fervent in spirit, but weak in knowledge, in scripture-knowledge, and far to seek for proper words, and full of improper ones; and, on the other hand, many are *eloquent* enough, and *mighty in the Scriptures*, and learned, and judicious, but they have no life or fervency. Here was a complete man of God, *thoroughly furnished for his work*; both eloquent and fervent, full both of divine knowledge and of divine affections. (2.) He was an industrious, laborious preacher; *he spake and thought diligently*; he took pains, what he delivered was elaborate; and he did not offer that to God, or to the synagogue, that cost him nothing; he first worked it on his own heart, and then labored to impress it on those he preached it to; *he taught diligently, accurately, exactly*; everything he said was well weighed. (3.) He was an evangelical preacher; though he knew only the baptism of John, yet that was the beginning of the Gospel of Christ, and to that he kept close; for he taught not the ceremonial law or Gentile philosophy, but *the things of the Lord*, of the Lord Christ, that tended to make way for Him, and to set Him up. (4.) He was a courageous preacher; *he began to speak boldly in the synagogue*, as one who, having confidence in God, did not fear the face of

man; he spake as one that knew the truth of what he said, and had no doubt of it; the worth of what he said, and was not afraid to suffer for it; *in the synagogue*, where *the Jews* not only were present, but had power, there he preached the things of God, which he knew they were prejudiced against.

2. He there made a good increase of his gifts in private, not so much in study, as in conversation with *Aquila and Priscilla*. (1.) Aquila and Priscilla heard him preach in the synagogue. Though in knowledge he was much inferior to them, yet, having excellent gifts for public service, they encouraged his ministry, by a diligent and constant attendance on it. Thus young ministers, that are hopeful, should be countenanced by grown Christians, for it becomes them to *fulfil all righteousness*. (2.) Finding him defective in his knowledge of Christianity, *they took him to them*, to lodge in the same house with them, and *expounded to him the way of God*, the way of salvation by Jesus Christ, *more perfectly*. They did not take occasion from what they observed of his deficiency, either to despise him themselves, or to disparage him to others; did not call him a young, raw preacher, not fit to come into a pulpit, but considered the disadvantages he had labored under, as knowing only the baptism of John; and having themselves got great knowledge in the truths of the Gospel, by their long and intimate conversation with Paul, they communicated what they knew to him, and gave him a clear, distinct, and methodical account of those things, which, before, he had but confused notions of. [1.] See here an instance of what Christ has promised, that *to him that hath, shall be given*; he that has, and uses what he has, shall have more. He that diligently traded with the talent he had, doubled it quickly. [2.] See an instance of truly Christian charity in Aquila and Priscilla; they did good according to their ability. Aquila, though a man of great knowledge, yet did not undertake to speak in the synagogue, because he had not such gifts for public work as Apollos had; but he furnished Apollos with matter, and then left him to clothe it with acceptable words. Instructing young Christians and young ministers privately in conversation, who mean well, and perform well, as far as they go, is a piece of very good service, both to them and to the church. [3.] See an instance of great humility in Apollos; he was a very bright young man, of great parts and learning, newly come from the university, a popular preacher, and one mightily cried up and followed; and yet, finding that Aquila and Priscilla were judicious, serious Christians, that could speak intelligently and ex-

perimentally of the things of God, though they were but mechanics, poor tent-makers, he was glad to receive instruction from them, to be showed by them his defects and mistakes, and to have his mistakes rectified by them, and his deficiencies made up. Young scholars may gain a great deal by converse with old Christians, as young students in the law may by old practitioners. Apollos, though *he was instructed in the way of the Lord*, did not rest in the knowledge he had attained, nor thought he understood Christianity as well as any man, which proud, conceited young men are apt to do, but was willing to have it *expounded to him more perfectly*. They that know much, should covet to know more, and what they know, to know it better, pressing forward toward perfection. [4.] Here is an instance of a good woman, though not permitted to speak in the church or in the synagogue, yet doing good with the knowledge God had given her, in private converse. Paul will have *the aged women to be teachers of good things*, Titus 2: 3, 4.

III. Here is his preferment to the service of the church of Corinth, which was a larger sphere of usefulness than Ephesus at present was. Here we have,

1. His call. He himself inclined to go, v. 27. and his friends encouraged him, and, he being a stranger there, they gave him letters of recommendation. In this way, among others, the communion of churches is kept up, by the recommending of members and ministers to each other, when ministers, as Apollos here, are disposed to remove.

2. His success. (1.) Believers were greatly edified, and they that had received the Gospel were very much confirmed; *he helped them much, who had believed through grace*. Note, It is through grace that we believe; *it is God's gift*. Those who, through grace, do believe, yet still need help; and it is the business of faithful ministers to help them, much; which, when a divine power goes along with them, they will be able to do. (2.) Unbelievers were greatly mortified, their objections fully answered, the folly and sophistry of their arguments discovered, so that they had nothing to say in defence of the opposition they made to the Gospel, v. 28. *He mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly*, before the people; he did it *earnestly*, and with great vehemence; he took pains to do it; his heart was upon it; he did it effectually, and to universal satisfaction. Now what he aimed to convince them of, was, *that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah promised to the fathers, who should come*, and they were to look for no other. If the Jews were but convinced of this,—that Jesus is Christ, even their own

PRACT. OBS. While the zealous ministers of Christ carefully shun whatever may entangle them in the affairs of this life; they will submit to any hardship or labor, which may be rendered subservient to their usefulness, or remove obstacles out of their way: and to work at a trade, for daily bread, in order to preach the Gospel without charge, differs exceedingly from carrying on lucrative business, in order to grow rich, and live in abundance, in connexion with the office of an evangelical preacher.—The knowledge of anything, by which an honest living can be earned, is a very valuable acquisition: it never can prove injurious to any man; it cannot be taken from him; and it may, on one occasion or other, be peculiarly useful to him.\*—Even among affluent persons, the ministers of Christ are more likely to do good, by showing an entire indifference to all those things which wealth can purchase; than by affecting a style of living, which emulates that of the very persons, from

\* And here the *Ed.* desires heartily to commend the present honorable practice of some students in theology, who contribute to their own support by muscular labor, to general imitation; for while it leads to a moral independence, which enables them more conscientiously to seek, adopt, and promulgate truth, it preserves that health which is generally lost by 7 years of sedentary pursuits, often attended with too much mental and moral excitement. Besides, it is but just: what other profession or class asks eleemosynary support? The pursuits of horticulture, herbiculture, and agriculture, present themselves as peculiarly beneficial. The knowledge thus acquired, may be helpful also to their charge, thus increasing the teacher's moral influence in domestic ministrations. The idea that hand-work is less honorable than head-work is an exploded vulgarism. *Ed.*

tions of these *private Christians* is the more remarkable, and the more amiable. DODDR.

(27.) *Through grace*.] These words may either refer to Apollos or to the people at Corinth.' Dr. A. C. 'Through grace, qualifies helped; so all the best commentators.' BLOOMF.

V. 28. 'It appears from passages in 1 Cor. that several of the Christians there, charmed with the eloquence of Apollos, were ready to set

whose liberality it requires and almost demands support.—The love of Christ is the best bond of friendship; and the communion of the saints sweetens labor, contempt, and even persecution.—Whatever be their motives, such magistrates as take care to prevent, or impartially to punish, those crimes which are injurious to the welfare of the community; and who refuse to use their authority, [by putting down the free discussion of truth,] in persecuting one religious sect at the instance of another, or in imposing doctrines, forms, and modes of worship on men's consciences; certainly best understand and perform the duties of their office. Yet, indifference to all religion, and to the infinitely momentous interests of eternity, is no necessary concomitant of toleration, but rather a disgrace to it; as it shows that rulers, of this description, are actuated merely by indolence and worldly policy, and not by a regard to the rights of conscience, or by a sense of their duty to God: and their toleration or protection of his worshippers, will often be partial and contemptuous, and attended by improper connivance at those who violate the peace of society; as well as a total and systematical neglect of the due improvement of the talents entrusted to them. We should, however, be thankful for security, thus continued to us, in Providence [making every effort and sacrifice necessary to preserve it, and transmit it unimpaired]; and we must not forget to pray for those who seem more to regard the liberties of mankind, than the salvation of their own souls. SCOTT.

him at the head of a party, and to make invidious and foolish comparisons between him and the apostle, who had been their father in Christ, and who, though he might have less volubility of speech, was on the most important accounts far superior to this eloquent and zealous teacher. See 1 Cor. 1:12. 3:4—8, 21, 22. 4:6. Yet this occasioned no breach between Paul and Apollos.' DODDR.



## CHAP. XIX.

6 The Holy Ghost is given by Paul's hands. 9 The Jews blaspheme his doctrine, which is confirmed by miracles. 13 The Jewish exorcists 16 are beaten by the devil. 19 Conjuring books are burnt. 24 Demetrius, for love of gain, raiseth an uproar against Paul, 33 which is appeased by the town clerk.

AND it came to pass, that while Apollos<sup>a</sup> was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus; and finding certain disciples,

2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not<sup>b</sup> so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto<sup>c</sup> John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John<sup>d</sup> verily baptized with the baptism of repentance,<sup>e</sup> saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name<sup>f</sup> of the Lord Jesus.

a 1 Co. 3:5,6. c c. 18:25. f c. 8:16. 1 Co.  
b c. 8:16. 1 Sa. d Mat. 3:11. 1:13.  
3:7. e Jn. 1:15, 27, 30.

law would teach them to hear Him. Ministers' business is to preach Christ, *not themselves*. The way he took to convince them, was, *by the Scriptures*; for the Jews owned the Scriptures to be of divine authority; and it was easy for him, who was *mighty in them*, to show that *Jesus is the Christ*. Note, Ministers must be able not only to preach the truth, but to prove it and defend it, and to convince gainsayers with meekness, and yet with power, instructing those that oppose themselves; and this is real service to the church.

NOTES. CHAP. XIX. V. 1—4. 'We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost?' they must have meant, that they had never been led to expect his miraculous powers, or been informed of anything respecting the extraordinary communication of them to believers, at that time; or about the Gospel being especially 'the ministration of the Spirit.' (John 7:37—39. 2 Cor. 3:7—11.) 'As Apollos had left Jerusalem, and gone to Alexandria, before the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost on the apostles, at the day of Pentecost; so had they also done, and had been travelling into other parts of the world, where the Gospel had not yet been planted.' *Whitby*. This is not improbable: and perhaps, like Apollos, they endeavored to communicate to the Jews in different places what they had learned from John the Baptist, concerning Jesus, the Messiah, 'the Lamb of God,' 'the Son of God,' and 'the Bridegroom' of the church; and, having just before arrived at Ephesus, they had not become acquainted with Aquila and Priscilla. But hearing of Paul, it is probable they introduced themselves to him, as persons who believed in Jesus as the promised Messiah: and, perhaps, being regarded as teachers of this doctrine, the apostle might suppose that they had received the Holy Spirit, at the day of Pentecost, or by the laying on of the hands of the apostles; till their answer showed that they had very imperfect views of the Christian doctrine. *Scott*.

(1, 2.) *Upper*.] 'I. e. inland, to wit, Galatia and Phrygia; so called in reference to the maritime situation of Ephesus, which was *Katō*, below.' *Kuin*. *Certain disciples*.] 'Pious Jews, who having waited for the kingdom of God, and being many years before baptized by John, or some of his disciples, had, on receiving some evidences of Christianity, believed in Jesus; but... had not enjoyed an opportunity, before, of being instructed in anything relating to the Holy Spirit, more than might be learned from the O. T.' *Doddr*. *Not so much as heard, &c.*] 'They could not mean they had not heard of the Holy Spirit; for John, in his baptism, announced Christ as about to baptize with the Holy Ghost, Mat. 3:11., but they simply meant, that they had not heard that this Spirit in his gifts had been given to, or received by any one.' *Dr. A. C.* 'Paul, hearing these were separatists, probably, and suspecting they were John's disciples, went to give them more correct notions, and seems to have said more than is recorded, and *Kuin*. is persuaded he appealed to Joel 3:1. That he had asked them if they were baptized, may be collected from v. 3. [Luke often leaves out minor circumstances in a narrative.] And when they answered they had been, he, to know if they were votaries of the same Messiah with himself, further asked, "have ye experienced the effects of the Holy Spirit?" John and his disciples baptized none but Jews, and as these were so, the Heb. phrase *ruch hqdsh* [Holy Spirit] could not but be familiar to them; and by this they believed the prophets were inspired. See Ez. 11:5. These Ephesian Jews then seem to have meant, that they had never heard the Messiah was come, and who He was; that they had not known that the period spoken of by Joel 3:1 (note, Acts 2:17), had arrived, when the Spirit was to be poured out upon all men, still less had they been imbued with it. *Kuin*.' *Bloomf*.

CHAP. XIX. We left Paul in his circuit visiting the churches, *ch. 18: 23*. but we have not forgotten, nor has he, his promise to his friends at Ephesus, to return to them, and make some stay there; now this *ch.* shows us his performance of that promise, his coming to Ephesus, and his continuance there two years.

V. 1—7. To Ephesus, that city of great note, *Paul came to preach the Gospel, while Apollos was at Corinth, v. 1.* and grudging not that Apollos entered into his labors there, though there were those that made him the head of a party against Paul, 1 Cor. 1:12. yet Paul had no jealousy of him, nor any way disliked the affection the people had for him. He passed through the upper coasts, Pontus and Bithynia, that lay N. At his first coming, he met with some disciples there, who professed faith in Christ as the true Messiah, but were much of the standing Apollos was of when he came to Ephesus, *ch. 18: 25*. Observe,

1. How Paul catechised them. 1. They did believe in the Son of God; but Paul inquires, whether they believed in the Spirit, whose operations on the minds of men, for conviction, conversion, and comfort, were revealed some time after the doctrine of Jesus being the Christ. That was not all; extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were conferred on the apostles and others presently after Christ's ascension, which was frequently repeated on occasion; had they participated of these gifts? We are not now to expect any such extraordinary gifts as they had then. The canon of the N. T. being long since completed and ratified, we depend on that as the most sure Word of prophecy. But graces of the Spirit are given to all believers, which are as earnest to them, 2 Cor. 1:22. 5:5. Eph. 1:13. Luke 11:13. Now it concerns us all who profess the Christian faith, seriously to inquire, whether we have received the Holy Ghost or not. The tree will be known by its fruits. Do we bring forth the fruits of the Spirit? Are we led

by the Spirit? Do we walk in the Spirit? Are we under the government of the Spirit?

2. They owned their ignorance in this matter; that there is a promise of the Holy Ghost we know from the O. T., and that that promise will be fulfilled in its season, we doubt not; but we have not heard whether the Holy Ghost be indeed yet given as a Spirit of prophecy. They knew, as *Dr. Lightfoot* observes, that, according to the tradition of their nation, after the death of Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the Holy Ghost departed from Israel, and went up; and they professed they had never heard of his return. They spake as if they expected it, and wondered they did not hear of it, and were ready to welcome the notice of it. The gospel-light shone more and more, gradually; not only clearer and clearer, in the discovery of truths not before heard of, but further and further, in the discovery of them to persons that had not before heard of them.

3. Paul inquired, how they came to be baptized, if they knew nothing of the Holy Ghost; for if they were baptized by any of Christ's ministers, they were instructed concerning the Holy Ghost, and were baptized in his name. 'Surely your baptism was a nullity, if you know nothing of the Holy Ghost. Ignorance of the Holy Ghost, is as inconsistent with a sincere profession of Christianity, as ignorance of Christ is.' Applying it to ourselves, those are baptized to no purpose, that do not receive and submit to the Holy Ghost. Let us often consider, *unto what we were baptized*, that we may live up to our baptism.

4. They own, they were baptized unto John's baptism; i. e. as I take it, in the name of John, not by John himself, but by some weak, well-meaning disciple of his, that ignorantly kept up his name, as the head of a party, retaining the spirit and notion of those disciples of his that were jealous of the growth of Christ's interest, and complained to him of it, John 3:26. Some of these, not thinking that the kingdom of

(3, 4.) *Unto*.] 'Eis: Some, as *Kuin*. take the *eis* to denote the final cause: q. d. "To what purpose, then, were ye baptized? what doctrine did ye profess on baptism?" And they determine the answer to be, "Namely, that we should profess the doctrine which John announced, to which we were bound by his baptism." And thus "the baptism of John" will signify *John's doctrine and baptism*. This mode of interpretation, however, seems to need confirmation. The "baptism of repentance," (5) signifies the baptism by which those who receive it are bound to reformation of life. See on Mark 1:4.' *Bloomf*.

V. 5, 6. Several learned critics, of different sentiments concerning baptism, have argued, that these are the words of Paul, showing the disciples, that when John baptized those who heard his doctrine, he virtually baptized them in the name of Jesus; and not the words of the historian, relating to the baptism of these persons, subsequent to the apostle's instruction of them. Some of those, who first contended for this interpretation, did it out of zeal against such as they called *Rebaptizers*, lest they should adduce this example in support of their practice. Yet, by maintaining the baptism of John, and the baptism of Christ, to be entirely the same, they have furnished their opposers with a far more plausible argument, than that which they wanted to wrest from them. But, however that may be, I cannot think, that any impartial man, who never heard of these controversies, would, either from reading the original, or our version, put this construction on the words. If John could, in any sense, be said to 'baptize his disciples in the name of the Lord Jesus;' Jesus himself must have been baptized virtually in his own name. John 3:22—24. Even Paul's question, 'Unto what then were ye baptized?' implies a distinction between different kinds of baptism; and denotes, that, while he understood they had been baptized, he also concluded that they had not received Christian baptism, having never heard of the Holy Spirit, in whose name Christians were baptized. Mat. 28:19, 20, v. 19.—'This is visible even in the words of Paul here: John said to those that came to his baptism (4), not that they *did*, but that "they should, believe in Him that was coming after him;" now they were not to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, till they did actually believe in Him, which they who had received John's baptism were so far from doing, that they "were musing whether John himself were not the Christ." *Whitby*. After Christ's ascension, no inquiry was made, that we read of, whether the converts had been baptized by John, or not: and if but one of the 3000, who were baptized on the day of Pentecost, had been John's disciple, (and probably numbers were such) the baptism of John, and that of Jesus, must have been distinct ordinances. (2:41.) The difference between that introductory institution to the Christian dispensation, and the initiatory external seal of that dispensation, has been already considered, Mat. 3:5, 6.—Some have indeed said, that if John's baptism and Christ's were different, our Lord had no communion with the N. T. church in baptism, as He had with the O. T. church in circumcision. But 'He was made under the law,' to fulfil its righteousness, as our Surety; and must, therefore, both on that account, and as our example, obey every command, and attend on



6 And when Paul had laid <sup>g</sup> his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and <sup>h</sup> they spake with tongues, and <sup>i</sup> prophesied.

7 And all the men were about twelve.

8 ¶ And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, <sup>j</sup> disputing, and <sup>k</sup> persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

9 But when divers were <sup>l</sup> hardened, and believed not, but spake evil <sup>m</sup> of that <sup>n</sup> way before the multitude, he <sup>o</sup> departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

g c. 8:17. k c. 28:23. 2:2. Jude 10.  
h c. 2:4. 10:46. l Ru. 11:7. He. n ver. 23.  
i 1 Co. 14:1, &c. 3:13. o 1 Ti. 6:5.  
j c. 18:19. m 2 Ti. 1:15. 2 Pe.

heaven, which John spake of as at hand, was so very near as it proved, rested in what they had, and thought they could not do better than to persuade others to do so too; and so, ignorantly, in a blind zeal for John's doctrine, they baptized here and there one in John's name, or, as it is here expressed, *unto John's baptism*, looking no further themselves, nor directing those that they baptized any further.

5. Paul explains to them the true intent and meaning of John's baptism, as principally referring to Jesus Christ, and so rectifies the mistake. He owns John's baptism was a very good thing, as far as it went; *John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance*. But John's baptism had a further reference, and he never designed that those he baptized should rest there, but told them, that they should believe on Him who should *come after him*, i. e. on Christ Jesus; that his baptism of repentance was designed only to *prepare the way of the Lord*, and to dispose them to receive and entertain Christ, whom he left them big with expectations of; nay, whom he directed them to; *Behold the Lamb of God*.

6. When they were thus showed the error

they were led into, they thankfully accepted the discovery, and *were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*, v. 5. As for Apollos, of whom it was said, ch. 18:25. that he *knew the baptism of John*, that he rightly understood the meaning of it when he was baptized with it, though he knew that *only*; yet, when he *understood the way of God more perfectly*, he was not again baptized, any more than Christ's first disciples that had been baptized with John's baptism, and knew it referred to the Messiah at the door, and with an eye to that, submitted to it, were baptized again. But to these here, who received it only with an eye to John, and looked no further, as if he were their savior, it was such a fundamental error as was as fatal to it, as it would have been for any to be baptized in the name of Paul, 1 Cor. 1:13. therefore when they came to understand themselves better, they desired to be *baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*, and were so. Not by Paul himself, as we have reason to think, but by some of those who attended him. It does not therefore follow hence, that there was not an agreement between John's baptism and Christ's; or that they were not for substance the same; much less does it follow that those who have been once baptized *in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, which is the appointed form of Christ's baptism, may be again baptized in the same name; for those that were here baptized *in the name of the Lord Jesus*, had never been so baptized before.

II. Paul solemnly *prayed to God* to give them the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, signified by his *laying his hands on them*, which was a gesture used in blessing, by the patriarchs, especially in conveying the great trust of the promise, as Gen. 48:14. The Spirit being the great promise of the N. T. the apostles conveyed it by the imposition of hands, Is. 44:3. The prayer was granted; *The Holy Ghost came on them*, in a surprising, overpowering manner, and *they spake with tongues and prophesied*, as the apostles did, and the first Gentile converts, ch. 10:44. This was intended to introduce the Gospel at Ephesus, [called by *Jos. the foremost city in Asia*, i. e. Asia proper, v. 10.,] and to awaken in the minds of men an expectation of some great things from it;

and some think it was further designed to qualify these twelve men for the work of the ministry, and that they were the elders of Ephesus, to whom Paul committed the care and conduct of that church. They had the Spirit of prophecy, that they might understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God themselves, and the gift of tongues, that they might *preach them to every nation and language*. Oh! what a wonderful change was here made on a sudden in these men; they that but just now *had not so much as heard that there was any Holy Ghost*, are now themselves *filled with the Holy Ghost*; for the Spirit, like *the wind, blows where and when He listeth*.

V. 8—12. Paul is here very busy at Ephesus to do good.

I. He begins, as usual, with the Jews.

1. He preached to them in their synagogue, v. 8. as Christ used to do. Thus he would bear his testimony to public worship on sabbath-days. Where there were no Christian assemblies yet formed, he frequented the Jewish assemblies, while the Jews were not as yet wholly cast off. Paul went into the synagogue, because there he had them together, and had them, it might be hoped, in a good frame.

2. What he preached to them; *the things concerning the kingdom of God* among men, the great things which concerned God's dominion over all men, and favor to them, and men's subjection to God, and happiness in God. Or, more particularly, *the things concerning the kingdom of the Messiah*, which the Jews were in expectation of, and promised themselves great matters from; he opened the Scriptures which spake of this, gave them a right notion of this kingdom, and showed them their mistakes about it.

3. How he preached to them. (1.) Argumentatively; he disputed; gave reasons, scripture-reasons; and answered objections. He preached *dialogue-wise*; he put questions to them, and received their answers; gave them leave to put questions to him, and answered them. (2.) Affectionately; he persuaded; he used not only logical arguments, but rhetorical motives; showing them, that the things he preached concerning the kingdom of God, were things *concerning themselves*, which they were nearly concerned in,

every institution of God, then in force: whereas, there was not the same reason for his joining in the ordinances of the Gospel, which He appointed merely as our Lord and King. Doubtless He ate the passover with his disciples, yet it does not appear that He partook of the eucharist: *Mat. 26:26—29. Luke 22:14—18*. it is not probable that He did; neither can it be supposed, that He was 'baptized into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' which is essential to Christian baptism. I apprehend therefore, that these persons, having been further instructed by Paul, were admitted into the church by baptism, previously to the communication of the Holy Spirit to them, by the imposition of the apostle's hands, in his miraculous powers and gifts. (8:14—17. 10:44—48.)

SCOTT.

(5.) *When they heard this.* 'I think it evident, beyond all dispute, that the baptism of John and of Christ were in their own nature quite different, and that it is plain in fact, that, when persons were converted to Christianity, they were baptized of course, without inquiring whether they had or had not, received the baptism of John, which we know vast numbers did, *Mat. 3:5, 6*, who probably afterwards received Christian baptism. Comp. *Acts 2:38—41. 4:4, 6:7.* Doddr. 'As there is no evidence in the N. T. of persons being rebaptized, unless this be one, many criticisms have been hazarded, to prove that these persons were not rebaptized. I see no need of this. To be a Christian, a man must be baptized in the Christian faith; these persons had not been baptized into that faith, and therefore were not Christians; they felt this, and were immediately baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. This is a plain case; but let one instance be produced of a person being rebaptized, who had before been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, or even in the name of Jesus alone. In my view, it is an awful thing to iterate baptism, when it has been before "essentially performed;" I mean administered by sprinkling, washing, or plunging, by or in water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit, [that] being invoked at the time; and it matters not at what period of his life a person has had it.' Dr. A. C. See *Kuin*. against Anabaptists, whose note is omitted for want of room: his arguments are mostly contained in what is here given, from *Henry, Scott, &c.* See *Bl. Ed.* 'Those who were baptized by John, were bound to the *metanoia* [repentance and change] to which he exhorted them, and were prepared for the kingdom of the Messiah that was to come. The apostles, while Jesus was on earth, baptized those who applied for baptism; (*Jn. 3:5*, note, and *28. 4:1, 2.*) thus binding them to Jesus, and his doctrine, and instituting the new economy, soon to be established by the Messiah. So *Jn. 4:1*. "He makes disciples and baptizes," comp. with *v. 2*. That Jesus was the Messiah the apostles were not at that time assured, (see on *Mat. 16:20. 10:7.*) and so they did not baptize them to Jesus the

Messiah. Those who had undergone John's baptism, and had been taught by Jesus Himself, and admitted his doctrine, were not rebaptized by the apostles. See *Jn. 3:26*. Nor were the apostles again baptized by Jesus; for they were nursed up under his instruction, and in due time taught his Messiahship, and were baptized with the Holy Spirit. But when, after Christ's departure to heaven, a church had, by his direction, been established by the apostles, whose foundation He Himself had laid, and into which they who should account Jesus as the Messiah, and profess his doctrine, were to be received; then also those who had been baptized by John, or after his death, by his disciples, and who had not enrolled themselves in the number of Jesus' followers, while He was on earth, nor accounted Him as Messiah (see *Acts 2:37*, and *41.*): were by the apostles again baptized; as were by Paul these 12 here. At *Acts 2*. it is not indeed expressly said, that any of John's disciples were among the baptized, but from the silence of Luke nothing can be proved. Of Apollos (*Acts 18.*) it is nowhere said he was not rebaptized, but (and so *Ernesti*) the thing is passed by, as well known and usual.'

KUIN.

(6.) *Spake, &c.* 'I can by no means accede to the harsh interpretations of these words propounded by the foreign commentators. The plain and simple sense is, "they spake with other, and to them, strange and foreign tongues, and sustained the character of prophets and inspired teachers." See *Ecumenius* and *Chrysostom.*'

BLOOMF.

V. 8—12. The handkerchiefs and aprons (probably such as both men and women, at their work, wore to save their other clothes) could not convey any virtue from the apostle, but were mere tokens of the Lord's omnipotent operation, as the waving of the rod of Moses had been. 'These cures wrought on absent persons, some of them a considerable distance from Ephesus, might conduce greatly to the success of the Gospel among those, whose faces Paul himself had not seen.' Doddr. 'Asia, throughout the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of Paul, does not mean the whole of Asia Minor, or Anatolia, nor even the whole of the proconsular Asia, but a district in the anterior part of that country, called Lydian Asia, divided from the rest, much as Portugal is from Spain, and of which district Ephesus was the capital.' *Paley*.—[The most extensive and flourishing district W. of Mt. Taurus and the river Halys, was dignified by the Romans with the exclusive title of Asia. See note, end of Acts.] (10.) *Two years.* The apostle, in his address to the elders of Ephesus, mentions 3 years, *20:31*. and most commentators date the beginning of these 3 years from his first coming to Ephesus. (*18:19—21.*) Nine months, however, seem far too short a time for his voyage and journey to Jerusalem, and his circuit, by Antioch, and through Galatia and Phrygia, and the upper regions of Asia. The circuit itself could not be made, without travelling perhaps 1000 miles, probably on



10 And this continued by the space <sup>p</sup> of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia <sup>a</sup> heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

11 And God wrought special <sup>r</sup> miracles by the hands of Paul:

12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick <sup>s</sup> handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

13 ¶ Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them <sup>t</sup> to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure <sup>u</sup> you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth.

p c. 50:31. r Ma. 16:20. t Ma. 9:38. Lu. 9:49.  
q c. 20:18. s c. 5:15. u Jos. 6:26.

and therefore ought to *concern themselves about*, 2 Cor. 5:11. Paul was a moving preacher, master of the art of persuasion. (3.) Undauntedly, and with a holy resolution; boldly, as one that had not the least doubt of the things he spake of, nor the least distrust of Him he spake from, or the least dread of them he spake to.

4. How long he preached to them; *for the space of three months*, a competent time for them to consider; in that time those among them that belonged to the election of grace were called in, and the rest were left inexcusable. Thus long Paul preached the Gospel *with much contention*, 1 Thess. 2:2. *yet he did not fail, nor was discouraged.*

5. His success. (1.) Some were persuaded to believe in Christ; intimated, some think, in the word *persuading*; he prevailed with them. (2.) Divers continued in infidelity, and were confirmed in their prejudices against Christianity. When Paul called on them before, and preached only some general things to them, they courted his stay among them, *ch. 18:20*. but now that he settled among them, and his word came more closely to their consciences, they were soon weary of him. They had an invincible aversion to the Gospel, were resolved they would not believe, and did their utmost to raise and keep up in others an aversion to it, *spake evil of that way before the multitude*, to prejudice them against it. Though they could not show any manner of evil in it, yet they said all manner of evil concerning it.

II. When he had carried the matter as far as it would go in the synagogue, and found that their opposition grew more obstinate, he left the synagogue; they hated to be reformed, hated to be instructed, and therefore *he departed from them*. Here we are sure there was a *separation*, and no *schism*; for there was a just cause for it, and a clear call to it. Now observe,

1. When Paul departed from the Jews, he took the disciples with him, and *separated them, to save them from that untoward generation*; according to the charge Peter gave to his new converts, *ch. 2:40*. he separated them which believed, to be the foundation of a

Christian church, now that there were a competent number to be incorporated, that others might attend with them on the preaching of the Gospel, and might, on their believing, be added to them.

2. When Paul separated from the synagogue, he set up a meeting of his own, *in the school of one Tyrannus*; he left the synagogue, that he might go on with more freedom; and he had by this separation a double advantage, (1.) Now his opportunities were more frequent. In the synagogue, he could only preach every sabbath-day, *ch. 13:42*. but now he set up a lecture *every day*, and those whose business would not permit them to come one day, might come another day; (2.) Now they were more open. To the synagogue of the Jews none might come, or could come, but Jews or proselytes; Gentiles were excluded; but when he set up a meeting in the school of Tyrannus, both Jews and Greeks attended his ministry, *v. 10*. Thus, as he describes his gate of opportunity at Ephesus, 1 Cor. 16:8, 9. *a wide door*, and an *effectual* was *opened to him*, though *there were many adversaries*. Some think this school of Tyrannus was a divinity-school of the Jews; if so, it shows that though Paul left the synagogue, he still kept as near it as he could, as he had done, *ch. 18:7*. But others think it was a philosophy-school of the Gentiles, belonging to one Tyrannus, or a retiring place, for so the word sometimes signifies, belonging to a principal man or governor of the city; some convenient place it was, which Paul and the disciples had the use of, either for love or money.

3. Here he continued his labors for 2 years, from the end of the 3 months he spent in the synagogue, *v. 8*. and after they were ended, he continued for some time in the country about, preaching, therefore he might justly reckon it in all 3 years, as he does, *ch. 20:31*.

4. The Gospel hereby spread far and near, *v. 10*; not only all that dwelt in Ephesus, but all that dwelt in that large province called *Asia*, which Ephesus was the head city of; *Asia the Less*, so called. There was great resort to Ephesus from all parts of the country, for law, traffic, religion, or education; which gave Paul opportunity of sending the Gospel to all that country: all heard the *Word of the Lord Jesus*. The Gospel is Christ's Word, a word concerning Christ. This they heard, or at least heard of it; some of all sects, some out of all parts, both in city and country; and by them it was communicated to others; so they all *heard the Word of the Lord Jesus*, or might have heard it. Probably, Paul sometimes made excursions himself into the country, to preach the Gospel, or sent his assistants, and thus the Word of the Lord was *heard throughout that region*.

III. God confirmed Paul's doctrine by miracles, which awakened people's inquiries after it, fixed their affection to it, and engaged their belief of it, *v. 11, 12*. I wonder we have not read of any miracle wrought by Paul, since the casting of the evil spirit out of the damsel at Philippi; it is certain he wrought many at Corinth, though Luke has

recorded none, for he tells them, 2 Cor. 12:12. the signs of his apostleship were among them, *in wonders and mighty deeds*.

But here at Ephesus they were *special* [extraordinary] *miracles*, either such things were done, as could by no means be ascribed to *second causes*; or, as all miracles are of this character, these were even uncommon miracles, such miracles as had not been wrought by the hands of any other of the apostles. As God's instrument, he not only cured the sick that were brought to him, or that he was brought to; but they got Paul's handkerchiefs, or the aprons, (so some,) he wore when he worked at his trade, and the applying of them to the sick, cured them immediately. Or, they brought the sick people's handkerchiefs, or their girdles, or caps, or head-dresses, and laid them for a while to Paul's body, and then took them to the sick. The former is more probable. Now was fulfilled that word of Christ to his disciples, *Greater works than these shall ye do*. We read of one that was cured by the touch of Christ's garment, when it was on Him; but here were people cured by Paul's garments when taken from him. Christ gave his apostles power *against unclean spirits* and *all manner of sickness*, Mat. 10:1. Accordingly those to whom Paul sent relief, had it in both these cases; *the diseases departed from them*, and *the evil spirits went out of them*; both significant of the great design and blessed effect of the Gospel, to heal spiritual diseases, and to free souls from Satan.

V. 13—20. To show how many ways Christ triumphed over Satan, we have here two remarkable instances of it, in those that were not only violently possessed by him, but voluntarily devoted to him.

I. The confusion of some of Satan's servants, *vagabond Jews*, that were *exorcists*, who used Christ's name profanely, in their diabolical enchantments. Observe,

1. Their general character; they were of the Jewish nation and religion, but *vagabonds*; went about from town to town, to get money by conjuring; to tell people their fortunes, and pretended by spells and charms to cure diseases, and bring people to themselves; that were melancholy or distracted. They called themselves *exorcists*, because in doing their tricks they used forms of adjuration, by such and such commanding names. The superstitious Jews, to put a reputation on these magic arts, wickedly attributed the invention of them to Solomon. Josephus, *Antiq. lib. 8. cap. 2*. And Christ seems to refer to this, Mat. 12:27. *By whom do your children cast them out?*

2. At Ephesus were some, *seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests*, *v. 14*. head of one of the 24 courses of priests. One would think the temple would find both employment and encouragement enough for the sons of a chief priest, if they had been twice as many. But, probably, it was a vain, rambling, rakish humor that took them all to turn mountebanks, and stroll all the world over to cure mad folks.

3. Their profaneness; *they took upon them, to call over evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus*; not as those who venerated Christ, and confided in Him, as we read of some who

foot, besides the voyage from Ephesus to Cesarea; and the stay in each place, in order to answer the intended purposes, must have been considerable. Neither does it appear, how he could say, 'Remember, that by the space of 3 years, I ceased not to warn every one of you night and day with tears,' if he had been absent from them 9 months of the time. It is therefore most natural to conclude, that after he had preached 2 years in the school of Tyrannus, he continued at Ephesus some months longer, before he went into Macedonia. Scott.

(9.) *Departed... separated.* [Apostas...aphōrise: the words evidently denote *separating from church communion*. [Tyrannus: tyrant, or king.] A not very unfrequent name, we are told, like *King* among us. Commentators are not quite agreed what sort of a school this Tyrannus taught. Lightf., Vitr., Hamm., Doddr., and Schoettg. think it was a kind of *Beth Midrasch*, or Divinity Hall, designed for reading theological lectures. Others, as Pearce, Ros., and Kuin. think it was a philosophical-lecture-room, (for the Gr., see Wetst., is applied to them as well as to boys' schools,) and that Tyrannus was a rhetorician or sophist. If the former conjecture be true, he was probably a converted Jew; [Dr.

A. C. says Jews, besides the rabbins, kept schools;] if the latter, a converted Gentile.

(10.) *All, &c.* 'Infinite was the number of persons who resorted to this capital and *emporium* of Asia Minor, on all kinds of business, religious, political, and commercial.' Grot.

(12.) *Handkerchiefs.* [Soudaria: sweat-wipers. Aprons.] *Simikinthia*: lit. *half girdles*, pinafores, aprons (contr. for *afore onc*). See Bl. Ed.

V. 13—20. *Num. 22:5*. It was common in those days for persons to exorcise such as were possessed with evil spirits, especially among the Jews; and, whatever methods they employed, they seem to have, in one way or other, expressed a dependence on God, and at some times, at least, to have succeeded. *Mat. 12:27, 28*. *Jesus I know, and Paul I know, &c.* The words are ambiguous; and might imply a confederacy with Jesus and Paul, in consequence of which the evil spirit would have gone out, had Paul thus spoken to him: and Satan might intend to bring the Gospel into suspicion by the insinuation. *Mat. 12:22—30*. Yet they may signify, that the evil spirit knew the power and authority of Jesus, and the efficacy of the apostle's faith, to engage that power by his word;



14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped upon them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

19 Many of them also which used curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

20 So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed.

[Practical Observations.]

21 ¶ After these things were

v Lu. 8:29. c. 2:43. 5:5,11. y c. 12:24.  
w Lu. 1:65. x Mat. 3:6. Ro. 10:10. z Ga. 2:1.

cast out devils in Christ's name, and yet did not follow with his disciples, Luke 9:49. whom He would not have to be discouraged; but as those who were willing to try all methods to carry on their wicked trade, and it should seem, had this design; if the evil spirits should yield to an adjuration in the name of Jesus, by those that did not believe in Him, they would say, it was no confirmation of his doctrine to those that did; for it was all one, whether they believed it or no. If they should not yield to it, they would say, the name of Christ was not so powerful as the other names they used, which the devils had often by collusion yielded to. They said, *We adjure you by Jesus*, (not, whom we believe in, or depend on, or have any authority from, but) *whom Paul preaches*; as if they had said, 'We will try what that name will do.' Exorcists in the Romish church,\* who pretend to cast the devil out of melancholy people, by spells and charms which they understand not, and which, not having any divine warrant, cannot be used

\* And all other churches.

Ed.

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—20. Alas! many seem not to have 'heard, that there is a Holy Ghost!' and many regard all that is spoken concerning his graces and consolations, to be enthusiasm and delusion!—Surely such books as are indecent and licentious, scornfully infidel, or heretical in essential matters, would be condemned to the flames, if 'the Word of God grew mightily and prevailed' among us; not indeed by the sentence of the inquisitor, but by the voluntary choice of the possessors. Were all such books destroyed in this [laud], their price would be found immensely more than '50,000 pieces of silver!' Will not then these

so that if Paul had commanded, he must have yielded. But he knew not them, and would not obey their command. A man must himself be 'possessed with a spirit' of incredulity, who can doubt of this having been a real possession, and maintain that this event was merely the effect of insanity. 16:16—18. Mat. 8:23, 29. (19.) *The price.*] Some reckon it to have been almost £7000, supposing shekels to be meant. I think it evident, that these books did not merely contain an account of the tricks, by which jugglers of any description imposed on men's senses; for in that case, the persons concerned might have used the books, to detect the artifices of such impostors. They contained the rules and forms of those abominable incantations, by which an intercourse with evil spirits has continually been attempted, or conducted. These being in reality the regulations of the worship of the devil, the devised means of worshipping him, and of seeking help and information from him, ought by all means to be destroyed, and forgotten, if possible: though the attempt to revive these practices, by publishing books on such subjects, forms one of the bad effects which attend on the manifold advantages of the liberty of the press in this Christian age and nation. *Exorcists.*] 'An exorcist is one, who impels another, as in the name of God, to the confession of the truth, or to any action. *I adjure*, is used for commanding anything, interposing the authority of God. Mark 5:7. 1 Thess. 5:27.'—Leigh.

SCOTT.

(13.) *Exorcists.*] 'The Hebrews called them *bily shm*, [lords of the

in faith, are the followers of these vagabond Jews.

4. The confusion they were put to; let them not be deceived, God is not mocked, nor shall the glorious name of Jesus be prostituted to such a vile purpose as this; *what communion hath Christ with Belial?* (1.) The evil spirit gave them a sharp reply, v. 15. 'I know Jesus has conquered principalities and powers, and Paul has authority in his name to cast out devils; but what power have you to command us in his name, or who gave you any such power, seeing you hate his instructions?' Ps. 50:16, 17. This was extorted out of the mouth of the evil spirit by the power of God, to gain honor to the Gospel, and to put those to shame, that made an ill use of Christ's name. (2.) The man in whom the evil spirit was, gave them a warm reception, *leaped upon them*, in the height of his frenzy and rage, *overcame them*, and all their enchantments, *prevailed against them*, and was every way too hard for them; so that they fled out of the house, not only naked, their clothes pulled off their backs, but wounded. This is written for a warning to all those who name the name of Christ, but do not depart from iniquity. The same enemy that overcomes them with his temptations, will overcome them with his terrors; and their adjuring him in Christ's name to let them alone, will be no security. If we resist the devil, by a true and lively faith in Christ, he will flee from us; but if we think to resist him by the bare using of Christ's name, or any part of his Word, as a spell or charm, he will prevail against us.

5. The general notice taken of this, and the good impression it made on many, v. 17. (1.) Men were terrified; *fear fell on them all.*—In this instance, they saw the malice of the devil, whom they served, and the power of Christ, whom they opposed; and both were awful considerations. (2.) God was glorified; *the name of the Lord Jesus*, by which his faithful servants cast out devils, and cured diseases, without any resistance, *was the more magnified*; for now it appeared to be a name above every name.

II. Here is the conversion of others of Satan's servants, and the evidences of their conversion.

1. Those that had been guilty of wicked practices, confessed them, v. 18.; what ill lives they had led, and what a great deal of secret wickedness their own consciences charged them with, which the world knew not of; secret frauds and secret filthinesses; *they showed their deeds*; took shame to themselves, and gave glory to God, and warning to others; confessions not extorted, but vol-

untary, to ease their consciences, which the late miracles had struck a terror upon. Where there is true contrition for sin, there will be an ingenuous confession of sin to God in every prayer, and to man whom we have offended, when the case requires it.

2. Those that had conversed with wicked books, burnt them, v. 19. *Many also of them which used curious arts, impertinent things, busy bodies*, so the word is used, 2 Thess. 3:11. 1 Tim. 5:13. that traded in the study of magic and divination; in books of judicial astrology, casting of nativities, telling of fortunes, raising and laying of spirits, interpreting of dreams, predicting future events, and the like; to which some think, are to be added *plays, romances, love-books, and unchaste and immodest poems*. Stres. These, having their consciences more awakened than ever, to see the evil of those practices which these books instructed them in, *brought their books together, and burned them before all men*. Ephesus was notorious for the use of these curious arts; hence spells and charms were called *Literæ Ephesiæ*. Here people furnished themselves with all those sorts of books, and, probably, had tutors to instruct them in those black arts. It was therefore much for the honor of Christ and his Gospel, to have such a noble testimony borne against those curious arts, in a place where they were so much in vogue. In a holy indignation at the sins they had been guilty of, Is. 2:20.; and being steadfastly resolved never to use them, they burnt them. Those that truly repent of sin, will keep themselves as far as possible from the occasions of it. Thus, too, they prevented their doing mischief to others. Thus they showed a contempt of the *wealth of this world*; for the price of the books was found to be 50,000 pieces of silver; which some compute to be £1500 of our money; probably the books were scarce, perhaps prohibited, and therefore dear; or had cost so much; yet, being the *devil's books*, they did not think that would justify them in being so wicked as to sell them again. They joined together in making this bonfire, in joy [as it were] of their conversion, and made it *before all men*, that Christ and his grace in them might be the more magnified, and all about them the more edified.

III. A general account of the progress and success of the Gospel in and about Ephesus, v. 20. It is a blessed sight to see the Word of God thus growing and prevailing mightily, by the addition of many to the church, and by the advancement of those in knowledge and grace.

V. 21—41. Paul is here brought into

Ephesian converts rise up in judgment against such professors of the Gospel, especially, as trade in pernicious books and pamphlets; and who encourage such publications, for lucre's sake, as they must know are likely to do great mischief in the world? And is it not a proof, that the Word of God declines in its influence and authority, when books pretending to teach, and persons professing to exercise, forbidden and magical arts, are publicly advertised among us? But let no friend of the Gospel countenance any pretensions of this kind; whether they be human impositions, or diabolical delusions. SCOTT.

*name*,] i. e. persons who, using the sacred tetragrammaton, [four letters, viz. *yhwj*,] (which the Jews called, by way of eminence, *shm*, [the name,]) thought they could perform various kinds of incantation. BL.

(17.) *Name of the Lord Jesus, &c.*] 'The primitive fathers speak strong and decisive words concerning the power of this name: and how demons were tormented and expelled by it, not only from individuals, but from the temples themselves. Exorcists formed a distinct class in the church.' DR. A. CLARKE.

(18, 19.) *That believed.*] 'Rather, of the believers, i. e. Christians, repenting now of their disobedience to Paul's admonitions against the prevalent vice at Ephesus, seeing the ill success of the magic arts, brought out and burnt what books they had. So *Kuin*. 50,000 pieces of silver.] Iit 50,000 of silver. Drusus, Grot., &c. take it to mean the silver shekel, equal to four attic drachms. But (as others observe) it is not probable, that at Ephesus the reckoning should have been by shekels, unless, indeed, these were foreign Jews. The objection to reckoning them *minæ*, is the largeness of the sum, but [a set of] such books was very numerous. See *Suet.*, Aug. 31. However, if I rightly recollect, the Gr. [tr. silver] is never *thus* used, except for *drachms*, but we are not certain if *attic* drachms were used at Ephesus.' [If so, at 9d. (so *Prid.*) the value was £1875. *Doddr.*] BLOOMF.

V. 21, 22. Thus he laid the plan of his voyages and journeys, backward and forward, of some thousands of miles, as if it had been no more



ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

22 So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.

23 And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;

25 Whom he called together, with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.

a Ro. 15:23,28. 4:20. d c. 16:16,19.  
b Ro. 16:23. 2 Ti. c 2 Co. 1:8. 6:9. e Re. 18:11.

some trouble at Ephesus, just when forecasting to go thence. See,

1. He was a man of vast designs for God, and was for making his influences as far diffusive as might be. Having spent above two years at Ephesus, (1.) He designed a visit to the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, especially of Philippi and Corinth, the chief cities of those provinces, v. 21. He purposed in the spirit; either in his own spirit, not communicating his purpose as yet; or by the direction of the Holy Spirit, by whom he was led. (2.) Thence he designed to visit the brethren at Jerusalem, and give an account to them of the prospering of the good pleasure of the Lord in his hand; and thence he intended to go to Rome, to see Rome, an expression people commonly used, that they would go see Rome, would look about them there; what he designed, was, to see the Christians there, and to do them some service, Rom. 1:11. Lightfoot supposes it was on the death of the emperor Claudius, who died the second year of Paul's being at Ephesus, that Paul thought of going to Rome, because while he lived, the Jews were forbidden Rome, ch. 18:2. (3.) He sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia, to give notice of his intended visit, and to get their collection ready for the poor saints at Jerusalem. Soon after, he wrote the first epistle to the Corinthians, designing to follow it himself, as appears 1 Cor. 4:17, 19. For

the present, he stayed in Asia, about Ephesus, founding churches.

2. He was seconded in his purpose, and obliged to pursue it by the troubles he at length met with at Ephesus. Strange, he had been quiet there so long; yet it should seem he had met with trouble there, not recorded in this story; for in his epistle, written at this time, he speaks of his having fought with beasts, at Ephesus, 1 Cor. 15:32. which seems to be meant of fighting with wild beasts in the theatre, according to the barbarous treatment they sometimes gave the Christians. And he speaks of the trouble which came to them in Asia, near Ephesus, when he despoiled of life, and received a sentence of death within himself, 2 Cor. 1:8, 9.

As to the trouble here related, in general, there arose no small stir about that way, v. 23. Some historians say, that famous impostor Apollonius Tyanæus, who set up for a rival with Christ, and gave out himself, as Simon Magus, to be some great one, was at Ephesus about this time. But it seems the opposition he gave to the Gospel was so insignificant, that Luke did not think it worth noticing.

I. A great complaint against Paul and the other preachers of the Gospel, for drawing people off from the worship of Diana, and so spoiling the trade of the silversmiths that worked for Diana's temple.

1. The complainant is Demetrius, a silversmith, a principal man, it is likely, of the trade, and one that would be thought to understand and consult the interests of it, more than others of the company. The most advantageous branch of his trade, was, making silver shrines for Diana, v. 24. Some think, these were medals, stamped with the effigies of Diana, or her temple, or both; others think, they were representations of the temple, with the image of Diana in it, in miniature; so small, that people might carry them about with them, as the papists do their crucifixes. Those that came from far, when they went home, bought these little temples or shrines, to carry home with them, to gratify the curiosity of their friends, and to preserve, in their own minds, the idea of that stately edifice. See how craftsmen, and crafty men too, above the rank of silversmiths, make an advantage to themselves of people's superstition, and serve their worldly ends by it.

2. The persons he appeals to, are not the magistrates, but the mob, the craftsmen, a company of mechanics, who had no sense of anything but their worldly interest, who would be actuated as little by reason, and as much by fury, as he could desire.

3. His complaint and representation are very full. (1.) He lays it down for a principle, that the art and mystery of making silver shrines for the worshippers of Diana, was very necessary to be supported and kept up, v. 25. It is natural for men to be jealous for that, whether right or wrong, by which they get their wealth: and many have, for this reason alone, set themselves against the Gospel of Christ, because it calls men off from those crafts which are unlawful, how much wealth soever is to be gotten by them. (2.) He charges it on Paul, that he had dissuaded men from worshipping idols. The words, as laid in the indictment, are, that he had asserted, *They are no gods which are made with hands*, v. 26. Could any truth be more plain and self-evident than this, or any reasoning more cogent and convincing than those of the prophets, *The workman made it, therefore it is not God?* Yet this must be looked upon as a heretical and atheistical notion, and Paul as a criminal for maintaining it; not that they could advance anything against it, but that the consequence of it was, that not only at Ephesus, the chief city, but almost throughout all Asia, among the country people, who were their best customers, and whom they thought they were surest of, he had persuaded and turned away much people from the worship of Diana; so that there was not now such a demand for the silver shrines as had been, nor such good rates given for them. There are those who will stickle for that which is most grossly absurd and unreasonable, and which carries along with it its own conviction of falsehood, as this does, *that those are gods which are made with hands*, if it have but human laws, and worldly interest and prescription, on its side. (3.) He reminds them of the danger their trade was in of going to decay. Whatever touches that, touches them in a tender part. *This our part*, so the word is, 'our interest or share of trade and commerce, will not only come into danger of being lost, but will bring us into danger, and we shall become not only beggars, but malefactors.' (4.) He pretends a mighty zeal for Diana, and a jealousy for her honor; *Not only this craft; if that were all, he would not have spoken with so much warmth, but the temple of the great goddess Diana, and her magnificence; we would not, for the world, see the diminution of the honor of that goddess, whom all Asia and the world worship.* See what the worship of Diana had to plead in its behalf, — *pomp and numbers.* The magnificence of the temple was the thing that charmed them; they could not bear the thoughts of anything

than a progress through a single province! (21.) *Purposed in the Spirit.* 20:22. It does not appear, that *pneuma* with the article as here, and without the possessive pronoun, or something to fix the application of it, is used in the N. T., except for the Holy Spirit. (20:22—24.) SCOTT.

(21.) *These things, &c.* Many events referred to in the Epistles happened during this period. Philemon, probably, (Phil. 19.) and Epaphras, afterwards ministers at Colosse, were converted about this time: Col. 1:4, 78. 2:1. 4:12, 13. The apostle was also visited by several Christians from neighboring parts, during his abode here, particularly by Sosthenes and Apollos from Corinth, and by some of the family of Chloe, a woman, as it seems, of some figure there, (1 Cor. 1:1, 11.) as also by Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, all from the same place; (1 Cor. 16:17.) and Onesiphorus, who afterwards so affectionately visited him at Rome, was, as Timothy had frequent opportunities of observing, very serviceable to the apostle here; 2 Tim. 1:16—18. And there is great reason to believe he wrote 1 Cor. from hence, (1 Cor. 16:18.) and about this time; for it is plain that Aquila and Priscilla were then with him in Asia, 1 Cor. 16:19. as they now were, Acts 18:18, 19, 26. that it was after Apollos had visited Corinth, had watered Paul's plantation there, and was returned to Ephesus again, 1 Cor. 3:6. 16:8, 12. and that it was when Paul himself, having lately given a charge to the Galatian churches on that head, (comp. 1 Cor. 16:1, 2. with Acts 18:23.) intended a journey from Asia to the Macedonian and Corinthian churches, and was sending Timothy to prepare his way, 1 Cor. 4:17, 19. 16:5, 10. comp. with our v. and the next.

V. 23—31. (26.) *No gods, &c.* 'This plainly shows that the contrary opinion generally prevailed, namely, that there was a kind of divinity in the images of their supposed deities [note, Dan. 3:5.] . . . though some of them . . . learned to speak of them just as papists now do; who indeed may seem to have borrowed some of their apologies from the heathens.' DODD. [See Bl.] The vulgar, both among pagans and papists, always have supposed, that there is some kind of divinity in the image: but the more learned and philosophical palliate the absurdity, by considering the image as the visible representation of the invisible deity or saint. It might also be easily shown, that the processions, and very

many other observances of the papists, are copied from pagan customs; and far more clear illustrations of these pompous ceremonies may be made from Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Juvenal, and other classical writers, than from the Holy Scriptures, or even the Apocrypha. SCOTT.

(24.) *Shrines.] Naoses:* called also by classic writers, *naidia*, i. e. temple-shapes. Comp. note and cut, Is. 3:18—23, v. 20. 'These little silver models of the temple were bought by strangers for curiosity or devotion, as are the models of the Santa Casa [holy house] at Loretto, in Italy, by the pilgrims. Even Diana's effigy was worshipped with singular fervency by even the most remote and barbarous nations, and they dedicated temples to her: for she presided not only over hunting, but the compounding of poison or drugs, (lit. *pharmacy*.) and was therefore worshipped by those who cultivated the magic arts. She was regarded as the author and distributor of health and sickness, and was especially invoked by women in travail. It was an early custom for worshippers of idols to carry these portable chapels, (made of wood or metal, in which were enclosed images of the gods or goddesses,) in journeys for a safeguard; and sometimes they sent them, by way of expiating an offence, to other towns, to be placed in the temples there.' Comp. cuts, 2 S. 6:17. Jer. 10:5. and the standard A, at end of Jer. The Gr. for silversmith, may also mean, a silver founder, and coiner. See Hamm., Wetst., Kuin., Bl. *Of Diana.] Artemidos:* The most rational derivation of this name is from Artemis, either from the goddess's incorrupt virginity, or as presiding over health. So Liban. See Kuin.' BLOOMF. 'The temple of Diana was raised at the expense of all Asia Minor, and was 220 years in building. The whole is in Aristoph. called *golden*. It was 425 ft. by 220, and beautified by 127 columns, 60 ft. high, (of which 36 were carved,) made at the expense of so many kings. Erosstrates burnt it the night Alexander the Great was born. But as only part was consumed, it was soon repaired, and brought to a higher degree of magnificence than ever. So Strabo. But Nero plundered it. Its ornaments and symbols have been accurately described by Musellius. See Gronov. It remains almost entire, and is now a Turkish mosque. [Arundell, however, thinks its remains uncertain. See note, end of Acts.] Dr. A. C.' Kuin.



26 Moreover, ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying f that they be no gods which are made with hands :

27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia, and the world h worshippeth.

28 And when they heard these sayings, they were full of i wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians !

29 And the whole city was filled with confusion : and having caught j Gaius and k Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

f Ps. 115:4. Is. h 1 Ju. 5:19. Re. j Ro. 16:23. 1 Co. 44:10-20. 13:8. t:14. g Zep. 2:11. i Je. 50:38. k Col. 4:10.

that tended to the diminution, much less to the destruction, of that. And numbers; All Asia and the world worship it; therefore it must needs be right, let Paul say what he will. Thus, because all the world wonders after the beast; the dragon, the devil, the god of this world gives him his power, and his seat, and great authority. Rev. 13: 2, 3.

II. The popular resentment.

1. A great displeasure against the Gospel and its preachers, v. 28. full of fury and indignation, so the word signifies. The craftsmen went stark mad, when they were told that their trade and their idol were both in danger.

2. A great jealousy for the honor of their goddess; They cried out, ' Let Paul say ever so much to prove that those are no gods which are made with hands, we will abide by it that, whatever comes of other gods and goddesses, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. We must and will stand up for the religion

of our country, which we have received by tradition from our fathers.' Much more should the servants of the true God do so, who can say, This God is our God for ever and ever.

3. A great disorder among themselves, v. 29. The whole city was full of confusion,—the common, and natural effect of an intemperate zeal for a false religion; it throws all into confusion, dethrones reason, and inthrones passion; and men run together, not only not knowing one another's minds, but not knowing their own.

III. The proceedings of the mob under the power of these resentments.

1. They laid hands on some of Paul's companions, and hurried them into the theatre, v. 29. Some think, with design there to make them fight with beasts, as Paul had; or perhaps they intended only to abuse them, and to make them a spectacle to the crowd. We read of both Gaius and Aristarchus elsewhere; Gaius was of Derbe, ch. 20: 4. Aristarchus is also there spoken of, and Col. 4: 10. They came with Paul from Macedonia, and their only crime was, they were Paul's companions in travel, both in services and sufferings.

2. Paul, who had escaped being seized by them, when he perceived his friends in distress for his sake, would have entered in unto the people, to [appease them, and] sacrifice himself, if there were no other remedy, rather than his friends should suffer on his account; it evidenced a generous spirit, and that he loved his neighbor as himself.

3. He was dissuaded from it by the kindness of his friends, that overruled him. They had reason to say to Paul, as David's servants did to him, when exposing himself in a piece of public service, Thou art worth ten thousand of us, 2 Sam. 18: 3. They would treat him much worse than Gaius and Aristarchus, looking on him as the ring-leader of the party; therefore, better let them bear the brunt of the storm than that he should venture into it, v. 31. They were certain of the chief of Asia, the princes of Asia. The critics tell us, they were the chief of their priests; or, as others, the chief of their players. Whether they were converts, or only well-wishers to Paul, we are not told; they were Paul's friends. Lightfoot sug-

gests, they kept up a respect and kindness for him ever since he fought with beasts in their theatre, and were afraid he should be abused so again. It is a friendly part to take more care of the lives and comforts of good men, than they do themselves. It would be very hazardous for Paul to go into the theatre; a thousand to one it would cost him his life; therefore Paul was overruled by his friends to obey the law of self-preservation; and has taught us to keep out of the way of danger as long as we can, without going out of the way of duty. We may be called to lay down our lives, but not to throw away our lives. It would better become Paul to venture into a synagogue than into a theatre.

4. The mob was in a perfect confusion, v. 32. Some cried one thing, and some another; some, Down with the Jews; others, Down with Paul; but the assembly was confused, as not understanding one another's minds; the truth was, they did not understand their own; the greater part knew not wherefore they were come together; they knew not what began the riot, nor who; much less what business they had there; but, as on such occasions, the greatest part come only to inquire what the matter was: they follow the cry, follow the crowd, increasing like a snow-ball.

5. The Jews would have interested themselves in this tumult; for it had been strange if a persecution were carried on against the Christians, and there were not Jews at one end or the other of it; but they had not interest enough to raise the mob; yet, when it was raised, they had ill-will enough to set in with it, v. 33. They drew Alexander out of the multitude, called him out to speak on the behalf of the Jews against Paul and his companions. This they looked upon as necessary in their own defence; therefore, what he designed to say is called his apologizing to the people, not for himself in particular, but for the Jews in general, whom the worshippers of Diana looked upon to be as much their enemies as Paul; now they would have them know, that they were as much Paul's enemies as themselves were; and they who are thus careful to distinguish themselves from the servants of Christ now, and are afraid of being taken for them, shall have their doom accordingly in the

(26.) 'I certainly do not remember any Doctor of the Romish church who has so learnedly, eloquently, and copiously pleaded the cause of image-worship as either Maximus Tyr. [a heathen] or Julian [the apostate,] and yet how forcibly and zealously did the first Christian teachers oppose those opinions; nor is there any doubt but that the very error which in the pagans they had so powerfully and successfully opposed, they would have as strenuously resisted, had they lived to see it introduced into the Christian Church!' See Bloomf. Ed. 'Plut. and Soph. account all the makers of images as most audacious, and sharply rebuke them; and hold all image-worship in detestation. Plut. ascribes similar opinions also to the Pythagoreans and first Romans. On [similar] sentiments of the Persian magi, see Diog., Laert.;—of the Seres [Chinese] and Indians, Bardesanes, in Euseb. That Moses forbade the use of images, is even mentioned by Strabo.' Elsner. Shall the people of the U. S. be more senseless than these heathen? Ed. 'From the mouth of this heathen, we have, in one sentence, a most pleasing account of the success with which God had blessed the labors of the apostles.' Dr. A. C. KUIN.

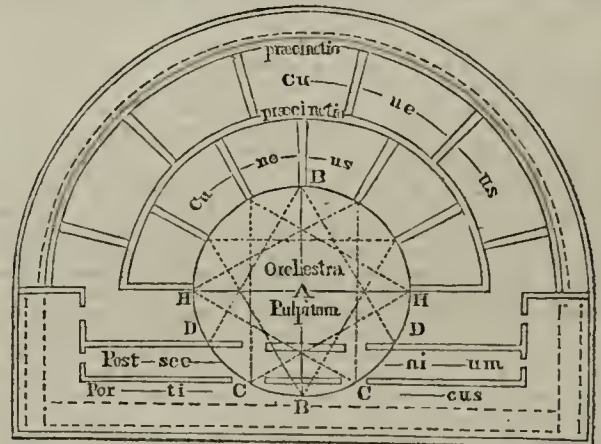
(27.) 'From a number of representations of the Ephesian goddess Diana which still remain, [cut,] we find that she was widely different from Diana the huntress. She was the representation of universal nature, the nourisher and supporter of all things. [Notes, Lev. 26:1. 1 K. 12:26—29.] It is evident this Diana was a composition of several deities.' Dr. A. C. See her image (multiform, of animals and woman) in Tayl. Calm. Ed.

(28.) The cut (from a classic relic) shows the front of the temple of Ephesus, and the statue of Diana, clothed: also the very words of the text, Ephesiōn, nekōrdōn. See other images in Taylor's Calmet. Ed.

(29.) Theatre. 'The cut shows the form of the Roman. They were roofed, open, or covered with awnings. The benches or seats [often cut in the side of a hill, or rock] rose above one another, [comp. engravings of Ephesus and Petra,] and were distributed to the different orders, in the same manner as in the amphitheatre, [note and cut, 1 Cor. 4: end.] The foremost rows,



next the stage called orchestra, were assigned to the senators and ambassadors of foreign states; 14 rows behind them to the equites, and the rest to the people. The scena, scene, was adorned with columns, statues, pictures, according to the plays exhibited; its ornaments were sometimes inconceivably magnificent; and it was concealed, when the play was acting, by a curtain. The actors dressed in the postscenium, and appeared in the proscenium: recited their parts on the pulpitum,



and danced in the orchestra, 5 feet lower.' Adam. They generally rehearsed in the porticoes. See Adam, Edinburgh ed. 1835. Theatres contained, some 40,000, and one 80,000 persons. 'With the Greeks and states of Grecian origin, the theatre [cut, Acts, end] was a place of assembly for public business of every kind, and served for senate-house, town-hall, forum, &c.; and harangues to the people were there delivered. See on 12:21. Indeed, all important political affairs were there transacted; war declared, peace proclaimed, and criminals executed.' Kuin. 'Wetst. well observes, that the very situation of the place, would, not a little, promote and increase the tumult, since, as we find from the accounts of travellers, the temple was in view of the theatre, [and it would seem any clamor, too, could be heard from one at the other.] The Gaius here was not the same with that Rom. 16:23. who was a Corinthian.' Bloomf. ED



30 And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.

31 And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring <sup>1</sup>him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

[Practical Observations.]

32 Some <sup>m</sup> therefore cried one thing, and some another; for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

33 And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander <sup>n</sup> beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people.

34 But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice, about the space of two hours, cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians!

35 And when the town-clerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men <sup>o</sup> of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is <sup>p</sup>a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from Jupiter?

l c. 21:12. 4:14. p the temple-  
ra c. 21:31. o Ep. 2:12. keeper.  
n 1 Ti. 1:20. 2 Ti.

great day. Alexander beckoned with the hand, desiring to be heard against Paul. Some think he had been a Christian, but had apostatized to Judaism, and therefore was drawn out as a proper person to accuse Paul; and that he was that *Alexander the copper-*

*smith* that did Paul so much evil, 2 Tim. 4:14. and whom he had delivered unto Satan, 1 Tim. 1:20.

6. This occasioned the prosecutors to drop the prosecution of Paul's friends, and to turn it into acclamations in honor of their goddess, v. 34. When they knew that he was a Jew, and, as such, an enemy to the worship of Diana, (for the Jews had now an implacable hatred to idols and idolatry,) whatever he had to say for Paul or against him, they were resolved not to hear him, and therefore set the mob a shouting, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians; whoever runs her down, be he Jew or Christian, we are resolved to cry her up; she is Diana of the Ephesians, our Diana; and it is our honor and happiness to have her temple with us; and she is great, a famous goddess, and universally adored; there are other Dianas, but Diana of the Ephesians is beyond them all, because her temple is more rich and magnificent than any of their's.' This was all the cry for two hours together; and it was thought a sufficient confutation of Paul's doctrine, that they are not gods which are made with hands. Thus the most sacred truths are often run down with nothing else but noise, and clamor, and popular fury \*! They were mad upon their idols. Diana made the Ephesians great, for the town was enriched by the vast concourse of people from all parts to Diana's temple there; therefore, they are concerned by all means possible to keep up her sinking reputation with, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians.*

IV. The suppression and dispersion of these rioters, by the prudence and vigilance of the town-clerk; he is called, *the scribe, or secretary, or recorder*; 'the governor of the city,' so some; 'the registrar of their games,' the Olympic games, so some; whose business it was to preserve the names of the victors, and the prizes they won. With much ado, he, at length, stilled the noise, so as to be heard, and then made a pacific speech to

\* And what else can ever be expected of even the most 'respectable' mob? Ed.

them, and gave us an instance of that of Solomon, *The words of wise men are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that rules among fools*, as Demetrius did, Ec. 9:17.

1. He humors them with an acknowledgment, that *Diana was the celebrated goddess of the Ephesians, v. 35.* They needed not to be so loud and strenuous in asserting a truth which nobody denied, or could be ignorant of; every one knows the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana; is, *neokoros*; not only that the inhabitants were worshippers of this goddess, but the city, as a corporation, was, by its charter, intrusted with the worship of Diana, to take care of her temple, and to accommodate those who came thither to do her homage. Ephesus is the *ædütua*, (they say that is the most proper word,) or the *sacrist*, of the great goddess Diana. Such care did idolaters take to keep up the worship of gods made with hands, while the worship of the true and living God is neglected, and few nations or cities glory in patronizing and protecting that! The temple of Diana at Ephesus was a very rich and sumptuous structure, but, it should seem, her *image* in the temple, because they thought it sanctified the temple, was had in greater veneration than the temple, for they persuaded the people that it fell down from Jupiter, and therefore was none of the gods that were made with men's hands. See how easily the credulity of superstitious people is imposed on by the fraud of designing men! Because this image of Diana had been set up time out of mind, and nobody could tell who made it, they made the people believe it fell down from Jupiter.

'Now these things,' says the town-clerk, very gravely, (but whether seriously or no, and as one that did himself believe them, may be questioned,) 'cannot be spoken against; they have obtained such universal credit, that you need not fear contradiction, it can do you no prejudice.' Some take it thus; 'Seeing the image of Diana fell down from Jupiter, as we all believe, then

PRACT. OBS. V. 21—31. The enterprising spirit and unwearied diligence of conquerors, navigators, and others, are generally admired: but the same endowments, when directed by love to Christ, and to the souls of men, commonly meet with neglect, if not ridicule and contempt! [How many call the risking of life in commercial pursuits, for selfish ends, 'enterprise;' while ridiculing the missionary who puts his life in his hand for the best good of others!] The distinct principles of avarice and superstition naturally coalesce: nor would idolatry, delusion, or vice, though congenial to the human heart, meet with so firm and general a support, did they not conduce to the temporal advantage of numbers, who grow rich by them. The immense encouragement which popery has always given to painting, sculpture, music, architecture, and other ingenious arts, attaches great multitudes to its splendid forms; and greatly impedes all attempts for reformation. The devotees of mammon and superstition not only impose on others, but on themselves; and imagine that they really love their religion, while they only value the affluence, and splendor, and honor, derived from it! Their selfishness increases their bigotry; and their interested opposition to the

Gospel elokes its malignity under zeal for some forms or observances: their indignation and resentment, and envy, are expressed in furious zeal for the honor of their idol; and the servants of God are hated and persecuted, because they draw men off from those sins by which lucrative trades are supported. Such persons would 'eat up the sin of the people, and set their hearts upon their iniquities;' whilst they vehemently contend 'for the vain conversation delivered by tradition from their fathers.' Ecclesiastical history continually furnishes the student with instances of these combinations: and we can scarcely look around us in the world, but we see the part of Demetrius, and the workmen, acted over and over again, even to the filling of cities with tumult and confusion. It is as safe to contend with wild beasts, as with men who are thus enraged by bigotry and disappointed avarice; or who think that all arguments are answered, when they have shown that they grow rich by those measures which the ministers of truth, and the friends of genuine reformation oppose: and whatever side in religious controversies, or whatever name this spirit assumes; it is antichristian, and should be strenuously discountenanced by all the friends of truth and piety. Sc.

(31.) *Chief of Asia.* *Asiarchon*: these Asiarchæ, who derived their appellation from the name of the province over which they presided (as Syriarchæ, Cypriarchæ, &c.) were, in proconsular Asia (of which Ephesus was the metropolis), the chief presidents of the religious rites, whose office it also was to exhibit, in honor of the gods, and the Roman emperor, every year, solemn games in the theatre, at their own expence (like the Roman ædiles); whence none but the more opulent could bear this office, though it only lasted a year. They were thus chosen:—At the beginning of every year (i. e. about the autumnal equinox), each of the cities of Asia held an assembly, in which they elected some one of their citizens to be put in nomination for this office. Then each town sent one ambassador to some certain city of importance in proconsular Asia, such as Ephesus, Smyrna, Sardis; and others to the *to koinon*, or common council of the nation, in order to announce publicly the name of him whom they had elected to be put in nomination, as Asiarch. Of those whom each of the cities of Asia had thus recommended, the common council created ten only as Asiarchs, and out of that number the Roman proconsul chose the president of the sacred rites, sometimes called the *Archiereus*. Commentators are not agreed if all ten performed this function together, or whether only one was elected Asiarch. In my opinion, one elected by the proconsuls was, by way of eminence, styled *ho Asiarchēs*, "the Asiarch," and the rest were his assessors, [sitters with him,] and themselves also styled Asiarchs. Strabo indeed mentions many Asiarchs; but in Euseb. Polycarp is said to have suffered martyrdom when "Philip was Asiarch, and Statius Quadratus proconsul of Asia." Moreover, the Asiarchs (as we find from the Gr. authors) did not (as some have supposed) always reside at Ephesus, but also in other cities to which the sacred rites of Asia were common; as Smyrna, Cyzicus, &c. See Spanh. At the time when Paul abode at Ephesus, the Asiarch, with his colleagues, was, it

seems, then in residence, and games were probably then in exhibition; from whence, however, it does not follow that the events here narrated took place at the solemn games. The Ephesian games are not mentioned at all.—It must be observed, too, that even those who had discharged the office of Asiarch, used to have the title still bestowed on them by courtesy (as was the case among the Jews with those who had filled the office of high priest): so that the Asiarchs here mentioned, may have been either those then in office, or who had been so. KUIN.

V. 32—41. *Deputies.* *Anthupatoi*. See on 13:7. 18:12. The office of proconsul of Asia was at this time divided between two magistrates, commonly called *procurators*, but who might properly be called *proconsuls*.

(32.) *Assembly.* *Ekklesia*: the same word which we tr. *church*; and thus we find it signifies any assembly good or bad, lawful or unlawful; and that only the circumstances of the case can determine the precise nature of the assembly, to which this word is applied.

Dr. A. CLARKE.

(35.) *Town Clerk.* *Grammateus*: it now seems pretty well agreed, that the word signifies some chief magistrate; though it is not easy to express this more specially by any term of modern languages. This officer was president of the senate, and united the offices of Recorder, Chancellor, and Secretary of State. Among other of his duties, was that of publicly reading aloud letters and state papers. All these functions Wetst. illustrates by classical citations. So also the Syriac, *primarius civitatis*, i. e., *head-man*. From Malala, Apollonius, and the coins, it appears to have been an office of the highest dignity; so having little like the "*grammateus*" among the Athenians, (a not very honorable office, perhaps like our town-clerk,) except the name. His speech evinces considerable judgment; prudence, and not a little tact. Bloomf. *Is a worshipper.* 'Is devoted, &c. It properly signi-



36 Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.

37 For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.

38 Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another.

39 But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.

40 For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

q Pr. 14:29. s or, the court t or, ordinary.  
r c. 25.8. days are kept. u 2 Co. 1:8-10.

what is said against gods made with hands, does not at all affect us.

2. He cautions them against all violent and tumultuous proceedings, which their religion did not need, nor could receive any real advantage from, v. 36. A very good rule to be observed at all times, both in private and public affairs; not to be hasty and precipitate in our motions, but to deliberate, and take time to consider; not to put ourselves or others into a heat, but to be calm and composed, and always keep reason in the throne, and passion under check. This word should be ready to us, to command the peace with, when ourselves or those about us are growing disorderly; *We ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly*; to do nothing in haste, which we may repent of at leisure.

PRACT. OBS. V. 32-41. A mob can never effect anything, but mischief and madness. Like a wild beast, it sometimes turns against and destroys those, who meant to govern its operations, or to derive advantage from them: and generally the greater part of riotous multitudes know not for what purposes they are come together. (2 Cor. 1:8-11.) It is well, when their fury evaporates in senseless clamor; for it is commonly most cruel and destructive. Yet He who 'ruleth the waves of the sea,' can also 'still the madness of the people:' and in Him we should trust ourselves, and all belonging to us, when perils alarm us.—Worldly policy and sagacity often abound, where piety is utterly wanting: and prudent worldly men, by cajoling the deluded multitudes in

ties a priest, or priestess, devoted to some particular deity, whose business it is to look after the temple. . . The chancellor, with great strength and beauty of language, to express the unanimity and zeal of the whole city in the service of Diana, speaks of it as *one such attendant devotee in the temple*; and as *neōkoros* is compounded of a word which signifies to sweep, it imports the humility with which they were ready to stoop to the lowest office of service there.' *Doddr.* 'But this is, as usual, pressing too much on the etymological sense, for the term was by no means confined to Ephesus, but extended to many other cities of Greece and Asia Minor; nay, sometimes the same city was called *neōkoros* to three or four deities, see coins. The *neōkoros* was an officer chosen annually by the Ephesians; some medals, struck on the public shows, have inscribed that such an one was then *neōkoros*, i. e., guardian or warden of the temple. What was properly applied only to a person came, by common figures, to be applied to a city, and to signify devoted, consecrated to, and was used towards tutelary deities of a city.' *Bloomf. Image.* 'The temple was used as the sacred treasury, or bank of most of the civilized world. (*Dio Chrys.* and *Arist.*) As was the temple of Delos to Greece. (*Thucyd.*) Generally speaking, indeed, the temples were the banks, and only secure deposits of the ancient world. By the time of Gallienus it was despoiled and burnt. [By barbarians, see *Gibbon.*] From Artemid. it appears, that no woman (married woman?) was permitted to enter it. There was (*Thucyd.*) an annual festival there to which the Ionians generally resorted. The temple (*Xen.*) was close by the river Sellinus. The image (*Plin.*) was of eben (or as some r. vine) wood. *Vitr. says, cedar.* All agree it had not been changed.' *Bloomf. Fell down from Jupiter.* So it was fabled of several other idols: and among the first idols we read of are the black stones, which, falling from heaven (*aerolites*), were naturally venerated, and supposed to have inherent divinity; note, Dan. 3:5. Perhaps (so *Bloomf.*) some had a rude likeness to an image. In countries where such falsehoods are likely to be believed, (not, at present, in others,) parts, at least, of the Romish church show pictures of the Virgin, which they tell the people came

3. He wipes off the odium that had been cast on Paul and his associates, and tells them, they were not the men they were represented to be, v. 37. 'Ye have brought hither these men, and are ready to pull them to pieces; but have you considered what is their offence? What can you prove on them? you cannot charge them with sacrilege, nor have they given any opprobrious language to the worshippers of Diana, nor spoken scurrilously of her or her temple. Why should you prosecute them with all this violence, who, though not of your mind, yet do not inveigh with any bitterness against you? Since they are calm, why should you be hot?' It was the idol IN THE HEART they levelled all their force against, by reason and argument; if they can but get that down, the idol in the temple will fall of course. Those that preach against idolatrous churches, have truth on their side, and ought vigorously to maintain it, and press it on men's consciences; but let them not be robbers of those churches; *on the prey laid they not their hand*, Esth. 9:15, 16. nor blasphemers of those worships; *with meekness instructing*, not with passion and foul language reproaching, those that oppose themselves; for God's truth, as it needs not man's lie, so it needs not man's intemperate heat. *The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.*

4. He turns them over to the regular methods of the law, which ought ALWAYS to supersede popular tumults, and in civilized, well-governed nations, will do so. A great mercy it is to live in a country where provision is made for the keeping of the peace, and the administration of public justice, and the appointing a remedy for every wrong; and herein we of this nation are as happy as any people.

(1.) If the complaint was of a private injury, let them have recourse to the judges and courts of justice, which were kept publicly at stated times. There is a proconsul and his delegate, whose business it is to hear both sides, and to determine according to equity; and in their determination all parties must acquiesce, and not be their own judges, nor appeal to the people. *The law*

is good if a man use it lawfully, as the last remedy, both for the discovery of a right disputed, and the recovery of a right denied.

(2.) If the complaint was of a public grievance, relating to the constitution, it must be redressed, not by a confused rabble, but by a convention of the states, v. 39. *If ye inquire anything concerning other matters, that are of a common concern, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly* of the aldermen and common-council, called together in a regular way by those in authority. Private persons should not intermeddle in public matters, so as to anticipate the counsels of those whose business it is to take cognizance of them; we have enough to do to mind our own business.

5. He makes them sensible of the danger they were in, and of the præmunire they had run themselves into by this riot, v. 40. 'It is well if we be not called in question for this day's uproar, if we be not complained of at the emperor's court, as a factious and seditious city, and our charter taken away; for we have nothing to say in excuse of this concourse; we cannot justify ourselves in breaking the peace, by saying, that others broke it first, and we only acted defensively; we have no color for any such plea; and therefore let the matter go no further, for it has gone too far already.' Note, Most people stand more in awe of men's judgment, than of the judgment of God. How well were it, if we would thus still the tumult of our disorderly appetites and passions, and check the violence of them, with the consideration of the account we must shortly give to the Judge of heaven and earth for all these disorders! *Ecel. 11:9.*

6. When he had thus showed them the absurdity of their riotous meeting, and the ill consequences that might follow from it, he advised them to separate with all speed, v. 41. See here, the overruling providence of God, how it preserves the public peace, by an unaccountable power over the spirits of men! Considering what an impetuous, furious thing, what an ungovernable, unmanageable wild beast the mob is, when it is up, we shall see reason to acknowledge God's goodness, if we are not under the tyranny of it,

their follies and absurdities, prevail far more with them, than the most eminent servants of God possibly could by truth and argument.—What senseless fables have they implicitly credited, who would not believe the report of the Gospel! And how ridiculous have they often been, in their religious opinions and worship, who have discovered the most consummate good sense on every other subject! For 'the god of this world blinds the minds' of unbelievers.—Let us be thankful for prudent magistrates, who can keep the peace, and afford us protection, while we quietly worship God according to our consciences, and endeavor to promote the knowledge of his great salvation. SCOTT.

down from heaven!

(37.) *Robbers of churches.*] 'Hierosuloi: guilty of laying hands on anything sacred, whether to steal or to destroy.' BLOOMF.

(38.) *Proconsuls.*] As there was but one of these, Markl., Heintz., Kuini., Bloomf., &c., rightly take it for a popular use of the plural by *hypallage*:—as if, 'It is for laws and proconsuls to decide such matters.' *Doddr.* (after Biscoe) paraphrases thus:—*If, &c.,* 'have suffered in their property, and have a charge of any private injury to offer against any one, the civil courts are held in which they may have justice done them; or if they have any crime relating to the state to allege against any, the law directs them how they should proceed, and there are the Roman proconsuls to whom they may apply, who are the proper judges of such cases: Let them then bring their action, and implead one another, and traverse their suit in a legal manner in either of these judicatories, till it is brought to a fair determination. But if the cause be not properly civil or criminal, and you are inquiring anything concerning other matters, relating to our common utility, or to religion, which may seem of a special nature, there is no room to doubt but it shall be determined to the general satisfaction, in a lawful assembly of the Asiatic States, who will inquire into it impartially, and with a diligence proportionable to its importance.' 'The regular periods of assembly (called *kuria*, from their regularity) in those Greek cities which exercised, under the Roman empire, a qualified self-government, were three or four times a month; though there were extraordinary ones.' *Grot., Wetst., Bloomf.*

(40.) Raising a riot, was capitally punished by Roman law. Ed.

(41.) It is unjustly cavilled, that Paul acquiesced in this idol-acknowledging speech, but what had Paul to do with it? He was not even present! Nor, if there, could he have then replied, (what more unprofitable and unseasonable!) after the assembly was officially dismissed, without a silly and wicked suicide. Paul's life, whole example, and sufferings, are a sufficient refutation of such often answered slurs. See *Doddr.* Id.



CHAP. XX.

<sup>1</sup> Paul goeth to Macedonia. <sup>7</sup> He celebrateth the Lord's supper, and preacheth. <sup>9</sup> Eutychus having fallen down dead, is raised to life. <sup>17</sup> At Miletum he calleth the elders together, telleth them what shall befall to himself, <sup>28</sup> committeth God's flock to them, <sup>29</sup> warneth them of false teachers, <sup>32</sup> commendeth them to God, <sup>36</sup> prayeth with them, and goeth his way.

AND after the uproar <sup>a</sup> was ceased, Paul called unto *him* the disciples, and embraced *them*, and departed, for to go <sup>b</sup> into Macedonia.

<sup>2</sup> And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much <sup>c</sup> exhortation, he came into Greece,

<sup>3</sup> And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait <sup>d</sup> for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.

<sup>4</sup> And there accompanied him into Asia, Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, <sup>e</sup> Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and <sup>f</sup> Timothy; and of Asia, <sup>g</sup> Tychicus and <sup>h</sup> Trophimus.

<sup>5</sup> These going before, tarried for us at Troas.

<sup>6</sup> And we sailed away from Philippi after the days <sup>i</sup> of unleavened bread, and came unto them to <sup>j</sup> Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.

<sup>7</sup> ¶ And upon the first <sup>k</sup> day of

a c. 19:40.	e c. 19:29.	4:20.
b 1 Co. 16:5.	f c. 16:1.	i Ex. 23:15.
Th. 1:3.	g Ep. 6:21.	Col. j 2 Ti. 4:13.
c 1 Th. 2:3, 11.	4:7.	2 Ti. 4:12.
d c. 23:12.	Tit. 3:12.	k 1 Co. 16:2.
2 Co. 11:26.	h c. 21:29.	2 Ti. 1:10.

Ps. 65: 7. See how many ways God has of protecting his people! Perhaps this town-clerk was no friend at all to Paul, or the Gospel he preached, yet his human prudence is made to serve the divine purpose. *Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all.*

CHAP. XX. V. 1—6. Of these travels of Paul, we have here only some general hints of occurrences, which therefore ought to be the more precious.

NOTES. CHAP. XX. V. 1—6. The apostle probably concluded, it would be imprudent for him to continue at Ephesus; he therefore, not long after, set out to travel into Macedonia. He went through Troas, but not meeting Titus, whom he expected from Corinth, he was so desirous of visiting that city, that he proceeded on his journey without further delay. 2 Cor. 2:12, 13. The 2d Cor. seems to have been written when he was in Macedonia, on his progress to Achaia, which probably took up more time than he had expected.—Timothy had gone before the apostle into Macedonia; we find him here attending on him, and he was with him when he wrote 2 Cor.: 2 Cor. 1:1—7, v. 1. yet elsewhere he says he desired him to tarry at Ephesus, when he went into Macedonia. 1 Tim. 1:3, 4. It is probable, that 1 Tim. was written, when the apostle was in Macedonia, soon after he left Ephesus: so that we must conclude that Timothy returned to Ephesus before Paul came away; and that he staid there only a short time, before he, on some account, came to Paul in Macedonia. But he might return thither, and take up his stated residence there afterwards, for some time, according to the statement of ecclesiastical writers.

(2.) 'In Macedonia, after great anxiety in his mind, Paul at length met with Titus, who brought him a comfortable account of the state of affairs at Corinth, 2 Cor. 7:5—7, and in particular, what he said of their liberal disposition, gave Paul reason to glory in them, and to excite the Macedonians to imitate their generosity, in assisting the contribution he was now raising for the poor Christians in Judea, which was one great part of his business on this journey, 2 Cor. 9:2. 3:1—14. The 2 Cor. was, therefore, written from Macedonia at this time, (2 Cor. 9:2. 3:1—14.) and was sent by Titus, who, on this occasion, returned to get the collection in still greater forwardness. This tour through Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, and Berea, would, of course, take up several months, and no doubt many circumstances would occur at most of these places, which made Paul's presence with them for a while highly expedient. It seems probable that Paul wrote 1 Tim. from thence, expecting to return to Ephesus again, and then designing that Timothy should continue there till he came (1 Tim. 3:14, 15. 4:13.), though Providence ordered the matter otherwise.' Greece.] 'Thence he probably wrote Rom.; for it plainly appears, that epistle was written before his imprisonment at Rome, and in it he speaks of a collection made by the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, Rom. 15:25—27. a circumstance which fixes it to this time.'

(4, 5.) 'The several persons mentioned in v. 4. are thought [and so

I. His departure from Ephesus; he had tarried there longer than at any one place since he was ordained; and now it was time to think of removing, for he must preach in other cities also; but after this, to the end of the scripture-history of his life, which is all we can depend upon, we never find him breaking up fresh ground again, nor preaching the Gospel where Christ had not been named, as hitherto he had done, Rom. 15:20. for in the close of the next ch. we find him made a prisoner, and so continued, and so left, at the end of this book. He did not leave them abruptly, and in a fright, but solemnly; He called unto him the principal persons of the congregation, and embraced them, took leave of them, saith the Syriae, with the kiss of love, according to the usage of the primitive church. Loving friends know not how well they love one another till they come to part.

II. His visitation of the Greek churches, which he had planted, and more than once watched, and which appear to have laid very near his heart. He enforced his exhortation with a great variety of motives and arguments. He stayed three months in Greece, v. 2, 3. i. e. in Achaia, as some think, for thither also he purposed to go, to Corinth, and thereabout, ch. 19:21.

III. The altering of his measures. 1. Paul was about to sail into Syria, to Antioch, whence he was first sent out into the service of the Gentiles, and which, therefore, in his journeys, he generally contrived to take in his way; but he changed his mind, and resolved to return through Macedonia, the same way he came. 2. The reason was, the Jews, expecting he would steer that course, as usual, had way-laid him, designing his death; some think, it was to rob him of the money he was carrying to Jerusalem for the relief of the poor saints there; but considering how very spiteful the Jews were against him, I suppose they thirsted for his blood, more than for his money.

IV. His companions into Asia are here named, v. 4. some ministers, whether all or no, is not certain; Sopater of Berea, it is likely, is the same with Sosipater, Rom. 16:21. Timothy is reckoned among them, for though Paul, when he departed from Ephesus, v. 1. left Timothy there, and afterward wrote his first epistle to him thither, to direct him as an evangelist how to settle the church there, and in what hands to leave

it, 1 Tim. 1:3. 3:14, 15. yet he soon followed him, and accompanied him, with others here named.

One would think, this was no good husbandry, to have all these worthy men accompanying Paul, for there was more need of them where Paul was not, than where he was; but, 1. They might assist him in instructing such as by his preaching were awakened and startled; wherever Paul came, the waters were stirred, and then there was need of many hands to help the cripples in. It was time to strike when the iron was hot. 2. They might be trained up by him, and fitted for future service; might fully know his doctrine, and manner of life, 2 Tim. 3:10. Paul's bodily presence was weak and despicable, and, therefore, these friends of his accompanied him, to put a reputation on him, and to intimate to strangers, who would be apt to judge by the sight of the eye, that he had a great deal in him truly valuable, which was not discovered on the outward appearance.

V. His coming to Troas, where he had appointed a general rendezvous of his friends. They went before, and stayed for him at Troas, v. 5. designing to go along with him to Jerusalem, as Trophimus particularly did, ch. 21:29. it should seem Luke was now in company with him; for he says, We sailed from Philippi, v. 6. and the first time we find him in his company, was here, at Troas, ch. 16:11. The days of unleavened bread are mentioned only to describe the time, not to intimate that Paul kept the passover after the manner of the Jews; for just about this time he had written in his first epistle to the church of Corinth, and taught, that Christ is our Passover, and a Christian life our feast of unleavened bread, 1 Cor. 5:7, 8. and when the substance was come, the shadow was done away. He came to them to Troas, by sea, in five days, and when he was there stayed but seven days. A great deal of time will unavoidably be lost, in travelling to and fro, by those who go about doing good, yet it shall not be put on the score of lost time. Paul thought it worth while to bestow five days in going to Troas, though but for an opportunity of seven days' stay there; but he knew, and so should we, how to redeem even journeying time, and make it turn to some good account.

V. 7—12. We have here what passed at Troas the last of the 7 days Paul stayed there.

Scott] to have been joined with Paul, as messengers of the churches, in carrying their contributions to the poor brethren at Jerusalem, comp. 1 Cor. 16:3, 4. 2 Cor. 8:19—23. We know but few particulars of most of them.—Sopater, in some ancient MSS. called son of Pyrrhus, is generally thought to be Sosipater, Paul's kinsman, Rom. 16:21.—Aristarchus of Thessalonica, is mentioned before as a Macedonian, Acts 19:29. he attended Paul in his voyage to Rome, Acts 28:2. and was his fellow-laborer, Phil. 24. and fellow-prisoner, Col. 4:10, 11.—Secundus is not elsewhere mentioned.—Gaius of Derbe, if not another of the same name, is elsewhere mentioned as of Macedonia, Acts 19:29. of which, as some suppose, he was a native, but descended of a Derbe family: he was baptized by Paul, at Corinth, 1 Cor. 1:14. and entertained him as his host while he abode there, Rom. 16:23. and, afterwards, John directs his 3d Ep. to him.—Timothy was a native of Lystra, Acts 16:1. whom Paul particularly honored with his friendship, and distinguished by 2 Eps. to him, as well as by joining his name with his own in the title of several other Eps.: 2 Cor., Philip., Col., 1 and 2 Thess., Philemon. He frequently attended Paul in his travels, and labored with him in the service of the Gospel, in which he was so diligent and zealous, that it is no wonder he was imprisoned for it, Heb. 13:23.—Tychicus was often sent on messages by Paul, 2 Tim. 4:12. Tit. 3:12. and more than once was recommended by him to the churches as a beloved brother, and faithful minister, and fellow-servant in the Lord, whom he employed not only to acquaint them with his own affairs, but also to know their state, and comfort their hearts, Eph. 6:21, 22. Col. 4:7, 8.—Trophimus, who was of Ephesus, appears to have been a Gentile convert, whom we find afterwards with Paul at Jerusalem, Acts 21:29. and attending him in other journeys till he left him at Miletum, sick, 2 Tim. 4:20. Those two last are called Asiatics, and being here distinguished from Gaius and Timothy, who were of Derbe and Lystra, both in Asia Minor, it is plain they are so called as natives of proconsular Asia.—It seems, from the construction of the original, that only Tychicus and Trophimus went before to Troas.

(6.) 'The argument which some zealous papists have drawn from this text, for denying the cup in the sacrament to the laity, was so solemnly given up in the council of Trent, that it is astonishing, any who profess to believe the divine authority of that council, should ever have presumed to plead it again.'

V. 7—12. It is not said, that the disciples were called together, as on a special occasion; but that they came together, as it seems, accord-



the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him, said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

11 When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

[Practical Observations.]

l. c. 2:42, 45. 1 Co. m. c. 1:13. 2 K. 4:34.  
10:16. 11:20-34. n. 1 K. 17:21. o. Mat. 9:24.

I. There was a solemn religious assembly of the Christians there, according to their constant custom, and the custom of all the churches, v. 7. Though they read, and meditated, and prayed, and sung psalms, apart, yet they must *come together* to worship God in concert. There ought to be stated times for the disciples of Christ to come together, though they all cannot, yet as many as can.

It was on the first day of the week, called the Lord's day, Rev. 1:10. the Christian Sabbath, celebrated to the honor of Christ and the Holy Spirit, in remembrance of the resurrection of Christ, and the pouring out of the Spirit, both on the first day of the week. This is here said to be the day when the disciples came together, i. e. when it was their practice to come together in all the churches. Note, The first day of the week is to be religiously observed by all the disciples of

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-12. Tumults and opposition may constrain a Christian or minister to remove from his station, or to alter his purpose: but his employment and pleasure will be the same wherever he goes.—It shows a carnal state of mind, when people are soon wearied in the worship of God, and are in haste to close it, for the sake of animal recreation, or vain conversation. Doubtless it is inexpedient, on ordinary occasions, to lengthen out religious ordinances much beyond the usual time: yet surely Paul would be displeased, surprised, or grieved, to hear the professors of his doctrine complain of an instructive sermon, because it was an hour long; or of the length of the service, when it scarcely exceeded two hours!—If we cannot wholly excuse Eutychus,

ing to their general practice. Hence it is evident, that Christians were accustomed to assemble for religious worship, 'on the first day of the week;' but the change from the seventh to the first, appears to have been gradually and silently introduced, by example rather than by express precept. John 20:19-23.—'Breaking of bread,' or commemorating the death of Christ in the eucharist, was one chief end of their assembling. It may be gathered from the narrative, that the apostle staid on purpose to spend one Lord's day with them.—As the room was, most likely, very much crowded, the windows seem to have been open to admit the air.—It is probable that Eutychus had been dead: but the apostle was assured of his restoration to life, which perhaps took place at the moment when he spoke; and he afterwards gradually recovered health and strength. Accordingly, the company returned to their sacred services: and, after the Lord's supper had been celebrated, and the company had taken some refreshment; the apostle, instead of apologizing for the length of his discourse, resumed the subject, and continued to converse with them till the day dawned, and it was time for him and his friends to set out on their journey.—We may easily conceive how many things would be said at Troas, about a night spent altogether in preaching, religious conversation, and devotion: and had Eutychus lost his life, it would have given the enemies of the Gospel some plausible ground for exclaiming against unseasonable hours, long sermons, and enthusiastical irregularities. SCOTT. People who would make as long sermons, &c., as Paul here, to the general benefit of a promiscuous congregation, on occasions similar to this unique case of Paul's, must be such preachers as Paul was, and come as well prepared. In a Christian community, the cases where such a protracted meeting is necessary will be very few.

Ed.

Christ; and it is a sign between Christ and them, for by this is known that they are his disciples.

They had no temple or synagogue to meet in, no capacious, stately chapel, but met in a private house, v. 8. As they were few, and did not need, so they were poor, and could not build, a large meeting-place; yet they came together in [a third loft] an inconvenient place. It will be no excuse for absenting ourselves from religious assemblies, that the place of them is not so decent or so commodious as we would have it.

Breaking bread here is to be understood of the Lord's supper; that one instituted sign of breaking the bread, being put for all the rest, 1 Cor. 10:16. In this, not only the breaking of Christ's body for us, to be a sacrifice for our sins, is commemorated, but the breaking of Christ's body to us, to be food and a feast for our souls, is signified. In the primitive times, it was the custom of many churches to receive the Lord's supper every Lord's day,\* celebrating the memorial of Christ's death in the former; with that of his resurrection in the latter; and both in concert, in a solemn assembly, to testify their joint concurrence in the same faith and worship.

II. In this assembly Paul gave them a sermon, a long, a farewell sermon, v. 7. The preaching of the Gospel ought to accompany the sacraments. What does the seal signify without a writing? He had a great deal to say, and knew not he should ever have another opportunity of preaching to them. We know some that would have reproached Paul for this, as a long-winded preacher, that tired his hearers; but they were willing to hear, he saw them so, and therefore continued his speech, even till midnight; perhaps they met in the evening, for privacy, or in conformity to the example of the disciples, who came together on the first Christian Sabbath in the evening. It is probable he had preached to them in the morning, and yet thus lengthened out his evening sermon, even till midnight; we wish we had the heads of this long sermon, but we may suppose it was for substance the same with his epistles. The meeting being continued till midnight, there were candles set up, many lights, v. 8. that the hearers might turn to the Scriptures Paul quoted, and see whether these things were so; and that this might prevent

\* And so did the Plymouth Pilgrims. Ed.

the reproach of their enemies, who said they met in the night for works of darkness.

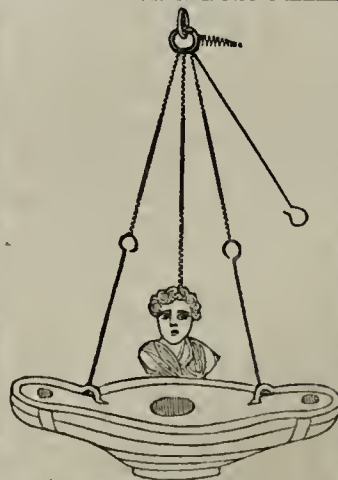
III. A young man in the congregation, that slept at sermon, was killed by a fall out of the window, but raised to life again; his name signifies one that had good fortune, Eutychus; and he answered his name. The peculiar notice taken of his sleeping, makes us willing to hope none of the rest slept, though it was sleeping time, and after supper; but this youth fell fast asleep, he was carried away with it; so the word is; which intimates, that he strove against it, but was overpowered by it, and at last sunk down with sleep. We must look upon it as an evil thing, be afraid of it, do what we can to prevent our being sleepy, not compose ourselves to sleep, but get our hearts affected with the word we hear, to such a degree as may drive sleep far enough; let us watch and pray, that we enter not into this temptation, and by it into worse.† The miraculous mercy showed him in his recovery to life again, v. 10. gave a present distraction, and interruption, but proved an occasion of a great confirmation to his preaching, and helped to make it effectual.

(1.) Paul, so far from saying, 'He was well enough served for minding so little what I said,' fell on the dead body and embraced it, thereby expressing a great compassion to, and an affectionate concern for, this young man. Such tender spirits are much affected with sad accidents of this kind, and are far from judging and cursing those that fall under them, as if those on whom the tower of Siloam fell, were sinners above all that dwell at Jerusalem; I tell you, nay. But this was not all; his falling on him, and embracing him, were in imitation of Elijah, 1 K. 17:21. and Elisha, 2 K. 4:34. in order to the raising of him to life again; not that this could, as a mean, contribute anything to it, but, as a sign, it represented the descent of that divine power on the dead body, for the putting of life into it again, which at the same time he inwardly, earnestly, and in faith, prayed for.

(2.) He assured them he was returned to

† Muscles laboriously exercised for six days, assert, by God's physiological law, dominion over the mind, when the laboring man sits down quietly awhile; especially when, as in the once breathed air of afternoon meetings, the invigorating oxygen of the air to be breathed, is partly consumed. 'Lights,' too, v. 8., destroy this. Leaving off work, mental or bodily, at noon on Saturday, more intellectuality and spirituality, ventilation, and spare Sabbath meals, would aid pulpit exhortations against the bad habit noticed here. Ed.

for yielding to sleep at midnight, during the apostle's copious exhortations; how inexcusable are they, who, in the middle of the day, and during a service of a moderate length, make a practice of sleeping, as if best pleased when most composed to rest! Infirmary or weariness, indeed, requires tenderness: but such an indulgent habit of contempt should be treated with decided severity. They who thus offend have cause to tremble, lest some sudden judgment should cut them off in their sin, and leave them to perish without remedy: and such as desire to get the better of this temptation should join earnest prayers with all other methods of keeping themselves awake; for when this is neglected, they need not wonder that they are unsuccessful. SCOTT.



(8.) Lights.] These, as classic relics show, were of forms, beautifully and splendidly diversified; the cut shows one of the common lamps. 'The wick was merely a few twisted threads, drawn through a hole in the upper part of the oil-vessel,' and there was no glass to give steadiness to the flame: such are still in use around the Mediterranean. Ed.

(8, 9.) The child's or youth's punishment (by falling) was simply for disobedience to God's natural laws: compare, Lu. 13:4. Bloomf. remarks, that the words 'there were many lights,' is a circumstance thrown in, like John 6:10. 'Such are the remarks of eyewitnesses.' Id.

(9.) Window.] These were made, probably, as now in the E., extended down to the floor. Perhaps it was a square projection, latticed on three sides, with a cushioned floor some feet higher than the floor of the room; such are still seen in the E. Ed. 'The Gr. plainly signifies an open window, which had a sort of wooden casement, or little door, [hence is derived window, provincial window, i. e. wind-door. BL.] which was set open, that the room might not be overheated with so much company, and so many lamps. It is well



13 ¶ And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot.

14 And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene.

15 And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus.

16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia; for he hastened, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

17 ¶ And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,

p c. 18:21. 24:17. q c. 2:1. 1 Co. 16:8. r c. 19:1,10.

life, and it would appear presently. Various speculations, we may suppose, this ill accident had occasioned in the congregation, but Paul puts an end to them; 'Trouble not yourselves, be not in any disorder about it, let it not put you into any hurry, for his life is in him; he is not dead, but sleepeth; lay him a while on a bed, and he will come to himself, for he is now alive.' Thus, when Christ raised Lazarus, he said, *Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me.*

(3.) He returned to his work immediately after this interruption, v. 11. and they talked a long while, even till break of day. Paul did not now go on in a continued discourse, as before, but he and his friends fell into a free conversation, the subject of which, no doubt, was good, and to the use of edifying. Christian conference is an excellent mean

known, the ancients had not yet glass in their windows, though the manner of making it was invented long before.' *Doddr.* Continued his speech.] 'At what time he began we cannot tell, but we hear when he concluded, v. 11. though about midnight his discourse was interrupted by the fall of Eutyehus. As it was about the time of the Pentecost, and we may suppose about the beginning of May, as Troas was about forty degrees of north latitude, the sun set there at 7 P. M., and rose at 5 A. M., so that the night was about eight hours long; and taking all the interruptions together, and they could not have amounted to more than two hours; and taking no account of the preceding day's work, Paul must have preached a sermon not less than six hours long. But it is likely good part of this time was employed in hearing and asking questions, for so the original words may be understood to imply.' Dr. A. C.

V. 15—16. Assos, Trogyllium, and Miletus were cities of Asia, on the sea-coast: Mitylene was a city in the Isle of Lesbos, which, with Chios and Samos, was situated near the Coast of Asia, in what is now called the Archipelago. Miletus, a city about thirty miles further to the south from Ephesus.—The apostle seems to have had the direction of the vessel, which he could not have had, if merely a passenger: it is therefore probable that it belonged to some of his friends.—The historian continues to speak in language which shows that he was one of the company.

SCOTT.

(13.) *On foot.*] 'Pezeuein: go by land, so the best writers. This was to enjoy his Troas friends a little longer; and to avoid the dangerous navigation of the promontory of Lectrum; and from Troas to Assos is one third shorter by land than by sea.' *Bl.*, whom see. *Ed.*

(16, 17.) See *Bl.*, proving that Paul, &c., did not hire a whole ship, but took advantage of such coasters as they met with, 21:2. *Id.*

V. 17. The same persons are in this chapter called 'elders' or presbyters, and 'overseers' or bishops; (*episcopoi*, 29.) it must therefore be allowed, that these were not distinct orders of ministers in the church at that time. Probably, when the apostles founded a church they appointed pastors over it; according to the numbers to be superintended, or the field of usefulness which was opened in the neighborhood: these were at first called either 'elders,' or 'overseers,' i. e. presbyters, or bishops, indifferently; and no one had any direct authority over the rest. By degrees the number of converts would increase, other churches would be planted in the neighborhood, and more pastors chosen. In the mean time the senior ministers, and such as were most eminent for wisdom, ability, piety, or usefulness, would acquire a measure of influence and authority: and their juniors, both in their own church, and in others which had been planted from it, would naturally look up to them.

of promoting holiness, comfort, and Christian love.

(4.) Before they parted, they brought in the young man alive, every one congratulating him, and they were not a little comforted, v. 12. not only the relations of the young man, but the whole society, [from sympathy, and] as it not only prevented the reproach that would otherwise have been cast on them, but contributed very much to the credit of the Gospel.

V. 13—16. Paul is hastening towards Jerusalem, no doubt endeavoring to make every place he came to the better for him, as every good man should do.

I. He sent his companions by sea to Assos, but he himself was minded to go afoot, v. 13. and if the land-way was the shorter, yet the ancients notice it as a rough way; (*Homer, Iliad, 6.* and *Eustathius* upon him, say, it was enough to kill one to go on foot to Assos, *Lorin. in locum*;) yet that way Paul would take; 1. That he might call on his friends by the way, and do good among them, either converting sinners or edifying saints; Or, 2. That he might inure himself to hardship, and not seem to indulge his ease; that he might make his sufferings for Christ, when called out to them, the more easy, 2 *Tim. 2:3.* We should use ourselves to self-denial.

II. At Assos he went on board with his friends, and made the best of his way to Jerusalem; passed by Chios, v. 15. touched at Samos; places of note among the Greek writers, both poets and historians; tarried a while at Trogyllium, the sea-port next to Samos; and the next day came to Miletus, the sea-port that lay next to Ephesus; for v. 16. he had determined not to go to Ephesus at this time, because he was resolved not to stay, and would not put himself into a temptation to stay. He had been at Jerusalem, about four or five years ago, *ch. 18: 21, 22.* and now would again pay his continued respects to that church, that he might not be thought alienated by his commission to preach among the Gentiles. The feast of pentecost was a time of concourse, which would give him an opportunity of propagating the Gospel among the Jews and proselytes, who came from all parts to worship at the feast: and that feast had been particularly made famous among the Christians, by the pouring out of the Spirit. Men of business must fit

themselves, and it will contribute to the expediting of it, to set time, with submission to Providence, and strive to keep it; contriving to do that first which we judge to be most needful, and not suffering ourselves to be diverted from it. It is a pleasure to us to be with our friends, it diverts us, nothing more; but we must not be diverted by it from our work. This is not the world we are to be together in; we hope to be so in the other.

V. 17—35. These elders, or presbyters [here], some think, were those twelve who received the Holy Ghost by Paul's hands, *ch. 19: 6.* But beside those, probably Timothy had ordained other elders there for the service of that church, and the country about; these Paul sent for, that he might instruct and encourage them to go on in the work to which they had laid their hands, a very pathetic and practical discourse, which has in it much of the excellent spirit of this good man.

I. He appeals to them concerning both his life and doctrine, all the time he had been in and about Ephesus, v. 18. He mentions this, (1.) As a confirmation of his commission, and consequently of the doctrine he had preached among them; and that he was no designing, self-seeking man. The temper of his mind, and the tenor both of his preaching and conversation, plainly spoke that God was with him of a truth, and that he was actuated and animated by a better spirit than his own. (2.) As an instruction to them in whose hands the work was now left, to follow his example; 'Ye know after what manner I have been with you, how I have conducted myself as a minister; in like manner be you with those that are committed to your charge when I am gone,' *Phil. 4:9.*

1. His spirit and conversation were excellent and exemplary; they knew after what manner he had been among them, and how he had had his conversation toward them, in simplicity, and godly sincerity, 2 *Cor. 1:12.* How holily, justly, and unblamably he behaved himself, and how gentle he was toward them, 1 *Thess. 2: 7, 10.* (1.) He had conducted himself well, all along, from the very first day he came into Asia; at all seasons; his entering in among them was such as nobody could find fault with. He was a man that was consistent with himself, and all of a piece, uniform, like a die, which, throw

Thus they would be expected to take the lead in every business: especially in the ordination of ministers, in directing their labors, and in animadverting on such as turned aside to heretical doctrines, or immoral practices. Hence the name of 'Bishop,' or Overseer, or Inspector, seems gradually to have been appropriated to one principal minister, to whom a measure of authority and distinction was insensibly annexed; and the title and rank of 'Presbyters' were continued to the rest. 11:27—30. It is evident that episcopacy prevailed, generally and early, in the primitive church; and it seems to have been gradually introduced. There were many elders in the church at Ephesus at this time; yet Christ afterwards addressed his epistle 'to the angel of the church at Ephesus;' which seems to mean the superintending pastor, who was an inspector over the elders. *Rev. 2:1.* It appears, to me at least, that neither episcopacy, nor any other species of church-government, can be proved from Scripture, to be exclusively of divine authority. But a moderate episcopacy has many and great advantages to recommend it: and the high claims and excessive authority, which soon began to be advanced and exercised by bishops and lordly prelates, of different titles; and all the abuses of antichristian tyranny, supply the best arguments to those, who would entirely exclude that order from the church. In this, however, as well as in other things, very much remains to be remedied and rectified, among every description of Christians, before matters can be reduced to the scriptural standard.—Every impartial man must allow, that if Timothy had been at this time bishop of Ephesus, in that sense for which some contend; the apostle would have given these elders some exhortation, to pay a proper deference to his episcopal authority.—To assert, as some have done, (*Hann.* especially,) that these elders of Ephesus were indeed the diocesan bishops of all the Asiatic churches, only exposes the ease which it is meant to support: for, besides the inexcusable liberty taken with the words of Scripture; how could these bishops have been got together, at so short a notice? Unless it be supposed, that they all resided at Ephesus, and left the charge of their dioceses to others, according to the too common custom of later times! The statement would also show, that there were no presbyters; and consequently, a parity of ministers, in the primitive church, directly contrary to the sentiments of those who make it. *Phil. 1:1.* 1 *Tim. 3: 1. 5:19, 20.* *SCOTT.* See note, end of *ch.* and 1 *Pet. 5:1,2.* *Ed.*

V. 18. *Ye know, &c.*] 'From these words (*comp. v. 12.*) and those of v. 25. it is quite evident, that besides the presbyters of Ephesus, others also of Asia, (*i. e.* Ionia,) were present (*Kuin.*); few of whom would have more than a day's journey to travel.' *Bloomf.*, whom see.



19 Serving the Lord with all <sup>a</sup>humility of mind, and with many <sup>b</sup>tears, and <sup>c</sup>temptations, which befell me by <sup>d</sup>the lying in wait of the Jews :

20 And how <sup>e</sup>I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, <sup>f</sup>and from house to house,

21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance <sup>g</sup>toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 And now, behold, I go <sup>h</sup>bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not <sup>i</sup>knowing the things that shall befall me there :

23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, <sup>j</sup>that bonds and afflictions <sup>k</sup>abide me.

24 But none <sup>l</sup>of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might <sup>m</sup>finish my course with joy, and the ministry, <sup>n</sup>which I have received <sup>o</sup>of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

s 1 Co. 15:9,10. t Phi. 3:18. u 2 Co. 4:7-11. v ver. 3. w ver. 27. x 2 Ti. 4:2.

it which way you will, lights on a square side. (2.) He had made it his business to serve the Lord; to promote the interest of Christ and his kingdom among them; he never served himself, nor was a time-server. In his ministry, in his whole conversation, he proved himself what he wrote himself, Paul a servant of Jesus Christ, Rom. 1: 1. (3.) He had done his work with all humility of mind, i. e. in all works of condescension, modesty, and self-abasement. Though one that God had put great honor on, and done great good by, yet he never took state on him, nor kept people at a distance, but conversed freely and familiarly with all for their good. Those that would in any office serve the Lord, acceptably to Him and profitably to others, must do it with all humility of mind, Matt. 20: 26, 27. (4.) He had always been very tender, affectionate, and compassionate among them; he was herein like his Master, often in tears; in his praying, he wept and made supplication, Hos. 12: 4. In his preaching, what he had told them before, he told them again, even weeping, Phil. 3: 18. In his concern for them, though his acquaintance with them was but of a late standing, yet so near did they lie to his heart, that he wept with them that wept, and mingled his tears with their's on every occasion, which was very endearing. (5.) He had struggled with many difficulties among them; he went on with his work in the face of much opposition, many temptations, trials of his patience and courage, such discouragements as perhaps were sometimes temptations to him (as to Jeremiah in a like case) to say, I will not speak any more in the name of the Lord, Jer. 20: 8, 9. These befell him by the lying in wait of the Jews, who still were plotting some mischief or other against him. Note, Those are the faithful servants of the Lord, that continue to serve Him in the midst of troubles and

perils; that care not what enemies they make, so that they can but approve themselves to their Master, and make Him their Friend. Paul's tears were owing to his temptations; his afflictions helped to excite his good affections.

2. His preaching was likewise such as it should be, v. 20, 21. (1.) Plain; he delivered his message so as to be understood; this is intimated in two words, I have showed you, and have taught you; he did not amuse them with nice speculations, nor lead them into, and then lose them in, the clouds of lofty notions and expressions; but he showed them the plain truths of the Gospel, which were of greatest consequence and importance, and taught them as children are taught.

(2.) Powerful; intimated in his testifying to them; he preached as one on oath, that was himself fully assured of the truth of what he preached, and desirous to convince them of it, and to influence and govern them by it. He preached the Gospel, not as a hawker proclaims news in the street, (it is all one to him whether it be true or false,) but as a conscientious witness gives in his evidence at the bar, with the utmost seriousness and concern.

(3.) Profitable; in all his preaching he aimed, not at pleasing, but at doing good to those he preached to; he studied what had a tendency to make them wise and good, wiser and better; to inform their judgments, and reform their hearts and lives. Those teach for God, that teach people to profit, Is. 48: 17.

(4.) Pains-taking; he was very industrious and indefatigable in his work; he preached publicly, and from house to house; and did not think that the one manner would excuse him from the other. Ministers should in their private visits, and as they go from house to house, discourse of those things which they have taught publicly, repeat them, inculcate them, and explain them, if it be needful, asking, Have you understood all these things? And especially, they should help persons to apply it to themselves and their own ease.

(5.) Faithful; he not only preached what was profitable, but everything he thought might be profitable, he kept back nothing; he declined not preaching whatever he thought might be profitable, though not fashionable, nor to some acceptable. He did not keep back reproofs when necessary, for fear of offending; nor keep back the preaching of the cross, though he knew it was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks, foolishness, as the Roman missionaries in China lately did.

(6.) Catholic; he testified both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks. Though born and bred a Jew, yet he did not therefore confine himself to the Jews, and avoid the Gentiles; but preached as readily to them as to the Jews. And, on the other hand, though called to be the apostle of the Gentiles, and the Jews had an implacable enmity against him on that score, yet he did not therefore abandon them as reprobates, but continued to deal with them for their good. Ministers must preach the Gospel with impartiality; for they are ministers of Christ for the universal church.

Finally, he was a truly Christian, evangelical preacher, he did not preach philosophical notions, or matters of doubtful dispute, nor [party] politics, but faith and repentance, the two great gospel-graces, the nature and necessity of them; these he urged on all occasions. He preached repentance as God's great command, ch. 17: 30. which we

must obey,—that men should repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance, so he explains it, ch. 26: 20. and he preached it as Christ's gift, in order to the remission of sins, ch. 5: 31. and directed people to look up to Him for it.

He preached faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, as our Way to God. Sin must by repentance be abandoned and forsaken, and then Christ must by faith be relied on for the pardon of sin. Our repentance toward God is not sufficient, we must have a true faith in Christ as our Redeemer and Savior, consenting to Him as our Lord and our God. For there is no coming to God, as penitent prodigals to a Father, but in the strength and righteousness of Jesus Christ as Mediator. Such a preacher, they all knew Paul had been; and if they will carry on the same work, they must walk in the same spirit, in the same steps.

II. He declares his expectation of sufferings and afflictions in his present journey to Jerusalem, v. 22—24.; therefore let them not think he quitted Asia now, for fear of persecution. Now behold, I go bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem; which may be understood either, of the certain foresight he had of trouble before him; or of the strong impulse he was under from the Spirit of God working on his spirit to go this journey.

1. He does not know particularly the things that shall befall him at Jerusalem; it is good for us to be kept in the dark concerning future events, that we may be always waiting on God, and waiting for Him. When we go abroad, it should be with this thought, we know not the things that shall befall us, nor what a day, or a night, or an hour, may bring forth; and therefore must refer ourselves to God, let Him do with us as seemeth good in his eyes, and STUDY TO STAND COMPLETE IN HIS WHOLE WILL.

2. Yet he does know, in general, that there is a storm before him; for the prophets in every city he passed through, told him, by the Holy Ghost, that bonds and afflictions did abide him. Beside the common notice given to all Christians and ministers to expect and prepare for sufferings, [and his own past experience,] Paul had particular intimations of an extraordinary trouble, greater and longer than any he had yet met with, that was now before him.

3. He fixes a brave and heroic resolution to go on with his work, notwithstanding. He was flesh and blood, as well as other men; and yet, by the grace of God, he was enabled to go on with his work, and to look with a gracious and generous contempt on all the difficulties and discouragements he met with in it. Let us take it from his own mouth here, v. 24. where he speaks not with obstinacy or ostentation, but with a holy, humble resolution; 'None of these things move me, all my care is to proceed and to persevere in the way of my duty, and to finish well.' Paul is here an example, (1.) Of holy courage and resolution in our work, notwithstanding difficulties and oppositions; he saw them before him, but says, I make no account of them. He did not lay these things to heart, Christ and heaven lay there. None of these things drove him off from his work, nor deprived him of his comfort, nor made him drive on heavily in his work; in the midst of troubles he was as one unconcerned. Those that have their conversation in heaven, can look down, not only on the common troubles of this earth, but on the threatening rage and malice of hell itself, and say, that none of these things move them, as knowing that none of these things can hurt them. (2.)

V. 21. This repentance and faith, when considered in connexion with man's need of them, the source from which they spring, and the invariable effects of them, on the heart and life of him who continually exercises them; may be considered as the substance of Christianity, the religion of a sinner under a dispensation of mercy and grace. SCOTT.

V. 22. Bound in the Spirit.] Perhaps the bonds and imprisonment, which the Holy Spirit, by the prophets, constantly predicted, as

awaiting the apostle, were intended by this expression. (23. Note, 19: 21, 22.)—'This resembles the expression used in ch. 18: 5. and in both I understand to pneuma, not of the Holy Spirit, but of the spirit and mind of Paul.' Bp. Middleton. See on 18: 5.

(22.) Bound, &c.] 'Either the strong influence of the Divine Spirit on his mind, or the strong propensity in his own will, wish, and desire to visit Jerusalem.'



25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am <sup>h</sup> pure from the blood of all men.

27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel <sup>i</sup> of God.

28 Take heed <sup>j</sup> therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you <sup>k</sup> overseers, to feed <sup>l</sup> the church of God, which he hath purchased <sup>m</sup> with his own blood.

h 2 Co. 7:2. k He. 13:17. m Ep. 1:14. Col. 1 Ep. 1:11. l Pr. 10:21. Je. 3: 1:14. He. 9:12, 15. Ju. 21:15— 14. 1 Pe. 1:18, 4:16. 17. 1 Pe. 5:2,3. 19. Re. 5:9.

Of a holy contempt of life, and the continuance and comforts of it; *Neither count I my life dear to myself.* Life is sweet, and naturally dear to us, *all that a man has will he give for his life;* but all that a man has, and life too, will he give, who understands himself aright and his own interest, rather than lose the favor of God, and hazard eternal life. This explains Luke 14:26, where we are required to *hate* our own lives, not in a hasty passion, as Job and Jeremiah, but in a holy submission to the will of God, and a resolution to *die* for Christ, rather than to *deny* Him. (3.) Of a holy concern to go through with the work of life, which should be much more our care, than to secure either the outward comforts or the continuance of it. Blessed Paul counts not his life *dear*, in comparison with this, and resolves in the strength of Christ, *that he never will, to save his life, lose the ends of living.* Two things if this great and good man gain, it is no matter to him what comes of life:

[1.] That he may be *found faithful* to the trust reposed in him; make *full proof of his ministry*; go through the business of it, and others reap the advantage of it, to the utmost that was designed. Observe, The apostleship was a ministry both to Christ and to the souls of men; and they that were called to it, considered more the *ministry* [i. e. *serv- ing*] than the *dignity* or dominion of it; and if the apostles did so, much more ought the pastors and teachers to do so, and to be *in the church as those that serve.* This ministry was *received from the Lord Jesus*; for Him they do their work, in his name, in his strength, and to Him they must give up their account. The work of this ministry was, to *testify the Gospel of the grace of God*, to publish it to the world, to prove it, and to recommend it; and being the Gospel of the grace of God, it has enough in it to recommend itself; it is a proof of God's good-will to us, and a mean of his good work in us. Paul made it the business of his life to testify this, and desired not to live a day longer than he might be instrumental to spread the

knowledge, and savor, and power of this Gospel.

[2.] That he may finish well; he cares not when the period of his life comes, nor how, be it ever so soon, ever so sudden, ever so sad, as to outward circumstances, so that he may but *finish his course*, his *race*, so the word is, *with joy*, Heb. 12:1. This intimates, that we have our labors appointed us, for we were not sent into the world to be idle; and our limits appointed us, for we were not sent into the world to be here always; but to pass through the world, nay, to run through it; and it is soon run through. He speaks of the *finishing of his course*, as sure and near, and that upon which he had his thoughts continually. The business of our life is, to provide for a joyful death.

III. Counting on it, that this was the last time they should see him, he appeals to their consciences concerning his integrity, and demands of them a testimony to it.

1. When any of us part with our friends, we may say, and should say, 'We know not we shall ever see one another again, in this world.' But Paul here speaks it with assurance, by the Spirit of prophecy; and we cannot think he who spake so doubtfully of that which he was not sure of, v. 22. would speak this with so much confidence, unless he had had a special warrant from the Spirit to say it; to whom I think they do wrong, who suppose that, notwithstanding this, Paul did afterward come to Ephesus, and see them again. We ought often to think of it, that those who now are *preaching to us the kingdom of God*, will shortly be removed, and we shall see their faces no more; it concerns us therefore to improve their ministry while we have it, that when we shall see their faces no more on earth, yet we may hope to look them in the face with comfort in the great day.

2. He challenges them to prove him unfaithful, or to have said or done anything by which he had made himself accessory to the ruin of any precious soul; *I am pure from the blood of all men*, the blood of souls. This plainly refers to that of the prophet, Ez. 33:6. If a minister has approved himself faithful, he may have this *rejoicing in himself*. He therefore leaves the *blood* of them that perish, *on their own heads*, because they had fair warning given them, but they would not take it. He charges these ministers to look to it, that they took *care and pains*, as he had done; *I am pure from the blood of all men*, see that you keep yourselves so too. *I take you to record this day*; I call *this day* to witness to you, so Streso. As sometimes the heavens and earth are appealed to, so here *this day* shall be a witness; this parting day.

3. He proves his own fidelity with this, v. 27. He had preached to them nothing but the counsel of God, and not added any inventions of his own. He had preached to them the whole counsel of God; gone over a *body of divinity* among them, that, having the truths of the Gospel opened to them methodically, from first to last, in order, they might the better understand them, by seeing them in their several connexions with, and

dependences on, one another. He had not shunned to do it, to save his own pains, nor credit; he had not shunned preaching those doctrines, which he knew would be provoking to the watchful enemies of Christianity, or displeasing to the careless professors of it, but faithfully took his work before him, *whether they would hear or forbear.* And thus it was that he *kept himself pure from the blood of all men.*

IV. He charges them, as ministers, to be diligent and faithful in their work.

1. He commits the care of the church at Ephesus, i. e. the Christians there and thereabouts, Eph. 1:1. to them; who, though doubtless so numerous they could not all meet in one place, but worshipped God in several congregations, under the conduct of several ministers, are yet called here *one flock*, because they not only agreed in *one faith*, as they did with all Christian churches, but in many instances they kept up communion one with another. To these elders or presbyters the apostle here, on the actual foresight of his own final leaving them, commits the government of this church, and tells them that not he, but the *Holy Ghost*, had made them *overseers, bishops of the flock.* They took not this honor to themselves, but the Holy Ghost in them qualified them for, and enriched them to, this great undertaking, the *Holy Ghost fell upon them*, ch. 19:6.

2. He commanded them to mind the work they were called to; dignity calls for duty; (1.) They must *take heed to themselves* in the first place, must have a very jealous eye on all the motions of their own souls, and on all they said and did. Those are not likely to be skilful or faithful keepers of the vineyards of others, that do not keep their own. (2.) *Take heed to the flock*, to all the flock, see that no part be neglected. Ministers must have a constant regard to the souls of their charge, as shepherds to their sheep, that they receive no damage. (3.) They must *feed the church of God*, do all the parts of the shepherd's office; heal the distempered, feed them with wholesome doctrine, with a tender, evangelical discipline, and see that nothing is wanting that is necessary to their being nourished up to eternal life. There is need of pastors, not only to *gather* the church of God, by the bringing in of those that are without, but to *feed* it by building up those that are within. (4.) They must *watch*, v. 31. as *shepherds* keep watch over their flocks by night; must be awake and watchful; must not give way to spiritual sloth and slumber, but must stir up themselves to their business, and closely attend it. *Watch thou in all things*, 2 Tim. 4:5. watch against everything hurtful, and to everything that will be advantageous to the flock; improve every opportunity of doing it a kindness.

3. He gives them several good reasons for this. Let them consider,

(1.) The interest of their Master, and his concern for the flock, committed to their charge, v. 28. 'It is *the church which He has purchased with his own blood.* And if it be the *church of God*, He expects you would show

V. 25—27. An immediate revelation seems to have been, about this time, made to the apostle, that he should no more revisit Ephesus, or see any of these elders, or those in that neighborhood to whom he had preached, any more on earth.—It is probable, that the apostle went, after this, into the neighborhood of Ephesus: 2 Tim. 4:9—13, v. 12. Philem. 22—25. and, on this ground, some learned men think, that in saying, 'I know that ye all... shall see my face no more; he only meant to draw this conclusion from the predictions, which were given of the sufferings that awaited him. The elders, however, understood him, as speaking with certainty of what he knew by revelation: nor did he attempt to undeceive them, though he saw them overwhelmed with grief. 36—38. Pref. to 1 Tim. [He may have had, says Dr. A. Clarke, 'a divine intimation, that the persons now present should not be alive when he came again that way. Or, it may refer only to Ephesus and Miletus... which, probably, he did not revisit,' though it seems he was again in their neighborhood; see, in add. to the texts above, 'Phil. 1:25—27. 2:24. Heb. 13:19, 23.' Ep.] (27) *Shunned.*] See on 20. 'A military word from soldiers who recoil, and leave their standing.' Leigh. 'Its proper import in such a connexion,' (as used by Demosth. and Lucian,) 'is, to *disguise* any important truth, and at least to *decline* its open publication, for fear of displeasing.' Doddr.

SCOTT.

(25.) *BL.* complains of the expedients, to reconcile this v. with Paul's

actual return to Asia and Ephesus, as 'far-fetched, evidently made for the nonce, and only meriting contempt;' and finds 'the true key at v. 22; the words of which, as I have proved,' says he, 'were spoken with an avowed ignorance of the future, so were not *divinely prophetic*, but only those of one *under the influence of his human spirit*,—*not knowing* (as in Acts 19:28. Rom. 15:24. 2 Cor. 1:15). For the phrase *ego oïd' hoti*, [I know that,] is a *formula*, frequently used in the most elegant writers, but denotes something far less than certain knowledge (even with the addition of *eu* [well] before *oida* [know]), namely, *opinion* only and *present persuasion*. Comp. *Thucyd.* 1. 6, 34 fin. *Xen., Cyr.*, 3, 3, 32. See many other examples in *Sturz.* So Acts 3:17.' *BL.* Ed.

V. 28. The most able critics have shown, that the present is the genuine reading of the v.; though a few copies have 'the church of the Lord,' a phrase not used in the N. T. The passage is a most decisive testimony to the Deity of Christ. The atonement and ransom of our souls is the blood of Jesus, who is as truly God, as man: and thus in his mysterious Person, as God and man, He 'purchased the church with his own blood.' This gave the infinite value to his sacrifice; and it suggests to his ministers the most powerful motives to faithfulness, diligence, patience, and fortitude in their work.—The personality and Deity, and sovereignty likewise, of the Holy Spirit, are clearly shown, in the words, 'Over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.' SCOTT.



29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

33 I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

n Mat. 7:15. 2 Pe. 4, &c. 1:12. He. 9:15. 2:1. q 2 K. 4:5. 1 Pe. 1:4. o Je. 13:20. 23:1. r Col. 1:23. u 1 Sa. 12:3. 1 Eze. 34:2, 3. s Ju. 17:17. Co. 9:12. 2 Co. Zec. 11:17. t c. 26:13. Col. 7:2. p 1 Ju. 2:19. Jude

your love to Him, by feeding his sheep and lambs. He has purchased it; therefore it ought to be dear to us, for it was dear to Him, because it cost Him dear, and we cannot better show it, than by feeding his sheep and his lambs. He purchased it; not as Israel, of old, when He gave men for them, and people for their life, Is. 43:3, 4. but with his own blood. This proves, that Christ is God, for He is called so here, where yet He is said to purchase the church with his own blood; the blood was his as Man, here called the blood of God, for it was the blood of Him who is God, and his being so, put such dignity and worth into it, as made it both a valuable ransom of us from all evil, and a valuable purchase for us of all good, nay, a purchase of us to Christ, to be to Him a peculiar people; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; in consideration of this, therefore, feed the church of God, because it is purchased at so dear a rate.

(2.) The danger the flock was in of being made a prey to its adversaries, v. 29, 30. Some understand grievous wolves of persecutors, that will inform against the Christians, and incense the magistrates against them, and will have no compassion on the flock. Ministers must take a more than ordinary care of the flock, in times of persecution. But it is rather to be understood of seducers and false teachers; probably, he has an eye to those of the circumcision, that preached up the ceremonial law, and did all they could to blemish and defame those that adhered to the pure Gospel of Christ, Gal. 5:15. Phil. 3:2. While Paul was at Ephesus, they kept away, for they durst not face him; but when he was gone, then they entered in among them, and sowed their tares where he had sown the good seed. Take heed also, v. 30. of your own selves, among the members, nay,

perhaps, among the ministers of your own church, among you that I am now speaking to, shall men arise speaking perverse things, things contrary to the right rule of the Gospel, and destructive of the great intentions of it. Nay, they will pervert some sayings of the Gospel, and wrest them to make them patronize their errors, 2 Pet. 3:16. it is to draw away disciples after them, to make a party for themselves, that shall admire them, and be led by them. Some read it, to draw away the disciples after them; those that are already disciples of Christ, draw them from Him to follow them. This was there fulfilled in Phygellus and Hermogenes, who turned away from Paul and the doctrine he had preached, 2 Tim. 1:15. and in Hymeneus and Philetus, who concerning the truth erred, and overthrew the faith of some, 2 Tim. 2:18. which explains this here. But though there were some such seducers in the church of Ephesus, yet it should seem by Paul's Epistle to that church, that that church was not so much infested with false teachers, or at least with their false doctrine, as some other churches were; but its peace and purity were preserved, by the blessing of God on the pains and vigilance of these presbyters, to whom the apostle, in the actual foresight and consideration of the rise of heresies and schisms, as well as of his own death, committed the government of this church.

(3.) The great pains Paul had taken in planting this church, v. 31. Paul, like a faithful watchman, had warned them, and by his warnings of the danger of continuing in judaism and heathenism, he prevailed with men to embrace Christianity. He warned every one; beside the public warnings he gave in his preaching, he applied himself to particular persons, according as he saw their case called for it, which he had something to say peculiar to. He was constant in giving warning; night and day, his time was filled up with his work; in the night, when he should have been reposing himself, he was dealing with those he could not get to speak with in the day about their souls. He was indefatigable in it, he ceased not to warn; though they were ever so obstinate, yet he did not cease, not knowing but at length they might, by the grace of God, be overcome; though they were ever so pliable, yet he did not think that a sufficient excuse for him to desist, but still he warned them that were righteous, not to turn from their righteousness, as he had warned them when they were wicked, to turn from their wickedness, Ez. 3:18-21. He spake to them about their souls with great affection and concern, with tears. As he had served the Lord, so he had served them, with many tears, v. 19. He had begun the good work at Ephesus, thus free had he been of his pains; why then should they be sparing of their pains in carrying it on?

V. He recommends them to a divine conduct and influence, v. 32. They were in care what would become of them, how they

should go on in their work, break through their difficulties, and what provision would be made for them and their families. In answer to all these perplexities, Paul directs them to look up to God with an eye of faith, and beseeches God to look down on them with an eye of favor.

1. He commends them, (1.) To God, i. e. to his providence, and to its protection and care. It is enough, that, whomsoever we are separated from, still we have God nigh unto us, 1 Pet. 4:19. (2.) To the Word of his grace, by which some understand Christ, John 1:1. 1 John 1:1. He puts them into his hand, as being his servants, whom He would in a particular manner take care of. It comes much to one, if, by the Word of his grace, we understand the Gospel of Christ, for it is Christ in the Word that is nigh unto us for our support and encouragement, and his Word is spirit and life. He commends them to the Word of God's grace, not only as the foundation of their hope, and the fountain of their joy, but as the rule of their walking; observe the precepts of this Word, and then live upon its promises.

2. He commends them to the Word of God's grace, not so much for a protection from their enemies, or a provision for their families, as for the spiritual blessings they most needed, and ought most to value. (1.) For their edification; It is able (the Spirit with it and by it) to build you up: there is that in it which you need to be better acquainted with, and more affected with. Ministers, in preaching the Word of grace, must aim at their own edification, as well as at the edification of others. The most advanced Christians, while in this world, are capable of growing, and will find the Word of grace to have still more and more in it to contribute to their growth. (2.) For their glorification; It is able to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. The Word of God's grace gives it, not only as it gives the knowledge of it, but as it gives the promise of it; and by the Word, as the ordinary vehicle, the Spirit of grace is given, ch. 10:44. thus it is the Word of God's grace that gives us the inheritance. Those that would make out a title to heaven, must make it sure they are among the sanctified, incorporated with them, and partake of the same image and nature.

VI. He recommends himself to them as an example of indifference to this world, and to everything in it; which, if they would walk in the same Spirit, and in the same steps, they would find to contribute greatly to their easy and comfortable passage through it. He here tells them,

1. That he never aimed at worldly wealth, v. 33. There were many in Ephesus, and many of those that had embraced the Christian faith, who were rich, had a great deal of money, and plate, and rich furniture, and wore very good clothes, and made a very good appearance. Now, (1.)

(28.) 'The reading Theou (of God), is admitted by Beza, Hamn., Mill., Whitby, Wolf, Ven., Ern., Mich., Valek.; kuriou (of the Lord), by Grot., Le Clerc, and all (says Kuin., but certainly Ven., Ern., Mich., and Valek., are exceptions) the most eminent critics of the age; and is undoubtedly the true reading.' Kuin. But, says Bl., 'after a careful examination of what has been written on it, by Wetst., Griesb., Kuin., &c., I must avow that I see no reason to desert the common reading. If (so Mich.) Luke wrote Theou, we cannot [can?] easily account for the readings kuriou, or Christou: but if kuriou, what could possibly induce any one to change it to Theou, making an uncommon expression? Since then there has been wilful alteration, to whom are we to charge it?—See his learned note. The text cannot, we see, be a decisive one. Ed. Purchased.] 'Peripoiçato: "justissimus modus acquirendi." Grot. By this the apostle meant to suggest the obligations under which we lie, to acknowledge Jesus as Lord, and render unto Him due honor and obedience. Thus in 1 Pet. 2:9. Christians are said to be a people eis peripoiçsin, and in Tit. 2:14. a people periousios. And the Jewish people is, in Ex. 19:5. Deut. 7:6. and elsewhere, called am sgh. The student will observe, the middle form in peripoiçisthai, "to acquire anything for one's own use." See Dresig, and Wetst. It was often used of gaining a town by capture, or, what is to our present purpose, acquiring the right to any one's services as a slave, by sparing his life, or otherwise preserving his life in war (whence the origin of servus, a slave). So Herod. 1, 110. Wetst. ref. to Gen. 12:12. Ex. 1:16. 32:14. and also cites Appian, p. 397.

In the active it often signifies to save, preserve, as in Thucyd. 2, 25, 3, 102, 6, 104.' Bloomf. Purchased with his own blood.] 'I cannot but apprehend, that it was the special direction of the Holy Spirit that so remarkable an expression was used.' Doddr.—'The reading of the great majority of MSS. is "of the Lord and of God;" though the most ancient are for "of the Lord:" on this ground, Griesb. has admitted this reading into the text, and put "of the Lord and of God" in the margin. Wakefield, a Unitarian, decides for "of God," as the true reading; but understands "blood" to mean son, and tr. "by his own Son;" but as the redemption of man is, throughout the N. T., attributed to the sacrificial death of Christ, it is not likely that this very unusual meaning should apply here.' DR. A. CLARKE. V. 31. Night and day.] 'I. e. assiduously: Luke 2:37. 1 Thess. 2:9, 3:10. And so Artemid. 2, 70.' V. 32-35. With this example, instruction, and admonition to labor, disinterestedness, and liberality, the apostle closed his address to these elders; and his words could not but make a deep and durable impression on their pious minds. SCOTT. (32.) 'From the certainty with which a Jew's inheritance [lot] was secured to the heirs and occupiers, it became an image not only of undisturbed possession, but of certain acquirement.' BLOOMF. (33.) 'Ephesus was famous (see Wetst.) for costly and splendid garments, which are, apparently, denoted by the original word, and by the Hebrews reckoned part of one's wealth. See Mat. 6:19.' ID.



34 Yea, ye yourselves v know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.

35 I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak; and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

36 ¶ And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled v down, and prayed with them all.

37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him;

38 Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

v c. 18:3. 1 Co. w Ro. 15:1. Ep. y c. 21:5.  
4:12. 1 Th. 2:9. 4:28. 1 Th. 5:14. 2 Ge. 46:29.  
2 Th. 3:8. x Lu. 14:12-14. a ver. 25.

Paul was not ambitious to live like them; we may take it in that sense. The false apostles desired to make a fair show in the flesh, Gal. 6:12, to make a figure in the world; but Paul did not; he knew how to want, and how to be abased. (2.) He was not greedy to receive from them either silver, or gold, or apparel; so far from being always craving, that he was not so much as coveting, nor desired them to allow him so and so for his pains among them, but was content with such things as he had; he never made a gain of them, 2 Cor. 12:14. He could not only say with Moses, Num. 16:15, and with Samuel, 1 S. 12:3, 5. *Whose ox have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded?* But, 'Whose kindness have I coveted, or asked? Or to whom have I been burdensome?' He protests against desiring a gift, Phil. 4:17.

2. That he had worked for his living, and taken a deal of pains to get bread, v. 34. Observe, (1.) Paul was sometimes reduced to necessities, and the want of the common supports of life, though so great a favorite of heaven, and so great a blessing to this earth. What an unthinking, unkind, and ungrateful world is this, that could let such a man as Paul be poor in it! (2.) He desired no more than to have his necessities supplied; he did not work at his calling to enrich him-

self, but to maintain himself with food and raiment. (3.) When he was to earn his bread, he did it by a manual occupation. Paul had a head and tongue that he might have got money by, but they were these hands, saith he, that ministered to my necessities. Paul puts these presbyters (and others in them) in mind of this, that they may not think it strange if they be thus neglected, and yet to go on in their work, and make the best shift they can to live; the less encouragement they have from men, the more they shall have from God. (4.) He worked not only for himself, but for the support of them also that were with him; that was hard indeed! It had better become them to have worked for him, to maintain him as their tutor; but so it is; those that are willing to take the laboring oar, will find those about them willing they should have it.

3. That even then when he worked for the supply of his own necessities, yet he spared something out of what he got, for the relief of others; for this he here obliges them to do, v. 35. Some understand it of their supporting the faith of weak believers, by removing the prejudices which some conceived against Christianity, as if the preachers of it made a gainful trade of their preaching, and the Gospel was only a trick to get money by, and pick people's pockets; but I rather understand it, of their helping to support the sick and the poor, and those that could not labor, because it agrees with Paul's exhortation, Eph. 4:28. We must labor in an honest employment, not only that we may be able to live, but that we may be able to give.

This might seem a hard saying, and, therefore, Paul backs it with a saying of our Master's, which he would have them always to remember; words which our Lord, it should seem, often used to his disciples, Mat. 10:8, 9, which, though nowhere recorded by the evangelists, yet Paul had, by word of mouth from Peter, or some other of the disciples; and an excellent saying it is, and has something of a paradox in it; *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* 'It is,' (saith Dr. Tillotson,) 'a particular endearment of this admirable saying of our Savior's to us, that, being omitted by the evangelists, and in danger of being lost and forgotten, it was thus happily retrieved by Paul, and recorded by Luke.' The sentiment of the children of this world is contrary; they are afraid of giving; 'This giving,' they say, 'undoes us all;' but they are in hope of getting, every one for his gain

from his quarter, Is. 56:11. Clear gain is with them the most blessed thing that can be; but Christ tells us, *It is more blessed, more excellent in itself, an evidence of a more excellent disposition of mind, and the way to a better blessedness at last, to give, than to receive.* It makes us more like to God, who gives to all, and receives from none; and to the Lord Jesus, who went about doing good. *It is more blessed to give our pains than to receive pay for it, and what we should delight to do.* It is more pleasant to do good to the grateful, but it is more honorable to do good to the ungrateful,\* for [God commands it, and] then we have God to be our paymaster.

V. 36-38. After Paul's parting sermon to the elders of Ephesus, which was very affecting, we have here the parting prayer and tears, yet more so; we can scarcely read the account, and meditate on them, with dry eyes.

I. They parted with prayer, v. 36. A joint prayer; he not only prayed for them, but with them, with them all. It is good for friends, when they part, to part with prayer; that by praying together, just at parting, they may be enabled to pray the more feelingly one for another when parted, which is one part of our Christian duty, and an improvement of the communion of saints. *The Lord watch between us, and watch over us both, when we are absent one from the other,* is a good parting prayer, Gen. 31:49, as also that our next meeting may be either nearer heaven, or in heaven. Paul here followed the example of Christ, John 17:1.

II. They parted with tears, abundance of tears, and most affectionate embraces, v. 37, 38. Those that are most loving, are commonly best beloved. Paul, who was a most affectionate friend himself, had very affectionate friends. These tears at parting with Paul were a grateful return for all he had shed in preaching to, and praying with them. *He that watereth, shall be watered also himself.*

What cut them to the heart thus, was, that word Paul spake, that they should see his face no more: it makes the farewell just like a funeral. There were other things for which they sorrowed,—that they should want the benefit of his public performances, his personal counsels and comforts; but this gave the most sensible accent to their grief. If our friends died in Christ, and we live to Him, though we shall see their faces no more in this world, we hope to see them again in

\* And even injurious. See Wayland's Mor. Sci. Ed.

PRACT. OBS. V. 13-38. No Christian can be comfortable or prosperous without retirement. Popular ministers may preach, converse, or pray in company, to the edifying of others: and yet decline in their own souls, for want of self-examination, humiliation, and secret prayer, suited immediately to their own case: their friends should consider this, and not too much intrude on the regular and needful hours for retirement of those persons in whose company they most delight.—All who are employed in the sacred pastoral service, whether favored with living monitors, in some degree resembling Paul, or not, should consider this charge of the apostle as addressed to them, even as really as to the Ephesian elders; and as thus setting before them the proper conduct, spirit, and principles of a true minister of Christ. Except we are ourselves deeply affected with the subjects on which we treat, how can we expect to affect others? and how can we convince them, that we indeed mean anything by our exhortations, unless we persevere in our labors amidst temptations and opposition?—Alas! few who claim the honor of being 'the successors of the apostles,' in office and authority, are disposed to affect an equality with them in self-denial, and a willing-

ness to labor night and day without emolument, and in circumstances of comparative poverty! It is indeed probable, that their authority, as successors to the apostles, would be far less questioned, if this were their conduct and spirit. The zealous and prudent minister of Christ, however, who is 'wise to win souls,' will not tenaciously demand even his due maintenance, when it would interfere with his usefulness; but will 'suffer all things, rather than hinder the Gospel of Christ.' Should peculiar circumstances require or admit of it, his own hands would minister to his necessities, and those of his family or friends: that he might show the people all his principles reduced to practice; and teach even the poor of the flock thus to labor, that they might be able to assist in supporting the weak; and that every one might learn to inquire, not what gain he shall make, but what good he can do; according to the words of our gracious Lord, who has taught us, that 'It is more blessed to give than to receive;' a sentence, that should be written on every heart, especially on that of every minister of the Gospel. 'This miad was in Christ Jesus;' may it be in us also. Amen, and Amen. SCOTT.

(34.) 'I question whether in the whole range of ancient oratory, there is to be found a sentence of more *deinotes*, and in which energy and pathos are more happily combined.' Bloomf. *Weak.* 'The needy and infirm, who are not able to maintain themselves.' DODDR.

(35.) *All things.* Rather, *completely.* Bloomf. *It is more blessed, &c.* 'This is a true and precious monument of apostolical tradition.' Doddr. Were the whole world to feel and practice upon this sentiment, the work of religion would be more than half done; for selfishness is the great antagonist principle of the Gospel. See Wayland's Elts. Mor. Sci. Ed. Where or on what occasion our Lord spake these words, we do not know; but the sentiment is worthy of Christ. A truly generous mind, in affluence, rejoices in opportunities to do good; and feels happy in having such opportunities. A man of an independent spirit, when reduced to poverty, finds it a severe trial to be obliged to live on the bounty of another; and feels pain in receiving what the other feels a happiness in communicating. Let, therefore, the man who is able to give, feel himself the obliged person: and think how much pain the feeling heart of the supplicant must endure, in being obliged to forego

its native independence, in soliciting and receiving the bounty of another. I am not speaking of common beggars; these have got their minds already depraved, and their native independence reduced, by sin and idleness, to servility.' DR. A. CLARKE.

V. 36-38. 'This, which is Luke's own explication, leaves no room for ambiguity, which might be imagined in the expression used before. (25.) Doddr.—It does not appear that there was a church at Miletus; for none are spoken of, but the elders of Ephesus and Paul's companions. It is probable, that Timothy went to Ephesus with these elders, and resided there for some time; as we do not find that he accompanied the apostle to Jerusalem, or was with him before he arrived at Rome. Pref. 1 Tim.

(37.) *Fell, &c.* 'Still in the E. relatives and friends, on meeting or parting, embrace each other, and kiss each others' hands, face, or shoulder. With the Greeks and Romans it was not unusual to kiss the head.' ED.

Concluding Note. Overseers, v. 28.] 'Eπισκοπος [corrupted in bishop] is a name generally applied to those who preside over anything, or to whose care its administration is committed. So the Hebrews used *pyd* for ruler, tr. at Num. 31:14. Judg.



## CHAP. XXI.

1 Paul will not by any means be dissuaded from going to Jerusalem. 9 Philip's daughters prophetesses. 17 Paul cometh to Jerusalem: 27 where he is apprehended, and in great danger, 31 but by the chief captain is rescued, and permitted to speak to the people.

AND it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course unto Coos, and the day following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara:

2 And finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth.

3 Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden.

4 And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.

a ver. 12.

a better, and to be there together for ever, and with the Lord.

Lastly, They accompanied him unto the ship; partly to show respect, they would bring him on his way as far as they could; and partly to have a little more of his company and conversation; if it must be the last interview, they will have as much from him as they can: loath to part bids oft farewell. But this was a comfort to both sides, and soon turned this tide of passion, that the presence of Christ both went with him, and stayed with them.

CHAP. XXI. We have, with a great deal of pleasure, attended the apostle in his travels throughout the Gentile nations to preach the Gospel, and have seen a great harvest of souls gathered in to Christ; there we have seen likewise what persecutions he endured; yet still out of them all the Lord presently delivered him, 2 Tim. 3: 11. But now we are to attend him to Jerusalem, and there into lasting bonds; the days of his service now seem to be over, and nothing to

remain but days of suffering, days of darkness, for they are many. It seems a thousand pities such a workman should be laid aside; yet we must not only acquiesce, as his friends then did, saying, The will of the Lord be done; but we must believe, and shall find reason to do so, that Paul in the prison, and at the bar, is as truly glorifying God, and serving Christ's interest, as Paul in the pulpit was.

V. 1—7. We may observe here,

I. How much ado Paul had to get clear from [Miletus], intimated in the first words of the ch. after we were gotten from them, i. e. were drawn from them as by violence. It was a force put on both sides.

II. Their prosperous voyage thence; without any difficulty, they came, by direct sailing, to Coos, a famous Grecian island; the next day to Rhodes, talked of for the Colossus there; thence to Patara, a famous port, the metropolis of Lycia, v. 1. there they very happily found a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, the very course they were steering, v. 2. Providence must be acknowledged when things happen thus opportunely, and we are favored by some little circumstances that contribute to the expediting of our affairs; and we must say, It is God that maketh our way perfect. This ship that was bound for Phenicia, i. e. Tyre, they took the convenience of, went on board, and set sail for Tyre. In that voyage they discovered Cyprus, the island Barnabas was of, and which he took care of, and therefore Paul did not visit it, but we left it on the left hand, v. 3. sailed on the coasts of Syria, and at length landed at Tyre, that celebrated mart of the nations, [Ez. 27: end,] so it had been, but was now reduced; yet something of a trade it had still, for there the ship was to unlade her burden, and did so.

III. Paul's halt at Tyre; finding he could compass the remainder of his journey within the time he had fixed.

1. At Tyre he found disciples, some that had embraced the Gospel, and professed the Christian faith. Observe, Wherever Paul came, he inquired what disciples were there, found them out, and associated with them; for we know what is the usage of birds of a feather. When Christ was upon earth,

though He went sometimes into the coasts of Tyre, yet He never went thither to preach the Gospel there; nor did He think fit to afford to Tyre and Sidon the advantages which Chorazin and Bethsaida had, though He knew that if they had had them, they would have made a better improvement of them, Luke 10: 13, 14. But, after the enlarging of the gospel-commission, Christ was preached at Tyre, and had disciples there; and to this, some think, that prophecy concerning Tyre had reference, Is. 23: 18. That her merchandise, and hire, should be holiness to the Lord.

2. Paul finding these, tarried 7 days, they urging him to stay as long as he could. He stayed as at Troas, ch. 20: 6. that he might be sure to spend one Lord's day with them, and so have an opportunity of preaching publicly; good men desire to do good wherever they come; and where we find disciples we may either benefit them, or be benefited by them.

3. The disciples at Tyre were endowed with such gifts, that they could by the Spirit foretell the troubles Paul would meet with at Jerusalem, ch. 20: 23. It being a thing that would be so much talked of when it came to pass, God saw fit to have it much prophesied of before, that people's faith, instead of being offended, might be confirmed. And withal they were endowed with such graces, that, foreseeing his troubles, out of love to him, and concern for the church, especially the churches of the Gentiles, that could ill spare him, they begged of him that he would not go up to Jerusalem, for they hoped the decree was conditional; If he go up, he will come into trouble there; as the prediction to David, that the men of Keilah will deliver him up; i. e. if he venture himself with them; therefore they said to him, by the Spirit, that he should not go up, because they concluded it would be most for the glory of God, that he should continue at liberty; and it was not at all their fault to think so; and consequently to dissuade him; but it was their mistake; for his trial would be for the glory of God, and the furtherance of the Gospel, and he knew it; and the importunity used with him, to dissuade him from it, renders his pious and truly heroic resolution the more illustrious.

9:23. *episcopos*, [in the Sept.] Hence the term was applied to those ecclesiastical rulers, whose duty it was to take care for each individual member, and provide for the welfare of the whole body. They are also called *poimenes* in Eph. 4:11, a term figuratively denoting a *care-taker*, and one who provides for the safety of others; which involves an idea of governing, ruling. Thus *poimainein* also denotes to rule. See on Mat. 2:6. Jn. 10:12. 1 Pet. 5:2. Those, moreover, who, in the N. T., are called *episcopoi* and *poimenes*, are also called *presbuteroi*. Some indeed have fancied a distinction between *episcopoi* and *presbuteroi* in the primitive church; but the distinction is utterly unfounded. For those whom Paul here addresses as *episcopoi*, are just before, (v. 17.) called *presbuteroi*. See Ti. 1:5, 7. Passages, also, in the N. T., mention Bishops and Deacons only, to the omission of Presbyters, who, nevertheless, could not have been passed by, if the office of Bishops had then differed from that of Presbyters. See Phil. 1:1, 1 Tim. 3:1—10. Indeed, there is not found in the N. T. any vestige of that material difference which, in a later age, subsisted between Bishops and Presbyters. The Christians in the age of the apostles followed the model of the Jewish church in the sacred rites, and thus the *episcopoi*, or *presbuteroi*, corresponded to the *Archienagogi* [synagogue rulers] of the Jews, who were also in like manner termed *zqnym*, *presbuteroi*, and whom Philo 1, 399, styles *hierophantas*. These *zqnym*, or *presbuteroi*, of the Jews, were also termed *prusym*, i. e. *prefects*, *praepositi* (see Vitruv.,) so that they had the care, superintendance, and governance of whatever belonged to public worship.

These were persons skilled in the Mosaic Law. See Vitruv. and Seld. Thus also the Christian Bishops or Presbyters, who succeeded to the place of these *Archienagogi* and *zqnym*, were set over each Christian society, in order to overlook and superintend the purity of morals, and rectitude of doctrine, of those committed to their charge, so as to prevent any injury arising to Christianity from failure in the one, or error in the other. Now this is plain from abundance of passages in the N. T. For those who in v. 17. are called *presbuteroi*, are at v. 23. exhorted *poimainein ten ekklesian, prosechein to poiminoi*. And in 1 Tim. 5:11. mention is made of *prostotes, presbuteroi*, and *episcopoi*. Paul, in 1 Tim. 5:11. directs Timothy, *epimeleisthai tes ekklesias tou Theou*. See also 1 Pet. 5:1, 2. At Hebr. 13:7. and 7:24. they are said to be *hegoumenoi*.

Now it has been a question, whether or no the Presbyters, or Bishops, were appointed to teach the precepts of the Christian religion? Many have maintained, that the whole of the episcopal office consisted in the regulation of the sacred worship of the Christians, by taking care that all things in the church were done rightly and suitably to common usage; and admonishing, reproving, and subjecting to ecclesiastical censures, those who acted contrary; and that these Presbyters or Bishops taught, if they were able and willing, but were not chosen and appointed for the purpose of teaching the truths of Christianity. So Dodwell, &c.; and Vitruv., who thinks that, owing to the lowly condition of the primitive church, and contrary to the intentions of the apostles, not all the persons elected as Presbyters by the Christian congregations were qualified to teach. Thus Boehmer maintains; also Mich. and Farberger. The contrary, namely, that Presbyters, in the age of the apostles, were appointed to teach the people, as well as to govern the church, and were, from the very institutes of the apostles, with reference to the nature of the office, confined to teaching, has, after Danov., recently found a learned and zealous defender in Gabler. Indeed, it may, from various passages of the N. T., be proved, that Presbyters were also appointed to teach; for in Tim. and Ti., Paul especially urges this, that those only should be chosen Presbyters in the churches, who, besides the other virtues there mentioned, were not deficient in the faculty of teaching those committed to their care, in refuting adversaries; thus Ti. 1:9. 1 Tim. 3:2. Moreover, in 1 Cor. 12:25, 29. where there are enumerated the ecclesiastical offices, the *episcopoi* or *presbuteroi* are omitted, (though the apostle could not mean to do so,) and in their place are mentioned *didaskaloi* [teachers]. Therefore (as Gabler, rightly) the Bishops or Presbyters were the ordinary teachers of the primitive church, just as the apostles and prophets, mentioned before them,

held the rank of extraordinary teachers. Also, in Eph. 4:11. mention is made of *poimenes* (i. e. Presbyters or Bishops) *kai didaskaloi*, i. e. Presbyters, who were also teachers. That by the *poimenes* and *didaskaloi* the same are meant, is plain from the particle *kai* [and]. For surely, if the *poimenes* had been persons different from the *didaskaloi*, the apostle would have written, *tous de poimenas, tous de didaskalous*: since, by this mode of constructing the sentences, he has distinguished the rest of the ministers of doctrine and of the church. In 1 Thess. 5:12. are conjoined *proistamenoi*, (*praefecti*, Bishops,) and *nouthetountes, exhortors, teachers*; and they are pronounced to be the same. The terms, too, *proistamenoi* and *nouthetountes* are meant to explain the general one, *kopiontes*, [tr. those who labor,] (see Koppe.) And so Heb. 13:7. where the "*hegoumenoi* [tr. those who have rule] who have spoken," &c. are the *proistamenoi* in 1 Thess. 5:12. At Jerusalem, also, as appears from Acts 11:30. and at 15:2. there were Presbyters. But (as Gabler well remarks) the presence of the apostles, inasmuch as they were not confined to the church at Jerusalem, could not supersede the necessity of Presbyters filling the office of ordinary teachers and rulers of the church. For to the Christian congregations at Jerusalem, the instruction of the apostles would surely not be sufficient, since they travelled up and down, and were occupied with innumerable other labors and avocations. . . Finally, at 1 Tim. 5:17. we read, that whosoever rightly discharges the office of Presbyter, to them is due a liberal stipend or reward, especially if they not merely teach, but perform the office zealously and laboriously, i. e. be *kopiontes en logn kai didaskalia*. For *proistasthai* [to rule] pertains to all the parts of the office, even to the being *didaktikos* [apt to teach]. Comp. 1 Tim. 3:2. and see Gabler. Therefore, when *poimainein* is used of the governors of the churches, it is to be referred both to the doctrine and discipline of the church. Comp. 1 Tim. 3:2. and Acts 20:30, 31.

NOTES. \* CHAP. XXI. V. 1—6. *Torn from them, &c.*] So the first clause may be lit. r.: and the language was evidently intended to convey the idea of that powerful reciprocal affection, which cemented together the hearts of these Christian friends, and rendered their final separation at the call of duty exceedingly painful, and the effect of a very violent effort. Perhaps the ship, in which Paul and his friends had sailed thus far, was bound to Patara. Should a company of believers, in this Christian country, and in the environs of one of our great commercial cities, imitate this example (5); they would doubtless be derided, as a fanatical or hypocritical set of people.—It is most evident, from this circumstance, that kneeling was the general posture for public and social prayer, in the primitive church; otherwise this company would scarcely have used it in so inconvenient a situation. SCOTT. It is but just, however, to recollect, that the fervent genius of the E. displays itself in manners quite different from ours: and this scene was probably not at all strange there. A son of the Ed. saw a mussulman praying at noon on the sands, amid a crowd of Christian Sunday travellers; and it is well known devotions in the E. are very public. They are not so much ashamed to own God, as some of a colder clime. 'Grot. has proved, that the Jews offered up prayer everywhere, even on the seashore.' (4.) 'It is plain Paul understood them popularly, (as warning him not to go if he valued his life, &c.,) for if he had regarded himself as forbidden by the Spirit, we may be sure he would not have gone up.' See Bloomf. Ed.



5 And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way: and they all brought us on our way with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled<sup>b</sup> down on the shore, and prayed.

6 And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again.

7 And when we had finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day.

8 And the next day, we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Cesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip<sup>c</sup> the evangelist,<sup>d</sup> which was one of the<sup>e</sup> seven; and abode with him.

9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which<sup>f</sup> did prophesy.

10 ¶ And as we tarried<sup>g</sup> there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named<sup>h</sup> Agabus.

11 And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So<sup>b</sup> shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

4. The disciples at Tyre, through none of Paul's converts, yet showed a very great respect to Paul, whose usefulness in the church they had heard so much of; when he departed from Tyre, though they had had but seven days' acquaintance with him, yet, as if he had been some great man, they all came together, with their wives and children, solemnly to take leave of him, to beg his blessing, and to bring him as far on his way as the sea would permit them. Note, We should pay respect, not only to our own ministers that are over us in the Lord, but, in a particular manner, honor those whom God hath singularly honored, by making them eminently useful in their generation. It is good to train up children in a respect to good people and good ministers. This was particularly remarkable at Tyre, which we have not met with anywhere else, that they brought their wives and children to attend Paul, to do him the more honor, and to receive benefit by his instructions and prayers; and, as angry notice was taken of the children of the idolaters of Bethel, that mocked a prophet, so, no doubt, gracious notice was taken of the children of the disciples, at Tyre, that honored an apostle, as Christ accepted the hosannas of the little children. We should make the utmost we can of our opportunities for the good of our souls. They brought Paul on his way, that they might have so much the more of his company, and his

prayers. Some refer us to Ps. 45:12. as a prediction of this. The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; for, it is probable that they made some presents to Paul at parting, as usual to our friends that are going to sea, ch. 28:10.

5. They parted with prayer, as Paul and the Ephesian elders had done, ch. 20:36. Thus Paul has taught us, by example, as well as rule, to pray always, to pray without ceasing, and everywhere. Their last farewell on the shore was sanctified and sweetened with prayer. Those that are going to sea should, when they quit the shore, commit themselves to God by prayer, and put themselves under his protection, as those that hope, even when they leave the terra firma, to find firm footing for their faith in the providence and protection of God.

6. They parted at last, v. 6. When we had taken our leave one of another, with the most affectionate embraces, and expressions of love and grief, we took ship to be gone, and they returned home again, each complaining that this is a parting world. Observe how they disposed of themselves; we, that had a journey before us, took ship, thankful that we had a ship to carry us; and they, that had no occasion to call them abroad, returned home again, thankful that they had a home to go to. Rejoice Zebulon, in thy going out, and Issachar in thy tents.

IV. Their arrival at Ptolemais, not far from Tyre, v. 7. some think it the same with Accho, in the tribe of Asher, Judg. 1:31. Paul begged leave to go ashore there, to salute the brethren, to inquire of their state, and testify his good-will; though he could not stay long with them, yet he would not pass without paying his respects, and he abode with them one day, perhaps a Lord's day; better a short stay than no visit.

V. 8—14. I. Paul and his company arrive at length at Cesarea, where he designed to make some stay, it being a place where the Gospel was first preached to the Gentiles, and the Holy Ghost fell on them, ch. 10:1, 44. Paul seldom had occasion to go to a public house, but, wherever he came, some friend or other took him in, and bid him welcome. I. They were entertained by Philip the evangelist, whom we left at Cesarea many years ago, after he had baptized the eunuch, ch. 8:40. and there we now find him again. He was originally a deacon, (one of the seven, chosen to serve tables, ch. 6:5.) but was now, and had been long, an evangelist, one that went about to plant and water churches, as the apostles did, and gave himself, as they did, to the Word and prayer; thus, having used the office of a deacon well, he purchased to himself a good degree; and having been faithful in a few, was made ruler over many things. It thus becomes Christians and ministers, according as their ability is, to use hospitality one to another without grudging, 1 Pet. 4:9. 2. This Philip had four maiden daughters, which did prophesy, v. 9. i. e. of Paul's troubles at Jerusalem, as others; or, perhaps, for his comfort and encouragement, in reference to the difficulties before him. Here was a further accomplishment of Joel 2:28.

II. A plain and full prediction of Paul's sufferings, by a noted prophet, v. 10, 11.

1. Paul and his company tarried many days; What cause he saw to tarry so long there,

and to make so little haste at the latter end of his journey to Jerusalem, when he seemed so much in haste at the beginning of it, we cannot tell; but we are sure he did not stay, either there, or anywhere else, to be idle; he measured his time by days, and numbered them.

2. Agabus is he that came from Jerusalem to Antioch, to foretell a general famine, ch. 11:27, 28. See how God dispenseth his gifts variously! To Paul was given the word of wisdom and knowledge, as an apostle, by the Spirit, and the gifts of healing; to Agabus, and to Philip's daughters, were given prophesy, by the same Spirit,—the foretelling of things to come, which came to pass according to the prediction, See 1 Cor. 12:8, 10. So that that which was the most eminent gift of the Spirit under the O. T., the foretelling of things to come, was under the N. T. quite outshone by other gifts, and bestowed on those of less note, in the church. It should seem as if Agabus came on purpose to Cesarea, to meet Paul with this prophetic intelligence.

3. He foretold Paul's bonds at Jerusalem, (1.) By a sign, as the prophets of old did, Is. 20:3. Jer. 13:1. 17:2. Eze. 4:1. 12:3. and many others. Agabus' taking Paul's girdle, was designed both to confirm the prophesy, and to affect those about him with it, because that which we see usually makes a greater impression on us than that which we only hear of. (2.) By an explication of the sign; Thus saith the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of prophecy, So shall the Jews, &c. Paul had this express warning given him of his troubles, that he might prepare for them, and, when they came, they might be no surprise or terror to him; the general notice given us, that through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God, should be of the same use to us.

III. The great importunity his friends used with him, to dissuade him from going forward to Jerusalem, v. 12. Not only they of that place, but we that were of Paul's company, and among the rest Luke himself, who had heard this often before, and seen Paul's resolution notwithstanding, besought him, with tears, that he would not go up to Jerusalem. Now, 1. Here appeared a commendable affection to Paul, and a value for him, on the account of his great usefulness in the church. Good men that are very active, sometimes need to be dissuaded from overworking themselves; and good men that are very bold, need to be dissuaded from exposing themselves too far. The Lord is for the body, and so must we be. 2. Yet there was a mixture of infirmity, especially in those of Paul's company, who knew he undertook this journey by divine direction, and had seen with what resolution he had before broken through the like opposition; but the infirmity is incident to us all; when we see trouble at a distance, and have only a general notice of it, we can make light of it; but when it comes near, we begin to shrink, and draw back. Now that it toucheth thee, thou art troubled, Job 4:5.

IV. The holy bravery and intrepidity with which Paul persisted in his resolution, v. 13.

1. He reproves them for dissuading him; here is a quarrel of love on both sides, and very sincere and strong affections clashing with each other; they love him dearly, and therefore oppose his resolution; he loves

V. 7—14. Ptolemais.] A city on the sea-coast of Galilee, so called, because rebuilt by Ptolemy, k. of Egypt. Agabus came down from Judea, properly so called; for Cesarea lay in that part of the land which belonged to the kings of Israel, not in that belonging to the kings of Judah. Paul considered himself bound in duty, to accomplish the service with which he had been entrusted, of conveying the oblations of the Gentile converts to the church at Jerusalem; and, on this and other accounts, he was steadfastly purposed to proceed, whatever persecutions might await him. (8.) Evangelist.] This word occurs only thrice in the New Testament. Acts 21:8. secondly in Eph., where evangelists are mentioned after apostles and prophets, as one of the offices which our Lord, after his ascension, had appointed for the conversion of infidels, and the establishment of order in his church; Eph. 4:11. and lastly, 2 Tim. 4:5. . . . This word has also obtained another signification,

which, though not scriptural, is very ancient.' Campbell. Scott. (7.) And when, &c.] 'I. e. thus finishing the sailing part of our journey.'

(8.) 'These Evangelists in the age of the apostles were not settled pastors of any one Christian congregation, or resident at any stated place, but were itinerant Presbyters, sent by the apostles to various cities, to inculcate the elements of the Christian religion, and following up the instruction of the apostles, thus building on their foundation. See Euseb. Hist. Eccl., Acts 8:5. and Koppe, on Eph. 4:11.'

(10—12.) 'Neither in 20:22. nor in v. 4. are we told that the Holy Ghost had given any command to Paul about his going, or not going, to Jerusalem. If he had, Paul would no doubt have said so here, v. 13. Comp. v. 14. where his friends evidently knew not what God's will was in the case.'



12 And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13 Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus.

14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

15 And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem.

16 There went with us also certain of the disciples of Cesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge.

17 ¶ And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

18 And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present.

19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.

i Mat. 16:22,23. 1 Pr. 16:31. o Ro. 15:18,19.  
j 2 Ti. 4:6. m c. 15:4. p c. 20:21. 2 Co.  
k Mat. 6:10. 26: n c. 15:13, &c. 12:12.  
42. Ga. 1:19.

them dearly, and therefore chides them for opposing it; *What mean ye to weep and to break [break down, weaken] my heart?* It was a temptation to him, it shocked him, it began to weaken and slacken his resolution, and made him to entertain thoughts of tacking about; *What do you mean, to do thus?* Has not our Master bid us *take up our cross?* And would you have me to avoid mine? It was a trouble to him; Paul was of a very tender spirit; and now it *breaks his heart*, when he is under the necessity of denying the request of his weeping friends. When our friends are called out to sufferings, we shall show our love, rather by comforting them than by sorrowing for them. But observe, When Paul was made a prisoner at Jerusalem, he was presently sent to Cesarea, the very place where he now was, *ch. 23:33*, and there he continued at least *two years, ch. 24:27*, a prisoner at large, as appears *ch. 24:23*, so that the church at Cesarea had much more of Paul's company and help when he was imprisoned, than they could have had if he had been at liberty. That which we oppose, as thinking it to make much against us, may be overruled, by the providence of God, to work for us, which is a reason why we should follow Providence, and not fear it.

2. He repeats his resolution to go forward, notwithstanding; *What mean ye to weep thus? I am ready to suffer whatever is appointed me.* I expect trouble, I count upon it, it will be no surprise to me. I was told at first *what great things I must suffer,* *ch. 9:16*. 'I am prepared for it, by a clear conscience, a firm confidence in God, a holy contempt of the world and the body, a lively faith in Christ, and a joyful hope of eternal life. I can bid it welcome, as we do a friend that we look for, and have made preparation

for. I can, through grace, not only bear it, but rejoice in it.' All that a man has will he give for his life; but life itself will Paul give for the service and honor of the name of Christ.

V. Their patient acquiescence, *v. 14*.

1. They submitted to the wisdom of a good man; they had carried the matter as far as they could with decency; but *when he would not be persuaded, we ceased* our importunity. Paul knows best his own mind, and what he has to do; and it becomes us to leave it to himself, and not to censure him for what he does, or to say he is rash, and wilful, and humorsome, and has a spirit of contradiction, as some people are apt to judge of those that will not do just as they would have them. No doubt, Paul has a good reason for his resolution, though he sees cause to keep it to himself, and God has gracious ends to serve in confirming him in it. It is good manners, not to over-press those in their own affairs, *that will not be persuaded*.

2. They submitted to the will of a good God. They did not resolve his resolution into his stubbornness, but into his willingness to suffer, and *God's will* that he should. In the turning of the hearts of our friends, or ministers, this way or that way, we should eye the hand of God, and submit to that; when we see trouble coming, and particularly that of our ministers, being silenced, or removed from us, it becomes us to say, *The will of the Lord be done*. God is wise, and knows how to make all work for good, and therefore welcome his holy will. When a trouble is come, this must allay our griefs, that the will of the Lord is done; when we see it coming, this must silence our fears, that the will of the Lord shall be done, to which we must say, *Amen*, let it be done.

V. 15—26. In these vs. we have,

I. Paul's journey to Jerusalem from Cesarea, and the company that went along with him,

1. They took [or packed] up their carriages, [i. e. things they carried, bundles,] their bag and baggage; it should seem, like poor travellers or soldiers, they were their own porters; so little had they of change of raiment. Some think they had with them the money they collected in the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, for the poor saints at Jerusalem. Their resolution to cleave to Paul, was like that of Thomas, in a like case, to Christ, *John 11:16*, or of Itai to David, *2 S. 15:21*. Thus Paul's boldness imboldened them.

2. Certain of the disciples of Cesarea went along with them; whether of previous design, therefore, or on purpose to do Paul service, and if possible prevent his trouble, or at least minister to him in it, does not appear. Elisha kept close to Elijah, when he knew the time was at hand that he should be taken up.

3. They brought with them an honest old gentleman, that had a house of his own at Jerusalem, in which he would gladly entertain Paul and his company, one Mnason of Cyprus, *v. 16*. Such a great concourse of people there was to the feast, that it was a hard matter to get lodgings, and those that had private houses must freely accommodate strangers. Every one then would choose his friends to be his guests, and Mnason took Paul and his company to be his lodgers; though he had heard what trouble Paul was likely to come into, which might bring those that entertained him into trouble too, yet he shall be welcome to him, whatever comes of it. This Mnason is called an *old disciple*;

a disciple from the beginning; some think, one of the 70, or one of the first converts after the pouring out of the Spirit, or one of the first converted by the preaching of the Gospel in Cyprus, *ch. 13:4*. However, it is an honorable thing to be an *old disciple* of Jesus Christ, to have been enabled by the grace of God to continue long in a course of duty, steadfast in the faith, and growing more and more prudent and experienced, to a good old age. And with these old disciples one would choose to lodge; for the *multitude of their years shall teach wisdom*.

II. Paul's welcome at Jerusalem.

1. Many of the brethren there received him gladly, *v. 17*. Streso observes, the word here used of the welcome they gave the apostles, is used of the welcome of the apostles' doctrine, *ch. 2:41*. They gladly received his word. We think, if we had Paul among us, we would gladly receive him; but it is a question whether we would or no, if, having his doctrine, we do not gladly receive that.

2. They made a visit to James and the elders of the church, at a church-meeting, *v. 18*. The day following, Paul went in unto James, and took us with him, that were his companions, to introduce us into acquaintance with the church at Jerusalem. It should seem, James was now the only apostle resident at Jerusalem; the rest had dispersed, to preach the Gospel in other places. But still they forecasted to have an apostle at Jerusalem, perhaps sometimes one, and sometimes another, because there was a great resort thither from all parts. James was now on the spot, and all the elders or presbyters, the ordinary pastors of the church, were present. Paul saluted them all, paid his respects to them, inquired of their welfare, and gave them the right hand of fellowship. The proper signification of salutation, is, wishing salvation to you; *salve*, like *peace be unto you*. And such mutual salutations, or good wishes, very well become Christians, in token of their love to each other, and joint regard to God.

III. The account they had from him of his ministry among the Gentiles, and their satisfaction in it. Paul ascribed it all to God, *v. 19*, and to God they gave the praise of it, *v. 20*. The conversion of sinners ought to be the matter of our joy and praise, as it is of the angels. And they could not do more to encourage Paul to go on cheerfully in his work, than to glorify God for his success in it; for, if God be praised, Paul is pleased.

IV. The request of James and the elders of the church at Jerusalem to Paul, or their advice rather, that he would gratify the believing Jews, by showing some compliance with the ceremonial law, and appearing publicly in the temple to offer sacrifice; which was not a thing in itself sinful; for the ceremonial law, though by no means to be imposed on the Gentile converts, yet was not become unlawful as yet to those that had been bred up in its observance, but were far from expecting justification by it. And being not sinful, they thought it prudence in Paul to conform thus far. Observe,

1. They desired him to notice the great numbers there of Jewish converts. They call him brother, for though they were of the circumcision, and he the apostle of the Gentiles, though they were conformists, and he a non-conformist; yet they were brethren, and owned the relation. Thou hast been in some of our assemblies, and seest how numerous they are; *myriads*. The word signifies not thousands, but ten thousands. And this account of the success of the Gospel among the Jews, no doubt, was as grateful to Paul

V. 16. 'Grot., Knatchbull, Homberg, Pearee, Dodd., Ros., Heinr., Kuin. understand, "Leading us to a certain Mnason, with whom we should put up." See Bl. Ed.

V. 18—21. *That thou teachest, &c.* In this they had been misinformed: for, though the apostle had shown, that none were bound to observe the ceremonial law, and that they must by no means place any dependence on such obedience for justification; he had never forbidden

the Jewish converts to observe it, as a matter of expediency, when their communion with their Gentile brethren would admit of it.—(18.) *Elders.* All the bishops of Judea, saith Dr. Hammond, without one word to prove it. *Whitby*, in Scott. That learned writer's zeal for episcopacy, leads him frequently to express himself in a manner, which seems to imply that there were no presbyters in the primitive church: perhaps he was not aware, that this supposition would reduce all min-



20 And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord; and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:

21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise <sup>r</sup> their children, neither to walk after the customs.

22 What is it therefore? The multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come.

23 Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them;

24 Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave <sup>t</sup> their heads: and all may know, that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing, but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.

q c. 22:3. Ro. r Ga. 5:3. t Nu. 6:2, 13, 18.  
10:2. s c. 19:32. c. 18:18.

as the account he gave them of the conversion of the Gentiles was to them; for his heart's desire and prayer to God for the Jews, was, that they might be saved.

2. They inform him of a prevailing infirmity these believing Jews labored under, which they could not yet be cured of; *They are all zealous of the law.* They believe in Christ as the true Messiah, rest on his righteousness, and submit to his government; but they know the law of Moses was of God, they have found spiritual benefit in their attendance on the institutions of it, and therefore they can by no means think of parting with it, no, nor of growing cold to it; and perhaps, they urged Christ's being made under the law, and observing it, as a reason for their continuance under it. This was a great weakness and mistake, to be so fond of the

isters, above deacons, to an entire parity of order, as effectually as either the Presbyterian or the Independent plan could do. (20) *How many thousands.*] Or, 'How many tens of thousands.' *Gr.* This can hardly mean less than forty or fifty thousand: and, though a considerable part of this large number might come from other places to keep the feast; yet it can scarcely be doubted, but that there were so many Christians, stately residing at Jerusalem, as to form several distinct congregations; yet the whole is spoken of as one church.

(20.) *Thousands.*] 'The word may only in general denote a great number; but it is certain the greater part were not stated inhabitants of Jerusalem, but only visited it on occasion of this great festival; so that no certain argument can be hence deduced as to the plurality of congregations supposed to have been now under the care of the bishop of Jerusalem, if there were indeed any Christian officer who had that title so early, and it does not appear from Scripture that there was.' *Doddr.* *Zealous of the law.*] 'Nor was it to be wondered at: for the decree of the apostles had respect only to those called from among the Gentiles, and not to those who were native Jews. Neither had Paul there begun to teach converts from among the Jews anything on that subject, though he did a little later: out of Judea indeed.' *Ros.* 'It is not to be wondered at, that men who had imbibed such opinions of their laws from infancy, [those laws which lifted them in pride above other nations,] that they derived them from God, and knew no revelation made by Him, that they were to cease after the death of their Messiah, should be still zealous for them; or that they who thought they could not be removed, or that any better laws could be given, should think them fit to be observed; or that they who feared such dreadful evils if they forsook them, and expected so great blessings from being faithful to them to the death, should be averse from any doctrine which taught them to apostatize from, or to forsake the Law of Moses; and yet it pleased God, as yet, not to convince them of this error by any revelation, or any affatus of that spirit which many of them had received; partly because He saw that this might have obstructed the faith even of the little remnant which belonged to the Election of Grace; partly because He knew the time would shortly come, when the destruction of their temple, and the exclusion from their own land, would render it impossible for them to observe this Law, and the severity of divine judgments on them would convince them, as it did some, that God had utterly cast off the nation from being any more his people.' *BL.*

V. 22—26. (24.) *All may know that thou thyself, &c.*] This conclusion seems to have been rather stronger than the real case would admit of.

shadows when the substance was come; to keep their necks under a yoke of bondage, when Christ was come to make them free. But see the power of education and long usage, and especially of a ceremonial law; and the charitable allowance that must be made in consideration of these. These Jews that believed, were not therefore disowned and rejected, as no Christians, because they were for the law, while it was only in their own practice, and they did not impose it on others. Their being zealous of the law, was capable of a good construction, which charity would put upon it; and of a good excuse, considering what they were brought up in, and whom they lived among.

3. They gave him to understand that these Jews, who were so zealous of the law, were ill-affected to him, v. 21. Now, (1.) It was true, Paul preached the abrogation of the law of Moses, and that it was impossible to be justified by it, and therefore we are not bound any longer to observe it. But, (2.) It was false, that he taught them to forsake Moses; for the religion he preached tended not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. He preached Christ, the End of the law for righteousness, and repentance and faith, in the exercise of which we are to make great use of the law. The Jews among the Gentiles, whom Paul taught, were so far from forsaking Moses, that they never understood him better, nor ever embraced him so heartily, as now when they were taught to make use of him as a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. But even the believing Jews, having got this notion of Paul, that he was an enemy to Moses, and perhaps giving too much regard to the unbelieving Jews, too, were much exasperated against him. Their ministers, the elders here present, loved and honored him, and approved of what he did, and called him brother, but the people could hardly be got to entertain a favorable thought of him; for it is certain, THE LEAST JUDICIOUS ARE THE MOST CENSORIOUS; THE WEAK-HEADED ARE THE HOT-HEADED.

4. They therefore desire Paul would, by some public act, now that he was come to Jerusalem, make it to appear that the charge against him was false. (1.) They conclude something of this kind must be done,—For Paul's sake, that his reputation may be cleared, and that so good a man may not lie

under any blemish, nor so useful a man labor under any disadvantage, which may obstruct his usefulness,—for the people's sake, that they may not continue prejudiced against so good a man, nor lose the benefit of his ministry by those prejudices,—for their own sake, that since they knew it was their duty to own Paul, their doing it might not be turned to their reproach, among those that were under their charge. (2.) They produce a fair opportunity which Paul might take to clear himself; *We have four men, Jews, which believe, of our own churches, and they have a vow on them, a vow of Nazariteship for a certain time; their time is now expired, v. 23. and they are to offer their offering according to the law, when they shave the head of their separation, a he-lamb for a burnt-offering, an ewe-lamb for a sin-offering, and a ram for a peace-offering, with other offerings, appurtenant to them, Num. 6:13—20. Many used to do this together, when their vow expired about the same time, either for the greater expedition, or for the greater solemnity. Now Paul having so far of late complied with the law, as to take on him the vow of a Nazarite, and to signify the expiration of it, by shaving his head at Cenchrea, ch. 18:18. according to the custom of those who lived at a distance from the temple, they desire him but to go a little further, and to join with these four, in offering the sacrifices of a Nazarite; 'Purify thyself with them according to the law; and be willing not only to take that trouble, but to be at charges with them, in buying sacrifices for this solemn occasion, and to join with them in the sacrifice.' This, they think, will effectually stop the mouth of calumny, and every one will be convinced that the report was false, that Paul was not the man he was represented to be, did not teach the Jews to forsake Moses, but, that he himself, being originally a Jew, walked orderly, and kept the law; and then all would be well.*

5. They enter a protestation, that this shall be no infringement at all of the decree lately made in favor of the Gentile converts, nor do they intend by this, in the least, to derogate from the liberty allowed them, v. 25. for they knew how jealous Paul was for preserving the liberty of the converted Gentiles.

V. Paul's compliance. He was willing to gratify them in this matter. Though he

The apostle had before performed a vow of a similar nature; and he doubtless paid some regard to the Mosaic law, as a matter of expediency: but he does not appear to have habitually observed it, as it may be inferred from his own words, 1 Cor. 9:19—23. Gal. 2:11—16. 4:12—16. They probably meant, that he attended to the legal ceremonies, as far as his intimate communion with uncircumcised persons would permit him; but it may be questioned, whether this, if it had been fully explained, would have satisfied the persons concerned. It should be remembered, that, though the apostles were infallibly preserved from mistaking, corrupting, or mutilating the doctrine, which they were entrusted to communicate to the church; yet they were not rendered infallible in their personal conduct: in many things, they acknowledged, and it is evident, they all offended, and were to be blamed. Gal. 2:6—10. Perhaps it would be found very difficult wholly to defend the apostle from the charge of temporizing, accommodating, or refining too much in this matter. His deference to the judgment of his brethren, his desire of 'becoming all things to all men,' and his willingness to conciliate the Jewish believers, seem to have carried him rather too far: and he was led to hold out a greater degree of regard to the Mosaic law, than he showed in his general conduct. The concession, however, by no means answered the intended purpose; on the contrary, it was the immediate occasion of his predicted sufferings.—'To be "at charges" with Nazarites was both a common and a very popular thing among the Jews. . . . Maimonides. . . asserts, that a person who was not himself a Nazarite, might bind himself by a vow to take part with one in his sacrifice.' *Doddr.*—This, however, not being mentioned in the law, was rather complying with custom and tradition, than showing a regard for the ceremonies of Moses.—'James and the brethren thought it was most regular and convenient, that the Jewish ritual should still be observed, by those of the circumcision who believed in Christ. And, considering what tribulation the church at Jerusalem must otherwise have been exposed to by the Sanhedrim, who no doubt would have prosecuted them to the utmost, as apostates; and also how soon Providence intended to render the practice of it impossible; . . . it was certainly the most orderly and prudent conduct to conform to it; though it were looked upon by those, that understood the matter fully, (which it was not necessary that all should,) as antiquated and ready to vanish away.' *Ibid.*—The Jewish Christians at Jerusalem, and in Judea, might comply with the law far more easily and exactly, than their brethren could in other countries, who were joined in the same churches with the Gentile converts.—Does not the epistle to the Hebrews, probably written by the



25 As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded, that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.

26 Then Paul took the men; and the next day purifying himself with them, entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

27 ¶ And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,

28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help: this is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and further, brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.

29 (For they had seen before with him, in the city, Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

31 And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar:

u c. 15:20, 29. x Nu. 6:13 a c. 6:13, 14, 24:5, 6.  
v 1 Co. 9:20. y c. 24:18. b c. 20:4.  
w c. 24:18. z c. 26:21. c 1 Co. 11:23, &c.

would not be persuaded not to go to Jerusalem, yet, when he was there, he was persuaded to do as they there did, v. 26. Then Paul took the men, as they advised, and the very next day, purifying himself with them, and not with multitude or tumult, as he himself pleads, ch. 24: 18. he entered into the temple, as other devout Jews that came on such errands did, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification to the priests; desiring the priest would appoint a time when the offering should be offered for every one of them, one for each. Paul contributed what he vowed to the offerings of these Nazarites; and, some think, bound himself to the law of the Nazariteship, and to an attendance at the temple, with fastings and prayers for seven days, not designing that the offering should be offered till then; which was that he signified to the priest.

Now it has been questioned, whether James and the elders did well to give Paul this advice, and whether he did well to take it.

1. Some have blamed this occasional conformity of Paul's, as indulging the Jews too much in their adherence to the ceremonial

law, and a discouragement of those who stood fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free.

2. Others think the advice was prudent and good, and Paul's following it was justifiable enough, as the case stood. It was Paul's avowed principle, *To the Jews became I as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews*, 1 Cor. 9:20. He had circumcised Timothy, to please the Jews; though he would not constantly observe the ceremonial law, yet, to gain an opportunity of doing good, and to show how far he could comply, he would occasionally go to the temple and join in the sacrifices there. Those that are weak in the faith are to be borne with, when those that undermine the faith must be opposed. It is true, this compliance of Paul's sped ill to him; for this very thing, by which he hoped to pacify the Jews, did but provoke them, and bring him into trouble, yet that is not a sufficient ground to go on in condemning it; Paul might do well, and yet suffer for it, but perhaps the wise God overruled both their advice and Paul's compliance with it, to serve a better purpose than was intended; for we have reason to think, that when the believing Jews, who had endeavored by their zeal for the law to recommend themselves to the good opinion of those who believed not, saw how barbarously they used Paul, (who endeavored to oblige them,) they were by this more alienated from the ceremonial law, than they could have been by the most argumentative or affecting discourses. They saw it was in vain to think of pleasing men that would be pleased with nothing else but the rooting out of Christianity. Integrity and uprightness will be more likely to preserve us, than sneaking compliances. And when we consider what a great trouble it must needs be to James and the presbyters in the reflection upon it, that they had by their advice brought Paul into trouble, it should be a warning to us, not to press men to oblige us by doing anything contrary to their own mind.

V. 27—40. We have here Paul brought into a captivity, which we are not likely to see the end of: for, after this, he is either hurried from one bar to another, or lies neglected, first in one prison, and then in another, and can neither be tried nor bailed. When we see the beginning of a trouble, we know not either how long it will last, or how it will issue.

I. Paul seized,

1. He was seized in the temple; it was not till the seven days were almost ended, that he was noticed by those that had an evil eye toward him, so great a stranger was he there. But, in the temple, where he should have been protected as in a sanctuary, he was most violently set upon by those who did what they could to have mingled his blood with his sacrifices; in the temple, where he should have been welcomed as one of the greatest ornaments it ever had, since the Lord of the temple left it. The temple which they themselves pretended such a mighty zeal for, yet did they themselves thus profane. Thus is the church polluted by none more than by popish persecutors, under the color of the church's name and interest.

2. The informers against him were Jews of Asia, not of Jerusalem, Jews of the dispersion, who knew him best, and were most

exasperated against him. Those who seldom came up to Jerusalem themselves, but contentedly lived at a distance, in pursuit of their private advantages, yet appeared most zealous for the temple, as if thereby they would atone for their habitual neglect of it.

3. The method they took, was, to raise the mob, and to incense them against him. They did not go to the high priest, or the magistrates of the city, with their charge, but they stirred up all the people, who were at this time more than ever disposed to anything tumultuous and seditious. Those are fittest to be employed against Christ and Christianity, that are governed least by reason, and most by passion; therefore Paul described the Jewish persecutors to be not only wicked, but absurd, unreasonable men.

4. The arguments wherewith they exasperated the people against him were popular, but very false and unjust. *Men of Israel, help.* If ye are true-born Jews, that have a concern for your church and your country, now is your time to show it, by helping to seize an enemy to both. The enemies of Christianity, since they could never prove it to be an ill thing, have been always very industrious, right or wrong, to put it into an ill name, and so run it down by outrage and outcry. This was like, *Stop thief*, Job 30:5. or Athaliah's cry, *Treason, treason*; what is wanting in right, is made up in noise.

5. They charge on him both ill doctrine and ill practice, and both against the Mosaic ritual. (1.) *Ill doctrine*; not only that he holds corrupt opinions himself, but that he vents and publishes them, though not here at Jerusalem, yet in other places, nay, in all places, he teaches all men, everywhere; so artfully is the crime aggravated, as if, because he was an itinerant, he was an ubiquitous. [1.] *Against the people of the Jews.* He had taught that Jews and Gentiles stand on the same level before God, and neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision; nay, he had taught against the unbelieving Jews, that they were rejected, and this is interpreted to be speaking against the whole nation, as if no doubt but they were the people, and wisdom must die with them, Job 12:2. whereas God, though He had cast them off, yet had not cast away his people, Rom. 11:1. Those commonly seem most jealous for the church's name, that belong to it in name only. [2.] *Against the law.* His teaching men to believe the Gospel as the end of the law, and the perfection of it, was interpreted his preaching against the law; whereas it was so far from making void the law that it established it, Rom. 3:31. [3.] *Against this place, the temple.* Because he taught men to pray everywhere, he was reproached as an enemy to the temple, and perhaps because he sometimes mentioned the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and of the Jewish nation, which his Master had foretold.

(2.) *Ill practices.* To confirm their charge against him, as teaching people against this holy place, they charge it on him, that he had himself polluted it, and by an overt act showed his contempt of it, and a design to make it common. He has brought Gentiles also into the temple; into the inner court, into which none uncircumcised were admitted, under any pretence; there was written on the wall that inclosed this inner court, in Greek and Latin, *It is a capital crime for strangers to*

apostle when a prisoner at Rome, show, that he thought it of great importance, even to the Christians in Judea, to understand that the Mosaic law had no longer any validity; and that he considered their attachment to it, as exceedingly unfavorable to their proficiency in true religion? *Pref. to Heb.*

(24.) *Purify.* 'Abstain from wine, and other things forbidden to Nazarites.'

(26.) 'Paul, it seems, so fixed the period (Num. 6:5.) of his vow, that it should cease at the same time with that of these 4 men.' *Bl.* See *Grot.* and *Kuin.* on this v. 'On the following day, Paul began to observe the religious rites which they did who were bound to a vow, giving notice to the priests at the temple, that he takes upon himself an obligation to abstinence, prayer, &c. for 7 days.' So *Bl.*, whom see. *Ed.*

V. 27—30. As the apostle could not enter on his purification, till the

3d day after his arrival at Jerusalem, 17, 18, 26. and as he made his defence before Felix, (which seems to have been 7 or 8 days after he was apprehended in the temple,) only 12 days after he came to Jerusalem; (*Note*, 24:10—21.) the first clause should certainly be rendered, 'when the 7 days were about to be accomplished;' i. e. the 7 days which had been fixed on, and mentioned to the priests, as the term at the end of which the sacrifices would be offered, and the vow performed. *Scott.*

(28.) *Against.* The Jews conceived themselves injured, because others were admitted to the benefits of Messiah's kingdom. How much of this satirical envy is still seen in nations and in individuals! *Ed.*

(29.) *Supposed, &c.* 'This should seem to have been merely the fancy of the vulgar. The more intelligent would (I think) understand the reproach in a figurative sense.'

V. 31—36. It has been asserted, that the Jews claimed the liberty of



32 Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul.

33 Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done.

34 And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.

35 And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers, for the violence of the people.

36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him!

37 ¶ And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek?

38 Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?

d c 23:47. 24:7. g Ps. 55:9. Hab. 1 Co. 4:13.  
e ver. 11. c. 20:23. 1:3. i This Egyptian  
Ep. 6:20. h Lu. 23:18. Jn. rose A. D. 55.  
f c. 23:10,16. 19:15. c. 22:22. c. 5:36.

vnter, Jos. Antiq. lib. 15. cap. 14. Paul was himself a Jew, and had a right to enter; and they, seeing some with him there, concluded Trophimus an Ephesian, who was a Gentile, was one. Why? Did they see him there? Truly no; but they had seen him with Paul in the streets of the city, therefore they affirm he was with him in the inner court of the temple. See here, Innocency is no fence against calumny and false accusation. Evil men dig up mischief, and go far to seek proofs of their false accusations, as they did here, who, because they saw a Gentile with Paul in the city, will thence infer, that he was with him in the temple! It is common for malicious people to improve that against those that are wise and good, with which they thought to have obliged them, and ingratiated themselves with them. Paul thought to recommend himself to their good opinion by going into the temple, and thence they take occasion to accuse him. If he had kept further off them, he had not been so maligned by them. This is the genius of ill-nature;

for my love, they are my adversaries, Ps. 109:4. 69:10.

II. Paul in danger of being pulled in pieces by the rabble. They will not be at the pains to have him before the high priest, or the Sanhedrim; that is a round-about way, the execution shall be of a piece with the prosecution, all unjust and irregular. They have not patience to proceed against him by a due course of law, though they were ever so sure to gain their point; therefore, as those who neither feared God nor regarded man, they resolved to knock him on the head immediately.

1. All the city was in an uproar, v. 30. Just such a zeal the Jews here show for God's temple, as the Ephesians did for Diana's, when Paul was informed against as an enemy to that, ch. 19:29. But God does not reckon Himself at all honored by those whose zeal for Him transports them to such irregularities, and who, while they pretend to act for Him, act in such a brutish, barbarous manner.

2. They drew Paul out of the temple, and shut the doors between the outer and inner court, or, perhaps, of the outer court. See how absurd these were; they condemned Paul for drawing people from the temple, and yet when he himself was very devoutly worshipping in the temple, they drew him out of it. They that made no conscience of doing so ill a thing, as the murdering of a good man for well doing, yet would be thought to scruple doing it in a holy place, or at a holy time; not in the temple, as, not on the feast day.

3. They went about to kill him, v. 31. for they fell a beating him, v. 32. resolving to beat him to death: a punishment which the Jewish doctors allowed of in some cases,\* (not at all to the credit of their nation,) and called, the beating of the rebels.

III. Paul rescued from his Jewish enemies by a Roman enemy.

1. Tidings were brought of the tumult, and mob, to the chief captain of the band, the governor of the castle, or, whoever he was, the now commander-in-chief of the Roman forces, quartered in Jerusalem; and he is the man that must be instrumental to save Paul's life, when never a friend he had was capable of doing him any service.

2. The tribune, or chief captain, got his forces together with all possible expedition, and went to suppress the mob. Now at the feast, as at other such solemn times, the guards were up, and the militia more within call than at other times, and so he had them near at hand, and he ran down unto the multitude; for at such times, delays are dangerous. Sedition must be crushed at first, lest it grow headstrong.

3. The very sight of the Roman general frightened them from beating Paul; they

\* As of profaning the temple. Light. Ed.

were deterred from that by the power of the Romans, from which they ought to have been restrained by the justice of God and the dread of his wrath. Note, God often makes (Rev. 12:16.) those to be a protection to his people, who yet have no affection for them; they have only a compassion for sufferers, and are zealous for the public peace.

4. The governor takes him into custody; he rescued him, not out of a concern for him, but because he knew how dangerous the consequence to the Roman government, if such tumultuous proceedings were not timely suppressed; nor what such an outrageous people might do, if once they knew their own strength; he therefore takes Paul out of the hands of the mob, into the hands of the law, v. 33. This violent taking of him out of the hands of the multitude, though there were all the reason in the world for it, yet they laid to the charge of the chief captain as his crime, ch. 24:7. which refers to this rescue, as appears by comparing ch. 23:27, 28. where the chief captain gives an account of it to Felix.

IV. The provision the chief captain made, with much ado, to bring Paul to speak for himself; one had almost as good enter into a struggle with the winds and the waves, as with such a mob as was here got together; yet Paul made a shift to get liberty of speech among them.

1. There was no knowing the sense of the people; for when the chief captain inquired concerning Paul, having perhaps never heard of his name before, some cried one thing, and some another, so that it was impossible for the chief captain to know their mind, when really they knew not either one another's mind or their own, when every one pretended to give the sense of the whole body. Those that will hearken to the clamors of the multitude, will know nothing for a certainty.

2. There was no quelling their rage and fury; for when the chief captain commanded that Paul should be carried into the castle, the tower of Antonia, where the Roman soldiers kept garrison, near the temple, the soldiers themselves had much ado to get him safe thither out of the noise; the people were so violent, v. 35. the soldiers were forced to take him up in their arms, and carry him, to keep him from the people, who would have pulled him limb from limb, if they could. When they could not reach him with their cruel hands, they followed him with their sharp arrows, even bitter words; they followed, crying, Away with him, v. 36. See how the most excellent persons and things are often run down by a popular clamor! Christ Himself was so, with, Crucify Him, Crucify Him; though they could not say what evil He had done.

3. Paul at length begged leave of the chief captain to speak to him, v. 37. With great calmness, composedness, mildness, and deference, he said unto the chief captain, 'May I

putting to death, without any legal process, such uncircumcised persons as entered the inner courts of the temple: yet even this could not be applicable to Paul.

(34.) Castle.] 'Parembolôn: lit. pitching place, hence generally it means a camp; and many, as Schl., understand the soldiers' barracks (Jos. speaks of) in the castle of Antonia, commanded by the tribune. But Beza, De Dien, &c., Heum., Kuin. take it for the castle itself: which, says Jos. "had 4 towers, one of which overlooked the whole temple, and was joined to its porticoes, and had a double pair of stairs from it, by which the soldiers of the garrison in the castle were used to come down with their arms on the festival days, and keep the people in quiet. As the temple was a guard to the city, so was this castle to the temple." But as the principal entrance, (which, as the tower was 40 cubits high, would also have steps,) would not be through the temple, and as the priests and Levites probably would not have permitted this violence in any part of the temple, the steps of that principal entrance seem meant. The S. E. angle of the citadel joined the N. W. angle of the temple, just so as to allow 2 approaches to the court of the Gentiles, from the citadel, by 2 flights of steps, one leading to the N. E. portico of the temple, the other to the S. W. one. The whole citadel occupied not much less space than the temple.

BLOOMF.

V. 37—40. (33) Four thousand, &c.] Josephus mentions 30,000 men, whom this Egyptian, (whose name is not known,) had collected together: but it is probable, that he 'led forth' only 4000, and that the rest came to him in the wilderness; or only 4000 of the company were murderers. [The captain's assertion, as to their number and character, is to be understood popularly, not exactly. Ed.] (40) In the

Hebrew tongue.] 22:2. See on 2:6.—It is decidedly agreed among the learned, that the Syr. or Chal. dialect is meant. No doubt many Chal. words and phrases came into use among the Jews, who returned from the Babylonish captivity. Yet those parts of the O. T. which were written after that event, are in Heb., except a few passages in Ezra, which are Chal., for special reasons. This creates a difficulty, as to the current opinion, taken in its full extent. Nor does the language of the N. T. favor it: and several of the arguments used in support of it, are inconclusive. Ez. 4:7—9. 7:11, 12. Neh. 8:8. Jer. 10:11. Dan. 2:4. Scott.

(37.) Canst, &c.] Dost thou know Greek? 'It is a Latin mode of expression. The Greek was then used by all liberally educated men: nor evidently was it unknown to the people of Jerusalem [nor in Egypt]: but the Jews preferred the Heb. i. e. the Syriac dialect.' Ros.

(33.) Four thousand.] 'We are not bound to prove that a slight expression, thrown out hastily by a soldier, is to be tried by the rules of historical accuracy: still less, that Luke is to be held accountable for any error that may exist.' But see Bl. Murderers.' 'Sikariôn: cut-throats; the word was derived from sika [comp. sikeen, Gaelic, and Arabic], a short falchion, or cutlass, (as I suspect of Oriental origin, and like the kriesh of the Burmans, Siamese, Chinese, and Japanese,) which was convenient for being concealed hupo malês, under the thigh, the sheath of the weapon closely bound against the flesh, and inflicted a much more severe wound than a sword or dagger. These sicarii were at first private assassins (and not very different from those from whom the name is derived); afterwards they, by impunity, rose to such a pitch [of insolence] as to insult the government, and band together in large companies: so that at length the name was applied



39 But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; and I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people.

40 And when he had given him license, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people: and when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying,

CHAP. XXII.

1 Paul declareth at large, how he was converted to the faith, 17 and called to his apostleship. 22 At the very mentioning of the Gentiles, the people exclaim on him. 23 He should have been scourged, 25 but claiming the privilege of a Roman, he escapeth.

MEN, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence, which I make now unto you.

2 (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,)

3 I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous towards God, as ye all are this day.

j c. 9:11. 22:3. k c. 22:25. l c. 12:17. a c. 7:2. b 1 Pe. 3:15. c c. 21:39. 2 Co. 11:22. Phi. 3:5. d c. 5:34. e c. 26:5. f Gal. 1:14. g c. 21:20. Ro. 10:2.

4. The chief captain tells him what notion he had of him; Canst thou speak Greek? I am surprised to hear thee speak a learned language; for, Art not thou that Egyptian which madest an uproar? Probably some of the Jews whispered this in the ear of the chief captain. See what false, mistaken notions of good people, and good ministers, many run away with, and will not be at the pains to have the mistake rectified!

It seems, there had lately been an insurrection somewhere in that country, headed by an Egyptian, who took on him to be a prophet; Jos. mentions this story: 'That an Egyptian raised a seditious party, promised to show them the fall of the walls of Jerusalem from the mount of Olives, and that they should enter the city upon the ruins.' The captain here says, that he led out into the wilderness 4,000 murderers, desperadoes, banditti, raparees, cut-throats. What a degeneracy in the Jewish nation, when so many of such a character, were found, and could be drawn into such an attempt on the public peace! But Jos. says, 'That Felix, the Roman president, went out against them, killed 400, and took 200 prisoners, and the rest were dispersed.' Antiq. 20: 6. De Bell. Jud. 2: 12. And Eusebius speaks of it, Hist. 2: 20. It happened in the 13th year of Claudius, a little before those days, about 3 years. The ringleader of this rebellion, it seems, had made his escape, and the chief captain concluded, that one who lay under so great an odium, as Paul seemed to lie under, and against whom there was so great an outcry, could not be a criminal of less figure than this Egyptian. See how good men are exposed to ill-will by mistake!

5. Paul rectifies his mistake concerning him, by informing him particularly what he was; not such a vagabond, scoundrel, rake, as that Egyptian, who could give no good account of himself, v. 39.

6. He humbly desired permission from the chief captain, whose prisoner he now was, to speak to the people. The chief captain rescued him with no other design than to give him a fair hearing; now, to show that his cause needs no art to give it a plausible color, he desires he may have leave immediately to defend himself; for it needed no more than to be set in a true light; nor did he depend only on the goodness of his cause, but on the goodness and fidelity of his Patron, and his promise to all his advocates, that it should be given them in that same hour what to speak. Lastly, This license being obtained, the people were attentive; Paul stood on the stairs, which gave a little man some advantage; he made signs to them to be quiet, and to have a little patience, for he had something to say to them; and so far he gained his point, every one cried hush to his neighbor; probably the chief captain also charged all to keep silence; if the people were not required to give audience, it was to no purpose Paul was allowed to speak. When the cause of Christ and his Gospel is to be pleaded, there ought to be a great silence, that we may give the more earnest heed; and all little enough. Paul spake in Hebrew, i. e. in the language of their country, to which he hereby owned not only an abiding relation, but an abiding respect.

PRACT. OBS. Wherever zealous Christians travel, they will inquire after their brethren in the Lord, and get acquainted with them: fervent social prayer, abates the poignancy of our sorrow, when constrained to separate from those whom we love; and this is peculiarly reasonable, when sharp afflictions or important services lie before us. Our children too should be admitted to such scenes of affection and devotion: that their tender minds may be early impressed with a sense of the excellence and importance of religion. Thus we may hope, that when they grow up, they will be evidently partakers of the blessing, and endued with spiritual gifts, for the edification of others also; which should be considered as the greatest favor God can bestow on us, with respect to our offspring.—The path of duty will eventually be that of safety: yet it often leads into many apparent, or temporary dangers and difficulties. It is, however, an extraordinary attainment, for the same man to be so firm and inflexible, in following the dictates of his own conscience, as to be habitually ready to endure bonds, or face death for the Lord's sake; and yet so full of tenderness and sympathy, as to be more affected by the sorrows of his friends, than by the prospect of his own perils and sufferings. What a striking proof is it of the weakness and depravity of human nature, that so large a proportion of the disciples of Christ, even in the days of the apostles, were exceedingly disaffected to the most eminent minister, probably, who ever lived!... because he would not render that respect to the antiquated Mosaic ceremonial, with which they had been used to regard it! How wretched should we be against prejudices of every kind; and against those mis-

representations of men's principles and conduct, from which prejudices commonly originate! And how patient should we be, if called to have fellowship with the great apostle of us Gentiles in this affliction; and to endure the suspicious, and coldness, of those whom we most esteem and love! We ought indeed to use all proper methods of rectifying the judgments and conciliating the affections of our brethren, as far as their misapprehension can interfere with our usefulness; yet we should watch against the temptation of conniving at those errors or evils, which are the general source of prejudices, and which cannot consistently be countenanced. When accommodation is allowed to infringe on our 'simplicity and godly sincerity,' it will seldom produce any good effect. Our brethren will not be satisfied, unless we go the full length of their sentiments; others will begin to suspect our integrity, and to hesitate concerning us; and it is in vain to attempt conciliating the favor of graceless bigots, and furious zealots of any party, from whom we shall commonly do well to keep at a distance. But much wisdom, integrity, and humility are requisite, to guide us in the middle way, between an uncomplimentary inflexibility in things of small consequence, and a temporizing spirit in respect of important truth. Professed attachments to this or the other party or church, among Christians, will readily give energy to the clamor, 'Men of Israel, help, &c.' The church is in danger! Our religious liberties are in danger! And the groundless outcry may affect even the lives or characters, even of the most prudent, benevolent, and pious servants of our God!

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word, in this age of apologies, it indisputably conveys the idea of a contentious, defensive war against impiety and infidelity, rather than of that boldness and decision, with which the cause of God and truth ought to be supported.—25:16. 1 Cor. 9:3. 2 Cor. 7:11. Phil. 1:7, 17. 2 Tim 4: 16. 1 Pet. 3:15. See on Luke 12:11. It does not appear, that the Classics use the term in any other sense. Plato, in Phædo, 7 Sect. thus employs it.

V. 3. 'According to the mode of arrangement in the Jewish schools, all the pupils sat at the feet of their master, i. c. considerably lower. See Wetst. The expression here is like our phrase, "educated under"

CHAP. XXII. In the close of the foregoing ch. we had Paul bound, according to Agabus' prophecy, yet he had his tongue set at liberty, by the chief captain's permission: and so intent he is on using that liberty, to the honor of Christ and the service of his interest, that he forgets the bonds he is in, not mentioning them, but speaks of the great things Christ had done for him, with as much ease and cheerfulness as if nothing had happened to ruffle him.

V. 1, 2. Never was poor man set upon in a more tumultuous manner, nor with more rage and fury; yet,

1. There appears no fright, but his mind is sedate, and admirably composed! Thus he makes his own words good, None of these things move me; and David's, Ps. 3: 6.

2. There appears no passion, no angry expressions; though the suggestions against him were all frivolous and unjust, though it would have vexed any man alive, to be charged with profaning the temple, just then when he was contriving and designing to show his respect to it, yet he is led as a lamb to the slaughter.

3. What respectful titles he gives even to those who thus abused him, and how humbly he craves their attention, v. 1. Thus he lets them know he was one of them, and had not renounced his relation to the Jewish nation, but still had a kindness and concern for it. Though we must not give flattering titles to any, yet we ought to give their titles of due respect to all; and those we would do good to, we should endeavor not to provoke. Observe, he does not recriminate, but makes a just and reasonable request; for no man has justice done him if his answer to an accusation be not patiently and impartially heard.

4. He spake in Heb., i. e. the vulgar language of the Jews, at this time, not the pure O. T. Heb., but the Syriac, a dialect of the Heb., or rather a corruption of it, as the Italian of the Latin: though he had conversed so much with the Gentiles, yet he still retained the Jews' language, and could talk it with ease; by this it appears he is a Jew. Besides, that was the language every body spake, and to speak in it was indeed to appeal to the people, by which he might have somewhat to insinuate into their affections; then they kept the more silence.

V. 3—21. Paul here gives them to understand,

I. His extraction and education:

1. He was of their own nation; not of any obscure family, or a renegade of some other nation; but verily a Jew, a Jewish man,

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4 And I persecuted <sup>b</sup> this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

5 As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to <sup>1</sup> Damascus, to bring them which were there, bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished.

6 And it came to pass, that as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.

9 And they that were with me <sup>1</sup> saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.

12 And one <sup>k</sup> Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good <sup>1</sup> report of all the Jews which dwelt there,

h c. 8:3. 26:9-13. i c. 9:2, &c. l c. 10:27. 1 Ti. 3:6. 1 Ti. j Da. 10:7. 37. He. 11:2. 1:13. k c. 9:17.

and therefore not likely to derogate from the national honor.

2. He was born in a creditable, reputable place, in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia; and not in servitude, as some of the Jews of the dispersion, it is likely, were; but a freeman, a gentleman, and perhaps could produce his certificate of his freedom in that ancient and honorable city: a small matter indeed to boast of, yet needful to be mentioned at this time to those who insolently trampled on him, as if he were to be ranked with the children of fools, yea, of base men, Job 30:8.

3. That he had a learned and liberal education; was not only a Jew, and a gentleman, but a scholar; brought up in Jerusalem, the principal seat of the Jewish learning, and at the feet of Gamaliel, whom they all knew to be an eminent doctor of the Jewish law, of which Paul was designed to be himself a teacher; therefore, he could not be ignorant of their law, nor be thought to slight it because he did not know it; his parents had brought him very young to this city, designing him for a Pharisee; and some think his being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, intimates, not only that he was one of his pupils, but that he was, above any other, diligent and constant in attending his lectures, observant of him, and obse-

and evidently to be taken figuratively, however.' Bloomf. So in the E. it is said, 'He had his holiness at the feet of the gooroo, or his learning at the feet of the philosopher.' It is only used of great saints or teachers. So Rob. At first, disciples seem to have sat on the ground before their teachers, who were in a seat or chair. Afterwards, the eldest sat on pulpits, or arm-chairs, the next in dignity on chairs or stools, the novitiates or youngest on mats upon the ground. Vitr. says, disciples stood before their teachers. See Wetst. Ed.

V. 6-13. It is evident, the apostle considered his extraordinary con-

quious to him, in all he said, as Mary, that sat at Jesus feet, and heard his word.

4. That he was, in his early days, a very forward and eminent professor of the Jews' religion, his studies and learning were all directed that way. So far was he from being principled in his youth with any disaffection to the religious usages of the Jews, there was not a young man among them had a greater or more entire veneration for them than he had, was more strict in observing them himself, nor more hot in enforcing them on others. What departures he had made from the law, were not owing to any confused or mistaken notions of it, for he understood it to a nicety,—according to the most accurate and exact method; and, to make it more strict than it was, added to it the traditions of the elders, the law of the fathers, the law given to them, and so handed down to us. Paul had as great a value for antiquity and tradition, as any of them had. And he was as much a zealot as any Rabbim; he was zealous against everything the law prohibited, and for everything the law enjoined; and this was zeal toward God, because he thought it was for the honor of God, and the service of his interests; and here he compliments his hearers with a candid and charitable opinion of them, that they all were this day zealous toward God; he bears them record, Rom. 10:2.

II. What a fiery, furious persecutor he had been of the Christian religion, in the beginning of his time, v. 4, 5. He mentions this, to make it the more plainly and evidently to appear, that the change wrought on him, when he was converted, was purely the effect of a divine power; for he was so far from having any previous inclinations to it, or favorable opinions of it, that immediately before that sudden change in him, he had the utmost antipathy imaginable to Christianity, and was filled with rage against it, to the last degree! Perhaps he mentions it, to justify God in his present trouble, who permitted it, for time was when he was a persecutor; and he may have a further view in it, to invite and encourage those people to repent, for he himself yet obtained mercy.

Let us view Paul's picture of himself when a persecutor. 1. He hated Christianity with a mortal enmity; I persecuted this way unto the death, those that walked in this way, 9:1. 26:10. nay, the way itself, Christianity, which was branded as a by-way, a sect: he persecuted it to the death, i. e. he could have been willing himself to die in his opposition to Christianity, so some; he would contentedly have lost his life, thinking it well laid out, in defence of the laws and traditions of the fathers. 2. He did all he could to frighten people from this way, and out of it, by binding and delivering them into prisons; now he himself was bound, he lays a particular stress on this part of his charge against himself; he likewise reflects, with a special regret, that he had imprisoned, not only the men, but the weaker sex, who ought to be treated with particular tenderness and compassion. 3. He was employed by the great Sanhedrim, the high priest, and all the estate of the elders, as an agent for them, in suppressing this new sect; so much had he already signalized himself for his zeal against it! v. 5. 'Such an one,' says Paul, 'I was at first, just such as you now are. I know the heart of a persecutor, and therefore pity you, and pray that you may know the heart of a convert, as God soon made me to do.'

III. The manner of his conversion; it was not from any natural or external causes; nor from discontent in the Jewish church, much less from covetousness, or ambition, or any hope of mending his fortune, for it was to expose himself to all manner of disgrace and trouble; nor had he any conversation with the apostles or any other Christians, by whose subtlety and sophistry he might be thought to have been wheedled into this change; no, it was the Lord's doing, and the circumstances of the doing of it were enough to justify him in the change, to all those who believe there is a supernatural power; and none can condemn him for it, without reflecting on that divine energy by which he was herein overruled. More particularly,

1. He was as fully bent on persecuting the Christians just before Christ arrested him, as ever, v. 6. and had no other thought than to execute the cruel design he was sent upon. 2. A light from heaven first startled him. Had it shone in upon him into some private room, there might have been a cheat in it, but it shone upon him in the open road, at high noon, and so strongly, that it struck him to the ground, v. 7. and all that were with him, ch. 26:14. They could not deny but that surely the Lord was in this light. 3. A voice from heaven first began in him awful thoughts of Jesus Christ, whom before he had had nothing but hateful, spiteful thoughts of. By which it appeared, that this Jesus of Nazareth, whom they also were now persecuting, was one that spake from heaven, and they knew it was dangerous resisting one that did so, Heb. 12:25. 4. Lest it should be objected, 'How came this light and voice to work such a change on him, and not on those that journeyed with him?' He observes, that his fellow-travellers saw indeed the light, and were afraid that they should be consumed with fire from heaven, but did not distinctly hear the words; now faith comes by hearing, and therefore that change was now presently wrought on him that heard the words, and heard them directed to himself, which was not wrought on them who only saw the light; and yet it might afterward be wrought on them too. 5. He assures them, that when thus startled, he referred himself entirely to a divine guidance; 'What shall I do, Lord? Let the same voice from heaven, that has stopped me in the wrong way, guide me into the right,' v. 10. And immediately he had directions to go to Damascus, and there he should hear further from Him that spake to him; 'No more needs to be said from heaven, there it shall be told thee, by a man like thyself, in the name of Him that now speaks to thee, all things which are appointed for thee to do.' The extraordinary ways of divine revelation, by visions, and voices, and the appearance of angels, were designed, both in the O. T. and in the New, only to introduce and establish the ordinary method by the Scriptures, and a standing ministry, and therefore were generally superseded when those were settled. See the story of Cornelius. 6. As a demonstration of the greatness of that light which fastened on him, he tells them of the immediate effect it had on his eyesight, v. 11. Those that were with Paul, had not the light so directly darted into their faces, as Paul had into his, therefore were not blinded, as he. Now Paul was thus struck with bodily blindness, to make him sensible of his spiritual blindness, and his mistake concerning himself, when he was alive without the law, Rom. 7:9.

version, as a most complete demonstration of the truth of Christianity: and when all the particulars of his case are properly considered; it must convince every candid and impartial person, that no rational account can be given of this change, except that which he himself assigns; and if that be true, Christianity is divine. Scott.

(12.) Ananias. 'A pious man, according to the law, whose acceptance of the Gospel had by no means destroyed his regard to the Mosaeic institutions, and who on that account had an honorable character among all the Jews who dwelt at Damascus.' Dodd.



13 Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.

14 And he said, The <sup>m</sup> God of our fathers hath chosen <sup>n</sup> thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see <sup>o</sup> that <sup>p</sup> Just One, and shouldest hear the voice <sup>q</sup> of his mouth.

15 For thou <sup>r</sup> shalt be his witness unto all men, of what thou hast seen and heard.

16 And now, why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash <sup>s</sup> away thy sins, calling <sup>t</sup> on the name of the Lord.

17 And it came to pass, that when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a <sup>u</sup> trance;

18 And saw <sup>v</sup> him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

19 And I said, Lord, they <sup>w</sup> know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee:

20 And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I <sup>x</sup> also was standing by, and consenting <sup>y</sup> unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

21 And he said unto me, Depart: for <sup>z</sup> I will send thee far hence, unto the Gentiles,

m c. 3:13. 5:30. &c. x c. 7:58.  
n c. 9:15. Ga. 1:15. s He. 10:22. 1 Pe. y c. 8:1.  
o ver. 13. 1 Co. 3:21. z c. 13:2,47. Ro.  
p 9:1. 15:8. t Ro. 10:13. 1 1:5. 11:13. 15:  
q 1 Co. 11:23. Ga. u 2 Co. 12:2. 16. Ga. 2:7. 8.  
r c. 23:11. 26:16, w ver. 4. v ver. 14. 2:7.

IV. How he was confirmed, and further directed. Observe,

1. The character here given of Ananias; he was not prejudiced against the Jewish nation or religion, but if not a Jew by birth, yet had been proselyted to the Jewish religion, therefore is called *devout*, and thence advanced further to the faith of Christ; he conducted himself so well, that he had a *good report of all the Jews at Damascus*; this was the first Christian Paul had any friendly communication with, and it was not likely he should instil into him any such notions as they suspected him to have espoused, injurious to the law, or to this holy place.

2. The cure immediately wrought by him on Paul's eyes; which miracle was to confirm Ananias' mission to Paul, and to ratify all that he should afterwards say to him, v. 13. and to assure him that he *came to him from Christ*.

3. The declaration Ananias makes to him of the peculiar favor the Lord Jesus design-

ed him above any other. (1.) In the present manifestation of Himself to him, v. 14. Ananias' saying, *the God of our fathers*, intimates, he was himself a Jew by birth, and why he said *Brother Saul*. *Know his will*, the will of his precept to be done by thee, the will of his providence to be done concerning thee. *He hath chosen thee immediately by the revelation of Christ*, Gal. 1:1, 12. *Those whom God hath chosen, He hath chosen to know his will*, and to do it. *That thou shouldest see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth*, and so shouldest know his will immediately from Himself, in a particular manner, above others; Christ is here called *that Just One*; for He is *Jesus Christ the righteous*, and suffered wrongfully.

(2.) In the after manifestation of Himself by him to others, v. 15. *Thou shalt be his witness*, not only a monument of his grace, as a pillar may be, but a witness *by word of mouth*; thou shalt publish his Gospel, as that which thou hast experienced the power of, and been delivered into the mould of; *thou shalt be his witness unto all men*, Gentiles as well as Jews, *of what thou hast seen and heard*, now at the very first. And finding Paul so particularly relating the manner of his conversion in his apologies for himself, here, and ch. 26. we have reason to think he frequently made the same narrative in his preaching for the conversion of others; he told them *what God had done for his soul*, to encourage them to hope that He would do something for theirs.

4. The counsel and encouragement he gave him to join himself to the Lord Jesus by baptism, v. 16. He had in his circumcision been given up to God, but he must now by baptism be given up to God in Christ; must embrace the Christian religion and the privileges of it, in submission to the precepts of it. This must now be done immediately on his conversion, and so was added to his circumcision; but to the *seed of the faithful* it comes in the room of it; for it is, as that was to Abraham and his believing seed, a *seal of the righteousness which is by faith*. The great *gospel-privilege*, which by baptism we have sealed to us, is the *remission of sins*; and the great *gospel-duty* we are bound to by it, is, *to call on the name of the Lord, the Lord Jesus*; to acknowledge Him to be our Lord and our God, and to apply ourselves to Him accordingly. *To call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord*, is the periphrasis of a Christian, 1 Cor. 1:2. We must *wash away our sins, calling on the name of the Lord*; i. e. we must seek for the pardon of our sins in Christ's name, and in dependence on Him and his righteousness. We must do this quickly. *Why tarriest thou?* The case is so plain, it is needless to deliberate; the hazard so great, it is folly to delay.

V. How he was commissioned to go and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. This was the great thing they were so angry at him for, therefore it was requisite he should for this, in a special manner, produce a divine warrant; and here he does it. This commission he did not receive presently on his conversion, for this was *at Jerusalem*,

whither he did not go till *three years after*, or more, Gal. 1:18. and whether it was then, or afterward, that he had this vision here spoken of, we are not certain. But, to reconcile them, if possible, to his preaching the Gospel among *the Gentiles*, he tells them,

1. That he received his orders to do it when at prayer, and (a circumstance that would have some weight with those he was now speaking to) *at prayer in the temple*, which was an evidence, contrary to their malicious suggestion, that he had a veneration for *the temple*, though he did not make an idol of it, as they did; as also that the sending him *to the Gentiles* would be no prejudice *to the temple*, unless the Jews by their infidelity made it so.

2. He received it in a vision, he fell *into a trance*, v. 17. his external senses, for the present, locked up. In this *trance* he saw Jesus Christ, not with the eyes of his body, as at his conversion, but represented to the eyes of his mind, v. 18. Our eye must be on Christ, when receiving the law from his mouth; and we must not only *hear Him speaking*, but *see Him speaking* to us.

3. Before Christ gave him a commission *to go to the Gentiles*, He told him, it was to no purpose for him to think of doing any good *at Jerusalem*. As God knows before who will receive *the Gospel*, so He knows who will reject it.

4. Paul, notwithstanding this, renews his petition that he might be employed *at Jerusalem*, because they knew, better than any did, what he had been before his conversion, and therefore must ascribe so great a change in him to the power of almighty grace, and, consequently, give the greater regard to his testimony; thus he reasoned, both with himself, and with the Lord, and thought he reasoned right, v. 19, 20. for they will not impute my preaching Christ to education, or any prepossession in his favor, but will the more readily regard what I say, because they know I have myself been *one of them*: particularly in Stephen's case. 'No,' says Christ to him, 'they will not; but will be more exasperated against thee as a *deserter from*, than against others whom they *look upon* only as strangers to, their constitution.'

5. Paul's petition is overruled, and he has peremptory orders *to go among the Gentiles*, v. 21. God often gives gracious answers to the prayers of his people, not in the thing itself that they pray for, but in something better. Abraham prays, *Oh that Ishmael may live before thee*; and God hears him for Isaac. It is God that appoints his laborers both their day and their place, and it is fit they should acquiesce in his appointment; though it may cross their own inclinations. So often does Providence contrive better for us than we for ourselves; to the guidance of that we must therefore refer ourselves. And it might be a mitigation of the offence of this to the Jews, that he did not set up a Gentile church in the neighboring nations; but was sent a vast way off.

Now if they would lay all this together, surely they would see they had no reason to be angry with Paul for preaching among the Gentiles, or construe it an act of ill-will to

V. 14—16. 'Calling on the name of the Lord,' even the Lord Jesus, as the expression generally means, seems to have been one principal part of the required profession of faith in his name. 2:14—21. Joel 2:23—32. 1 Cor. 1:1, 2.—'The inference of Chrysostom from this place (16) is this, that by these words, he shows that Christ was God; because it is not lawful to invoke any but God.' *Whitby*. The invocation of saints and angels had not, it seems, at that time, (near the end of the fourth century,) received the sanction of the most eminent Christian ministers.—'Washing away thy sins,' is rather connected with 'having called on the name, &c.' than with 'be baptized.' Rom. 10:12—17, v. 12—14. See on 9:14.

(16.) 'Do thy part to be baptized, (by applying for baptism,) and, as much as in thee lies, wash away thy sins.' 'Calling on the name of the Lord,' seems a form of solemn engagement, by which the applicant for baptism invoked the name of the Lord to bear witness to his engagements to forsake sin, and have faith. 'Baptism in the adult, excepting our Lord's peculiar case, was a token of confession and humiliation for sin, (hence called of repentance, Mat. 3:11. Mark 1:4. Luke 3:3. Acts 13:24. 19:4.) and of a desire to be cleansed from it, as the body was

by water cleansed from its pollution; and being administered to such professed penitents, by divine appointment, as a token of favorable regard to them, it was a seal of pardon: nor did God ordinarily give any particular person any public and visible token of pardon till he had submitted to baptism; and this may explain in what sense baptism may be said to wash away sins, and elsewhere to save. Comp. 1 Pet. 3:21. See Acts 2:38. and note.' *Doddr*. See an admirable passage on this subject in *Calvin's Inst.* L. IV. xv. § 14.

V. 17—21. Doubtless many who heard the apostle, on this occasion, could well remember the facts to which he referred, and attest them to others. He therefore hoped to convince the multitude, that his labors among the Gentiles were not the result of his own choice, as he earnestly desired to have been useful to his countrymen; but at the same time this mission intimated the approaching rejection of the Jewish nation, as well as the calling of the Gentiles into the church.—[*Death*.] See on 8:1. 'Murder.' 'Rightly; for Stephen was slain, without any precedent sentence of law, by manifest violence, as by robbers; when it was not allowed to the Jews capitally to condemn any one, even according to the laws.' *Beza*.

SCOTT.



22 ¶ And they gave him audience unto this word, and *then* lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a *fellow* from the earth: for <sup>a</sup>it is not fit that he should live.

23 And as they cried out, and cast off *their* clothes, and threw dust into the air,

24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.

25 ¶ And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a <sup>b</sup>Roman, and uncondemned?

26 When the centurion heard *that*, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.

27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.

28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was *free* born.

29 Then straightway they departed from him which should have <sup>c</sup>examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

a c. 25:24. b c. 16:37. 25:16. c or, tortured him.

his own nation, for he was compelled to it, contrary to his own mind, by an overruling command from heaven.

V. 22—30. Paul was going on, we may suppose, to show how he was afterward, by a special direction of the Holy Ghost at Antioch, separated to this service, how tender he was of the Jews, how respectful to them, and how careful to give them the precedency in all places whither he came, and to unite Jews and Gentiles in one body; and then to show how wonderfully God had owned him, and what good service had been done to the interest of God's kingdom among men in general, without damage to any of the true interests of the Jewish church in particular. But when he speaks of being *sent to the Gentiles*, they cannot bear it, not so much as to hear the Gentiles named, such an enmity had they to them, and such a jealousy of them.

1. They interrupted him, by *lifting up their voice*, to put him into confusion, and that nobody might hear a word he said. Galled consciences kick at the least touch; and those who are resolved not to be ruled by reason, commonly resolve not to hear it, if they can help it. And the spirit of enmity against the Gospel of Christ commonly shows itself in silencing the ministers of

Christ, as the Jews did Paul here. See Is. 30:10. 2 Chr. 25:16.

2. They clamored against him as one unworthy of life, much more of liberty; *'Away with such a fellow as this from the earth, who pretends to have a commission to preach to the Gentiles; why, it is not fit that he should live.'* Thus the men that have been the greatest blessings of their age, have been represented not only as the burdens of the earth, but the plague of their generation. See what different sentiments God and men have of good men, and yet they both agree in this, that they are not likely to live long in this world. Heb. 11:38. Rev. 11:10.

3. They went stark mad against Paul, and against the chief captain for not killing him immediately, at their request, v. 23. they *cried out* like roaring lions or raging bears, howled like the evening wolves; they *cast off their clothes* with fury and violence, as much as to say, that thus they would tear him if they could but come at him. Or rather, they thus showed how ready they were to stone him; they that stoned Stephen, threw off their clothes, v. 20. Or, they *rent their clothes*, as if he had spoken blasphemy; and *threw dust into the air*, in detestation of it. What they intended, was, to make the chief captain sensible how much they were enraged and exasperated at Paul, so that he could not do anything to gratify them more than to let them have their will against him.

4. The chief captain took care for his safety, by ordering him to be brought into the castle, v. 24. A prison sometimes has been a protection to good men from popular rage.\* God raised up one that took care of Paul, when none of his friends durst appear on his behalf. *Grant not, O Lord, the desire of the wicked.*

5. He ordered him the torture, *bade that he should be examined by scourging*, (as now [to their disgrace] in some countries, by the rack,) that *he might know wherefore they cried so against him*. Herein he did not proceed fairly; he should have singled out some of the clamorous, tumultuous complainants, and have examined them, [never however by torture, which takes the prisoner's crime for granted,] what they had to lay to the charge of a man that could give so good an account of himself, and did not appear to have done anything worthy of death or of bonds. It was proper to ask them, but not at all proper to ask Paul, *wherefore they cried so against him*. No man is [in law] bound to *accuse himself*, though *guilty*, much less, when *innocent*. Surely the chief captain did not know the Jewish nation, when he concluded, he must needs have done something very ill, whom they cried out against. Had they not just thus cried against our Lord Jesus, *Crucify Him, crucify Him*, when they had not one word to say in answer to the judge's question, *Why, what evil has He done?* Is this a fair or just occasion to scourge Paul, that a rude tumultuous mob cry out against him, but cannot tell why or wherefore, and therefore *he* must be forced to tell?

6. Paul pleaded his privilege as a Roman citizen, by which he was exempted from all

\* It is singular, that the free United States should, of late, exemplify this!

trials and punishments of this nature, v. 25. *As they bound him with thongs*, or leather bands, to the whipping-post, he made no outcry against the injustice of their proceedings, but very mildly let them understand the illegality of them against him as a citizen of Rome; he had done this once before at Philippi, after he had been scourged, ch. 16:37. but here he makes use of it for prevention. The manner of his speaking, plainly speaks what a holy security and serenity of mind this good man enjoyed, not disturbed with anger or fear in the midst of all the indignities done him, and the danger he was in. The Romans had a law, *lex Sempronia*, that if any magistrate did chastise or condemn a freeman of Rome, *without hearing him speak for himself, and deliberating on the whole of his case*, he should be liable to the sentence of the people, who were very jealous of their liberties. It is indeed the privilege of every man not to have wrong done him, except it be proved he has done wrong; as it is of every Englishman, by *Magna Charta*, not to be dispossessed of his life or freehold, but by a verdict of 12 men of his peers.

7. The chief captain was surprised at this, and put into a fright; he had taken Paul to be a vagabond Egyptian, and wondered he could speak Greek, ch. 21:37. but is much more surprised, now he finds he is as good a gentleman as himself. How many men of great worth and merit are despised because they are not known! *It is a crime*, says Cic., *to bind a Roman citizen, but an unpardonable one to beat him*. Now, (1.) The chief captain would be satisfied of the truth of this from his own mouth, v. 27. perhaps he produced some instrument which proved it; otherwise, they would scarcely have taken his word; [but the *pretending* it was a capital crime by Roman law, and so not likely to happen.] (2.) The chief captain very freely compares notes with him on this matter, and it appears, that the privilege Paul had as a Roman citizen, was of the two more honorable than the colonel's [tribune's]; for the colonel owns his was purchased; while 'I,' says Paul, *'was free-born.'* Some think he became entitled to this freedom by the *place of his birth*; others rather, by his father or grandfather, for some signal piece of service in the war between Cesar and Antony, rewarded with a freedom of the city; and so Paul came to be free-born. (3.) This put an immediate stop to Paul's trouble, v. 29. Many are restrained from evil practices by the *fear of man*, who would not be by the *fear of God*. See here the benefit of human laws and magistracy, and what reason we have to be thankful to God for them; therefore *this* service we owe to all in authority,—*to pray for them*, because *this* benefit we have reason to expect from them, whether we have it or no, as long as we are quiet and peaceable,—*to live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty*, 1 Tim. 2:1, 2. (4.) The governor, the next day, brought Paul before the Sanhedrim, v. 30. for he found it to be a matter of religion, and therefore looked upon them to be the most proper judges of it. What he is here said to aim at, is, the gratifying of his own curiosity. *He would have known*

V. 22. 'They thought, if the Gentiles were ever admitted to the benefits of the Messiah's kingdom, it would only be by previously becoming Jews.'

V. 23. So in Persia aggrieved peasants carry their complaints to their governors (in companies of several hundreds or a thousand) to their prince's gate, where they set themselves to make the most horrid cries, tearing their garments, and *throwing dust in the air*, [intimating, perhaps, that the obnoxious person ought to be prostrated and buried?] at the same time demanding justice. See *Bush's Ill.*

V. 24. 'The tribune,' says *Bloomf.*, 'ignorant of Hebrew, and therefore not acquainted with the purport of Paul's speech, thinks, by the rabid fury of the multitude, that he had committed some heinous offence.'

V. 25. He had before mentioned his being a citizen of Tarsus, yet the tribune had not thence inferred, that he was entitled to the privilege of a Roman citizen: so that it is probable, all the citizens of the Roman colonies had not this privilege; or that Tarsus was not a colony. SCOTT.

(25.) *That stood by.* 'This alludes to the custom of the Romans, to appoint a centurion to superintend the execution of any punishment.'

V. 28. *Free born.* *Doddr.* thinks Lardner's arguments unanswerable against Tarsus having been a colony, or what the Romans called a *municipium*, i. e. a place where all the natives were free by birth; and that, therefore, 'it is much more probable,' that Paul was born free by virtue of his father's, or some of his ancestors' having been rewarded with the honor of Roman citizenship, for some military service: and *Ros.* hence infers, that Paul 'was of a wealthy family.' Note, 16:37. See *Bloomfield.*

V. 29. *Was afraid.* *Bloomf.* (whom see) thinks Paul's right of Roman citizenship was not of the first class, but the *Jus Latii* or *Jus Coloniae*, for he is put in bonds or irons, v. 30. is constantly spoken of as the *bound* [tr. prisoner], and at 27:42. the centurion, it appears, had the power of death over him: all which are inconsistent with the highest order of Roman citizenship. The centurion, he supposes, was *afraid* because he had *strapped Paul to the whipping-post*, v. 25.



- 30 ¶ On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them.

## CHAP. XXIII.

1 As Paul pleadeth his cause, 2 Ananias commandeth them to smite him. 7 Dissension among his accusers. 11 God encourageth him. 14 The Jews' laying wait for Paul 20 is declared unto the chief captain. 27 He sendeth him to Felix the governor.

AND Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.

2 And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him<sup>b</sup> on the mouth.

d c. 23:28. a c. 24:16. 2 Co. 1:12. He. 13:13. b Jn. 18:22.

the certainty whereof he was accused of the Jews. Had he sent for Paul to his own chamber, and talked freely with him, he might soon have learned that, and more; but it is too common for great men to affect to set that at a distance from them, which might awaken their consciences, and to desire to have no more of the knowledge of God's ways than may serve them to talk of.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1—5. The close of the foregoing ch. left Paul in the high priest's court, into which the chief captain

PRACT. OBS. The honor of the Gospel requires its advocates to speak with temper, benevolence, and respect to their superiors; as well as with boldness and constancy, in the midst of all the ill usage, to which they may be exposed.—A simple narration of the Lord's dealings with us, in bringing us from opposing, to profess and promote his Gospel, when it is delivered with modesty and caution, will generally make more impression on the minds of men, than labored arguments or rhetorical declamations.—Natural abilities, the advantages of education, proficiency in learning, exactness in a system, and a fervent, religious zeal according to that system, may be either valuable or mischievous; as they are directed, under the influence of divine grace, in support of the truth, or as employed by men's selfish passions in defence of error. Zeal, especially, is an ambiguous attainment; it may be a violent, cruel, and dreadful flame, kindled from beneath, and destroying all around it with fatal vehemence; or it may be a gentle, active, kind, and heavenly principle, powerfully influencing the possessor to everything excellent and beneficial, in the persevering use of the most unexceptionable means of obtaining the most important ends. *Jam. 3:13—16.*—Many, who for a time have devoted their talents to the service of delusion and error, have afterwards been induced to consecrate them to the cause of Christ. When a man is thus admitted among the servants of Christ, he is often employed in such services, as disconcert all his own plans and purposes. Not being wholly weaned from 'leaning to his own understanding,' he is sometimes reluctant to renounce his favorite plan, even after he has been

NOTES. CHAP. XXIII. V. 1—5. When the apostle was placed before the Sanhedrim, he steadfastly viewed it, to observe of what persons it now consisted.—The council would have given him credit for that [the first] part of his life: his object therefore, evidently was, to show that he had acted conscientiously, and on good grounds, in those things which they deemed deserving of death. 'Ananias carried it very plausibly towards the citizens, and stood high in their favor: yet he impudently and cruelly defrauded the inferior priests of their legal subsistence, so that some of them even perished for want. And God did remarkably smite him: for after his own house had been reduced to ashes, in a tumult begun by his own son, he was besieged and taken in the royal palace; where, having in vain attempted to hide himself in an old aqueduct, he was dragged out and slain.' *Doddridge.*—But though the answer of Paul contained a just rebuke, and an evident prediction; yet he seems to have been too much carried away by indignation at the base usage he had experienced: . . . and it seems probable, that the apostle meant to allow, that, in the warmth of his spirit, he had not adverted to the person who had given the orders, or was not aware that he was the high priest. Perhaps the high priest in the Sanhedrim was not always to be known by his seat, or his garments; and Ananias did not fill that office, when Paul had been more intimately conversant with that assembly. But it is not very clear, whether the apostle intended by this concession to waive the question concerning his speaking by 'the Spirit of prophecy,' as not choosing to insist on it; or whether he allowed that he had spoken too sharply, and could not justify the whole of his answer, or propose it to the imitation of others. *SCOTT.*

(1.) 'Paul intimates, that as he left not the religion of the Jews out of any hardship which it required, or any prejudice against its precepts, he became and continued a Christian, also, out of a full conviction that he was bound in conscience so to be, and to act, and that he still served God from a pure conscience.' *Whitby, in Bloomf.,* who 'cannot consent to [Doddridge's] limitation, which seems abhorrent from simplicity, and (in truth) has something jesuitical about it.' *I have lived, &c.* 'Paul could not intend, by this, to intimate, that he thought himself free from guilt while persecuting the Christians, since he so expressly declares

had removed his cause from the mob; and if his enemies act there against him with less noise, yet it is with more subtlety. Perhaps Paul, when brought before heathen magistrates, thought, if he were before the Sanhedrim, he should be able to deal with them to some good purpose, yet we do not find that he works at all upon them. Here we have,

I. Paul's protestation of his own integrity; he appeared here,

1. With a good courage; when Stephen was brought before them, they thought to have faced him down, *ch. 6:15.* but could not, such was his holy confidence; and now that Paul was brought before them, he thought to have faced them down, but could not, such was their wicked impudence. However, now was fulfilled in him what God promised to Ezekiel, *ch. 3:8, 9.*

2. With a good conscience, and that gave him a good courage. *Be this thy brazen bulwark of defence.* He had always been a man inclined to religion; never lived at large, but, even in his unregenerate state, was, as touching the righteousness in the law, blameless. Even when he persecuted the church of God, he thought he ought to do it, and that he did God service in it. Though his conscience was misinformed, yet he acted according to its dictates. See *ch. 26:9.* But he seems rather to speak of the time since his conversion; he does not say, 'From my beginning until this day; but, 'All the time in which you have looked upon me as a deserter, an apostate, and an enemy to your church, even to this day, I have lived in all good conscience before God; whatever you may think,' *Heb. 13:18.* In all he had done toward the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, and the

setting of it up among the Gentiles, he had acted conscientiously. See here the character of an honest man; He sets God before him, he makes conscience of what he says and does, and though he may be under some mistakes, yet, according to the best of his knowledge, he abstains from that which is evil, and cleaves to that which is good. He is universally conscientious; and they that are not so, are not at all truly conscientious: whatever changes pass over him, he is still the same, strictly conscientious. And those who thus live in all good conscience before God, may, like Paul here, lift up their face without spot; and if their hearts condemn them not, may have confidence both toward God and man, as Job had when he still held fast his integrity, and Paul himself, whose rejoicing was this, the testimony of his conscience.

II. The outrage Ananias the high priest was guilty of; he commanded the beadle that attended the court, *v. 2.* to give him a dash on the teeth, with a hand, or with a rod. Our Lord Jesus was thus despitefully used in this court, by one of the servants, *John 18:22.* as was foretold, *Mic. 5:1.* 1. The high priest was highly offended at Paul; some think, because he looked so boldly and earnestly at the council, as if he would face them down; others, because he did not address himself particularly to him as president, with some title of honor and respect, but spake freely and familiarly to them all, as men and brethren. His protestation of his integrity was provocation enough to one who was resolved to run him down, and make him odious. When he could charge him with no crime, he thought it crime enough that he asserted his own inno-

praying for direction respecting the will of God! A person in these circumstances often imagines, that the opposition of unbelievers to religion arises mainly from misinformation; and that if the truth were fairly set before them, they could not resist the evidence of it. Thus he may practically forget, that nothing can reconcile the heart of fallen man to the Gospel, except the special grace of God; and that 'a prophet is not without honor save in his own country;' and that a servant of Christ may expect a more favorable hearing from entire strangers, than from prejudiced neighbors, relatives, and acquaintance; who commonly treat his attempts to convince them, as a usurpation of authority to which he is not entitled.—Bigotry and spiritual pride are commonly connected with furious wrath and intolerant malice; and it is well for mankind, that the power of persecutors is often inadequate to their rage; otherwise they would drive all the servants of Christ out of the earth, as unfit to live upon it. But the Lord mercifully restrains their madness, by subjecting them to more moderate men. For, though many iniquities have been practised by magistrates, not professing any great regard to religion, even in civilized nations; yet their severity is commonly tender mercy, compared with the cruelty of enraged bigots, when advanced to authority; and their haste in punishing is deliberation and caution, compared with the fury of a licentious mob, when excited by frantic persecutors. But how great a privilege is it to be governed according to a written law!

SCOTT.

the contrary elsewhere. See *1 Cor. 15:9. Ga. 1:13. 1 Tim. 1:13.* He was only examined with respect to his conduct as a Christian: therefore it would not have been pertinent to have referred to his conduct while a persecuting Jew, though it were indeed true, that he did not then act against his conscience. . . . The plain sense of the passage is, that his conscience, when examined as in the sight of God with respect to what they alleged against him, did not charge him with any known and deliberate contradictions to its dictates.' *Doddr.* But in the texts cited above, Paul does not accuse himself of criminal intention, (which gives character to act,) nay, he expressly says he acted ignorantly, indeed, conscientiously. The phrase here seems certainly to speak of his whole life as entirely conscientious.

(2.) *Ananias.* 'Undoubtedly, Ananias son of Nebidæus, [and so *Doddr.*] (see *Jos. Ant. 20, 5, 3.*) who had discharged the pontifical office under the procuratorship of Quadratus, predecessor of Felix. By Quadratus he was sent a prisoner to Rome, together with Ananus, prefect of the temple, to give an account of his high priesthood to Claudius Cesar. (*Ant. 20, 6, 2*) [Of his behavior in the quarrel between the Jews and Samaritans, during Cumanus' gov. of Judea. *Doddr.*] But, by the intercession of Agrippa, Junior, they were acquitted, and returned to Jerusalem. Ananias, however, was not reinstated in the pontifical office. For, during the procuratorship of Felix, it was discharged by Jonathan, who (*Ant. 20, 10.*) was successor to Ananias. This Jonathan was, afterwards, by the connivance, at least, of Felix, assassinated in the temple, by some *sicarii*: *Ant. 20, 8, 5.* and note, *Acts 22:4.* The office then remained unoccupied, until *K. Agrippa* filled it by appointing *Ishmael*, son of *Phabeus.* (*Ant. 20, 8, 8.*) Therefore what is now related happened while it was vacant. So that Ananias did not, at that time, hold the office of high priest, but was usurping the dignity. *Kuin.* from *Krebs,* who has treated the question with no little learning and research. See also *Benson,* and *Biscoe.* *Bloomf. Snite, &c.* Comp. on *Mic. 5:1. Is. 50:6.* Thus the *k. of Persia,* wishing to extort money, commanded his ferashes to 'heat these rogues till they die;' and, on the victims attempting to say anything in their own defence, they smote them on the mouth with a shoe, the heel of which was shod with iron. (*Moricr.*)



3 Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, *thou* whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten <sup>e</sup> contrary to the law?

4 And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest?

5 Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is <sup>d</sup> written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

6 ¶ But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

c Le. 19:35. De. 10:20, 2 Pe. 2:10. f c. 21:15, 21. 26:  
25:1, 2. Jn. 7:51. Jude 8. 6. 18:20.  
d Ex. 22:28. Ec. e c. 26:5. Phi. 3:5.

gency. 2. In his rage he ordered him to be smitten, so to disgrace him, and to be smitten *on the mouth*, as having offended with his lips, and in token of enjoining him silence. Thus Zedekiah smote Micaiah, 1 K. 22:24. and Pasbur, Jeremiah, Jer. 20: 2. when they spake in the name of the Lord; if, therefore, we see such indignities done to good men; nay, if they be done to us for well doing and well saying, we must not think it strange; Christ will give those the *kisses of his mouth*, Cant. 1:2. who for his sake receive *blows on the mouth*.

III. The denunciation of the wrath of God against the high priest for this *wickedness in the place of judgment*, Eccl. 3:16. it agrees with what follows there, v. 17. with which Solomon comforted himself, *I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; God shall smite thee, thou whited wall*, v. 3. Paul did not speak this in any sinful heat or passion, but in a holy zeal against the high priest's abuse of his power, and with something of a prophetic spirit, not at all with a spirit of revenge. 1. He gives him his due character; *Thou whited wall; thou hypocrite; a mud-wall, trash and dirt, and rubbish, underneath, but plastered over, or white-washed,—the same comparison in effect with that of Christ, when He compares the Pharisees to whited sepulchres*, Mat. 23:27. 2. His just doom; *'God shall smite thee, shall bring on thee his sore judgments, especially spiritual judgments;'* Grotius thinks this was soon fulfilled, in his removal from office, either by death or deprivation, for he finds another in office a little while after; probably, he was smitten by some sudden stroke of divine vengeance. Jeroboam's hand was withered when stretched out against a prophet. 3. He assigns a good reason for that doom; *'For sittest thou there as president in the supreme judicature of the church, pretending to judge me after the law, to convict and condemn me by the*

law, and yet *commandest me to be smitten* before any crime is proved upon me, which is *contrary to the law?* Deut. 25:2. It is against all law, human and divine, natural and positive, to hinder a man from making his defence, and to condemn him unheard. When beaten by the rabble, Paul could say, *Father, forgive them, they know not what they do*; but it is inexcusable in a high priest, that is appointed to judge *according to the law*.

IV. The offence taken at this bold word of Paul's, v. 4. It is a probable conjecture, that those who blamed Paul for what he said, were *believing Jews*, who were *zealous for the law*, and consequently for the honor of the high priest, and therefore took it ill that Paul should thus reflect on him, and checked him for it. See here, then, 1. What a hard game Paul had to play, when his enemies were abusive to him, and his friends, so far from standing by him, and appearing for him, were ready to find fault with his management. 2. How apt even the disciples of Christ, themselves, are, to overvalue outward pomp and power. As, because the temple had been *God's temple*, and a magnificent structure, there were those who followed Christ, that could not bear to have anything said that threatened the destruction of it; so, because the high priest had been *God's high priest*, and was a man that made a figure, though an inveterate enemy to Christianity, yet these were disgusted at Paul, for giving him his due.

V. The excuse Paul made for what he had said, because he found it was a stumbling-block to his weak brethren, and might prejudice them against him in other things. These Jewish Christians, though weak, yet were *brethren*, so he calls them here, and, in consideration of that, is almost ready to recall his words; for *Who is offended, said he, and I burn not?* 2 Cor. 11:29. His fixed resolution was, rather to abridge himself in the use of his Christian liberty, than give offence to a weak brother; rather than do it, he will *eat no flesh while the world stands*, 1 Cor. 8:13. And so here, though he had taken the liberty to tell the high priest his own, yet when he found it gave offence, he wished he had not done it; and though he did not beg the high priest's pardon, nor excuse it to him, yet he begs *their* pardon, who took offence at it, because this was not a time to inform them better, nor to say what he could say to justify himself.

1. He excuses it with this, that he did not consider, when he said it, whom he spake to, v. 5. *'I did not just then think of the dignity of his place, or else I would have spoken more respectfully to him.'* I see not how we can with any probability think Paul did not know him to be the high priest, for Paul had been seven days in the temple, at the time of the feast, where he could not miss of seeing the high priest; and his telling him that *he sat to judge him after the law*, shows that he knew who he was; but, says he, I did not consider it. Dr. Whitby puts this sense on it: that the prophetic impulse that was on him, and inwardly moved him to say

what he did, did not permit him to advert that it was the high priest, lest this law might have restrained him from complying with that impulse; but the Jews acknowledged, that prophets might use a liberty in speaking of rulers which others might not, as Is. 1:10, 23. Or, (as he quotes the sense of Grot. and Lightf.) Paul does not go about to excuse what he had said, in the least, but rather to justify it; *'I own that God's high priest is not to be reviled, but I do not own this Ananias to be high priest; he is a usurper, he came to the office by bribery and corruption; and the Jewish rabbins say, that he who does so, is neither a judge, nor to be honored as such.'* Yet,

2. He takes care that what he had said should not be drawn into a precedent, v. 5. to the weakening of the obligation of that law in the least; it is for the public good, that the honor of magistracy should be supported, and not suffer for the miscarriages of those intrusted with it; and, therefore, that decorum be observed in speaking both of and to princes and judges, Job 34:18. Even when we do well, and suffer for it, we must *take it patiently*, 1 Pet. 2:20. Not as if great men may not hear of their faults, and public grievances be complained of by proper persons, and in a decent manner; but there must be a particular tenderness for the honor and reputation of those in authority, more than of other people, because the law of God requires a particular reverence to be paid to them, as God's vicegerents; and it is of dangerous consequence to have those any way countenanced, who *despise dominions*, and *speak evil of dignities*, Jude 8. Eccl. 10:20.

V. 6—11. *Many are the troubles of the righteous, but, some way or other, the Lord delivereth them out of them all.* Paul owned he had experienced the truth of this, in the persecutions he had undergone among the Gentiles, 2 Tim. 3:11. And now he finds that He who has delivered, does and will deliver.

1. His own prudence and ingenuity stand him *in some stead*, and contribute much to his escape. His being a *citizen of Rome* saved him in the foregoing ch. from being whipped by the chief captain as a vagabond, and here, his being a Pharisee saved him from being condemned by the Sanhedrim, as an apostate from the faith and worship of the God of Israel. It will consist very well with our willingness to suffer for Christ, to use all lawful methods, nay, and arts too, both to prevent suffering, and to extricate ourselves out of it. Paul's honest policy was, to divide his judges, and, by incensing *one part of them* more against him, to engage the contrary part for him.

1. The great council was made up of Sadducees and Pharisees, and Paul perceived it; he knew the characters of many of them ever since he had lived among them, and saw those among them whom he knew to be Sadducees, and others whom he knew to be Pharisees, v. 6. perhaps nearly an equal part. Now these differed very much

To be smitten with a shoe is the last ignominy. *Burd.* See *Bush's* III. Ed. 'This proud [Ananias] took umbrage, it seems, at Paul's undaunted look, and unqualified assertions of innocence, which gave the lie to all the accusations of the priests; as also, perhaps, at his addressing them with *Brethren*, not *Fathers* (as in 22. and 7:2.) or rulers of the people, and elders of Israel; as in 4:8. He must too have felt vexation at Paul's having been liberated by Roman soldiers; and having thrown himself on their protection as a Roman citizen.'

(3.) 'At this [aggravated] insult Paul inveighs with no little acrimony, [and] Dr. *Graves* remarks, that it is the only instance in which he forgot decorum and propriety. Many, as *Erasmus*, *Beza*, *Pearce*, and *Doddr.*, [with *Scott*,] take the words to be a prediction, or prophecy (as *Doddr.* thinks, uttered by the impulse of the Spirit): and *Grot.* maintains, that Paul *uses the right of a prophet*. But this seems scarcely satisfactory; nay, almost absurd. I rather assent to *Cam.*, *Zeger*, *Wetst.*, *Limb.*, *Heum.*, and, indeed, most recent commentators, that it is a *formula malè precantis*. (*Wetst.* quotes a similar imprecation from *Schævuos*.) And this is apparent from the words of the apparitor, at v. 4. and of Paul, at v. 5. It is (as *Kuin.* observes) admitted by *Jer.* and *Augustin*; that this sudden insult provoked the apostle to express himself with more bitterness than he should have done, and that, on this

occasion, he did not display the same patience under injuries that his Divine Master had done.'

(4.) 'Limb., *Beng.*, *Wetst.*, *Pearce*, *Valck.*, *Bp. Mann*, *Morus*, *Schoett.*, [*Bp. Sanderson*, *Bl.*,] &c., think, that Paul meant to excuse his lapse; and they tr.: "I did not *consider*, or *reflect*, that it was the high priest." Now this signification of *eidō* [tr. "wist"] often occurs, as *Eph.* 6:8. *Col.* 3:24. &c. Hence, in *Acts* 7:18. for *ēdei* [knew], some MSS. have (by a gloss) *emnēsthē* [recollected]. And this seems the best tr. *Kuin.* Whom see, for four other views, sustained by eminent men. Ep.

(5.) *I wist not*, &c. 'I was not aware that it was the high priest. This is a natural rendering of the original, which cannot fairly be tr. *I do not acknowledge him to be the high priest*; nor can it be imagined, that Paul would enter on so curious and so dangerous a question as the justice of his accession to that office. Paul's answer plainly shows he knew the person speaking, whoever he was, to be a judge. [And, so *Bl.*, the character Paul gives him exactly suits and must be meant for *Ananias*.] The candor both of the historian and of the apostle is well worthy of remark.' *Doddr.* But see on v. 2. *Camerarius*, *Calvini*, *Marnix*, *Pricæus*, and *Ros.*, think it irony. Id.

V. 6—10. The apostle showed a most consummate sagacity, and a deep acquaintance with the human heart, and [with] that universal disposi-



7 And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided.

8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.

9 And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God.

10 ¶ And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle.

<sup>g</sup> Mat. 22:23. <sup>h</sup> c. 25:25-29:31. <sup>i</sup> c. 22:17, 18. <sup>j</sup> c. 5:39.

from one another, yet ordinarily agreed well enough to do the business of the council together. (1.) The Pharisees were bigots; zealous for the ceremonies, not only those God had appointed, but those enjoined by the tradition of the elders; great sticklers for the authority of the church, and enforcing obedience to its injunctions, which occasioned many quarrels between them and our Lord Jesus; but at the same time very orthodox in the faith of the Jewish church concerning the world of spirits, the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. (2.) The Sadducees were deists; no friends to the Scripture, or divine revelation. The books of Moses they admitted, but had little regard to the other books of the O. T.; see Mat. 22:23. These Sadducees, [1.] Deny the resurrection; they had neither hope of eternal happiness, dread of eternal misery, nor expectation of anything on the other side death; on these principles, they [perhaps] said, *It is vain to serve God*, and [they] call the proud happy, Mal. 3:14, 15. [2.] They denied the existence of angels and spirits, and allowed of no being but matter. They thought God Himself was corporeal, and had parts and members, as we have. The angels, they supposed to be messengers God made and sent on his errands as there was occasion; or impressions on the fancies of those they were sent to, and no real existences; this, or that, or anything, rather than what they were. And as for the souls of men, they looked upon them to be nothing else but the temperament of the humors of the body, or the animal spirits; but denied their existence in a state of separation from the body, and any difference between the soul of a man and of a beast. These, no doubt, pretended to be free-thinkers, but really thought as meanly, absurdly, and slavishly as possible. It is strange how men of such corrupt and wicked principles could come into office, and have a place in the great Sanhedrim; but many of them were of quality and estate, and they complied with the public establishment, and so got in, and kept in. But they were generally stigmatized as heretics, were ranked with the Epicureans, and prayed against, and excluded from eternal life. The prayer the modern Jews use against Christians, Witsius thinks, was designed by Gamaliel,

who made it, against the Sadducees; and that they meant them in their usual imprecation, *Let the name of the wicked rot*. But how degenerate was the character, and how miserable the state of the Jewish church, when such profane men as these were among their rulers!

2. In this their difference, Paul openly declared himself to be on the Pharisees' side, v. 6. He cried out, so as to be heard by all, *I am a Pharisee*, so bred, may, born, in effect, the son of a Pharisee, and thus far still a Pharisee, that I hope for the resurrection of the dead, and, I may truly say, if rightly understood, this is it for which I am now called in question. When Christ was on earth, the Pharisees set themselves most against Him, because He witnessed against their traditions, and corrupt glosses on the law; but after his ascension, the Sadducees set themselves most against his apostles, because they preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead, ch. 4:1, 2. And it is said, ch. 5:17. that they were the sect of the Sadducees that were filled with indignation at them, because they preached that life and immortality which is brought to light by the Gospel. As Pharisaism was opposed to Christianity, Paul set himself against it, yet, as it was opposed to Sadducism, he adhered to it. We must never think the worse of any truth of God, nor be more shy of owning it, for its being held by men otherwise corrupt. Paul might truly say, that, being persecuted, as a Christian, this was the thing he was called in question for; perhaps he knew the Sadducees, though they had not such an interest in the common people as the Pharisees had, yet had underhand incensed the mob against him, under pretence of his having preached to the Gentiles, but really because he had preached [to them and others] the hope of the resurrection. However, being called in question, for his being a Christian, he might truly say, he was called in question for the hope of the resurrection of the dead, as he afterward pleaded, ch. 24:15. and ch. 26:6, 7. Though Paul preached against the traditions of the elders, (as his Master had done,) and therein opposed the Pharisees, yet he valued himself more on his preaching for the resurrection of the dead, and a future state, in which he concurred with the Pharisees.

3. This occasioned a division in the council; probably the high priest sided with the Sadducees, as he had done, ch. 5:17. and made it to appear by his rage at Paul, v. 2. which alarmed the Pharisees so much the more; but so it was, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, v. 7. for this word of Paul's made the Sadducees more warm, and the Pharisees more cool, in the prosecution of him; so that there was a schism, a quarrel among them, and the edge of their zeal began to turn from Paul against one another; nor could they go on to act against him, when they could not agree among themselves, or prosecute him for breaking the unity of the church, when there was so little among them of the unity of the Spirit. All the cry had been against Paul, but now there arose a great cry against one another, v. 9.

4. The Pharisees hereupon (would one think it!) took Paul's part, v. 9. they strove, they fought, saying, We find no evil in this man. He had conducted himself decently and reverently in the temple, and had attended the service of the church; and though it was but occasionally, yet it showed that he was not such an enemy to it as he was said to be; he had spoken very handsomely in

his own defence, and given a good account of himself, and had now declared himself orthodox in the great principles of religion, as well as regular and conscientious in his conversation; therefore, they cannot see that he has done anything worthy of death, or of bonds. Nay, they go further, *If a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him concerning Jesus*, and put him on preaching as he does, though we may not be so far satisfied as to give credit to him, yet we ought to be cautioned not to oppose him, lest we be found fighting against God; as Gamaliel, himself a Pharisee, had argued, ch. 5:39. Now here,

(1.) We may observe it, to the honor of the Gospel, that it was witnessed to even by its adversaries, and confessions, not only of its innocency, but of its excellency, were extorted sometimes by the power of truth, even from those that persecuted it. Pilate found no fault in Christ, though he put Him to death; nor Festus in Paul, though he continued him in bonds; and the Pharisees here supposed it possible, that Paul might have a commission sent him from heaven by an angel to do what he did; and yet, it should seem, as elders, they after this joined the high priest in prosecuting him, ch. 24:1. They sinned against the knowledge which they not only had, but sometimes owned, as Christ had said of them, *They have both seen and hated both Me and my Father*, John 15:24.

Yet, (2.) We will hope some of them did, from henceforward, conceive a better opinion of Paul, and then it must be observed, to their honor, that their zeal for the traditions of the elders, which Paul had departed from, was so far swallowed up in a zeal for the great and fundamental doctrines of religion, to which Paul still adhered, that if he will heartily join them against the Sadducees, and adhere to the hope of the resurrection of the dead, they will not think his shaking off the ceremonial law to be any evil in him, but charitably hope he walks according to the light God has given him by some angel or spirit, and are so far from persecuting him, that they are ready to patronize, and protect him. The persecuting Pharisees of the church of Rome are not of this spirit; for, let a man be ever so sincere and zealous for all the articles of the Christian faith, yet, if he lay not his neck under the yoke of their church's authority, they find evil enough in him to persecute him unto the death.

II. The chief captain's care and conduct stand him in more stead; for when he had thrown this bone of contention between the Pharisees and Sadducees, he is never the nearer, but is in danger of being pulled in pieces by them; the Pharisees pulling to have him set at liberty, and the Sadducees to have him put to death, or thrown to the people, like Daniel into the den of lions; so that the chief captain was forced to come with his soldiers, and rescue him, as he had done, ch. 21:32. and ch. 22:24. He ordered his soldiers to go down from the upper wards, and to take him by force, out of that apartment in the temple, where he had ordered the council to meet, and to bring him into the castle, or tower of Antonia; for he saw he could make nothing of them, toward the understanding of the merits of his cause.

III. Divine consolations stood him in most stead of all; the castle was indeed a protection, but withal it was a confinement; and as it was now his preservation from so great a death, it might be his reservation for a greater. We do not find that any of the apostles or elders at Jerusalem came to him; either they had not courage, or had not ad-

tion, which continually manifests itself, of favoring those who take our part in any contested point. Grant me discernment, I allow it you.' Cowper. What must this heathen Lysias have thought of the worshippers of JEHOVAH, when he saw this assembly of chief priests, learned scribes, and rulers of Israel, forgetful of what became their rank, profession, and sacred character; and carried away by an unbridled rage, in their religious contests, to those excesses, which the Roman senators

and magistrates, or principal persons, would have been ashamed of, even in their eager competition for preeminence and dominion? SEOTT.

(3.) Paul's excuse, unaccompanied by retraction, the Sanhedrim, it seems, did not accept, and, perceiving that his judges were too much under the dominion of anger, hatred, and prejudice to decide his case fairly, Paul bethought himself of a justifiable stratagem, to which Orobio has unreasonably objected. [See *Limb. Am. Coll.*] BLOOMF.



11 And the night following, the Lord stood <sup>k</sup> by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at <sup>l</sup> Rome.

12 ¶ And when it was day, <sup>m</sup> certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves <sup>n</sup> under a curse, saying, that they would neither eat nor drink <sup>o</sup> till they had killed Paul.

13 And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy.

14 And they came to the chief <sup>p</sup> priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.

15 Now therefore ye, with the council, signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you tomorrow, as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready <sup>q</sup> to kill him.

16 And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he <sup>r</sup> went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

17 Then <sup>s</sup> Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain; for he hath a certain thing to tell him.

18 So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner <sup>t</sup> called me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.

19 Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went <sup>u</sup> with him aside privately, and asked him, What is that thou hast to tell me?

k Ps. 46:1, 7. c. 18, 9. 27:23, 24. l c. 28:30, 31. Ro. 1:15. m ver. 21:30. c. 25:3. n or, with an oath of execration. o Ps. 31:13. p Ho. 4:9. q Ps. 21:11. 37:32, 33. r 2 Sa. 17:17. s Pr. 22:3. Mat. 10:16. t c. 28:17. Ep. 3:1. 4:1. Phil. 9.

mission. But now the Lord Jesus makes him a kind visit, and, though at midnight, yet a very seasonable one, v. 11. Whoever is against us, we need not fear, if the Lord stand by us. The Lord is with those that uphold my soul, and then nothing can come amiss.

1. Christ bids him not be discouraged, saddened, or frightened. Note, Christ will have his servants, who are faithful, always cheerful. Perhaps Paul began to be jealous, whether he had done well in what he had said to the council the day before; but Christ satisfies him that God approved his conduct. Or, perhaps, it troubled him, that his friends did not come to him; but Christ's visit did itself speak, though he had not said, *Be of good cheer, Paul.*

2. It is a strange argument he uses, to

encourage him; *As thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, &c.* One would think this but cold comfort; yet this was designed to hearten him; for hereby he is given to understand he had been serving Christ, as a witness for Him, in what he had hitherto endured, that he had not yet finished his testimony, nor was, by his imprisonment, laid aside as useless, but was only reserved for further service: nay, he seems to have had a particular fancy, and an innocent one, to go to Rome, to preach the Gospel there, though it was already preached, and a church planted there; yet, being a citizen of Rome, he longed for a journey thither, and had designed it, ch. 19:21. And he had written to the Romans some time ago, *that he longed to see them, Rom. 1:11.* Now he was ready to conclude, this had broken his measures, and he should never see Rome; but even in that Christ tells him he should be gratified, since he desired it for the honor of Christ, and to do good.

V. 12—35. Here is the story of a plot against Paul's life; how it was laid, how discovered, and how defeated.

1. They found they could gain nothing by popular tumult, or legal process, and therefore have recourse to the barbarous method of assassination; so restless is their malice against this good man. Observe,

1. Who formed this conspiracy; *certain Jews* that had the utmost degree of indignation against him, because he was the apostle of the Gentiles, v. 12. *more than forty* in the design, v. 13. *Lord, how are they increased that trouble me!*

2. When; as soon as it was day, answering to the account the prophet gives of some who *work evil on their beds, and when the morning is light they practice it*, and are laid under a woe for it, Mic. 2:1. *In the night* Christ appeared to Paul to protect him, and when it was day, here were forty men appearing against him to destroy him; they were not up so soon, but Christ was up before them. *God shall help her, and that right early*, Ps. 46:5.

3. By a league, perhaps they called it a holy league, they engaged to stand by one another, and every one, to his power, to be aiding and assisting to murder Paul. Strange, so many could so soon be got together, and that in Jerusalem, too, who were so perfectly lost to all sense of humanity and honor. Comp. Is. 1:21. What laws of truth and justice so sacred, so strong, which malice and bigotry will not break through!

4. How firm they made it, as they thought, that none might fly off, on conscience of the horror of the fact, at second thoughts; *they bound themselves under an anathema*, imprecating the heaviest curses on themselves, their souls, bodies, families, if they did not kill Paul, and so quickly, *that they would not eat or drink till they had done it.* What a complication of wickedness is here! It showed a great contempt of the providence of God, and a presumption on it, in that they bound themselves to do such a thing within so short a time as they could continue fasting, without any proviso or reserve for the disposal of an overruling Providence; nay, a great contempt of their own souls and bodies; of their souls, in imprecating a curse on them if they did not proceed. (God certainly meets them with his curse if they do go on in it, and they desire He would if they do not!) of their bodies, in tying

themselves out from the necessary supports of life till they had accomplished a thing which they could never lawfully do, and perhaps not possibly do. Such language of hell they speak, that wish God to damn them, and the devil to take them, if they do not so and so. *As they love cursing, so shall it come unto them.* Some think, the meaning is, they would either kill Paul, as an Achan, an accursed thing, a troubler of the camp; or, if not, would make themselves accursed before God in his stead, Job 31:31. Persecutors are said to *eat up God's people as they eat bread*; it is as much a gratification to them, as meat to one that is hungry, Ps. 14:4.

5. What method they took to bring it about. Paul is under the particular protection of the government, imprisoned, not, as others, lest he should do harm, but lest he should have harm done him; therefore the contrivance is, that the chief priests and elders desire the governor to let Paul come to them to the council-chamber, to be further examined, and then, in his passage, they would put an end to all disputes about Paul, by killing him; thus the plot was laid, v. 14, 15. Towards evening they come to the principal members of the great Sanhedrim, and, though they might have concealed their main design, and yet might have moved them on some other pretence to send for Paul, they are so confident of their approbation of this villany, that they are not ashamed or afraid to own to them, that they design to breakfast the next morning on his blood; they doubt not but the chief priests will not only countenance them, but lend them a helping hand, be their tools to get them an opportunity of killing Paul; nay, tell a lie for them, too, pretending to the chief captain, that they would inquire something more perfectly concerning him, when they meant no such thing. What a mean, what an ill opinion had they of their priests, when they could apply to them on such an errand as this! Yet, vile as the proposal was, for aught that appears, the priests and elders consented, and, at the first word, promised to gratify them.

II. How the plot was discovered. 1. There was a youth related to Paul, whose mother, probably, lived in Jerusalem, and some how or other, we are not told how, he heard of their lying in wait, and went into the castle, probably, as he used to do, to attend on his uncle, and bring him what he wanted, which gave him a free access to him, and he told Paul what he heard. God has many ways of bringing to light the hidden works of darkness; though the contrivers of them dig deep to hide them from the Lord, He can make a bird of the air to carry the voice, Eccl. 10:20. or the conspirators' own tongues to betray themselves.

2. How it was discovered to the chief captain. This is related very particularly, perhaps because the penman was an eyewitness of the prudent and successful management of this affair, and remembered it with a deal of pleasure. (1.) Paul had got a good interest in the officers that attended, by his prudent, peaceable deportment; he could call one of the centurions to him, though a centurion, and used to call, not to be called to, v. 17. and he desired he would introduce this young man to the chief captain, to give in an information of something that concerned the honor of government. (2.) The centurion

V. 11. *Must bear, &c.*] 'Here is an instance of a divine appointment, without any necessity laid on the will of Paul.' *Whitby.* This erroneously supposes, that they, with whom this learned writer meant to contend, held that the divine decrees laid a necessity on the human will! 2:22—24, v. 23. 4:23—28, v. 28. In fact, the instance proves, beyond all controversy, that an event may be certainly determined by almighty God, and infallibly come to pass; though all parties concerned exercise the utmost free agency, of which the rational nature is capable. Some argue from this vision, that the Lord approved of the apostle's conduct: but, though this is undoubtedly true as to the grand outline, yet the vision no more proves that the conduct of the apostle was free from all mixture of infirmity, than the vision, with which Jacob was fa-

vored at Bethel, proves that he had not sinned in fraudulently obtaining the blessing. Gen. 27:6—14. 28:16, 17. The actions of men must be judged of by the law of God; and not by the event, or by any special instances of the Lord's unmerited kindness to them.

SCOTT. V. 12—22. The Jews, perceiving that Lysias was resolved to protect Paul, unless legally convicted of some crime, began to fear that their malice would be disappointed. [Hence their conspiracy.] 'Such execrable vows as these were not unusual among the Jews, who challenged to themselves a right of punishing those, without any legal process, whom they considered as transgressors of the law; and in some cases thought, that they were justified in killing them. . . It is no wonder, therefore, that these Jews should make no scruple of acquaint-



20 And he said, The Jews <sup>u</sup> have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul tomorrow into the council, as though they would inquire somewhat of him more perfectly.

21 But do not thou yield <sup>v</sup> unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.

22 So the chief captain *then* let the young man depart, and charged *him*, See thou tell no man that thou hast showed these things to me.

23 ¶ And he called unto *him* two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cesarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night:

24 And provide *them* beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring *him* safe unto Felix the governor.

25 And he wrote a letter after this manner:

26 Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix *sendeth* greeting.

27 This <sup>w</sup> man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them: then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood that he was a Roman.

28 And <sup>x</sup> when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him forth into their council:

<sup>u</sup> ver. 12. <sup>v</sup> Ex. 23:2. <sup>w</sup> c. 21:33. 24:7. <sup>x</sup> c. 22:30.

very readily gratified him, v. 18. did not send a common soldier with him, but went himself to countenance the young man, to recommend his errand to the chief captain, and to show his respect to Paul. Note, It is true charity to poor prisoners, to act for them as well as to give them. 'I was sick, and in prison, and you went on an errand for me,' will pass as well in the account as, 'I was sick, and in prison, and you came unto me, to visit me, or sent me a token.' Those that have acquaintance and interest, should use them to assist persons in distress. This centurion helped to save Paul's life by his civility, which should engage us to do the like on occasion. *Open thy mouth for the dumb*, Prov. 31:8. Those that cannot give a good gift, may yet speak a good word. (3.) The chief captain received the information with great condescension and tenderness, v. 19. He took the young man by the hand, as a friend or father, to encourage him, that he might not be dashed out of countenance, but might be assured of a favorable audience. The notice taken of this circumstance, should

encourage great men to make themselves easy of access to the meanest, on any errand which may give them an opportunity of doing good; to condescend to them of low estate. This familiarity of this Roman tribune is here on record to his honor. Let no man think he disparages himself by his humility or eharity. It is probable the chief captain was the more obliging in this case, because of having bound Paul, against his privilege as a Roman citizen, which he was willing now to atone for. (4.) The young man delivered his errand very readily and handsomely, v. 20, 21. 'The Jews,' he does not say who, lest he should invidiously reflect on the chief priests and the elders, and his business was to save his uncle's life, not to accuse his enemies; 'have agreed, &c. Lastly, The captain dismissed the young man with a charge of secrecy, v. 22. The favors of great men are not always to be boasted of; and those that cannot keep counsel, are not fit to be employed in business. If it should be known that the chief captain had this information brought him, perhaps they would compass and imagine the death of Paul some other way.

III. How the plot was defeated; The chief captain, finding how implacable and inveterate the malice of the Jews was against Paul, and how near he was to become himself necessary to it as a minister, resolves to send him away with all speed out of their reach. What a melancholy observation is it, that the Jewish chief priests, when they knew of this assassination-plot, should countenance it, and assist in it, while a Roman chief captain, purely from a natural sense of justice and humanity, when he knows it, sets himself to baffle it, and puts himself to a deal of trouble to do it effectually!

1. He orders a considerable detachment of the Roman forces under his command to get ready to go to Cesarea, with all expedition, and to bring Paul thither to Felix the governor, where he might sooner expect to have justice done him than by the great Sanhedrim at Jerusalem. I see not but the chief captain might, without any unfaithfulness to the duty of his place, have set Paul at liberty, and given him leave to shift for his own safety, for he was never legally committed to his custody as a criminal, he himself owns, that nothing was laid to his charge worthy of bonds, v. 29. and he ought to have the same tenderness for his liberty that he had for his life; but he feared [his death, perhaps, or that it] would have incensed the Jews too much against him. [In fact, he was now accountable for Paul's life, both to God and Rome.] Two centurions, or captains of the hundreds, must get ready 200 foot soldiers, probably those under their own command, with 70 horse, and 200 spearmen beside, which some think were the chief captain's guards; whether horse or foot is not certain, most probably foot, as pikemen for the protection of the horse. [So large a force would render a rescue for any purpose, hopeless, and a smaller might have led to bloodshed, which this prompt and soldierly Roman determined to prevent.] See how justly God brought the Jewish nation under the Roman yoke, when such a party of the Roman army was necessary to restrain them from the

most execrable villanies! There needed not all this force, not any of it, to keep Paul from being rescued by his friends; ten times this force would not have kept him from being rescued by an angel, if it had pleased God to work his deliverance that way, as He had sometimes done; but, (1.) The chief captain designed hereby to expose the Jews, as a headstrong, tumultuous people; and hearing how many were in the conspiracy, he thought less would not serve to defeat their attempt. (2.) God designed hereby to encourage Paul; for being thus attended, he was not only kept safe in the hands of his friends, but out of the hands of his enemies. Paul was by this made considerable; thus his bonds in Christ were made manifest all the country over; Phil. 1:13. and so great an honor having been put on them before by the prediction of them, it was agreeable enough that they should be thus honorably attended, that the brethren in the Lord might wax the more confident by his bonds, when they saw him rather guarded as the patriot of his country, than guarded against as the pest of his country; and so great a preacher made so great a prisoner.

When his enemies hate him, and I doubt his friends neglect him, then does a Roman tribune patronize him, and carefully provide, [1.] For his ease; the chief captain treats him like a gentleman, and orders him a good horse to ride upon. Nay, beasts, either a led horse, or more; or, as some, for his friends and companions, as many as pleased [according to the custom in the E., note, 10:23.] to go along with him, to divert him in his journey, and to minister to him. [2.] For his security; they have a strict charge to bring him safe to Felix the governor, to whom he is consigned, and who was supreme in all civil affairs among the Jews, as the chief captain was in military affairs. The Roman historians speak much of this Felix, as a man of mean extraction, but that raised himself by his shifts to be governor of Judea; in the execution of which office, Tacitus, Hist. 5. says, He used royal power with a servile genius, and in connexion with all the varieties of cruelty and lust. To the judgment of such a man as this is poor Paul turned over; and yet better so than in the hands of Ananias the high priest! Now a prisoner, thus on his deliverance by course of law, ought to be protected as well as a prince.

The chief captain orders, for greater security, that Paul be taken away at the 3d hour of the night, which some understand of 3 hours after sunset, that, it being now soon after the feast of pentecost, (i. e. midsummer,) they might have the cool of the night to march in. Others understand it of 3 hours after midnight, in the 3d watch, about 3 in the morning, that they might have the day before them, and get out of Jerusalem before Paul's enemies were stirring, and so prevent any popular tumult, leaving them to roar, when they rose, like a lion disappointed of his prey.

2. He writes a letter to Felix, the governor of this province, by which he discharges himself from any further care about Paul, and leaves the whole matter with Felix. This letter is here inserted, v. 25. Probably Luke had a copy of it, having attended Paul in this remove. Observe, after the proper

ing the chief priests and elders with their conspiracy against the life of Paul; who were so far from blaming them for it, that not long after they renewed the same design themselves. (25:2, 3.)... Dr. Lightfoot has shown from the Talmud, that if they were prevented from accomplishing such vows as these, it was an easy matter to obtain an absolution from their Rabbies' Doddr.

V. 21. 'The cavalry used often to take each a led horse; by which means they travelled long distances without stopping.'

V. 25—30. This epistle is a good specimen of the Roman method of writing letters, and a model of brevity, simplicity, and perspicuity. The customary title of respect to a superior, and expression of goodwill, are once only made use of: and in this it differs exceedingly from modern epistles, to persons of high rank and authority; which are generally enumbered with multiplied compliments, and ascriptions of honor.—As we suppose this to have been an exact copy of the letter, it appears, Lysias was willing Felix should conclude, that his interposition in Paul's favor arose from a previous knowledge that he was a Ro-

man citizen; though it is evident this was not the case. 21:31—40. 22:27—30. In other respects, the account was fair and candid. Scott.

(27.) Having understood, &c.] Bl. sensibly remarks, 'Rois and Doddr. think Lysias only confounds, inadvertently, the times of delivery; since he delivered Paul twice. But this confusion could scarcely be accidental [yet Paul's being a Roman, was a reason for a good deed that the tribune did.]... Lysias ventured, it seems, to take a little more credit for zeal in behalf of his fellow citizens, than, in strictness, he merited. As, however, his conduct was, throughout the rest of this business, so humane, judicious, and every way worthy of a public functionary, we must not visit the lapse too severely on his head. As to his concealment of the fact, that he had caused Paul to be strapped to the whipping-post, no one can justly blame him for that; though, if this had come to the ears of Felix, it would have destroyed the only excuse that Lysias could have advanced; namely, that he had not known Paul to be a Roman citizen. So dangerous is it to deviate ever so little from the path of truth, to gratify any petty vanity, or serve any temporary purpose.' Ep.



29 Whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds.

30 And when it was told me, how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee, and gave commandment to his accusers also, to say before thee what they had against him. Farewell.

31 Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris.

32 On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle :

33 Who, when they came to Cesarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him.

34 And when the governor had read the letter, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia :

35 I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment-hall.

#### CHAP. XXIV.

1 Paul, being accused by Tertullus the orator, 10 answereth for his life and doctrine. 24 He preacheth Christ to the governor and his wife. 26 The governor hopeth for a bribe, but in vain. 27 At last, going out of his office, he leaveth Paul in prison.

AND after five days, Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul.

y c. 18:15. 25:19. c ver. 25—30. f Mat. 27:27.  
z c. 26:31. d c. 21:39. a c. 23:2. 25:2.  
a ver. 20, 21. e c. 24:1, &c. b Ps. 11:2.  
b c. 24:8. 25:6. 25:16.

title given, and good wishes expressed, (1.) The just and fair account he gives him of Paul's case : [1.] That he was one the Jews had a pique against, had taken, and would have killed ; and perhaps Felix knew the temper of the Jews so well, he did not

PRACT. OBS. To rejoice in the testimony of a good conscience before God, amidst calumnies and persecutions, is an invaluable blessing ; but this cannot be habitually possessed, except by the constant exercise of faith in Christ, and an upright obedience to his commandments.—The best of men are liable, when greatly injured and insulted, to be put off their guard : and it is in general advisable to decline a strenuous justification of ourselves, and to admit that our conduct was in some respects unfit for imitation : and in no ordinary circumstances should we by any means 'speak evil' of our rulers ; whatever their characters may be, or however they may have injured us ; for the Christian's maxims are, to honor those in authority, and 'to overcome evil with good.' Rom. 13: 1—5. Tit. 3:1, 2. 1 Pet. 2:13—17. 2 Pet. 2:10, 11. Jude 9, 10.—It is useless to urge the most conclusive arguments, when we know that our cause is already prejudged.—Among those who oppose spiritual religion, some come nearer to the truth than others ; and though self-righteous Pharisees are to be warned and shunned ; yet Sadducees and infidels, who deny all the doctrines of revealed religion, should be still more

V. 31. *By Night.*] 'I. e. principally : to Neopolis was 22 miles, to Lydda (or Diospolis) 10, to Antipatris 10, to Cesarea 16. See Reland, *Bloomf. Antipatris.*] 'Very different accounts are given of the situation of Antipatris, which must, however, have been N. W. from Jerusalem. Its ancient name was Capharsalama, or Chabarzaba ; but Herod the Great rebuilt it, and gave it the name of Antipatris, in honor of his father, Antipater. Some have supposed it but 18 or 20 m. from Jerusalem ; but Mr. Biscoe has shown it was something more than 38 of our miles, which must have been too far for one night's march ; he therefore very well observes, it is not necessary to conclude Paul was carried there in one night, or that the soldiers returned in one day. . . It appears from *Jos.* that from Jerusalem to Cesarea was 600 furlongs, or near 70 miles.'

V. 35. *Judgment-hall.*] 'Praitēriō : now the prætorium was the habitation of the provincial governors. Thus Cic. calls Verres' (prætor of Sicily's) house. Finally, the term was applied, as here, to any magnificent edifice.'

NOTES. CHAP. XXIV. V. 1—9. (2) *Worthy deeds.*] We read of no benefit whatever, resulting from Felix's oppressive government, except that he freed the country from some daring gangs of robbers.—As for Judea, its state under Felix was so far from being what Tertullus here represents, that Josephus declares, that the Jews accused him before

think much the worse of him for that, v. 27. [2.] That he had protected him because he was a Roman ; which action for a citizen of Rome would recommend him to the Roman governor. [3.] That he could not understand the merits of his cause, nor what made him so odious to the Jews. He took the proper method to know, brought him forth into their council, v. 28. to be examined there ; hoping that, either from their complaints, or his own confessions, he should learn something of the ground of all this clamor, but he found he was accused of questions of their law, v. 29. about the hope of the resurrection of the dead, v. 6. This chief captain was a man of sense and honor, and had good principles in him of justice and humanity ; and yet see how slightly he speaks of another world, and the great things of that world, as if that were a question, which is of undoubted certainty, and which both sides agreed in, except the Sadducees ; and as if that were a question only of their law, which is of the utmost concern to all mankind ! \* Or, perhaps, he refers rather to the question about their rituals than about their doctrinals, and the quarrel he perceived they had with him, was for lessening the credit and obligation of their ceremonial law, which he looked upon as a thing not worth speaking of. The Romans allowed the nations they conquered the exercise of their own religion, and never offered to impose their's on them ; yet, as conservators of the public peace, they would not suffer them, under color of their religion, to abuse their neighbors. [4.] That thus far he understood that there was nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds, much less proved or made out against him. (2.) His referring Paul's ease, his life being there in danger, to Felix, v. 30. as the most proper person to judge the cause, and 'let his accusers go after him, if they please, and say before thee what they have against him, for, being bred a soldier, I will never pretend to be a judge, and so farewell.'

3 Paul is accordingly conducted to Cesarea ; the soldiers got him safe out of Jerusalem by night, and if any of the conspirators did starve themselves to death, in conscience of their oath, and vexation at their disappointment, they fell unpitied. Paul was conducted to Antipatris, 17 miles from Jerusa-

\* That he distinctly understood what Paul had said, is hardly probable. Ed.

strenuously opposed.—Man is a vain-glorious creature, who courts flattery, and would have his own opinion considered as the standard of truth ! A practical uniform attention to this characteristic of our fallen nature seems the grand device for managing mankind ; whether among the giddy multitude, or in the great councils of nations, or in ecclesiastical conventions. But it is a delicate operation, which requires great skill and caution, and there is imminent danger of deviating from strict 'simplicity, and godly sincerity,' into carnal policy, whenever we have recourse to it : though we may avail ourselves of it on some great emergency ; and when it may evidently be done, without at all receding from our principles, and to the advantage of the truth.—But what a scandal is it, when the professors and ministers of true religion are so furious in their contests, that idolatrous and ungodly men cry shame of their violence, and are constrained to interpose authority, or military force, to quell the riot, and prevent more fatal consequences ! or when national and ecclesiastical assemblies more resemble a meeting of furious assassins, than a convention of legislators, or servants of God ! Sc.

Nero, of insufferable oppressions ; and had certainly ruined him, if his brother Pallas had not interposed in his favor.' *Doddr.*—The high priest, the chief magistrate of the Jews, was known to be one of Paul's accusers : yet the tribune, a subordinate officer under the Roman governor, commanded these accusers to go to Cesarea. This shows to what entire subjection the Jews were at this time reduced. And was not then 'the sceptre departed from Judah,' because Shiloh was come? *Gcn.* 49:10.—The disciples long before had been named Christians : yet Tertullus still calls them Nazarenes ; which shows that the disciples were not first called Christians by [all] their enemies. 11:25, 26, v. 26. Sc.

(1.) *Orator.*] 'Rhetor. The Jews being subjected to the Roman empire, were obliged to transact their law affairs after the Roman manner : but, being little conversant with the Roman laws, and the forms of the Jurists, it was necessary for them, in pleading a cause before a Roman magistrate, to employ the assistance of some Roman lawyer and advocate (as this Tertullus), who was well versed in Greek and Latin. See *Ottius.* *Rhetor.*, indeed, signifies properly, an orator or speaker, but it also denotes a pleader ; as here, in *Ælian.*, *Æsch.*, *Cic.*, *Juv.* In all the Roman provinces these rhetores were found, who devoted their time and labor, for hire, to the pleading of causes, and transacting other business before the provincial courts. So *Lamprid.* And from *Cic.* it appears, that many Roman youths, who had devoted themselves to forensic



2 And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence,

3 We accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.

4 Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words.

5 For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes:

6 Who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law.

7 But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands,

8 Commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom, thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things whereof we accuse him.

c Ps. 12:2. 21:28. 1 Pe. f Jn. 19:31.  
d Lu. 23:2. c. 6. 2:12, 19. g c. 21:33.  
13. 16:20. 17:6. e c. 19:37. 21:28. h c. 23:30.

not ashamed to own himself a sworn enemy to Paul. The elders attended him, to signify their concurrence, and to invigorate the prosecution; attorneys or solicitors could not be found to follow it with sufficient violence. The pains evil men take in an evil matter, should shame our coldness and backwardness, and indifference in what is good.

II. The prosecutors brought with them a certain orator named Tertullus, a Roman, skilled in the Roman law and language, and therefore fittest to be employed in a cause before the Roman governor, and most likely to gain favor. His business is, on the behalf of the prosecutors, to open the information against Paul, and he is a man that will say anything for his fee; mercenary tongues will do so. No cause so unjust, but can find advocates to plead it; yet we hope many advocates so just, as not knowingly to patronize an unrighteous cause; but Tertullus was none of those, his speech, or at least an abstract of it, is here reported; and it is made up of flattery and falsehood; it calls evil good, and good evil.

1. One of the worst of men is here applauded, as one of the best of benefactors, only because he was the judge. Felix is represented, by historians, as a very bad man, who, depending on his interest in the court, allowed himself in all manner of wickedness, was a great oppressor, very cruel, and very covetous, patronizing and protecting assassins, Jos. Ant. l. 20. c. 6. And yet Tertullus here, in the name of the high priest and elders, compliments him, as if he were so good a magistrate as never was the like: and this comes the worse from the high priest and the elders, because he had given a late instance of his enmity to their order; for Jonathan the high priest, or one of the chief priests, having offended him, by too free an invective against the tyranny of his govern-

ment, he got him murdered by some villains whom he hired for that purpose, and who afterward did the like for others, as they were hired: and that even in the temple itself.

(1.) To give him his due, he had been instrumental to suppress the insurrection of that Egyptian whom the chief captain spake of, ch. 21:38. but will the praise of that screen him from the just reproach of his tyranny and oppression afterward? See here, [1.] The unhappiness of great men, and a great unhappiness it is, to have their services magnified beyond measure, and never to be faithfully told of their faults; and hereby they are hardened and encouraged in evil. [2.] The policy of bad men, by flattering princes in what they do amiss, to draw them in to do worse. The bishops of Rome got to be confirmed in their exorbitant church power, and have been assisted in persecuting the servants of Christ, by flattering and caressing usurpers and tyrants, and so making them the tools of their malice, as the high priest, by his compliments, designed to make Felix here.

(2.) They promise to retain a grateful sense of it, v. 3. 'We accept it always, and in all places, everywhere and at all times, we embrace it, we admire it, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.' Had this been true, it had been just; the benefits we enjoy by government, especially by wise and good governors, are what we ought to be thankful for, both to God and man.

(3.) They therefore expect his favor in this cause, v. 4. They pretend a great care not to entrench on his time; 'We will not be further tedious to thee,' and yet to be very confident of his patience, 'hear us of thy clemency a few words.' All this address is only to induce him to give countenance to their cause; and they were so conscious it would soon appear to have more malice than matter in it, they found it necessary thus to insinuate themselves into his favor. Everybody knew the high priest and the elders were enemies to the Roman government; and yet, to gain their ends against Paul, they, by their counsel, show him all this respect; as they did to Pilate and Cesar, when persecuting our Savior. Princes cannot always judge of the affections of their people by their applauses; flattery is one thing, true loyalty another.

2. One of the best of men is here accused as one of the worst of malefactors, only because he was the prisoner. After a flourish of flattery, in which you cannot see matter for words, he comes to his business, and it is, to inform his excellency concerning the prisoner at the bar; and this part of his discourse is as nauseous for its rallery, as the former for its flattery. I pity the man, and believe he has no malice against Paul, nor does he think as he speaks in calumniating him, any more than he did in courting Felix; but as I cannot but be sorry that a man of wit and sense should have such a saleable tongue, as one calls it, so I cannot but be angry at those dignified men, that had such malicious hearts as to put such words into his mouth. Tertullus complains,

(1.) That the peace of the nation was disturbed by Paul. Innocence, nay excellence and usefulness, are no fence against calumny, no, nor against the impressions of calumny on the minds both of magistrates and multitudes, to excite their fury and jealousy; for be the representation ever so unjust, when enforced, as here, with gravity and pretence of sanctity, and with assurance and noise, something will stick. The old charge against God's prophets, was, that they were the troublers of the land, and against

God's Jerusalem, that it was a rebellious city, hurtful to kings and provinces, Ezra 4: 15, 19. and against our Lord Jesus, that He perverted the nation, and forbade to give tribute to Cesar; it is the very same against Paul here; and, though utterly false, is averred with all the confidence imaginable. They do not say, 'We suspect him;' but, as if the thing were past dispute, 'We have found him, often and long found him, a pestilent fellow;' as if he were a traitor and rebel already convict. [1.] Paul was a useful man, and a great blessing to his country, a man of exemplary candor and goodness, obliging to all, and provoking to none; yet he is here called a pestilent fellow, v. 5. the plague of the nation, a walking pestilence; which supposes him to be a turbulent man, malicious and ill-natured, that threw all things in disorder wherever he came. Many a good sermon he had preached, and many a good work he had done, and for those he is called a pestilent fellow. [2.] Paul was a peacemaker, a preacher of that Gospel which has a direct tendency to slay all enmities, and to establish true and lasting peace; he lived peaceably and quietly himself, and taught others to do so too, and yet is here represented as a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world. The Jews were disaffected to the Roman government, the most bigoted, most so. This Felix knew, and had therefore a watchful eye on them; now they would fain make him believe that this Paul was the man that made them so, whereas they themselves sowed the seeds of faction and sedition: and they knew it; and the reason why they hated Christ and his religion, was, because He did not go about to head them in an opposition to the Romans. The Jews were everywhere much set against Paul, and stirred up the people to clamor against him; they moved sedition in all places where he came, and then [like all mobs and mobbers] cast the blame unjustly on him, as if he had been the mover of the sedition; as Nero not long after set Rome on fire, and said that the Christians did it. [3.] Paul was a man of catholic charity, who did not affect to be singular, but made himself the servant of all for their good; and yet he is here charged to be a ringleader, lit. standard-bearer, of the sect of the Nazarenes. Now it was true, Paul was an active, leading man in propagating Christianity. But, 1st. It was utterly false that that was a sect; he did not draw people to a party or private opinion, nor did he make his own opinions their rule. True Christianity establishes that which is of common concern to all mankind, publishes good-will to men, and shows us God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, and therefore cannot be thought to take its rise from such narrow opinions and private interests as sects owe their original to. True Christianity has a direct tendency to the uniting of men, and the gathering of them together in one; and, as far as it obtains its just power and influence on the minds of men, will make them meek and quiet, and peaceable and loving, and every way easy, acceptable, and profitable one to another, and therefore is far from being a sect, which is supposed to lead to division, and to sow discord. True Christianity aims at no worldly benefit or advantage, and therefore must by no means be called a sect. Those that espouse a sect, are governed in it by their secular interests, they aim at wealth and honor; but the professors of Christianity are so far from this, that they expose themselves thereby to the loss and

business, used to repair to the provinces with the consuls and prætors, in order, by managing the causes of the provincials, to fit themselves for more important ones at Rome.

(2.) 'Almost every word of this oration is false; the accusation of Paul, the encomium of the government of Felix, and the declaration of a lawful intention in what they had done and attempted.' DODDR.

(5.) Nazarenes.] 'So in Judea were called the Christians who lived out of Judea; ns also are Christians in general at the present day, by Jews and Mohammedans.'

ROSENF.

(6.) 'It had been granted by the Romans to the Jews, that they should remain in undisturbed observance of all the rights and ceremonies of their religion, and, in such circumstances as had reference thereto, the power of inflicting capital punishment had been left as their right. Every sentence, however, had to be confirmed by the Prætor. See on Mat. 26:66. John 19:7. Acts 21:28. and Jos. Ant. 20, 4. who there records the execution of a Roman soldier for profane derision of the Mosaic Law'

BLOOMF.

(8.) Whom.] 'I. e. Lysias (Comp. v. 22.) the Gr. is singular.' BL. KUIN.



9 And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so.

10 ¶ Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:

11 Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship.

12 And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city:

13 Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me.

14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets;

15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

i Felix, made n Mi. 4:5. 3:21.  
Procurator over o 2 Ti. 1:3. r c. 23:6, &c. 26.  
Judea, A. D. 53. p Lu. 24:27. c. 25: 6, 7, 28:20, &c.  
j 1 Pe. 3:15. 22. 28:23. s Da. 12:2. Jn.  
k c. 21:15. q Mat. 22:40. Lu. 5:28, 29. 1 Co.  
l c. 25:8 28:17. 16:16, Jn. 1:45. 15:12-27. Ro.  
m 1 Pe. 3:16. c. 13:15. Ro. 20:6, 13.

ruin of all that is dear to them in this world. 2dly. It is invidiously called *the sect of the Nazarenes*, by which Christ was represented as of Nazareth, whence no good thing was expected to arise; whereas He was of Bethlehem. 3dly. It was false, that Paul was the author or standard-bearer of this sect; for he did not draw people to himself, but to Christ; did not preach himself, but Christ Jesus. [4.] Paul had a veneration for the temple, as it had been the place God chose, to put his name there, and had lately himself with reverence attended the temple-service; yet it is here charged on him, that he went about to *profane the temple*, and that he designedly put contempt on it, and violated the laws of it, v. 6. Their proof of this failed; for the matter of fact they alleged was utterly false, and they knew it. ch. 21:29.

(2.) That the *course of justice* against Paul was obstructed by the chief captain. [1.] They pleaded, that they *took him, and would have judged him according to their law*. This was false; they did not go about to judge him according to their law, but, contrary to all law and equity, went about to *beat him to death, or to pull him to pieces*, without hearing what he had to say for himself; went about, under pretence of having him into

their court, to throw him into the hands of ruffians, that lay in wait to destroy him. [2.] They reflected on the chief captain, as having done them an injury in rescuing Paul; whereas he therein not only did him justice, but them the greatest kindness that could be, in preventing the guilt they were bringing on themselves. When David in a heat of passion was going on a bloody enterprise, he thanked Abigail for stopping him, and God for sending her to do it, so soon did he correct and recover himself; not so these cruel men. [3.] They referred themselves to Felix and his judgment, yet seeming uneasy at the necessity, 'the chief captain, v. 8. having forced us to give your excellency this trouble, and ourselves too.'

III. The Jews' assent to this charge, v. 9. 1. Some think, this speaks the proof of their charge by witnesses on oath, that were examined as to the particulars, and attested them. And no wonder, if, when they had found an orator that would say it, they found witnesses that would *swear it*, for money. 2. It rather seems to intimate, the approbation the high priest and elders gave to what Tertullus said; so they made themselves guilty of all the falsehood in his speech. Many that have not learning enough to *plead*, yet have wickedness enough to *vote for Baal*.

V. 10—21. Here is Paul's defence, and there appears in it a great deal of the spirit of wisdom and holiness, and an accomplishment of Christ's promise, that when before governors and kings, for his sake, it should be *given his followers in that same hour what to speak*. He did not presently fly out into passionate exclamations against the iniquity of the times and the men, but waited for a permission from the judge to speak in his turn; v. 10. He made no reflections on Tertullus; he knew he spoke for his fee, and therefore despised what he said, and levelled his defence against his employers. And here,

I. He addresses himself very respectfully to the governor. He was very cheerful when he had an indifferent person to be his judge; nay, when he considers who his judge is, he *answers the more cheerfully*; and why so? he does not say, 'Because I know thee to be a judge of inflexible justice and integrity, that hatest bribes, and in giving judgment *fearest God, and regardest not men*;' but, *I know thou hast been many years a judge to this nation*; and that was very true. And being so, 1. He could say, of his own knowledge, that there had not formerly been any complaints against Paul; therefore he was not an old offender, nor so dangerous a criminal as represented. 2. He was well acquainted with the Jewish [laws and] nation, and with its temper and spirit; he knew how bigoted they were to their own way, what furious zealots they were against all that did not comply with them, how peevish and perverse they generally were; and therefore would make allowances for that in their accusation of him, and not regard what he had reason to think came so much from party-malice.

II. He denies the facts he was charged with, *Moving sedition, and profaning the temple*; crimes [the latter of which] they knew

the Roman governors were not accustomed to inquire into, and therefore they hoped the governor would return him back to them to be judged by their law, and that was all they wished for. But Paul desires, that though he would not inquire into the crimes, he would protect one that was unjustly charged with them, from those whom he knew to be spiteful and ill-natured enough. Now he would have him to understand, 1. That he came up to Jerusalem on purpose to worship God in peace and holiness, so far was he from any design to *move sedition, or profane the temple*. He came to keep up his communion with the Jews, not to affront them. 2. That it was but 12 days since he came up, and he had been 6 days a prisoner; he was alone, and it could not be supposed that in so short a time he could do the mischief they charged on him. And as for what he had done in other countries, they knew nothing of it but by uncertain report, by which the matter was very unfairly represented. 3. If he was a *mover of sedition among all the Jews*, surely he would have been industrious to make a party at Jerusalem: but he did not. He was in the temple, attending the public service there; in the synagogues, where the law was read and opened; he went about in the city among his relations and friends, and conversed freely in the places of concourse, and he was a man of a great genius and an active spirit; and yet they could not charge him with offering anything either against the faith, or against the peace of the Jewish church. (1.) He had nothing in him of a contradicting spirit, as the movers of sedition have; they never found him *disputing with any man*, either affronting the learned with captious cavils, or perplexing the weak and simple with curious subtleties; he was ready, if asked, to *give a reason* of his own hope, and to give instruction to others, but he never picked a quarrel with any man about his religion, nor made that the subject of debate and controversy, and perverse dispute, which ought always to be treated of with humility and reverence, with meekness and love. (2.) He had nothing in him of a turbulent spirit; *raising up the people*, incensing them against their governors in church or state, or suggesting fears and jealousies concerning public affairs, or setting them at variance one with another, or sowing discord among them; he behaved as became a Christian and minister, with love and quietness, and due subjection to lawful authority; though he could have made, perhaps, as strong a party among the common people as his adversaries, yet he never attempted it. 4. As to *moving sedition* in other countries, he was wholly innocent, and they could not make good the charge, v. 13. He thus *shows the iniquity of his prosecutors*, who said what they knew they could not prove, and thereby did him wrong in his name, liberty, and life, and did *the judge* wrong too, in imposing on him, and doing what in them lay to pervert his judgment. He *appeals to the equity of his judge*, and awakens him to look about him, that he might not be drawn into a snare by the violence of the prosecution.

V. 10. *Many years.*] '6 years, or (as Tac.) much longer, at least over Samaria, of which Felix was procurator, while Cnmanus governed the rest of Palestine. Biscoe thinks 7, considerably longer than any of his 3 predecessors. Judge.] The procurator united the judicial power to the civil and military.'

V. 11—17. (11) *Mayest understand.*] As knowing, that the feast of Pentecost was observed at that time.—(14) *God of my fathers.*] Had Paul worshipped some other god, than the God of Israel, he would not have been entitled to protection by the Roman laws, made in favor of the Jews.—(15) *Just and unjust.*] 'The doctrine of the Pharisees, according to Josephus, restrained the resurrection to the just, condemning the unjust to perpetual torments without any resurrection.' *Whitby. Mat. 22:23—33.*—(17) *Alms, &c.*] This purpose, of Paul's journey to Rome, is not before mentioned in the history; but it appears evidently in his epistles; and this shows how little the historian aimed to enhance the credit of his principal character. *Rom. 15:22—29.*—The apostle's answer refers distinctly to the 3 charges brought against him, namely, *sedition, heresy, and profanation of the temple.* Scorr.

(11.) *Twelve.*] 'On the 1st day, Paul arrives at Jerusalem; 2d, attends the meeting of the Presbyters; 3d, commences his week of active

abstinence, which he continues on the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th, (for so 21:27. seems to require.) On the same 8th day he is attacked by the Jews, and committed to the castle; on the 9th, he is brought before the Sanhedrim; the 10th he spends in the castle, during which the plot is formed; on the night of the 10th, he is removed to Antipatris, where he arrives early on the 11th; and on the 12th day arrives at Cesarea. The days spent at Cesarea are not numbered, since in them he could excite no tumult.'

(14.) *Heresy.*] 'I cannot but think this a place where the word rendered *heresy*, which I own to be often indifferent, is used in a bad sense; for Paul intimates, that Christianity did not deserve the name they gave it. Yet while it was not the national religion, but its professors were distinguished from most of their countrymen by their adherence to Christ, as the Leader they chose to follow, they might properly be called a sect, or party of men, unless the very word sect or party be taken always in a bad signification, which none well acquainted with the Greek language can imagine.' [Note, 1 Cor. 11:18, 19.] Dondr.

(15.) *They allow.*] 'The *loter* doctrine of the Pharisees, that the just only should rise, in the times now in question was not the general one. Mat. 25:31. John 5:29.'



16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have 'always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men.

17 Now after many years, I came 'to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.

18 Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult :

19 Who ought to have been here 'before thee, and object, if they had aught against me.

20 Or else let these same *here* say, if they have found any evil-doing in me, while I stood before the council ;

21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead, I am called in question by you this day.

22 ¶ And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of *that* way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias 'the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.

t c. 23:1. 16. Ro. 15:25. w ver. 7.  
u c. 11:29,30. 20: v c. 25:16.

III. He gives a fair and just account of himself, which at once both clears him from crime, and likewise intimates the true reason of their violence.

1. He acknowledges himself to be one whom they looked upon as a heretic, and that was the reason of their spleen. The chief captain had observed, and the governor now cannot but observe, an uncommon violence and fury in his prosecutors, which they know not what to make of, but, guessing at the crime by the cry, conclude he must needs have been a very bad man : now Paul here unriddles the matter ; I confess, that *in the way they call heresy*, or a sect, *so worship I*. The controversy is in a matter of religion, and such controversies are commonly managed with most fury and violence. It is no new thing for the right way of worshipping God to be called *heresy* ; and for the best of God's servants to be stigmatized and run down as sectaries. The reformed churches are called heretical ones by those who themselves *hate to be reformed*, and are themselves heretics. Let us therefore never be driven off from any good way by its being put into an ill name ; for true and pure Christianity is never the worse, nor to be the worse thought of for its being called *heresy* ; no, not though it be called so by the *high priest and the elders*.

2. He vindicates himself from this imputation : he is not a *heretic* ; for,

(1.) He *worships the God of his fathers*, and therefore is right in the Object of his worship. If he had said, *Let us go after gods we have not known*, Deut. 13:2. they might justly call his way *heresy*, a *drawing of them aside* into a by-path, and a dangerous one ; but he worships the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not only the God whom they worshipped, but the God who took them into covenant with Himself, and was, and would be, called *their God*. Paul ad-

heres to *that covenant*, and sets up no other in opposition to it. *The promise made unto the fathers*, Paul preached as fulfilled to the children, ch. 13: 32, 33. and so directed both his own devotions, and those of others, to God, as the *God of their fathers*. He also refers to the practice of all his pious ancestors ; his religion gloried in its antiquity, and in an uninterrupted succession of its professors. It is very comfortable in our worshipping God, to have an eye to Him, as the *God of our fathers* ; what an emphasis is laid on that, Ex. 15:2.

(2.) He *believes all things written in the law and the prophets*, and therefore is right in the rule of his worship ; his religion is grounded on, and governed by, the Holy Scriptures ; they are his oracle and touchstone, and he speaks and acts according to them. He receives them *entire*, and believes *all things* there written ; and he receives them *pure*, for he says *no other things* than what are contained in them ; as he explains himself, ch. 26: 22. He sets not up any other rule of faith or practice but the Scriptures,—not tradition, nor the authority of the church, or the infallibility of any man or company of men on earth, nor the light within, or human reason ; but divine revelation, as it is in the Scripture, is that which he resolves to live and die by, therefore he is not a heretic.

(3.) He has his eye on a future state, and is a believing expectant of that, therefore is right in the end of his worship. [1.] There shall be a *resurrection of the dead*, the dead bodies of men, of all men from the beginning to the end of time ; it is certain, not only that the soul does not die with the body, but that the body itself\* shall live again ; we have not only *another life* to live when our present life is at an end, but there is to be *another world*, which shall commence when this world is at an end, into which all men must enter at once by a *resurrection from the dead*, as they entered into this, one after another, by their birth. [2.] It shall be a resurrection *both of the just and of the unjust*, John 5: 29. See Dan. 12: 2. This implies, that it will be a resurrection to a final judgment, by which all men will be determined to everlasting happiness or misery in a world of retribution, according to what they were, and what they did, in this state of probation and preparation. The just shall rise, by virtue of their union with Christ as their Head ; the unjust, by virtue of Christ's dominion over them as their Judge. [3.] God is to be depended on for the resurrection of the dead ; I have *hope toward God, and in God*, that there shall be a resurrection ; it shall be effected by the almighty power of God, in performance of the word God hath spoken ; so that they who doubt of it, betray their ignorance, both of the Scriptures, and of the power of God, Mat. 22: 29. [4.] The resurrection of the dead is a fundamental article of our creed, as it was also [of] that of the Jewish church ; it is what *they themselves also allow* ; nay, it was the expectation of the ancient patriarchs, witness Job's confession of his faith ; but it is more clearly revealed and more fully confirmed by the Gospel, therefore, they who believe it, should have been thankful to the preachers of the Gospel for their explanations and proofs of it, instead of opposing them. [5.] In all our religion we ought to

\* It is certainly not necessary to believe this. 1 Cor. 15:50. Ed.

have an eye to the other world, and to serve God, in all instances, with a confidence in Him, *that there will be a resurrection of the dead*, doing all in preparation for that.

(4.) His conversation is of a piece with his devotion, v. 16. Prophets and their doctrine were to be tried by *their fruits*. Paul was far from having *made shipwreck of a good conscience*, and therefore it is not likely he has *made shipwreck of the faith*, the mystery of which is best held in a *pure conscience*. This protestation of Paul, is to the same purport with that which he made before the high priest, ch. 23: 1.

IV. Having made confession of his faith, he gives a plain and faithful account of his case, and of the wrong done him by his persecutors. Twice he had been rescued by the chief captain out of the hand of the Jews, when they were ready to pull him to pieces, and he challenges them to prove him guilty of any crime either time.

1. In the temple. It was very hard to accuse him as an *enemy to their nation*, when after long absence from Jerusalem he came to *bring alms to his nation*, money which, though he had need enough himself of, yet he had collected among his friends, for the relief of the poor at Jerusalem. It was very hard to accuse him of having profaned the temple, when he brought offerings to the temple, and was himself at charges therein, ch. 21: 24. and was found *purifying himself in the temple*, according to the law, v. 18. and that in a very quiet, decent manner, *neither with multitude nor with tumult* ; though he was a man so much talked of, he was far from coveting to show himself, when he came to Jerusalem, or of being crowded after, but went to the temple, as much as was possible, *incognito* ; they were Jews from Asia, his enemies, that made him to be taken notice of ; they had no pretence to make a tumult and raise a multitude against him, for he had neither multitude nor tumult for him. And as for what was perhaps suggested to Felix, that he had *brought Greeks into the temple*, contrary to their law, and the governor ought to reckon with him for that, the Romans having stipulated with the nations that submitted to them, to preserve them in their religion, he challenges them to prove it, v. 19. 'Those Jews of Asia ought to have been *here before thee*, that they might have been examined, whether *they had aught against me*, that they would *stand by and swear to* ;' for some that will not scruple to tell a lie, have such *hearings of conscience*, that they scruple confirming it with an oath.

2. In the council ; 'Since the Jews of Asia are not here, to prove anything on me done amiss in the temple, let *these same* that are *here*, the *high priest* and the *elders*, say, whether they have found any evil doing in me, or if I were guilty of any misdemeanor when I stood before the council, when also they were ready to pull me in pieces, v. 20. When I was there, they could not take offence at anything I said ; for all I said was, *Touching the resurrection of the dead, I am called in question by you this day*, v. 21. which gave no offence to any but the Sadducees. This, I hope, was no crime, that I stuck to that which is the faith of the whole Jewish church, excepting those whom they themselves call *heretics*.'

V. 22—27. I. Felix adjourned the cause, and took time to consider of it, v. 22. He had a more perfect knowledge of that way called *heresy*, than the high priest and the

V. 20. 'A delicate irony. "Except for one speech, if they can make a crime of that." Paul not unfrequently uses irony, as in 2 Cor. 12:13. &c.' Beza.

V. 22. *Having more perfect knowledge, &c.* [The words in the original are very ambiguous, and might be rendered, "That Felix, when he had heard these things, having been more accurately informed concerning this way of Christianity, and knowing it not to be so mischievous a thing as these accusers suggested, put them off." But I rather think [contrary to Scott and Whitby] with Beza, Grotius, and others, that they are all the words of Felix, and take the meaning to be, "that he would take an opportunity of being more particularly informed of [144]

this sect, and of its aspect on the public tranquillity, and when Lysias should come, and give him an account of what he had observed concerning it, as well as of the circumstances attending Paul's apprehension, &c., he would determine the affair." Which answer was the more proper, as Paul did not deny, that he was indeed a leading person among the Christians, which made a part of their accusation ; and we soon after find, that Felix sent for Paul to give him an account of his religion, v. 24. and endeavored by this, as well as other means, to inform himself in it.' Doddr. 'He saw that the case involved, in part, a question of law, and in part, a question of fact ; the former, whether this *sect of the Nazarenes* was opposed to the law of the Jews ; and the latter,



23 And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let *him* have <sup>z</sup>liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or to come unto him.

24 ¶ And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

25 And as he reasoned of <sup>v</sup>righteousness, temperance, <sup>z</sup>and judgment <sup>a</sup>to come, Felix <sup>b</sup>trembled, and answered, Go <sup>c</sup>thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

26 ¶ He hoped also that money <sup>d</sup>should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

x c. 27:3. 28:16. 5. 1 Pe. 4:4. 11. Ha. 3:16.  
y Pr. 16:12. Je. a Ps. 50:3,4. Da. He. 4:1,12.  
22:15-17. Da. 12:2. Mat. 25: c Pr. 1:24, 31.  
4:27. Jn. 16:8. 31-46. 2 Co. Mat. 22:52.  
z Pr. 31:4,5. Da. 5:10. Re. 20:12. 25:1-10.  
5:1-4. Ho. 7: b Ps. 99:1. Is. 32: d Ex. 23:8.

elders thought; he understood something of the Christian religion; for, living at Caesarea, where Cornelius, a Roman centurion, was, who was a Christian, from him and others he had got a notion of Christianity, that it was not such an evil thing as represented; he himself knew some of *that way* to be honest, good men, and very conscientious; and, therefore, he put off the prosecutors with an excuse. Now, 1. It was a disappointment to the high priest and the elders. But thus, sometimes, God restrains the wrath of his people's enemies by the agency, not of their friends, but of strangers. 2. It was an injury to Paul, that he was not released; Felix ought to have released him, when he so plainly saw there was nothing but malice in the prosecution, Ps. 82:4. But what good could be expected from such a judge?

II. He continued the prisoner in custody, v. 23. did not commit him to the common jail, but took care he should be a *prisoner at large*; his keeper must *let him have liberty*, not bind him, or lock him up, but make his confinement as easy to him as possible; the high priest and the elders grudged him his life, but Felix generously allows him a sort of liberty; for he had not their prejudices against him and his way; he also gave orders, that none of his friends should be hindered from *coming and ministering to him*; and a man's prison is, as it were, his own house, if he has but his friends about him.

III. He had frequent conversation with him afterward in private, once particularly, not long after his public trial, v. 24, 25. Observe,

1. Felix's design in this; he had a mind to talk with Paul more freely than he could in open court, where he observed Paul or his guard, *concerning the faith of Christ*, the Christian religion; and this only to satisfy his curiosity, or rather the curiosity of *his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess*, daughter of Herod Agrippa, that was eaten of worms; being educated in the Jewish religion, she was more inquisitive concerning the Christian religion, which pretended to be the per-

fection of that, and desired to hear Paul discourse of it. But it was no great matter what religion she was of; for, whatever it was, she was a reproach and scandal to it; a Jewess, but an adulteress; she was another man's wife when Felix took her to be his wife, and she lived with him in whoredom, and was noted for an impudent woman, yet she desires to hear *concerning the faith of Christ*. Many are fond of new notions and speculations in religion, who yet hate to come under the power and influence of religion.

2. The account Paul gave him of the Christian religion; by the idea he had of it, he expected to be amused with a *mystical divinity*, but as Paul represents it to him, he is alarmed with a *practical divinity*. It is probable, Paul mentioned to him the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, concerning the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and his being *the Mediator between God and man*; but he hastened to his application, in which he designed to come home to the consciences of his hearers, and he discoursed, with clearness and warmth, of *righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come*: and there he showed, (1.) That *the faith in Christ* is designed to enforce on men the great laws of justice and temperance, Tit. 2:12. These were celebrated virtues among the heathen moralists; if the doctrine Paul preaches, which Felix has heard of as proclaiming liberty, will but free him from an obligation to these, he will readily embrace it; 'No,' says Paul, 'so far from doing so, it strengthens the obligations of those sacred laws; it binds all under the highest penalties to be *honest in all their dealings*, and to *render to all their due*; to *deny themselves*, and to *keep under the body, and bring it into subjection*.' Paul reasoned of *righteousness and temperance*, to convince Felix of his *unrighteousness and intemperance*, which he had been notoriously guilty of; that, seeing the odiousness of them, and his obnoxiousness to the *wrath of God* for them, Eph. 5:6. he might inquire *concerning the faith of Christ*, with a resolution to embrace it. (2.) That by the doctrine of Christ is discovered *the judgment to come*, by the sentence of which the everlasting state of all men will be finally and irreversibly determined. Paul reasoned concerning this; he showed what reason we have to believe that *there is a judgment to come*, and what reason we have, in consideration thereof, to be religious.

Now, from this account of the heads of Paul's discourse, we may gather, [1.] That Paul, in his preaching, had no respect of persons, as the Word of God has not: he urges the same convictions and instructions on the Roman governor, that he did on other people. [2.] That he aimed at the consciences of men, and came close to them; sought not to please their fancy, or gratify their curiosity, but led them to a sight of their sins, and a sense of their duty and interest. [3.] That he preferred the serving of Christ, and the saving of souls, before his own safety. He lay at the mercy of Felix, to deliver him back to the Jews, or to *release him*. Yet, while he has a fair opportunity of ingratiating himself with him, and, on the contrary, if he disoblige him, he may do himself a great diskindness by it, he is wholly negligent of these considerations, and is intent on *doing good*, at least discharging his duty. [4.] That he was willing to take pains, and run hazards, in his work, even

there where there was little probability of *doing good*. Such hardened sinners, as Felix and Drusilla, were not at all likely to be brought to repentance by Paul's preaching, especially under such disadvantages; yet Paul did not despair.

3. What impressions Paul's discourse made on this great, but bad man; *Felix trembled, being put into a fright*, or made a *terror to himself*, a *magor-missabib*, as Pashur, Jer. 20:3, 4. Paul never trembled before him, but he was made to tremble before Paul. We do not find that Drusilla trembled, though she was equally guilty, for she was a Jewess, and depended on the ceremonial law, which she adhered to the observance of, to justify her; but Felix for the present could fasten on nothing to pacify his conscience, and therefore trembled.

4. How Felix struggled to get clear of these impressions, and to shake off the terror of his convictions, v. 25. He trembled, and that was all. Paul's *trembling*, ch. 9:6. and *the jailer's*, ch. 16:29. ended in their conversion, but this of Felix did not. Many are startled by the *Word of God*, who are not effectually changed by it; are in fear of the consequences of sin, and yet continue in love and league with sin. He did not fight against his convictions, nor fly in the face of the Word, or of the preacher of it; but artfully shifted off his convictions, by putting off the prosecution of them to *another time*; he has nothing to object against what Paul had said, but, like a sorry debtor, he begs a day; Paul has spent himself, and has tired him and his lady, and therefore, 'Go thy way for this time, break off here, business calls me away; but when I have a convenient season, and nothing else to do, I will call for thee, and hear what thou hast further to say.' Note, (1.) Many lose all the benefit of their convictions for want of striking while the iron is hot. If *Felix*, now that he trembled, had but asked, as Paul and the jailer did, when they trembled, *What shall I do?* he might have been brought to the *faith of Christ*, and have been a *Felix* indeed, *happy* for ever; but by dropping his convictions now, he lost them for ever, and himself with them. (2.) In the affairs of our souls, delays are dangerous; nothing is of more fatal consequence than men's putting off their conversion from time to time. The present season is, without doubt, *the most convenient season*. Behold, now is the *accepted time*. To-day, if ye will hear his voice.

IV. After all, he continued him a prisoner, and left him so, when two years after he was removed from the government, v. 26, 27. To little purpose had Paul reasoned with him about *righteousness*, though he then trembled at the thought of his own iniquity, who could thus persist in such a palpable piece of injustice. But here we are told what principles he was governed by herein; and they were such as make the matter yet much worse:

1. The love of money. He would not release Paul, because he hoped that at length his friends would make a purse to purchase his liberty: he cannot find in his heart to do his duty as a judge, unless he can get money by it. In hopes of that, he continues Paul a prisoner, and sends for him the oftener, and communed with him; not any more about the *faith of Christ*, he had had enough of that, but about his discharge, or ransom, rather. He cannot, for shame, ask Paul, what he

whether Paul had been guilty of exciting tumult. Concerning the former, Felix would be better informed, by consulting other learned men besides Paul's accusers; and concerning the latter, by the testimony of Lysias himself, when he should arrive. Wherefore he justly interrupted the proceedings.' ROSENM.—'Having become better acquainted with Christianity, from the account just given by Paul.' D'Oyley and Mant. Wetst. tr. 'Having heard these things, he amplified them, being now somewhat, by a more accurate cognizance, informed, &c.' which Bl. thinks, is 'both simple, and agreeable to the construction, context, and what we know of the subject.' En.

V. 23. Minister.] 'Used sometimes for assistance in general, where personal ministrations and attention are out of the question; and as it

is here distinguished from, and prefixed to, *coming to him*, it may probably signify, sending him food, books, or other accommodations. Comp. Luke 8:3.

V. 24-27. Drusilla was daughter to that Herod, who beheaded James the brother of John, 12:1, 2. and sister to king Agrippa, who is afterwards mentioned. 25:13-27. She was married to Azizus, king of the Emesenes, who had been circumcised in order to obtain her; but she had left her husband to cohabit with Felix, being a very profligate woman.—Neither the apostle, nor his friends, would purchase his liberty, by becoming accessory to the bribery and extortion of Felix; they would not 'do evil, that good might come.'—'It was during the two years of Paul's imprisonment here, that these contentions arose between the



27 But after two years, Porcius Festus came into Felix' room : and Felix, willing to shew \* the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

CHAP. XXV.

<sup>2</sup> The Jews accuse Paul before Festus. 8 He answereth for himself, 11 and appealeth unto Cesar. 14 Afterwards Festus openeth his matter to king Agrippa, 23 and he is brought forth. 25 Festus cleareth him of having done any thing worthy of death.

NOW when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Cesarea to Jerusalem.

2 Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him,

3 And desired favor against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying \* wait in the way to kill him.

4 But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Cesarea, and that he himself would depart shortly *thither*.

e Ma. 15:15. c. 25:9. a c. 23:14,15.

will give him to release him, but he sends for him, to feel his pulse, and give him an opportunity to ask what he would take to release him. And now we see what became of his promise, both to Paul and to himself, that he would hear more of Christ, *at some other convenient season*. Here were many seasons convenient enough to have talked that matter through, but nothing is done in it; all his business now is to get money by Paul, not to get the knowledge of Christ by him. It is just with God, to say, concerning those who trifle with their convictions, and think they can have the grace of God at command when they please, *My Spirit shall no more strive with them*.

Paul was but a poor man himself; but Felix knew there were those who wished well to him, who were able to assist him; he having lately collected a deal of money, to relieve the poor saints, it might also be expected that the rich saints should contribute some to release him, and I wonder it was not done; nay, I know not whether his friends can be justified, in not doing it. I ought not to bribe a man to do an unjust thing, but if he will not do me justice without a fee, it is but doing myself justice to give it him; and if they might do it, I blush for them, that they would let such an eminent and useful man as Paul lie in the jail, when a little money would have fetched him out, and restored him to his usefulness again. The Christians here at Cesarea, where he now was, had parted with their tears to prevent his going to the prison, *ch. 21:13*. but

PRACT. OBS. In how different a light will the characters of Paul and Felix appear, at the day of judgment, than they do in Tertullus' harangue! Let us not then value the applause, or be troubled at the revilings of ungodly men; as the basest and most criminal of the human race have been almost deified by encomiums, and the excellent of the earth have been treated as deserving of universal execration; and this by professors of the true religion! by priests, elders, and persons of chief authority in the visible church!—But they have never rightly understood the doctrines of Paul, who do not 'exercise themselves to have

[it would seem] could not find in their hearts to part with their money to help him out. Yet there might be a providence of God in it; Paul's bonds must be for the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ, and therefore he must continue in bonds. However, this will not excuse Felix.

2. Men pleasing. He was willing to do the Jews a pleasure; though he would not deliver Paul to death, to please them, yet he would continue him a prisoner rather than offend them; and he did it in hope hereby to atone for his many offences against them. Thus they who do some base things, are tempted to do more, to screen themselves and bear them out. But it seems he did not gain his point; the Jews, notwithstanding this, accused him to the emperor, and some historians say he was sent bound to Rome by Festus; and if so, surely his remembering how light he had made of Paul's bonds, would help to make his own heavy. Those that aim to please God, by doing good, will have what they aim at; but so will not they that seek to please men by doing evil.

CHAP. XXV. Some think Felix was turned out, and Festus succeeded him, quickly after Paul's imprisonment; and that the two years, mentioned in the close of the foregoing ch., are to be reckoned from the beginning of Nero's reign; but it seems more natural to compute it from Paul's being delivered into the hands of Felix; however, we have here much the same management of Paul's case, as we had in the foregoing ch.

V. 1—12. Festus, the new governor, like Felix, is not just to Paul, for he does not release him; and yet not so unjust as the Jews would have him, for he will not condemn him to die, nor expose him to their rage.

1. The high priests and other Jews press the governor to send Paul to Jerusalem, in effect, to abandon him.

1. See how restless a thing malice is! As soon as ever Festus was come into the province, and had taken possession of the government, within 3 days, as he went up to Jerusalem, to show himself there, presently the priests were upon him to proceed against Paul; we do not find that Paul, in the 3 days Festus stayed at Cesarea, made any application to him to release him! Paul more patiently bears the lengthening out of his imprisonment, than his enemies do the delay of his prosecution even to the death.

2. How spiteful their application. They informed the governor against Paul, *v. 2*. before a fair trial, that so they might, if possible, prejudice the cause with the governor, and make him a party, who was to be the judge. But this artifice, though base enough, they could not confide in; for the governor would be sure to hear him himself, and then all their informations against him would fall to

the ground; therefore they form another project much more base, and hellish, and that is, to assassinate Paul before he came on his trial.—Such is their malice against the Gospel of Christ; and this too under color of zeal for Moses.

3. How specious the pretence. Now that the governor was himself at Jerusalem, designing to waylay Paul, they desired he would send for him thither, and try him there, which would save the prosecutors a great deal of labor, and looked most reasonable, because he was charged with having profaned the temple at Jerusalem, and it is usual for criminals to be tried in the court where the fact was committed. It is said, *They desired favor against Paul*. The business of prosecutors is, to demand justice against one they suppose to be a criminal, and, if he be not proved so, it is as much justice to acquit him as it is to condemn him if he be. But to desire favor against a prisoner, and from the judge too, who ought to be of counsel for him, is a very impudent thing. The favor ought to be for the prisoner, to favor his life, but here they desire it against him. They will take it as a favor if the governor will but condemn Paul, though they can prove no crime on him!

II. The governor's resolution that Paul shall take his trial at Cesarea, *v. 4, 5*. It does not appear he had any suspicion, much less any certain information, of their bloody design, *ch. 23:30*. but whatever his reason for refusing it, God made use of it as a mean of preserving Paul out of their hands. Yet he will do the prosecutors the justice to hear what they have to say against Paul, at Cesarea. 'Let them among you who are able in body and purse, or in mind and tongue, those who are fit to be managers; or, who are competent witnesses, able to prove anything criminal on him, let them go down.'

III. Paul's trial before Festus; since they are so eager in the prosecution, he is willing this cause should be first called on his return, *v. 6*. Expedition in administering justice is very commendable, provided more haste be not made than good speed.

1. The court is set, and the prisoner called to the bar. Christ, to encourage his disciples, and keep up their spirits under such awful trials of their courage, as this was to Paul, promised them, that the day should come when they should sit on thrones, judging the tribes of Israel.

2. The prosecutors exhibit their charge against the prisoner, *v. 7*. The Jews stood round about, which intimates, that they were many, also unanimous, intent on the prosecution, and eager in clamoring against Paul; they stood round about, if possible, to frighten the judge into a compliance with their malicious design; however, to frighten the prisoner, and, at least, to put him out of countenance; but in vain; he had too just and

a conscience void of offence towards God and man.' 1 Pet. 3:13—16. In a continual application of the blood of Jesus, and an habitual dependence on his grace, we should daily seek to have our conduct and temper more and more conformed to his holy precepts, as the rule of our duty. Thus our actions will recommend our principles; our kindness even to those who injure us will expose the malignity of our accusers; and a sober, righteous, and godly life will prove the most effectual refutation of all their calumnies. SCOTT.

Jews and Gentiles, as to their respective rights in Cesarea, which, after many tumults and slaughters of the Jews, were inflamed, rather than appeased, by the hearing at Rome, and did a great deal towards exasperating the Jewish nation to that war, which ended in its utter ruin. . . . She (Drusilla) was afterwards . . . consumed, with the son she had by Felix, in a terrible eruption of mount Vesuvius.' Doddr.—The conduct of the trembling jailer at Philippi, and that of Felix, should be carefully and minutely compared; for the contrast is in every particular striking and instructive. 16:19—34.—(25) Go thy way,] I. e. 'back to prison.' Sc. (25.) Go thy way, &c.] 'How affecting an instance and illustration of the treachery of the human heart.' DODDR.

(26.) Receive, &c.] Directly contrary to the law. See Grot. The thing is very common in oriental countries. See all travellers. ED.

(27.) 'During this captivity, Paul wrote most of those epistles of his in which he speaks of himself, as in bonds for the cause of Christianity.' ROSENM.

NOTES. CHAP. XXV. V. 1—5. It was very wonderful, that Festus [146]

should refuse to gratify the great men of the nation, which he was appointed to govern, by sending for Paul to Jerusalem; as he staid in that city long enough to have heard his cause there. But God was pleased thus to influence his mind, in order to Paul's preservation.—'When we consider, how much edification to the churches depended on Paul's life, and how evidently, under God, his life depended on this resolution of Festus; it must surely lead us to reflect, by what invisible springs the blessed God governs the world; with what silence, and yet at the same time with what wisdom and energy!' Doddr. [Note \*, p. 770, Vol. III.] (5.) Able.] I. e. able to substantiate an accusation; or, able, without material detriment, to take the journey to Cesarea, for this purpose. SCOTT.

(2.) High priest.] 'Ismael: (Jos. Ant. 20, 8, 3.) but I should prefer to read, with many excellent MSS., ancient versions, and Fathers, *hoi archiereis*, [the chief priests,] which is, with reason, adopted by Griesb.' BLOOMF.

(4.) Should be.] 'Rather, was.' ID.



5 Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with me, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him.

6 And when he had tarried among them<sup>b</sup> more than ten days, he went down unto Cesarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment-seat, commanded Paul to be brought.

7 And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which<sup>c</sup> they could not prove.

8 ¶ While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Cesar, have I offended any thing at all.

9 But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?

10 Then said Paul, I stand at Cesar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.

11 For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal<sup>d</sup> unto Cesar.

12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Cesar? unto Cesar shalt thou go.

13 ¶ And after certain days, king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Cesarea, to salute Festus.

<sup>b</sup> or, as some copies read, no more than eight or ten days. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 35:11. Mat. 5:11, 12. c. 24:5, 13. <sup>d</sup> c. 26:32.

strong an assurance to be dashed by them. Ps. 118:12. *When they stood round about him, they brought many and grievous accusations against Paul, so it should be read; they charged him with high crimes and misdemeanors; the articles of impeachment were many, and contained things of a very heinous nature; but when they had opened the cause, and came to the evidence, there they failed; they could not prove what they alleged against him, for it was all false, the complaints groundless and unjust; either the fact was not as they opened it, or there was no fault in it; they laid to his charge things that he*

*knew not, nor they neither. It is no new thing for the most excellent ones of the earth to have all manner of evil said against them falsely, not only in the song of the drunkards, and on the seat of the scornful, but even before the judgment-seat.*

3. The prisoner's insisting on his own vindication, v. 8. His general plea, is, Not guilty; *Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor yet against Cesar, have I offended anything at all.* By this, it appears, that now, his cause being brought before the government, to curry favor with the governor, and seem friends to Cesar, they had charged him with some instances of disaffection, which obliged him to purge himself, protesting he was no enemy to Cesar.

IV. Paul's appeal to the emperor, and the occasion of it; this gave the cause a new turn; whether he had before designed it, or whether it was a sudden resolve on the present provocation, does not appear; but [it was his only chance for his life, and] God puts it into his heart to do it, to bring it about *that he bear witness to Christ at Rome, for there the emperor's court was, ch. 23: 11.* We have here,

1. The proposal Festus made to Paul, to go and take his trial at Jerusalem, v. 9. Festus was inclined to gratify the prosecutors, rather than the prisoner, as far as he could go with safety against one that was a citizen of Rome; he would not offer to turn him over to the high priest and the Sanhedrim, as the Jews would have had him; but, *Wilt thou go thither, and be judged of these things before me?* He might, if he had pleased, have ordered him thither, but he would not do it without his consent, which, if he could have wheedled him to give it, would have taken off the odium of it. In suffering times, the prudence of the Lord's people is tried, as well as their patience; being *sent forth therefore as sheep in the midst of wolves, they have need to be wise as serpents.*

2. Paul's refusal, and his reasons. He knew, if he were removed to Jerusalem, notwithstanding the utmost vigilance of the president, the Jews would find some means or other to murder him; therefore he pleads, (1.) That, as a citizen of Rome, it was most proper for him to be tried, not only by the president, but in what was properly his court, at Cesarea, the metropolis of the province. *The court being held in Cesar's name, and by his authority and commission, before one delegated by him, it might well be said to be his judgment-seat, as all writs run in the name of the sovereign, [whether an individual, a state, or the people,] in whose name all courts are held.* Paul's owning *that he ought to be judged at Cesar's judgment-seat*, plainly proves, that Christ's ministers are not exempted from the jurisdiction of the civil powers, but *ought to be subject to them, as far as they can with a good conscience; and, if they be guilty of a real crime, to submit to their censure; if innocent, yet to submit to their inquiry, and to clear themselves before them.* (2.) That, as a member of

the Jewish nation, he had done nothing to make himself obnoxious to them; *no wrong, as Festus knew.* It very well becomes the innocent, to plead their innocency, and insist on it; it is a debt we owe to our own good name, not only not to bear false witness against ourselves, but to maintain our own integrity against those who bear false witness against us. (3.) That he was willing to abide by the rules of the law, and to let that take its course, v. 11. *Not that all who have committed anything worthy of death, are obliged to accuse themselves, and offer themselves to justice; \* but when accused and brought to justice, they ought to submit, and to say, both God and the government are righteous. But if he be innocent, as he protests, 'If the prosecution be malicious, and they are resolved to have my blood, right or wrong, no man may deliver me unto them, no, not the governor himself, without palpable injustice; for it is his business as much to protect the innocent, as to punish the guilty;'* and he claims his protection.

3. Since he is continually in danger of the Jews, and one attempt is made after another to get him into their hands, he flies to the last refuge of oppressed innocency, and takes sanctuary there, since he cannot have justice done him in any other way; *'I appeal unto Cesar, rather than be delivered to the Jews,'* which Festus seems inclined to consent to. So David, 1 S. 27:1. But it is a hard case, that a son of Abraham must appeal to a Philistine, to a Nero, from those who call themselves the seed of Abraham, and shall be safer in Gath or Rome, than in Jerusalem! *How is the faithful city become a harlot!*

V. The judgment given. Paul is neither released nor condemned; both his enemies and his friends are disappointed, the thing is left as it was. It is an instance of the slow steps Providence [for good ends] sometimes takes.

The president, when he had advised with his council, determines to send Paul to Rome; some think, Paul meant not an appeal to Cesar's person, but only to his court, and that Festus might have chosen whether he would have sent him to Rome, or, at least, whether he would have joined issue with him on the appeal; but, it should seem, by what Agrippa said, ch. 26: 32. that, by the course of the Roman law, a Roman citizen might appeal at any time to a superior court, even to the supreme; as with us. Festus therefore, either of choice or of course, comes to this resolution; he found there was something very extraordinary in the ease, which he was therefore afraid of giving judgment on, either one way or other; and the knowledge of which he thought would be an entertainment to the emperor, therefore he transmitted it to his cognizance.

V. 13—27. We have here the preparation made for another hearing of Paul before king Agrippa, not in order to his giving judgment on him, but to his giving advice concerning

\* Why not? are they not obliged to bring others to justice? Ed.

(5.) *Able.* 'Rather, of credit and might: so the Gr. is used very frequently in the classics, also in Philo. and Jos. This tr. is supported by the Syr. and Vulg., and so Zeger, Cam., Pric., Wets., Pearce, Krebs, Ros., Loesner, and Kuin.'

V. 8. *Against Cesar.* The epistle to the Romans, in which submission to the existing powers, without excepting the most faulty characters, is decidedly enforced, was written before this time. SCOTT.

V. 9—11. This proposal renders it the more wonderful, that he did not before send for him to Jerusalem, at the request of the same persons. 1—5, vv. 4, 5.—It may be supposed, that Festus was not aware of a conspiracy formed against his life; but probably the apostle was fully informed of it; or at least was assured, that no kind or degree of violence or deceit would be wanting to murder him. And, though assured by the Lord Himself, that he should 'bear testimony to Him at Rome,' he used all proper means for his own preservation: so far was he from thinking, that the divine decrees and man's free agency were incompatible, or that the purposes of God, even when known, render the use of means needless or useless. 2:22—24. 4:23—23. 23:11. 27:29—32.—The Roman governors were the emperor's representatives: the apostle, therefore, as a Roman citizen, when standing at the tribunal of Festus, was in the place where 'he ought to be judged;' but, should he be sent to Jerusalem, to be tried under the influence of the Jewish rulers, he would, independently of plots and conspiracies, be deprived of his

privilege. Nero, who is still infamous, was at that time the Roman emperor.

(9.) *Before me.* 'I. e. under my authority, and subject to my final determination; for a sentence of the Sanhedrim required the confirmation of the president. [Note 24:6.]' BLOOMF.

(10.) *I stand, &c.* 'Grot. and others have abundantly proved, that the tribunal of the Roman procurators in the provinces, as it was held in Cesar's name, and by commission from him, was looked upon as Cesar's tribunal.' DODDR.

• V. 12. *I appeal, &c.* 'It is well known, that the Roman law allowed such an appeal to every citizen, before sentence was passed, and made it highly penal for any governor, after that, to proceed to any extremities against the person making it.' *Doddr. Council.* 'Sumbouloi: the assessores of the president, as they are called by Lamprid. Dio Cass. calls them *paredroi*, and Suet. *consilarii*. (Kuin.) This Roman custom seems, like many others, to have been adopted from the Lacedaemonian institutions. Thus we read often, in Thucyd., of these *sumbouloi* sent with generals and admirals, and sometimes with governors of cities and provinces [to prevent abuses, &c.]' BLOOMF.

V. 13. [Except as suspected of incest,] Agrippa bore a good character; being equitable in his administration, of a generous disposition, and paying a strict attention to the externals of religion. SCOTT.

(13.) *King Agrippa.* 'Son of Herod Agrippa, spoken of ch. 12:1.



14 And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix :

15 About whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him.

16 To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have license to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.

17 Therefore when they were come hither, without any delay, on the morrow I sat on the judgment-seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth.

18 Against whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed :

19 But I had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

20 And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters.

21 But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Cesar.

e ver. 2:3. h or, I was doubt- quire hereof.  
f ver. 6. ful how to in- l or, judgment.  
g c. 13:15.

him, or rather to gratify his curiosity. Here is,

I. The kind and friendly visit king Agrippa made to Festus, now on his coming into the government in that province, v. 13.; personal converse is the most pleasant among friends.

1. The visitants were; (1.) King Agrippa, son of that Herod, surnamed Agrippa, who killed James, the apostle, and was himself eaten of worms, and great grandson of Herod the Great, under whom Christ was born. Josephus calls this Agrippa the younger; Claudius, the emperor, made him king of Chalcis, and tetrarch of Trachonitis and Abylene, mentioned Luke 3:1. The Jewish writers, as Lightfoot tells us, relate among other things this story of him, 'That reading the law publicly, in the latter end of the year of release, as was enjoined, when the king came to those words, Deut. 17:15. *Thou shalt not set a stranger king over thee, which is not of thy brethren*, the tears ran down his cheeks, for he was not of the seed of Israel, which the congregation observing, cried out, *Be of good comfort, king Agrippa, thou art our*

and grandson of Aristobulus, son of Herod the Great. As he was but 17 years of age when his father died, the emperor Claudius did not think proper to appoint him k. of Judea in the room of his father, but made it a Roman province: however, on the death of his uncle Herod, he made him k. of Chalcis, which, after he had governed it four years, he exchanged for a greater kingdom, and gave him the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias, to which Nero afterwards added part of Galilee, with several towns in Perea.' *Doddr. Bernice.* 'A Macedonian name, for the Macedonians change Ph into B. So Burgas for Phurgas.' *Ros.* This was also the person whom Titus Vespasian so passionately loved, and whom he would have made empress, had not the elainers of the Romans prevented it.' *Doddr.*

V. 15. *Judgment.* 'Sentence of condemnation.' *Kuin.* 'The judgment they demanded against Paul, was not a trial, but a sentence upon a previous conviction, which they falsely and wickedly pretended: and, probably, it was the knowledge that Festus had of Paul's being a Ro-

man citizen, that engaged him to determine to try the cause himself.' *Doddr.* (2.) *Bernice* came with him, she was his own sister, now the widow of his uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, after whose death she lived with this brother of hers, who was suspected to be too familiar with her, and after she was a second time divorced from him, and returned to her brother, king Agrippa. Juvenal, *Sat.* 6. speaks of a diamond ring, Agrippa gave to Bernice, his incestuous sister; and both Tacitus and Suetonius speak of a criminal intimacy afterward, between her and Titus Vespasian. Drusilla, the wife of Felix, was another sister. Such lewd people, were the great people generally in those times! *Say not that the former days were better.*

2. Their design was, to salute Festus, to compliment him on his accession to the government, and to keep up a good correspondence with him, that Agrippa, who had the government of Galilee, might act in concert with Festus, who had the government of Judea; but, probably, as much to divert themselves, as to show respect to him, and to share in the entertainments of his court, and to show their fine clothes, which would do vain people no good, if they did not go abroad.

II. The account Festus gave king Agrippa of Paul, and his case. 1. To entertain him; and truly it was a very remarkable story, and worth any man's hearing, not only as surprising and entertaining, but, if truly and fully told, very instructive and edifying; and it would be particularly acceptable to Agrippa, not only because he was a judge, and there were some points of law and practice in it, well worth his notice, but much more as he was a Jew, and there were some points of religion in it, much more deserving his cognizance. 2. To have his advice. Festus was but newly come to be a judge, at least, to be a judge in these parts, therefore is diffident of his own ability, and willing to have the counsel of older and more experienced persons, especially in a matter of so much difficulty as Paul's case seemed to have, and therefore he declared it to the king. Let us now see his particular account of Paul, v. 14—21.

1. He found him a prisoner when he came into office; therefore could not of his own knowledge, give an account of his cause from the beginning, and if there were anything amiss in the first taking of him into custody, Festus is not to answer for that. When Felix left Paul bound, he knew not what he did, knew not but he might have fallen into worse hands than he did, though they were none of the best.

2. That the Jewish Sanhedrim were extremely set against him; 'The chief priests and the elders informed me against him, as a dangerous man, and desired he might therefore be condemned to die.' These being great pretenders to religion, and therefore to be supposed men of honor and honesty, Festus thinks he ought to credit them; but Agrippa knows them better than he, and therefore he desires his advice.

3. That he had insisted on the Roman law in favor of the prisoner, and would not condemn him unheard, v. 16. He seems to upbraid them, as if they reflected on the

Romans, and their government, in asking such a thing, or expecting they would condemn a man without trying him; 'No,' says he, 'The Romans allow not of such a piece of injustice among them.' *Hear the other side*, was become a proverb among them. This rule we ought to be governed by in our private censures, in common conversation. See John 7:51.

4. That he had brought him on his trial, according to the duty of his place, v. 17. had been expeditious in it, and had likewise tried him in the most solemn manner, on the judgment-seat, as they used to do in weightier causes, while those of small moment, they judged on even ground. He called a great court, on purpose for the trial of Paul, that the sentence might be definitive, and the cause ended.

5. That he was extremely disappointed in the charge they brought against him, v. 18, 19. He supposed, by the eagerness of their prosecution, and their urging it thus on the Roman governors, one after another, that they had something to accuse him of that was, (1.) Dangerous either to private property or the public peace; they would prove him a robber, or a murderer, or a rebel against the Roman power. Such were the outcries against the primitive Christians, so loud, so fierce, that the standers-by, who judged of them by those outcries, could not but conclude them the worst of men; and to represent them so was the design of that clamor, as it was against our Savior. (2.) Cognizable in the Roman courts.—But, to his great surprise, he finds the matter is neither so, nor so: they had certain questions, instead of proofs and evidences against him; questions fitter for the schools than for the judgment-seat; questions of their own superstition, so he calls their religion, or rather, that part of it which Paul was charged with doing damage to. The Romans protected their religion according to their law, but not their superstition, nor the tradition of their elders. But the great question, it seems, was concerning one Jesus that was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. Some think, the superstition he speaks of, was the Christian religion, which Paul preached, and that he had the same notion of it that the Athenians had, that it was the introducing of a new *dæmon*, even Jesus. See how slightly this Roman speaks of Christ; of the great controversy between the Jews and the Christians, whether He were the Messiah promised or no; and the great proof of his being the Messiah, his resurrection from the dead, as if it were no more than this, There was one Jesus that was dead, and Paul affirmed He was alive. Whereas this Jesus, whom he prides himself in being thus ignorant of, as if He were below his notice, is He that was dead, and is alive, and lives for evermore, and has the keys of hell and of death, Rev. 1:18. What Paul affirmed concerning Jesus, that He is alive, is a truth of such importance, that if it be not true we are all undone!

6. That therefore he had moved it to Paul, that the cause might be adjourned to the Jewish courts, as best able to take cognizance of an affair of this nature, v. 20. that he might not have his conscience burdened with a cause of such a kind.

7. That Paul had chosen rather to remove

man citizen, that engaged him to determine to try the cause himself.' *Doddr.* *Scott.*

V. 17—19. (19) *Superstition.* As Festus entertained Agrippa with great respect; so it cannot be supposed, that he would have used the word here tr. *superstition*, if it had implied any harsh censure of his religion: we must therefore conclude that it was of a doubtful signification; to be understood in a good or evil sense, according to its application. [So *Doddr.* and *Ros.*] 17:22—25.—Festus seems to have regarded Paul as a credulous visionary, in affirming that Jesus was alive: but he thought his opponents far more criminal, in persecuting him so virulently on that account; for the matter in contest was in his judgment of no importance! *Scott.*

V. 21. *Augustus.* 'Sebastos: this surname [contrary to *Doddr.*'s remark here] was borne by all the emperors, from Cesar Octavianus, who first assumed it.' *Bloomf.*



22 Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.

23 ¶ And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul<sup>k</sup> was brought forth.

24 And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying<sup>m</sup> that he ought not to live any longer.

25 But when I found that he had committed nothing<sup>n</sup> worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed<sup>o</sup> to Augustus, I have determined to send him.

26 Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write.

27 For<sup>p</sup> it seemeth to me unreasonable, to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him.

#### CHAP. XXVI.

2 Paul, in the presence of Agrippa, declareth his life from his childhood, 12 and how miraculously he was converted, and called to his apostleship. 24 Festus chargeth him to be mad, whereunto he answereth modestly. 28 Agrippa is almost persuaded to be a Christian. 31 The whole company pronounce him innocent.

THEN Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak

1 Ex. 7:24. m c. 22:22. o ver. 11:12.  
k c. 9:15. n c. 23:9,29. p Pr. 13:13. Jn.  
l ver. 3:7. 29:31. 7:51.

his cause to Rome, as expecting fairer play from the emperor than from the priests, v. 21. having no other way to stop proceedings here in this inferior court; therefore I have commanded him to be kept a close prisoner till I might send him to Cesar; for I did not see cause to refuse his appeal, but rather was pleased with it.

III. The bringing of him before Agrippa.

1. Agrippa desires it, v. 22. knowing more of this matter than Festus does; he has heard of Paul, and knows of what vast con-

PRACT. OBS. The malignant enmity of hardened persecutors cannot be worn out by length of time, or satisfied with any sufferings of those against whom they are enraged, unless terminating in their violent death. They deem it a peculiar favor, when rulers will gratify their malice; and they have no scruples about conspiracies, assassinations, or massacres, when legal forms fail of effecting their purposes. We cannot, therefore, too much watch against the feeblest risings of that principle, which may be matured into such dire excesses. The most important questions, which relate to the worship of God, the way of eternal salvation, and the grand truths of the Gospel, appear dubious and uninteresting to the politicians and wise men of the world. They can see, however, and condemn the mismanagement, into which men are betrayed by an indiscreet or furious zeal; and this confirms them in their skeptical disregard of religion in general. Yet the day is at hand, when Festus and the whole world will know, that all the temporal concerns of the immense Roman Empire were frivolous, as the toys and sports of children, compared with the single question, whether Jesus the crucified

V. 22. *Would also hear myself.*] 'No doubt, but Agrippa had learned from his father, by whom, it is to be remembered, James had been put to death, and Peter imprisoned, ch. 12:2, 3, and from many others, something of the history and pretensions of Christianity: so that he would naturally have a curiosity to see and discourse with so eminent a Christian teacher as Paul was; who, on account of what he had been in his unconverted state, was, to be sure, more regarded and talked of among the Jews, than any other of the apostles.'

V. 23, &c. 'Festus, thinking of no such thing, exposes the wickedness of the Jews, and shows the innocence of Paul, even in the presence of kings; and thus marvellously assists the church of God.' Beza. Per-

cern this question is, which Festus makes such a jest of, whether Jesus be alive or no. He would not for all the world have gone to hear Paul preach, any more than Herod to hear Jesus; yet both are glad to have them brought before them, only to satisfy their curiosity. Perhaps Agrippa desired to hear him himself, that he might be in a capacity to do him a kindness, and yet did him none, only put some credit on him.

2. Festus granted it; *To-morrow thou shalt hear him.* There was a good providence in this, to encourage Paul, who seemed buried alive in his imprisonment, and deprived of all opportunities of doing good; we know not [i. e. certainly; comp. on 24:27.] of any of his epistles, that bore date from his prison at Cesarea; what opportunity he had of doing good to his friends that visited him, and perhaps to a little congregation that might come every Lord's day, was but a low and narrow sphere of usefulness; but this gives him an opportunity of preaching Christ to a great congregation, and, which is more, to a congregation of great ones. And we have reason to think his sermon in the next ch., though not so instrumental as some other, for the conversion of souls, redounded as much to the honor of Christ and Christianity, as any he ever preached.

3. Great preparation was made for it, v. 23. *The next day there was a great appearance in the place of hearing,* Paul and his cause being much talked of, and the more for their being much talked against. (1.) Agrippa and Bernice took this opportunity to show themselves in state, and to make a figure, and perhaps for that end desired the occasion, that they might see and be seen; for they came with great pomp, richly dressed with gold and pearls, and costly array; with a great retinue of footmen, in rich liveries, which made a splendid show, and dazzled the eyes of the gazing crowd. They came with great [phantasio] fancy, so the word is. Great pomp is but great fancy; it neither adds any real excellency, nor gains any real respect, but feeds a vain humor, which wise men would rather mortify than gratify. It is but a show, a dream, a fantastical thing, so the word signifies; superficial, and it passeth away. And the pomp of this appearance, would put one for ever out of conceit with pomp, when thus stained by their lewd characters (for all virtuous people could not but contemn them in the midst of all, as vile, Ps. 15:4.); and thus outshone by the real glory of the poor prisoner at the bar. What was the honor of their fine clothes, compared with that of his wisdom, and grace, and holiness; his courage and constancy in suffering for Christ! His bonds in so good a cause were more glorious than their chains of gold; and his guards, than their equipage. Who would be fond of worldly pomp, that here

sees so bad a woman loaded with it, and so good a man loaded with the reverse? (2.) The chief captain and principal men of the city took this opportunity to pay their respects to Festus, and to his guests; it answered the end of a ball, at court; it brought the fine folks together, in their fine clothes, and served for an entertainment. I am apt to think, that they who were to appear in pomp, perplexed themselves more with care about their clothes, than Paul, who was to appear as a prisoner, did with care about his cause; for he knew whom he had believed, and who stood by him.

IV. Festus introduced the cause; in a speech of much to the same purport with his account to Agrippa. 1. He addresses himself respectfully to the company. 2. He represents the prisoner, as one the Jews had a very great spite against; not only the rulers, but the multitude of them, both at Jerusalem, and here at Cesarea; they could not charge him with any capital crime, but they want to have him out of the way. 3. He confessed the prisoner's innocency; much for Paul's honor, v. 25. on a full hearing of the cause, it appeared, that there was no evidence at all to support the indictment; therefore though inclinable enough to favor the prosecutors, yet his own conscience brought in Paul not guilty. And why not discharge him then? Why truly, because he was so much clamored against, and he feared the clamor would turn on himself if he should. It is pity but every man that has a conscience, should have courage to act according to it. Or, perhaps, because there was so much smoke, he concluded there could not but be some fire, which would appear at last, and he would continue him a prisoner, in expectation of it. 4. He acquaints them with the present state of the case; that the prisoner had appealed to the emperor himself; and that he had admitted his appeal. And thus the cause now stood. 5. He desires their assistance in examining the matter, calmly and impartially, now that there was no danger of their being interrupted, as he had been, with the noisiness and outrage of the prosecutors; that he might have at least such an insight into the cause, as was necessary to his stating it to the emperor, v. 26, 27.; who is supposed to be a man of great business, and therefore every affair must be laid before him, in as little compass as possible. He could not as yet write anything certain concerning Paul; so confused were the informations given in against him, and so inconsistent. He therefore desired he might be thus publicly examined, that he might be advised by them what to write.

CHAP. XXVI. We left Paul at the bar, and Festus, and Agrippa and Bernice, and all the great men of the city of Cesarea, on

was risen from the dead, according to the doctrine of the apostle, or was not risen. Then those who have had the means of instruction, and have despised them, will be most awfully convinced of their sin and folly. But alas! many, who seem to desire information on such questions, only want to gratify a vain curiosity, and not to learn the way to heaven: and 'the great pomp,' with which some of the rich and honorable of this world, attend at 'the places of hearing the Word of God,' nay, at the Lord's table, show, that they are actuated by the same motives as Paul's splendid auditory was, though in a far more aggravated manner.—Ministers, indeed, do not commonly now stand in fetters, as prisoners, to make their defence before their hearers; yet numbers affect rather to sit in judgment on them, as 'offenders for a word,' than to learn from them the truth and will of God, for the salvation of their own souls; and alas, too many preachers seem far more anxious to collect together, and to please, their genteel and splendid congregations, than to 'declare the whole counsel of God,' and to keep themselves pure from the blood of all men.'

SCOTT.

haps this was as magnificent an assembly, as ever was brought together to hear the truths of the Gospel.

SCOTT.

V. 26. *My lord.*] 'Rather THE lord, i. e. the supreme lord. The earlier emperors, Augustus and Tiberius, had rejected this title, as too magnificent and invidious. Yet it was readily admitted by succeeding emperors, and in the time of Pliny the younger, it seems to have become the regular title of the sovereign. It occurs perpetually in his Epistles and Panegyrics. Our idiom will not better express it than by the phrase, our sovereign lord.' See Bl.

NOTES. CHAP. XXVI. V. 1. *Stretched forth his hand.*] 'Some of the most illustrious Greek orators of the earlier ages, such as Peri-



for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:

2 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews:

3 Especially, because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

4 My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews:

5 Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee.

6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers:

7 Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.

8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

a De. 17:18. 15. 2 Sa. 7:12. 13:1-7. Mal.  
b c. 24:4. Ps. 132:11. Is. 3:1. c. 13:32.  
c 2 Ti. 3:10. 4:2. 7:14. 9:6,7. Ga. 4:4.  
d c. 22:3. Phi. 3:5. Je. 23:5. 33:14 g Lu. 2:37. 1 Th.  
e c. 23:6. -16. Eze. 34:3:10.  
f Ge. 3:15. 22:18. 23. Da. 9:24. h night and day.  
49:10. De. 18: Mi. 7:20. Zec. i 1 Co. 15:12, 20.

the bench, or about it, waiting to hear what he had to say for himself.

V. 1-11. Agrippa was the most honorable, having the title of king, though otherwise having only the power of the other governors under the emperor; and though not here superior, yet senior to Festus, and therefore Festus having opened the cause, Agrippa, as the mouth of the court, intimates to Paul a license given him to speak for himself, v. 1.

I. Paul addresses himself with a very particular respect to Agrippa, v. 2, 3. He is glad he has an opportunity of clearing himself; though an apostle, he is not exempt from the jurisdiction of the civil powers; as we all have benefit by magistracy, so we all must be subject to it. He is glad it is before king Agrippa, who, being himself a proselyte to the Jewish religion, understood all matters relating to that, better than the other Roman governors did. It seems, Agrippa was a scholar, particularly in Jewish learning; he was well versed in the O. T., and therefore could make a better judgment than

another on the controversy between him and the Jews, concerning Jesus being the Messiah. Paul designed a long discourse, and begs he would not be weary; he designs a plain discourse, and begs he would hear him with mildness, and not be angry. Paul had some reason to fear, that Agrippa, though the more competent judge, might be soured in some measure with the Jewish leaven, and therefore prejudiced against him as the apostle of the Gentiles; therefore says, to sweeten him, *I beseech thee, hear me patiently.*

II. He professes, that though hated and branded as an apostate, yet he still adhered to all that good which he was first educated and trained up in; his religion was always built on the promise of God made unto the fathers; and this he still built upon.

1. See here what his religion was in his youth; his manner of life was well known, v. 4, 5. His education was neither foreign nor obscure, it was among his own nation at Jerusalem, where religion and learning flourished; and this, all that could remember so long, and knew him from the beginning, could testify for him, that he was not only of the Jewish religion, but that he was of the most strict sect of that religion, not only called a Pharisee, but lived a Pharisee; nay, of the better sort of Pharisees, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, an eminent rabbin of the school or house of Hillel, which was in much greater reputation for religion, than the school or house of Samai.

Now if Paul was a Pharisee, and lived a Pharisee, (1.) Then he was a scholar, a man of learning; the Pharisees were well versed in the law, and in the traditional expositions of it. The other apostles were bred fishermen, ch. 4:13. therefore, that the unbelieving Jews might be left without excuse, here is an apostle raised up, that had sat at the feet of their most eminent doctors. (2.) Then he was a moralist, a man of virtue, and not a rake, or a loose, debauched young man, no drunkard or fornicator; and being a young Pharisee, we may hope no extortioner, nor had yet learned the arts of the crafty, covetous, old Pharisees, of devouring widows' houses, but he was, as touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless; therefore, as he could not be thought to have deserted his religion because he did not know it, for he was a learned man; so he could not be thought to have deserted it because he did not love it, or was disaffected to the obligations of it, for he was a virtuous man, and not inclined to any immorality. (3.) Then he was orthodox, sound in the faith, and not a deist or skeptic, or a man of corrupt principles that led to infidelity; he was a Pharisee, in opposition to a Sadducee; he received those books of the O. T. which the Sadducees rejected, believed a world of spirits, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and the rewards and punishments of the future state, all which the Sadducees denied. They

could not say, He quitted his religion for want of a principle, or for want of a due regard to divine revelation; no, he always had a veneration for the ancient promise made of God unto the fathers, and built his hope on it.

Now, though Paul knew very well that all this would not justify him before God, yet he knew it was for his reputation among the Jews, and an argument such as Agrippa would feel, that he was not such a man as they represented him to be. He knew very well, that all this while he was a stranger to the spiritual nature of the divine law, to heart-religion, and that, except his righteousness exceeded this, he should never go to heaven; yet he reflects on it with some satisfaction, that he had not been before his conversion an atheistical, profane, vicious man, but, according to the light he had, had lived in all good conscience before God.

2. See here what his religion is; he has not indeed such a zeal for the ceremonial law as he had in his youth; the sacrifices and offerings appointed by that, he thinks, are superseded by the great Sacrifice which they typified; ceremonial pollutions and purifications from them he makes no conscience of, and thinks the Levitical priesthood is honorably swallowed up in the priesthood of Christ; but, for the main principles of his religion, he is as zealous for them as ever, and more so, and resolves to live and die by them.

(1.) His religion is built on the promise made of God unto the fathers; built on divine revelation, which he receives and believes, and ventures his soul upon; that promise which was more ancient than the ceremonial law, Gal. 3:17. it may look back as far as the promise made to father Adam, concerning the Seed of the woman, and those discoveries of a future state which the first patriarchs acted faith upon, and were saved by that faith; but it respects chiefly the promise made to father Abraham, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, and, that God would be a God to him, and to his seed after him. The former meaning Christ, the latter heaven; for if God had not prepared for them a city, He would have been ashamed to have called Himself their God, Heb. 11:16.

(2.) His religion consists in the hopes of this promise; he places it not, as they did, in meats and drinks, and the observation of carnal ordinances; but in a believing dependence on God's grace in the covenant, and on the promise, which was the great charter by which the church was first incorporated. He had hope in Christ as the promised Seed; he had hopes of heaven; this is expressly meant, as appears by comp. ch. 24:15. *That there shall be a resurrection of the dead.* Paul had no confidence in the flesh, but in Christ; no expectation of great things in this world, but of greater things in the other.

(3.) Herein he concurred with all the

cles, Themistocles, and Aristides, thought it a point of modesty to avoid it. But this was the effect of a false taste; and it is plain, the eloquent Demosthenes often used the same gesture with Paul here. DODDR.

V. 2. 'Agrippa, by the emperor's permission, had the management of the sacred treasure, the government of the temple, and the right of nominating the high priest.' BLOOMF.

V. 4-8. 'Paul, dividing the narrative of his life into two parts, cites his adversaries themselves as witnesses of the former part, and the fathers and prophets to attest the latter part.' Beza. — Some commentators suppose the apostle to mean, almost exclusively, that the resurrection to eternal life, was 'the promise made unto the fathers;' but it is manifest, beyond all doubt, that the promise of a Savior was the most prominent part of the revelation made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the grand subject of prophecy; Luke 24:44-49. John 5:39-44. Heb. 11:39, 40. 1 Pet. 1:10-12. Rev. 19:9, 10. while the doctrine of the resurrection was not so fully and plainly revealed in the O. T. as it is in the New. 2 Tim. 1:10. Paul says, elsewhere, 'We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children; in that He hath raised up Jesus again.' 13:24-37. Rom. 1:1-4, v. 4. Thus the resurrection of Jesus demonstrated, that He was the promised Messiah, against all the unbelieving Jews; and the doctrine of the resurrection, against the Sadducees. The latter were instigated to persecute the apostles, 'for preaching, through Jesus, the resurrection of the dead;' 4:1-3. 23:6-10. the former, for preaching the very person whom they had cruci-

fied, as the Messiah, and as risen and exalted to be a Prince and a Savior.' Yet the whole nation expected a Messiah; and all, except the Sadducees, professed to believe the doctrine of the resurrection. And, as the resurrection of Jesus was proved, by most inexceptionable and abundant testimony, and might be shown to be the fulfilment of ancient prophecies; what reason could be given, why it should not be credited?—Thus the apostle makes a natural and easy transition, from the hope of their fathers, and the doctrine of the resurrection, to that which was his principal subject; namely, the proof, he intended to adduce, that Jesus was indeed risen, and was the promised Messiah. — Some render v. 8. thus, 'What! Is it a thing incredible with you, if God raises the dead?' and this indeed gives a peculiar animation to the question. SCOTT.

(4.) *From my youth.* 'Probably, so Dr. Wells, he had in his childhood been brought up in the schools of Tarsus, [to which all Asia flocked,] and there formed an acquaintance with the politest of the Greek and Roman authors, till he entered on a kind of academical course under the celebrated Gamaliel, about the 15th or 16th year of his age, when he came to Jerusalem, and was there educated from the beginning of his youth.' DODDR.

(5.) *Most straightest sect.* 'So Jos. calls the sect of the Pharisees, almost in the very words the apostle here uses, and in a variety of other passages collected by Biscoe. And Whitby has shown, that it was in many respects stricter, both as to doctrine and life, than that of the Essenes.' ID.



9 I <sup>j</sup> verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

10 Which thing I also did in <sup>k</sup> Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority <sup>l</sup> from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.

11 And I punished them oft in <sup>m</sup> every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.

12 Whereupon as I went <sup>n</sup> to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief priests,

13 At mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*

15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a <sup>o</sup> minister and a <sup>p</sup> witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

<sup>j</sup> 1 Ti. 1:13.      <sup>m</sup> c. 22:19.      1:23, 25.  
<sup>k</sup> c. 8:3. Ga. 1:13.      <sup>n</sup> c. 9:3.      p c. 22:15.  
<sup>l</sup> c. 9:14.      <sup>o</sup> Ep. 3:7. Col.

pious Jews; '*Our twelve tribes*, the body of the Jewish church, all the Israelites, profess to believe in this promise, both of Christ and heaven, and *hope to come* to the benefits of them. They all hope for a Messiah to come, and we that are Christians, hope in a Messiah already come; so that we all agree to build on the same promise. They look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come, and that is what I look for. Why should I be looked upon as advancing something dangerous and heterodox, or as an apostate from the faith and worship of the Jewish church, when I agree with them in this fundamental article?

Nay, the Jewish church not only hoped to come to this promise, but, in the hope of it, they *instantly served God day and night*. The temple-service, morning and evening, day and night, from the beginning of the year to the end of it, was kept up by the priests and Levites, and the *stationary men*, as they called them, continually attended there to lay their hands on the public sacrifices, as the representatives of all the twelve tribes; this service was kept up in the profession of faith in the promise of eternal life, and, in expectation of it, *Paul instantly serves God day and night*, in the Gospel of his Son; the *twelve tribes* by their representatives do so in the law of Moses, but he and they do it in hope of the same promise. Much more should Christians, who hope in the same Jesus for the same heaven, though differing in the modes and ceremonies of worship, hope the best one of another, and live

together in holy love. Or it may be meant of particular persons who continued in the communion of the Jewish church, and were very devout in their way, serving God with great intensesness, and a close application of mind, and constant in it, *night and day*, as Anna, Luke 2:37.

(4.) This was it he was now suffering for; for preaching that doctrine which they themselves, if they did but understand themselves aright, must own; *I am judged for the hope of the promise made unto the fathers*. He stuck to the promise, against the ceremonial law, while his persecutors stuck to the ceremonial law, against the promise. It is common for men to hate and persecute the power of that religion in others, which yet they pride themselves in the form of.

This was it he would persuade all, that heard him, cordially to embrace, *v. 8. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?* This seems to come in somewhat abruptly; but, probably, Paul said much more than is here recorded, and explained the *promise made to the fathers*, to be the promise of the resurrection and eternal life; and proved that he was in the right way of pursuing his hope of that happiness, because he believed in Christ who was risen from the dead, which was a pledge and earnest of that resurrection which the father's hoped for. Now many of his hearers were Gentiles, most of them perhaps, Festus particularly, and we may suppose, when they heard him speak so much of *Christ's resurrection*, and of the *resurrection from the dead*, which the tribes hoped for, that they *mocked*, as the Athenians did, began to *smile* at it, and whispered to one another what an absurd thing it was; which occasioned Paul thus to reason with them, *What! is it thought incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?* So it may be read. We are not required to believe anything that is *incredible*, that *implies a contradiction*, Zech. 8:6. There are motives of credibility sufficient to carry us through all the doctrines of the Christian religion, and this particularly of the resurrection of the dead. Has not God an infinite, almighty power!

III. He acknowledges, that while he continued a Pharisee, he was a bitter enemy to Christians and Christianity, and thought he ought to be so, and continued so to the moment that Christ wrought that wonderful change in him. This he mentions,

I. To show, that his becoming a Christian and a preacher, was not the product and result of any previous disposition or inclination that way, or any gradual advance of thought in favor of the Christian doctrine; he did not reason himself into Christianity by a chain of arguments, but was brought into the highest degree of an assurance of it, immediately from the highest degree of prejudice against it: by which it appeared, that he was made a Christian and a preacher by a supernatural power; so that his conversion, in such a miraculous way, was not only to himself, but to others, also, a convincing proof of the truth of Christianity.

2. Perhaps he designs it for such an excuse of his persecutors as Christ made for his, when He said, *They know not what they do*. It is possible for those to be confident they are in the right, who yet are evidently in the wrong; and for those to think they are doing their duty, who are wilfully persisting in the greatest sin. There is not a more violent principle in the world, than conscience, misinformed, 1 Tim. 1:13.

Paul filled the jails with Christians, made himself the tool of the chief priests, and was very officious to vote, unasked, for the putting of Christians to death, *ch. 8:1.* and so made himself *partaker of the crime*. He

brought them under punishments of an inferior nature, *in the synagogues*, where they were *scourged*, as transgressors of the rules of the synagogue; he had a hand in the punishing of divers; nay, it should seem, the same persons were by his means *often punished*; as he himself was five times, 2 Cor. 11:24. He not only punished them for their religion, but, taking a pride in triumphing over men's consciences, he forced them to abjure their religion, by putting them to the torture, *compelled them to blaspheme*, and to say Christ was a deceiver. His rage swelled so, that Jerusalem itself was too narrow a stage for it to act upon. He was *mad*, to see how much the Christians had to say for themselves; *mad*, to see them multiply the more for their being afflicted; he was *exceedingly mad*, mad to see, that those in other cities were not so outrageous against the Christians as he was; therefore, he made himself busy there, where he had no business, and persecuted the Christians even in strange cities. There is not a more restless principle than malice, especially [that] which pretends conscience.

This was Paul's character, and this his manner of life in the beginning of his time; therefore he could not be presumed to be a Christian by education or custom, or that he was drawn in by hope of preferment, for all imaginable external objections lay against his being a Christian.

V. 12—23. All who believe a God, and have a reverence for his sovereignty, must acknowledge, that they who speak and act by direction and warrant from Him, are not to be opposed; for that is *fighting against God*. Now Paul here, by a plain and faithful narrative of matters of fact, makes it out to this august assembly, that he had an immediate call from heaven, to preach the Gospel of Christ to the Gentile world, which was the thing that exasperated the Jews against him. He here shows,

I. That he was made a Christian by a *divine power*; notwithstanding all his prejudices against that way, he was brought into it on a sudden by the hand of heaven; not compelled by outward force, but by a divine and spiritual energy, by a revelation of Christ from above, both to *him* and *in him*: and this when in the full career of his sin, going to Damascus, to suppress Christianity by persecuting the Christians there; as hot as ever in the cause, his persecuting fury not in the least spent or tired, nor he tempted to give it up by the failing of his friends, for he had at this time as ample an *authority and commission from the chief priests*, as ever he had, to *persecute* Christianity, when he was obliged by a superior power to give up that, and accept another commission to preach up Christianity.

Paul thought Jesus was buried, and, though stolen out of his own sepulchre, yet laid in some other; all the Jews were taught to say so, and, therefore, he is amazed to hear Him speak from heaven, to see Him surrounded with all this glory, whom he had loaded with all possible ignominy. This convinced him the doctrine of Jesus was divine and heavenly, and not only not to be opposed, but to be cordially embraced; that *Jesus is the Messiah*, for He is not only *risen from the dead*, but He has *received from God the Father honor and glory*; and this is enough to make him a Christian immediately.

II. That he was made a minister by a divine authority; that the same Jesus, that appeared to him in that glorious light, ordered him to go preach the Gospel to the Gentiles; he was not sent by men like himself, but by Him whom the Father sent, John 20:21. What is said of his being an apostle, is here joined immediately to that which was

V. 16—18. It is evident, this commission was given to Paul by our Lord, at the time of his conversion; though not mentioned in the compendious narrative of that event. 9:15, 16.—The words make a part of

the sentence, in which Christ bids him rise from his astonishment, into which his appearance to him, in the way to Damascus, had thrown him. *Doddr.* 'To open their eyes:' though their bodily eyes were open, and



17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee ;

18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God ; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified, by faith that is in me.

19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision :

20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.

22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come :

q c. 22: 21. Ro. 11:13.	2:9.	1:30. Re. 21:27.
r 1s. 35:5. 42:7.	u Lu. 1:77. Ep. 1:7. Col. 1:14.	x Ep. 2:8. He. 11:6.
s Lu. 1:79. Jn. 8:12. 2 Co. 4:6. Ep. 1:18.	v Ep. 1:11. Col. 1:12. 1 Pe. 1:4. w Jn. 17:17.	y c. 9, 10, &c. z Mat. 3:8. a c. 21:30.
t Col. 1:13. 1 Pe. 1:13.	c. 20:32. 1 Co. 1:30.	b Lu. 24:27, 46.

said to him by the way, though it appears by ch. 9 : 15. and 22 : 15, 17, &c. that it was spoken to him afterward ; but he puts the two together for brevity-sake ; *Rise, and stand upon thy feet.* He must stand up, for Christ has work for him to do ; has an errand, a very great errand, to send him on ; *I have appeared to thee to make thee a minister.* Christ has the making of his own ministers, both their qualifications and their commissions are from Him. *Paul thanks Christ Jesus who put him into the ministry,* 1 Tim. 1 : 12. One way or other, *Christ will manifest Himself to all whom He makes his ministers ; for how can they preach Him, who do not know Him? And how can they know Him, to whom He does not, by his Spirit, make Himself known?* Observe,

The office to which Paul is appointed ; that of a minister, to attend on Christ, and act for Him, as a witness ; to give evidence in his cause, and attest the truth of his doctrine ; Christ appeared to him, that he might appear for Christ before men. Christ often appeared to Paul, oftener, it is likely, than is recorded, and still taught him, that he might still teach the people knowledge. Further, he was taken under spiritual protection while thus employed as Christ's witness, v. 17.

Paul has a special commission to go among the Gentiles, and, 1. Two things must be done, which their case calls for : *A world that sits in darkness must be enlightened, and a world that lieth in wickedness,*

must be sanctified and reformed, v. 18. He is sent to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light. It is not enough for them to have their eyes opened, they must have their hearts renewed, must be turned from the power of Satan unto God ; which will follow of course ; for Satan rules by the power of darkness, and God, by the convincing evidence of light. Sinners are under the power of Satan ; idolaters, in a special manner, and all sinners are under the influence of his temptations ; converting grace turns them from under his dominion, and brings them into subjection to God ; to conform to the rules of his Word, and comply with the dictates and directions of his Spirit, translates them out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son. When gracious dispositions are strong in the soul, as corrupt and sinful dispositions had been, it is then turned from the power of Satan unto God.

2. There is a great happiness designed for the Gentiles by this work,—that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified ; they are turned from the darkness of sin to the light of holiness, from the slavery of Satan to the service of God ; not that God may be a gainer by them, but they gainers by Him,—be restored to his favor, which by sin they have forfeited and thrown themselves out of, receive forgiveness of sins, and be delivered from the dominion of sin ; that they may be happy in the [obedience and] fruition of Him ; the forgiveness of sins makes way for this inheritance, by taking that out of the way, which alone hindered. All that shall be saved hereafter, are sanctified now ; those that have the heavenly inheritance, must have it in this way, must be prepared and made meet for it ; none can be happy, that are not holy ; nor shall any be saints in heaven, that are not first saints on earth. We need no more to make us happy, than to have our lot among them that are sanctified ; let us, therefore, now cast in our lot among them, by coming into the communion of saints, and be willing to take our lot with them, and share with them in their afflictions, which, how grievous soever, our lot with them in the inheritance will abundantly make amends for. We are sanctified and saved by faith in Christ ; some refer it to the word next herefore, sanctified by faith, for faith purifies the heart, and applies the promises, and subjects the soul to the influence of that grace, by which we partake of a divine nature ; others refer it to the receiving of both pardon and the inheritance ; it is by faith accepting the grant, it comes all to one ; for it is by faith that we are justified, sanctified, and glorified ; by faith, that faith which is in Me ; it is emphatically expressed ; that faith which not only receives divine revelation in general, but which, in a particular manner, fastens on Jesus Christ, and his mediation ; by which we rely on Christ as the Lord our Righteousness, and resign ourselves to Him, as the Lord our Ruler ; this is that by which we receive the remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and eternal life.

III. That he had discharged his ministry, pursuant to his commission, by divine aid, and under divine direction and protection.

God, who called him to be an apostle, owned him in his apostolical work, and carried him on in it with enlargement and success.

1. God gave him a heart to comply with the call, v. 19.

2. He enabled him to go through a great deal of work, though in it he grappled with a great deal of difficulty, v. 20. He applied himself to the preaching of the Gospel with all vigor, began at Damascus, ch. 9 : 20. came soon to Jerusalem, where he had most furiously set himself against Christ, ch. 9 : 28. preached throughout all the coasts of Judea, as Christ had done, made the first offer of the Gospel to the Jews, as Christ had appointed, and did not leave them till they had wilfully thrust the Gospel from them ; and then, he turned to the Gentiles, and laid out himself for the good of their souls, laboring more abundantly than any of the apostles, nay, perhaps, than all put together.

3. His preaching was all practical ; not notional, or speculative, or doubtfully disputatious, but demonstrative of the truth. He taught, that men must repent of their sins, bethink themselves, so the word properly signifies ; turn to God, not only turn from that which is evil, but turn to that which is good ; they must turn to God, in love and affection, in duty and obedience, and they must do works meet for repentance, as John preached, Mat. 3 : 3. Those that profess repentance, must practice it, in everything carry it as becomes penitents.

4. The Jews had no quarrel with him but on this account, v. 21. He suffered ill, not only for doing well himself, but for doing good to others.

5. He had no help but from heaven, and by that, he went on in this great work, v. 22. It was now above 20 years since Paul was converted, and all that time he had been very busy, preaching the Gospel in the midst of hazards ; and what bore him up ? Not any strength of his own resolutions, but having obtained help of God ; *I have stood, my life has been preserved, and my work continued ; I have stood my ground, and have not been beaten off ; I have stood to what I said, and have not been afraid or ashamed to persist in it.* The work was so great, and he had so much opposition, he could not otherwise have gone on in it, but by help obtained of God. And Paul mentions it as an evidence that he had his commission from God, that from Him he had ability to execute it.

6. He preached no doctrine but what agreed with the scriptures of the O. T. ; he witnessed both to small and great, to all, all being concerned in it ; it was an evidence of the condescending grace of the Gospel, that the poor were welcome to it ; and of the incontestable truth and power of it, that it was neither afraid nor ashamed to show itself to the greatest. The enemies of Paul objected against him, that he preached something more than that men should repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance ; those, indeed, were but what the prophets of the O. T. had preached ; but, besides these, he had preached Christ, and his death, and his resurrection, and that was what they quarrelled with him for, as appears by ch. 25 : 19. that he affirmed Jesus to

their intellectual powers, in secular matters, might be very penetrating ; they had, notwithstanding, been hitherto spiritually blind, through the influence of the devil, and the depravity of their carnal minds ; so that they could see nothing of the glory of God, of his truth and will, or of the way of acceptance and holiness.—The distinction between opening their eyes, and turning them from darkness to light, should be particularly noticed.—To interpret the language of this passage, as if it were exclusively applicable to idolaters, implies an opinion, that nominal Christians are of a better nature than other men ; or that pride, covetousness, and all the other vices, by which men are enslaved to Satan, are not so heinous in professed Christians, as they are in heathens ! Gross idolatry indeed has been, in this part of the world, exchanged for irreligion, infidelity, superstition, formality, and hypocrisy, among nominal Christians ; but the hearts and minds of the unregenerate and unconverted are as much blinded by aversion to spiritual religion, and by the love of the world and of sin, as those of the ancient Gentiles were. Those who call themselves Christians, because they happen to be born

in a Christian country ; but attend neither to the doctrines, nor the duties of the Gospel, seem to differ but little, with respect to the point under consideration, from those to whom the Gospel was first preached ; the process in both must be nearly the same. Bp. Tomline's Refutation of Calvinism.—May it not be added, 'Because they have been baptized with water?'—(18) By faith, &c.] 'This may be referred to sanctified ; . . . but the sentence is much fuller, if we join it with the word receive.' Beza. No doubt we are 'sanctified,' as well as 'justified,' by faith in Christ ; but the words under consideration seem to show, that all the blessings mentioned are received by faith in Christ, and not one of them only.

V. 21. Kill.] 'Kill with their own hands. Beza justly observes, that this is the exact import of the original, which was the more properly used here : as there was reason to apprehend, that Paul would have been actually pulled in pieces, in an assembly, as it seems, less numerous and less violent than that which seized him in the temple.'

DODDR.



23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

24 ¶ And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.

25 But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.

26 For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.

27 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

c 1 Co. 15:23. d 2 K. 9:11. e Ja. 1:23,24.

be alive; 'And so I did,' says Paul, 'and so I do, but therein, also, I say no other than that which Moses and the prophets said should come; and what greater honor can be done to them, than to show, that what they foretold is accomplished, and in the appointed season, too; that what they said should come, is come, and at the time they prefixed?'

Three things they prophesied, and Paul preached. (1.) That Christ (the Messiah) should suffer; be a Sufferer; not only a Man, and capable of suffering, but that, as Messiah, He should be appointed to sufferings; that his ignominious death should be not only consistent with, but pursuant of, his undertaking. The cross of Christ was a stumbling-block to the Jews, and Paul's preaching that, was the great thing that exasperated them; but Paul stands to it, that, in preaching that, he preached the fulfilling of the O. T. predictions, and, therefore, they ought not only not to be offended, but to embrace it. (2.) That He should be the first that should rise from the dead; not in time, but in influence; the Chief of the resurrection, the Head, or principal One, in the same sense that He is called the First begotten from the dead, Rev. 1:5. and the First-born from the dead, Col. 1:18. and the first fruits of them that slept, 1 Cor. 15:20. for He sanctified the harvest, was the first that rose from the dead, to die no more; and to show that the resurrection of all believers is in virtue of his, just when He arose many dead bodies of saints arose, and went into the holy city, Mat. 27:53. (3.) That He should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles; to the Jews first, for He was to be the glory of his people Israel; and then to the Gentiles, by the ministry of his apostles, for He was to be a Light to lighten them who sat in darkness. In this Paul refers to his commission, v. 18. He rose from the dead, on purpose that He might show light to the people, that He might give a convincing proof of the truth of his doctrine,

V. 24—29. Festus had never heard anything before on these subjects; the resurrection of Jesus, and the vision of Paul, appeared to him incredible, or visionary in the highest degree. Probably he was astonished to hear him speak of his doctrine, as of universal concernment; and aver that one, who arose among the despised Jews, was appointed to be 'the Light of the Gentiles,' even of the philosophical Greeks and Romans. He perhaps had observed, that the apostle spent much time in retirement, study, and reading.—To this rude interruption, before so large and splendid an audience, the apostle calmly and gravely replied, addressing the governor, by the customary title.

(24.) 'It has been the opinion of the vulgar, in all ages, that devoted attention to mental or spiritual pursuits, tends to madness. And, in illustration of this, Kypke and Wets. adduce numerous passages from the classical writers.'

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and might send it with so much the greater power, both among Jews and Gentiles. This, also, was foretold by the O. T. prophets, that the Gentiles should be brought to the knowledge of God by the Messiah; and what was there in all this, that the Jews could justly be displeased at?

V. 24—32. We have reason to think Paul had a great deal more to say in defence of the Gospel he preached; but there is no remedy; the court thinks it is time to proceed to give in their judgment on his case, and he must be interrupted.

I. Festus, the Roman governor, is convinced he is no criminal, nor bad man, that should be punished, but he takes him to be a lunatic, a distracted man, that should be pitied, but not heeded; and thus he thinks he has found out an expedient to excuse himself, both from condemning Paul as a prisoner, and from believing him as a preacher; for, if he be not in his senses, he is not to be either condemned or credited.

1. He said it with a loud voice; a whisper to those next him had been more excusable, but (without consulting Agrippa, to whose judgment he had seemed to pay profound deference, ch. 25:26.) he said aloud, that he might oblige Paul to break off, and might divert the auditors, 'Paul, thou art beside thyself:' he puts the most candid construction he can on his delirium; 'Much learning hath made thee mad, thou hast cracked thy brains with studying.' This he speaks, not so much in anger, as in scorn and contempt; what Paul said was above his capacity, all a riddle to him; therefore, he imputes it to a heated imagination. He owns Paul to be a scholar, but even this is turned to his reproach. The apostles who were fishermen, were despised because they had no learning; Paul, who was a university-man, and bred a Pharisee, is despised as having too much learning, more than did him good: the enemies of Christ's ministers will always have something to upbraid them with! He reproaches him as a madman. The prophets of the O. T. were thus stigmatized, to prejudice people against them, by putting them into an ill name, 2 K. 9:11. Hos. 9:7. John Baptist and Christ were represented as having a devil, as being crazed. Probably Paul now spake with more life and earnestness than in the beginning of his discourse, and used some gestures expressive of his zeal, therefore Festus put this invidious character on him, which, perhaps, never a one in the company but himself thought of.

2. How Paul cleared himself; it should seem, it had been said of him by the false apostles, 2 Cor. 5:13. but never charged on him before the Roman governor; therefore he must say something to this. (1.) He denies the charge, with due respect indeed to the governor, but with justice to himself, protesting that there was neither ground nor color for it, v. 25. Observe, Though Festus gave Paul this base and contemptuous usage, yet Paul is so far from resenting it, and being provoked by it, that he gives him all possible respect, compliments him with his proper title of honor, most noble Festus, to teach us not to render railing for railing, nor one invidious character for another, but to speak civilly to those who speak slightly of us. It becomes us, on all occasions, to speak the words of truth and soberness, and

then we may despise the unjust censures of men. (2.) He appeals to Agrippa concerning what he spake, v. 26. He knew those things were not fancies, but matters of fact, knew something of them, and, therefore, would be willing to know more; his own conversion, and commission to preach the Gospel, Agrippa could not but have heard of, having been so long conversant among the Jews; all the country rang of it; and any of the Jews present might have witnessed for him, that they had heard it many a time from others, and therefore it was unreasonable to censure him as a distracted man for relating it, much more for speaking of the death and resurrection of Christ, which was so universally spoken of. Peter tells Cornelius and his friends, ch. 10:37. That word you know, which was published throughout all Judea concerning Christ; and, therefore, Agrippa could not be ignorant of it, and it was a shame for Festus that he was so.

II. Agrippa, so far from thinking him a madman, thinks he never heard a man argue more strongly, nor talk more to the purpose.

1. Paul applies himself closely to Agrippa's conscience: and because he had mentioned Moses and the prophets, as confirming the Gospel he preached, he refers Agrippa to them, v. 27. Dost thou receive the scriptures of the O. T. as a divine revelation, and admit them as foretelling good things to come? He does not stay for an answer, but, in compliment to Agrippa, takes it for granted; I know that thou believest; for every one knew that Agrippa professed the Jews' religion, as his fathers had done, and therefore both knew the writings of the prophets, and gave credit to them.

2. Agrippa owns there was a great deal of reason in what Paul said, v. 28. Some understand this as spoken ironically, and read it thus, Wouldest thou in so little a time persuade me to be a Christian? But taking it so, it is an acknowledgment that Paul spake very much to the purpose, and that to his mind there came a convincing power in what he said. Others take it as spoken seriously, and as a confession that he was, within a little, convinced that Christ was the Messiah; for he could not but own, and had many a time thought so within himself, that the prophecies of the O. T. had had their accomplishment in Him; and now that it is urged thus solemnly on him, he is ready to yield to the conviction, and is as near persuaded to believe in Christ, as Felix, when he trembled, was to leave his sins; he sees a great deal of reason for Christianity, so that if it were not for his obligations to the ceremonial law, his respect to the religion of his fathers and of his country, or his regard to his dignity as a king, and to his secular interests, [&c. &c.] he would turn Christian immediately. Many are almost persuaded to be religious, who are not quite persuaded; they are under strong convictions of their duty, and of the excellency of the ways of God, but yet are overruled by some external inducements, and do not pursue their convictions.

3. Paul; not being allowed time to pursue his argument, concludes with a compliment, or rather a pious wish, that all his hearers were Christians, and this wish turned into prayer, I pray to God for it, v. 29. it was his heart's desire and prayer to God for them

(27.) 'This passage may be thought, in every quality of fine writing, equal to anything to be found in Demosthenes, or any of the ancient orators.'

BLOOMF.

(28.) Almost thou persuadest.] 'To interpret this as an irony, is supposing Agrippa very unseasonably and absurdly ludicrous. . . and it plainly appears from Paul's answer, and from the sense in which he there uses almost, in opposition to altogether, that he took him to mean seriously that he was almost persuaded, and consequently that he did indeed mean so.' Doddr.—'Paul was proceeding to prove, that the prophets had pointed out Jesus as the promised Messiah, when Agrippa interrupted him by the words, "Almost," &c. accompanied (as I suspect) with a motion to take his departure.' Pearce. Bloomf., who thinks the 'almost,' &c. was 'pronounced in that sort of complimentary, nonchalant insincerity, into which would be apt to run, good-

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29 And Paul said, I would f to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

30 ¶ And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them.

31 And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.

32 Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cesar.

#### CHAP. XXVII.

1 Paul, shipping toward Rome, 10 foretelleth of the danger of the voyage, 11 but is not believed. 14 They are tossed to and fro with tempest, 41 and suffer shipwreck, 22, 34, 44 yet all come safe to land.

AND when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered a Paul, and certain other prisoners, unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.

f 1 Co. 7:7.

a c. 23:12, 25.

all, that they might be saved, Rom. 10:1. Hereby, He professes his resolution to cleave to his religion, as that which he was entirely satisfied in, and determined to live and die by. He intimates his satisfaction, not only in the truth, but in the benefit and advantage of Christianity; he could not wish better to the best friend he had in the world, than to wish him such an one as he was, a faithful, zealous disciple of Jesus Christ; and it was his trouble and concern, that Agrippa went no further than being almost a Christian, and not altogether one; for he wishes that he and the rest of them might be not only almost, (what good would that do?) but altogether such as he was, sincere, thorough-paced Christians: it was their concern, and would be the unspeakable happiness of every one of them, to become true Christians; that there is grace enough in Christ for all, he they ever so many; enough for each, he they ever so craving. He intimates the

PRACT. OBS. When Christian love abounds in the heart, it dictates a sincere language, far surpassing all compliment and worldly politeness; and teaches us to 'render honor to whom honor is due,' without flattery or fear of man.—A moral conduct, and a form of godliness, are often connected with a bigoted aversion to the Gospel; and this leads to many other heinous crimes; yet it is a mercy to be preserved, during our unconverted years, from those vices, which might afterwards disgrace our characters among worldly people, and so prevent the influence of our testimony; and this is greatly corroborated, when they, who 'knew our manner of life from our youth,' could testify, that we then acted consistently with our principles, and according to what we thought right; for they may thence infer, that our change of sentiment and conduct also originated from a regard to duty.—Those who have been most strict in their conduct, previous to conversion, will afterwards see abundant cause for deep humiliation, even on account of things, which at the time they 'verily thought they ought to do;' their contemptuous or injurious treatment of the saints, their opposition to the Gospel, and endeavors to seduce, reason, or terrify others into a neglect of it, will often sit very heavily on their minds; and they will condemn those words, as impious and blasphemous, which they once uttered, or excited others to utter, without remorse; and allow that conduct to be madness, in which they once gloried.—For calling on men to 'repent and be converted;' and for 'witnessing none other things,' than what are evidently contained in the Holy Scriptures; what numbers have been execrated, persecuted, and slain, even by the professed worshippers of God!—The persons whom God employs to protect his servants, often despise them as visionaries or madmen, for being so zealous about invisible objects, for believing subjects so mysterious, crediting facts of so

natured, easy characters, as was Agrippa; whom *Jos.* calls luxurious, somewhat free-thinking, little attentive to religion, yet good-humored, and by no means tyrannical. 'The grave energy, and dignified pathos of the whole sentence, [Paul's reply,] is inexpressible.' Ep.

(29.) Prisoners (see *Act.* and *Suet.*) were brought forward for trial in chains; and Paul, doubtless, [with powerful effect,] held his chains up, as he spoke. Being in *militari custodia*, Paul was yet chained, by his right hand, to the left hand of the soldier that guarded him. See *Bl.* In.

V. 30—32. It does not appear, that either Agrippa or Festus, or any of those present, inquired further after Christ and his salvation; and this [154]

heartly good-will he bore to them all; he wishes them as well as he wished his own soul, nay, better, than he was now as to his outward condition, for he *excepts these bonds*; be comforted Christians, as he, but not persecuted Christians, as he; they made light of his imprisonment, and were in no concern for him; Felix continued him in bonds to gratify the Jews; now this would have tempted many a one to wish them all in his bonds; but so far from this, when he wished them in bonds to Christ, he desired they might never be in bonds for Christ. Nothing could be said more [strikingly,] tenderly, nor with a better grace.

III. They all agree Paul was wronged.

1. The court broke up with some precipitation, v. 30. When he had spoken that obliging word, v. 29. afraid, if he were permitted to go on, he would say something yet more moving, which might work on some of them to appear more in his favor than was convenient, and perhaps might prevail with them to turn Christians; the king himself durst not trust himself to hear more, but, like Felix, dismissed Paul for this time. They ought in justice to have asked the prisoner, whether he had any more to say for himself.

2. They all concurred in an opinion of Paul's innocency, v. 31. and withdrew, to consult and know one another's minds; and they agree, he is not a criminal that deserves to die; nay he doeth nothing worthy of bonds; he is not a dangerous man, whom it is prudence to confine. After this, Nero made it death to profess the Christian religion, but as yet there was no law of that kind among the Romans; and this judgment of their's is a testimony against that wicked law, that Paul, the most active, zealous Christian that ever was, was adjudged, even by those that were no friends to his way, to have done nothing worthy of death, or of bonds. Thus was he made manifest in the consciences of those who yet would not receive his doctrine; and the clamors of the hot-headed Jews, who cried out, *Away with him, it is not fit he should live*, were silenced by the moderate counsels of this court.

3. Agrippa gave his judgment, that he might have been set at liberty, if he had not himself appealed to Cesar, v. 32. Some think, that, by the Roman law, this was true, that, when a prisoner had appealed to the supreme court, the inferior courts could no more dis-

charge him than they could condemn him; and we suppose the law was so, if the prosecutors joined issue on the appeal, and consented to it. But it does not appear that in Paul's case they did so; he was forced to do it, to screen himself from their fury, when he saw the governor did not take the care he ought for his protection. Therefore others think, that Agrippa and Festus, being unwilling to disoblige the Jews by setting him at liberty, made this serve as an excuse for continuing him in custody, when they themselves knew they might have justified the discharging of him. Agrippa, who was but almost persuaded to be a Christian, proves no better than if he had not been at all persuaded.

Whether Paul repented having appealed to Cesar, as a rash thing, now he saw it hindered his discharge, I cannot tell. He had reason, perhaps, to regret it, and to charge himself with imprudence and impatience in it, and some distrust of the divine protection. He had better have appealed to God than to Cesar. It confirms what Solomon says, *Eccel.* 6:12. What we think is for our welfare often proves to be a trap; such short-sighted creatures are we, and so ill-advised, in leaning, as we do, to our own understanding. Or, notwithstanding this, he may have been satisfied in what he had done; his appealing to Cesar was lawful, and what became a Roman citizen, and would help to make his cause considerable; and forasmuch as, when he did it, it appeared to him, as the case then stood, to be for the best, though afterwards it appeared otherwise, he did not vex himself with any self-reproach in the matter, but believed there was a providence in it, and it would issue well at last. And besides, he was told in a vision, that he must bear witness to Christ at Rome, *ch.* 23:11. And it is all one to him, whether he goes thither a prisoner or at his liberty; he knows the counsel of the Lord shall stand, and says, *Let it stand. The will of the Lord be done!*

CHAP. XXVII. This whole ch. is taken up with an account of Paul's voyage toward Rome, when he was sent thither a prisoner by Festus the governor, on his appeal to Cesar.

V. 1—11. It does not appear how long after Paul's conference with Agrippa he was sent away. But,

1. Paul was shipped off for Italy; a long

extraordinary a nature; and relating their experience of the way in which the Lord brought them to trust in his grace, and embrace his Gospel; and for attesting that the same faith and diligence, and an experience in many respects similar, are indispensably necessary to all men, both small and great, in order to their salvation. Indeed few ascribe the madness of modern teachers to deep study, or much learning; but they rather impute it to weakness of intellect, or contemptible ignorance; whatever evidences they give of good sense, enlarged minds, and extensive knowledge in other subjects. We should cautiously avoid all real enthusiasm, and whatever is ambiguous, or incapable of being supported by appropriate evidence, whilst we deny, and attempt to refute, the charge of being visionaries and fanatics.—It is highly important for us to lead men's attention, by clear instructions, conclusive arguments, and well authenticated facts, to the sacred oracles, as the standard of truth; and while we inquire, whether our hearers do indeed believe the Scriptures, we should, as much as may be, take it for granted, that they do; for many assent to the truth of the Bible, and pay a respect to the testimonies from it, who have not yet understood or received the doctrines of salvation there revealed. . . . In doing this, the language of fervent, disinterested affection is peculiarly becoming; and we should sincerely desire and pray, that others may participate all our hopes and comforts; and be exempted from our crosses and trials. Yet even this beautiful philanthropy, when expressed in the most graceful and conciliatory language, will fail to recommend the holy Gospel to the carnal hearts of worldly men. Alas! how many such persons have been almost persuaded to be Christians, who, nevertheless, at last perished in their sins! God grant that none who read these observations may be found in that unhappy number! SCOTT.

most admirable speech of the apostle seems to have been peculiarly unsuccessful, as to the event of it at that time. SCOTT.

(32.) 'The great civilian and commentator, *Grotius*, tells us, that by such an appeal [as is here] the power of the Judge, from whom it was made, had ceased, whether for acquittal or condemnation; the cognizance of the whole business thenceforward resting solely with the superior.' BROOKS.

NOTES. CHAP. XXVII. V. 1, 2. As this centurion belonged to the emperor's own cohort, or regiment, it is probable that he was going to Rome on other business. Adramyttium was a city of Mysia, on the



2 And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; one<sup>b</sup> Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us.

3 And the next day we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself.

4 And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary.

5 And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lyeia.

6 And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein.

7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under<sup>d</sup> Crete, over against Salmone;

8 And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The Fair Havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.

9 Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the<sup>e</sup> fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,

10 And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive<sup>f</sup> that this voyage will be with<sup>g</sup> hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.

b c. 19:20. on the 10th day Da. 2:20. Am.  
c. c. 24:23. 28:16. of the 7th month. 37.  
d or, Canitia. Le. 23:27, 29. g or, injury.  
e The Fast was f 2 K. 6:9, 10.

voyage, but there is no remedy. He appealed to Cesar, and to Cesar he must go. It was determined, determined by the counsel of God, before it was by that of Festus, that we should sail into Italy, for to Rome they must go by sea; by land would have been a vast way about. Hence when the Roman conquest of the Jewish nation is foretold, it is said, Num. 24: 24. *Ships shall come from Shittim, i. e. Italy, and shall afflict Eber, i. e. the Hebrews.* Now here we are told,

1. He was committed to the custody of one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band; as Cornelius was of the Italian band, or legion, ch. 10: 1. He had soldiers under him, who were a guard on Paul, both for security and protection.

2. He embarked in a ship of Adramyt-

tium, v. 2. a [famous] sea-port of Africa, whence this ship brought African goods, on a coasting voyage for Syria.

3. His company; some prisoners committed to the custody of the same centurion, who, probably, had appealed to Cesar too, or were on some other account removed to Rome, to be tried there, or examined as witnesses against some prisoners there; perhaps some notorious offenders, like Barabbas, who were therefore ordered to be brought before the emperor himself. It is no new thing for the innocent to be numbered among the transgressors. But he had also some of his friends with him, Luke, particularly, the penman of this book, for he puts himself in all along, (*We sailed, We launched, v. 2.*) also Aristarchus a Thessalonian; Lightfoot thinks, Trophimus the Ephesian went off with him, but that he left him sick at Mile-tum, 2 Tim. 4: 20. when he passed by those coasts of Asia, mentioned here, v. 2. and that there likewise he left Timothy. It was a comfort to Paul to have some of his friends in this tedious voyage, when he had so much loose, profane company about him. Those that go long voyages at sea, are commonly necessitated to sojourn, as it were, in Mesech and Kedar, and have need of wisdom, that they may do good to the bad company they are in, making them better, or at least be made never the worse by them.

II. The course they steered, and the places they touched at, are particularly recorded, to confirm the truth of the history to those who lived at that time, and could by their own knowledge tell of their being at such and such a place.

1. They touched at Sidon, whither they came the next day. And (what is observable) there Julius, the centurion, was extraordinarily civil to Paul; probably he was one of the chief captains or principal men, that heard him plead his own cause before Agrippa, ch. 25: 23. and was convinced of his innocency, and therefore treated him as a friend, as a scholar, as a gentleman, and as a man that had an interest in heaven; he gave him liberty, while the business of the ship stayed at Sidon, to go among his friends there, to refresh himself; and it would be a great refreshment to him. Julius herein gives an example to those in power, to be respectful to those whom they find worthy of their respect. God herein encourages those that suffer for Him, to trust in Him; for He can put it into the hearts of those to befriend them, from whom they least expect it; can make them to be pitied, nay, prized and valued, even in the eyes of those that carry them captive, Ps. 106: 46. And it is likewise an instance of Paul's fidelity; being out on his parole of honor, he faithfully returns to his imprisonment; if the centurion be so civil as to take his word, he is so just and honest as to keep his word.

2. They thence sailed under Cyprus, v. 4.

If the wind had been fair, they had gone forward by direct sailing, and had left Cyprus on the right hand; but, the wind not favoring, they were driven to oblique sailing with a side wind, and so compassed the island, in a manner, and left it on the left hand. Sailors must do as they can, when they cannot do as they would, and make the best of their wind, whatever point it is in; so must we all, in our passage over the ocean of this world. When the winds are contrary, yet we must be getting forward as well as we can.

3. At a port of Myra, they changed their ship; that they were in, probably, having business no further, v. 5, 6. Alexandria was now the chief city of Egypt, and great trading there was between that city and Italy; from Alexandria they carried corn to Rome; and the East India and Persian goods imported at the Red Sea, they exported again to all parts of the Mediterranean, and especially to Italy. And it was a particular favor showed to the Alexandrian ships, in the ports of Italy, that they were not obliged to strike sail, as other ships were, when they came into port.

4. With much ado they made the Fair havens, a port of the island of Crete, v. 7, 8. They sailed slowly many days, being becalmed, or having the wind against them. It was a great while before they made the point of Cnidus, a port of Caria, and were forced to sail under Crete, as before under Cyprus; much difficulty they met with in passing by Salmone, a promontory on the eastern shore of Crete. Observe, The place they came to was called the Fair havens. Travellers say, it is known to this day by the same name, and answers the name from the pleasantness of its situation and prospect; yet it was not commodious to winter in, v. 12. It had a fine prospect, but lay exposed to the weather.

III. Paul's advice with reference to that part of the voyage they had before them; to be content to winter where they were.

1. It was now a bad time for sailing; they had lost a deal of time, struggling with contrary winds. Sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was already past; i. e. the yearly fast of the Jews, the day of atonement, the 10th of the 7th month, about the 20th of Sept. That yearly fast was very religiously observed; but (which is strange) we never have any mention made in all the scripture-history of its observance, unless it be meant here, where it serves only to describe the season of the year.

2. Paul put them in mind of it, and gave them notice of their danger, v. 10. but they would not be advised by Paul in this matter, v. 11. They thought him impertinent, though the centurion, to whom it was referred, was himself a passenger, and had not been oftener at sea, perhaps, than Paul, nor was better acquainted with these seas; for Paul had planted the Gospel in Crete, Tit. 1: 5. and

coast of Asia; this ship, therefore, if only returning thither, could convey the company but a small part of their long voyage. Scorr.

(1.) Augustus.] *Sebastēs*: from the time of Augustus Octavianus, legions took the name *Augustan*. Thus Claudian mentions a *Legio Augusta*. Hence many think, that as in all the other legions, so in the five cohorts stationed at Cesarea, there was one cohort called the *Augustan*: or that the cohort of this v. was a legionary cohort of an *Augustan legion*, stationed in Syria and Judea. Schwartz, however, thinks the cohort obtained its name from Sebaste, capital of Samaria. Keir.

(2.) Adramyttium.] 'A city of Mysia not far from Pergamos.' Doddr. Ros. refers to Jer. as supposing it the most celebrated maritime city of Africa (as Henry above): and says, the vessel seems to have been 'an African merchantman carrying goods from Syria to Lycia.' Eo.

V. 3. To refresh himself.] 'Lit. to receive their (kind) attentions. The word generally refers to care and watchful attention to the wants of a sick person: as Paul at the commencement of his voyage would probably be. Keir. observes, he was attended by the soldier in these visits.' Bl. Touched at Sidon.] Doddr. observes, here, that Paul had not been able to visit his friends at Sidon, in his way to Jerusalem. Id.

V. 5. Myra.] 'Though 20 stadia from the sea, it had a port (whence they generally crossed to Cyprus) called *Andriace*, defended (so App.) by a chain. Mela and Hierocles mention Myra as the metropolis of Lycia.' Bloomf.

V. 6. Ship of Alexandria.] Scott thinks her cargo was corn; and Egypt supplied immense quantities to Rome. Ros. says, the vessels from Alexandria [which sometimes went in fleets to Dicæarchia, and

sometimes singly] were wont to sail direct from there to Italy, but that on occasion of bad weather, and unfavorable winds, they sometimes passed by Syria and Cilicia, and Pamphylia, through the Grecian sea. Lucian mentions an Egyptian corn-vessel 120 cubits long, 30 broad, 29 deep; and Plut. one 180 by 50. But *Walch, &c.*, with *Bl.*, think the vessel made a coasting traffic with India goods. See *Bl.* Ed.

V. 8. Hardly passing it.] 'Scarcely coasting it;' i. e. with danger, as well as difficulty. 1 Pet. 4: 17—19, v. 18. Scorr.

V. 9. Sailing was thought dangerous.] In that imperfect state of navigation, the mariners commonly kept within a moderate distance from the shore, and seldom put to sea during the winter season.—Some commentators suppose, that the Michaelmas-flows, which are peculiar to the Mediterranean sea, are referred to: but, I apprehend, that at present the Mediterranean is navigated at Michaelmas, and in winter, as well as other seas. Sc. Not unless it is absolutely necessary. Ed.

V. 10. The apostle doubtless had an intimation from God of the approaching storm: though the particular event of it was not as yet made known to him. 20—26.—The centurion, and all on board the ship, must have had some general knowledge of Paul's character and principles; and the religious converse and worship of him and his friends, as well as their whole behavior, must have excited attention: yet they probably regarded them as deluded men; entitled indeed to civil usage, being very inoffensive and well meaning, yet not worthy of notice as to their religious opinions. But it was the Lord's purpose to exhibit Paul among them, as a most extraordinary person; that they might learn to inquire after his principles, and receive his instructions. Sc.



11 Nevertheless, the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

12 ¶ And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the southwest and northwest.

13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete.

14 But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.

15 And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive.

16 And running under a certain island which is called Clauda, we had much work to come by the boat;

17 Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven.

18 And being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship;

19 And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.

20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

21 ¶ But after long abstinence, Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

h Pr. 27:12  
i ver. 7.  
j ver. 21.  
k or, beat.

l Ps. 107:25.  
m ver. 41.  
n Ps. 107:27.

p Ps. 105:28.  
q Eze. 37:11.  
r ver. 10.  
s ver. 13.

knew the several parts of the island, well enough. But the centurion would not be governed. Many will show respect to good ministers, that will not take their advice, Ez. 33:31.

V. 12—20. In these verses, we have,

I. The ship putting to sea again, and pursuing her voyage at first with a promising gale. Yet they aimed not to go far, but only to another port of the same island, here

called Phenice, some think, because the Phenicians frequented it much, the merchants of Tyre and Sidon. It is here described to lie toward the S. W. and N. W.; i. e. the haven was between two promontories or jutting out of land into the sea, one of which pointed to the N. W. and the other to the S. W. by which it was guarded against the E. winds. Thus hath the Creator provided for the relief and safety of them who go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters. In vain were there waters to sail on, if there were not likewise natural harbors to take shelter in.

II. The ship in a storm presently, a dreadful storm. Observe,

1. What their danger and distress was, (1.) A tempestuous wind, not only contrary to them, so that they could not get forward, but violent, like that sent forth in pursuit of Jonah; though Paul was not, as Jonah, running away from God and his duty; the sailors called it Euroclydon, a N. E. wind, on those seas perhaps particularly dangerous; a sort of a whirlwind, for the ship is said to be caught by it, v. 15. God commanded this wind to rise, designing to bring glory to Himself, and reputation to Paul, out of it; stormy winds, being brought out of his treasures, Ps. 135:7. fulfil his word, Ps. 148:8. (2.) The ship was exceedingly tossed, v. 18. kicked like a football from wave to wave, elegantly described, Ps. 107:26, 27. and could not possibly bear up into the wind, i. e. make her way in opposition to the wind; therefore they folded up their sails, and so let the ship drive, whither it was impelled by the impetuous waves. (3.) They saw neither sun nor stars for many days; this made the tempest the more terrible; and the use of the loadstone, for the directing of sailors, not being then found out, made the case the more hazardous. Thus melancholy sometimes is the condition of the people of God on a spiritual account; they walk in darkness, and have no light: yet light is sown for them. (4.) They had abundance of winter weather; no small tempest, cold, rain, and snow, and all the rigors of that season of the year; so that they were ready to perish for cold, and all this many days: yet to get gain there are still those who make nothing of all this; and it is an instance of the wisdom of Divine Providence, that some, notwithstanding the difficulties that attend it, keep up commerce among the nations, and the isles of the Gentiles particularly; and Zebulun can as heartily rejoice in his going out, as Issachar in his tents. Perhaps Christ therefore chose ministers from among sea-faring men, because they had been used to endure hardness.

2. What means they used for their own relief; all the poor shifts (for I can call them no better) that sailors in distress have recourse to. (1.) When they let the ship run adrift, finding it to no purpose to ply either the oar or the sail, they nevertheless did what they could to avoid the present danger, and took care to prevent shipwreck, on a little island, Clauda, v. 16. (2.) When

they were afraid they should scarcely save the ship, they were busy to save the boat, which they did with much ado. They had much work to come by the boat, v. 16. but at last they took it up, v. 17. That might be of use in any exigence, and therefore they made hard shift to get it into the ship to them; [for then as now in the E. they towed their boat astern.] (3.) They used means, which were proper enough in those times, when the art of navigation was far short of the perfection it is now come to; \* they undergirded the ship, v. 17. i. e. bound it under the bottom with strong cables, to keep it from bulging in the extremity of the tempest. (4.) For fear of falling into the quicksands, they struck sail, and then let the ship go as it would. It is strange, how a ship will live at sea (so they express it) even in very stormy weather, if it have but sea-room; and when the sailors cannot make the shore, it is their interest to keep as far off it as they can. (5.) The next day, they lightened the ship of its cargo, threw the goods and merchandises overboard, (as Jonah, ch. 1:5.) being willing rather to be poor without them, than to perish with them. Any man will rather make shipwreck of his goods than of his life; but many will rather make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience than of their goods. (6.) The third day they cast out the tacklings of the ship; the utensils of it, armamenta, [the artillery,] (so some,) as if it were a ship of force; but I question whether it were not then a vulgar error among seamen thus to throw everything into the sea, even that which would be of great use in a storm, and no great weight.

3. The despair they were at last brought to, v. 20. The storm continued, and the means they had used were ineffectual, so that such was the consternation this melancholy prospect put them into, that they had no heart either to eat or drink. They had provision enough on board, v. 38. but such bondage were they under, through fear of death, that they could not admit the supports of life. Why did not Paul, by the power of Christ, and in his name, lay this storm? Why did he not say to the winds and waves, Peace, be still, as his Master had done? Surely it was because the apostles wrought miracles for the confirmation of their doctrine, not for the serving of a turn for themselves or their friends.

V. 21—44. We have here the issue of the distress of Paul and his fellow-travellers; they escaped with their lives; and that was all; and that was for Paul's sake. Their number is here told, v. 37 to make us the more concerned for them in reading the story, that they were such a considerable number, whose lives were now in the utmost jeopardy, and one Paul among them, worth more than all the rest. We left them in despair, giving up themselves for gone. Now here we have,

\* Though Anson (Voyages) speaks of some Spanish men-of-war's resorting to this practice of undergirding. The ropes are passed across the deck and round under the keel. Ed.

(10.) Sirs.] 'The common phraseology of the 15th cent. Paul speaks as a person of experience, 2 Cor. 11:25. [and sense.] B1.

V. 11. Master..owner.] Kubernētēs.. nauklēros: besides these the Gr. classics mention the *emporos* and the *proreus* as officers. They seem to have answered to the captain (or mate, or boatswain) who governed the sailors; the pilot, or sailing-master, who, at the side or prow, governed the sails, and directed the course, by the headlands, &c.; the steersman or helmsman; and the owner or supercargo. Of the last there seem sometimes to have been several, who made the voyage 'on shares, and consulted in common;' and when there was but one, he seems to have had great influence in directing the ship's manœuvres, as well as what ports she should touch at, &c. But every vessel had not all these officers. See note, Ez. 27:5,7. Ed.

V. 13. Loosing.] 'Lit. raising; i. e. anchors, masts, yards, or sails; for the word is applied to each.' BLOOMF.

V. 14, 15. This tempest came from the east, as its name imports: yet it violently and frequently shifted its direction, and thus excited so tremendous an agitation of the waves, that the ship could not in any way be managed, during the storm. SCOTT.

(14.) A tempestuous wind, &c.] 'One of the furious winds, now called Levanters, which are not confined to one single point, but blow in all directions from N. E. to S. E.' DODDR., after Dr. Shaw. Ed.

V. 16. Clauda.] Tho islet is now called Gozzo. See Bl. Ed. Boat.] Skaphēs, skiff. As has been remarked, the orientals still tow the ship's boat behind, and do not hoist it up and fix it against the stern: so it would be very likely to be lost in a storm, by the parting of the rope which attached it to the vessel, or being itself stove by the waves, or against the vessel. We may here remark, also, that the custom of having two or more anchors astern as well as on the bows, is still kept up in the E. Note, v. 29. These facts may silence several ignorant scoffs which have been ventured on this ch. Ed.

V. 17. Quicksands.] Surtin. Supposed to have been the greater and less Syrtes, [shifting sand-banks,] towards the coast of Africa, which were extremely formidable to ancient navigators. SCOTT. [The less was about 100 stadia in circumference [Strabo]; the greater 5000, so Eratosthenes, others say 4000. See Wetst.] Id.

(17.) Strake sail.] Rather, they unstepped and lowered the masts, with sails, rigging, yards and all; for thus the ancients constructed their ships. See Bl. Id.

V. 18. 'They first cast out the merchandise, next the tacklings, or utensils of the ship, and last, their provisions, v. 38.' Ros.

V. 21. Gained, &c.] Lit. should have been as much better off as we are now worse off for (i. e. should have saved ourselves, avoided) this harm, &c. See Bl. Ed.



22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of *any man's* life among you, but of the ship.

23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

25 Wherefore, Sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

26 Howbeit, we must be cast upon a certain island.

27 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country:

28 And sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms.

29 Then fearing lest they should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

1. The encouragement Paul gave them, by assuring them, in the name of God, that their lives should all be saved, then when, in human appearance, all hope that they should be saved was taken away. *After long abstinence*, as if they were resolved not to eat, till they knew whether they should live or die, *Paul stood forth in the midst of them*. During distress hitherto Paul hid himself among them, was one of the crowd, helped with the rest to *throw out the tackling*, v. 19. but now he distinguished himself, and, though a prisoner, undertook to be their counsellor and comforter.

1. He reproves them for not taking his advice, which was to stay where they were, in the road of Lasea, v. 8. They did not *hearken to Paul*, when he warned them of their danger, and yet, if they will but acknowledge their folly, and repent of it, he will speak comfort and relief now; so compassionate is God to those that are in misery, though they bring themselves into it by their own incontinency, nay, by their own wilfulness, and contempt of admonition. Most people bring themselves into inconvenience, because they do not know when they are well off, but gain harm and loss by aiming, against advice, to mend themselves.

2. Paul quickens them to bestir themselves yet in working for their own safety, by telling them, if they would resume their vigor, they should secure their lives. He gives them this assurance when they were brought to the last extremity, for now it would be doubly welcome to them to be told that not a life should be lost, when they were ready to conclude they must inevitably be all lost. Yet they must count on the loss of the ship, which would be trying to those who were interested in that and the goods, probably, those *greater part* that were for pushing forward the voyage.

3. He tells them *what ground he had* for this assurance; it is not a banter on them, to put them into humor, nor a human conjecture, but he has a divine revelation for it, and is as confident of it as that God is true, being fully satisfied that he has his word for it, vs. 23—25. The God from whom he had it is, *He whose I am, and whom I serve*. He looks upon God as his *rightful Owner*, and *sovereign Ruler and Master*, who, having given him being, *whose I am*, has right to give him law; *whom I serve*. It is Christ Paul here has an eye to; He is God, and the angels are his, and go on his errands; Paul often calls himself a *servant of Jesus Christ*. Now this he tells the company, that, seeing their relief coming from his God, they might thereby be drawn in to take Him for their God, and to serve Him likewise; for the same reason Jonah said to his mariners, *I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who has made the sea and the dry land*, Jonah 1:9.

Paul knows not where he is himself, yet God's angel knows where to find him out. The ship is tossed with winds and waves, hurried to and fro with the utmost violence, yet the angel finds a way into it. No storms or tempests can hinder the communications of God's favor to his people, for He is a very present Help, a Help at hand, even when the sea roars, and is troubled, Ps. 46:1, 3. We may suppose Paul, being a prisoner, had not a cabin of his own, much less a bed in the captain's cabin, but was put down into the hold; yet there the angel of God stood by him, v. 23. Meanness and poverty set none at a distance from God and his favor. Jacob, when he has no pillow but a stone, no curtains but the clouds, yet has a vision of angels. God chooses rather, by preserving them all for his sake, to show what great blessings good men are to the world, than, by delivering him only, to show how good men are distinguished from the world. *God has given thee all them that sail with thee*, i. e. spares them, in answer to thy prayers, or for thy sake. Sometimes good men deliver *neither sons nor daughters, but their own souls only*, Ez. 14:18. But God often spares wicked people for the sake of the godly; as Zoar for Lot's sake, and as Sodom might have been, had there been *ten righteous persons* in it. There is no greater satisfaction to a good man, than to know that he is a public blessing. Paul comforts them with the same comfort wherewith he himself was comforted, v. 25. and gives them a sign, telling them particularly what this

tempestuous voyage would issue in, v. 26. When the church of God, like this ship, is *tossed with tempests, and not comforted*; when *there is none to guide her of all her sons*; yet God can bring her safe to shore, and will do it.

II. At length they anchor on an unknown shore, v. 27—29. 1. They had been a full fortnight in the storm, continually expecting death, *driven up and down in Adria*, not in the Adriatic Gulf, on which Venice stands, but in the Adriatic sea, a part of the Mediterranean, containing both the Sicilian and Ionian seas, and extending to the African shore; in this sea they were tossed, and knew not whereabouts they were. 2. *About midnight the mariners, apprehending they drew near to some shore, sounded*; by the first experiment they found they drew 20 fathom deep of water, and by the next 15 fathom; which was a demonstration that they were near some shore; God has wisely ordered such a natural notice to sailors in the dark, that they may be cautious. 3. They took the hint, and fearing rocks near the shore, *cast anchor, and wished for the day*. When those that fear God, *walk in darkness, and have no light*, yet let them not say, *The Lord has forsaken us, or, Our God has forgotten us*; but let them do as these mariners did, *cast anchor, and wish for the day, and be assured that the day will dawn. Hope is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil*.

III. A new danger is added to their distress, which they narrowly escaped. Observe,

1. The treacherous design of the shipmen, to leave the sinking ship, v. 30. concluding no other than that when it run ashore it must be broken all to pieces; having the command of the boat, the base project was to get into that, and so save themselves, and leave all the rest to perish. To cover this vile design, they pretended they would *cast anchors out of the fore-ship*, or carry them further off, and in order to that they let down the boat, which they had taken in, v. 16, 17. and were going into it, having agreed among themselves, when they were in, to make straight for the shore. The treacherous seamen are like the treacherous shepherd, who flees when he sees the danger coming, and there is most need of his help, John 10:12. Paul had, in God's name, assured them they should come safe to land, but they will rather trust their own refuge of lies than God's word of truth.

2. Paul's discovery of it, and protestation against it, v. 31. It was indeed not by any skill of their's that they were brought to land, but now that they are near land, they must use their art to bring the ship to it. When God has done that for us which we could not, we must then in his strength help ourselves. Paul, therefore, speaks humanly, when he says, *Ye cannot be saved except these abide in the ship*; and he does not at all weaken the assurances he had divinely given, that they should infallibly be saved. God, who appointed the end, that they should be

V. 23. *Stood by me the angel, &c.*] Eich. in Ros. thinks, Paul dreamed that he and his companions were arrived ashore, and that providentially this dream came to pass, as other dreams sometimes come to pass. Dreams of this kind, i. e. that seem to come to pass, he says, the Jews believed were had by the aid of angels. At the same time, he refers to Storr, as having labored to prove, that this vision of the night was not a natural, but a divine impression, in which Paul could not possibly be deceived. As the human understanding cannot now comprehend the mode and constitution of being in the invisible world, why not confess our ignorance of the manner how, and content ourselves with simply believing the assertions of the text?

V. 27. *Deemed, &c.*] Lit. 'fancying some land drew near them': it is spoken by a figure (hypallage) which describes things not as they are, but as they appear. So we say *the sun rises, &c.*, and, as here, seamen speak of nearing (i. e. bringing near) the land, fetching a point, &c. See Bloomf.

V. 28—32. Nothing could be more absolute than the promise above given (24): yet neither the centurion nor the soldiers charged Paul with inconsistency, in what he now said to them. If the end was absolutely decreed, the means of attaining it were so likewise; and the case is the same, in concerns of still higher importance. [Comp. note, 2:23.]—

'God hath indeed assured me, that none of all our lives shall miscarry in this danger; but that God, who hath ordained our preservation, hath also ordained the means thereof, and therefore hath appointed, that these mariners shall continue in the ship, if we will hope for safety.' Bp. Hall. 23:12—22, vv. 16—18. 25:9—11.

(28.) *Fathoms.*] *Orguiai*: (from *oregesthai*, to stretch,) the distance a man can compass by stretching his arms. This the Romans made five feet, the Greeks (who had shorter measures) six. So *yard* is from the Anglo-Saxon *gered, stretched*, i. e. the length of a stretched arm: and *fathom* or *fadam* (from the Dutch, *vadem*), the distance a man can stride, both ways, from one foot fixed.

(29.) *Rocks.*] 'Had they been sure of soft ground they would have run ashore, as the ancients never scrupled to do in such cases.' *Four anchors out of the stern.*] 'So Cesar speaks of vessels with four anchors at the four corners; and *Val. Fla.* of anchors cast from the stern; *Virg.* of anchors cast from the bows. *James* (Epist.) says, there were in his time ships plying between Alexandria and Constantinople, that carried anchors in the poops; and confirms it by a passage of *Heliodorus*. Further, *Chardin* tells us, that the large modern Egyptian ships always carry their anchors at their stern, never at the prow.' Bl. Note, v. 16.



30 And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under color as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,

31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.

32 Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

33 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought *them* all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried, and continued fasting, having taken nothing.

34 Wherefore I pray you to take *some* meat; for this <sup>c</sup>is for your health: for there <sup>d</sup>shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.

35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and <sup>e</sup>gave thanks to God in the presence of them all: and when he had broken *it*, he began to eat.

36 Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat.

37 And we were in all, in the ship, two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.

38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

39 And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.

c Mat. 15:32. 10:30. Lu. 12:7. 15:35. Ma. 8:6.  
1 Ti. 5:23. 21:18. Jn. 6:11, 23.  
d 1 K. 1:52. Mat. e 1 Sa. 9:13. Mat. 1 Ti. 4:3, 4.

*saved*, appointed the means, *that they should be saved by the help of these shipmen*; though if they had gone off, no doubt God would have made his word good, some other way. Paul speaks as a prudent man, not as a prophet, when he says, *These are necessary to your preservation*. Duty is ours, events are God's; and we do not trust God, but tempt Him, when we say, 'We put ourselves under his protection,' and do not use proper means, such as are within our power, for our own preservation.

3. The effectual defeating of it by the soldiers, v. 32. It was no time to stand arguing the case with the shipmen; therefore, they cut the ropes of the boat, and though it might otherwise have done them service in their present distress, they chose rather to let it fall off, and lose it, than suffer it to do them this dis-service. And now the shipmen, being forced to stay, are forced likewise to work for the safety of the ship, because, if the rest perish, they must perish with them.

IV. The new life Paul put into the company, by his cheerful inviting them to take

some refreshment, and the repeated assurances given them, *that they should all of them have their lives given them for a prey*. Happy they who had such an one as Paul in their company, who not only had correspondence with heaven, but was of a hearty, lively spirit with those about him; such a friend in distress, is a friend indeed, Prov. 27:10. The day's coming on revived them a little, and then Paul got them together.

1. He chid them for their neglect of themselves, that they had so far given way to fear and despair, as to forget or not to mind their food, v. 33. Not that they had all, or any of them, continued 14 days without any food, but they had not had any set meal, as they used to have, all that time; they ate very little, next to nothing. Or, 'You have continued fasting, you have lost your stomach; you have had no appetite at all to your food, nor any relish of it, through prevailing fear and despair.' A very disconsolate state is thus expressed, Ps. 102:4. It is a sin to starve the body, and to deny it its necessary supports; and it is a *sore evil under the sun*, to have a sufficiency of the good things of this life, and not to have power to use them, Eccl. 6:2. If this arise from the sorrow of the world, and from any inordinate fear or trouble, it is so far from excusing it, that it is another sin, it is discounting, it is distrust of God, it is all wrong. What folly is it, to die for fear of dying! But thus the sorrow of the world works death, while joy in God is life and peace [as here to Paul], in the greatest distresses and dangers.

2. He courts them to their food, v. 34. 'We have a hard struggle before us, must get to shore as well as we can; if our bodies be weak through fasting, we shall not be able to help ourselves.' I pray you, I exhort you, if you will be ruled by me, take some nourishment; though you have no appetite to it, yet let reason bring you to it, for this is for your health; or rather, your preservation, or safety, at this time; it is for your salvation, you cannot without nourishment have strength to shift for your lives. Weak and trembling Christians, that give way to doubts and fears about their spiritual state, if they would feed and feast as they ought, on the provision Christ has made for them, would be strengthened, and it would be for their souls' health and salvation.

3. He assures them of their preservation; *There shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you*. It is a proverbial expression, denoting a complete indemnity.

4. He himself spread their table for them; for none of them had any heart to do it; *When he had thus spoken, he took bread*, fetched it from the ship's stores, to which every one might safely have access, when none of them had an appetite. We have reason to be thankful to God, that we have not only food to our appetite, but appetite to our food; that our soul *abhors not even dainty meat*, Job 33:20. through sickness or sorrow.

5. He was chaplain to the ship; *he gave thanks to God in presence of them all*. We have reason to think he had often and daily prayed with Luke and Aristarchus, and what other Christians there were among them, but whether before with the whole company promiscuously, is not certain; now *he gave thanks to God in presence of them all*; that they were alive, had been preserved,

and had a promise they should be preserved in the imminent peril now before them; *he gave thanks* for the provision they had, and begged a blessing on it. *He gave thanks in presence of them all*, not only to show that he served a Master he was not ashamed of, but to invite them into his service too. If we crave a blessing on our meat, and give thanks for it in a right manner, we shall not only keep up a comfortable communion with God ourselves, but credit our profession, and recommend it to the good opinion of others.

6. He set them a good example; *When he had given thanks, he brake the bread*, and began to eat; whether they would be encouraged or no, he would; he would eat his meat, and be thankful. Those that teach others, are inexcusable, if they do not themselves as they teach; and the most effectual way of preaching is by example.

7. It had a happy influence on them all, v. 36. They then ventured to believe the message God sent them by Paul, when they plainly perceived that Paul believed it himself, who was in the same common danger with them. Thus God sends good tidings to the perishing world of mankind, by those who are of themselves, and in the same common danger with themselves, who are sinners too, and must be saved, if ever they be saved, in the same way in which they persuade others to venture; and it is here on this occasion that the number of the persons is set down, which we took notice of before, 276. See how many may be influenced by the good example of one! *They did all eat*, nay *they did all eat enough*, v. 38. *they made a hearty meal*; which explains the meaning of their fasting before for 14 days; not that they did not eat all that time, but they never had enough all that time, as they had now.

8. They once more lightened the ship, that it might escape the better in the shock it was now to have; they had before thrown the wares and the tackle overboard, and now the wheat, the victuals and provisions they had; better they should sink it, than that it should sink them. It is probable the ship was over-loaded with the multitude of the passengers, for this comes in just after the account of the number of them, and that obliged them so often to lighten the ship.

V. Their putting to shore, and the staying of the ship in the adventure. It was about break of day when they ate their meat, and when it was fair day, they began to look about them, and,

1. *Knew not where they were*, whether in Europe, Asia, or Africa, for each had shores washed by the Adriatic sea, though probably these shipmen had often sailed this way. *Let not the wise glory in his wisdom*.

2. *They observed a creek with a level shore, into which they hoped to thrust the ship*, v. 39. Though they knew not what country it was, nor whether the inhabitants were friends or foes, evil or barbarous, they determined to cast themselves on their mercy, for it was land. Those who live on the sea-coast, have often opportunity of succoring those in distress at sea, and of saving precious lives, and they ought to do their utmost in order to it, with all readiness and cheerfulness; for it is a great sin, and very provoking to God, to forbear to deliver them that are driven unto death, and are ready to be slain; and it will not serve for an excuse to say, *Behold, we*

(30.) *Cast.*] Rather carried out, technically speaking, so to drop them that their cables might not get entangled.

(31.) 'That God foretold the deliverance of this ship's company as certain, though suspended on this condition, because He knew it would be complied with, and directed Paul to urge the necessity of that compliance, as what He knew would be the successful means of securing it, though none can deny but these sailors had a natural power of going out of the ship, or the soldiers a natural power of permitting them to do it. The application of this remark to other affairs of greater moment appears both easy and important.'

V. 33. *Taken nothing.*] 'Not to be understood *lit.*, and implying only, that they had not taken food during that time in the ordinary way, and a full meal.' *Ros.* 'So Appian speaks of an army, which, for 20

days, took no food nor sleep; by which he must mean, they never made full meals, nor slept whole nights together.'

V. 38. *Wheat.*] Most recent commentators, and *Bloomf.*, tr. *provisions*, as Job 3:24. Prov. 4:17. for, 'had their cargo been wheat, they would doubtless have thrown it overboard before, as there had already been two *apobolai*' discharges, v. 18, 19.

V. 39. *Shore.*] I. e. beach to run upon (so the Gr.), as is the custom in the Mediterranean, even now, with smaller vessels. 'This inlet on the N. W. of Malta, is now called *La Cala di San Paolo* [St. Paul's Creek].'  
Bl. It opens to the N. E. with a sand-bank in its middle, formed by a current, which passes between the coast and an island: here two seas meet, v. 41. Recurring to Dr. Anderson's travels, the *Ed.* finds this is the traditional place of the shipwreck. Cuts and note, Ae. end. Ed.



40 And when they had <sup>f</sup> taken up the anchors, they committed *themselves* unto the sea, and loosed the rudder-bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore.

41 And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmovable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.

42 And the soldiers' counsel <sup>g</sup> was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape.

43 But the centurion, willing to save <sup>h</sup> Paul, kept them from *their* purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast *themselves* first into the sea, and get to land:

44 And the rest, some on boards, and some on *broken pieces* of the ship. And so <sup>i</sup> it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

#### CHAP. XXVIII.

<sup>1</sup> Paul after his shipwreck is kindly entertained of the barbarians. <sup>5</sup> The viper on his hand hurteth him not. <sup>8</sup> He healeth many diseases in the island. <sup>11</sup> They depart toward Rome. <sup>17</sup> He declareth to the Jews the cause of his coming. <sup>24</sup> After his preaching some were persuaded, and some believed not. <sup>30</sup> Yet he preacheth there two years.

**A**ND when they were escaped, then they knew that the island <sup>a</sup> was called Melita.

<sup>f</sup> or, cut the anchors, they left them in the sea, &c. <sup>g</sup> Ps. 74:20. <sup>h</sup> 2 Co. 11:25. <sup>i</sup> Ps. 107:28—30. ver. 22. a c. 27:6.

knew it not; when either we did, or might, and should, have known it, Prov. 24: 11, 12. I have been told there are some, and in our own nation too, who, when from the sea-coast they see a ship in distress, and at a loss, will, by misguiding fires or otherwise, purposely lead them into danger, that the lives may be lost, and they may have the plunder of the ship. One can scarce believe any of the human nature could possibly be so wicked, so barbarously inhuman, and should have so much of the devil in them; if there be, let them know of a truth, that they shall have judgment without mercy, who have showed no mercy.

3. They made straight to the shore with wind and tide, v. 40. They took up the an-

chors, the four anchors which they cast out of the stern, v. 29. Some think they took pains to weigh them up, hoping they should have use for them again at the shore; others, that they did it with such precipitation, that they were forced to cut the cables, and leave them; the original will admit either; they then committed themselves to the sea, the wind standing fair to carry them into the port, and they loosed the rudder-bands, which were fastened during the storm, for the greater steadiness of the ship, but, now that they were putting into the port, were loosed, that the pilot might steer with the greater freedom; they then hoisted up the mainsail to the wind, and made towards shore. The original words here used for the rudder-bands, and the mainsail, find the critics a deal of work, to accommodate them to the modern terms; but they need not give us any difficulty, who are content to know that when they saw the shore, they hastened to it as fast as they could; and perhaps made more haste than good speed. And should not a poor soul that has long been struggling with winds and tempests in this world, long to put into the safe and quiet haven of everlasting rest? Should it not get clear from all that which fastens it to this earth, and straitens the out-goings of its pious and devout affections heavenward? And should it not hoist up the mainsail of faith to the wind of the Spirit, and so with longing desires make to shore.

4. They made a shift among them to run the ship aground, in a shelf, or bed of sand, as it should seem, or an isthmus, or neck of land, washed with the sea on both sides, and, therefore, two seas are said to meet on it, and there the fore part stuck fast; and then, when it had no liberty to play, as a ship has when it rides at anchor, but remained unmovable, the hinder part would soon be broken, of course, by the violence of the waves. The ship, that had strangely weathered the storm in the vast ocean, where it had room to roll, is dashed to pieces when it sticks fast. Thus if the heart fixes in the world, in love and affection, and adherence to it, it is lost; Satan's temptations beat against it, and it is gone; but as long as it keeps above the world, though it be tossed with its cares and tumults, there is hope of it.

VI. A particular danger Paul and the rest of the prisoners were in, besides their share in the common calamity, and their deliverance from it.

1. In this critical moment, when every

man hung in doubt of his life, the soldiers advised the killing of the prisoners committed to their custody, and whom they were to give account of, lest any of them should swim out and escape, v. 42. There was no great danger of that, for they could not escape far, weak and weary as they were; and under the eye of so many soldiers that had the charge of them, it was not likely they should attempt it; and if it should so happen, though they might be obnoxious to the law, for a permissive escape, yet, in such a case as this, equity would certainly relieve them. But it was a brutish, barbarous motion, and so much the worse, that they were thus prodigal of other peoples' lives, when, without a miracle of mercy, they must lose their own.

2. The centurion, for Paul's sake, quashed this motion presently. Though he despised Paul's advice, v. 11. yet he afterwards saw great cause to respect him; and therefore being willing to save Paul, he kept them from their purpose. It does not appear that any were malefactors convicted, but only suspected, and waiting their trial; and in such a case as this, better ten guilty escape, than one innocent be slain. As God had saved all in the ship for Paul's sake, so here the centurion saves all the prisoners for his sake; such a diffusive good is a good man!

VII. The saving of the lives of all the persons in the ship, by the wonderful providence of God. 1. Some were saved by swimming; The centurion commanded his own soldiers, in the first place, as many as could swim, to get to land first, and to be ready to receive the prisoners, and prevent their escape. The Romans trained up their youth to swimming, which was often of service to them in their wars: Julius Cesar was a famous swimmer. 2. The rest with much ado scrambled to the shore, some on boards, that they had loose with them in the ship, and others on the broken pieces of the ship; [or things which came from the ship;] so it came to pass, one way or another, that, through the good providence of God, they escaped all safe to land. Here was an instance of the performance of a particular word of promise God gave, that, whatever difficulties lie in the way, all the persons in this ship should be saved for Paul's sake.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1—10. We are the more concerned to notice and improve what is here recorded concerning blessed Paul, because, after the story of this ch., we hear no more of him in the sacred history, though

PRACT OBS. The Lord provides kind friends, and adequate consolations, for his faithful servants, in all their multiplied and varied trials: and even such persons, as might previously have been expected to be inimical to them, are sometimes induced to treat them courteously, and to minister to their refreshment; nor shall these fail of receiving a suitable reward.—Zealous and able ministers cannot, in any situation, be wholly excluded from usefulness: and their gracious God often causes them to pass through troubles, to manifest the power of his consolations in supporting them, and the excellency of their principles and character; in order to excite the attention of the careless, the ignorant, and the prejudiced, to their example and instructions. Men in general are so selfish, that they are ready to provide for their own preservation,

V. 40. De Dien, Wetst., Pearce, Markl., Schl., Heint., Kuin., Bl., &c., adopt the marg. tr., for the object was to lighten the ship. Grot., Boch., Elsn., Pearce, Scheffer, Lips., and Periz., prove, that the ancients in their large ships had two rudders. These

appear to have been attached, one on each side of the stern; by bands, as on a pivot, so that the larger ends could be raised out of the water, either by lashing the upper ends close down to the deck, or sides, or the lower ends close against the sides of the ship: cuts, 2 S. 19:18. Is. 33:21. These rudders, it would seem, were unshipped and taken off when in port: here, by 'unloosing the rudder-bands' the lower or broad part of the rudder was probably dropped into the sea, and so again became of use for steering. See Bloomf. and comp. the cut of a vessel of this age, seen pictured at Pompeii. Mainsail.] It seems rather to have been a sail (see Bl.) attached to the dolon, a short foremast, perhaps one raised for the occasion: this



even by such measures as directly conduce to the destruction of those, with whom they are most intimately connected! No peril or sufferings can subdue human depravity: so that soldiers and sailors, who experience more hardships, dangers, and evident deliverances than other men; and who, it might be thought, would be more careful than others to be always prepared for death and judgment; are too commonly peculiarly regardless of religion and morality [how imperious then is the duty of society, especially of Christians, towards them!]. It will at length so come to pass, that, by one mean or another, all [true believers will] escape safe to heaven, where mutual congratulations and admiring praises and thanksgivings, will succeed their present trials and distresses, and will not be terminated or interrupted to all eternity. SCOTT.

of course would lift the vessel's bows, and so ease her on to the land, and enable her to run farther in shore before she struck: but the design was frustrated by their grounding unawares on the spit, v. 41. It will be recollected that the ancients had no bowsprit. Ed.

V. 41. Where two, &c.] A portion of land, on a sandbank from the shore, ending in a point, (called by sailors, a spit, from its sharp ending,) divided the channel in the midst, on each side of which was deep water. SCOTT. This concealed spit of sand was, says Bl., 'the elongation of a ness plainly to be seen on Cluverius' map.' [Cut, and note, Ac. end.] Ed.

V. 42—44. This [the immediate execution of the whole company, though yet uncondemned] could not have been thought of, had not the Roman laws allowed it, or had it not been sometimes done. So that this cruel and unfeeling policy disgraced the jurisprudence of the renowned Romans! Indeed, the centurion himself seems not to have been at all shocked by the proposal: and he was induced, rather by a personal regard to Paul, than by general principles, either of humanity or justice, to negative the counsel: and this at a time too, when his own life and that of the soldiers were in as much peril, as the lives of the prisoners. It is highly reasonable to suppose, that these extraordinary incidents were overruled to the conversion and salvation of many of their souls. SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1. Melita.] 'It is well known that this island took its name from the abundance of honey found in it: it



2 And the barbarous <sup>b</sup> people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us <sup>c</sup> every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.

3 ¶ And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

4 And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt <sup>d</sup> this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.

5 And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt <sup>e</sup> no harm.

6 Howbeit, they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said <sup>f</sup> that he was a god.

b Ro. 1:14. Col. 13:2. 10:19.  
3:11. d Lu. 7:24. f c. 14:11.  
c Mat. 10:42. He. e Ma. 16:18. Lu.

we have a great deal of him yet before us in his epistles; we have attended him through several chs., from one judgment-seat to another, and could at last have taken leave of him with the more pleasure, if we had left him at liberty; but in this eh. we are to console with him, and yet congratulate him. What a great variety of places and circumstances do we find Paul in! He was a planet, and not a fixed star. Here we have him in an island, to which, in all probability, he had never come, if he had not been thrown upon it by a storm; and yet, it seems, God has work for him to do here. This island was called *Melita*, lying between Sicily and Africa; 20 miles long, and 12 broad; it lies farthest from the continent of any island in the Mediterranean; it is about 60 miles from Sicily. It has been famous since, for the knights of Malta, who, when the Turks overran that part of Christendom, made a noble stand, and gave some check to the progress of their arms.

Now here we have,

I. The kind reception the inhabitants gave to the distressed, shipwrecked strangers, v. 2. God had promised there should be no loss of any man's life; and if, when they came ashore, they had perished for cold or want, it had been all one; therefore Providence continues its care of them, and what benefits we receive by the hand of man, must be acknowledged to come from the hand of God; for, as, when He pleases, He can make enemies to be at peace, so He can make strangers to be friends, friends in adversity, and that is the time a brother is born for. Observe,

1. The general notice taken of the kindness the natives of Malta showed to Paul and his company; they are called *barbarous people*, because not, in language and customs, conformed either to the Greeks or Romans,

who looked superciliously enough on all but themselves as barbarians, though otherwise civilized enough, and perhaps in some cases more civil than they. These *barbarous people*, however so called, were full of humanity; they showed us no little kindness. Far from making a prey of this shipwreck, as many, I fear, called Christian people, would have done, they laid hold on it as an opportunity of showing mercy! and it is written for our imitation, that we may hence learn to be compassionate, and to relieve and succor those in distress to the utmost of our ability, as those that know we ourselves are also in the body; we should be ready to entertain strangers, Heb. 13:2. but, especially strangers in distress. Who knows but these barbarous people, had their lot cast in this island for such a time as this!

2. A particular instance of their kindness; They kindled a fire, in some large hall or other, and they received us every one; made room for us about the fire, and bid us all welcome, without asking either what country we were of, or what religion. We must suppose they were sadly wet, of course; and it was cold too; so they wanted nothing so much as a good fire, for they had eaten heartily just before on shipboard. It is sometimes as much a piece of charity to poor families, to supply them with fuel, as with food or raiment. Be ye warmed, is as necessary as, Be ye filled. When, in the extremities of bad weather, we find ourselves fenced against the rigors of the season, by the accommodations of a warm house, bed, clothes, and a good fire, we should think how many lie exposed to the present rain, and to the cold, and pity them, and pray for them, and help them if we can.

II. Paul's further danger by a viper's fastening on his hand, and the unjust construction the people put on it.

1. When the fire was to be made, and to be made bigger, that so great a company might all have the benefit of it, Paul was as busy as any of them in gathering sticks, v. 3. He was an industrious, active man, and loved to be doing when anything was to be done, and never contrived to take his ease. He was a humble, and self denying-man, and would stoop to anything by which he might be serviceable, even to the gathering of sticks to make a fire of. We should reckon nothing below us but sin, and be willing to condescend to the meanest offices, if there be occasion, for the good of our brethren. The people were ready to help them; yet Paul, wet and cold as he is, will not throw it all on them, but will help himself. They that receive benefit by the fire, should help to carry fuel to it.

2. The sticks being old, dry rubbish, it happened there was a viper among them, that lay as dead till it came to the heat, and then revived, or lay quiet till it felt the fire, and then was provoked, and flew at him that unawares threw it into the fire, and fastened on his hand, v. 3. Serpents, and such venomous creatures, commonly lie among sticks, Am. 5:19. It was so common, that people were by it frightened from tearing hedges, Eccl. 10:8. See how many perils human life is exposed to, and what danger we are in from inferior creatures, which are many of them become enemies to men, since men

became rebels to God; and what a mercy it is, that we are preserved from them as we are!

3. The barbarous people concluded, that Paul, being a prisoner, was certainly a murderer, who had appealed to Rome, to escape justice in his own country, and that this viper was sent by divine justice, to be the avenger of blood. Now in this we may see,

(1.) Some discoveries of natural light; they were barbarous people, perhaps had no books of learning among them, yet they knew naturally, that there is a God that governs the world, and a providence that presides in all occurrences; that evil pursues sinners; that there are good works which God will reward, and wicked works which He will punish; they believe that murder is a heinous crime, which shall not long go unpunished; that whoso sheds man's blood, if his blood be not shed by man, by the magistrate, as it ought to be, it shall be shed by the righteous Judge of heaven and earth, who is the Avenger of wrong. Those that think they shall go unpunished in any evil way, will be judged out of the mouth of these barbarians, and those who, because they have escaped many judgments, are secure, may learn from these illiterate people, that, though malefactors have escaped the vengeance of the sea, yet there is no outrunning divine justice; vengeance suffers not to live. In Job's time, you might ask them that go by the way, ask the next body you met, and they would tell you, that the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction.

(2.) Some mistakes of natural light, which needed to be rectified by divine revelation; in two things their knowledge was defective. [1.] They thought all wicked people are punished in this life; whereas it is not so; the wicked, even murderers, sometimes live, become old, yea, are mighty in power; for the day of vengeance is to come in the other world, the great day of wrath; and many are left unpunished, to prove that there is a judgment to come. [2.] They thought all who were remarkably afflicted in this life, were wicked people; a mistake Job's friends went upon, in their judgment on his case; but divine revelation sets this matter in a true light,—that all things come ordinarily alike to all; that good men are oftentimes greatly afflicted in this life, for the exercise and improvement of their faith and patience.\*

4. When he shook off the viper, yet they expected divine vengeance would ratify the censure they had passed, and that he would have swollen and burst, through the force of the poison, or that he should have fallen down dead suddenly. See how apt men are, when once they have got an ill opinion, though ever so unjust, to abide by it, and to think God must necessarily confirm and ratify their peevish sentence! It was well they did not knock Paul down themselves, when they saw he did not swell and fall down; but so considerate they are, as to let Providence work, and to attend the motions of it.

III. Paul's deliverance from the danger, and the undue construction the people put on that; The viper's fastening on his hand, was a trial of his faith; and it was found to praise, and honor, and glory: for,

1. It does not appear that it put him into

\* But see notes, Job 36:8—14. 34:1.

Ed.

also yields a great deal of cotton, and though it has but three feet depth of earth above the solid rock, is very fruitful. Paul's shipwreck here engaged a kind of superstitious regard to it, in consequence of which it was given, A. D. 1530, by the Emperor Charles V. to the knights of St. John in Jerusalem, when they had been expelled from Rhodes by the Turks. They [were] 1000 in number, of whom 500 always resided on the island, and [were] called Hospitaliers.' [Cuts, Ac. end.] Doddr.

V. 2. Barbarians.] Barbaroi: comp. the terms, *shenmo*, of the Egyptians; *touran*, of the Persians; *goim*, of the Jews, and *ee-jin*, of the Chinese, applied to foreigners. Bl. derives *barbaroi* from the Punie *berber*, a shepherd, a name especially appropriated to the indigenous and pastoral inhabitants of Africa, by their more civilized neighbors on the other side the Mediterranean; so it came at last to mean savage. The inhabitants, too, of Malta were of Carthaginian origin, and spoke Punie. Nations are not yet rid of these feelings! Ed.

V. 3. Viper, vs. 4, 5. Beast.] A fierce animal is the proper import

of the word. Ros. has well shown, that the physicians use it to express any poisonous animal, and Lucian in particular applies it, as here, to a viper: but to render it *beast* is by no means justifiable. No harm, v. 5.] 'Elsner observes, that many of the heathen thought there was something divine in the nature of serpents, and that deities, or good genii, who were made use of as the instruments of delivering and honoring those that were the peculiar favorites of the gods, often appeared in that shape. Hence, idols were often made with serpents near them; and there have been numerous and indeed astonishing instances of religious worship paid to that kind of animal, absurd as it may seem.' Doddr. Indeed *ophite* or *snake-worship* seems to have been almost universal. Ed. The poisonous vipers of Italy and Africa do not, like some species of harmless snakes with us, wind around a person's hand, but dart upon and bite them at once, and keep fast hold.' BLOOMF.

V. 6. 'The swelling, first local, then universal, is a common symptom: and Waterton says, that darts, dipped in the Woral poison (of S.



7 ¶ In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously.

8 And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever, and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.

9 So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed:

10 Who also honored us with many honors; and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary.

11 ¶ And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux.

g Ja. 5:14,15. h Mat. 9:13. Ma. 6:5. 7:32. 16:13. Lu. 4:40. c.19: 11. 1 Co. 12:9. 28. 1 Th. 2:6. 1 Ti. 5:17. j Mat. 6:33-34. 10:8-10. 2 Co. 9:5-11. Phil. 4:11, 12.

any fright or confusion at all; he did not shriek, or start, nor, as it would be natural for us to do, throw it off with terror and precipitation; for he suffered it to hang on so long, that the people had time to notice it, and make their remarks upon it. Such a wonderful presence of mind he had, and such a composure, as no man could have on such a sudden accident, but by the special aids of divine grace, and the actual belief and consideration of that word of Christ concerning his disciples, Mark 16:18. *They shall take up serpents.* This is to have the heart fixed, trusting in God.

2. He carelessly shook off the viper into the fire, without any difficulty, calling for help, or any means used to loosen its hold; and, probably, it was consumed in the fire. Thus, in the strength of the grace of Christ, believers shake off the temptations of Satan, that the wicked one toucheth them not, so as to fasten on them, 1 John 5:18. When we despise the censures and reproaches of men, and look on them with a holy contempt, having the testimony of conscience for us, then we do, as Paul here, shake off the viper into the fire. It does us no harm, except we either fret at it, or be deterred by it from our duty, or be provoked to render railing for railing.

3. They looked a great while, but saw no harm come to him. God hereby intended to make him remarkable among these barbarous people, and so to make way for the en-

tertainment of the Gospel among them. It is reported, that after this, no venomous creature would live in that island, any more than in Ireland; but I do not find that the matter of fact is confirmed, though the popish writers speak of it with assurance.

4. They then magnified him as much as before they had vilified him; *They said he was a god; an immortal god.* See the uncertainty of popular opinion, how it turns with the wind, and how apt it is to run into extremes both ways.

IV. The miraculous cure of an old gentleman ill of a fever, and of others, otherwise diseased, by Paul. And with these confirmations of the doctrine of Christ, no doubt there was a faithful publication of it. Observe,

1. The kind entertainment *Publius, the chief man of the island,* gave to them, v. 7. some think, he was governor. It is happy when God gives a large heart to those to whom He has given a large estate. It became him, who was *the chief man of the island,* to be most hospitable and generous; [him,] who was the richest man, *to be rich in good works.*

2. The illness of *the father of Publius; a fever and a bloody flux* often go together, and, when they do, are commonly fatal. Providence ordered he should be ill just at this time, that the cure of him might be a present recompense to Publius for his generosity, and the cure of him by a miracle, a recompense particularly for his kindness to Paul, whom he received *in the name of a prophet,* and had *this prophet's reward.*

3. His cure; Paul took cognizance of his ease, and though not urged to it, yet he entered in, not as a physician, but as an apostle, prayed, and then laid his hands on him, and he was perfectly well in an instant: he must needs be in years, yet he recovered his health, and the lengthening out of life yet longer would be a merey to him.

4. The cure of many others. A good man will endeavor to do good, wherever the providence of God casts him. Paul reckoned himself a debtor, not only to the Greeks, but to the barbarians, and thanked God for an opportunity of being useful among them. Nay, he was particularly obliged to these inhabitants of Malta, and hereby he did in effect discharge his quarters; which should encourage us to entertain strangers, for some thereby have entertained angels, and some apostles, unawares; God will not be behindhand with any for kindness shown to his people in distress. We have reason to think, that Paul, with these cures, preached the Gospel to them, and that, coming thus confirmed and recommended, it was generally embraced among them. And if so, never were any

people so enriched by a shipwreck on their coasts, as these Maltese.

V. The grateful acknowledgment, which even these barbarous people made of the kindness Paul had done them, in preaching Christ unto them. They were civil to him, and to the other ministers that were with him, who, it is likely, were assisting him in preaching among them, v. 10. 1. *They honored us with many honors;* showed them all possible respect; they saw God honored them, and therefore justly thought themselves obliged to honor them; and thought nothing too much by which they might testify the esteem they had for them. The faithful preachers of the Gospel are worthy of a double honor, then especially when they succeed in their labors. 2. *When we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary;* or, they put on board such things as we had occasion for. Paul could not labor with his hands here, for he had nothing to work upon, and therefore accepted the kindness of the good people of Melita, not as a fee for his cures, (freely he had received, and freely he gave,) but as the relief of his wants, and theirs that were with him. And having reaped of their spiritual things, it was but just they should make them those returns, 1 Cor. 9:11.

V. 11-16. We have here the progress of Paul's voyage towards Rome, and his arrival there at length; a rough and dangerous voyage he had had hitherto, and narrowly escaped with his life, but the latter part of his voyage was easy and quiet.

1. Their leaving Malta; notice is here taken,

1. Of the time of their departure; *after three months,* the three winter-months. Paul had warned them before, but now they needed not a further warning: their learning did them good when they had paid dear for it. Experience is therefore called *the mistress of fools,* because fools will not learn, till experience has taught them.

2. The ship in which they departed was of Alexandria; so was that which was east away, ch. 27:6. Two ships, both of Alexandria, both bound for Italy, both thrown on the same island, but one wrecked, the other saved. Events are thus varied, that we may learn both *how to want,* and *how to abound.* The historian notices the sign of the ship, *Castor and Pollux,* little, foolish, pagan deities, the poets made to preside over storms, and to protect seafaring men, as *gods of the sea;* these were painted or graven on the fore part of the ship, and thence its name. I suppose this is observed only the better to ascertain the story; that ship being well known by that name and sign, by all that dealt between Egypt and Italy. Lightfoot

America), cause almost immediate death. *Pliny* says, of the Scythian darts, dipped in viper's blood, "on a slight touch they forthwith bring death."

V. 7-10. It had been providentially ordered, that the ship should be wrecked, near the house and estate of the governor of the island; thus Paul became acquainted with the sickness of the governor's father. It is reasonable to conclude from this compendious narrative, that the conduct and discourses of Paul and his friends, and all the events of the shipwreck and deliverance, had made a deep impression on the minds of the soldiers, sailors, and passengers; and that they too had behaved so well at Melita, as to conciliate the esteem and favor of the inhabitants.—No one will ever repent of having entertained a servant of God, however wretched and indigent. *Beza.* (7) *The chief man.* *Protos:* Grotius has produced an ancient inscription, by which it appears, the title of protos, or chief, was given the governor of this island, and so it is used here by Luke, with his usual propriety of expression. *Doddr.* Sc.

V. 11. *Castor and Pollux.* The figure used for these, as *Lightf.* says, was that of two young men on horseback, with each of them a javelin in his hand, &c. But others have observed, that it was the sign of a double cross: and though the Greeks took them for a sign in the zodiac, which was called the twins, and considered as sacred to these fictitious deities, it was not at first represented by two boys, but by two beasts, as referring to the fruitfulness of goats in producing twin kids about the time the sun was in that constellation. The appearance of both these constellations together was thought favorable to mariners, and therefore, for a good omen, they had them carved or painted on the head of the ships, [cut, Is. 33:21.] and gave it name from, thence, which the sacred historian does not scruple to use. *Doddr. Sign.* *Parasēmon:* the Romans had the *tutela* on the poop, and the *insigne parasēmon* at the prow: the image here seems to have been placed on both. *Bl.* Note and cut, Ez. 27:5-7. The cut, from a painting in Pom-

peii, of that age, will assist in explaining the arrangement of ancient vessels. The figure-head, half of which only seems to be seen, may be



of 'Castor and Pollux,' another head being added on the other side of the board, which seems to separate the figure-head into two parts. En.



12 And landing at Syracuse, we tarried *there* three days.

13 And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium : and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli ;

14 Where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days : and so we went toward Rome.

15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came <sup>k</sup> to meet us as far as Appii Forum, and the Three Taverns : whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took <sup>l</sup> courage.

16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard : but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself <sup>m</sup> with a soldier that kept him.

17 ¶ And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together : and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men *and* brethren, though <sup>n</sup> I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered <sup>o</sup> prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans ;

f c. 21:5, 3 Jn. 6:8. 27:14. n c. 24:12, 13, 25:8. l Jos. 1:6, 7, 9. m c. 24:23. 27:3. o c. 21:33, &c. 1 Sa. 50:6. Ps.

thinks Luke mentions it, to intimate the men's superstition, that they hoped they should have better sailing under this badge than before.

II. Their landing, and journey toward Rome.

1. At Syracuse in Sicily ; there they *tarried three days*, probably to put ashore goods, or make some merchandise there ; for this ship seems to have been on a trading voyage. Paul had now his curiosity gratified, with the sight of places he had often heard of, and wished to see ; particularly Syracuse, a place of great antiquity and note ; yet, it should seem, there were no Christians there.

2. From Syracuse they came to Rhegium, a city in Italy, directly opposite to Messina in Sicily, belonging to the kingdom of Calabria or Naples ; there, it seems, they stayed one day. And a very formal story the Rómish legends tell, of Paul's preaching here at this time, and the fish coming to the shore to hear him ; that with a candle he set a stone pillar on fire, and by that miracle convinced the people of the truth of his doctrine, and they were many of them baptized, and he ordained Stephen, one of his companions in this voyage, to be their bishop ; and all this, they tell you, was done in this one day ; whereas it does not appear that they did so much as go ashore, but only came to an anchor in the road.

3. From Rhegium, they came to Puteoli, a sea-port town not far from Naples, now called *Pozzolana* [and *Pozzuoli*] ; the ship of Alexandria was bound for that part ; and therefore there Paul, and the rest bound for Rome, were put ashore, and went the remainder of their way *by land*. At Puteoli they *found brethren*, Christians ; they heard

of him, or he inquired them out, as it were, by instinct. Brethren in Christ should find out one another, and keep up communion with each other, as those of the same country do in a foreign land. They desired Paul and his companions to *tarry with them seven days*, i. e. to forecast to stay at least *one Lord's day*, and assist them in their public worship. They knew not whether ever they should see Paul at Puteoli again ; therefore he must not go, but he must give them a sermon or two, or more. And Paul was willing to allow them so much of his time ; and the centurion, under whose command Paul now was, perhaps having himself friends or business at Puteoli, agreed to stay one week there, to oblige Paul.

4. From Puteoli they went forward toward Rome ; whether on foot, or on beasts, as *ch. 23: 24.* does not appear.

III. The meeting the Christians at Rome gave to Paul ; probably notice was sent them by the Christians at Puteoli, which gave an opportunity for this interview. Observe,

1. The great honor they did to Paul ; they had heard much of his fame, and of his sufferings, and how God had owned him, therefore they not only longed to see him, but thought themselves obliged to show him all possible respect, as a glorious advocate for the cause of Christ. He had some time ago written them a long epistle, *the epistle to the Romans*, in which he had not only expressed his great kindness for them, but had given them a great many useful instructions, and in return for that they show him this respect. They *went to meet him*, some as far as *Appii-forum*, 51 miles from Rome ; others, to a place called the *Three taverns*, 28, some say 33 miles, from Rome. They are to be commended for it, that, so far from being ashamed of him, or afraid of owning him, because he was a prisoner, that, for that very reason, they counted him *worthy of double honor*, and were the more careful to show him respect.

2. The great comfort Paul had in this ; now that he was drawing near to Rome, and perhaps heard at Puteoli what a tyrant the emperor Nero was now of late become, he began to have some melancholy thoughts about his appeal to Cesar, and the consequences of it ; till he meets with these good people that came from Rome, to show him respect ; and *when he saw them*, (1.) He *thanked God* ; we may suppose he *thanked them* for their civility, told them again and again how kindly he took it ; but that was not all, he *thanked God*. Note, if our friends be kind to us, it is God that makes them so, that puts it into their hearts, and into the power of their hands, to be so, and we must give Him the glory of it. Paul had thanked God for the Christians at Rome before he had ever seen them, on the report he had heard concerning them, *Rom. 1: 8.* But now that he saw them, he *thanked God* ; perhaps they appeared better than most Christians he had seen. But that was not all ; (2.) He *took courage* ; it put new life into him, cheered his spirits, and now he can enter Rome a prisoner, as cheerfully as ever he had entered Jerusalem at liberty. He finds there are those there who love and value him, and whom he may both *converse with* and *consult with* as his friends, which will take off much of the *tediousness* of his imprisonment, and the terror of his appearing before Nero. Note, It is an encouragement to those who are travelling toward

heaven, to *meet with their fellow-travellers*, who are their *companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ*. And this is a good reason why respect should be shown to good ministers, especially when in sufferings and contempt, that it *encourages* them, and makes both their sufferings and their services more easy. Yet it is observable, that though the Christians at Rome were now so respectful to Paul, and he had promised himself so much from their respect, yet they failed him when he most needed them, *2 Tim. 4: 16.* To venture the displeasure of the emperor, and the disobliging of other great men, by appearing in defence of Paul, and giving evidence for him, here they desired to be excused ; when it comes to that, they will rather ride as far out of town to miss him, as now they did to meet him. Which is an intimation to us, to *cease from man*, and to *encourage ourselves in the Lord our God*. The courage we take from his promises will never fail us ; when we shall be ashamed of that which we took from men's compliments.

IV. The delivering of Paul into custody at Rome, v. 16. 1. He is delivered, with other prisoners, to the *captain of the guard*, and can see no more of Rome than he will permit him. How many *great men* had made their entry into Rome, crowned, and in triumph, who really were the plagues of their generation ! But here a good man makes his entry into Rome, chained, and triumphed over, as a poor captive, who was really the greatest blessing to his generation. This thought is enough to put one for ever out of conceit with this world.

2. Yet [as it is] some *favor is showed him* ; he is a *prisoner*, but not a *close prisoner*, not in the common jail ; *Paul was suffered to dwell by himself*, in some convenient private lodgings his friends there provided for him, and a soldier was appointed his guard, we hope civil, and that let him take all liberty that could be allowed a prisoner, for he must be very ill-humored indeed, that could be so to such a courteous, obliging man as Paul. Paul, being suffered to *dwell by himself*, could the better enjoy himself, friends, and God, than if lodged with the other prisoners. This may encourage God's prisoners, that He can give them favor, *Ps. 106: 46.* as Joseph in the eyes of his keeper, *Gen. 39: 21.* and Jehoiachin in the eyes of the king of Babylon, *2 K. 25: 27, 28.* When God does not deliver his people presently out of bondage, yet if He either make it *easy* to them, or *them easy* under it, they have reason to be thankful.

V. 17—22. Paul, with great expense and hazard, is brought a prisoner to Rome, and when he is come, nobody appears to prosecute him, or lay anything to his charge ; but he must call his own cause ; and here he represents it to the *chief of the Jews at Rome*, persons most distinguished as to estates and interests. It was not long, since, by an edict of Claudius, all the Jews were banished from Rome, and kept out till his death ; but in the five years since then, many Jews were come thither, for the advantage of trade, though it does not appear that they were allowed any synagogue there, or place of public worship ; *Paul called them together*, being desirous to *stand right* in their opinion, and that there might be a good understanding between him and them.

I. His account of his ease.

1. He professes his own innocency. It is true, he had not imposed the customs of the fathers on the Gentiles, for whom they were

V. 13. *Fetching a compass.* [Rather, coasting about.] BLOOMF.

V. 16. When the company arrived at Rome, the other prisoners were committed to the custody of the captain of the imperial guards, to be lodged in prison : but, through the account sent by Festus, and the report of Julius, Paul was exempted from this hardship, and was allowed to dwell in a lodging apart from other prisoners ; and only guarded by a soldier. [At another period Paul was closely confined.] SCOTT.

(16.) *Captain of the guard.* [The person who had now this office, was the noted Burrhus Afranius ; but both before and after him, it was

held by two. See *Tac.* *Doddr.* 'The law was, that all prisoners sent to Rome should be delivered to the custody of the *Præfectus Prætorii*, and guarded in the Prætorian camp. This Præfect 'permitted Paul,' &c., for (so Ulpian) the proconsul exercised a discretion as to the treatment of such, whether to put them in prison, or give them to a soldier's charge.' *Bl.* The allowing to Paul a separate confinement out of the common 'camp prison,' (where prisoners in 'free custody' were herded together,) was indeed a great favor. See *Bloomf.* Ed.

V. 17—20. 'Paul everywhere remembers that he is an apostle.'



18 Who, when <sup>p</sup> they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me.

19 But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal <sup>q</sup> unto Cesar; not that I had aught to accuse my nation of.

20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope <sup>r</sup> of Israel I am bound with this <sup>s</sup> chain.

21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee.

22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where <sup>t</sup> it is spoken against.

23 ¶ And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his <sup>u</sup> lodging; to whom he <sup>v</sup> expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both <sup>w</sup> out of the law of Moses, and <sup>x</sup> out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

24 And some <sup>y</sup> believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

p c. 24:10. 26:31. q c. 25:11. r c. 26:6, 7. s c. 26:29. 3:1. 4:1. 6:20. 2 Ti. 1:16. 2:9. Phil. 10:13. t Lu. 2:34. c. 24: c. 17:3. 19:3. 5:14. 1 Pe. 2:12. w c. 26:6, 22. 4:14. x c. 14:1. 17:4. 19:9. Ro. 3:3.

never intended; but it is as true, he never opposed them in the Jews; but did himself, when among them, conform to them. He never quarrelled with them for practising according to the usages of their own religion, but only for their enmity to the Gentiles, Gal. 2:12. Paul had the testimony of his conscience for him, that he had done his duty to the Jews.

2. He modestly complains of the hard usage he had met with, v. 17. If he had spoken the whole truth in this matter, it would have looked worse than it did on the Jews, for they would have murdered him without any color of law or justice, if the Romans had not protected him; but, however, their accusing him as a criminal, before Felix the governor, and demanding judgment against him, were, in effect, delivering him prisoner into the hands of the Romans, when he desired no more than a fair and impartial trial by their own law.

3. He declares the judgment of the Roman governors concerning him, v. 18. It was for Paul's honor, that those who most carefully examined his case, acquitted him, and none condemned him but unheard, and such as were prejudiced against him.

4. He pleads the necessity he was under to remove himself and his cause to Rome; and that it was only in his own defence, and not with any design to recriminate, or exhibit a cross bill against the complainants, v. 19. When the Jews spake against his discharge, finding the governors, one after another, stood so much in awe of them, that

they would not discharge him, for fear of making them their enemies; it was necessary for him to appeal to the higher powers: this was all he aimed at, not to accuse his nation, but only to vindicate himself. Every man has a right to plead in his own defence, who yet ought not to find fault with his neighbors. It is an invidious thing to accuse, especially to accuse a nation, such a nation. Paul made intercession for them, but never against them. The Roman government had at this time an ill opinion of the Jewish nation, as factious, turbulent, disaffected, and dangerous, and it had been easy for a man with such a fluent tongue as Paul had, a citizen of Rome, and so injured as he was, to have exasperated the emperor against the Jewish nation; but Paul would not, for ever so much, do such a thing; he was for making the best of every body, and not making bad worse.

5. He puts his sufferings on the true foot, and gives them such an account of the reason of them, as should engage them not only not to join with his persecutors against him, but to concern themselves for him, and to do what they could on his behalf, if they had any interest, to procure him his liberty, v. 20. He carried the mark of his imprisonment about with him, and probably was [as was the custom] chained [at least at times] to the soldier that kept him; and it was, (1.) Because he preached that the Messiah was come, who was the Hope of Israel, He whom Israel hoped for. (2.) Because he preached, that the resurrection of the dead would come; that also was the hope of Israel; so he had called it, ch. 23:6. 24:15. 26:6, 7. 'They would have you still expect a Messiah that would free you from the Roman yoke, and make you great and prosperous on earth; and they are angry at me for directing their expectations to the great things of another world, and persuading them to embrace a Messiah, who will secure those to them, and not external power and grandeur; I am for bringing you to the spiritual and eternal blessedness which our fathers by faith had their eye upon, and that is what they hate me for; because I would take you off from that which is the cheat of Israel, and will be its shame and ruin, the notion of a temporal Messiah; and lead you to that which is the true and real hope of Israel, and the genuine sense of all the promises made to the fathers, a spiritual kingdom of holiness and love set up in the hearts of men, to be the pledge of, and preparative for, the joyful resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.'

II. Their reply; they own,

1. That they had nothing to say in particular against him; nor had any instructions to appear as his prosecutors before the emperor, either by letter or word of mouth, v. 21. None had written, or come up to Rome, on the subject of his prosecution. This was very strange, and some think they told a lie here, and had orders to prosecute him, but durst not own it, being themselves obnoxious to the emperor's displeasure; who, though he had not, like his predecessors, banished them all from Rome, yet he gave them no countenance there. But I am apt to think that what they said was true, and Paul now found he had gained the point he aimed at, in appealing to Cesar, which was to remove his cause into a court to which they durst not follow it. This was David's policy, and it was his security, 1 S. 27:1. and it proves so, v. 4.

2. That they desired to know more particularly concerning the doctrine he preached, and the religion he took so much pains to propagate in the face of so much opposition, v. 22. 'what thy opinions or sentiments are, what are those things thou art so wise about, and hast such a relish of, and zeal for; for though we know little else concerning Christianity, we know it is a sect everywhere spoken against.' Those who said this scornful, spiteful word of the Christian religion, were Jews, the chief of the Jews at Rome, who boasted of their knowledge, Rom. 2:17. and yet this was all they knew concerning the Christian religion, that it was a sect everywhere spoken against. They give it an ill name, and then run it down. They looked upon it to be a sect, and that was false. True Christianity establishes that which is of common concern to all mankind, and is not built on such narrow opinions [bigoted pride] and private interests as sects commonly owe their original to. It aims at no worldly benefit or advantage, as sects do; but all its gains are spiritual and eternal. And, besides, it has a direct tendency to unite the children of men, not to divide, and set them at variance, as sects have. It is, and always has been, the lot of Christ's holy religion, to be everywhere spoken against: [which should teach us, that public opinion, even in 'the most enlightened nation,' is not the best measure of right and wrong.]

V. 23—29. We have here a short account of a long conference Paul had with the Jews at Rome, about the Christian religion. Though so far prejudiced against it, yet they were willing to give it a hearing; which was more than the Jews at Jerusalem would do; probably, being men of [more liberal views, from] larger acquaintance with the world, and more general conversation, they were more free in their inquiries than the bigoted Jews at Jerusalem were; and would not answer this matter before they heard it.

I. How Paul managed this conference.

1. There were many got together to Paul; though a prisoner, the confinement he was now under, if duly considered, instead of prejudicing them against his doctrine, ought to confirm it to them; for it was a sign, not only that he believed it, but that he thought it worth suffering for. And Paul made room for them in his lodging, not fearing giving offence to the government, so that he might do good to them.

2. He was very large and full in his discourse with them; seeking their conviction more than his own vindication. (1.) He expounded, or explained, the kingdom of God to them, showed them the nature of it, how it is heavenly and spiritual, seated in the minds of men, and shines not in external pomp, but in purity of heart and life. What kept the Jews in their unbelief, was, a misunderstanding of the kingdom of God, as if it came with observation; let but that be expounded to them, and set in a true light, and they will be brought into obedience to it. (2.) He not only expounded the kingdom of God, but testified it, plainly declared it, and confirmed it by incontestable proofs, that the kingdom of God, by the Messiah's administration, was come, and was now set up in the world. He attested the extraordinary powers by which it was set up, the miracles by which it was confirmed. He bore his testimony to it from his own experience of its power and influence on him, and the

Beza. His address was the language of candor, caution, and benevolence; and he spake of his chain with great indifference, being willing to wear it for Christ's sake.

(18.) 'I appeal to Cesar from necessity [in self-defence], not out of any intent of accusing my brethren.'

V. 22. This answer shows, that the Jews in Judea despaired of success in following up their accusations at Rome; and that immense pains had been taken to misrepresent the Christians, in every part of the world.

(22.) Everywhere spoken against.] 'Some think this refers to a fact mentioned by Justin Martyr, and afterwards by Origen and Eusebi-

us, that the Jews at Jerusalem sent chosen men of the most distinguished character all over the world, representing the Christians as an atheistical sect, and charging them with the grossest calumnies, which the ignorant heathens advanced against them. The fact itself is in all respects very credible; but I apprehend that the exact date of it cannot be ascertained, nor can I anywhere find (as some have asserted) that it is mentioned by Philo Judæus.'

V. 23—29. 'As for the quotation from Isaiah, which he applies to them, I would observe, that it is quoted oftener than any other text from the O. T., (i. e. six times,) in the New: (here, and Mat. 13:14, 15. Mark 4:12. Luke 8:10. John 12:40. Rom. 11:8.) yet in such a variety of ex-



25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word; Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,

26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive;

27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

30 ¶ And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him,

y Ps. 81:11, 12. Is. 6:3. Je. 5:21. Eze. 5:6, 7. 12:2. Mat. 13:14, 15. Ro. 11:8. c. 13:46, 47. 18:6. 22:21. 26:17, 18. Ro. 11:11.

manner of his being brought into subjection to it. (3.) He not only expounded and testified the kingdom of God, but he persuaded them, urged it on their consciences, and pressed them with all earnestness to embrace it, and submit to it, and not to persist in opposition. He followed his doctrine with a warm and lively application to his hearers, which is the most proper, profitable method of preaching. (4.) He persuaded them concerning Jesus; the design and tendency of his whole discourse were to bring them to Christ, to convince them of his being the Messiah, and to engage them to believe in Him as He is offered in the Gospel. He urged upon them the things concerning Jesus, the prophecies of Him, which he read to them out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets, as pointing at the Messiah, and showed how they had all had their accomplishment in this Jesus.

3. He was very long; it should seem from morning till evening, perhaps 8 or 10 hours; the subject was curious, he was full of it; it was of vast importance, his heart was upon it; he knew not when he should have such another opportunity; therefore, without begging pardon for tiring their patience, he kept them all day; but probably he spent some time in prayer with them.

II. The effect of this discourse; one would have thought all the hearers should have yielded; but it did not prove so; the child Jesus is set for the fall of some, and the rising again of others, a Foundation Stone to some, and a Stone of stumbling to others. 1. They did not agree among themselves, v. 25. Some thought Paul was in the right, others would not admit it. This is that division which Christ came to send; that fire which He came to kindle, Luke 12: 49, 51. Paul preached with great plainness and clearness, yet his hearers could not agree about the sense and evidence of what he preached. 2. Some believed, and some believed not, v. 24. Such has always been

the success of the Gospel; to some it has been a savor of life unto life; to others, of death unto death. If all had believed, there had been no disagreement; so that all the blame of the division, lay on those who would not believe.

III. The awakening word Paul said to them at parting; he perceived, by what they muttered, that many, perhaps the greater part, were obstinate, and would not yield to what he said; and they were getting up to be gone, they had had enough; 'Hold,' says Paul, 'take one word with you before you go, and consider of it when you come home: what do you think will be the effect of your obstinate infidelity? What will you do in the end hereof? What will it come to?'

1. You will, by the righteous judgment of God be sealed up under unbelief. Turn to that scripture, Is. 6: 9, 10. and read it seriously, and tremble, lest the case there described should prove to be your case. As there are in the O. T. gospel-promises, which will be accomplished in all that believe, so there are gospel-threatenings of spiritual judgments, which will be fulfilled in them that believe not; and this is one. What was spoken by JEHOVAH, is here said to be spoken by the Holy Ghost, which proves that the Holy Ghost is God. He that believes not shall be damned, is Gospel, as well as, He that believes shall be saved, Mark 16: 16. Or, this may be explained by that of our Savior, Mat. 15: 7. 'Well did Esaias prophesy of you.' The Holy Ghost said to your fathers that which would be fulfilled in you, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand.'

(1.) 'Their great sin against God, is yours; You will not see; your eyes you have closed,' v. 27. That speaks an obstinate infidelity, and a willing slavery to prejudice. They would not prosecute their convictions, and for that reason would not admit them. They have purposely closed their eyes, lest they should see with their eyes the great things which belong to their everlasting peace; should see the glory of God, the amiableness of Christ, the deformity of sin, the beauty of holiness, the vanity of this world, and the reality of another; they will not be changed and governed by those truths, and therefore will not receive the evidence of them; lest they should hear with their ears that which they are loth to hear, the wrath of God revealed from heaven against them, and the will of God revealed from heaven to them. Thus their fathers did, they would not hear, Zech. 7: 11, 12. And what they are afraid of in shutting their eyes and ears, is, lest they should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. They kept their mind in the dark, or at least in a constant confusion and tumult, lest, if they should admit a considerate, sober thought, they should understand with their heart how much it is both their duty and their interest to be religious, and so by degrees the truth should be too hard for them, and they should be converted from the evil ways which they take pleasure in, to those exercises which they have now an aversion to. Observe, God's method is, to bring people first to see and hear, and so to understand with their hearts, and then to convert them, and bow their wills, and so heal them; which is the regular way of dealing with a rational soul: and therefore Satan prevents the conversion of souls to God, by blinding the mind, and darkening the understanding, 2 Cor. 4: 4. And the case is very sad, when the sinner joins with him herein, and puts out his own eyes. They plunge into ignorance, that they

may sin the more freely, Jer. 51: 9. This was the sin.

(2.) 'God's great judgment on them for this sin, is, his judgment on you, You shall be blind. God will give you up to a judicial infatuation; because you will not give your minds to understand, God will not give you strength and grace to understand; seeing, you shall see; you shall have abundance of miracles and signs done before your eyes, but you shall not perceive the convincing evidence of them. Take heed lest it be true of you, what Moses said to your fathers, Deut. 29: 4. and what Isaiah said to the men of his generation, Is. 29: 10—12.' How should they be happy, that will not be healed of a disease that makes them miserable? And how should they be healed, that will not be converted to the use of the methods of cure? And how should they be converted, that will not be convinced either of their disease or of their remedy? Let all that hear the Gospel, and do not heed it, tremble at this doom; for when once they are thus given up to hardness of heart, they are already in the suburbs of hell; for who shall heal them, if God do not?

2. 'Your unbelief will justify God in sending the Gospel to the Gentile world, which is the thing you look upon with such a jealous eye, v. 28. that salvation which was of the Jews only, John 4: 22. the Gentiles stand fairer for it than you do: it is sent to them, and they will hear it, and receive it, and be happy in it.' And if they thought salvation of so small a value, as not to be worth their acceptance, surely they could not grudge it the Gentiles, as too good for them, or envy them for it.

Thus also he would improve their displeasure at the favor done to the Gentiles, to their advantage, bring good out of that evil; for when he had spoken of this very thing in Rom., the benefit the Gentiles had by the unbelief and rejection of the Jews, he says, he took notice of it on purpose that he might provoke his dear countrymen the Jews to a holy emulation, and save some of them, Rom. 11: 14. And if it had not that effect on them, it would aggravate their condemnation, as it did that of the Scribes and Pharisees, who, when they saw the publicans and harlots submit to John's baptism, did not afterwards thereupon repent of their folly, that they might believe him, Mat. 21: 32.

IV. The breaking up of the assembly, as it should seem, in some disorder. 1. They turned their backs on Paul; with a resolution never to hear him preach again, nor trouble themselves with further inquiries about this matter. 2. They set their faces one against another; they that agreed to depart from Paul, yet agreed not in the reasons why they departed, but had great reasoning among themselves. Many have great reasoning, who yet do not reason right; can find fault with one another's opinions, and yet not yield to truth. Nor will men's reasoning among themselves convince them, without the grace of God to open their understandings.

V. 30, 31. We are here taking our leave of the history of blessed Paul; and therefore, since God saw it not fit we should know any more of him, we should carefully notice every particular of the circumstances here.

I. It cannot but be a trouble to us, that we must leave him in bonds for Christ, nay, and have no prospect given us of his being set at liberty. He appealed to Caesar, in hope of a speedy discharge, yet is continued a prisoner two whole years. So little reason have we to trust in men, especially despised prisoners in great men; witness Joseph's case, Gen. 40: 23. Yet some think it was early

pression as plainly proves, the apostles did not confine themselves, exactly, either to the words of the original or the Gr. version. Doddr. Sc. (28.) Salvation.] 'The original word here, *sōtērion*, is used sometimes for the Author of salvation, as Ln. 2: 30. and sometimes, as here, for the preaching of the Gospel. Possibly, God might have given the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, though the Jews had not despised and rejected it.'

V. 30, 31. Doubtless Luke, Aristarchus, and others who attended on

the apostle, or came to him, being themselves at liberty, labored diligently to make the Gospel known in the city and its vicinity, during all the time of the apostle's imprisonment; though the historian, by a modesty almost unprecedented, is wholly silent concerning his own labors and sufferings.

(30.) Two whole years.] 'As Luke concludes his history with Paul's abode at Rome, before his journey into Spain, we may infer, as Dr. More observes, that he wrote his Gospel and the Acts while the apostle

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31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

a c.4:31. Ep.6:19.

in the first of these two years, that he was first brought before Nero, and then his bonds in Christ were manifest in Cesar's court, as he says, Phil. 1:13. And at that first answer it was, that no man stood by him, 2 Tim. 4:16. But it seems, instead of being set at liberty on his appeal, as he expected, he hardly escaped out of the emperor's hands with his life; he calls it a deliverance out of the mouth of the lion, 2 Tim. 4:17. and his speaking there of his first answer, intimates, that since that, he had a second, in which he had come off better, and yet was not discharged. During these two years' imprisonment, he wrote his epistle to the Galatians, then his second epistle to Timothy, then those to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon, in which he mentions several things, particularly concerning his imprisonment; and lastly, his epistle to the Hebrews, just after he was set at liberty, as Timothy also was, who, coming to visit him, was on some account or other made his fellow-prisoner; (with him, writes Paul to the Hebrews, 13:23. if he come shortly, I will see you;) but how or by what means he obtained his liberty, we are not told; only that two years he was a prisoner. Tradition says, that after his discharge, he went from Italy to Spain, thence to Crete, and so with Timothy into Judea, and from thence to visit the churches in Asia, and at length came a second time to Rome, and there was beheaded in the last year of Nero. But Baronius himself owns, that there is no certainty of anything concerning him, betwixt his release from this imprisonment, and his martyrdom; but it is said by some, that Nero, having, when he began to play the tyrant, set himself against the Christians, and persecuted them, (and he was the first of the emperors that made a law against them, as Tertullian saith, *Apol. cap. 3.*) the church at Rome was much weakened by that persecution, and that brought Paul the second time to Rome, to re-establish the church there, and to comfort the souls of the disciples that were left, and so he fell a second time into Nero's hand. And Chrysostom relates, that a young woman that was one of Nero's misses, (to speak modestly,) being converted, by Paul's

preaching, to the Christian faith, and so brought off from the lewd course of life she had lived, Nero was incensed against Paul for that, and ordered him first to be imprisoned, and then put to death.

But, to keep to this short account here given of it,

1. It would grieve one to think that such a useful man, as Paul was, should be so long in restraint; two years a prisoner under Felix, ch. 24:27. and beside all the time between that and his coming to Rome, here two years more a prisoner under Nero. How much Paul might have done for Christ, in these five years, (for so much it was at least,) if he had been at liberty! But God is wise, and will show that He is no debtor to the most useful instruments He employs, but can and will carry on his own interest, both without their services, and by their sufferings. Even Paul's bonds fell out to the furtherance of the Gospel, Phil. 1:12, 14.

2. Yet even Paul's imprisonment was in some respects a kindness to him; before, he had always accustomed himself to sojourn in the houses of others, now he has got a house of his own, his own while he pays the rent for it; such a retirement would be a refreshment to one who had been always on the remove; so that the bringing of him into this prison, was like Christ's call to his disciples to come into a desert place, and rest awhile, Mark 6:31. When at liberty, he was in continual fear by reason of the lying in wait of the Jews, ch. 20:19. but now his prison was his castle.

II. Yet it is a pleasure to us, (for we are sure it was to him,) that we leave him at work for Christ; his mouth is not stopped; he is bound, but the Word of the Lord is not bound. Observe,

1. Whom he preached to; to all that had a mind to hear him, whether Jews or Gentiles; he received all that came to him, was not afraid of the greatest, nor ashamed of the meanest: Note, Ministers' doors should be open to such as desire to receive instruction from them, and they should be glad of an opportunity to advise those that are in care about their souls. When we cannot do what we would in the service of God, we must do what we can. He was ready to preach on the first day of the week to Christians, on the seventh day to Jews, and to all who would come on any day of the week; and he might hope the better to speed, because they came in unto him, which supposed a desire to be instructed, and a willingness to

learn; and where these are, it is probable that some good may be done.

2. What he preached; he does not fill their heads with curious speculations, or with matters of state and politics, but preaches the kingdom of God, does all he can to advance its true interests; teaches those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ; the whole history of Christ, his incarnation, doctrine, life, miracles, death, resurrection, ascension; all that relates to the mystery of godliness. Ministers, when tempted to divert from that which is their main business, should reduce themselves with this question, What does this concern the Lord Jesus Christ? What tendency has it to bring us to Him, and to keep us walking in Him? For we preach not ourselves, but Christ.

3. With what liberty he preached. (1.) Divine grace gave him a liberty of spirit; he preached with all confidence, as one that was himself well assured of the truth of what he preached, and of the worth of it, that it was what he durst stand by, and suffer for. He was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.

(2.) Divine Providence gave him a liberty of speech; no man forbidding him, giving him any check for what he did, or laying any restraint on him; the Jews, that used to forbid him to speak to the Gentiles, had no authority here; and the Roman government as yet took no cognizance of the profession of Christianity as a crime. Herein we must acknowledge the hand of God, [1.] Setting bounds to the rage of persecutors; Nero was a bloody man, and there were many, both Jews and Gentiles, in Rome, that hated Christianity; yet so it was, unaccountably, that Paul, though a prisoner, was connived at in preaching the Gospel, and it was not construed a breach of the peace. Thus God makes the wrath of men to praise Him, and restrains the remainder of it, Ps. 76:10. Though so many had it in their power to forbid Paul's preaching, (even the common soldier that kept him might have done it,) yet God so ordered it, that no man did forbid him. [2.] Providing comfort for the relief of the persecuted. It was some comfort to him to do a little; and then there were saints even in Cesar's household, Phil. 4:22. When the city of our solemnities is thus made a quiet habitation at any time, and we are fed from day to day with the bread of life, no man forbidding us, we must give thanks to God for it, and prepare for changes; still longing for that holy mountain, in which there shall never be any pricking brier or grieving thorn.

PRACT. OBS. Those who are despised for their rude and uncultivated manners, are often more hospitable, and show more genuine philanthropy, than their more polished neighbors: and heathens, or reputed barbarians, will rise up in judgment against many persons, in this civilized, Christian nation, who do not scruple to embezzle the property, or injure the persons, of such as are cast upon our shores.—True dignity has no need of affected stateliness; and pride or sloth alone deems that beneath any man, which the present exigency requires for personal or social advantage.—The Lord raises up friends to his people, in every place whither He leads them; He rewards, or enables them to requite, their benefactors in a suitable manner; and He renders them a blessing to all who are connected with them.—The cure of diseases is far more valuable when united with the means of grace and salvation; and the friends, who are raised up to a pious man by his good behavior and use-

fulness, will be above all others affectionate and liberal; as far as this is needful and consistent. The ordinary transactions of travelling are seldom worth a recital: but the comfort of 'communion with the saints,' and the kindness shown us by our friends, are deserving of a more particular mention.—Should we be called to wear a chain for Christ's sake, we ought not to be ashamed of it, but to glory in it; and though real Christians are everywhere, and at all times, in this deluded, ungodly world, 'spoken against,' as a precise, troublesome, or fanatical sect; yet we may so behave, that none can speak any personal harm of us.—If, under reproach and persecution, the true minister can obtain leave and liberty to preach the Gospel, and is favored with success, he will think his sufferings amply compensated; and be reconciled to his own want of liberty, if he finds that 'the Word of God hath free course and is glorified.'

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was still living, of whose actions he was himself an eyewitness, and by whom it is very probable this book was revised, as the ancients also say his Gospel was.

(31.) *Preaching and teaching.*] 'Many of his retired hours were also employed in corresponding. . . The 2 Tim. I think of later date.' *Id.* 'But Paul was twice at Rome, 2 Tim. 4:16. He was indeed liberated from his first captivity. But many years after he was sent again to Rome, that he might plead his cause before Cesar. In this second captivity, as all the ancient writers agree, he was beheaded by order of Ne-

ro.' *Ros.* 'All ancient writers, I think, universally agree, he was beheaded at Aqua Salvia, 3 miles from Rome: for being free of that city, he could not be crucified, as Peter was, according to the tradition of the Latin church, on the very same day. It is said, and there is great reason to believe it, that he gave his head to the fatal stroke with the greatest cheerfulness, and also that he was buried on the Via Ostiensis, two miles from Rome, where Constantine the Great erected a church to his memory, A. D. 318, which was successively repaired and beautified by Theodosius the Great, and the Empress Placidia.'

DODDR.

#### TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL NOTICES,

ILLUSTRATING PAUL'S LIFE AND TRAVELS, AND THE EARLY PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY. (See the Map, and Cuts.)

Paul was born about six years B. C. in

Tarsus:

'the capital city of Cilicia; rich, populous, and containing academies and schools, excelling even those of Alexandria and Athens, in the various branches of literature and philosophy; its inhabitants possessed all the immunities and privileges of Roman citizens, which had been conferred upon them by Julius Cesar and Augustus, in return for valuable services rendered. To it imperial Rome itself was indebted for some of the best and wisest of its professors, and, in many respects, it held a proud place even among the first cities of that day. Now, however, it is a place of no importance; for during the wars of the Greek emperors with the Saracens and Persians, it was brought low, and perhaps the only trace of former times it retains, is, that Christiani-

ty, first planted there by P., is not yet wholly extinct, but still continues to linger fondly amidst the ruined shrines that looked upon its birth. It is no stretch of fancy, therefore, to suppose, that if its existence had not been indissolubly joined with the name and memory of the celebrated apostle, every trace of it would long since have vanished from the records of time.'

It is now called Tarsous, has no good buildings, and is but ill supplied with the necessaries of life. In this province, where P. passed his childhood, nature still presents her most captivating, secluded, and romantic aspects. P. finished his education under the highest masters, in

Jerusalem:

which was then in the height of its splendor; which see described in the note, a\* the



## ACTS.—CONCLUDING NOTE.

back of the title-page. Also, the Frontispiece, compared with the note at the back of this title-page, Vol. III. and the vignette, Vol. III.

From Jerusalem, P., in the year 33, is sent as a persecutor, 160 miles, to

### Damascus.

This most ancient city [founded, say the Arabs, by Demshah, son of Canaan, son of Ham, son of Noah] was, and still is, a great centre of oriental civilization and intercourse. Lamartine remarks, 'Arab tradition represents this city, and its neighborhood, to form the site of the lost Paradise; and certainly I should think that no place upon earth was better calculated to answer one's ideas of Eden. The vast and fruitful plain, with the 7 branches of the blue stream which irrigates it; the majestic framework of the mountains; the glittering lakes which reflect the heavens upon the earth; its geographical situation between the seas; the perfection of its climate;—everything, indicates that Damascus has been one of the first towns that were ever built by the children of men,—one of the natural halts of humanity in primeval times. It is, in fact, one of those sites pointed out by the hand of God, for a city,—a site predestined to sustain a capital, like Constantinople. These are, perhaps, the only 2 cities which could not possibly have taken their post in an empire, from arbitrary selection; but which are palpably indicated by the configuration of the place. So long as the earth shall bear empires on her surface, Damascus will continue to be a great city, and Stamboul the metropolis of the world.'

Of its 2 to 400,000 inhabitants, 30,000 are Armenian Christians, whom the fanatic populace, since the conquering Ibrahim equalized in it the rights of Mahometans and Christians, are scarce restrained from massacring.—'Remembrances of P.,' says *Lamartine*, 'are always present to the Christian at Damascus. The ruins of the house are still visible, from whence he escaped during night, let down in a basket.' The principal building, in the back ground, now the chief mosque, was once the church of St. John. It has several large courts, ornamented with ancient Corinthian columns; and stands in the street called 'straight,' Acts 9:11, which runs from the E. to the W. gate, and is lined with shops. No building in the principal streets, but displays some taste. Note, I, K. II: 24.

From Damascus P. wanders in Arabia (Gal. 1:17.), probably among those rovers who have ruled, and in turn been ruled by, this turbulent capital, viz. the Bedouins, (as Damascus tells us now,) finding exercise for his trade, under the hospitable protection of these tent-dwellers,—maturating his religious views, probably, not taught of men,—and spreading the Gospel to S. Arabia, Mesopotamia, Edom, and Syria; to all which countries these tribes wander. See *Burckhardt's* Bedouins. These tribes, from the simplicity of their manners and character, are peculiarly susceptible to a purer and simpler faith, as is proved by the progress Wahabism (the puritanism of Islani) has made among them. In them, the patriarchs still live. 'We have the authority of the Mahometans for saying, that, previous to Mahomet, the 3 wandering tribes of Thauouk, Bakera, and Naclab, professed the Christian religion; and that in those very plains of Arabia Deserta, where the famed cities of Mecca and Medina were subsequently erected, many Arab families embraced Christianity, soon after the Gospel was first preached among them.' After 2 years' sojourn, P. returns to Damascus, A. D. 33, (Gal. 1:18.) and preaches openly in the synagogue; but Aretas, k. of Arabia, being now at war with Herod, the Roman tetrarch, P.'s enemies found means to persuade the governor, that P. (known to be a Roman citizen) was sent as a spy, by the Roman government, so that he was obliged to escape to Jerusalem, perhaps favored by the Arab friends he had made, some of whom are always at war with Damascus. 'Having remained 15 days at Jerusalem, the same unrelenting persecution, stirred up against him at Damascus, began to show itself in the holy city; wherein the Hellenists now sought his life. With that fearlessness, however, which formed so conspicuous an ingredient in his character, the apostle, notwithstanding the persecution which raged against him, hesitated for a time to leave Jerusalem. But many of the disciples who had seen his usefulness, and praised God that so efficient an instrument had been sent to do his work, trembled for his safety, and, in the warmth of their affection, besought and urged him to depart, and neither lessened their entreaties, nor ceased their more active exertions, till they had brought him to

### Cesarea.

on the shores of the Mediterranean. In the days of P., it was perhaps the most splendid city, as it was undoubtedly the greatest seaport, of Palestine. It was erected by Herod the Great, upon the site of an obscure fortress, called the Tower of Strato [a Phœnician king], between Dora and Joppa, about 75 miles from Jerusalem. It derived its name from Augustus Cesar, to whom it was dedicated by its founder, in the 28th year of his reign. The most remarkable feature of the city was its magnificent harbor, and the perfect shelter it afforded from every breath of wind. It was of great extent, fully as large as that of Athens, and capable of containing a royal fleet. The natural situation of the coast did not admit of much protection; but to obviate this, Herod built a prodigious mole, in a semi-circular form, extending far into the sea, and of such amazing strength as to resist every effort of the wildest tempest. One half of it was so formed as to present an impenetrable bulwark to the waves, and on the other half a strong wall, surmounted by many fortified turrets, was erected. In the centre a quay, or landing-place, was built; and around the whole a pathway was formed, on which the inhabitants of the city might enjoy the soft breezes of the Mediterranean. Near this harbor, the residences of the mariners rose upon open arches;—and around the beach, beyond it, the proud city, built in the shape of a crescent, ascended gradually from the sea. On a rising ground, at a short distance from the end of the quay, a temple was erected, which served as a guide, or beacon, to mariners; and within its walls stood two colossal statues, one of Cesar, and another of Imperial Rome personified. All the private houses in the city were built of marble; and its many temples; its palaces; its theatres; and forum, of the fairest and richest architecture, were of the same material. The building of this magnificent city commenced shortly before the Christian era, occupied 12 years, and had been finished only about 15 years before the period of the apostle's embarkation from it. It was, therefore, in its glory when he first beheld it; and although no external change had taken place during any of his subsequent visits, the fairness of its beauty had often been soiled by scenes of bloodshed and murder. The inhabitants were partly heathens, partly Jews, and, animated with a constant dislike to each other, they were invariably engaged in broils, which set all peace and order at defiance.

'With regard to the Christian church established at Cesarea, it flourished till the 7th century, when the city was captured by the Saracens, being the last of their many exploits during the Syrian war. But before this event, a flame, which was destined to outlive its marble walls, was conferred upon Cesarea. It was there that the prophet Agabus foretold that P. should be bound at Jerusalem, and be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles; it was there that the apostle was confined for 2 years; it was there that he was tried before Felix and Festus; it was there that Cornelius the centurion, who was baptized by Peter, lived; it was there that Philip, the deacon, and his 4 daughters, distinguished by the spirit of prophecy, dwelt; and it was there that Herod, even in the midst of his own splendid palaces, arrayed in cloth of silver, and in cloth of gold, surrounded by fawning courtiers, and an applauding multitude, borne up with pride, and seated on his jewelled throne, was at once struck dead, and devoured of worms, a loathsome and disgusting spectacle, because he assumed unto himself the glory which was due to God.

'Now, should we journey to Palestine, to gaze upon the fair city of the apostle's day, our journey would indeed be vain. The Arabs still call it Kisary; and perhaps this would be one of the few associations which might enable us to discern its site. Its marble halls and palaces are gone,—its temples,—its theatres,—its forum, have disappeared; the dwellings of the many are levelled with the dust; and if a single trace of them is to be found, it is in a shapeless mass, or mound of blackened earth. The waves, it is true, still beat against the ruins of the mole, for the storms and tempests of nearly 2000 years have not been able to effect the entire demolition of that stupendous work. Its huge remains are still to be seen; and here and there the crumbling ruins of its strongest towers. But the whole surrounding country is a sandy desert; the waste and silent desolation of which is only disturbed by the angry howlings of a few solitary beasts of prey.'

Embarking at once, at this port, P. reached his native city in safety, and abode there between 5 and 6 years, continuing to propagate the Gospel by making many converts, and planting several churches in Cilicia: while he was gladdened by knowing that the good seed prospered in Judea also, where, in consequence of an unexpected persecution of the Jews themselves, by the emperor Caligula, they ceased, for a time, to persecute the Christians, and the churches had rest and flourished exceedingly. Here in Cilicia, too, P. had those visions and revelations, 2 Cor. 12. In the course of time, Barnabas came to solicit P.'s assistance, with whom he went, in the year 42, to

### Antioch.

'This city, the capital of Syria, was at that period adorned with sumptuous palaces and temples; strongly and beautifully fortified, both by nature and by art, from its proud height it looked down on the bright streams of the Orontes, which bore the wealth of a hundred nations within its walls. This place, where the name of Christians first originated, and where, for many ages, the church continued so famous, was now the residence of the prefect or governor of the eastern provinces of the Roman empire, and oftentimes honored with the presence of the emperor himself, [for it was at one time second only to Rome; see *Gibbon*.]

'It was formerly called Riblath, (says *Arundell*), and was not known under the name

of Antioch, till after the reign of Seleucus Nicanor, who built it, and called it Antioch, from respect to his father Antiochus, 301 B. C. The kings of Syria, successors to Alexander the Great, generally resided at Antioch.—The city was almost square; had many gates, and much of it, on the N. side, stood on a high mountain. It was adorned with galleries [gardens]: and fine fountains. Amm. Marcel, says, it was celebrated throughout the world, and that no city exceeded it, either in fertility of soil, or richness of commerce. The emperors Vespasian and Titus, and others, granted it very great privileges; but it has likewise been exposed to very great revolutions. It was almost demolished by earthquakes in the years, A. D. 340, 394, 396, 458, 526, and 528. The emperor Justinian repaired it in 529, and called it, says Evagrius, Theopolis, (city of God.) Chosroes, k. of Persia, took it, in 548, massacred the inhabitants, and burnt it. Justinian ordered it to be rebuilt, 552. Chosroes took it again, in 574, and destroyed the walls. In 588, it suffered a dreadful earthquake, whereby 60,000 perished; it was again rebuilt, and was again exposed to new calamities. The Saracens took it 637, or 8, in the reign of Heraclius; Nicephorus Phocas retook it 966. Cedrenus relates, that in 970 an army of 100,000 Saracens besieged it without success, but afterwards subdued it: added new fortifications, and made it almost impregnable. Godfrey of Bouillon besieged it, 1097. The siege was long and bloody; the Crusaders, by their indefatigable labors, and by a secret correspondence in the place, carried it, in 1098. Frequently attacked by Saracens, it was retaken, in 1268, by the Sultan of Egypt, and demolished. It has ever since lost its reputation and magnificence, and has groaned under the dominion of the Turk. It was near Antioch, at the passage of Bylan Boghaz, that the Turkish army was defeated by the Egyptians under Ibrahim Pasha, and, in 2 days after, it surrendered (1st Aug. 1832) to him.

'Antioch abounded with great men, and the church in this city was long governed by illustrious prelates; but it suffered much on several occasions, sometimes being exposed to the violence of heresies, and at other times being rent with violent schisms.—The Bp. of Antioch has the title of patriarch, and constantly has had a great share in the affairs of the Eastern church. This city, itself, formerly so beautiful, so flourishing, and so illustrious, is scarcely anything at present but a heap of ruins; the city walls are still standing, but within the city there is nothing but ruins, gardens, and some bad houses. The Orontes runs near it, outside.' See the engraving, p. 62.

In the year 44, Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch from Jerusalem, whither they had gone with alms, and in 45 departed thence to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, being separated to that work by the solemn and express appointment of the Holy Spirit. They came first to

### Seleucia.

a fortified seaport, a short way N. of the mouth of the Orontes, 12 miles below Antioch, and named from its founder, Seleucus Nicanor, the most celebrated builder in the world. It was also sometimes called *Seleucia ad Mare*, (on the sea,) to distinguish it from 9 other cities of the same name, in Syria, and is mentioned in 1 Mac. as the termination of the conquests of Ptolemy Philometor. The ruins of it are now called Kapse, and lie on the side of a rocky mountain, nearly a mile from the ocean.'

'The apostle and his companions, did not, however, remain to preach here, but immediately embarked for the celebrated island of

### Cyprus.

about 60 miles W. or rather S. W. of Seleucia. That it was of great importance, may be gathered from the known fact, that it contained at least 15 cities of considerable note, and was at one time divided into no fewer than 9 kingdoms. This, combined with the fact of its being the native land of Barnabas, and the residence of some Christians who had fled from the Jewish persecution, probably induced P. and his companions to commence their ministerial office there. They may likewise have been influenced by the knowledge of the gross idolatry and infamous wickedness into which the blinded inhabitants had fallen. Venus was the principal deity they worshipped, and, according to the established laws of the country, every woman in it was obliged to prostitute herself to strangers, [thus vilely was foreign trade encouraged!] More need not be said, to give a complete idea of the character of those to whom the apostle, in the spirit of brotherly love and kindness, now went to preach repentance, and forgiveness of their sins.—They landed at

### Salamis.

afterwards called Constantia, and subsequently Famagusta. In the apostle's day it was a named and extensive city, on the E. shores of Cyprus, and being the first place at which Christianity was preached, it was, in primitive times, constituted the metropolitan city of the island. It is also said, at a subsequent period, to have been the scene where Barnabas, the beloved companion and fellow-laborer of the apostle, suffered martyrdom. At least, his body was long after found here, buried, with a copy of the Gospel of Matthew, written in his own hand, lying on his breast.

Having finished the work given them to do at Salamis, the apostle and his companions crossed the island, preaching at the various towns and cities on their route, till they came to

### Paphos.

then a celebrated city on its W. coast; but of which 24 or 30 huts are now the miserable remains. In it many Romans of considerable note, as well as an immense number of unconverted Jews, resided. But they were far outnumbered by the priests and worshippers of Venus, who congregated there in thousands. In Paphos, the most celebrated temple of the goddess was erected, and so devoted was the attachment of her followers, that one of her distinguishing names was that of the Paphian and Cyprian queen. Yet P. had great success, even here: the conversion of a person filling so distinguished a situation as Sergius Paulus, induced the Cyprians to listen with much attention to the doctrines of Paul, and although it is historically known, that the worship of Venus continued in the island for nearly 400 years after this period, many persons, following the example of their wise and prudent leader, embraced the Christian faith. Indeed, so rapidly did Christianity spread from Paphos, that although, within 70 years afterwards, no fewer than 240,000 of the Christian inhabitants were murdered by the Jews, its progress could not be checked, and this barbarity only led to the total extermination of the latter race from the island. But religion there now stands at a very low ebb, and, like the country itself, has fallen into a most wretched and desolate condition.'

On leaving Cyprus, P., Barnabas, and John proceeded, in the year 46, from Paphos to Pamphylia, and landing near the mouth of the river Caystras, or Cestros, after a voyage of about 140 miles, they proceeded to

### Perga.

the capital of the province, situated on the banks of the river, about 12 miles from the sea. The inhabitants of this city, famed as the birth-place of Apollonius, the geometrician, were worshippers of Dinna, and a celebrated temple was erected to her on an eminence, near the city, and in it solemn festivals were annually observed. Indeed, so devoted were the inhabitants to her worship, that their deity was often distinguished by the name of Dinna Pergena.

P. was met and opposed by the numerous priests of Dinna here, and did not remain long; but at a subsequent period, his preaching appears to have been attended with more success: for a Christian church, of considerable eminence, was established at Perga, and flourished till towards the close of the 8th century. Now it has passed away; and with it, Perga, as a place of any note, may be said to have likewise vanished from the earth.

Taking Titus with them, instead of John, Paul and Barnabas next came to

### Antioch in Pisidia.

the capital of the small province of Pisidia, and about 90 miles N. of Perga. This town, in which there were great numbers of Jews resident, was also built by Seleucus, in honor of his father; and, to distinguish it from the numerous other cities of the same name in W. Asia, was usually denominated Antiochia Pisidia. The remains, says *Arundell*, 'consist chiefly of prostrate temples, a theatre, churches, and between 20 and 30 arches of the most magnificently constructed aqueduct I ever beheld. [See the engraving, p. 167.] Immense squared blocks of stones and sculptured fragments, and the quantity of ancient pottery, tell us we were on the site of a great city. The superb members of a temple, which from the *thyrsus* on many of them, evidently belonged to Bacchus, was the first thing we saw. Passing on, a long and immense building, (160 ft. by 80.) constructed with prodigious blocks of marble, and standing E. and W., exhibited the remains of a church of Antioch! The ground plan, with the circular end for the bema, all were there; perhaps this was one of the very earliest temples consecrated to the Savior! The cut (from *Arundell*) shows, from the remains, the ground-plan of the church of Antioch, 160 feet long, without the portico, and 80 wide.' 'Perhaps we were standing on the very spot where P. made his admirable sermon; for it is very natural to suppose the oldest church was built on the site of the synagogue. N. are the arches of a grand underground passage, and the platform, and the ground-plan of a very large temple. E. are the remains of a theatre, 150 ft. diam.'



Beyond this, ascending still E., are vestiges of a small church.' *Arundell* also men-



## ACTS. — CONCLUDING NOTE.

tions, as near by, a curious and magnificent portico, or temple of the god Janus, and also foundations of the acropolis, probably. The whole were on the little hill, seen in the left front of the engraving (opposite page). The village in the distance is Yalabatz. The view near the aqueduct was enchanting, comprehending the modern village (Yalabatz), with groves of poplar and weeping willows in the plain; beyond rise the snowy heights of Taurus, under which appeared a lake, probably of Eyerhir. Not a Christian now resides here, except a single Greek in the kham! Antioch has usually been placed 6 hours N., at Aksher, but A. thinks this was Philomelium. 'This was the first city in which the Gospel was publicly preached to the Gentiles; and great success attended it also in the surrounding country.' Driven thence by the unbelieving Jews, they proceeded to

### Iconium,

'80 miles E. of Antioch. It was then a large and populous city, situated on the banks of the lake Trogilus, in the richest and most fertile part of Lycaonia, of which province it was the capital. The inhabitants were Jews, Greek proselytes, and idolatrous Gentiles. As at Antioch, so at Iconium, Paul left many firm and zealous professors of Christianity behind him. These propagated the true faith so successfully, that, for a period of 800 years after the apostle's day, the Christian church continued to flourish there. Indeed, the religion so earnestly and uncompromisingly taught by him, can scarcely be said ever to have totally disappeared from the city. It is one of the few places, in which his voice was heard, but survives the wreck of time, and has not yet fallen into ruin and decay. It is now known by the name of Cogni or Konieh, the most remarkable and noted city of Caranania; and although no longer, as once, the seat of empire of the Turkish kings of Lesser Asia, is still the residence of a considerable Pasha. It is surrounded by a strong wall, several miles in circumference, fortified by 108 splendid towers, at equal distances. The infidel alone, it is true, is now allowed to inhabit the city, properly so called, but many Armenians and Christians of the Greek church, with their archbishop, still reside in its suburbs.'

On leaving this place, Paul and his companions fled to

### Lystra,

another city of Lycaonia, about 45 miles S. from Iconium, and the birth-place of Timothy, where also Lois and Eunice were converted. The headlong stupidity of this ignorant and superstitions people, after worshipping them as gods, was, of course, easily aroused, by interested misrepresentations, to stone Paul as a magician; and left him dead, and contemptuously unburied, upon the highway. Immediately on his miraculous restoration to life, Paul quits Lystra for

### Derbe,

about 20 miles S. E. of Lystra. Gaius, and the apostle John, were born here; it is not otherwise of any note.

After preaching in the neighboring regions of Phrygia and Galatia, and, as some think, establishing the churches of *Colosse*, (see Pref. to Col.) *Laodicea*, (see Pref. to Rev.) and *Hierapolis*, (see on Col. 4:13) (cities of considerable importance in Phrygia), though this is doubtful, determining to revisit and establish the churches he had planted, the apostle returned from Derbe to Lystra, thence to Iconium, and then to Antioch in Pisidia, 'ordaining elders in every church.' They then retraced their steps to Perga, where he tarried to preach, with what success we are not informed. Leaving it, they come to

### Attalia,

another city of Pamphylia, founded by Attalus, k. of Pergamus, whence its name. It is situated on a fine bay in the Mediterranean, about 30 miles S. W. of Perga.

'It is now known by the name of Satalia, or Statalia, and is still a place of some consequence, having been preserved from ruin by the Turks, who are careful to keep its fortifications and castle in repair, as a protection to their trade.'

Here they embarked for Antioch in Syria, and arrived there again, after a circuit of 2 or 3 years. At Antioch they remained 2 full years (A. D. 47, 48), during which P. and Barnabas were sent to the Council at Jerusalem, and, returning, made some further stay, probably during the remainder of the year 49, teaching and preaching with many assistants. About the beginning of the year 50, P. proposed to Barnabas to take another circuit through the churches in Asia, but they disagreeing on account of Mark, Barnabas went to Cyprus, and P. taking Silas, passed, through Syria, and Cilicia, (whose churches were probably founded during Paul's 6 years' residence at Tarsus,) to Derbe, and Lystra (where he took Timothy), through Phrygia and Galatia, confirming the churches in those parts, and 'delivering to each a copy of the decretal Epistle of the Council at Jerusalem. Leaving Lystra, the three passed by Antioch to the E., and through Phrygia. 'The inhabitants of this country were proverbially of a servile and stupid temper, "sero sapient Phryges," noted for the effeminacy and lightness of their conversation, superstitious to excess, worshippers of Cybele, and said to have been the inventors of augury, and other kinds of divination. Among these benighted people they do not appear to have made any stay, but passed on to Galatia (so called from the Gauls settled there, see Pref. to Gal.), a region which contained no fewer than 22 considerable cities. Here the apostle was received with marked veneration, and preached most successfully, planting many churches. These attained considerable excellence, and remained in a flourishing condition for 900 years, after which they were reduced by the Mahometans, Saracens, and Turks, and in Galatia Christianity is now almost buried in oblivion.' See *Tuzier's* trav. 1824.

Forbidden to preach in Asia proper, (Ionia, Eolia, Lydia,) they passed into Mysia; here, among a base and contemptible race, P. preached, and some vestiges of a Christian church have constantly remained there. Hence they would have gone E. to Bithynia, but were forbidden, and came by Lesser Mysia, which separated Bithynia from the region of Troas, to the city and port of

### Troas,

its capital, where Luke joined them. 'This city was built on the Hellespont, by Lysimachus, one of Alexander's captains, peopled from the neighboring places, and originally called Alexandria, or Troas Alexandria, in his honor; but it soon lost its more distinguished name, and, with the surrounding country, retained that of Troas merely. Its site was only about 4 miles from that of the famous Troy, and in the apostle's day it was a noted seaport, where travellers from the upper part of Asia usually embarked for Europe.'

Invited to preach in Macedonia, the 4 set sail (A. D. 50,) with a fair wind for *Stimothrace*, or *Samandracchi*, as it is now called, an island about 20 miles round, famous anciently for the worship of Ceres, Proserpine, Philo, [Pluto?] Mercury, Castor, Pollux, Neptune, &c. Its religious mysteries (of the Cabiri) were so celebrated, that they were held in equal estimation with the famous Eleusinia mysteries, and foreigners, of the highest character, deemed it an honor to be initiated in them. Paul however did not land here, but, passing it, landed at

### Neapolis,

now Napoli, or Christopolis, a seaport, originally belonging to Thrace, but afterwards taken into Macedonia, and deservedly celebrated as the first spot in Europe trodden by the great apostle's feet.

Here they made no stay, and do not even appear to have preached, yet Christianity has been more or less known and acknowledged by its inhabitants down to the present day.'

Journeying 15 miles further, they came to

### Philippi,

'the ancient Dato, but subsequently named Philippi, in honor of Philip, k. of Macedonia, father of Alexander, by whom the city was rebuilt and beautified. It was the chief city of that part of Macedonia, a Roman colony, and the first place belonging to Romans, at which P. was ordained to preach.' As the Romans were under many a brand of prophecy, and detested by the Jews, therefore, perhaps, a supernatural call was given to the work of preaching to them.

'These Roman colonies were of two sorts; the one founded where no city had ever been, or, if it had, was totally destroyed. Such were peopled with none but Romans. The other sort were colonies in cities already built and inhabited, to which persons who had served in the wars, and such Romans as chose, were permitted to remove. These associated with the former inhabitants of the place, but at the same time they had a district of the town assigned to them to inhabit, and a portion of the country to cultivate and till. Both kinds of colonies, however, enjoyed the privileges of Roman citizens, and were governed by Roman laws. Philippi belonged to the latter class, and it is thought that the honor was conferred upon it, both by Julius and Augustus Cesar: by the 1st, in memory of the battle fought on the adjacent plains, betwixt him and Pompey the Great, and by the 2d, in honor of the struggle [there] betwixt him and Mark Antony on the one side, and Brutus and Cassius on the other. Its inhabitants, therefore, were not exclusively Romans, and there were many Jews in the city.'

Hence, after much both endured and enjoyed, Paul proceeds to

### Amphipolis,

'This city, now Embolis, was built about 500 B. C. by the famous Athenian Cimon. It was the capital of the 1st division of Macedonia, situated on the confines of Thrace, close to the banks of the river Strymon, and contained about 10,000 inhabitants.'

### Apollonia,

through which they next passed, was also a city of Macedonia, betwixt Amphipolis and Thessalonica, and although of not so much consequence as the former, in any point of view, had yet sufficient importance to attract the apostle's attention, and

may probably have been the residence of some learned men, as it is known that men of talents did at different periods reside at Apollonia, and that a considerable school, at which Augustus Cesar acquired his knowledge of the Greek language, was established there. It would appear that P. staid not long in these two cities, nor do we read of converts made or churches planted at either. He next arrived at

### Thessalonica,

which, both from the length of time he resided there, and the eminent success attending his preaching, deserves more particular notice.

'In ancient days, this splendid city was called Haliis, and Therræ; but Philip, father of Alexander, subsequently named it Thessalonica, in commemoration of a great victory obtained over the Thessalians. In after days, it fell successively into the hands of the Romans, the Saracens, the Greeks, the Venetians, and the Ottoman Turks, in whose possession, under the name of Saloniki, it still continues. Even now it is a place of considerable importance, being upwards of 5 miles in circumference, and containing about 60,000 inhabitants. [See engraving, Pref. to Thess.] The traces, too, if the expression may be used, of the apostle's visit to it, yet remain, in so far as about 30 churches, belonging to the Christians of the Greek church, still rear their heads in the midst of about 50 Jewish synagogues, and an equal number of Mahometan mosques, or temples. This however is but the picture of it in its degenerate days. In the apostle's time, it was the capital of all the countries comprehended in the Roman province of Macedonia, the residence of the proconsul and questor, the seat of government, and a place much resorted to by strangers. Its situation at the bottom of the [deep] Therræic gulf (now Gulf of Saloniki), admirably adapted it for commerce, and consequently the trade carried on by its inhabitants was most extensive. A great number of Jews, too, resided in it, and there was, at least, one, if not more, synagogues in the city. All these circumstances combined, and especially the consideration, that Thessalonica was [like Antioch] the temporary residence of so many foreign merchants, who, on their return to their own countries, would naturally publish the conversion of the inhabitants, and an account of the miracles by which they had been converted, induced the apostle to take up his abode there longer than usual.'

'P.'s great success here, among a people whose minds were probably enlarged by their wide intercourse with mankind, excited, of course, the inveterate hostility of the Jews. In every large town, particularly of a mercantile description, there are hosts of idle and dissolute characters to be found, lingering about the market, and other places of public resort. To these the Jews applied, and, by mingled persuasions and promises, easily induced them, knowing little, and caring less about the matter, to adopt their views. The train thus ignited, and the [propensities] of a promiscuous rabble excited, it was an easy matter [by a few popular catchwords, perhaps] for the designing agitators to turn the fury of the mob in any direction they chose. The tumult and uproar having spread to an enormous extent, they accordingly seized the proper moment, and directed the popular attention to the house of Jason, where they knew the apostle lodged, in the hope, doubtless, of laying violent hands on him, and inducing the people at once to sacrifice him in their blind and [hellish] zeal. In this hope they were disappointed; and P.'s friends, fearing the probable result of another attempt, conveyed him and Silas out of the city by night, and set them forward on their way to

### Berea,

another great and populous city of Macedonia, near the Therræic gulf, about 40 miles W. of Thessalonica. The noble (for they loved truth, come whence it would) and candid disposition of the Bereans received the Gospel with greater favor, but his Thessalonian enemies pursuing Paul thither, at last drove him from Berea (where, however, he leaves Silas and Timothy awhile) to

### Athens,

'situated in a [once] beautiful plain of Attica, the fairest part of Greece,—on the gulf of the Ægean, which runs up to the Morea. [See its plan on the map.] It lay about 250 miles to the S. of Berea, and 35 E. of Corinth, [and, in its splendor, was 22 miles in circuit.] At the period of the apostle's visit, it maintained its place as one of the most renowned cities in the world; although it unquestionably had then somewhat retrograded from its pristine splendor, in consequence of the seat of government having been fixed at Corinth, after the conquest of Greece had been completed by the Romans. It was still, however, so celebrated, as being the seat of science, philosophy, and the arts, and, according to Cicero, the fountain whence civility, learning, religion, and the laws flowed to all other nations, that it deservedly obtained the name of the University of the Roman Empire and the world. It was flocked to from all quarters, for the purpose of acquiring knowledge in every branch of literature, and so essential was it to completing the education of the man of wisdom and manners, to have been there, that, according to an old writer, "He who had not seen Athens was accounted a block; he who had seen it, and was not in love with it, a dull, stupid ass; and he who, after having seen it, could be willing to leave it, fit for nothing but to be a packhorse." Yet, notwithstanding the many advantages the inhabitants of this splendid city enjoyed,—notwithstanding their eloquence, their learning, their talents, their wit, their knowledge of the arts and sciences, and of all that might be presumed, in the eyes of a misjudging world, to raise man above his fellow-man, it remains as matter of deep regret to be added, that they were sunk in the grossest superstition and idolatry.'

What then must have been the benevolent, the truly wise apostle's thoughts, the grief of his keenly sensitive heart, while walking among the 30,000 idols of Athens! He is brought before the court of *Areopagus*, not indeed as an accused person, but that his new doctrines, 'if they met the approbation of the *Areopagites*, might receive their sanction, and be admitted, with the rest, into the extensive code of their religious regulations.' How discouraging the prospect of success for the simple story of the uncompromising Gospel, whose first word sweeps all other religions away!

This court or senate-house, we must recollect, 'was situated upon *Mars-hill*,—in former times, almost in the centre of the city, although now, [see the plan on the map, here with,] entirely without its bounds. Its foundations, formed of enormous blocks of stone, upon which a terrace or platform was raised, still remain to show its great extent. In the centre of the platform there was a tribunal [the *pyx*, still to be seen] cut from the solid rock, and all around it seats, likewise made of stone, were ranged in a semi-circular form. There the senate met, and in the open air heard and determined every cause. The wisdom and uprightness guiding the decisions of this court, which, before the conquest of Greece by the Romans, used to judge in all causes, both of a civil and religious nature, were held in such esteem, that even after the Roman proconsuls had been sent to rule in Greece, it was no uncommon thing for them to refer difficult causes to the judgment of the *Areopagites*. But, in the apostle's day, their consequence and splendor had both dwindled away,—their jurisdiction in civil matters was at an end,—and although they still pretended to judge of those of a religious nature, and maintained that no strange worship could be introduced till it had first received their approbation, their celebrated court-house had, in fact, become little more than a point of meeting, or place of general rendezvous, for those who desired either to tell or hear something new.'

Here, then, P. stood, beneath the clear sky of that classic land, in the midst of a countless crowd of human beings; around him lay the plain, studded with temples, and palaces, amid groves of olives and other trees; the marble porticoes of the academy, and gardens full of art; beyond, circled the blue hills, opening behind him upon the sparkling sea; in front, arose the perfect temple of Theseus, the forum, and the populous city; stretching to the right, towered terrace upon terrace, palace, theatre, and many-columned temple, up the steep hill of the Acropolis, crowned with the everlasting Parthenon. How difficult his task, to turn the attention of such an auditory, in such a place, from the things of time to those of eternity!

'Though there are still thousands of remains of antiquity at Athens, the birth-place of Solon, Socrates, Aristides, Demosthenes, Miltiades, Themistocles, and hundreds of others celebrated in philosophy, oratory, and war, is for ever gone. The modern city, [see the engraving, at Acts 17:] now made the capital of the *Kingdom of Greece*, does not contain above 10,000 inhabitants; but, strange to say, notwithstanding the little success which attended the preaching of the apostle, Christianity has maintained its footing, and lingered around the ruined shrines of Athens till the present day. About three fourths of its inhabitants are now Christians, and have a bishop at their head.' Flourishing schools, also, are supported and taught there, by Christians of our own distant land, which promise, under her present protestant king, incalculable good to regenerated Greece.

### Corinth

was P.'s next station; here he remained a yr. and 6 mo., i. e. the latter part of A. D. 51, the whole of 52, and the early part of 53. 'This city, anciently called Epirus, is supposed to have been founded in the time of Solomon. For many centuries it was governed by a race of kings, and subsequently by an aristocracy, till the time of the consul Mummius, who took and reduced it to ashes, in revenge of a gross insult, put by the inhabitants upon the Roman ambassadors. About a century after, it was rebuilt by Julius Cesar, and peopled with a Roman colony. It then became the capital of Greece, and one of the fairest cities of the world. The citadel, called *Acr-cornibus*, built upon an almost inaccessible promontory, rendered it well-nigh impregnable; and this, joined to its central position upon the narrow isthmus betwixt the Peloponnesus, or Morea, and the continent of Greece, open to the Adriatic and Ægean, by its suburbs, the seaports of Lecheum, on the Gulf of Lepanto, and Cenchea on the Gulf of



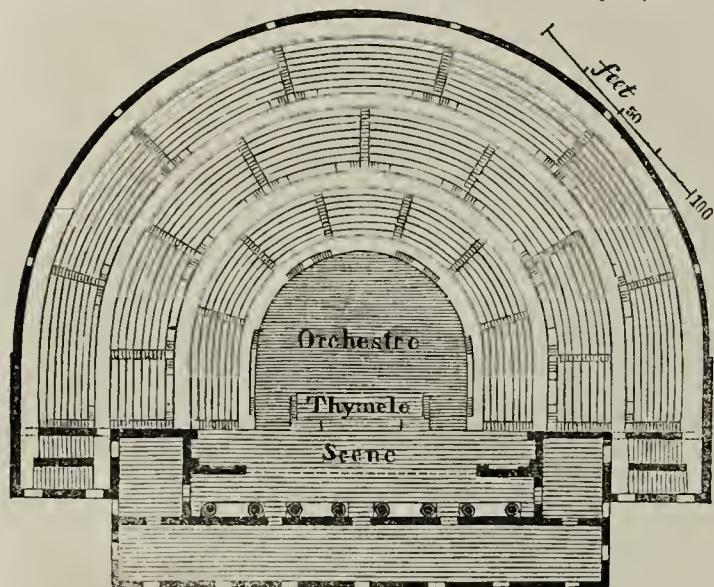
ACTS.—CONCLUDING NOTE.

Egina, enabled it, on the W. and on the E., to command a lucrative and increasing trade with every quarter of the known world. In consequence, the inhabitants soon became enriched, and when the apostle arrived, it had become more famed for its extent and population, and the philosophy, politeness, learning, and wealth of its inhabitants, than any other city in Greece. But how worse than futile is intellectual without moral education! While the arts and sciences flourished in so fair a soil, they brought pride of heart in their train, and the exuberant riches of the people produced many sorts of iniquity and vice. Lasciviousness was a reigning sin among the Corinthians, and so far was the grossest idolatry recognised, that a splendid temple was erected to the worship of Venus, in the vile service of which some thousand females were employed. The fact, that the infamous Thais, supposed to have been one of these, demanded 10,000 drachms for one night's lodging, most effectually discloses one manner in which the wealth of the inhabitants was squandered, and the grossness of the abomination into which they had sunk. No wonder, then, that here a fearful dejection of mind should have weighed down even the firmness of the apostle, requiring the immediate interposition of his Master to comfort and encourage him. Acts 18:9, 10. Thus strengthened, his success was great; and a new source of doing good, viz. by writing, seems now first to have opened itself to his mind, and from Corinth he wrote several of his epistles.

The considerable church Paul labored so hard to establish in this celebrated city, sunk, at no distant period, into a wretched and degenerate condition: false teachers arose among the Corinthians; disorders and schisms were the consequences; some of the disciples pretended to be followers of P.—some of Peter,—some of Apollos,—and some, discarding all minor teachers, pretended to be followers of Jesus Christ alone. Yet, notwithstanding this confusion, the church did not, as might have been expected, fall to pieces. It has maintained a place at Corinth to the present day, and one half of the inhabitants are still Christians, with an archbishop at their head. But Corinth is now a decayed and desolate place. [see Pref. to I Cor.:] containing, at the highest, not more than 2000 miserable inhabitants. Embarking at

*Cenchrea,*  
*Ephesus.*

(Note, Rom. 16:1.) Paul, on his way to Cesarea and Jerusalem, sails 250 miles, to the extent, trade, and wealth of this metropolis of proconsular Asia, has already been mentioned, and its famous temple described. It was 'beautiful for situation,' being 'in the side of a gently sloping hill, by the banks of the river Cayster, with a far extended verdant plain, stretching to the W.' See the engraving, Pref. to Eph.; also another, p. 166, which shows its theatre, Ac. 19:29. The cut herewith is a plan of the Grecian theatre, from Vitruvius; it differs a little from the Roman; comp. cut, Ac. 19:29.



'Lost and degraded as the Ephesians were, the apostle, during his short stay among them, at this period, made a stronger impression than he had done upon the minds of many a more enlightened people.'—Proceeding 700 miles, to Cesarea, P. went thence to Jerusalem, and thence to Antioch in Syria, where he made some stay, in 54, then through the remainder of Syria and Cilicia, and again visited all the churches of Galatia and Phrygia, and came back to Ephesus. During this residence, probably about the beginning of the year 56, P. received and answered a letter from Corinth. 'Combining example with instruction too, he not only led a blameless life, during the full two years he staid here, but even with the world of employment he had upon his hands, labored for his own maintenance, that no aspersions might [in this trading community] be cast upon the purity of his motives, nor the greatest enemy of the Gospel have it in his power to say, that he taught its precepts for the sake of worldly gain. The consequences were brilliant in the extreme. Ephesus was the resort of many strangers, some of whom flocked thither to pay reverence to their renowned goddess; others to be instructed in the arts of sorcery and magic, for which the city stood in high repute,—others to prefer their suits and solicitations to the Roman governor of the province,—others for the sake of commerce; and not a few to learn more of those doctrines and miracles, of which they had heard so much, and with their own ears to listen to the instructions the apostle gave. An innumerable multitude of these wayfaring people were converted to the Christian faith, and each returning to his own home, preached the Gospel to his benighted kinsmen; so that, ere Paul's stay at Ephesus was at an end, the joyful tidings had not only been heard throughout the whole land, even from one end of Lesser Asia to the other, but many churches were founded, to which the apostle subsequently referred, when he declared that "they had not seen his face in the flesh."'

'The church, decayed in the 6th century, was finally crushed by the Mohammedan power, and Ephesus is now levelled in the dust. Scarcely one stone remains on the top of another; [the foundations only of some churches may be traced, and one is now a mosque:] the site of the temple is unknown, and, with the exception of a few wretched and dependent Greek peasants, inhabiting some miserable huts at Aiasuluk, not a living being breathes within its walls. Its candlestick has indeed "been removed out of its place."'

'On his departure (A. D. 55) from Ephesus,' says Horne, 'P. went first to Troas, expecting to meet Titus, on his return from Corinth, (2 Cor. 2:12, 13.) Here he preached a short time with great success, and then proceeded to Macedonia, where he received the contributions for Judea. In his progress (in 57) from Macedonia into Greece, he is supposed to have preached on the confines of Illyricum. [N. of Macedonia,] as mentioned in Rom. 15:19. [Remains of the church established here still exist.] He continued three months in Greece, principally, it is supposed, at Corinth (whence he wrote Rom.); and having received the contributions, sailed from Philippi to Troas,' and thence to

*Assos,*  
*Mylene.*

'20 miles S. of Troas, celebrated only for its quarries of sarcophagus [flesh-consuming] stone.' Here he neither preached nor remained for any time, but set sail for about 40 miles S. It was the principal city of Lesbos, one of the largest islands of the Archipelago, celebrated as the birth-place of Alceus, the poet; Pittacus, one of the 7 wise men; Diaphnes, the orator; Theophanes, the historian; and Arion, the musician. The whole island was sometimes called Mytilene, and sometimes Pentapolis, from its 5 cities, Issa, Pyrrha, Eressos, Arisba, and Mytilene. There was no Christian church in it for many centuries after the apostle's time. At the present day, although not a place of any consequence, it is fortified and garrisoned by the Turks.

*Chios.*

now Scio, 'a considerable island, famed both in ancient and modern days for its wine, its figs, and its marble: and now for its excellent mastic. Here, more than in all the Turkish dominions, Christians have enjoyed the greatest civil and religious liberty, secured by treaty, with Mahomet II., and unviolated; but on the rebellion of the Greeks, the Turks perpetrated a general massacre of its Greek inhabitants.' 'Previous to the 5th cent. when the first Christian church was established, human sacrifici-

ces were common here. Many Genoese now inhabit it. 50 miles S. E., Paul came to for many ages a state of considerable impotence, and governed as a commonwealth. But from the days of the apostle, downward, the Persians, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, and Turks, have in turns mastered it. Here Juno and Pythagoras were born, and Lycurgus died. Fear of the numerous pirates of those seas, has caused the Thruka almost to desert it, but many Christians (remnants of the church established in the 2d century) reside there, under an archbishop. Stretching a short way E., the vessel next touched at

*Trogyllium,*  
*Miletus.*

a promontory and small town at the foot of Mt. Mycale, on the Asiatic coast. Here he landed, and sailing next morning, arrived that evening at the capital of Caria and Ionia, then noted for its extensive harbors, capable of containing the whole Persian fleet,—for its neighborhood to the famous river Meander, winding through the surrounding plains,—and for its splendid temple of Apollo. It was founded by Cretans, and from its 4 harbors, extended its commerce and colonies to remote regions, as the Black Sea, and some think to Ireland even. They retained independence till they agreed to pay Cressus tribute; withstood Darius, and Alexander, who took their city, but pardoned and liberated them. They took the side of the Romans in the Antiochian war. 'The church established here in the 5th cent. maintained itself 400 years, when it altogether disappeared, and since the Saracens ravaged the surrounding country, the city has followed it, and now only exists in the few miserable huts of Melas.' It is still called Palat, or Palatia, 'the Palaces.' The ruins of a theatre, of 457 ft. marble front, heathen walls, pedestals, broken arches, inscriptions, and some fragments of churches, remain; rubbish and thickets overspread the whole site of the city. 'Here P. sent for the church elders at Ephesus, 36 miles off, and gave them his affecting farewell charge. On the day after he reached

*Cos.*

island and town, 30 miles S. W., formerly celebrated for its stately temples of Juno and Apollo, its wines, and transparent robes; also as the birth-place of Hippocrates and Apollon. So early as Jehoshaphat, it was a separate kingdom, but fell under the Persians, Parthians, and Romans, in turn. Christianity was introduced about 300 years after P.'s visit, but it never flourished much, and when the island, now called Staniora, Lango, or Zia, indifferently, fell under the Saracens, it was almost totally lost. 40 miles S. E. he came to the famous

*Rhodes.*

10 miles from the coast, 40 long, 15 broad, and once sacred to the sun; no one need to be reminded of its colossus, [on the most picturesque site in the world,]—of the expertness of its navigators,—its romantic scenery,—its fertile soil,—the exquisite clearness of its air,—the delicious brightness of its climate,—its myriads of fragrant roses, whence some derive its name,—nor of the height of excellence to which the study of eloquence and the mathematics was carried there. At this time it was part of the province of the islands; afterwards it fell, in turn, to the Saracens, Greeks, Seljukian Turks, the gallant knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and the Ottomans. Christianity was introduced about the middle of the 4th cent., and still has footing among the oppressed Greeks, now, with the Spanish Jews, its principal inhabitants, who number about 30,000. [Of the view (cut), from the heights above Rhodes, an eyewitness says, 'Its beauty, unsurpassed in the E., is augmented by the excessive purity of the atmosphere: how clearly, almost ethereally, distinct is each distant bark on the channel, and each mountain-peak, precipice, and forest of Asia! It is a splendid panorama, over which, at noon, there is a pale purple haze, like a faint shroud, which, as the sun sinks lower, melts away. The ruins of the ancient kingdoms of Asia Minor, stretched out upon the opposite capes and hills, desolate and solitary, are almost visible to fancy's eye; at least, there are dim forms and shadows which resemble them.' How glorious were the scenes of peopled Asia, where P. was born and bred, and wandered; yet he forgot all for Christ!]

This important naval power founded colonies in Sicily, Italy, and Spain; its commercial laws were adopted as the basis of maritime law on all the Mediterranean coasts, and some fragments still retain their authority. This island was the last barrier of Christian chivalry to Ottoman power; it was taken by Solyman II., after six months' siege in 1523. Paul next came to

*Patara.*

a 'maritime city of Syria, in Asia Minor, much celebrated for the excellence of its harbors, and the beauty and magnificence of its many splendid temples; one of which was dedicated to Apollo, and contained an oracle no ways inferior to Delphi. Christianity was introduced here in the 4th cent., and flourished till the Saracens' conquest in the 9th. Its fair harbor is now choked with sand, and its far-spread ruins attest its ancient greatness. Here Paul took another ship for

*Tyre.*

a strong place, even in Joshua's time.' See Ezek. 27: end, and cut, Is. 23:1. The cut of the colored page, herewith, shows part of the mole now left. The fate of the continental city is what Ezekiel foretold; and what Zechariah (9:3.) said of the insular city is also come to pass! It was finally razed by the Mamelukes of Egypt, to prevent its being a refuge for the persecuted Christians. After praying in an oriental manner, and fasting, he left for

*Ptolemais.*

'30 miles distant, now called Acre. Few cities have undergone more reverses. When given to the tribe of Ashur, it was called Achza; Ptolemy Philadelphus, rebuilding it, named it Ptolemais. In the Crusades it suffered much, both from the Infidels and Christians; in the middle ages it was a place of great magnificence and strength, and called Acre or Acre, and St. John D'Acre, from the Knights Hospitaliers. It is still one of the most considerable cities on the coast, but is most distinguished for its ruins. The most extensive are of the churches of St. Andrew and St. John. Hence P. went to Cesarea, 30 miles S., thence to Jerusalem.' Hence he was at last hurried away, a prisoner, as we have seen, by night, 40 miles, to

*Antipatris.*

a small town 'in a beautiful and fertile plain, and formerly called Capharsalma, or Caphar Saba, but being beautified and repaired by Herod the Great, he called it Antipatris, in honor of his father. Reposing here till the next morning, they then started for Cesarea.'

After a long imprisonment, and several hearings, P., obliged by Jewish malice, appeals to Rome, and accordingly being put under a proper guard, he is shipped from this port for the imperial city. 'Luke and Aristarchus accompany him in his adversity. The ship first touches at

*Sidon.*

60 miles N., a city as old as the days of Noah; famed in time for high mercantile character, luxury, and wealth, it has undergone many changes. Early preached here, the Gospel, amid all its reverses, has still maintained a place in it; and although its trade is long ago destroyed, its harbors choked up, its streets sunk in silence and gloom, it still has 16,000 inhabitants, the great majority Christians. Instead of stretching directly across the sea, P. and his companions were compelled, by contrary winds, to coast along, and disembarked at

*Myra.*

a considerable city of Lycia, and entered a large Alexandrian ship, laden with Egyptian grain, going to Italy. Variable winds drove them as far as Cape Cnidus. (now Crio.) with a city of worshippers of Venus. They did not touch here, but, the wind changing, they sailed S., passed the promontory of Salmone, (now Salmine,) at the E. end of Crete, and, steering W., they came to

*Fairhaven.*

This port (still so called) is on the S. E. part of the island, near Lasea, a considerable town, which could furnish needed supplies; so they reposed here many days.

*Crete.*

Availing himself of this delay, P. went ashore, and preached the Gospel with success in this island, one of the largest in the Mediterranean. Once it contained upwards of 100 cities, and is supposed to have been originally peopled by the Philistines who fled from Canaan in the days of Joshua, (and from Egypt, in earlier days?) Subsequently to the Trojan war, many Greeks immigrated to it. Its ancient inhabitants were famous for [laws,] archery. [2 S. 8:18.] falsehood, debauchery, and piracy. They long had kings, then a commonwealth for many centuries, till conquered by the Romans. Saracens, Greeks, Venetians, and Ottoman Turks, have since held it in turn; and [it is now under the Viceroy of Egypt, and] called Candia, or Candy.—P. succeeded in establishing a church here, and Christianity has ever since had a footing in the island, though now, like it, at the lowest ebb. Towards the end of September they left Fairhavens to winter at

*Phenice.*

a commodious and sheltered port, on the W. side of Crete. But a furious N. E. wind drove them off, and thus they passed

*Claudia.*

(now Gozn,) a small island S. of Crete, towards the Syrtes, quicksands, on the coast of Africa, the terror of ancient mariners. To avoid them as long as possible, they took in sail, and "scudded under bare r'cs." After being many days tossed by this fearful tempest, having used every precaution then known, despair was changed to hope by





Tarsus.



Remains of the Port of Seleucia.



A North Port of Cyprus.



Antioch in Pisidia.



Mars-hill and Temple of Theseus, Athens. Ac. 17: 19, 22.



Cenchrea, the Port of Corinth. Ro. 16: 1.



Ephesus, Theatre, &c. Ac. 19: 29.



Assos.



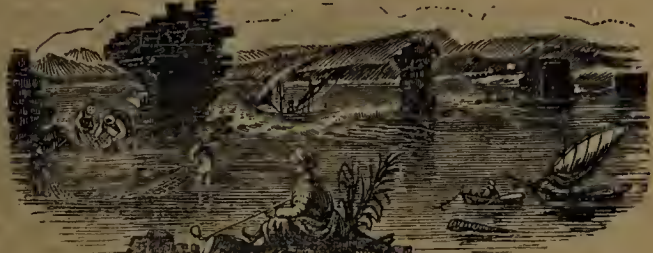
Mytilene.



Miletus.



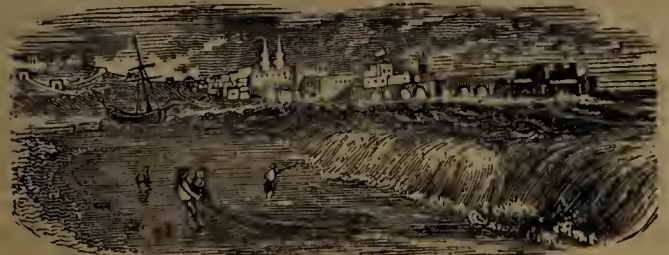
Rhodes.



Remains of the Port of Tyre.



Ptolemais, now Acre.



Sidon.

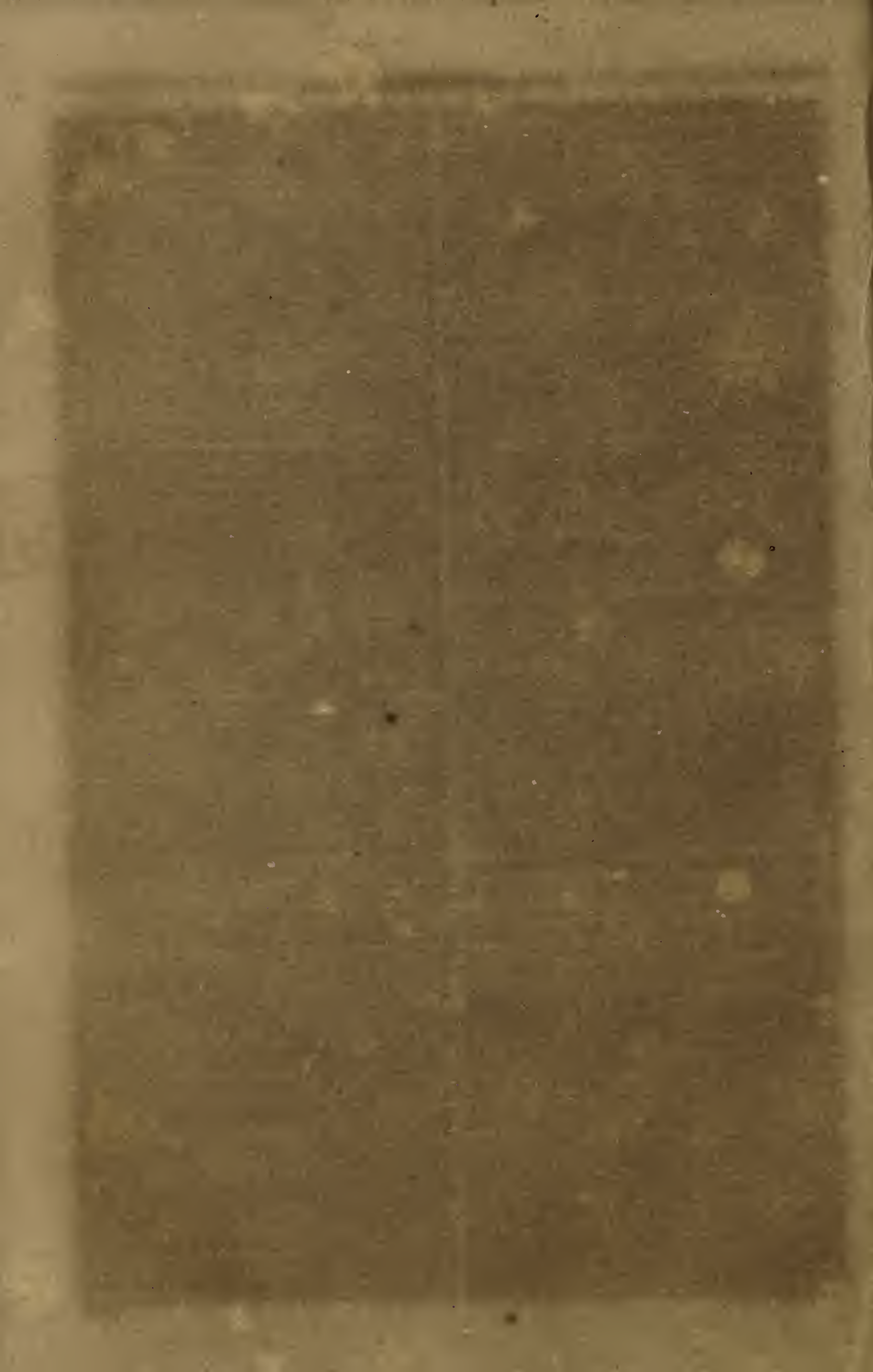


Syracuse.



Puteoli.





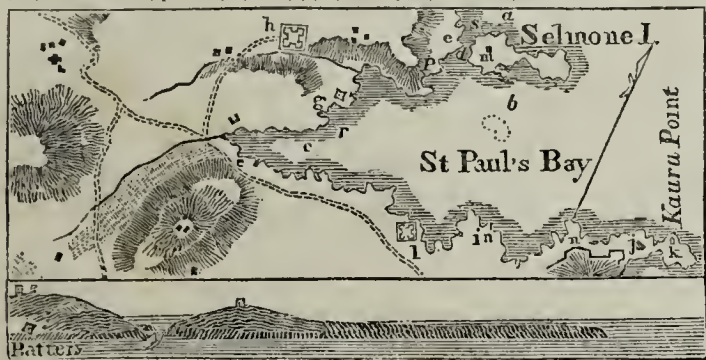


ACTS.—CONCLUDING NOTE.

a vision P. had, and at last, though the ship was lost, all on board got safe to land, in a little creek, still called the bay of St. Paul, on the island of *Malta*.

This is 60 miles from Africa, and has its name from having been a refuge to Tyrians, on their way to Spain. It is about 60 miles round, and formerly was only a barren rock, with 12,000 miserable inhabitants; but now, after having successively passed under the Phocians, Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Goths, Saracens, Sicilians, Knights of St. John, the French, and English, who now possess it, it has become quite the reverse, and produces abundance of fruit, cotton, and other productions, and contains nearly 50,000 inh., among whom a sort of half-breathing Christianity still exists.

The high probability that "St. Paul's bay" is the scene of the events of Acts 27: [will give interest to the following sketch.] The ship might have anchored at *a* or *b*. The inlet *c* has very much the appearance of a creek, and would lead us to think that the anchorage was at *b*; *m* is an island, and "two seas meet" at *d*, where the water is too shallow for such a vessel as P. was in to pass through. Whether the anchorage was at *a* or at *b*, the ship might "fall into" this place, and run aground. With the *Euroclydon*, or N. E. wind, (the present *Levanter*,) she would not indeed be likely to fall upon *d*, if the mariners, after getting under way at *b*, steered for the creek at *c*; but they might have managed unskillfully, or more probably the wind had changed to the S. E. or S. There is a "shore" or good [beach or] landing-place, at *e*, and also at *g*, and on the creek *c*. From the island *m* to *n* (where the Maltese pretend Publius had a country-house) is upwards of a mile. The rock at the point *s*, where are salt-works, runs under water, and some have supposed the vessel struck on this point, and that we are to understand the phrase, "where two seas meet," of the meeting of the waves, on the opposite sides of such a low projection; but at *e*, it would now be scarcely possible, after a storm, to effect a general landing on boards and pieces of a ship. [The sand-bank at *b*, (not noted in Dr. A.'s sketch,) being thrown up by them, shows that opposing currents exist, arising from the sea-flow in and out of St. Paul's bay, and from the N. through the gut *d s*; so it is likely the vessel cast anchor S. of Selmonë, under its shelter, and struck on the N. E. point of the sand-bank *b*, between *d* and *b*, the bank probably running farther in that direction than is indicated.] "If the vessel struck at *d*, (the traditional place,) it would be possible to land at *e*, especially if the wind had changed to the southward, as the shore is near, low, and sandy, and the water shallow. At *g* and *c* are also fine landings. The shore at *p* is precipitous, at *r*, rough and dangerous." Rev. Dr. Anderson. 'Obs. on the Peloponnesus,' &c.: from which the lettering, and view below, of the appearance of the shores and opening at *p*, *d*, *m*, are taken: *h*, palace; *i*, fort; *j*, *n*, battery, *k*, tower; *l*, St. Paul's castle.



After an interesting and successful stay at Malta, of three months, Paul sails to *Syracuse*,

one of the most renowned and splendid cities of ancient time. It was founded 700 B. C. on the E. of Sicily, commanding a beautiful prospect, both by sea and land; its harbor was surrounded with splendid buildings, supported on walls of white marble. In its best days it contained 1,200,000 inhabitants, was 22 miles in circumference, and not only the largest, but far the wealthiest of the Greek cities in any part of the world. Its standing army was 100,000 foot, and 10,000 horse, and it had a navy of 500 vessels in its capacious harbors. Its 4 parts, divided by their walls, were respectively famous for splendid temples of Jupiter, and of Fortune, an amphitheatre, with a statue of Apollo, two temples to Diana and Minerva, and the fountain of Arethusa. Here Archimedes was killed, 250 years before, when the Romans took and almost entirely destroyed it. But under Augustus it recovered part of its splendor, till the Saracens razed it. Only one of these parts, *Ortygia*, is now peopled; its narrow streets have a dejected, sickly population, of 15,000. P. remained here 3 days, and then embarking, landed on the following day at *Rhegium*,

now Reggio, on the S. coast of Italy, where he tarried a day; but starting again, a fair wind brought them, in 24 hours, through the straits of Messina to *Puteoli*,

(the *little wells*,) now Pozzuoli, in the kingdom of Naples, and near its chief city, about 100 miles S. of Rome. Pozzuoli is built on a hill, opposite the renowned Baie of the Romans, and has, in its bounds, 35 natural hot-baths, of different mineral waters. It abounds in Roman antiquities, and is still a bishoprick. Here P. was entertained by Christian friends 7 days, after which he went to *Appii Forum*,

an ancient city of the Volsci, 51 miles from Rome, where a numerous body met him to honor his approach: 18 miles further they reached *Tres Tabernæ*,

or 3 Taverns, another city on the Appian way, where another party of brethren met them, and so they entered *Rome*. Its state at that time will be seen by the plan

on the map. '3 days after his arrival, P. stated his case to the Jews of Rome. For 2 years he dwelt in his hired house, supported in part, at least, by the affectionate contributions of the Philippians. Called before the emperor Nero, all his friends deserted him for fear; but, though dismissed with contempt from the presence, his eloquent defence impressed some of Nero's court,—as Terpes, afterwards martyred, of high rank in his household; also, Nero's cup-bearer, and Poppæa Sabina, one of Nero's concubines, and Onesimus.'

He gloriously improved this period of restraint from his more active labors, too, in writing, for the unspeakable furtherance of true religion, those precious epistles to the Philippians, the Colossians, and the Ephesians. 'His first act, when freed' as tradition states, (the Jews not daring nor able to accuse him,) 'was, to proceed on his Gentile mission, N. through the greater part of Italy, and during his journey he wrote Hebrews. Crossing the sea to Spain, he preached in various places; then turning N. he journeyed through France, and, in the 66th year of his age, crossed into *Britain*,

then a Roman colony. From its wealthy, populous, and flourishing capitals, London and Verulam, the intercourse with Rome was mutual and constant. Many Britons of high rank had been at Rome, and many distinguished Romans visited Britain. The progress of Christianity in other parts, therefore, was well known to the Britons, and they received P. gladly. The blessed light of the Gospel soon dispelled their dark and gloomy superstitions. May it, constantly grow brighter and broader with the growing influence, upon the world, of all who speak the English language, now, by the blessing of God, the most active of the nations in propagating Christianity. God grant they may both practise and spread it, in all its primitive power and purity!

After 9 months in Spain, France, and Britain, P. went to Crete and preached; then (making Titus Bishop of Crete) he visited Judea, in her afflicted state, just before her final revolt and ruin. From Antioch, first, passing through the surrounding country, he travelled through Cilicia, the greater part of Galatia, to Colosse, preaching and exhorting at all the various cities on this extended route. Thence he went to Ephesus, Troas, and Philippi, where he remained some time. Then to Nicopolis, a considerable city on the Danube, whence he wrote Titus. Remaining till the winter was over, he then passed S. through Macedonia to Corinth, where he made a short stay. Embarking at Cenchræa, he landed once more at Troas, whence, after a short stay, he went to Timothy, at Ephesus. Shortly, he again set his face towards Rome, where he arrived soon after the commencement of Nero's first general persecution. Nero, being absent in Greece, his counterpart, Helius, the governor, imprisoned Paul as a principal leader of the obnoxious Christian sect.'



The cut is of the *Mamertine prison*, where, tradition says, Peter and Paul were confined by Nero. It is considered the oldest monument of Rome, and attributed to Ancus Martius, its 4th king; the lower cell, to Servius Tullius. It is under a little church, behind the arch of Severus, on the declivity of the Capitoline hill. This lower cell is 6 1-2 feet high, 19 long, and 9 wide; of Cyclopean architecture, the large stones being strangely united by iron cramps. The cell above it is 27 1-2 ft. by 19 1-2, and 14 high, hewn from the solid rock. By the circular aperture at top, prisoners condemned to be starved or strangled were thrust down. Here Jugurtha was starved to death, and others of note. 2 Timothy contains several allusions to Paul's second and severe imprisonment. 'In this imprisonment P. converted many poor prisoners, and even 2 of their centurions, Processus and Martinian; and wrote 2 Tim., justly called by *Chrys.* his "last testament," [note, 2 Tim. 1:16, 17.] which should, therefore, be peculiarly precious to us. The "crown" he panted for in the last vs. of that, his last letter, he soon obtained. The evil-minded later of Christianity returned to Rome. P. was taken from prison, and, with but little form of trial, condemned to die; the only privilege accorded to him being, that, as a Roman citizen, he should suffer by the sword. His usefulness ceased not in this last extremity; he converted three of the guard which led him to execution. He was led, bound, and in fetters, to the *Salvian waters*, about 3 miles from Rome, where, on the 29th of June, A. D. 66, and in the 68th year of his age, he closed his life of persecution and trial. His remains were interred in the *Via Ostiensis* [map], and over them Constantine erected a splendid church, afterwards greatly beautified and added to. All of it has since been burnt, but another stately fabric is now building in its place.'

Of the above, what is in quotation marks is mostly from the 'Life of Paul,' Lond. 1833. The rest is from *Horne, Arundell, &c.*

BIBLE CHRONOLOGY, AFTER HALES. (Concluded from p. 921, Vol. III.)

PERIOD IX.—FROM THE BAPTIST'S BIRTH TO THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM, 75 years.

	Y.	B. C.
Herod the Great . . . . .	last 2	5
2. Nativity of Jesus Christ (about autumn) . . . . .		5
2. Archelaus Ethnarch of Judea . . . . .	10	4
<i>Roman Procurators.</i>		
1. Procurator Coponius . . . . .	2	6
Christ visits the temple . . . . .		6
2. Procurator Marcus Ambricius . . . . .	4	9
Tiberina made colleague of Augustus . . . . .		12
3. Procurator Annius Rufus . . . . .	1	13
4. Procurator Valerius Gratus . . . . .	11	14
5. Procurator Pontius Pilate . . . . .	10	25
John's ministry, about autumn . . . . .		27
Christ baptized, about autumn . . . . .		27
I. Passover . . . . .		28
Christ purges the Temple, and preaches in Judea . . . . .		28
John is imprisoned by Herod Antipas . . . . .		28
Christ preaches in Galilee . . . . .		28
II. Passover, 12 Apostles sent forth . . . . .		29
John beheaded . . . . .		29
III. Passover, 70 disciples sent forth . . . . .		30
Christ's transfiguration . . . . .		30
IV. Passover, Christ's crucifixion, &c. . . . .		31
Church of Christ founded at Pentecost . . . . .		32
Church increased . . . . .		32
Church multiplied . . . . .		33
Martyrdom of Stephen, about autumn . . . . .		31
1. Jewish persecution of the church . . . . .		31
Paul's conversion . . . . .	1	35
6. Procurator Marcellus . . . . .	1	35
7. Procurator Marullus . . . . .	5	36
Jewish embassy to Caligula . . . . .		40
Herod Agrippa, king of Judea . . . . .		41
II. Jewish persecution of the church . . . . .		44
8. Procurator Cuspius Fadus . . . . .	2	44
9. Procurator Tiberius Alexander . . . . .	1	46
10. Procurator Ventidius Cumanus . . . . .	5	47
I. Council at Jerusalem . . . . .		49

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11. Procurator Felix . . . . .	9	52
Paul imprisoned at Jerusalem . . . . .		59
12. Procurator Porcius Festus . . . . .	2	61
Paul's first visit to Rome . . . . .		62
13. Procurator Albinus . . . . .	1	63
14. Procurator Gessius Florus . . . . .	1	64
Paul's second visit to Rome . . . . .		64
The Jewish war . . . . .	5	65
1. Roman persecution of this church . . . . .		65
Jerusalem destroyed . . . . .	75	70

PERIOD X.—PROPHETIC HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.

	B. C.
1. Golden head. The Babylonian . . . . .	606
Babylonian captivity . . . . .	605
II. Silver breast and arms. The Medo-Persian . . . . .	536
Return of the Jews . . . . .	536
Jewish church reformed by Nehemiah. 2300 days, and 70 weeks begin . . . . .	420
III. Brazen belly and thighs. The Macedo-Grecian . . . . .	331
IV. Iron legs and feet. The Roman . . . . .	169
V. The Stone, or Christian church . . . . .	A. D. 31
<i>The Church Militant, 1849 years.</i>	
I. Period, 7 seals beginning . . . . .	31
1. Jewish persecution of the church . . . . .	34
1. Roman persecution . . . . .	65
Jewish church suppressed. 70 weeks end . . . . .	70
II. Period, 6 Trumpets, beginning with the Gothic invasions . . . . .	385
Three woes, for a time, times, and half a time, or 1260 days begin . . . . .	620
Three angels of Reformation . . . . .	
1. Wickliffe, 1290 days from } A. D. 70 . . . . .	1360
2. Huss, 1335 days from } . . . . .	1405
3. Luther . . . . .	1517
III. Period, Seventh Trumpet, containing seven vials, or last woe, beginning } . . . . .	1793
with the French Revolution . . . . .	
Last vial to end with the 2300 days and 1260 days . . . . .	1880
<i>The Church Triumphant, 1000 generations.</i>	
IV. Period. The Mountain, or kingdom of God established upon } 1000 generations.	
earth in the Regeneration, for 1000 years . . . . .	
V. Period. The kingdom of God in Heaven . . . . .	eternity.



# P R E F A C E

TO THE

# E P I S T L E S.\*

THE New Testament may be very properly divided into two parts, one *Historical*, the other *Epistolary*. The exposition of the latter we now enter upon; and shall offer some thoughts on the epistolary way of writing in general, and then proceed to observe the divine authority of these Epistles, together with the style, matter, method, and design of them; † leaving what might be said concerning the several inspired penmen to the prefaces appertaining to the particular Epistles.

*Epistolary* writing has usually three properties; it is more *difficult* to be understood, but very *profitable*, and very *pleasant*: these will be found to be the properties of these sacred letters. Where we cannot so well discover the particular occasions on which they were written, or the questions or matters of fact to which they refer, they will be difficult: but we shall find the strongest reasoning, the most moving expostulations, and warm and pressing exhortations, mixed with seasonable cautions and reproofs, which are all admirably fitted to impress the mind with suitable sentiments and affections. And how much solid pleasure and delight must this afford to persons of a serious and religious spirit, especially when they wisely and faithfully apply to themselves what they find to suit their case! And how then should we prize this part of *holy Scripture*, when we consider herein that our God and Savior has written these letters to us, in which we have the *great things of his Law* and Gospel, the things that belong to our peace! By these means not only the holy apostles, *being dead, yet speak*, but the Lord of the prophets and apostles continues to speak and write to us; and while we read them with proper affections, and follow them with suitable petitions and thanksgiving, a blessed correspondence and intercourse will be kept up between heaven and us.

But it is the *divine inspiration and authority* of these Epistles we are especially concerned to know, and be fully established in. And because such has been the universally received opinion of all Christians in all ages of the church, and for the same reasons that lead us to acknowledge the other parts of the Bible to be the Word of God, we must own these to be so too, 1 Cor. 14:37. If there be good reason, as indeed there is, to believe that the books of *Moses* were written by inspiration of God, there is the same to believe that the writings of the *prophets* were also from God; nor can any person, who pretends to believe the divine authority of the *historical* part of the N. T. containing the *Gospels* and the *Acts*, with good reason question the equal authority of the *epistolary* part; for the subject-matter of all these Epistles, as well as of the sermons of the apostles, is the *Word of God*, Rom. 10:17. 1 Thess. 2:13. Col. 1:25. and the *Gospel of God*, Rom. 15:16. 2 Cor. 11:7. and the *Gospel of Christ*, 2 Cor. 2:12. The apostles confirmed what Christ Himself *began* to teach, *God also bearing them witness*, Heb. 2:3, 4. and it was the will of our blessed Lord, that his apostles should not only publish his Gospel, but also, after his resurrection, should declare some things more plainly concerning Him, than He thought fit to do while on earth; for which end He promised to send, and accordingly did send (Acts 2:) his Holy Spirit to teach them all things, to bring all things to their remembrance which He had spoken unto them, John 14:26. John 16:12, 13.

That in *preaching* the Gospel, they were under the influence of the infallible Spirit, is undeniable, from the miraculous gifts and

powers they received for their work, particularly that gift of tongues, so necessary for the publication of the Gospel throughout the world, to nations of different languages; nor must we omit that mighty power that accompanied the Word preached, bringing multitudes to the obedience of faith, notwithstanding all opposition from earth and hell, and the potent lusts in the hearts of those who were *turned from idols to serve the living God, and to wait for his Son from heaven*.

Now that they were under the same mighty influence in *writing* these Epistles, as in *preaching*, cannot be denied, considering that these Epistles were written to remind them of those things that had been delivered by word of mouth, 2 Pet. 1:15. and to rectify the mistakes that might arise about some expressions that had been used in *preaching*, 2 Thess. 2:2. and were to remain with them, as a standing rule and record to which they were to appeal, for defending the truth and discovering error, and a proper mean to transmit the truths of the Gospel to posterity, even to the end of time.

Besides, the writers of these Epistles have declared, that what they wrote was from God: and they are careful, when they speak their own private opinion, or only under some common influence, to tell the world, that not the *Lord*, but *they*, spake those things, but that in the rest it was not they, but the Lord, 1 Cor. 7:10, 12, &c. And the apostle *Paul* makes the acknowledgment of this, their inspiration, to be a test to try those that pretended to be prophets or spiritual: *Let them, says he, acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord*, 1 Cor. 14:37. And the apostle *Peter* gives this as the reason of his writing, that those he wrote to *might, after his decease, have those things always in remembrance*, 2 Pet. 1:15. which afterward he calls the *commandment of the apostles of the Lord*, ch. 3:1, 2. and so of the Lord Himself. And the apostle *John* declareth, 1 John 4:6. *We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us; by this we know the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error*.

As to the style of these Epistles, it may be allowed, that the penmen of them made use of their own reasoning powers and different endowments in their manner of writing, as well as of their different sorts of chirography; and that by this we are to account for that difference of style, which has been observed between the writings of *Paul*, who was brought up at the feet of *Gamaliel*, and those of *Peter* and *John*, who were fishermen. The like difference may be discerned between the style of the prophet *Isaiah*, who was educated in a court, and that of *Amos*, who was one of the herdsmen of *Tekoa*. However, we must believe, that these holy men spake and wrote as they were moved by the *Holy Ghost*, that He put them on, and assisted them, in this work, and always infallibly guided them into all truth, both when they expounded the Scriptures of the O. T., and when they gave rules for our faith and practice in the gospel-church state.

The *subject-matter* of these Epistles is entirely conformable to the rest of the Scriptures: in them we find frequent reference to some passages of the O. T., and explanations of them; in the Epistle to the Hebrews, we have the best exposition of the Levitical law. Indeed the N. T. refers to, and in a manner builds upon, the Old, showing the accomplishment of all the ancient promises and proph-

entertain his family and friends, in his delightful work of opening the Scriptures.

† If anywhere some things in the comment do not seem to flow so naturally and necessarily from the text, we believe, when they are well considered and compared, it will appear they come under the analogy and general reason of the subject, and truly belong to it. If there be any that think this exposition too plain and familiar, that it wants the beauties of oratory, and the strength of criticism; we only wish they will read it over again with due attention, and we are pretty confident, they will find the style natural, clear, and comprehensive: and we think they will hardly be able to produce one valuable criticism out of the most learned commentators, but they will have it in this exposition, though couched in plain terms, and not brought in as of a critical nature. No man was more happy than Mr. Henry in that useful talent of making dark things plain, while too many, that value themselves on their criticising faculty, affect rather to make plain things dark.

En.

‡ In the Acts of the Apostles, a history, or specimen, is given of the manner, in which the apostles and their fellow-laborers fulfilled the former part of their risen Lord's commission, given to them just before his ascension, 'Go ye therefore and teach' (or make disciples of) 'all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' In the epistles is more fully shown the particulars, and the way, in which they executed the latter part of it; 'Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.' *Mat.* 28:19, 20. *Mark* 16:14-16. The former therefore is more exactly suited to the case of missionaries, and persons in similar circumstances: the latter to stationary pastors and their flocks, as far as they are true believers. Both, however, are essentially requisite to an accurate and comprehensive view of Christianity, and of the office and duties of its ministers.

SCOTT.

\* The continuators and compilers of *Henry*, thus remark: 'After much expectation, and many inquiries, the last volume of the late reverend Mr. Henry's *Exposition* now appears. The common disadvantages that attend posthumous productions, will doubtless be discerned in this; but we hope, though there are *diversities of gifts*, there will be found to be the *same spirit*. Some of the relations and hearers of that excellent person, have been at the pains of transcribing the notes they took in short-hand of this part of the Holy Scripture, when expounded by him in his family, or in the congregation; they have furnished us with very good materials for the finishing this great work; and we doubt not but that the ministers who have been concerned in it, have made the use of those assistances, which may entitle this composition to the honor of Mr. Henry's name; and if so, they can very willingly conceal their own.'

† It is now about fourteen years since the first part of this exposition of the Bible was made public; in five years' time the O. T. was finished in four volumes. The first of the N. T. was longer in hand; for though the ever-memorable author was always fully employed in the ordinary work of his ministry, yet those last years of his life, in which he drew up this exposition on the historical part of the N. T., were less at his own command than any other had been; his removal to Hackney, his almost continual preaching from day to day, his journeys to Chester, and the necessity of more frequent visits to his friends in and about London, together with a gradual, sensible decay of health, will more than excuse the three years' time that passed before that was finished. And under such difficulties, none but a man of his holy zeal, unwearied industry, and great sagacity, could have gone through such a service in that space of time. He lived not to see that volume published, though left by him ready for the press. The church of God was suddenly deprived of one of the most useful ministers of the age. We have now been gathering up the fragments of those feasts with which he used to



## PREFACE TO THE EPISTLES.

ecies concerning the Messiah, and explains all the antiquated types and shadows of the good things that were then to come. But beside these references to the preceding part of Holy Writ, in some of these Epistles there are contained prophecies, either wholly new, or at least more largely and plainly revealed, as that in the *Revelation*, concerning the rise, reign, and fall of Antichrist, of which great apostasy we have some account in 2 Thess. 2:3, 4. and in 1 Tim. 4:1—3. And in these Epistles we have several of the great doctrines of the Gospel more fully discussed than elsewhere, particularly the doctrine of original sin, of the sin that dwells in the regenerate, and of justification by the righteousness of Christ, of the abolishing of the Jewish rites and ceremonies, of the true nature and design of the seals of the new covenant, the obligations they bring us under, and their perpetual use in the Christian church.\*

The general method of these Epistles is such, as best serves the end and design of them, which is indeed the end of the whole Scripture,—practical godliness, out of a principle of divine love, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned; accordingly, most of the Epistles begin with the great doctrines of the Gospel, and after these, practical conclusions are drawn and urged from them. In taking this method, regard is had to the nature and faculties of the soul of man, where the understanding is to lead the way, the will, affections, and executive powers to follow after; and to the nature of religion in general, which is a reasonable service; that we are not to be determined by superstitious fancies, nor by blind passions, but by a sound judgment, and good understanding in the mind and will of God; by this we are taught how necessary it is that faith and practice, truth and holiness, be joined together; that the performance of moral duties will never be acceptable to God, or available to our own salvation, without the belief of the truth; and the most solemn profession of the faith will never save those, that hold the truth in unrighteousness.

The particular occasions on which these Epistles were written, do not so evidently appear in them all as in some. The first to the Corinthians, seems to have taken its rise, from the unhappy divisions that so early rose in the churches of Christ, through the emulation of the ministers, and personal affections of the people; but it does not confine itself to that subject. That to the Galatians, seems directed chiefly against those judaizing teachers, that went about to draw the Gentile converts away from the simplicity of the Gospel, in doctrine and worship. The Epistle to the Hebrews is manifestly calculated to wean the converted Jews from those Mosaic rites and ceremonies they retained too great a fondness for, and to reconcile them to the abolition of that economy. Those Epistles that are directed to particular persons, more evidently carry their design in them, which he that runs may read.

But this is certain, none of these Epistles are of private interpretation; † most of the Pss. and of the prophecies of the O. T., were penned or pronounced on particular occasions, yet they are of standing and universal use, and very instructive even to us, on whom the ends of the world are come. And so are those Epistles that seem to have been most limited in their rise and occasion.

There will always be need enough to warn Christians against uncharitable divisions, against corrupting the faith and worship of the Gospel: and whenever the case is the same, those Epistles are as certainly directed to such churches and persons, as if they had been inscribed to them.

HENRY.

The Epistles are letters, written either to individuals, to particular churches, or to several churches; or they are *catholic* [universal] Epistles, i. e. circular letters to the churches in general. It is supposed they were all written by one or other of the apostles; and excepting the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Epistles ascribed to John, each has the name of an apostle prefixed to it. The apostle Paul's name is affixed to 13 Epistles, and the Epistle to the Hebrews has generally been ascribed to him: that of Peter, to two; those of James and Jude, to one each. Now, if they were actually written by the apostles, what shadow of reason can there be in the opinion, which numbers maintain, that they are not to be considered as of equal authority with the Gospels? The Gospels, indeed, record the words and actions of Christ; but the human testimony, by which these words and actions were recorded, might even be thought inferior to that of the Epistles; for neither Mark nor Luke were apostles: and we have as full proof, that the Epistles were divinely inspired, as that the Gospels were: and where are we to look for the full and explicit declarations of 'the whole counsel of God,' but in the writings of those, whom the Lord Jesus selected as the depositaries of his truths; to whom He gave 'the keys of the kingdom of heaven;' to whom He promised to give the Holy Spirit, 'to teach them all things, and lead them into all truth;' and whom

'He sent,' to make known his Gospel, even 'as the Father had sent Him?' *Mat. 16:19. John 14:25, 26. 20:19—23. vv. 21—23.* If the doctrine of the apostles was the unadulterated and entire truth of God, and altogether of Divine authority, as they preached it; why should it not be so when they committed it to writing? and if it was not the unadulterated entire truth, but either redundant or defective; then Christianity was corrupted or mutilated, even from the first. It must also be observed, that it is impossible, that we can know what the apostles preached, except from what they themselves wrote, or what others wrote concerning them: and can we suppose that their own writings are of less authority, than the writings of others on the same subject? If there be any ground for making this distinction, between the Gospels and the apostolical writings, how is the church 'built on the foundation of apostles and prophets?' *Eph. 2:19—22. Rev. 21:9—21, v. 14.* Hence then it follows, that what the apostles have delivered in these Epistles, as necessary to be believed or done by Christians, must be as necessary to be believed and practised, in order to salvation, as what was personally taught by Christ Himself, and is contained in the Gospels. *Whitby.*

Most of the Epistles, especially those of Paul, were written to those churches, the planting of which is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles: and the history so entirely coincides with them, even in the most minute particulars, and evidently without the least design or aim at coincidence; that the more carefully they are examined, and compared with the history, the more evident will it appear, that both are indisputably genuine. This has been clearly shown by the learned Dr. Paley, in his *Horæ Paulinæ*: and I am decidedly of opinion, that all the genius, sagacity, and care of any number of the most able men who ever lived, would be absolutely insufficient to forge a history, and a number of Epistles, so manifestly frank, artless, and often immethodical; and yet to make the one so completely to confirm the other. If ever books had such internal evidence of being genuine, that no reasonable man, after a diligent examination of them, could doubt of it, these are the books. But if the Epistles be genuine, they must be inspired, and also prove the divine original of Christianity.—Our Lord not only foretold his own death and resurrection, and that before the destruction of Jerusalem, and that in that generation the Gospel should be very extensively preached; but He promised to invest his apostles and disciples with miraculous powers, and especially with the gift of tongues, in order to accomplish this object.—'Now was anything of this nature ever undertaken, or laid as the foundation of their credit, by any other authors of any doctrine, religion, sect, or heresy? Did they ever make their own violent death, and resurrection, the foundation of their veracity? Or promise the like powers and assistances when they were risen, to those who should promote, or should embrace their doctrine? Or was not that, which no man else durst undertake, performed by the holy Jesus so effectually, as that his doctrine presently prevailed, and was received throughout the world, in spite of all the opposition of men and devils made against it; and wrought in Christians such a lasting faith, as time, and vice, though most concerned to do it, was never able to deface?' *Whitby.*—To the fulfilment of these promises, the apostles, especially Paul, in these Epistles, continually refer, as to facts most certainly known, by those to whom they wrote; and which none could deny or question. They appeal to the churches, whether they themselves had not exercised these miraculous gifts among them, nay, conferred them on others: they argue with them, from these gifts, as to the truth of their doctrine, when heretics perverted it; they appeal to these gifts, as deciding between them and their opposers; they lay down rules, for the behavior of the churches in respect of them; and they sharply reprove several instances of misconduct in this particular. Can it then be doubted, that, supposing the Epistles genuine, these miraculous gifts were publicly exercised and conferred, and that all knew them to be so? And if this were the fact, was not the promise of Christ fulfilled? Is not Christianity from God? And can it be supposed, that the writers, who exercised and conferred these powers, in so conspicuous a manner, were left to themselves, without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in addressing the churches on the most important subjects, and transmitting their doctrine to posterity?

The Epistles, in general, are written in language, which shows, that if genuine, they must have been known by the churches, to which they were addressed, during the life of the writers: but can it be supposed, that such facts were spoken of as undeniable, during the lives of the writers; and yet, that no one of their opposers, either heretics or persecutors, (not to say their friends,) knowing that no such facts had taken place, should stand forth publicly to

\*The peculiar doctrines of the Gospel are here more explicitly stated and explained, and their practical tendency more *argumentatively* shown, than in the historical books. The distinguishing truths, here laid down, have been kept in view through the whole of the preceding exposition: and it will therefore be unnecessary formally to answer those, who have endeavored to reconcile this part of the Scripture, with systems of a contrary nature and tendency. It may, however, be proper to say, that the author has considered, with much attention, both Dr. Taylor's key to the Epistle to the Romans, and the eminent Mr. Loeke's comment on several of the epistles: but, deeply convinced, that both of these publications 'darken counsel by words without knowledge;'

he can only on some incidental matters deduce instruction from them. In general, if the various terms, used in Scripture concerning Israel as a nation, be in the same, or nearly the same sense to be applied to Christians under the N. T., where is the type and the antitype? Where is 'the true Israel,' as distinguished from 'Israel after the flesh?' And where are we to learn either the character, privileges, or duties of true believers? SCOTT.

†Nor has anything ever yet been devised, more suited to render 'the Word of God of no effect,' than the notion, that we have little or nothing to do with this and the other part of Scripture, and can conclude nothing general from it, because it was 'written on a particular occasion.' *Id.*



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deny or confute them?—It is also undeniable, that most of the Epistles were known, at a very early period, to other churches, as the writings of the apostles whose names they bear. In a short time, translations were made of them into other languages, copious quotations were taken from them, and homilies, or expositions, were made on them. The churches, with one consent, acknowledged them as the Word of God; and neither heretics, schismatics, nor opposers of the Gospel, denied that they were the genuine writings of the apostles, and the standard records of Christianity. But had these Epistles, bearing the name of this or the other apostle, been brought forward after their death, when no one, either in the church specially addressed, or in other churches, had ever before heard of them; can it be conceived, but that they would have been rejected as spurious? It is evident the claim would have been absurd, and the imposture manifest. Had they not been known during the life of the writers; at what time, or in what manner, could it have been possible to palm them on the church, and obtain them the credit of apostolical writings?

The Epistle to the Hebrews, not bearing the name of Paul; that of James, which it seems at that time, as well as in later ages, was supposed irreconcilable with the doctrine of Paul; the second Epistle of Peter, which, probably, was written just before his martyrdom, and was not generally known till after his death; and the second and third Epistles of John, in which he only styles himself 'the elder,' were not for some time received by the churches, as genuine; but this shows the scrupulous caution of the primitive Christians in this respect; and further inquiry, together with internal evidence, at length obtained the admission of them into the sacred canon. (Pref. to Heb., Ja., 2 Pet. and 1. 2. 3. Jn.) Yet very many writings, which, in some places, and for a time, were admitted as apostolical and divine, were afterwards, on fuller investigation, rejected, and most of them have sunk into oblivion.

The epistolary part of the N. T., while it shows, more fully than even the historical, the accomplishment of the ancient prophecies, concerning the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom, contains

also many remarkable prophecies, several of which have already received as remarkable an accomplishment; but some still remain to be fulfilled. (Rom. 11. 2 Thess. 2:1—12. 1 Tim. 4:1—5. 2 Tim. 3:1—5. 2 Pet. 2:3.) This also constitutes an irrefragable proof, that they were written by inspiration.

Finally, it will appear, as we proceed, that the writers of these Epistles speak of themselves, and of each other, as authoritatively delivering the truth and will of God to mankind. Even the exceptions, (as they are supposed to be,) in a few instances, more undeniably established the general rule: for why should an apostle intimate, that he only gave his own opinion, and not a divine and authoritative injunction, in a particular case; unless conscious, and unless demanding his readers to allow, that in all other cases he 'spoke as moved by the Holy Ghost?' But if they advanced these claims, what alternative is there, between admitting them to the full extent, or decidedly rejecting them? That is, What alternative is there, between receiving the apostolical Epistles, as the infallible Word of God, and the standard of truth and duty; and wholly rejecting them, as bold impostures? Had no such claims been advanced; it might have been allowed, that they were good men, right on the whole, yet erroneous in some things: yet on this supposition where shall we find a divine standard of Christianity? But as the case is, either they are infallibly right, their doctrine divine, their writings the standard by which all other doctrines must be tried; or they claim for themselves, and each other, what they had no right to claim. I would be very cautious, in venturing on this ground; but I am fully persuaded, and often feel most deeply grieved by the assurance, that far more injury is done to the cause of truth, by a half-hearted allowance, that the Epistles (or other parts of Scripture) are genuine, authentic, and instructive, but possibly in some things erroneous, than by all the open attacks of infidels. For these plausible statements leave us no standard of truth and duty; no way of discriminating between true doctrine and heresy; no divinely appointed exhibition of the Christian religion, with which all other exhibitions must be compared and tried. Sc.

NUMBER, ORDER, PLACES, AND DATES, OF THE EPISTLES.

The 21 Epistles, or Letters, of the N. T. are generally divided into two classes, viz.

I. Epistles of Paul, (in number 14.)

Among the Epistles to Churches, that to the Romans stands first, because Rome was the chief city of the Roman empire; this is followed by the 2 Epistles to the Corinthians, because Corinth was a large, polite, and renowned city. To them succeeds that to the Galatians, of Galatia, a region of Asia Minor, with several churches. Next follows the Epistle to the Ephesians, because Ephesus was the chief city of Asia Minor, strictly so called. Afterwards come the Epistles to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians; for which order Dr. Lardner can assign no other probable reason than this, viz. that Philippi was a Roman colony, and, therefore, the Epistle to the Philippians was placed before those to the Colossians and Thessalonians, whose cities were not distinguished by any particular circumstance. He also thinks it not unlikely, that the shortness of the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, especially of the 2d, caused them to be placed last among the letters addressed to churches, though in point of time they are the earliest of Paul's Epistles.

Among the Epistles to particular persons, those to Timothy have the precedence, as he was a favorite disciple of Paul, and also because those Epistles are the largest and fullest. To them succeeds that to Titus, who was an evangelist; and that to Philemon is placed last, as he was supposed to have been only a private Christian. Last of all comes the Epistle to the Hebrews, because its authenticity was doubted for some time (though without any foundation, as will be shown in a subsequent page. [See Horne]); Dr. L. also thinks it was the last written of all Paul's Epistles.

Some have proposed to arrange Paul's Epistles in the order of time; but, 1. The order of their dates has not yet been satisfactorily or unanimously settled; and 2. Very considerable difficulty will attend the alteration of that order which has been adopted in all the editions and versions of the N. T. As it is the order of Eusebius' time, the 3d cent., and probably Irenæus', of the 2d cent., it is the most ancient: and according to Dr. L. the best. As, however, the order of time is important in many respects, it is given. For the dates, see Dr. L. [and Horne.]

Epistles.	Places.	A. D.
1 Thessalonians . . . . .	Corinth . . . . .	52
2 Thessalonians . . . . .	Corinth . . . . .	52
Galatians . . . . .	Corinth. At the close of 52, or early in . . . . .	53
1 Corinthians . . . . .	Ephesus . . . . .	57
Romans . . . . .	Corinth. About the end of 57, or early in . . . . .	58
2 Corinthians . . . . .	Macedonia (perhaps Philippi) . . . . .	58
Ephesians . . . . .	Rome . . . . .	61
Philippians . . . . .	Rome. Before the end of 62, or early in . . . . .	63
Colossians . . . . .	Rome . . . . .	62
Philemon . . . . .	Rome. About the end of 62, or early in . . . . .	63
Hebrews . . . . .	Italy (perhaps Rome) " or . . . . .	63
1 Timothy . . . . .	Macedonia . . . . .	64
Titus . . . . .	Macedonia . . . . .	64
2 Timothy . . . . .	Rome . . . . .	65

II. The Catholic Epistles, (in number 7.)

These contain the letters of the apostles James, Peter, John, and Jude. They are termed Catholic, i. e. general or universal, because they are not addressed to the believers of some particular city or country, or to individuals, as Paul's epistles were, but to Christians in general, or to Christians of several countries.

Epistles.	Places.	A. D.
James . . . . .	Judea . . . . .	61
1 Peter . . . . .	Rome . . . . .	64
2 Peter . . . . .	Rome. About the beginning of . . . . .	65
1 John . . . . .	Unknown (perhaps Ephesus) 68, or early in . . . . .	69
2 and 3 John . . . . .	Ephesus . . . . .	68, or early in . . . . .
Jude . . . . .	Unknown . . . . .	64 or 65

HORNE.

AN EXPOSITION  
OF  
PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Horne's Exposition, completed by J. Evans, D. D.)

PAUL's natural parts, I doubt not, were very pregnant. his apprehension quick and piercing, his expression fluent and copious, his affections, wherever he took, very warm and zealous, and his resolutions no less bold and daring: this made him, before his conversion, a very keen and bitter persecutor; but, when converted and sanctified, the most skilful, zealous, preacher; never any better fitted to win souls, nor more successful.\*

\* In all his writings we perceive evident proofs of a sound judgment, a talent for close reasoning, a lively imagination, and fervent affections: sometimes, yet not so often by far as many have supposed, he induces a measure of obscurity, by long parentheses. All his abilities and endowments, however, were directed and superintended by the Spirit of inspiration. SCORR.

The form and character of Paul's epistles, however peculiar, appear to have been derived from the circumstances of his early life. Tarsus, where he was born, and where his parents dwelt, was, in that age, a celebrated seat of learning. But, in every seat of ancient learning, eloquence held a principal rank; and each species of it was denominated from the place where it was most practiced, or in the greatest perfection. Thus we read of the chaste Attic eloquence, and of the florid Asiatic; and Tarsus, also, gave name to its peculiar mode. The last is, indeed, the least known; because, from the very nature of it, its productions were not likely to remain. The Tarsic eloquence was employed in sudden and unprepared harangues. And Paul, long accustomed to compositions of this sort, transferred the style and manner from speaking to writing. He seems to have written his epistles with the force of a speaker; not opening the way to his subject, nor advancing gradually towards it, but rushing into it. Little solicitous about method, he is

often drawn from his design by the accidental use of an expression or a word; and neither when he quits his purpose, nor when he returns to it again, does he employ the usual forms of transition. Sometimes he assumes another person, and introduces a kind of dialogue: in which it is not always easy to distinguish who is speaking, the objector or answerer. Lastly, he abounds with broken sentences, bold figures, and hard, far-fetched metaphors. These peculiarities in the apostle's manner, occasion continual difficulties, and, therefore, could not escape the notice of his commentators; of whom, the most rational impute them to such a warm temper, and a mind so full of religious [and controversial] knowledge, that his thoughts seem to strive for utterance, and his zeal suffers him to attend to nothing but the great mysteries revealed to him. But what they excuse as the effect of fervent zeal, and plentiful knowledge, either necessarily belongs to unprepared discourses, or may be admitted into them without blame. He who speaks on a sudden, cannot make those regular approaches to his principal design, nor dispose his matter in that exact order which we find in studied compositions. He may safely pass from one subject, or one person, to another, without the ceremonies which a reader requires, but which a speaker supplies the want of by his countenance, his voice, and every motion of his body. And those agitations of mind, which, in numerous assemblies, are mutually excited by



## PREFACE TO THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

Fourteen of his epistles we have in the canon of Scripture; many more, probably, he wrote, which might be profitable enough, but, not being given by inspiration of God, they were not received as canonical Scripture, nor handed down to us. Six epistles, said to be Paul's, written to Seneca, and eight of Seneca's to him, are spoken of by some of the ancients, (Sixt. Senens. Biblioth. Sanct. lib. 2.) and are extant; but, on the view, they appear spurious and counterfeit.

This Epistle to the Romans is placed first, not because of the priority of its date, but because of the superlative excellency of the epistle, it being one of the longest and fullest of all, and, perhaps, because of the dignity of the place to which it is written. Chrysostom would have this epistle read over to him twice a week. It is gathered from some passages in it, that it was written A. D. 56, from Corinth, while Paul made a short stay here, in his way to Troas, Acts 20:5, 6. He commendeth to the Romans, Phebe, a servant of the church at Cenchrea, *ch.* 16. which was a place belonging to Corinth. He calls Gaius his *host*, or the man with whom he lodged, *ch.* 16:23. and he was a Corinthian, not the same with Gaius of Derbe, mentioned Acts 20. Paul was now going up to Jerusalem, with the money given to the poor saints there, *ch.* 16:26.

The great mysteries treated of in this epistle, must needs produce in this, as in other writings of Paul, many things dark, and hard to be understood, 2 Pet. 3:16. The method of this, as of several other of the epistles, is observable; the former part of it doctrinal, in the first eleven *chs.*; the latter part practical, in the last five: to inform the judgment, and to reform the life. And the best way to understand the truths explained in the former part, is to abide and abound in the practice of the duties prescribed in the latter part, John 7:17. I. The doctrinal part of the epistle instructs us, 1. Concerning the way of salvation. (1.) The foundation of it laid in justification, and that not by the Gentiles' works of nature, *ch.* 1. nor by the Jews' works of the law, *ch.* 2, 3. for both Jews and Gentiles were liable to the curse: but only by faith in Jesus Christ, *ch.* 3:21, &c. *ch.* 4. through the whole. (2.) The steps of this salvation are, [1.] Peace with God, *ch.* 5. [2.] Sanctification, *ch.* 6, 7. [3.] Glorification, *ch.* 8. 2. Concerning the persons saved, such as belong to the election of grace, *ch.* 9. Gentiles and Jews, *ch.* 10, 11. By this, it appears, that the subjects he discourses of, were such as were then the present truths, as the apostle speaks, 2 Pet. 1:12. Two things the Jews then stumbled at,—justification by faith without the works of the law, and the admission of the Gentiles into the church; therefore, both these he studied to clear and vindicate. II The practical part follows; wherein we find, 1. Several general exhortations proper for all Christians, *ch.* 12. 2. Directions for our behavior, as members of a civil society, *ch.* 13. 3. Rules for the conduct of Christians to one another, as members of the Christian church, *ch.* 14. and *ch.* 15, to *v.* 14. III. As he draws towards a conclusion, he apologises for writing; *ch.* 15: 14—16. gives an account of himself and his affairs; *v.* 17—21. promises a visit; *v.* 22—29. begs their prayers; *v.* 30—33. sends particular salutations to many friends; *ch.* 16:1—16. warns against those who caused divisions; *v.* 17—20. adds salutations of friends with him; *v.* 21—23. and ends with a benediction to them, and a doxology to God, 24—27. HENRY.

The Epistle to the Romans is addressed to the Christians who resided in the capital city of that great empire, which then lorded it over the whole known world; [note, end of Acts;] and the epistle itself is one of the longest, and most comprehensive of all that were written by the apostle. It is not known when, or by whom, the Gospel was first preached at Rome; but it is conjectured, that it was carried thither by some of those Jews who were converted at the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:10 † Paul, however, had not yet visited that city; but, as 'the apostle of the Gentiles,' he deemed it proper to use this method of establishing the believers in the faith; and of giving them such a comprehensive view of the Christian religion, as might put them on their guard against false teachers, of various descriptions.

This epistle [forming a beautiful and sublime summary of the Christian faith] is the only part of the Scripture, in which divine truth is delivered in a systematical method: and it is a proper model for any one, who intends to compile a body of divinity. After the introduction, [setting forth his authority,] the apostle opens his subject, (as it is reasonable to begin systematical treatises,) by showing *man's relations and obligations to God* his Creator, and *his apostasy* from his worship and service: he proceeds to prove the *universal sinfulness* of both Gentiles and Jews, and the *impossibility* of any man's *justifying himself* before God, *by his own obedience*. Having brought the whole world in guilty, deserving of wrath, and condemnation; he proceeds to state the *method of salvation* by the mercy of God, through the *redemption* of his Son, and the *way of justification by faith* in his blood, and the *imputation of his righteousness*, as 'the righteousness of God, which is unto and upon all that believe.' This he proves, illustrates, and exemplifies very fully: he next proceeds to show, that this way of justification is closely *connected with sanctification*, [or holiness,] and evangelical *obedience*: he then states the believer's experience and conflicts; and displays his character, hopes, and privileges: and at length he leads our reflections back to the source of these blessings, in the eternal election, and sovereign love and mercy of God. Having thus stated and proved doctrines, and answered objections to them, and discussed several questions respecting the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, he applies the whole discourse by a variety of practical exhortations, precepts, and instructions, enforced by evangelical motives and, having touched on some particulars, suited to the circumstances of those times, concludes with affectionate salutations, cautions, and prayers; and ascribing glory to God our Savior. SCOTT.

the speaker and the hearers, excite in their turn, and, in the same measure, justify a bolder and more vehement kind of oratory.

But Paul did not learn at Tarsus the general form only of his writings. He collected there, also, many of their minuter ornaments. In that city was one of the largest and most celebrated places of exercise then in Asia. And there is no matter from which the apostle borrows his words and images in greater abundance, than from the public exercises. He frequently considers the life of a Christian as a race, a wrestling, or a boxing; the rewards which good men expect hereafter, he calls the prize, the victor's crown; and, when he exhorts his disciples to the practice of virtue, he does it usually in the same terms in which he would have encouraged the combatants. But many of these allusions, which occur in every page of the original, can hardly be preserved in a transl.

From the apostle's *country*, we descend to his *family*, and here we find another source of his figurative expressions. His parents were Roman citizens; and words or sentiments derived from the laws of Rome, would easily creep into their conversation. No wonder, then, that their son, sometimes, uses forms of speech, peculiar to the Roman lawyers; and applies many of the rules of adoption, manumission, and testaments, to illustrate the counsels of God in our redemption.

Nor are there wanting in Paul's style, some marks of his *occupation*. To a man employed in making tents, the ideas of camps, arms, armor, warfare, military pny, would be familiar. And he introduces them and their concomitants so frequently, that his language seems to be such as might rather have been expected from a soldier, than from one who had lived in quiet times, and was a preacher of the Gospel of Peace.

When we observe further, that, being educated in the school of Gamaliel, and instructed in all the learning of the Jewish doctors, he not only uses the Heb. idiom, but has many references to the Heb. Scriptures, and their received interpretations; there will remain little that is peculiar, in his manner of writing, of which the origin may not be traced to one or another of the before-mentioned circumstances. DR. POWELL.

† It is [however] certain, from the universally prevalent method of propagating Christianity, first among the Jews, and then, by their means, among the Gentiles, that the Roman church consisted originally of Jews, to whom others of different extraction were gradually added; new branches, as it were, engrafted on the parent stock. The probability of this statement is evident from the vast number of Jews residing at Rome, and enjoying the favor of the emperors, and participating in the society and friendship of the people. See Jos. Ant. 18, 12. Dio Cass. 36. Phil. Leg. ad Calum, p. 568. ed. Mang.' Kop.—'Jos. relates, that their number amounted

to 8000 (Ant. 17:12.), and Dion Cassius (37:17.) informs us, that they had obtained the privilege of living according to their own laws.' HORNE.

When Pompey overran Judea with a conquering army, (about 63 B. C.) he caused many captive Jews to be sent to Rome. There, as was usual with captives, they were sold into slavery. But their persevering and unconquerable determination to observe the Sabbath, and to practice many of the Levitical rites and customs, gave their Roman masters so much trouble, that they chose to liberate them, rather than to keep them. As there was a large body so liberated, the government assigned them a place opposite Rome, across the Tiber, where they built a town. Here Philo found them, just before Paul's time. (Leg. ad. C. p. 1014. ed. Frankf.) The reader who wishes for historical vouchers in respect to the number of Jews at Rome during the apostolic age, may consult Jos. Ant. 17:14, 18:5. ed. Colonn. Dio Cass. c. 36, p. 37. Suet. Vit. Tiberii, c. 36.

When the just impressions arising from the degradation of captivity and slavery began to wear away, the Roman citizens seemed to have looked at the Jewish community with some degree of respect, or, at least, with not a little of curiosity. Whether it arose from the disgust which delicate females among the Romans felt for the [foolish or] obscene rites of heathenism, which they were called to practice or witness, or whether it sprung from curiosity, the fact was, that in Ovid's time (ob. A. D. 17.) some of the most elegant and polished females thronged the Jewish assemblies. The poet, therefore, advises the young men of the city, if they wished to see a splendid collection of its beauty, to go to the *sabbath-day solemnities of the Syrian Jew*. It is not strange, moreover, that some of these should become *sebomenai*, or proselytes; as Jos. relates of Fulvia, a noble woman. By degrees, the men, also, as was natural, began to frequent the assemblies of those once despised foreigners. Juven. at the close of the 1st cent. pours out his contempt and indignation at this, in the bitter words, *Quidam sortiti*, &c.—Seneca, also, (fl. A. D. 64.) about the time when Paul wrote Rom., says, in a fragment preserved by August. (De Civ. Dei) that "so many Romans had received the Jewish [he means by this the Christian] religion, that now through all the earth it is received; the conquered have given laws to their conquerors." Tac. (Ann.) likewise represents the "*exitiabilis superstitio*," (Christian religion,) as breaking out again, after being repressed, and spreading, *not only through Judea, but through the city*, (Rome,) also.

From a comparison of Acts 19:21. 20:1—4. with Rom. 15:25—29. it follows, of course, that this epistle must have been written about A. D. 57; although some chronologists put it later. Prof. STUART.





PLAN OF ANCIENT ROME. As published by the Soc. for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

1. Porta Flaminia.
  2. Porta Collina.
  3. Porta Viminalis.
  4. Porta Esquilina.
  5. Porta Nævica.
  6. Porta Carmentalis.
  7. Porta Capena.
  8. Porta Triumphalis.
  9. Aqua Claudia.
  10. Aqua Appia.
  11. Aqua Marcia.
  12. Aqua Julia.
  13. Aqua Virgo.
- a. Ælian Bridge.
  - b. Triumphal Bridge.
  - c. Janiculan Bridge.
  - d. Bridge of Cestius.
  - e. Bridge of Fabricius.
  - f. Palatine Bridge.
  - g. Sublician Bridge.
  - h. Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus.
  - i. Capitol.
  - k. Temple of Apollo.
  - l. Temple of Diana.
  - m. Forum Boarium.
  - n. Forum Nervæ.
  - o. Forum Augusti.
  - p. Forum Trajani.

CHAP. I.

1 Paul commendeth his calling to the Romans, 9 and his desire to come to them. 16 What his Gospel is, and the righteousness which it sheweth. 18 God is angry with all manner of sin. 21 What were the sins of the Gentiles.

**PAUL**, a servant of <sup>a</sup> Jesus Christ, called <sup>b</sup> to be an apostle, separated <sup>c</sup> unto the gospel of God,

2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made <sup>d</sup> of the seed of David according to the flesh ;

a Ac. 27:23. 1:1. 1:15.  
b Ac. 9:15. 1 Co. c Ac. 13:2. Ga. d Ps. 89:36.

CHAP. I. V. 1—7. In this paragraph we have,

I. The person who writes the epistle, described, v. 1. *Paul*; not a *Rabbi*, but a *servant*; called *to be an apostle*, on which call, Acts 9:15. he here builds his authority; called *an apostle*; as if this were the name he would be called by, though he acknowledges himself not meet to be called so, 1 Cor. 15:9. *Separated to the Gospel of God*. The Pharisees had their name from separation,

because they separated themselves to the study of the law, and might be so called: such an one Paul had been; but now he had changed his studies, was a Gospel Pharisee, separated by the counsel of God, Gal. 1:15. from his birth, by an immediate direction of the Spirit, and a regular ordination according to that direction, Acts 13:2, 3. by a dedication of himself to this work; entirely devoted to the Gospel of God, of divine and heavenly original and extraction.

II. An encomium on the Gospel of God. 1. Its antiquity; it was promised before, v. 2. it was no novel doctrine, but of ancient standing in the promises and prophecies of the Old Test., which did all unanimously point at the Gospel, the morning beams that ushered in the Sun of righteousness; this not by word of mouth only, but in the Scriptures.

2. Its subject-matter; Christ, v. 3, 4. Observe, how he heaps up his names and titles, *his Son Jesus Christ our Lord*, as one that took a pleasure in speaking of Him; and having mentioned Him, he cannot go on in his discourse, without some expression of love and honor, as here, where in one person he shows us his two distinct natures. (1.) His human nature; made of the seed of David, v. 3. i. e. born of the virgin Mary, who was of the house of David, Luke 1:27. as was Joseph his supposed father, Luke 2:4. David is here mentioned, because of the

special promises made to him concerning the Messiah, especially his kingly office; 2 S. 7:12. Ps. 132:11. comp. with Lu. 1:32, 33. (2.) His divine nature; declared to be the Son of God, v. 4. the Son of God by eternal generation, or, as it is here explained, according to the Spirit of holiness, as He is said to be quickened by the Spirit, 1 Pet. 3:18. comp. with 2 Cor. 13:4. He is the Son of God.

The great proof or demonstration of this, is, his resurrection from the dead; that proved it, effectually and undeniably. The sign of the prophet Jonas, Christ's resurrection, was intended for the last conviction, Mat. 12:39, 40. Those that would not be convinced by that, would be convinced by nothing.

3. Its fruit, obedience to the faith, v. 5. By whom, i. e. by Christ manifested and made known in the Gospel, we, Paul and the rest of the ministers, have received grace and apostleship, i. e. the favor to be made apostles, Eph. 3:8. It involved toil, trouble, and hazard, yet Paul reckons the apostleship a favor: it was received for obedience to the faith, i. e. to bring people to that obedience, as Paul was for this obedience, among all nations, for he was the apostle of the Gentiles, ch. 11:13. Observe the description here given of the Christian profession, it is obedience to the faith; not a notional knowledge, or a naked assent, much less perverse dispu-

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1—4. According to the custom of those times, the apostle began this epistle, by prefixing his name and distinguishing title. Acts 15:22—29, v. 23. 23:25—30, v. 26. [Also, to state the fact of the reality of his apostolic mission, because the authority of his epistle depended on this fact.] The expression, 'according to the Spirit of holiness,' has been generally interpreted to signify, 'according to his divine nature;' but it is not used in that sense in any other place, nor does it obviously convey that idea. Others, therefore, explain it of the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit, on which account He was called 'the Son of God;' but this does nothing more than state, what He was 'according to the flesh,' or in his human nature; whereas the apostle clearly intended to show his divine nature, as the 'only begotten Son of the Father,' and the *antithesis*, as well as the *context*, evidently requires this. Our Lord indeed wrought all his miracles by the Spirit of God, which was 'given to Him without measure;' but the apostle plainly speaks of 'the Spirit of holiness,' in immediate connexion with the demonstration that Jesus was the Son of God, which arose from his resurrection from the dead. Now, the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the witnesses of his resurrection, and all the stupendous effects which followed, both in respect of them, and of those on whom they laid their hand, were a divine attestation to their testimony: and thus Jesus, who was crucified for affirming that He was 'the Son of God,' was 'declared,' or 'determined' to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection,' according to the demonstration of that event, arising from the divers powers, signs, and miracles, which the Spirit of God enabled the apostles and primitive Christians to perform. Heb. 2:1—4, v. 4. It may also be observed, that the Holy Spirit had foretold, by the prophets, that the Messiah would be the Son of God, as well as the Son of David; and also, that He would be put to death, and rise again, and enter into his glory. When, therefore, the Lord Jesus, having been put

to death as a deceiver and blasphemous, arose from the dead, 'ascended on high, . . . and gave gifts to men;' especially by pouring out the Holy Spirit on his apostles and disciples, according to the predictions of holy men from the beginning, 'who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;' He, in both respects, was 'declared to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness.' Acts 2:22—36. Eph. 4:7—13.

(1.) Called, also v. 7, called.] 'Rather, chosen.' Pr. Stuart. *Servant*.] 'Doulos: from *deō*, to tie, bind [cut, Is. 10:4.], (i. e. *deolos*, contracted to *doulos*), by the same figure as that found in our adjective *bond*, (from *bind*), signifies properly, one who is bound for life to the service of a person, as his property: and, with allusion to the entire devotedness of the service, this term was applied to *Moses*, who is called *abd yhv̄h*, in Ex. 14:31. Num. 12:7. Josh. 1:1. and also to Joshua, Jud. 2:8. But as the dignity of the master raises the credit of the servant, and as the term servant, or minister, of a king, became at length a title of honor, and especially as it has been applied to the prophets, so it came to be applied to the apostles. When, however, Paul takes it to himself, as here, he must not be understood as arrogating any peculiar dignity; since in 2 Tim. 2:24. he extends it to any Gospel preacher.' Bl.

(2.) Promised afore.] 'Rather, formerly declared or published.' St. These promises were not wholly unknown to the heathen, for Tacitus says, 'Pluribus persuasione inerat, antiquis sacerdotum libris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judea rerum potirentur;' and Suetonius, his contemporary, 'Percrebrerat Oriente toto, vetus et constans opinio, esse in fati ut eo tempore Judea profecti rerum potirentur.' See St., &c.

(3, 4.) 'Who was of the seed of David, as to the flesh, (and) was constituted the Son of God with power, as to his holy, spiritual nature, after his resurrection,' &c. Prof. STUART.



4 And declared <sup>1</sup> to be the Son of God with power, according to the <sup>2</sup> Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead :

5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, <sup>3</sup> for <sup>4</sup> obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name :

6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ :

7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called <sup>5</sup> to be saints : Grace <sup>6</sup> to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith <sup>7</sup> is spoken of throughout the whole world.

9 For God is my witness, whom <sup>8</sup> I serve <sup>9</sup> with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing <sup>10</sup> I make mention of you always in my prayers ;

10 Making request (if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey, by <sup>11</sup> the will of God) to come unto you.

11 For <sup>12</sup> I long to see you, that <sup>13</sup> I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established :

12 That is, that I may be comforted together <sup>14</sup> with you, by the mutual <sup>15</sup> faith both of you and me.

e determined.	j 1 Co. 1:2.	1 Th.	o 1 Th. 3:10.
f Ac. 13:33, 34.	4:7.		p Ja. 4:15.
Re. 1:13.	k 1 Co. 1:3, &c.		q c. 15:23, 32.
g He. 9:14.	2 Pe. 1:2.		r c. 15:29.
h or, to the obedience of faith.	1 c. 16:19		s or, in.
i Ac. 6:7. c. 16:26.	m Ac. 27:23.		t 2 Pe. 1:1.
	n or, in.		

tings, but obedience : obedience to the faith answers the *law of faith*, mentioned *ch. 3:27*. The act of faith, is the obedience of the understanding to God revealing, and the product of that is the obedience of the will to God commanding. To anticipate the ill use which might be made of the doctrine of justification by faith, without the works of the law, which he was to explain in the following epistle, he here speaks of Christianity as an obedience. Christ has a yoke.

'Among whom are ye, v. 6. Ye Romans in this stand on the same level with other Gentile nations of less fame and wealth; ye are all one in Christ.' The gospel-salvation is a common salvation, Jude 3. No respect of persons with God.

(4.) *Lord.*] '*Kurios*: a word of deep interest to Christians. Applied to Christ, it probably denotes Him as Supreme Ruler or Lord, especially of his church. Matthew and Mark do not apply this title absolutely to Christ, except after his resurrection, Mat. 28:6. Mark 16:19, 20. But Luke, John, and Paul, apply it to Him everywhere and often. With Paul the application seems to be in a manner exclusive. God the Father, or God absolutely considered, is named *kurios*, about 30 times in the O. T. passages which Paul cites; but elsewhere, with the exception of some 4 or 5 instances, Paul gives to Christ, exclusively, the title of *kurios* or *ho kurios*, in more than 250 instances; Bib. Repos. 1. 733, sq. The article makes no difference in the meaning; inasmuch as the word is a kind of proper name by usage, it is employed in like manner as one, and may therefore take or omit the article at the pleasure of the writer. See the Essay, in Bib. Rep.'

V. 5. *Stuart* understands, with *Tholuck*, *Castalio*, &c., that 'obedience springing from Christian faith may be promoted among all nations, so that Christ may be glorified.'

V. 7. This apostolical salutation is most undeniably a prayer, or act of worship, in which Christ is addressed in union with God the Father. 14:13—18, v. 17. *Jn.* 14:27, 28. 1 *Cor.* 1:3. *Eph.* 1:1, 2. *Phil.* 2:5—8. *Sc.*

V. 8—12. The apostle's language is, for substance, a most solemn oath, or appeal to the heart-searching God, for the truth of what he said. *Mat.* 5:33—37. For he ardently desired to see and converse with them, that he might impart to them some of those spiritual gifts, which were generally conferred by imposition of the apostles' hands, in order to their establishment in the faith. *Acts* 8:14—17. And this he desired, in order that he might share the comfort bestowed on them, and rejoice in ministering to their joy; as well as in conferring with them, concerning the nature, object, and effects of that faith, which was held both by them and him. Paul doubtless meant to remind the Romans

The called of Jesus Christ; all those, and those only, are brought to an obedience of the faith, that are effectually called of Jesus Christ.

III. The persons to whom it is written, v. 7. all in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints; i. e. all professing Christians in Rome, whether Jews or Gentiles originally, high or low, bond or free, learned or unlearned, rich and poor, meet together in Christ Jesus. Here is, 1. The privilege of Christians; they are beloved of God, are members of that body which is beloved, which is God's *Hephzi-bah*, his delight. We speak of God's love, by his bounty and beneficence, and so He hath a common love to all mankind, and a peculiar love for true believers; and between these there is a love He hath for all the body of visible Christians. 2. The duty of Christians; to be holy, for hereunto are they called, called to be saints, called to salvation through sanctification; called saints, saints in profession; it were well if all who are called saints, were saints indeed: such should labor to answer to the name; else, the honor and privilege will little avail at the great day.

IV. The apostolical benediction, v. 7. *Grace to you and peace*, a token in every epistle, having not only the affection of a good wish, but the authority of a blessing: the priests under the law were to bless the people, and so are gospel ministers, in the name of the Lord. The O. T. salutation was, *peace be to you*; but now grace is prefixed, *grace*, i. e. the favor of God towards us, or the work of God in us; both are previously requisite to true peace. All gospel-blessings are included in these two, *grace and peace*. *Peace*, i. e. all good; peace with God, peace in your own consciences, peace with all about you; all these founded in grace. The fountain of those favors is, *God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*. All good comes from God, as a Father, and from Christ, as Mediator. He hath put Himself into the relation of a Father, to engage and encourage our desires and expectations; and *Christ* in that of a Mediator, for the conveying and securing of the blessing. We have peace from the fulness of his merit, and from the fulness of his Spirit, grace.

V. 8—15. We may here observe,

I. His thanksgiving for them, v. 8. It is good to begin everything with blessing God, and in all our thanksgivings, eye God as our God, *through Jesus Christ*, in whom only all our duties and performances are pleasing to God; praises as well as prayers.

We must also express our love to our friends, not only by praying for them, but by praising God for them. Many of these Romans, Paul had no personal acquaintance with, yet he could heartily rejoice in their

gifts and graces. When some met him, *Acts* 28:15. he thanked God, and took courage; and here he thanks God for them all; not only those that were his helpers in Christ, and that bestowed much labor on him, *ch. 16:3, 6.* but for them all.

Wherever Paul travelled, he heard great commendations of the Christians at Rome, which he mentions, not to make them proud, but to quicken them to answer the general character people gave of them, and the general expectation people had from them. The greater reputation a man hath for religion, the more careful he should be to preserve it, because a little folly spoils him that is in reputation, *Ecl.* 10:1.

The whole world, here, means the Roman empire, into which the Roman Christians, upon *Claudius'* edict to banish all the Jews from Rome,\* were scattered abroad, but were now returned, and, it seems, left a very good report behind them; and there was this good effect of their sufferings, their being persecuted made their faith famous; as the elders, of old, obtained a good report through faith, *Heb.* 11:2.

The faith of the Roman Christians came to be thus talked of, not only because excelling in itself, but because eminent and observable in its circumstances. Rome was a city on a hill, every one noticed what was done there. Thus they who have many eyes on them, have need to walk circumspectly, for what they do, good or bad, will be spoken of.

The church of Rome was then flourishing; but since, how is the gold become dim! The most fine gold changed! It is not what it was; then, espoused a chaste virgin to Christ, but since degenerated, so that (as that good old book, *the Practice of Piety*, makes appear in no less than 26 instances) even the *Epistle to the Romans*, is now an epistle against the Romans; little reason has she therefore to boast of her former credit.

II. His prayer for them, v. 9; an instance of his love. One of the greatest kindnesses we can do our friends, and sometimes the only kindness in our power, is, by prayer to recommend them to the loving kindness of God. From Paul's example, here, we may learn,

1. Constancy in prayer; *always, without ceasing*. He did himself observe the same rules he gave to others, *Eph.* 6:18. 1 *Thess.* 5:17. Not that Paul did nothing else but pray, but he kept [his mind always in a praying frame, kept] up stated times for the solemn performance of that duty, and those very frequent, and observed without fail.

2. Charity in prayer; *I make mention of you*. He had no particular acquaintance

\* In consequence of his baggage being robbed, as is said, by Jews in Judea. Ed.

of his apostolical character and authority, as sanctioning his doctrine, by which he intended to guard them especially against the judaizing teachers; yet he aimed to do this, in the most unassuming and affectionate manner possible; that he might give no disgust to any person, or furnish false teachers with any handle against him.—Some think the Christians at Rome had received supernatural gifts; (12:6.) Yet it does not appear that any apostle had been there: Paul, however, expected that these gifts would be more abundantly imparted, when he should go among them; and that they would be thus fortified against such as attempted to pervert them, as well as against the fear of persecution.—It has been seen how his prayers for 'a prosperous journey' to Rome were answered by his being sent thither as a prisoner! 15:22—33. *Acts* 18:18—23. 25—28. *Scott.*

(9.) *God is my witness.*] 'The reason why he here makes the appeal to God, seems to be, that he being a stranger in person to the church of Rome, they might otherwise think his expressions to be merely those of common civility.' *Stuart.*

(10.) 'Always asking in my prayers, that at some time or other, if possible, before long, I may (God willing) make a prosperous journey, and come to you.' *Id.*

(11.) *Gift.*] 'Favor.' *St.* 'By enallage for gifts, i. c. supernatural ones. Nothing would so much tend to confirm the great multitude (who are here meant) in their religion, as the evidence of its divine origin, so unquestionably supplied by the communion of such gifts. Had no more been meant than *Schleus*, and other recent commentators tell us [viz. spiritual knowledge, edification, and peace], that would scarcely have required the presence of the apostle; nay, the epistle might have been expected to produce nearly the same effect.' *Bloomf.*

(12.) 'Chrys., *Ecum.*, *Theoph.*, *Grot.*, *Locke*, *Kypke*, and *Ros.* here notice the exquisite delicacy with which the apostle softens down what



13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

14 I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

[Practical Observations.]

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

u 1 Co. 9:16. w Je. 23:29. 1 Co. x Ma. 16:16.  
v Ma. 8:38. 2 Ti. 1:8. 1:18. y Ac. 3:26.

with them, or interest in them, yet he prayed for them, for them expressly. It is not unfit sometimes to be express in our prayers for particular churches and places; not to inform God, but to affect ourselves. We are likely to have the most comfort in these friends we pray most for. Concerning this, he makes a solemn appeal to the Searcher of hearts; *God is my witness*. It was in a weighty matter, known only to God and his own heart, that he used this asseveration. It is very comfortable to be able to call God to witness our sincerity and constancy in the discharge of a duty. God is particularly a witness to our secret prayers, the matter of them, the manner of the performance, Mat. 6:6. Those that *serve God with their spirits*, v. 9. may, with a humble confidence, appeal to Him; hypocrites cannot, who rest in bodily exercise.

His particular prayer, among many other petitions, was, that he might have an opportunity to visit them, v. 10. The expressions used, intimate, that he was very desirous of such an opportunity, *if by any means*; that

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—15. 'A servant of Jesus Christ' is the highest style of man; and the Christian slave is 'a servant of Christ,' as truly as the apostle.—All those who are thus distinguished, have been 'called' out of a state of darkness and alienation from God, and 'separated' from their sinful connexions, by divine grace; and thus taught to believe, love, adorn, and promote the Gospel of God.—In proportion as grace is communicated, peace may be expected; and when grace shall ripen into perfect holiness, peace will become complete fruition. These then are the great blessings, which we should seek for ourselves, our children, our friends, and all around us, in preference to all earthly possessions or prosperity: and they must be sought from the mercy of God, our Father, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and by reliance on his merits and

might appear arrogant in the preceding sentence' BLOOMF. V. 13—15. The apostle was exceedingly desirous to have some fruit among the Romans, as well as among the other Gentiles: for, as he had been converted in a most extraordinary manner, and entrusted with a dispensation of the Gospel; he thought himself bound to do everything which he possibly could, to promote the salvation of men in general, especially among the Gentiles.

(13.) *Hindered.*] 'By one mean or another,' Doddr. 'A proof that the minds and actions of the apostles were not continually overruled by a divine afflatus; but that their measures were often concerted by human foresight alone, and of course subject to disappointment. Comp. 15:23, 24. Acts 19:21.'

(14.) 'I am bound by my calling, gifts, and spiritual office, as teacher of the Gentiles, to evangelize both Greeks and barbarians. *Syr. and Chrys.* The Gospel was so fitted to all men, that it despised not the stupid, nor ought to be despised by men of genius. *Grot.* As the Gospel was committed to his trust, he was a trustee, and so a debtor, to dispense it freely to all, as he should have opportunity. See 1 Tim. 1:11. 1 Thess. 2:4. *Taylor.* So *Rox. and Schleus.* Bl. *Barbarians.*] 'Ammonius explains this by non-Greek; and that this very early distinction continued to a late period, and that the Romans were also included in *Barbaroi*, is seen in Polyb. After the Romans had conquered them, the Greeks either (as *Diod. Sic., Plut., and Appian*) avoided the use of the invidious word, or, as *Dion. Hal.*, meant the *uncivilized*, excluding the Romans, as of *Greek extraction*. So *Strabo, Herodian, Dio Cnss. Jos.* rarely uses the phrase, but takes care not to express in which class he reckoned the Romans. He evidently, however, means to consider the Jews as *separate from both classes*,—as, I think, the apostle does. So Col. 3:11.'

V. 16. While Jewish rabbies, and pagan philosophers, had tried in vain to reform men's lives; the despised Gospel of Christ, wherever it had been preached, had been rendered extensively successful for that purpose. 'It is the power of God unto salvation.' 'Now it is plain, that it is not merely the power of God manifested in outward miracles, that is there spoken of; for miracles were wrought upon and in the

he had long and often been disappointed, *now at length*; and yet submitted it to the Divine Providence. As in our purposes, so in our desires, we must still remember to insert this, *if the Lord will*, James 4:15. Our journeys are prosperous and comfortable, or otherwise, according to the will of God.

III. His great desire to see them, with the reasons of it, v. 11—15. He had often purposed to come, v. 13. but was hindered by other business; he was for doing that first, not which was most pleasant, (then he would have gone,) but which was most needful; a good example to ministers, not to consult their own inclinations so much, as the necessity of their people's souls.

Paul desired to visit these Romans, 1. That they might be edified, v. 11. He received, that he might communicate. A good sermon is a good gift, so much the better for being a *spiritual gift*. Having commended their flourishing, he expresses his desire that they *may be established*, that as they grew upward in the branches, they might grow downward in the root: in such a shaking world, the best saints need be more and more established; and for this *spiritual gifts* are of special use.

2. That he might be comforted, v. 12. What he heard of their flourishing in grace, was so much a joy to him, that it must needs be much more so to behold it. Mutual confidence between minister and people, is very comfortable. Or, it may mean the mutual work of faith, which is love; they rejoiced in the expressions of one another's love, or communicating their faith one to another. Their edification would be his advantage, fruit abounding to a good account, v. 13. Paul minded his work, as one that believed, the more good he did, the greater would his reward be.

3. That he might discharge his trust as the apostle of the Gentiles, v. 14. His receivings made him debtor; the great gifts and abilities he had, made him so; we should think of this when we covet great things; that all our receivings put us in debt; we

are but stewards of our Lord's goods. His office made him a debtor; he was a debtor as an apostle, he was called and sent to work, and had engaged to mind it. Paul had improved his talent, and done as much good as ever any man did, yet, in reflection on it, he still writes himself debtor; for when we have done all, we are but unprofitable servants. He was debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians, i. e. as the following words explain it, to the wise and to the unwise. The Greeks fancied they had the monopoly of wisdom, and looked upon all the rest of the world as barbarians, comparatively so; not cultivated with learning and arts as they were. Now Paul thought himself obliged to do all the good he could to both. Accordingly, we find him doing so, both in his preaching and in his writing. You may observe a difference between his sermon at Lystra, among the plain Lycaonians, Acts 14:15, &c. and that at Athens, among the polite philosophers, Acts 17:22, &c.

For these reasons he was ready, if he had an opportunity, to preach the Gospel at Rome, v. 15. though it should be attended with peril. He was ready to run the risk; the word denotes he was very forward to it: not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. It is an excellent thing to be ready to meet every opportunity of doing or getting good.

V. 16—18. Paul here enters on a large discourse of justification; in the latter part of this ch. laying down his thesis; and, in order to the proof of it, describing the deplorable condition of the Gentile world.

His transition is very handsome, and like an orator; he was ready to preach the Gospel at Rome, where it was run down by the wits, v. 16.

There is a great deal in the Gospel which such a man as Paul might be tempted to be ashamed of, especially that its Author was hanged on a tree; its doctrine had nothing to set it off among scholars, its professors were mean and despised, and everywhere spoken against; yet Paul was not ashamed to own it. I reckon him a Christian indeed, that is neither ashamed of the Gospel, nor a shame

mediation. . . Yet alas! most of us must own, with shame, that we are not so earnest or particular, even in our narrow circles, as Paul was, in respect of his most extensive connexions, and with all his urgent and multiplied engagements. But we should endeavor to imitate him, even as he imitated Christ: and we ought to long for opportunities of usefulness, as worldly men do for a prosperous trade, or occasions of distinguishing themselves and acquiring celebrity: and count that the most successful journey or undertaking, in which most good has been done or attempted; though it have exposed us to hardship, loss, or peril. Nor ought we to deem such services any great thing; but merely our bounden duty, our debt of devoted obedience to God, of gratitude to Christ, and of love to our neighbors and our brethren. SCOTT.

presence both of them that believed not, and them that did believe. The power of God, there spoken of, is a power felt only by them that believe: so that whatever the enemies of the free grace of God may suggest; it cannot be meant of those extraordinary manifestations of power in healing men's bodies, &c. but of that inward teaching and drawing of the Father, of which the prophets foretold, that it would be bestowed in a large manner in gospel-times. Maclaurin. SCOTT.

(16.) *Ashamed.*] 'Chrysostom has, I think, alone suggested the true mode of considering the expression: and in this he has been followed (as usual) by Theoph., Oec., and Theod. "Since the Romans were great admirers of riches, pomp, and worldly glory, and Paul was about to preach to them a Savior in whom was the very reverse of all this, and doctrines very humbling to the pride of man, he takes care to assure them, that he is not ashamed of the Gospel; and thereby means to delicately admonish them not to be so." Koppe observes, that "this sentiment was suggested to the apostle by the association of ideas, on writing the words, *those in Rome*: q. d. I shall not be ashamed, no, not at Rome, where high literary endowments are combined with unrestrained licentiousness, and where, therefore, the doctrines of a crucified Savior would be likely to attract naught but derision both to themselves and their promulgator. By this sentiment the apostle glides, *tanquam aliud agens*, to the subject which he especially meant to treat; namely, to prove, that it is only by Christ Jesus that men could be delivered from those punishments to which *all*, both Jews and Gentiles, had, by their own fault, rendered themselves obnoxious." Power, &c.] The powerful means employed by God for the salvation of man. Abstract for concrete.' BLOOMF.

(16—18.) 'These 3 vs. contain 4 propositions, which lie at the basis of all that may be appropriately called the Gospel of Christ. (1.) To Gospel truth is imparted a divine energy in saving the souls of men. (2.) Those only can be saved by it, who believe in it, and put their confidence in it. (3.) The pardon of sin, or the justification which God will bestow only on sinners who believe in Christ, is revealed from heaven, and proposed to all men for their reception. (4.) From the same source a revelation is made, that the unbelieving and ungodly will be the sub-



17 For therein <sup>2</sup> is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is <sup>3</sup> written, The just shall live by faith.

18 For the wrath <sup>b</sup> of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness:

19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest <sup>c</sup> in them; for <sup>d</sup> God hath shewed *it* unto them.

z c. 3:21-25.  
a Hab. 2:4.

b Ep. 5:6.  
c or, to them.

d Jn. 1:9.

to it. The reason of this bold profession, taken from the nature and excellency of the Gospel, introduces his dissertation.

I. The proposition, v. 16, 17. The excellency of the Gospel lies in this, that it reveals to us,

1. The salvation of believers as the end; *it is the power of God unto salvation*. Paul is not ashamed of it on this account, that it shows us the way of salvation, Acts 16: 17. and is the great charter by which salvation is conveyed and made over to us. But, (1.) *It is through the power of God*; without that it is but a dead letter; *the revelation of the Gospel, is the revelation of the arm of the Lord, Is. 53: 1.* (2.) It is to those, and those only, *that believe*; believing interests us in the gospel-salvation; to the Jew first, to whom the offer was first made, both by Christ and his apostles, Acts 3: 26. but on their refusal, to the Gentiles, Acts 13: 46. Such doctrine was surprising to the Jews, who had hitherto been the peculiar people, and looked with scorn on the Gentile world; but the long expected Messiah, proves a *Light to lighten the Gentiles*, as well as *the Glory of his people Israel*.

2. The justification of believers as the way, v. 17. *For therein*, i. e. in this Gospel, which Paul so much triumphs in, *is the righteousness of God revealed*. The Gospel makes known this righteousness. While God is just and holy, and we are guilty, it is necessary we have a righteousness wherein to appear before Him; and blessed be God, there is such a righteousness brought in by Messiah the Prince, Dan. 9: 24. and revealed in the Gospel; called here *the righteousness of God*, as being of God's appointing, approving,

jects of divine indignation and punishment. [What, some ask, becomes of the 600,000,000 of the human race horn where there is no Gospel? Will Christ's death avail the best of them nothing? See 2:6-16. Ed.] The apostle does not proceed formally, and in order, to illustrate and establish these propositions separately and successively; but now one part and now another comes in view, as he proceeds, and the whole is fully developed by him in the course of the epistle.

V. 17. In the Gospel, God had revealed, not only the righteousness of his perfect character and government, and the righteousness required by his holy law, but *that* also which He had appointed, provided, and introduced, for the justification of sinners before Him. This might be called 'the righteousness of God,' for other reasons; but especially, because it consisted of the perfect obedience unto death of that glorious Person, who is 'God manifested in the flesh.' 'This phrase, in Paul's style, doth always signify the righteousness of faith in Christ Jesus dying, or shedding his blood for us. . . . This righteousness consists not in our sanctification, but in our justification, or absolution from our sins past, through faith in the blood of Christ, shed for the remission of sins.' *Whitby*.—'Therein is the righteousness, which is of the free grace of God, through Jesus Christ, revealed to be wholly of faith.' *Locke*. The texts referred to [see *Scott's M. R. o.*], if duly considered, will prepare the reader to expect something still more appropriate, in this most remarkable expression; and a far higher privilege to believers, than these concessions, which are of no small importance, point out to us. 3:21—26. 2 Cor. 5:18—21, v. 21. *Phil.* 3:8—11, v. 9. 2 *Pet.* 1:1, 2. *SCOTT*.

(17.) Righteousness, &c.] *Dikaionunē*. 'Accepting and treating as righteous.' 3:21. *St.* 'Most explain, the doctrine of acceptance with God by faith. Called of God, says *Locke*, because a righteousness, a justification, "of his contrivance and bestowing." *Koppe* understands, "immunity from the punishment of sin; and, united with this, a sense of divine rewards." But this seems very vague and arbitrary. *Storr* tr. *probitas et beatitas*. *Schoett.* and *Syr.* benignity; *Ros.* favor, beneficium, and he says, there is a reason given why the Christian religion is to be acknowledged as the most effectual means of salvation. *Amnon*, *Wahl*, and *Turner* take it to mean, not the righteousness, or rather justification, itself, but the mode of justification, which God has exhibited in the Gospel; and this seems correct. *From faith*, &c.] Many, as *Hamm.*, *Mackn.*, and *Storr*, r. "for the righteousness of God by faith (i. e. produced by faith) is revealed in it (i. e. the Gospel) in order to faith (i. e. to produce faith in those to whom it is promulgated.) *Ros.*, *Doddr.*, and

and accepting; so called, also, to cut off all pretensions to a righteousness resulting from the merit of our own works: said to be from faith to faith; from the faithfulness of God revealing, to the faith of man receiving, so some; from the faith of dependence on God, and dealing with Him immediately, as Adam before the fall, to the faith of dependence on a Mediator, and so dealing with God, so others; from the first faith, by which we are put into a justified state, to after faith, [successive acts of faith,] by which we live, and are continued in that state, both implied in the next words, *The just shall live by faith*, faith being all in all, both in the beginning and progress of a Christian life.

To show that this is no novel doctrine, he quotes for it that famous scripture in the O. T. so often mentioned in the New, Hab. 2: 4. *The just shall live by faith*. Being justified by faith, he shall live by it both the life of grace, and of glory. The discovery by the prophet was, of the certainty of the appearance of the promised Messiah, in the fulness of time, notwithstanding seeming delays, there called the vision, by way of eminence, as elsewhere the promise; and while that time is coming, as well as when it is come, the just shall live by faith. Thus is the evangelical righteousness from faith to faith: from O. T. faith in a Christ to come, to N. T. faith in a Christ already come.

II. The proof of this proposition, that both Jews and Gentiles stand in need of a righteousness wherein to appear before God, and that neither have any of their own. Justification must be either by faith or works; it cannot be by works, which he proves at large, by describing the works both of Jews and Gentiles; therefore he concludes it must be by faith, ch. 3: 20, 28. Like a skilful surgeon, before he applies the plaster, he searches the wound; endeavors first to convince of guilt and wrath, and then to show the way of salvation. This makes the Gospel the more welcome.

In general, v. 18. the wrath of God is revealed. The light of nature, and the light of the law, reveal the wrath of God from sin to sin. It is well for us, that the Gospel reveals the justifying righteousness of God from faith to faith. The antithesis is observable.

1. Here is the sinfulness of man described; he reduceth it to two heads, ungodliness against the laws of the first table, unrighteousness against those of the second.

2. The cause of that sinfulness, and that is, holding the truth in unrighteousness. Some ideas they had of the being of God, and of the difference of good and evil; but they held them in unrighteousness, i. e. they knew and professed them in a consistency with their wicked courses; they held the truth as a captive or prisoner, that it should not influence them, as otherwise it would.

3. The displeasure of God against it; the wrath of God is revealed from heaven; not only in the written Word, the Gentiles had not that, but in the providences of God, his judgments executed on sinners, which fall not out by chance, but are a revelation from heaven; or wrath from heaven is revealed; not the wrath of a man like ourselves, but wrath from heaven, therefore the more terrible, and the more unavoidable.

V. 19—32. In this last part of the ch. he applies what he had said particularly to the Gentile world: in which we may observe,

I. The means and helps they had to come to the knowledge of God; not such a knowledge of his law as Jacob and Israel had, Ps. 147: 20. yet among them *He left not Himself without witness*, Acts 14: 17. v. 19, 20. Observe,

1. What discoveries they had; *That which may be known of God is manifest in them*; some even among them were convinced of the existence of one supreme God. The philosophy of *Pythagoras*, *Plato*, and the *Stoics*, discovered a great deal of the knowledge of God, as appears by plenty of testimonies. *That which may be known*, implies a great deal may not be known. The being of God may be apprehended, but cannot be comprehended. We cannot by searching find Him out, Job 11: 7—9. but, blessed be God, there is enough which may be known, to lead us to our chief end, the glorifying and enjoying of Him: and these things belong to us and to our children, Deut. 29: 29.

2. Whence they had these discoveries; *God hath showed it to them*. Those common natural notions they had of God, were imprinted on their hearts by the God of nature Himself, who is the Father of lights. This sense of a Deity, and a regard to that Deity, is so connate with the human nature, that some think we are to distinguish men from brutes by it, rather than by reason.

3. By what way and means these discoveries and notices they had, were confirmed and improved,—by the work of creation,

*Schleus*. r. "to those who have faith." But that would require the article. *Bl.* 'For the justification which is of God, is revealed by it, (justification) by faith, in order that we may believe.' *St.*, whom see: 'So *Flatt.*, *Beng.*, *Hamm.*' *As it is written*.] 'I. e. "so that one may here apply the Scripture," &c. This is the admitted meaning of the formula. "The just shall live by faith," seems, says *Taylor*, a Jewish proverb. *To live*, means to be happy. That this was a common Jewish opinion, appears from the writings of the Rabbins.' *BLOOMF.*

V. 18—20. 'In vain does the evangelical doctrine exhort men to seek righteousness and salvation in Christ alone, apprehended by faith, unless all men be previously convicted as guilty of unrighteousness; which the apostle now begins to prove, concluding at chap. 3:21.' *Beza*. The apostle here opens his main subject; and begins to show, that all men deeply need the salvation of the Gospel, because none can obtain the favor of God, or escape his wrath, by their own works. The ignorant and deluded indeed might imagine, that their supposed virtues would atone for their vices; but in fact, 'the wrath of God has been revealed from heaven,' against every kind and degree of 'ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;' not only against vice and immorality, in the conduct of men towards each other; but every failure of that reverence, love, gratitude, and honor, which are due [and ever were due in the highest degree, a perfect obedience] unto God: even of 'all those who hold the truth in unrighteousness.' This revelation had been especially made by the holy law of God, and the Old Test. dispensation; and had now been more generally published and fully explained by the Gospel. And though some extenuation might be admitted, in respect of those who had not been favored with 'the oracles of God;' yet all men were found guilty, and exposed to this 'revealed wrath,' for 'holding the truth in unrighteousness,' or acting in opposition to their knowledge, and the conviction of their own consciences. [The single fact, that all nations have had sacrifices, shows a sense in all of sin to be atoned for.] All were [endowed with a conscience, &c. and] acquainted with many leading truths, concerning moral duties; but their depravity imprisoned those truths, and, so, restrained them from duly influencing their conduct. 'All might have known far more than they did, had they not hated the light through love of sin. Indeed, to this day, no man, of any sect or nation, perfectly lives up to his own principles: all, at some times, and in some things, do what they know to be wrong, and omit what they know [by that perfection of conscience which would have resulted from perfect obedience] to be their duty. So that the plea



20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things <sup>e</sup> that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; <sup>f</sup> so that they are without excuse :

21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful, but became <sup>g</sup> vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened :

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they <sup>h</sup> became fools,

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image <sup>i</sup> made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

<sup>e</sup> Ps. 19:1, &c. <sup>g</sup> Je. 2:5. Ep. 4:17, 18. <sup>i</sup> Is. 40:18, 26. <sup>f</sup> or, that they <sup>h</sup> Je. 8:8, 9. Ez. 8:10. <sup>may be.</sup>

v. 20. *the things that are made*; they could not make themselves, nor fall into such an exact order and harmony by any casual hits; and therefore must have been produced by some first cause or intelligent agent; which could be no other than an eternal, powerful God. See Ps. 19:1. Is. 40:26. Acts 17:24. The workman is known by his work. The variety, multitude, order, beauty, harmony, different nature, and excellent contrivance, of the *things made*, the direction of them to certain ends, and the concurrence of all the parts to the good and beauty of the whole, do abundantly prove a Creator, and his eternal power and Godhead. Thus did the light shine in the darkness.

And *this from the creation of the world*. Understand either the *work* of creation, as a topic, and man in particular, so some; and so he is called *creature*, Mark 16:15; or, the date of the *discovery*; as old as the creation of the world, in which sense the phrase is most frequently used in Scripture. These notices concerning God, are not any modern discoveries, hit upon of late, but ancient truths, which were from the beginning.

II. Their gross idolatry, notwithstanding these discoveries that God made to them of Himself; described here, v. 21—23, 25. We shall the less wonder at the inefficacy of these natural discoveries, to prevent the idolatry of the Gentiles, if we remember how

prone even the Jews, who had scripture-light to guide them, were to idolatry; so miserably are the degenerate sons of men plunged in the mire of sense! Observe,

1. The inward cause of their idolatry, v. 21, 22. They are therefore without excuse, in that they did know God, and from that their duty to worship Him, and Him only. But the mischief was, they *glorified Him not as God*; their affections toward Him, and their awe and adoration of Him, did not keep pace with their knowledge. To glorify Him as God, is to glorify Him only; for there can be but one infinite; but they did not so glorify Him, for they set up a multitude of other deities. To glorify Him as God, is to worship Him with spiritual worship; but they made images of Him. Not to glorify God as God, is in effect not to glorify Him at all; to respect Him as a creature, is not to glorify Him, but to dishonor Him.

*Neither were thankful*; not thankful for the favors in general they received from God; nor in particular for the discoveries God was pleased to make of Himself to them. Those that do not improve the means of knowledge and grace, are justly reckoned unthankful for them.

*But became vain in their imaginations, in their reasonings, in their practical inferences.* They had a great knowledge of general truths, v. 19. but no prudence to apply them to particular cases. Or, in their notions of God, and the creation of the world, and the origination of mankind, and the chief good; in these things, when they quitted the plain truth, they soon disputed themselves into a thousand vain and foolish fancies.

*And their foolish heart was darkened.* The foolishness and practical wickedness of the heart, eloud and darken the intellectual powers and faculties. Nothing tends more to the blinding and perverting of the understanding, than the corruption and depravedness of the will and affections.

V. 22. reflects on the philosophers; and it was the just punishment of their pride and self-conceit, that they fell into the most gross and absurd conceits; it has been observed, that the most refined nations, that made the greatest show of wisdom, were the arrantest fools in religion. The barbarians adored the sun and moon, the learned Egyptians, an ox and an onion; the Grecians, who excelled in wisdom, adored diseases and

human passions: the Romans, the wisest of all, worshipped the furies: and at this day, the poor Americans worship the thunder; while the ingenious Chinese adore the devil. Thus the *world by wisdom knew not God*, 1 Cor. 1:21. Hence few philosophers were converted to Christianity; and Paul's preaching was nowhere so laughed at, and ridiculed, as among the learned Athenians, Acts 17:18, 32.; *conceiting themselves* to be wise. The plain truth of the being of God would not content them; they thought themselves above that, and so fell into the greatest errors.

2. The outward acts of their idolatry, v. 23, 25. They owned a supreme *Numen*, but in effect disowned Him, by the worship they paid the creature: for God will be all or none. Or, *served the creature above* the Creator; paying more respect to their inferior deities, stars, heroes, demons, thinking the supreme God inaccessible, or above their worship. Worshipping the creature was the general wickedness of the Gentile world, and became twisted in with their laws and government; in compliance with which, even the wise men among them, who knew and owned a supreme God, and were convinced of the nonsense and absurdity of their polytheism and idolatry, yet did as the rest of their neighbors did. Thus *Seneca de Superstitione*, as it is quoted by *Aug. de Civit. Dei*, lib. 6. cap. 10. I mention this, because it explains the apostle here, v. 18. *who hold the truth in unrighteousness.*

It is observable, that, on mention of the dishonor done to God by the idolatry of the Gentiles, the apostle, in the midst of his discourse, expresses himself in an awful adoration of God, *Who is blessed for ever. Amen.* When we see or hear of any contempt cast on God or his name, we should thence take occasion to think and speak highly and honorably of Him. In this, as in other things, the worse others are, the better we should be. *Blessed for ever*, notwithstanding these dishonors done to his name: though there are those that do not glorify Him, yet He is glorified, and will be glorified to eternity.

III. The judgments of God on them for this idolatry: not many temporal judgments, but spiritual judgments, giving them up to the most brutish and unnatural lusts. *He gave them up*; it is thrice repeated here, v. 24, 26, 28. Spiritual judgments are the sorest of all, and to be most dreaded. Observe,

of ignorance cannot be admitted, *in its full latitude*, in favor of any but idiots; for all rebel against that light, not only which they might have obtained, [and if there is but *one* omission, how can the reward of perfect obedience be claimed? and how can any merit over and above a perfect obedience, at every moment required, be laid up to atone for one failure even?] but which they actually possess. (M. R. u.)—This general principle the apostle proceeded to illustrate, by the state of the Gentile world. Thus, even idolaters and Gentiles are left without excuse; and their ungodliness and unrighteousness are proved to be the effect of their depraved dispositions, rather than of their want of information, or the means of obtaining it. All might have known more of God than they did, had they *lived up to what knowledge they had*. (18) *Revealed.* [How true is this of the rewards and penalties of God's natural laws; how striking the analogy between them and revelation!] 'The words of Paul to the Athenians give light to these here to the Romans. Acts 17:22—31.' *Locke.* (20) *Being understood, &c.* 'Or, "If they be minded, they are seen." The invisible things of God lie within the reach and discovery of men's reason and understanding; but yet they must exercise their faculties, and employ their minds about them.' *Locke.*

(19.) *In.* St. tr. 'to;'. *BL.* 'among.'

*Ed.*

(20.) 'For although He Himself cannot be seen with the eyes, yet from the (i. e. from the period of the) very creation of the world there may be seen (if we attend to the things constituted and effected by Him) his eternal power and majesty.' *Koppe. Godhead.* 'Everything comprehended in the idea of God; all the divine attributes. "In this mundane system (says *Mackn*) everything is so formed, that to the pious among the [illiterate] God Himself appears to be the Author of all the operations of nature. But they who have attained a partial knowledge of what is called *natural philosophy*, have, from the discovery of some second causes, been led to fancy, that the whole system may be accounted for without the intervention of a Deity; [as if nature informed and perfected itself, struggling through matter towards perfection, as is blindly set forth by some 'philosophers' of W. Europe. See also a book called '*Nature*, 1836.] This is what the apostle calls, v. 21. *becoming fools by their own reasonings*; [not content to confine their reason within the limits God has assigned it by our constitution.] Those, however, who have made the greatest advances in true philosophy, know that *second causes*, properly speaking, are no *causes*, because they

have no efficiency in themselves, but are set in motion [arranged in the relation of antecedent and consequent] by God: [but are not (Gen. 1:1.) identical with God, part of the actual existence of God, part and particle of God, God Himself, as some heathen philosophers and idolaters, and professed Christians even, and atheists, have taught and do teach.] And thus, the most perfect philosophy always ends where the natural sense of mankind begins." The subject has been admirably treated by *Paley*, in his *Nat. Theol.*

*BLOOMF.*

V. 21—23. Idolatry was first introduced, and became general and perpetual in the world, through man's depraved aversion to the holy character, worship, and service of the true God. The posterity of Noah had some knowledge of *Jehovan*; but they revolted, and idolatry was become almost universal when God called Abraham. From that time, the same causes produced the same effects, in every part of the world. It is well known, that many of the ancients, especially the learned Egyptians, worshipped dogs, snakes, reptiles, nay, even vegetables! Thus mankind, having retained from original tradition, or having acquired by the exercise of reason, some general notions of a Deity; invented numerous species of idolatry, and universally forsook the worship of the true God, in all places where revelation was not actually vouchsafed.—Indeed, the fact is undeniably the same, even to this day; and if any nations seem to be sunk into so entire a stupidity, as to have no notions of a God remaining among them, this still more clearly proves, not man's want of rational powers, but his carnal enmity to God and religion, through which he becomes more and more the besotted and blinded slave of Satan. Cicero's books, 'On the nature of the gods,' contain many very striking illustrations of the apostle's meaning. [See *Tholuck*, on the moral influence of heathenism.] *SCOTT.*

(21.) 'The heathen did not (as observe *Tolet*, *Paræus*, and *Wollius*) recognise God as the *Author* of all good things, but referred them mostly to fortune, to the stars, to their own prudence; very rarely ascribing anything to the providence of God. Idolatry was the fruitful mother of obscenity and vice, of every kind.'

*BLOOMF.*

(22.) This is now as it has been: see note, v. 20. *Ed.* As to the fashionable philosophers, 'the world was far more successful in *corrupting* them, than they in *reforming* it; since it had many temptations with which to corrupt them; they had no allurements with which to entice the world, and what is more, no divine sanctions to give authority to their precepts.' *BL.*

*Id.*



24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves :

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections : for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature :

27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lust one toward another ; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient ;

J Ps. 81:12. l or, rather. o or, a mind void  
2 Th. 2:11. m Ep. 5:12. Jude 10. of judgment.  
k Am. 2:4. n or, to acknowledge.

1. By whom they were given up. God gave them up, in a way of righteous judgment, as the just punishment of their idolatry ; whether the act was positive, or only privative, we leave to the schools to dispute: but this we are sure of, that it is no new thing for God to give men up to their own

hearts' lusts, nay, to lay stumbling-blocks before them. And yet God is not the author of sin, but herein infinitely just and holy ; for though the greatest wickednesses follow on this giving up, the fault of that is to be laid on the [choice of the] sinner's wicked heart.

2. To what they were given up.

(1.) To uncleanness and vile affections, v. 24, 26, 27. They that would not entertain the more pure and refined notices of natural light, which tend to preserve the honor of God, justly forfeited those more gross and palpable sentiments, which preserve the honor of human nature, Ps. 49:20. Thus one, by the divine permission, becomes the punishment of another ; but it is, as said here, through the lusts of their own hearts ; there all the fault is to be laid. Those who dishonored God, were given up to dishonor themselves. The particular instances of their uncleanness and vile affections, are, their unnatural lusts ; which many of the heathen, even of those among them who passed for wise men, as Solon and Zeno, were infamous for, against the plainest and most obvious dictates of natural light. Perhaps, the apostle especially refers to the abominations committed in the worship of their idol-gods, in which the worst of uncleannesses were prescribed to honor their gods.

In the church of Rome, where the pagan idolatries are revived, images worshipped, and saints only substituted in the room of demons, we hear of these same abominations going barefaced, licensed by the pope, (*Fox's Acts and Monuments*, vol. 1. p. 808,) and not only commonly perpetrated, but justified and pleaded for by some of their cardinals : the same spiritual plagues for the same spiritual wickednesses.

See what wickedness there is in the nature of man ! How abominable and filthy is man ! *Lord, what is man !* says David ;

what a vile creature is he, when left to himself ! How much are we beholden to the restraining grace of God, for the preserving [of] anything of the honor and deceeuy of the human nature !

(2.) To a reprobate mind in these abominations, v. 28. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge. The blindness of their understandings was caused by the wilful aversion of their wills and affections. They did not retain God in their knowledge, because they did not like it. Many have God in their knowledge, they cannot help it, the light shines so fully ; but they do not retain Him there ; they say to the Almighty, *Depart*, Job 21:14. and they therefore do not retain God in their knowledge, because it thwarts and contradicts their lusts ; they do not like it. There is a difference, too, between knowledge and acknowledgment ; the pagans knew God, but did not, would not, acknowledge Him. Answerable to which wilfulness of theirs, in gainsaying the truth, God gave them over to a wilfulness in the grossest sins, here called a reprobate mind,—a mind void of all sense and judgment, to discern things that differ, so that they could not distinguish their right hand from their left, in spiritual things. This reprobate mind was a blind, seared conscience, past feeling, Eph. 4:19. When the judgment is once reconciled to sin, the man is in the suburbs of hell. At first Pharaoh hardened his heart, but afterward God hardened Pharaoh's heart. This wilful hardness is justly punished with judicial hardness. *To do things not convenient.* This phrase may seem to bespeak a diminutive evil, but, here, is expressive of the grossest enormities ; things not agreeable to men, that contradict the very light and law of nature. And here he subjoins a black list of those unbecoming things the Gentiles were guilty of, being delivered up to a reprobate

V. 24—27. Thus they disgraced their bodies, by using them to perpetrate with each other the most detestable pollutions: even those bodies, which the Creator had formed with most exquisite contrivance and good-will ; as might best render them accommodated to the purposes of their own comfort and usefulness to one another, and to be the instruments of the soul in his worship [obedience] and service : so they were left to practice such unnatural lusts, as are not fit to be mentioned, except as a stigma on human nature, and to enhance the grace of our redemption. Those unnatural crimes and vile affections, which are most scandalous at present, and carefully concealed, or most severely punished, were openly avowed among the Greeks and Romans, even in their politest ages : and their most elegant and celebrated poets have defiled their compositions by the mention of such detestable amours, without any expressions of abhorrence, or even of disapprobation ; nay, often in a way, which sanctions them, and almost wins the unwary reader to palliate, or even approve them ! SCOTT. And these are the very books often put by parents and teachers into the hands of a child, at the very age when all such stimulants should be especially and most conscientiously avoided ! What education ! Ed.

(24.) Gave them up.] God has so constituted man, that the indulgence or exercise of any sentiment or propensity, or faculty, strengthens it, and increases its power and readiness to act : and disuse has a contrary effect. Now the propensities may by indulgence become so strong, that the moral powers, weakened and deadened by disuse, may have little or no power to restrain, and the reckless brute dashes on from worse to worse. Then the heart is 'hardened,' and as this happens by God's laws in man's constitution, it is expressed by God's hardening or giving up to be hardened ; not interfering by miracle to stop the natural course He has ordained. *Dishonor their own bodies.*] We read this with horror, perhaps, but may not the married even, who are faithful to one another indeed, thus sin, forgetting that their bodies are temples of God ? Physiologists assert, that indulgence strengthens propensity, and that children inherit these strengthened and rampant propensities ; hence we may guess at the occasion of much of the abominable licentiousness (for the modern world is but little behind the ancient, in many parts) prevalent all over the world. Here then should 'moral reform' begin, calling on physicians, (who will attest the necessity of these remarks,) and moralists, to give a rule possible in the present predominance of the lower propensities in our race, and on married, as well as single, to keep it. Ed.

(25.) Worshipped and served.] 'The Gr. word for the former, means reverence, worship, adoration by words and postures ; that for the latter, the service rendered to those gods by ceremonial observances, especially sacrifices. See Steph. More than.] To the prejudice of. [Neglect of Doddr.] To this clause Paul applies a doxology, which was usual with the Jews (see Gen. 9:26. 14:20. 24:27 and 31.) on mentioning the name of God on any solemn occasion, especially when speaking in vindication of his honor. And, to express a still greater veneration, they used it (as in the present case) even in the middle of a discourse, or chain of reasoning. See Gal. 1:5. 2 Cor. 11:31.' Bloomf. 'The sense here is, that greater honor was paid to the work than to the Workman Himself, to whom, if indeed they in any manner acknowledged Him, as the Platonists, they yet appointed no sacrifices. They might say, as did the Pythagoreans, Platonists, and Stoics, that they did not believe with the people : and did not follow the civil theology, or the poetic, but the natural ; as Varro distinguishes ; saying, that by Jove, he understood

ether ; by Juno, air ; by Neptune, the sea ; by Naiads, fountains ; by Cybele, the surface of the earth ; by Pluto and Proserpine, its bowels ; by Ceres, the fruit-producing force ; by Dryads, the lives of trees ; by Vulcan, fire ; by Bacchus, the moisture in bodies. Therefore Paul says, that these could not thus excuse themselves, who paid the greatest possible honor to the things themselves, but to their Artificer, little or none. But, in truth, as Jos. says of them, "They dared not promulgate truth before the people." As Plato remarks, in effect, it was impossible. See Chrys. Seneca, treating of the received rites, who says, "All these a wise man will observe because they are appointed by the laws, not as if they were grateful to the gods." This cloaking of a bad custom, the Gospel convicts of injustice, as does also the apostle here. Add to this, the customs now in Paul's time prevalent at Rome, of rendering divine honors to the dead Cesars, (see Lucan.) If any one perjured himself in swearing by Cesar, he was most severely punished, if by God, it went unpunished. GROT.

(26.) Their women did, &c.] This is well known to have been an abomination of the ancients, invented by the Lesbian women. In justification of the apostle's censure, see the proof of these horrible crimes, heaped together by Wets., &c.' Bl. Indeed the other vices (26, 27, &c.) are known to be still practised, even the worst of them : though, except as governments license and regulate brothels, they are kept more out of sight. Comp. the public obscenities of Pompeii, &c. of this very age, buried whole, and preserved for ages, as if to convince us of the crying necessity, as well as truth, of the Gospel. Ed.

(27.) Meel recompensc.] 'Perhaps the theleia nosos of Herod. is meant, viz. a compound of the catamenia, hemorrhoids, impotence, [bodily and mental,] and those hysteric and nervous disorders which often accompany and terminate such abominations. The apostle, of course, does not accuse each individual heathen of all these, but his statements are true of the great multitude. As to the charges of sodomy, thrown out upon Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato, they rest only on scandals to be found in such gossiping writers as Diog. Laert., and Athenæus (both too far removed from the times to be of any authority), or, in the buffoon, Lucian, who has poured much of the same filth on Paul and the primitive Christians. As to the Fathers, Tertullian, Greg. Naz., and Theod., their accusations are only faint echoes of the charges above advanced. If we credit scandal, there was not one celebrated character of antiquity but was stained with vice and corruption. . . . Need enough there was of a divine revelation, to rouse men to a sense of the enormities into which they had fallen, to place religion on its true footing, and, on a pure and simple faith to erect the superstructure of an innocent and holy practice ! And this is all that is meant.' Bl.

V. 28—32. Men, in all ages and nations, had shown a disposition and decided purpose to discard from their minds the knowledge of the true God. This was an evident fact all over the Gentile world. In righteous judgment God gave them up to 'a reprobate mind ;' thus they were left to commit those crimes, which were utterly inconsistent with reason, nature, and their own and each other's welfare. Nay, they proceeded to such lengths in wickedness, that their whole hearts and lives were filled with every kind of fraud, oppression, extortion, and iniquity : they invented new species of cruelty, treachery, luxury, impiety, idolatry, sensual gratification, and magnificence. They cast off all regard to parental authority, and despised, injured, or even murdered their aged parents, as the emperor Nero his mother Agrippina. They sinned away natural



29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity: whisperers,

30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful; proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 Without understanding, covenant-breakers, <sup>p</sup> without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

32 Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but <sup>q</sup> have pleasure in them that do them.

<sup>p</sup> or, unsofiable.

<sup>q</sup> or, consent with them.

mind. No wickedness so heinous, but a reprobate mind will comply with it.

By the histories of those times, especially the accounts we have of the then prevailing dispositions and practices of the Romans, [and the evidence of the obscene relics, dug up at Herculaneum and Pompeii, cities near Rome, buried about this time,] when the

PRACT. OBS. V. 16—32. We ought not for a moment to allow of that absurd and hateful shame, which the enmity and contempt of the wicked against the Gospel often excite in our minds. On the contrary, we should glory in the doctrine of the cross; and be ready to profess or preach it in any place, or before any description of men, according to our ability and our call in Providence; as knowing, that it is 'the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth,' and that no sinner can be saved in any other way. It is indeed evident, to this day, that learned speculations, and supposed rational schemes, or the elegances of admired orators, are not attended in general with that power, which converts sinners from impiety and immorality, to the love and service of God: but this effect is produced, in some good measure, wherever the despised Gospel is preached, even though it be in a homely manner, and by persons of inferior abilities, erudition, and elocution. For by the Gospel is 'the righteousness of God revealed;' his way of justification and sanctification is opened; and sinners are taught to trust in Him, and to come before Him, by faith in his mercy, through the righteousness, atonement, and intercession of his beloved Son. He will therefore honor this doctrine, because it honors his perfections, law, and government, and because it is his own appointment: and they who devise other schemes may put forth *their own power* to make them successful, if they can; but God will not own or countenance them.—Whatever may be pleaded to the contrary, it is a certain fact, that atheism, infidelity, impiety, and idolatry spring from human depravity, not from unavoidable ignorance or mistake. Whatever speculators may assume, of the sufficiency of man's reason [in the present degenerated state of his faculties] to discover divine truth and moral obligation, or to regulate men's practice; stubborn facts confute the flattering hypothesis: and as far as God has *in awful displeasure* left men to themselves, they have dishonored Him by the most absurd idolatries and su-

affection, and even exposed their new-born infants, leaving them to perish without remorse or censure.\* They were implacable in their resentments, and unmerciful in their dispositions: so that their public diversions consisted in beholding gladiators fighting together, till hundreds were sometimes massacred before their eyes; or in seeing slaves and criminals fighting with wild beasts, and often devoured by them. Nor did the principal persons, whether men or women, of the highest rank, and most cultivated manners in other respects, absent themselves from these horrid spectacles! The history of the Greeks and Romans, especially of the latter, about the time when the apostle wrote, abundantly illustrates this horrid description of their general character, from which even their philosophers and moralists were by no means excepted. It might easily be shown, that the morals of idolatrous nations, if judged according to the immutable standard of the divine law, are at this day not at all better than the description here given of the Gentile world.—

(32) *Have pleasure, &c.* This, say the Greek commentators, is much worse than the hard doing of them: for a man may do them by the power of temptation; and by consideration become sensible of his folly, and repent of it: but when he is arrived at that height of wickedness, that he not only approves, but *delights* in seeing the like things done by others, he demonstrates such a strong affection to them as is incurable. *Whitby*. The apostle, however, is showing what need the Gentiles, and all men, had of the grace of the Gospel; and not that they were incurable by it; and in fact multitudes who once had answered this description, afterwards embraced Christianity, and became a peculiar people, zealous of good works. [\* As now in China, &c.] SCOTT.

(29, 30.) Resisting, disusing, and, so, deadening the conscientious impulse; thus taking all restraint from the lower impulses, the animal nature of course becomes predominant, injustice of thought and action is followed and accompanied by impurity more and more heinous; unrestrained selfishness breaks out, through covetousness, in wrong to others, rapacity, extortion; envy and malice, uncurbed in their proud and crafty impulses, swell to violence, cruelty, bloody-mindedness, and murder (witness the Roman malignity to slaves and the mob spirit, everywhere); so filled are they with wickedness themselves, that they cannot think well of another, but unjustly suspect and judge every person and action for the worse, and recklessly vent their suspicions and slanders for truth: and 'not only practice all the known vices, but seek out and invent more. Thus Tiberius, like Sardanapalus of old, offered a reward to whoever would invent a new pleasure, (i. e. lust.) We know there were persons who professionally applied themselves to such discoveries.' *EL*. *ED*.

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ancient virtue of that commonwealth was so degenerated, it appears that these sins, here mentioned, were then and there reigning, national sins.

V. 29—31. Here are no less than 23 several sorts of sins and sinners specified. [1.] Sins against the first table; *Haters of God*. Could it be imagined, that rational creatures should hate the chiefest Good, and depending creatures abhor the Fountain of their being? Yet so it is. Every sin has in it a hatred of God; but some sinners are more open and avowed enemies to Him than others. Zech. 11:8. *Proud and boasters* cope with God Himself, and put those crowns on their own heads, which must be cast before his throne. [2.] Sins against the second table. These are especially mentioned, because in these they had a clearer light. In general, a charge of unrighteousness is put first, for every sin is unrighteousness, withholding that which is due, perverting that which is right; it is especially put for second-table-sins, doing as we would not be done by. Here, besides particulars against the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th commandments, are two generals not yet mentioned, *inventors of evil things, and without understanding*; wise to do evil, and yet having

no knowledge to do good. The more deliberate and politic sinners are in inventing evil things, the greater is their sin: so quick of invention in sin, and yet without understanding, stark fools, in the thoughts of God.

Here is enough to humble us all, in the sense of our original corruptions; for every heart by nature has in it the seed and spawn of all these sins; [the same elementary propensities, to be used or abused.]

He closes with the aggravations of the sins, v. 32. 1st. *They knew the judgment of God*, the law of God and the penalty; so it is explained here, they knew that they who commit such things are worthy of death, eternal death; their own consciences could not but suggest this to them, and yet they ventured upon it. It argues the heart much hardened, and very resolutely set upon sin. 2dly. *They not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them*. To be pleased with other people's sins, is to love sin for sin's sake: our own sins are much aggravated by our concurrence with, and complacency in, the sins of others.

Now lay all this together, and then say, whether the Gentile world, lying under so much guilt and corruption, could be justified before God by any works of their own.

perstitions, and degraded themselves by 'vile affections,' and abominable lusts: nor is it generally expedient to mention enormities, to which they, who, 'liking not to retain God in their knowledge,' preferring their own inventions to his holy worship, have been given up; when, being left to 'a reprobate mind,' their deluded judgments, their perverse wills, and their depraved passions, have reciprocally helped to corrupt, and have been corrupted by, each other. A most horrid view of the moral character of the Greeks and Romans, even amidst all their prosperity, politeness, and erudition, is here set before us by the apostle: and the student who judges of characters and actions by the law of God, will perceive, that our own historians, orators, and poets, amidst all their flattery and false coloring, adduce such facts, and make such representations, as fully prove the apostle's picture to be a real and striking likeness, and no caricature. Nay, the most illustrious and celebrated persons among them may be produced, as most exactly answering to this horrid description!—It must indeed be thankfully acknowledged, that Christianity has had considerable effect on mankind in general, in giving them more just notions of excellence, and in humanizing their manners; yet, after all, what multitudes, even in this land, seem to be the original of the picture before us!—These are they, who would discard revelation, and who count 'the preaching of the cross foolishness.' But their conduct demonstrates their need of it, and that it is a remedy which they must avail themselves of, or perish.—Finally, we may here observe, that religion moderates and regulates natural affections, but excess of depravity extinguishes them: that it is a proof of more determined impiety, for men to take pleasure in the company of the enemies of God, than to commit many crimes, whilst the heart and conscience protest against them: and that it is a peculiar cause for gratitude, if we have been restrained from these enormities, to which by nature we are [each in a greater or less degree] prone. SCOTT.

(30.) *Disobedient to parents.* 'That the people of those times should have been so, is not strange, considering the horrible depravity of morals, which would extinguish all the natural affections, and loosen the natural connexion too, for few would know their own parents.' *BL*. The filial virtues include the exercise of all the higher impulsive sentiments of our nature, which, being overpowered by its lower impulses, no longer act as governors, and the undutiful child is thus like to be brutified, and to become stupidly insensible (so the Gr., for 'without understanding,' v. 31. see *BL*.) to right, or virtue, or love. It becomes a nation, especially ours, to listen to the remarks of Sir G. H. Rose, note, Eph. 6:2. *ED*.

(31.) *Implacable, unmerciful.* 'Of the truth of this, surely no one at all conversant with ancient literature, can doubt. The brutality of the Romans towards their slaves (see classical citations in *Grot.*) would of itself be proof enough; and the gladiatorial contests, in which multitudes of poor wretches, [slaves, &c.] were brought out to butcher each other, in order to amuse the people, stamp this odious vice in indelible characters: and indeed I cannot but think the apostle had such enormities in view.' *BL*. What would Paul have said to the instances of enormous violence, perpetrated unpunished in a Christian land, in our own land? Would he have excused them on the score of their being the necessary consequence of the institution of slavery? Let us hope, that violence is not becoming common among us, and pray, that the hateful principles of slavery may be changed by the Gospel, before they have spread through the length and breadth of our sinful land. *ED*.

(32.) *Judgment.* *Dikaiōma*: it corresponds to the Heb. *hq* and *hgh*, and denotes what is thought good, constituted and decreed by any ruler, a law; plainly, here, the natural law of conscience, written by God on the hearts of men. Its application to all the 'natural laws,' man's whole constitution in relation to the universe, is fertile in instruction, also. *ID*.

*Concluding Note.* On the phrase, *Son of God*, Gr. *Huios Theou*, v. 4. 'Any rational being may be called *huios Theou*, who is formed in the image of God, i. e. possesses by his gift a moral and intellectual nature like his own. The original idea of *huios* is that of derivation. The secondary one (which is often employed), is that of resemblance. The third gradation of meaning is, that of being regarded or treated as a son, occupying the place of a son, viz. having distinguished gifts, favors, or blessings bestowed on any one. To one or the other of these classes of meaning may all the instances be traced, of the phrase *son*, or *sons of God*, in the Bible.

\* The phrase is applied (1) To Adam, as proceeding immediately from the hand of the Creator, Luke 3:38. (2) To those who are regenerated, or born of the Spirit of God, John 1:12, 13. Rom. 8:15, 17. 1 John 3:1, 2, and often elsewhere. Connected with this, is the usage of calling all true worshippers of God, his sons; e. g. Mat. 5: 9, 45. Luke 6:35. 25:36. Rom. 8:14, 19. 2 Cor. 6:18. Gal. 3:26. Heb. 12:6. Rev. 21:7.



## CHAP. II.

1 They that sin, though they condemn it in others, cannot excuse themselves, 6 and much less escape the judgment of God, 9 whether they be Jews or Gentiles. 14 The Gentiles cannot escape, 17 nor yet the Jews, 25 whom their circumcision shall not profit, if they keep not the law.

**T**HEREFORE thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things.

3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

4 Or despisest thou the riches<sup>b</sup> of his goodness, and<sup>c</sup> forbearance, and<sup>d</sup> long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth<sup>e</sup> thee to repentance?

5 But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest<sup>f</sup> up unto thyself wrath against the day of<sup>g</sup> wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

a 2 Sa. 12:6, 7. d Jo. 4:2. f De. 32:34.  
b c. 9:23. e Is. 30:18. g Ec. 12:14.

and elsewhere. (3) The same appellation is sometimes given to such as are treated with special kindness; e. g. Rom. 9:26. Ho. 1:10. 11:1. De. 32:5, 19. Is. 1:2. 43:6. Je. 31:9. 2 Cor. 6:18. God, as the common Father and Benefactor of all men, good and bad, in relation to this relation, often calls Himself a *Father*, and styles them his children; if I be a Father, &c. I have n. and brought up children, hot, &c. Moreover, as all men are made in his image, i. e. have an intellectual, rational, and moral nature like his own; on this account also they may be styled his children; but more specially does this apply to those who are regenerated, and in whom the image of God, that had been in part defaced, is restored. (4) As bearing some resemblance to the Supreme Ruler of the universe in respect to authority, or as having office by his special favor, kings are sometimes named *sons of God*; e. g. Ps. 82:6. 2 S. 7:14. So in Homer, *Diogenes basileus* [god-born king, note, Rom. 13:1]. (5) Angels are called *sons of God*, for the like reason that men are, viz. because God is their Creator and Benefactor; and specially, because they bear a high resemblance to God; see Job 1:6. 21. 38:7. Dan. 3:25. Thus men and angels may be so called, also, for more than one reason; so one truly pious, for each or any of these reasons.

“We come now to the phrases, *ho huios tou Theou*, [The Son of God], as applied to Christ. (7) It designates Jesus as produced in the womb of the virgin Mary, by the miraculous influence of the H. S., Luke 1:32. (comp. 3:33.) Perhaps the same sense belongs to it in Mark 1:1. The words of the centurion in Mat. 27:54. and Mark 15:39. seem, in the mouth of a Roman, to have, perhaps not altogether, the same sense. (8) It means, *Jesus, as the constituted King or Messiah*. E. g. Mat. 16:16. 26:63. Mark 14:61. Luke 22:70. John 1:49. 11:27. and probably, in Mat. 3:29. 14:33. Mark 3:11. 5:7. Luke 4:41. 8:28. John 1:34. 6:59. 9:35. 10:36. Acts 9:20. 13:33. Heb. 5:5. In the like sense, the appellation, *Son*, is given to Him, in the way of anticipation, by the ancient prophets who foretold his appearance; Ps. 2:7. 89:37. On the like ground, kings, see No. 4, are called *sons of God*; Ps. 82:6. 2 S. 7:14. (c) The most common use of the phrase, *Son of God*, as applied to the Messiah, is, to designate the high and mysterious relation which subsisted between Him and God the Father, by virtue of which He was, in his complex person as *Theanthropos* [God-man], the brightness of the glory, and express image of the person of the Father. Heb. 1:3. *The image of the invisible God*, Col. 1:15. *the image of God*, 2 Cor. 4:4. In this respect *ho huios tou Theou* is rather a name of nature than of office, for it is predicated upon the high and glorious *eikon* [image], *resemblance*, *similitude*, which the Son exhibits of the Father, He being the *radiance* (*apagasma*), [tr. brightness] of his glory; so that what Jesus said to Philip is true, viz. “He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father,” John 14:9. “It hath pleased the Father that in Him all fulness should dwell,” Col. 1:19; even “all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,” Col. 2:9; and that high, yea, divine honor, should be paid to Him, Phil. 2:9—11. Rom. 14:11. (comp. v. 9.) Rev. 5:13. 14. John 5:23. Heb. 1:6. As *Son*, Christ is Lord and Heir of all things, Heb. 1:2, 3. In particular, it would seem to be one design of the N. T. writers, in using the appellation, *Son of God*, to convey the idea of a most intimate connexion, love, and fellowship (so to speak), between Him and the Father. Comp. to illustrate this idea, such texts as Mat. 11:27. Luke 10:22. John 1:14, 18. Heb. 1:5. &c. Mat. 3:17. Luke 3:22. 9:35. Col. 1:13. 2 Pet. 1:17. Mat. 17:5. Mark 1:11. 9:7. Comp. also with these last texts, the parables in Mat. 21:37. &c. 22:2. &c. Mark 12:6. Luke 20:13; also John 8:35. 35. 10:36. That God has given Christ the Spirit without measure, that He dwells in Him *somatikos* [bodily], that all counsels and secrets (so to speak) of the divine nature are perfectly known to Him, (John 1:18. Mat. 11:27. Luke 10:22. John 6:46. 7:29. 8:19. 14:9, 10, 11, 20. 10:15.) seems to be suggested by the appellation, *Son of God*, as frequently bestowed; for so the texts referred to, and other like texts, would imply. In a word, similitude, affection, confidence, and most intimate connexion, seem to be designated by the appellation of *Son*, as applied to Christ. In this sense it is most frequent in the N. T.; although with Paul, the idea of *Messianic dignity or elevation* is more commonly designated by *Kurios* [Lord, note, v. 4.]

“But while I am fully satisfied that the term, *Son of God*, is oftentimes applied to Christ as a name of nature, as well as office; yet I am as fully satisfied, that it is not applied to Him considered simply as divine, or simply as *Logos*. It designates the *Theanthropos*, the *God-man*, i. e. the complex person of the Messiah, in distinction from his divine nature, simply considered, in his *Logos* state or condition. The exceptions to this are only cases of such a nature, as show that the appellation, *Son of God*, became, by usage, a kind of proper name, which might be applied either to his human nature or to his divine one, as well as to his complex person. In just such a way proper names are commonly used; e. g. *Abraham* usually and properly means, the complex person of this individual, consisting of soul and body. But when I say: “*Abraham is dead*,” I mean the physical part only of Abraham is so; and when I say: “*Abraham is alive*,” I mean that his immortal part only is so. So when I say: “*The Son of God was crucified*,” I mean that his mortal part was so; when I say: “*God sent his Son*,” the Son came out from the Father, He had glory with the Father before the world was,” &c., I mean, that the divine nature of the Son became incarnate, that He emptied Himself . . . humbled Himself (Phil. 2:7, 8), taking upon Him the likeness of our nature. But when I say, with John, that “*Jesus is the Son of God*,” and that “*Jesus Christ has come in the flesh*,” I mean to designate his complex person, the *theanthropos*, the *theos en sarri phanerotheis* [God manifested in flesh], the *logos sarx genomenos* [Word become flesh], and this is the case with most of the examples in the New Testament.”

Stuart.

CHAP. II. Both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin, ch. 3:9. This he had proved on the Gentiles, ch. 1. now in this ch. he proves it on the Jews, as appears by v. 17.

V. 1—16. To prepare his way, he sets himself in this part of the ch. to show, that God would proceed on equal terms of justice with Jews and Gentiles; and not with such a partial hand as the Jews were apt to think He would use in their favor.

I. He arraigns them for their censoriousness and self-conceit, v. 1. He expresses himself in general terms, but he intends especially the Jews, and to them particularly he applies this general charge, v. 21.

The Jews were generally a proud sort of people, that looked with a great scorn and contempt on the poor Gentiles, as not worthy to be set with the dogs of their flock; while, in the mean time, they were themselves as bad and immoral; and though not idolaters, as the Gentiles, yet sacrilegious, v. 22.

Therefore thou art inexcusable. If the Gentiles, who had but the light of nature, were inexcusable, ch. 1:20. much more the Jews, who had the revealed will of God.

II. He asserts the invariable justice of the divine government, v. 2, 3. To drive home the conviction, he here shows what a righteous God that is, with whom we have to do, and how just in his proceedings. It is usual with Paul, in his writings, on mention of some material point, to make large digressions on it; as here concerning the justice of God, v. 2.

But observe, how he puts it to the sinner's conscience, v. 3. The case is so plain, that we may venture to appeal to the sinner's

own thoughts; ‘Canst thou, a man, a rational, dependent creature, think that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?’ Can the heart-searching God be imposed on by formal pretences, the righteous Judge of all so bribed and put off?

III. He draws up a charge against them, v. 4, 5. consisting of two branches.

1. Slighting the goodness of God, v. 4. *the riches of his goodness*. This is especially applicable to the Jews, who had singular tokens of the divine favor. Low and mean thoughts of the divine goodness are at the bottom of a great deal of sin; every wilful sin is an interpretative contempt of the goodness of God, spurning particularly at his patience, forbearance, and long-suffering, taking occasion thence to be so much the more bold in sin, Eccl. 8:11.

Not knowing, not considering, not knowing practically, and with application, that the goodness of God leadeth thee, the design of it is to lead thee, to repentance. It is not enough for us to know that God's goodness leads to repentance, but we must know that it leads us; thee in particular.

See here what method God takes to bring sinners to repentance; He does not drive them like beasts, but leads them like rational creatures, allures them, Hos. 2:14. and it is goodness that leads, bands of love, Hos. 11:4. Compare Jer. 31:3. The consideration of the goodness of God, should be effectual to bring us all to repentance; and the reason why so many continue in impenitency, is, because they do not know and consider this.

2. Provoking the wrath of God, v. 5. The rise of his provocation is a *hard and im-*

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1—3. The apostle is commonly supposed to have here passed from the state of the Gentiles, to animadvert on that of the Jews: though some think that the heathen philosophers and moralists were also included. He, however, seems to have expressed himself in a general manner, that he might include all those of every nation, sentiment, or description, ‘who hold the truth in unrighteousness,’ or object to ‘the righteousness of God by faith,’ 1:17—20. and who are ready to judge and condemn others, though guilty themselves. Of these, the Jews were the most notorious. Yet, while they would join with the apostle in showing the inexcusable wickedness of the Gentiles, they were equally or more ‘inexcusable:’ as they might be proved guilty of crimes, the very same, or of similar malignity. But they, and all other persons in the world who acted in this manner, must be reminded, that assuredly, ‘the judgment of God,’ according to the truth of his Word, and the real character and conduct of men, would be executed on them. For could any man suppose, that when he had committed the same crimes, which he judged deserving of punishment in others, he should himself escape the judgment of God? This intimated to the unbelieving Jews, that personal and national judgments awaited them, unless they fled for refuge to the grace of the Gospel. The outward wickedness of the Jews was enormous at this time, as Josephus has shown; in this sense they copied the worst crimes (gross idolatry excepted) of the despised Gentiles; and their superior advantages rendered their conduct still more atrocious.

SCOTT.

(1.) *Judgest.*] ‘Condemnest.’ *St.* ‘Hence it readily came to pass, that they [the Jews] thought all nations hated by God, and at length to be destroyed by Him; which neither the philosophers, nor other nations, nor their magistracy did.’ *Tac.* ‘Yet that the Jews did the same things, (idolatry excepted,) see the Rabbinic writings.’

BL.

V. 4—6. The Gentiles were without excuse, because they were unthankful to their Creator and Benefactor; 1:21—23. Did the Israelites then despise the exuberant riches of his kindness to them, whom He had so peculiarly favored? He had distinguished them, both by temporal and spiritual benefits, in every age; and at length sent his Son among them. Even after they had crucified Him, He had in infinite mercy ordered the first proposals of his Gospel to be made to them; and He still besought them, by his apostles and ministers, to accept of this salvation! And did they despise all this as a small favor? Did it embolden them to continue in sin? Or d'd the Lord's abundant mercy and patience towards them lead them to conclude, that He would always favor them, however ungratefully they rebelled against Him? Luke 21:44—49, v. 47. If they thus despised his rich goodness, they strangely mistook its design and tendency; as it ought to lead and induce them to repentance.—The more kindness God exercises, the greater aggravation is there in the sinner's disobedience, and the more deeply should he be humbled for his base ingratitude. The patience of God gives the sinner time and opportunity for repentance, and the discoveries of his mercy furnish him with motives and encouragements; and were it not for man's total depravity, the proposals of the Gospel must prevail with every one to repent of his departure from God, and to return to his worship and service. (Luke 15:11—24. 2 Pet. 3:9, 14—16.)—If the Jews presumed on the special kindness of God to them; and continued to reject the Gospel, and to disobey his commandments, according to the ‘hardness of their impenitent hearts,’ their condemnation would be proportionably severe; and the longer God had patience with them, the heavier vengeance would be executed on them. All others indeed, who thus employed the day of mercy in committing sin, and hardening their hearts in impenitence, because of the goodness of God, would find that they had accumulated wrath as a treasure ‘for themselves,’ which would be secured for them, till the day of wrath and final recompense. SCOTT.

(4.) *Knowing.*] Acknowledging. *St.* Considering. *Bloomf.* Ed.



6 Who <sup>b</sup> will render to every man according to his deeds :

7 To them, who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life :

8 But unto them that are <sup>i</sup> contentious, and <sup>j</sup> do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness ; indignation and wrath,

9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the <sup>k</sup> Gentile :

10 But <sup>l</sup> glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the <sup>m</sup> Gentile :

11 For <sup>n</sup> there is no respect of persons with God.

12 For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law : and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law ;

h Pr. 24:12. j 2 Th. 1:8. n De. 10:17. 2 Ch. 19:7. Ga. 6:7, 8.  
Mat. 16:27. k or, Greek. l 1 Pe. 1:7. 1 Pe. 1:17.  
Re. 20:12. m or, Greek.

penitent heart ; and the ruin of sinners is their walking after such a heart, being led by it. To sin, is to walk in the way of the heart ; and when that is hard and impenitent, how desperate must the course needs be ! The provocation is expressed by *treasuring up wrath*.

Those that go on in a course of sin, are *treasuring up unto themselves wrath*. A treasure denotes abundance, it is a treasure that will be spending to eternity, and yet never exhausted ; sinners add to it as to a treasure. Every wilful sin will inflame the reckoning ; it brings a branch to their wrath, as some read, Ez. 8:17. A treasure denotes secrecy ; but, withal, reservation to some further occasion, Job 38:22, 23. Though the present day be a day of patience and forbearance toward sinners, yet a day of wrath is coming ; wrath, and nothing but wrath. Indeed, every day is to sinners a day of wrath, for God is *angry with the wicked every day*, Ps. 7:11. but there is the *great day of wrath coming*, Rev. 6:17.

And that will be the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. The wrath of God is not like our wrath, a heat and passion, Is. 27:4. but a *righteous judgment*, his will to punish sin, because He hates it, as

contrary to his nature. This *righteous judgment of God*, is now many times concealed, in the prosperity and success of sinners, but shortly it will be manifested before all the world, these seeming disorders set to rights, and the heavens shall declare his righteousness, Ps. 50:6. *Therefore judge nothing before the time*.

IV. He describes the measures by which God proceeds in his judgment. Having mentioned the *righteous judgment of God*, in v. 5. he here illustrates it, and shows what we may expect from God, and by what rule He will judge the world. The equity of distributive justice, is the dispensing of frowns and favors with respect to deserts, and without respect of persons.

1. He will render to every man according to his deeds, v. 6. a truth often mentioned in Scripture, to prove that the Judge of all the earth doth right. Observe the objects of his favor. By this we may try our interest in the divine favor, and hence be directed what course to take to obtain it.

(1.) Such as fix to themselves the right end ; that seek for glory and honor and immortality ; the glory and honor which are immortal, acceptance with God here and for ever. This is seeking the kingdom of God, looking, in our desires and aims, as high as heaven, and resolved to take up with nothing short of it.

(2.) Such as, having fixed the right end, adhere to the right way ; a patient continuance in well doing. It is not enough to know well, and speak well, and profess well, and promise well, but we must do well. Not for a fit and a start, like the morning cloud and the early dew ; but to the end : perseverance wins the crown. Patient continuance respects not only the length of the work, but its difficulties, and the oppositions and hardships we may meet with in it.\* Those that will do well and continue in it, must put on a deal of patience. Heaven, eternal life, is their reward, called, v. 10. *glory, honor, and peace*. Those that seek for the vain glory and honor of this world, often miss of it, and are disappointed ; but those that seek for immortal glory and honor, shall have it, v. 7. and not only *glory and honor*, but *peace*. Worldly glory and honor are commonly attended with trouble ; but heavenly glory and honor have peace with them, undisturbed, everlasting peace.

Observe, now, the objects of his frowns. In general, those that do evil ; more particularly described to be *such as are contentious*, and do not obey the truth. Every wilful sin

\* A distinguished and lamented friend (remarkably conscientious, full of good works,) used to observe, 'People talk of its being hard to die ; for my part, I have found it hard to live.' Ed.

is a quarrel with God, *striving with our Maker*, Is. 45:9. the most desperate contention. The Spirit of God strives with sinners, Gen. 6:3. and impenitent sinners strive against the Spirit, rebel against the light, Job 24:13. hold fast deceit, strive to retain that sin which the Spirit strives to part them from. The truths of religion are not only to be known, but to be obeyed ; they are directing, ruling, commanding truths ; truths relating to practice. Disobedience to the truth is a striving against it, and those that refuse to be the servants of truth, will soon be the slaves of unrighteousness. The wages of sin are, *indignation and wrath*, the causes ; *tribulation and anguish*, the necessary and unavoidable effects. And this upon the soul ; souls are the vessels of that wrath, the subjects of that tribulation and anguish. Sin qualifies the soul for this wrath. The soul is that in, or of, man, which alone is immediately capable of this indignation, and the impressions or effects of anguish therefrom. Hell is eternal tribulation and anguish, the product of infinite wrath and indignation. This comes of contending with God, Is. 27:4. Those that will not bow to his golden sceptre, will certainly be broken by his iron rod.

2. *There is no respect of persons with God*, v. 11. i. e. as to outward relation or condition. Jews and Gentiles stand on the same level before God. So Peter, Acts 10:34. and it is explained in the next words, that *in every nation, he that fears God, and works righteousness, is accepted of Him*. God does not save men with respect to their external privileges, or their barren knowledge and profession of the truth, but according as their state and disposition really are.

V. He proves the equity of his proceedings with all, when He shall actually come to judge them, v. 12—16. on this principle, that that which is the rule of man's obedience, is the rule of God's judgment.

Three degrees of light are revealed to men.

1. The light of nature. That the Gentiles have, and by that they shall be judged ; they shall not be reckoned with for the transgression of the law they never had, nor come under the aggravation of the Jews' sin against, and judgment by, the written law ; but they shall be judged by, as they sin against, the law of nature, not only as it is in their hearts, corrupted, defaced, and imprisoned in unrighteousness, but as in the uncorrupt original the Judge keeps by Him.

Further to clear this, v. 14, 15. in a parenthesis, he evinces, that the light of nature was to the Gentiles instead of a written law. He had said, v. 12. they had *sinned without law* ; but, though they had not the written

(6.) 'The pious, orthodox, and eloquent Chrysostom, here, steers the middle and only safe course.'

## BLOOMF.

V. 7—11. The apostle here gradually proceeds to a more explicit mention of the Jews, whom he especially intended to 'conclude under sin.' Gal. 3:22. According to the whole tenor of Scripture, as well as the dictates of common sense, no sinner can do well, till he repents, submits to God, and seeks mercy from Him. The Jew who did this, must have respect to the types and promises of a Savior, with which the law of Moses was replete, as well as to the preceptive part of it ; and he alone, who did this, would perform any spiritual obedience. Ez. 19:5. If then there was a man, anywhere, who embraced by faith the revelation of 'glory, honor, and immortality,' through the promised Messiah, made in the Word of God, and was earnestly desirous of obtaining this blessing ; if he sought the inheritance, by repenting, 'ceasing to do evil, learning to do well,' attending on the ordinances of God, obeying his commandments, and thus waiting patiently for the completion of his promises ; and if he proved his sincerity, by patience under trials, and perseverance in well doing, amidst temptations and difficulties ;—this man would surely be made partaker of eternal life, according to the constitution of the most gracious covenant of God in Jesus Christ ; whatever measure of explicit knowledge he might be favored with, or under whatever dispensation he might live. But as all transgressors of the law are under condemnation ; so those Jews, or others, who disputed against the Lord's method of saving sinners, and his sovereignty in dispensing unmerited favors ; and who refused to obey the truth, by embracing the Gospel and submitting to the promised Savior ; choosing rather to 'obey unrighteousness,' and continue the slaves of sin and Satan : all these persons would surely sink under the indignation and wrath of their offended Judge ; and the Jew will have the first and most severe lot in this condemnation ; though the unbelieving and disobedient Gentile will not be exempted. On the other hand, that 'glory, honor, and peace,' which God confers on the objects of his peculiar love,

will certainly be given to 'every man that worketh good,' as one who 'obeyed the truth.'—It is evident the apostle did not mean, that either Jew or Gentile could be saved by his own works, without faith in Christ ; but that, 'by obeying the truth,' and by that 'patient continuance in well doing' which springs from faith, the Gentile would obtain eternal life ; and without this, the Jew must fall under wrath and condemnation. To suppose he meant, that any man, who heard the Gospel without believing it ; or who had any part of revelation sent to him, yet rejected it, could be saved ; would absurdly make the apostle advance principles subversive of his own grand argument throughout the whole epistle, and of his doctrine in all his epistles. He had many reasons, for his first proposing his doctrine in this covert and practical manner. He thus avoided giving immediate disgust to the Jewish reader, previous to the more explicit declaration of the Gospel, for which he was here only making way : he intimated, that those, who really best understood and obeyed the law, would most readily embrace the Gospel ; and that the Jews did not refuse to 'obey the truth' from love to the holiness of the law, but from 'obedience to unrighteousness.' SCOTT.

(8.) *Contentious*.] 'A disposition seems meant, of disputing and contesting about what is commanded, and what not, rather than of applying sincerely to fulfil what is acknowledged to be enjoined.' BLOOMF.

(9.) 'Here we have the first express mention of the Jews ; (Dodd.) and it is introduced with admirable address ; q. d. "not only of the Jews (of whom I am now speaking), but also of the Gentiles."' Id.

V. 12—16. If they would seek acceptance in this way, they must be 'doers' of the law : and if any thus perfectly performed its righteous demands, he might then indeed claim the reward of righteousness, but not otherwise. Luke 10:25—29. For even the Gentiles, who had not the written law, when from natural principles they performed any of those duties which the law required, were, in this respect 'a law unto themselves ;' and by obeying thus far their own rule, came nearer to righteousness, than the Jews who broke their rule. Their consciences



13 (For ° not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law <sup>p</sup> unto themselves :

15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, <sup>q</sup> their conscience also bearing witness, and <sup>r</sup> their thoughts <sup>r</sup> the mean while accusing, or else excusing, one another ;)

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets ° of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my <sup>l</sup> gospel.

17 Behold, thou <sup>u</sup> art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,

18 And knowest <sup>v</sup> his will, and <sup>w</sup> approvest <sup>x</sup> the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law ;

o Ja. 1:22-25. p 1 Co. 11:14. q or, the conscience witness- ing with them. r or, between themselves. s Lu. 8:17. t c. 16:25. u ver. 23. v Ps. 147:19,20. w or, triest the things that dif- fer. x Phi. 1:10.

law, Ps. 147: 20. they had what was equivalent, not to the ceremonial, but to the moral law. They had the work of the law. He does not mean, that work which the law commands, as if they could produce a perfect obedience ; but that work which the law does ; in directing us what to do, examining us what we have done. Now,

(1.) They had that which directed them what to do by the light of nature : by the force and tendency of their natural notions, and dictates, they apprehended a clear and vast difference between good and evil. They did, by nature, the things contained in the law. They had a sense of [ought, and ought not] justice and equity, honor and purity, love and charity ; the light of nature taught obedience to parents, pity to the miserable, conservation of public peace and order ; forbade murder, stealing, lying, perjury, &c. Thus they were a law unto themselves.

(2.) They had that which examined them what they had done ; Their conscience also bearing witness. They had that within them, which approved and commended what was well done, and which reproached them for what was done amiss. Conscience is a witness, and first or last will bear witness, though for a time it may be bribed or brow-beaten. It is instead of a thousand witnesses, testifying of that which is most secret ; and their thoughts accusing or excusing, passing a judgment on the testimony of con-

also testified to the propriety of this part of their conduct, and produced an inward satisfaction : while, at the same time, their secret thoughts, or their reasonings one with another, served to accuse, or excuse themselves, or each other, according to the conformity of their conduct to their own sentiments of right and wrong, or the contrary. If, then, the very Gentiles could not but condemn themselves, when they acted against their own consciences ; how absurd and presumptuous must it be for a Jew, to expect justification before God, by a law which he was continually transgressing ! To 'perish without law' is widely different from 'justification unto life ;' of which the apostle gives not so much as any intimation. Mat. 11:20-24. The apostle's argument by no means implied, that the Gentiles performed any spiritual obedience ; or that any of them could be justified, on account of their partial and scanty compliance with the dictates of their own natural, and in very many things erroneous conscience. [If it be said, why should they not stand as well as those who live no nearer to their rule than they, and yet through grace are saved ?—no Christian lives up to his light, and no heathen does ; why should one be saved more than the other ? See 9:20. Ed.] As the apostle plainly says, that 'as many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law ;' it is surprising, any expositors should have thought the case of Job and his friends, and Cornelius, to be referred to. Probably Job lived and died before the law ; and he had traditional revelation, as the patriarchs had : and Cornelius, though not observant of the ceremonial law, had the scriptures of the O. T., and by the grace of God had studied them to good purpose. Acts 10:1-8.—It was indisputably the apostle's object, to convince his readers, that neither revelation, nor the light of reason and conscience, could save those who failed of obeying them ; that all had in many things failed ; however, in particular instances, some had been obedient ;

science, by applying the law to the fact. Conscience is that candle of the Lord, which was not quite put out, no, not in the Gentile world. The heathen (see Hor., Juv., &c.) have witnessed to the comfort of a good conscience, and to the terror of a bad one.

Their thoughts among themselves, or one with another. The same light and law of nature, that witnesses against sin in them, and in others, accused or excused one another, or by turns, so some ; according as they observed or broke these natural laws and dictates, their consciences did either acquit or condemn them. All which did evidence, that they had what was to them instead of a law, which they might have been governed by, and which will condemn them, because they were not so guided and governed by it. So that the guilty Gentiles are left without excuse. God is justified in condemning them. They cannot plead ignorance, and therefore are like to perish, if they have not something else to plead.

2. The light of the law ; that the Jews had, and by that they shall be judged, v. 12. They sinned, not only having the law, but in the law, in the midst of so much law, in the face and light of so pure and clear a law, the directions of which were so full and particular, and sanctions of it so very cogent and enforcing. These shall be judged by the law ; their punishment shall be, as their sin is, so much the greater for their having the law. The Jew first, v. 9. It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon. Thus Moses did accuse them, John 5: 45. and they fell under the many stripes of him that knew his Master's will, and did it not, Luke 12: 47.

The Jews prided themselves very much in the law ; but, to confirm what he had said, the apostle shows, v. 13. that their having, and hearing, and knowing the law, would not justify them, but their doing of it. The Jewish doctors bolstered up their followers with an opinion, that all that were Jews, how bad soever they lived, should have a place in the world to come. This the apostle here opposes : it was a great privilege that they had the law, but not a saving privilege, unless they lived up to the law they had ; which it is certain the Jews did not, and therefore they had need of a righteousness wherein to appear before God. We may apply it to the Gospel : it is not hearing, but doing, that will save us, John 13: 17. James 1: 22.

3. The light of the Gospel : and according to that, those that enjoy the Gospel shall be judged, v. 16. According to my Gospel ; not meant of any fifth Gospel, written by Paul, as some conceit ; or of the Gospel written by Luke, as Paul's amanuensis, (Euseb. Hist. lib. 3. cap. 8.) but the Gospel in general, called Paul's, because he was a preacher of it. As many as are under that

dispensation, shall be judged according to that dispensation, Mark 16: 16. Some refer it to what he says of the day of judgment : 'There will come a day of judgment, as I have often told you ; and that will be the day of the final judgment both of Jews and Gentiles.' (1.) There is a day set for a general judgment. The day, the great day, his day that is coming, Ps. 37: 13. (2.) The judgment of that day will be put into the hands of Jesus Christ. God shall judge by Jesus Christ, Acts 17: 31. It will be part of the reward of his humiliation. Nothing speaks more terror to sinners, and more comfort to saints, than this, that Christ shall be the Judge. (3.) The secrets of men shall then be judged : secret services rewarded, secret sins punished, hidden things brought to light.

V. 17-29. In the latter part of the ch. the apostle directs his discourse more closely to the Jews, and shows what sins they were guilty of, notwithstanding their profession and vain pretensions. He had said, v. 13. that not the hearers, but the doers of the law are justified ; and he here applies that great truth to the Jews. Observe,

I. He allows their profession, v. 17-20. and specifies their particular pretensions and privileges, which they prided themselves in ; that they might see he did not condemn them out of ignorance of what they had to say for themselves ; no, he knew the best of their cause.

1. They were a peculiar people ; separated and distinguished from all other by their having the written law, and the special presence of God. Jew was a very honorable title, yet many, so called, were the vilest of men. Many of the synagogues of Satan say they are Jews, Rev. 2: 9. and a generation of vipers boast they have Abraham to their father, Mat. 3: 7-9.

And retest in the law. I. e. they took a pride in this, that they had the law among them, had it in their books, read it in their synagogues. To rest in the law, with a rest of complacency and acquiescence, is good ; to rest in it with a rest of pride, and slothfulness, and carnal security, is the ruin of souls. They were mightily puffed up with this privilege, Jer. 7: 4. 48: 13. Haughty because of the holy mountain, Zeph. 3: 11. It is a dangerous thing to rest in external privileges, and not to improve them.

And makest thy boast of God. See how the best things may be perverted and abused ! A believing, loving, humble, thankful glorying in God, is the root and summary of all religion, Ps. 34: 2. Is. 45: 25. 1 Cor. 1: 31. But a proud, vainglorious boasting in God, and in the outward profession of his name, is the root and summary of all hypocrisy. Spiritual pride is of all kinds of pride the most dangerous.

and that all must perish, though with different degrees of aggravation, unless saved by the Gospel.—'Hell hath no power over sinners of Israel, because Abraham and Isaac descend thither to fetch them thence. . . No circumcised person goes to hell ; God having promised to deliver them from it, for the merit of circumcision. . . All Israelites have their portion in the world to come ; and that notwithstanding their sins ; yea, though they were condemned here for their wickedness.' Extracts from Jewish writers, in Whitby.—It would not be easy to produce any passage from modern writers, in which proud self-righteousness and rank anti-nomianism are so completely combined : but a considerable portion of the same leaven, may often be discerned both among papists and protestants.

(15.) Work.] 'Which the law requireth.' St. 'The effect or proof of the existence of that law, viz. in discovering the obligations to moral duties, which revelation, by its precepts, unfolds and enjoins. And so Taylor, and Mackn.'

V. 17-24. In order to understand this ch., it should constantly be kept in mind, that the apostle is combating the prejudices and presumption of the Jews, to whom he expected the epistle would be shown, and whose influence he knew would be employed, to unsettle the minds of the believers at Rome. The Gentiles are therefore introduced, by way of illustrating the argument, and not in order to show in what way they may be justified. 12-16.—The apostle here immediately addressed himself to any Jew, who was willing to take up the argument. He supposed him to rest his hope of acceptance on the law, and this with great quietness and satisfaction ; and to 'boast of God,' as standing in a covenant-relation to Him. He thought himself well acquainted with the will of God ; and, as an expert casuist, he could 'distinguish things which differed,' and give the preference to such as were more excellent, having



19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,

20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law :

21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?

22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?

23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonorest thou God?

24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

25 For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law : but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

γ 2 Ti. 1:13, 3:5. a Eze. 35:20, 23. c Ac. 10:34, 35.  
z Mat. 23:3, &c. b Ga. 5:3. d Mat. 12:41, 42.

2. They were a knowing people, v. 18. *And knowest his will*, lit. *the will*. God's will is the will, the sovereign, absolute, irresistible will. The world will then, and not till then, be set to rights, when God's will is the only will, and all other wills are [identified with it] melted into it. It is possible for a hypocrite to have a great deal of knowledge in the will of God.

*And approvest the things that are more excellent*. Paul prays for it for his friends, as a very great attainment, Phil. 1:10. Understand it, (1.) Of a good apprehension in the things of God, reading it thus, *Thou discernest the things that differ*, knowest how to distinguish between good and evil, the precious and the vile, Jer. 15:19. *the unclean and the clean*, Lev. 11:47. Good and bad lie sometimes so near together, that it is not easy to distinguish them; but the Jews, having the touchstone of the law ready at hand, were, or at least thought they were, able to distinguish, to cleave the hair in doubtful cases. A man may be a good casuist, and yet a bad Christian; accurate in the notion, but loose and careless in the application. Or we may,

with *De Dieu*, understand *controversies* by the *ta diopheronta*, (tr. *things that are more excellent*.) A man may be well skilled in the controversies of religion, and yet a stranger to the power of godliness. (2.) Of a warm affection to the things of God, as we read it, *Approvest the things that are excellent*. There are excellencies in religion, which a hypocrite may approve of; there may be a consent of the practical judgment to the law, that it is good, and yet that consent overpowered by the lusts of the flesh, and of the mind; 'I see the better, but pursue the worse;' and it is common for sinners to make that approbation an excuse, which is really a very great aggravation of a sinful course.

They got this acquaintance with, and affection to, that which is good, by being instructed out of the law, *katechoumenoi*,—being catechised. The word signifies, an early instruction from childhood. It is a great privilege and advantage to be well catechised betimes. It was the custom of the Jews to take great pains in teaching their children, when they were young, [cut, *Fam. Rec.* Vol. III.] and all their lessons were out of the law; it were well, if Christians were but as industrious to teach their children out of the Gospel.

Now this is called, v. 20. *The form of knowledge, and of the truth in the law*, i. e. the show and appearance of it. Those whose knowledge rests in an empty notion, and does not make an impression on their hearts, have only the form of it, like a picture well drawn and in good colors, but which wants life. A form of knowledge, produces but a form of godliness, 2 Tim. 3:5. A form of knowledge may deceive men, but cannot impose on the piercing eye of the heart-searching God. A form may be the vehicle of the power; but he that takes up with that only, is like sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal.

3. They were a teaching people, or at least thought themselves so, v. 19, 20. *And art confident that thou thyself*—

(1.) To the Jews in general; they thought themselves guides to the poor blind Gentiles that sat in darkness, that whoever would have the knowledge of God, must be beholden to them for it; [pass to it through proselytism to their Law and rites;] all other nations must come to school to them, to learn what is good, and what the Lord requires; for they had the lively oracles.

(2.) To their rabbies and doctors, and leading men among them, who were especially those that judged others, v. 1. these prided themselves much in the possession they had of Moses' chair, and the deference the vulgar paid to their dictates; and the apostle expresses this in several terms, the better to set forth their proud conceit of themselves, and contempt of others. This was a string they loved to be harping upon, heaping up titles of honor upon themselves.

II. He aggravates their provocations, v. 21—24. from two things,

1. That they sinned against their knowledge and profession, did that themselves which they taught others to avoid. It was the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, *That they did*

*not do as they taught*, Mat. 23:3. but pulled down with their lives what they built up with their preaching; for who will believe those who do not believe themselves? Example will govern more than rules. The greatest obstructors of the success of the Word, are those whose bad lives contradict their good doctrine; who in the pulpit preach so well, that it is pity they should ever come out; and out of the pulpit live so ill, that it is pity they should ever go in. He specifies three particular sins that abounded among the Jews. (1.) *Stealing*. This is charged on some that declared *God's statutes*, Ps. 50:16, 18. The Pharisees are charged with devouring widows' houses, Mat. 23:14. and that is the worst of robberies. (2.) *Adultery*, v. 22. This is likewise charged on that sinner, Ps. 50:18. Many of the Jewish rabbins are said to have been notorious for this sin. (3.) *Sacrilege*. Robbing in holy things, which were then by special laws dedicated and devoted to God. And this is charged on those that professed to abhor idols. So the Jews did remarkably, after their captivity in Babylon; but they dealt very treacherously in the worship of God. It was in the latter days of the O. T. church, that they were charged with robbing God in tithes and offerings, Mal. 3:8, 9. converting that to their own use, and to the service of their lusts, which was, in a special manner, set apart for God.

2. That they dishonored God by their sin, v. 23, 24. While God and his law were an honor to them, which they boasted of, and prided themselves in, they were a dishonor to God and his law, by giving occasion to those that were without, to reflect on their religion, as if that did countenance and allow of such things. And the apostle here refers to the same charge against their forefathers; as it is written, v. 24. He does not mention the place, because he wrote this to those that were instructed in the law, but he seems to point at Is. 52:5. Ez. 36:22, 23. and 2 S. 12:14. It is a lamentation, that those who were made to be to God for a name and for a praise, should be to Him a shame and dishonor. The great evil of the sins of professors, is, the dishonor done to God and religion by their profession. *'Blasphemed through you; you give the occasion for it, it is through your folly and carelessness. The reproaches you bring on yourselves, reflect on your God, and religion is wounded through your sides.'* A good caution to professors to walk circumspectly. See 1 Tim. 6:1.

III. He asserts the utter insufficiency of their profession, to clear them from the guilt of these provocations, v. 25—29; obedient Jews shall not lose the reward of their obedience, but will gain this by their being Jews, that they have a clearer rule of obedience than the Gentiles have. This must be referred to the state of the Jews before the ceremonial polity was abolished, otherwise circumcision, to one that professed faith in Christ, was forbidden, Gal. 5:2. But he is here speaking to the Jews, whose Judaism would advantage them, if they would but live up to the rules and laws of it; but if not,

from his youth been instructed out of the law. In this confidence he thought himself qualified to guide and enlighten the blind and benighted pagans; and to instruct such as became proselytes, whom he deemed foolish, and mere babes, compared with himself; as he had got a complete knowledge of the whole law, having the form of it in his memory and mind. This, however, was a mere semblance, and outside appearance of the spiritual knowledge, and true meaning of the law, which, rightly understood, would lead him to trust in the promised and typified Redeemer, and not in the law itself. In this form he rested, without even attempting to obey all the precepts of the law, according to his own exposition; as if his work had been to instruct others, and not himself! or as if he meant to insult the great Lawgiver, by studying his commandments in order to break them! It was notorious, that many of the chief priests, scribes, and elders, who appeared most zealous for the law, were guilty of these (21, 22) and similar crimes: and the rest, who rejected the Gospel, and made their boast in the law, would be found to dishonor God, by evidently breaking it.—The terms here used (21) concerning the Gentiles, aptly expose the arrogant self-wisdom of the Jews. (24) *Blasphemed*, &c.] 'Of this, Jos. doth frequently accuse them, saying, "What wickedness do you conceal or hide, which is

not known to your enemies? You triumph in your wickedness, strive daily who shall be most vile, making a show of your wickedness, as if it were virtue." Whitby.

(18.) *Approvest*, &c.] 'Canst distinguish things which differ.' St. (20.) *Form*.] *Morphōsis*: 'Representation.' St. *Morphōsis* properly signifies the delineation of anything with chalk, or otherwise, an outline; a *typos* [type] is the delineation of anything by stamp. Now ns both are concerned to represent the true form of anything, so they are both metaphorically applied, (the latter in 6:17. the former here,) to an accurate knowledge of a thing.

V. 25—29. If a man cleaved to the law, he must perfectly obey it, in order to justification; circumcision made him a debtor to fulfil the whole law; and his transgressions [a single one] cast him out of the covenant of God, as if he had never been circumcised. Gal. 5:1—6. On the other hand, if an uncircumcised Gentile should regulate his conduct according to the righteousness prescribed by the law; ought he not to be deemed a true worshipper of God, notwithstanding his uncircumcision? Such Gentiles, as were taught by divine grace thus to love and serve God, would, like Cornelius, embrace the Gospel when proposed to them: and thus in uncircumcision, the external natural state of



28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh:

29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

## CHAP. III.

1 The Jews' prerogative: 3 which they have not lost: 9 howbeit the law convinceth them also of sin: 20 therefore no flesh is justified by the law, 28 but all, without difference, by faith only: 31 and yet the law is not abolished.

WHAT advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

3 For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

e Mat. 3:9. Jn. f De. 10:16. 30:6. a De. 4:7,8. 8:19. c. 9:6,7. Je. 4:4. Phil. 3:3. b c. 10:16. He. 4:2. Ga. 6:15. Re. Col. 2:11. e Ps. 51:4. 2:9. g 2 Co. 10:18.

would do them no good. The uncircumcised are in Scripture branded as *unclean*, Is. 52:1. as *out of the covenant*, Eph. 2:11, 12. and wicked Jews will be dealt with as such. See Jer. 9:25, 26.

Further, to illustrate this,

1. He shows that the *uncircumcised Gentiles*, if they live up to the light they have, stand on the same level with the Jews; if they keep the righteousness of the law, v. 26. fulfil the law, v. 27. that is, by submitting sincerely to the conduct of natural light, perform the matter of your law. Some understand it, as putting the case of a perfect obedience to the law; but it seems rather to be meant of such an obedience as some of the Gentiles did attain to. The case of Cornelius will clear it. Doubtless, there were many such:

PRACT. OBS. The branches of man's disobedience are numerous, yet they all spring from the same root: nor can any one judge another to be deserving of divine wrath, without at the same time condemning himself: for, though he may not have committed exactly the same crimes; yet he has been guilty of the same apostasy from God, and rebellion against Him; and is equally chargeable with sinning against his better judgment, in various ways. We are very incompetent judges of the comparative heinousness of men's conduct: but it is certain, that 'the judgment of God is' and will be 'according to truth,' against all who break his law, and reject his grace. To Him we ought to leave others, and to be chiefly concerned to judge ourselves, and to seek mercy according to his blessed Gospel, that his truth in fulfilling his promises may secure our salvation.—The excuses, which numbers make for their misconduct, may very commonly be turned against them: nor would men in general be so daringly wicked, were it not for their experience of the Lord's forbearance, and their general notions of his mercy! (Ec. 8:11—13.)—The questions concerning justification, personal election, and efficacious grace, should be kept distinct from those, which relate to the character and conduct of the righteous and the wicked.—No man can be justified by his own obedience, because all men deviate from their rule: yet the nearer they act in conformity to their principles and convictions, the lighter will be their condemnation; and the greater the distance there is between their *known rule*, and their *allowed practice*,

man, they, being made partakers of an *inward* spiritual change, would judge and condemn the Jew, who, having the letter of the law and the outward circumcision, had no inward disposition to obedience. SCOTT.

(27.) 'Yea, he who keepeth the law, in his natural, uncircumcised state, will condemn thee, who, in possession of the Scriptures, and a partaker of circumcision, art a transgressor of the law.' STUART.

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. (1) *What advantage, &c.*] The stated ministry of the priests, the occasional messages of the prophets, the ordinances of the temple, the worship at the synagogues, their education in an acquaintance with the true God, and at a distance from gross idolatry, the many good examples which were set before them, and the dispensations of Providence respecting them, were *means of grace*, which probably were made effectual to the conversion and salvation of more persons in that one nation, from age to age, than were converted in all the rest of the world. (2) *Oracles, &c.*] Some think the Scriptures are thus called, with reference to the oracular answers, which the high priest delivered when he consulted the Lord by the breast-plate of judg-

and they were the *uncircumcision*, that kept the righteousness of the law; and of such he saith, (1.) That they were accepted with God, as if they had been circumcised; their *uncircumcision* was counted for *circumcision*: circumcision was indeed to the Jews a commanded duty, but it was not to all the world a necessary condition of justification and salvation. (2.) That their obedience was a great aggravation of the disobedience of the Jews, who had the letter of the law, v. 17. Judge thee, i. e. help to add to thy condemnation, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress. Observe, To carnal professors, the law is but the letter; they read it as a bare writing, but are not ruled by it as a law. They did transgress, not only notwithstanding the letter and circumcision, but by it, they thereby hardened themselves in sin. External privileges, if they do not do us good, do us hurt.

The obedience of those that enjoy less means, and make a less profession, will help to condemn those that enjoy greater means, and make a greater profession, but do not live up to it.

2. He describes the true *circumcision*, v. 28, 29. (1.) It is not that which is outward in the flesh and in the letter. This is not to drive us off from the observance of external institutions, but from trusting to them. He is not a Jew, i. e. shall not be accepted of God as the seed of believing Abraham, nor owned as having answered the intention of the law. To be Abraham's children, is to do the works of Abraham, Jn. 8:39:40. (2.) It is that which is inward, of the heart, and in the spirit. It is the heart, that God looks at, the *circumcising of the heart* that renders us acceptable to Him. See Deut. 30:6. This is the *circumcision not made with hands*, Col. 2:11, 12. Casting away the body of sin. So it is in the spirit, in our spirit as the subject, and wrought by God's Spirit as the Author of it. (3.) The praise thereof, though it be not of men, who judge according to outward appearance, yet it is of God, God Himself will own, and accept, and crown this sincerity; for He seeth not as man seeth. This is alike true of Christianity. He is not a Christian, that is one outwardly, nor is that baptism, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Christian, that is one inwardly, and baptism is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

the more aggravated must be their guilt. Indeed, the sermons which many preach, and the books which they publish, will testify against them; and it behooves ministers especially, to be most awfully jealous over themselves in this respect: for it is far more congenial to the self-flattery of our hearts, and our worldly lusts, to instruct others, than to bear the yoke ourselves. In short, no forms, ordinances, or notions can profit us, without regeneration by the Holy Spirit; which will always eventually lead us to seek an interest in 'the righteousness of God by faith.' The distinction between truth and error, and between divine institutions and human inventions, is indeed immutable and most important: yet a man may be alive to God, who maintains some errors, cleaves to some superstitions, and forms improper conclusions in respect of some divine appointments: while another, who is very clear in his notions, and exact in externals, may be 'dead in sin,' 'uncircumcised in heart;' and, through the letter and the outward form, he may deceive himself, and be a scandal to the Gospel. He is the real Christian, who is inwardly a true believer, with an obedient faith; and the true baptism is that of the heart, by 'the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Ghost,' producing a spiritual mind, and a cordial subjection to the truth, in its holy import and tendency. A Christian of this character will seldom be much approved by zealots of any party, any more than by the world at large: but he will be accepted of God. SCOTT.

ment; (Ex. 28:30.) implying that they were as immediately and entirely the Word of God, as the oracles thus delivered had been.—'This is so remarkable and important a testimony to the divine inspiration of the O. T. in general, that it can leave no doubt concerning the full persuasion of Paul on this head.' *Doddr.—Committed, &c.*] Or, 'they were entrusted with the oracles of God.'—It behooves Christians in every age to remember, that the Scriptures are committed or entrusted to them, in order that they may communicate the blessing to all around them, and to all who shall come after them, and to all men, throughout the earth, by every proper mean, to the utmost of their ability; and to preserve them uncorrupted and entire, for this purpose. SCOTT.

V. 3. *Make the faith.*] 'Render the faithfulness.' STUART.  
V. 4. 'By no means; but let God be (counted) true, although every man be (counted) false; as it is written: That Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and overcome when Thou judgest;' St. 'Rather, So that Thou must be justified or brought in clear, when thy dealings are called into judgment.' BL., whom see.



5 But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? *Is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance?* (I speak as a man.)

6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?

7 For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?

8 And not rather, (as we are slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.

9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.

d Job 8:3. f charged. h Ps. 5:9. j Ps. 10:7.  
e c. 6:1,15. g Ps. 14. Ps. 53. i Ps. 140:3.

some might object the unbelief of many of them.

*Ans.* It is very true, some, nay most, of the present Jews do not believe in Christ; but shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? The apostle startles at such a thought; *God forbid!* The infidelity and obstinacy of the Jews could not invalidate and overthrow those prophecies of the Messiah, contained in the oracles committed to them. Christ will be glorious, though Israel be not gathered, Is. 49:5. Let us abide by this principle, that *God is true*, and will let none of his oracles fall to the ground, though thereby we give the lie to man. All men are liars, compared with God.

For further proof, he quotes Ps. 51:4. *That Thou mightest be justified.* The design of which is to show, 1. That God doth and will preserve his own honor in the world, notwithstanding the sins of men. 2. That it is our duty, in all our conclusions concerning ourselves and others, to justify God, and

to assert and maintain his justice, truth, and goodness, however it goes. David loads himself in his confession, that he might justify God, and acquit Him from any injustice. So here, Let the credit and reputation of man shift for itself, but let us hold fast this conclusion, that *the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.*

*Obj. III.* Carnal hearts might hence take occasion to encourage themselves in sin. He had said, that the universal guilt and corruption of mankind gave occasion to the manifestation of God's righteousness in Jesus Christ. Now it may be suggested, If all our sin be so far from overthrowing God's honor, that it commends it, and his ends are secured, so that there is no harm done, is it not unjust for God to punish our sin and unbelief so severely? If the unrighteousness of the Jews gave occasion to the calling in of the Gentiles, and so to God's greater glory, why are the Jews so much censured? v. 5. What inference may be drawn from thence?—*Is not God unrighteous,* (so it may be read, more in the form of an objection,) *who taketh vengeance?* Unbelieving hearts will gladly take any occasion to quarrel with the equity of God's proceedings, and so condemn Him that is most just, Job 34:17. *I speak as a man, i. e.,* I object this as the language of carnal hearts; it is suggested like a man, a vain, foolish, proud creature.

*Ans.* *God forbid.* Far be it from us to imagine such a thing. Suggestions that reflect dishonor on God, and his justice and holiness, are rather to be startled at than parleyed with. Get thee behind me, Satan; never entertain such a thought.

*For then how shall God judge the world?* v. 6. The argument is much the same with that of Abraham, Gen. 18:25. *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* No doubt He shall. If He was not infinitely just and righteous, He would be unfit to be the Judge of all the earth. Job 34:17. *Comp. v. 18, 19.* The sin has never the less of inalignity and demerit in it, though God bring glory to Himself out of it. It is only accidentally that sin commends God's righteousness. No thanks to the sinner for that, who intends no such thing. The consideration of God's judging the world, should for ever silence all our doubtings of, and reflections on, his justice and equity. It is not for us to arraign the proceedings of such an absolute Sovereign; the sentence of a court whence lies no appeal.

*Obj. IV.* The former objection is repeated and prosecuted, v. 7, 8. He supposes the sophisters to follow their objection thus, 'If my lie, my sin,' (something of a lie is in every sin, especially of professors,) 'have occasioned the glorifying of God's truth and faithfulness, why should I be condemned, and not rather thence take encouragement to go on in my sin, that grace may abound?' An inference which at first sight appears too black to be argued, and fit to be cast out

with abhorrence. But, *Let us do evil, that good may come,* is oftener in the heart than in the mouth of sinners, so justifying themselves in their wicked ways. Mentioning this wicked thought, he observes, in a parenthesis, that there were those who charged such doctrines as this on Paul and his fellow-ministers; *some affirm that we say so.* It is an old artifice of Satan thus to cast dirt on Christ's ministers. Bp. Sanderson makes a further remark on this, *as we are slanderously reported,—blasphemously.* Blasphemy in Scripture usually signifies the highest degree of slander, speaking ill of God. The slander of a minister, and his regular doctrine, is a more than ordinary slander, a kind of blasphemy, not for his person's sake, but for his calling's sake, and his work's sake.

*Ans.* He says no more by way of confutation, but that, whatever they themselves may argue, the damnation of those is just. Some understand it of the slanderers; Or rather, it is to be applied to those who embolden themselves in sin, under a pretence of God's getting glory to Himself out of it. Those who deliberately *do evil that good may come of it,* will be so far from escaping, under the shelter of that excuse, that it will rather justify their damnation, and render them the more inexcusable; for sinning upon such a surmise, and in such a confidence, argues a great deal both of the wit and of the will in the sin.

Some think Paul herein refers to the approaching ruin of the Jewish church and nation, which their obstinacy and self-justification in their unbelief hastened on them apace.

Paul, having removed these objections, next revives his assertion of the general guilt and corruption of mankind in common, both of Jews and Gentiles, v. 9—18.

'*Are we better than they,* we Jews, to whom were committed the oracles of God? Does that recommend us to God, or will that justify us? No, by no means.' Or, 'Are we Christians (Jews and Gentiles) so much better, antecedently, than the unbelieving part, as to have merited God's grace? Alas! no: before free grace made the difference, those of us that had been Jews, and those that had been Gentiles, were all alike corrupted.'

*They are all under sin.* 1. Under the guilt of sin: under it as a sentence, a bond, binding over to eternal ruin and damnation; under it as a burden, Ps. 38:4. that will sink them to the lowest hell: we are guilty before God, v. 19. 2. Under the government and dominion of sin, as a tyrant and cruel task-master; enslaved to it; under the power of it, sold to work wickedness.

And this he had proved, v. 9. It is a law term; *we have charged them with it,* and have made good our charge.

This charge and conviction he here further illustrates by several scriptures out of

V. 5. 'Is God unjust, who inflicteth punishment?' So *St. tr. Mackn.* here paraphrases: 'If no sin can be rightly punished which is attended with good consequences [see on v. 8], how shall God judge the world?' The Jews allowed the Gentiles were to be judged. *Ed.*

V. 7. 'Still, if God's faithfulness to his Word, has, on account of my deceitfulness, abounded more unto his glory, why am I any longer condemned as a sinner?' v. 8. Shall we then (say), (us), &c.' *St.* 'And why then may not we (as well as you) do evil, that good may come?' so *Bl.* takes the sense, adding 'the dangerous principle was acted on by priests, philosophers, and politicians, of ancient times, and is still by such religionists as have to maintain inveterate error, or support gross imposture.' What a balm to the conscience is this authoritative rule, 'Do not evil that good may come,' from One who alone knows the infinite consequences of every act. See *Doddr.* and *Wayland.* *Id.*

V. 8. *Whose damnation is just.* Some interpret it of the Jews and others who reject the Gospel: but this proposition, though true, seems not to rise out of the context, or belong to the argument. Others apply the awful sentence to the calumniators, who charged the Christians with saying, 'Let us do evil that good may come:' but the clause, 'as we be slanderously reported, &c.' is, I think properly, included in a parenthesis, that it may not interrupt the main subject. The apostle evidently intended to show, that God may justly, and will certainly, punish those sins, which yet eventually prove the occasion of more conspicuously manifesting his glory. Now, if this were not the case, it might be said, 'Let us do evil that good may come:' but on the contrary,

whatever blasphemers may assert, this proposition is so contrary to the real nature and genius of the Gospel, that every intelligent minister or Christian will be forward to allow the condemnation of those, who thus encourage themselves in sin, under a vain imagination that good will follow, to be undeniably righteous. (6:1, 2.) The floodgates of licentiousness are opened by such a view of the Gospel.—Yet even apparently religious persons often tolerate, nay zealously promote, practices which cannot be denied to be deviations from truth and integrity, and vindicate them, because good is thus done. In this way, however, the standard of integrity is (dreadful to say!) fixed lower, in some particulars, among numbers who are zealous for the Gospel, than among respectable worldly people; who are, by noticing these things, exceedingly prejudiced against evangelical truth.—Nay, the same false principle is brought forward, in another and more fashionable form, when *utility*, and not 'the law of God,' [as if they were really separable,] is made the standard of morality, and a main principle of reasonings on moral obligation. *Scott.*

(8.) *Before proved.* 'Already made the accusation against.' *St.* V. 9—18. The apostle here resumes his subject from v. 2. . . To the indictment, on which the Gentiles had been convicted, the Jews pleaded, 'Not guilty:' therefore, besides the evidence already brought against them from notorious facts, and the nature of the case, the apostle produced several passages of the Scriptures against them. In these, it was not intimated that circumcision, the written law, the ceremonial observances, or the national covenant, would excuse their crimes, or entitle



15 Their feet <sup>k</sup> are swift to shed blood :

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways :

17 And the way of peace have they not known :

18 There <sup>l</sup> is no fear of God before their eyes.

19 Now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law ; that every <sup>m</sup> mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become <sup>n</sup> guilty before God.

20 Therefore <sup>o</sup> by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight : for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the <sup>p</sup> law and the prophets ;

<sup>k</sup> Is. 59:7, 8. <sup>l</sup> Ps. 36:1. <sup>m</sup> Ps. 107:42. <sup>n</sup> or, subject to the judgment of God. <sup>o</sup> Ps. 143:2. <sup>p</sup> Ac. 26:22.

the O. T., which describe the corrupt, depraved state of all men, till grace restrain or change them : so that herein as in a glass we may all of us behold our natural face. The 10th, 11th, and 12th verses are taken from Ps. 14:1—3. repeated as very weighty, Ps. 53: 1—3. The rest is found in the Sept. tr. of the 14th Ps., which some think the apostle chooses to follow, as better known : but I rather think he took these passages from other places of Scripture here referred to ; but in later copies of the LXX. they were all added in Ps. 14. from this discourse of Paul. It is observable, that to prove the general corruption of nature, he quotes some scriptures which speak of the particular corruptions of particular persons, as Doeg, Ps. 140:3. of the Jews, Is. 59:7, 8. which shows, that the same sins that are committed by one, are in the nature of all. What is said, Ps. 14. is expressly spoken of *all men*, and that, on a particular view and inspection made by God Himself ; the *Lord*

looked down, as on the old world, Gen. 6:5. Even in those actions of sinners that have some goodness in them, there is a fundamental error in the principle and end ; so that it may be said, There is none that doeth good. God made man in the way, set him in right, but he hath forsaken it. The corruption of mankind is an apostasy.

The root of all their wickedness we have, v. 18. The fear of God, is here put for all practical religion, which consists in an awful and serious regard to the Word and will of God as our rule, to the honor and glory of God as our end. Where no fear of God is, no good is to be expected.

So that we have here a short account of the general depravedness and corruption of mankind ; and may say, O Adam ! what hast thou done ? God made man upright, but thus he hath sought out many inventions.

V. 19—31. From all this Paul infers, that it is in vain to look for justification by the works of the law, and that it is to be had only by faith ; (the point he hath been all along proving, from ch. 1:17. and lays down, v. 28. as the summary of his discourse ;) *a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law* ; neither the deeds of the first law of pure innocence, which left no room for repentance ; nor the deeds of the law of nature, how highly soever improved ; nor the deeds of the ceremonial law ; (the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin ;) nor the deeds of the moral law, which are included ; for he speaks of that law by which is the knowledge of sin, and those works which might be matter of boasting. Man, [could never make up for the least deficiency, as *perfect obedience* was his duty, at every moment, and,] in his depraved state, could never, by any works of his own, gain acceptance with God ; but it must be resolved purely into the free grace of God, given through Jesus Christ to all true believers that receive it as a free gift.

If we had never sinned, our obedience to the law would have been our righteousness [to life] ; 'Do this and live : ' but having sinned, and being corrupted, nothing we can do will atone for our former guilt. [For we could at no moment do more than our

duty, and lay up this surplus as a fund to balance against sin.] It was by their obedience to the moral law that the Pharisees looked for justification, Luke 18:11.

Two things the apostle here argues from, the *guiltiness of man*, to prove that we cannot be justified by the works of the law ; and the *glory of God*, to prove that we must be justified by faith.

I. *Man's guiltiness.* 'May become guilty,' may be proved guilty, liable to punishment, Eph. 2:3. *Guilty before God*, is a dreadful word, before an all-seeing God, that is not, nor can be, deceived in his judgment ; before a just and righteous Judge, who will by no means clear the guilty. All are guilty, and therefore all have need of a righteousness wherein to appear before God. *For all have sinned*, v. 23. Man was placed in the top of the visible creation, actively to glorify [by obedience to every law] that great Creator, whom the inferior creatures could glorify only objectively : but by sin he comes short of this. Therefore he must give up all hopes and expectations of being glorified with God in heaven, by any righteousness of his own. It is impossible now to get to heaven in the way of spotless innocency ; that passage is blocked up ; there is a cherub and a flaming sword set to keep that way to the tree of life.

Further, *by the law is the knowledge of sin*, v. 20. That law which convicts and condemns, can never justify us. As the conscience stands in relation to God, *in his sight*, we cannot be justified by the deeds of the law. He refers to Ps. 143:2.

II. He argues from *God's glory*, to prove that justification must be expected only by faith in Christ's righteousness. There is no justification by the works of the law. Must guilty man then remain eternally under wrath ? Is there no hope ? Is the wound become incurable because of transgression ? No, blessed be God, it is not, v. 21, 22. there is another way laid open for us, *the righteousness of God, without the law, is manifested now under the Gospel.* Justification may be obtained without the keeping of Moses' law : and this is called *the righteousness of God*, righteousness of his ordaining, and providing, and accepting ; righteousness

them to the favor of God ; as the unbelieving Jews vainly imagined. And if these charges were true of the greater part of the nation in former times ; could it be supposed, that the Jews, when the apostle wrote, were better *by nature*, or merely *as circumcised*, or as *having the law*, than their forefathers had been ?—A few exceptions, by the *mercy and grace of God*, there doubtless were to these general rules ; and the apostle intended very soon to show how these persons were made to differ : but these quotations were full to the point, to show the Jews, that they were as unable to justify themselves before God as the Gentiles.

SCOTT. V. 19, 20. Every attentive reader must observe, that the apostle uses the word 'law' in various meanings ; which is rather to be considered as the defect of human language, than the result of ambiguity in his style. But the context generally shows how the word is to be understood : and common sense, united with a teachable spirit, will usually determine this far better than critical learning ; which is too often employed to perplex what is plain, rather than to clear up what is obscure. The nature of the argument requires us to suppose, that the apostle means the sacred Scriptures in general, when he says, 'Whatsoever the law saith : ' for the quotations are not from the law of Moses, and it is evident the whole O. T. was thus spoken of. *John 10:32—33, v. 34.* When he spoke of the Jews, as 'under the law,' he evidently meant the whole legal dispensation, by which they were distinguished from the Gentiles. But when he says, 'by the law is the knowledge of sin,' he must be understood of the *moral law* especially, the extent, spirituality, and excellency of which shows what things are sinful, and how evil sin is : whereas the ceremonial law rather gave the knowledge of salvation, by prefiguring the shedding of that atoning blood, and the communication of that sanctifying grace, by which sin is taken away. *7:7—12. John 1:17. 2 Cor. 3:7—11. Gal. 2:17—21, v. 13.* Indeed, this subject seems capable of an easy solution. If there be any law, which a man has perfectly kept, he may doubtless be justified by it : and surely no man can be justified by a law, which condemns him for breaking it ! But, there is no law of God, which any man has kept ; therefore no law by the deeds of which a man can be justified. The Gentile broke the law of his reason and conscience ; the Jew broke the moral law ; and even the attempt to justify himself by observing the ceremonial law, contradicted the very nature and intent of it. And as to that 'new law,' which requires sincere obedience as the condition of justification ; those who dream of it, should show us when it was promulgated, where it may be found, what it requires, whom it can condemn, or whom it can justify. When this is done, it may be worth while to prove that it 'makes void' both the law and the gospel ; that it introduces a new, vague, and unintelligible rule of duty, which every man

may interpret according to his own inclinations ; that it introduces boasting, and unites together pharisaical pride and antinomian licentiousness. 29—31. Yet this vague, unscriptural notion, which is replete with such complicated absurdities, so well suits men's natural indolence of thought in matters of religion ; serves so conveniently to reconcile a quiet conscience with a worldly life ; and so coincides with their enmity against both the holiness of the law, and the humiliating doctrines of the gospel ; that perhaps it deceives more souls, than all other false systems of religion put together, in this superficial, dissipated age.—'By law, which is the publishing of the rule with a penalty, we are not delivered from the power of sin, nor can it help men to righteousness ; but by law we come experimentally to know sin, in the power and force of it, since we find it prevail on us, notwithstanding the punishment of death is annexed to it.' *Locke.*—'The knowledge of sin being chiefly by the moral law, (7:7.) shows, that the apostle excludes that, as well as the ceremonial law, from justification : and evident it is, that the *antithesis* runs all along, not between *moral and ceremonial* works, but between *works in general, and faith.* 20, 22, 27. 4:2, 6. 9:32. 10:5, 6. *Whitby.*—'No flesh,' means none born of fallen Adam's race. 1—4, 9. *John 3:6. Notes, 21—26. Ps. 143:2.*

STUART. (20.) *The law..the law.* 'Law..law.' V. 21—26. The apostle, having 'shut up all men under sin,' *Gal. 3:19—22, v. 22.* proceeds more explicitly to exhibit 'the righteousness of God by faith,' 1:17. which had been manifestly declared by the preaching of the Gospel. This is the righteousness, which God had *appointed, provided, and introduced*, in the Person of his Son. It was 'without the law ;' having no dependence on any man's personal obedience to the law, being entirely a distinct thing : no past obedience being in the least taken notice of, as having any influence in the sinner's justification ; and his subsequent obedience being intended for other purposes. It had nothing to do with the ceremonial law, except as it was the substance of some of its shadows : for the Jew, who accepted of this righteousness, would place no dependence on these externals ; and the Gentile convert was not required to be circumcised, or to keep that law. Yet it had been 'witnessed by the law and the prophets : ' the ceremonies typified it ; the very strictness of the moral law, and its awful curses, being compared with the promises of mercy to sinners, implied it ; the promises and predictions of the Messiah bore witness to it ; the faith and hope of ancient believers recognised it ; and the whole O. T., rightly understood, taught men to expect and depend on it. This 'righteousness of God by faith in Jesus' is accounted, or imputed, to all believers without exception : yea, it is 'put on them' as a robe : for the words 'unto all and upon all,' seem incapable of any other consistent construction. 4:4—8. *Is. 45:23—25. Jer. 23:5, 6. Dan. 9:24. 1 Cor. 1:26*



22 Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference;

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

q c. 5:1, &c. r Ec. 7:20. or, fore-ordained. t or, passing over. u Ac. 13:33, 39.

which He confers on us; as the Christian armor is called the armor of God, Eph. 6:11. Now concerning the righteousness of God, Observe, 1. That it is manifested; made plain, laid open: the brazen serpent is lifted up on the pole. 2. It is without the law. Here he obviates the method of the judaizing Christians, who would needs join Christ and Moses together; the righteousness Christ hath brought in, is a complete righteousness. 3. Yet it is witnessed by the law and the prophets; there were types, and prophecies, and promises, in the O. T. that pointed at

this. The law, so far from justifying us, directs us to another way of justification; points at Christ as our righteousness, to whom bear all the prophets witness. See Acts 10:43. This might recommend it to the Jews, who were so fond of the law and the prophets. 4. It is by the faith of Jesus Christ, that faith which hath Jesus Christ for its object; an anointed Savior, so Jesus Christ signifies. Justifying faith respects Christ as a Savior, in all three anointed offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King; trusting to Him, accepting of Him, and adhering to Him, in all these. 5. It is to all, and upon all, them that believe. Therefore, as he had often said, Jews and Gentiles, if they believe, stand on the same level, and are alike welcome to God through Christ; for there is no difference. Or, it is to all, offered to all in general; the Gospel excludes none that do not exclude themselves; but it is upon all that believe; not only tendered to them, but put on them as a crown, as a robe; they are, on their believing, interested in it, and entitled to all the benefits and privileges of it. But now, how is this for God's glory?

(1.) It is for the glory of his grace, v. 24. It is by his grace, not by the grace wrought in us, as the papists say, confounding justification and sanctification; but by the gracious favor of God to us, without any merit in us so much as foreseen. And to make it the more emphatical, he says, it is freely by his grace, to show that it must be understood of grace in the most proper and genuine sense. It is said, that Joseph found grace in the sight of his master, Gen. 39:4. but there was a reason; he saw that what he did prospered; there was something in Joseph

to invite that grace: but the grace of God communicated to us, comes freely, freely; it is free grace, mere mercy; nothing in us to deserve such favors; no, it is all through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. It comes freely to us, but Christ bought it, and paid dear for it; which yet is so ordered, as not to derogate from the honor of free grace. Christ's purchase is no bar to the freeness of God's grace; for grace provided and accepted this vicarious satisfaction.

(2.) It is for the glory of his justice and righteousness, v. 25, 26. Note, [1.] Jesus Christ is the great propitiation, or propitiatory Sacrifice, typified by the mercy-seat under the law. He is our throne of grace, in and through whom atonement is made for sin, and our persons and performances are accepted of God, 1 John, 2:2. God was in Christ, as in his mercy-seat, reconciling the world unto Himself. [2.] God hath set Him forth to be so. God, the party offended, makes the first overtures towards a reconciliation, appoints the Days-man; foreordained Him to this, in the counsels of his love from eternity, appointed, anointed Him to it, qualified Him for it, and has exhibited Him to a guilty world as their propitiation. See Mat. 3:17. and 17:5. [3.] By faith in his blood we become interested in this propitiation. Faith, in the business of justification, hath a special regard to the blood of Christ, as that which made the atonement; for such was the divine appointment, that without blood there should be no remission, and no blood but his would do it effectually. Here may be an allusion to Ex. 24:8. [4.] All who by faith are interested in this propitiation, have the remission of their sins that

—31. 2 Cor. 5:18—21, v. 21. Gal. 3:26—29. Phil. 3:8—11, v. 8, 9. 2 Pet. 1:1, 2. Nor is there, in this respect, any difference between one man and another, however otherwise distinguished, 5:1, 2. Ps. 73:23—28, v. 24. 1 Pet. 5:10, 11. Whatever the nature or degree of men's crimes may have been, or whatever their nation, rank, or capacities, the way in which they must be justified before God is the same. 4:6—8. 2:32—34. This is by the free gift of God, which He bestows on the believer, wholly from his own infinite grace and mercy; not only without his deserving it, but directly contrary to his deserts, which the apparent tautology, 'freely by his grace,' seems to denote. This grace is honorably exercised, 'through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ,' or through the ransom, and meritorious obedience unto death, of the incarnate Son of God, as our Surety: for God the Father had before set Him forth to be a propitiatory sacrifice; He had appointed Him to be Mediator, as 'God manifested in the flesh,' for that purpose; He had openly 'laid on Him the iniquities of us all,' and exacted the punishment from Him; and He had exhibited this transaction to the world by the Gospel, that through Him sinners of every nation might approach God, on a propitiatory, or mercy-seat, and find acceptance by faith in the Savior's atoning blood. This method was taken in order 'to declare' and manifest the perfect righteousness of God; even in the very act of pardoning the innumerable sins of believers, remitting the punishment due to them, and accounting those righteous who in themselves were not so. Indeed, whatever the Jews might suppose, this was as necessary in respect of their believing progenitors as any other sinners. For, in remitting the punishment, justly merited by the sins committed in times past 'through his forbearance,' God was not propitiated in any degree by the repentance or subsequent good works of his servants, which could not satisfy his justice; nor did He ultimately regard the legal sacrifices, which 'could not take away sin;' but He had dealt with them as looking forward to the engagements of the divine Surety of the new covenant, and the atonement which He was at length to make. In the fulness of time, therefore, this sacrifice was offered, this righteousness introduced, and this method of justification published to mankind; that God might be clearly known to be a just and righteous Governor, and yet 'the Justifier' of every one 'who believed in Jesus,' which He could not otherwise have been. Prov. 17:15. 24:24, 25. For justice in a governor requires, that every man be dealt with according to his real character and actions; except some expedient can be adopted, for maintaining the authority of the law, and the credit of the administration; and to indemnify individuals: while mercy is exercised to those who deserve punishment. So that ancient believers had been admitted to the reward of righteousness, as well as exempted from the punishment deserved by their sins, for the sake of that promised Redeemer, who had engaged to pay their ransom, and bring in an infinitely valuable and everlasting righteousness for their justification: nor would it otherwise have consisted with the infinite justice of God, to have dealt with them in a manner, so very different from their real deservings, nay, contrary to them. Heb. 11:1—16, 39, 40. This is evidently the apostle's argument; and the concluding vs. might be thus tr.: 'Whom God hath before appointed to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, for a demonstration of his justice, on account of the passing by of sins that had been committed in former times, through the forbearance of God: I say, for a demonstration of his justice in this present time, in order that He might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.' — Dr. Hammond saith, the word *dikaios* is here to be tr. *clement* and *merciful*, and that it is commonly taken in that notion, and seldom in that of *vindictive justice*: but in opposition to this I assert, that the word is used about 80 times in the N. T., and not once in that sense of clemency and mercy. . . He himself produces but one place, Mat. 1:19.

where, says Lightfoot, men torment the word to make it signify clement and merciful, when it bears clearly the ordinary sense. Joseph being a just man, would not cohabit with an adulteress: and yet not being willing to make her a public example, and no necessity . . . lying upon him so to do, he was minded to put her away privily. . . That He might appear to be just, in requiring this satisfaction for our sins.' *Whitby*.—Too strong a protest cannot be entered against this practice of giving a new meaning to words, in Scripture, in order to get rid of a conclusion, against which the writer happens to be prejudiced: it is absolutely adding to, or taking from, or changing the Word of God, Rev. 22:18—21. and it perplexes the minds of ordinary readers to such a degree, that the plainest passages seem to them obscure, and of doubtful meaning.

(21, &c.) 'But now, the justification which is of God, without law, is revealed; to which testimony is given by the law and the prophets; a justification, moreover, which is of God by faith in Jesus Christ, (offered) to all, and (bestowed) on all who believe; for there is no distinction. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory which God bestows, &c.' *St. Turner* thus neatly connects the two clauses: "It need not surprise you, that justification cannot be thus obtained, since the law had quite a different design, viz. to bring us (21) to the knowledge of sin; *nunti de*, &c., but now under the Gospel a method of justification is revealed, of which God is the Author (*dikaïosunē Theou*), and to which all your Scriptures bear testimony, that method, which, rejecting obedience as the ground of (22) justification (*chōris nomou*), makes faith in Christ and his merits, the only cause, and which extends its benefits to all believers, Gentiles as well as Jews." BLOOMF.

(25, &c.) *Propitiation*.] 'Propitiatory sacrifice. So the Fathers and Greek commentators, and Erasm., Grot., Ham., Le Cl., Bois, Elsu., Kyp., Kop., Storr, Schl., and St.' *Ed. To declare, &c.* 'In order to declare his justification with respect to the remission of sins formerly committed during the forbearance of God, in order to declare his justification at the present time; so that He might be just and yet the, &c.

STUART. (25, 26.) 'Justice, in a ruler, is that virtue, whose exercise demonstrates that he best consults the good of his subjects. All had rebelled. Were all to be destroyed? this would not have been to consult their good. Were some? but a common Father should not be swayed by a partial solicitude. Were they to be left to themselves? thus also would they plunge into ruin. Finally, were the same to be imposed on the Jews by themselves, and on the Gentiles? but they would not have had greater force to amend them, than at first. Was impunity, outright, to be promised? This would have opened a wide door to licentiousness and crime. Nothing then was left, but that all without distinction should be invited to the same society and worship, pardon of the past and amnesty being promised, and the condition prescribed of an obedience, new, evangelical, and adapted to the human condition. 1 John 1:9. 2:2.' *West.*—'Now as the apostle here assures us, that Christ's death is a proof of God's righteousness, both when He passed by the sins of mankind before Christ came, and when, in the present time, He passes them by, we are led therefrom to conclude, that Christ's death hath rendered these exercises of God's mercy consistent with his character, as the righteous moral Governor of the universe. But in what manner this joyful event hath been accomplished by Christ's death, is nowhere in Scripture, so far as I know, declared to us. It is sufficient to all the purposes of our salvation, that the fact is revealed; and our duty is, to believe the fact upon the testimony of God who hath revealed it, and to rest our hope of salvation thereon, although the manner in which it hath been accomplished is not made known to us.' *Mackn.* Rom. 5:9. Notes, 5:11, and 19. Ed.



27 Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

29 *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

30 Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

31 Do we then make void the law through *a* faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

#### CHAP. IV.

1 Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness, 10 before he was circumcised. 13 By faith only he and his seed received the promise. 16 Abraham is the father of all that believe. 24 Our faith also shall be imputed to us for righteousness.

WHAT shall we say then that Abraham, our father *a* as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

v ver. 20—22. w Ga. 3:8, 28. a Mat. 3:9.  
c. 8:3. Ga. 2:16. x He. 10:15, 16.

are past. It was for this, Christ was set forth to be a propitiation, in order to remission, to which the reprieves of his patience and forbearance were a very encouraging preface. *Through the forbearance of God.* Divine patience hath kept us out of hell, that we might have space to repent, and get to heaven. Some refer the *sins that are past*, to the sins of the O. T. saints, which were pardoned for the sake of the atonement which Christ in the fulness of time was to make, which looked backward as well as forward. Several Greek copies make *through the forbearance of God* to begin v. 26. and they denote two precious fruits of Christ's merit and God's grace, *remission*, and *forbearance*: it is owing to Christ, that there is ever a sinner on this side of hell. [5.]

PRACT. OBS. We ought always to distinguish between our *advantages*, and our *deservings*; and between *the means* of becoming accepted and holy, and *that grace* which teaches to profit by those means.—The nature and desert of sin, and the motives and purposes of the sinner, remain precisely the same; when the only wise God has taken occasion from them to manifest more conspicuously his own glory: and his justice also will be glorified in punishing the transgressors.—Let us remember, that many and great as our advantages are, we are no *better* in the sight of God than the heighthed heathens, if not worse; except grace have made us to differ; and then to grace the whole praise is due: for it is proved, beyond contradiction, that we are all, in ourselves, 'under sin.' Eph. 2:1, 2. Tit. 3:4—7.—The Scriptures adduced in these vs.

V. 27, 28. The apostle decides, that all boasting by any of the human race is excluded, and can have no admission, in consistency with truth and justice. It was indeed the avowed purpose of God, that boasting should be shut out, by justifying believers, entirely by the grace of God, through the righteousness and redemption of Christ, without any respect to their works, by faith alone, of his own gift and operation, 1 Cor. 1:26—31. Eph. 2:4—10. not considered, *in this matter*, as an act of obedience, or a good work, or as the principle of subsequent obedience, Gal. 5:1—6. but as forming the relation between Christ and the sinner; which renders it proper, that the believer should be pardoned and justified for the sake of the Savior; and that the unbeliever, who is not thus united or related to Him, should remain under condemnation. This is 'the law of faith,' or the rule of the divine conduct towards believers and unbelievers; and as God has determined, that 'no flesh shall glory in his presence;' so on this ground, also, the apostle concluded, that 'a man is justified by faith, and not by the deeds of the law.' Sc.

V. 29—31. The doctrine of faith indeed honors and fulfils the ceremonial law; and showed the proper intent of it, and of the legal dispensation: but then, this was only in order to the final abrogation of them. But the moral law was fully established in honor and authority, both in respect of its precepts and sanction, by the perfect obedience and propitiatory sufferings of the incarnate Son of God: so that its immutable obligation, excellency, and equity, could not have been so fully shown, either by the perfect obedience of the whole human species, or by the destruction of every transgressor. Nor is any man justified by faith in Christ, who does not condemn himself, as *justly deserving* the wrath of God, for breaking his holy law. Moreover, it is given into the hands of every believer, as his rule of grateful obedience, by which he is to regulate his temper and conduct, and examine all his actions; that in everything, in which he deviates from this perfect standard, he may repent, and seek forgiveness through the blood of Christ. Yea, it is written in his heart, by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. Jer. 31:31—34. Heb. 8:7—13. and the believer's love to it, and delight in obeying it, are the evidences of his justification. Jam. 2:14—26. So that the doctrine

God does in all this *declare his righteousness*, (he insists on it with great emphasis,) 1st. In the propitiation itself. Never was there such a demonstration of the justice and holiness of God, as there was in the death of Christ. 2dly. In the pardon on that propitiation; so it follows, by way of explication, *that He might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth*. It would not stand with his justice to demand the debt of the principal, when the Surety has paid it, and He has accepted that payment in full satisfaction. See 1 Jn. 1:9. He is just, faithful to his Word.

(3.) It is for God's glory; for *boasting is thus excluded*, v. 27. God will have the great work of the justification and salvation of sinners carried on from first to last, in such a way as might exclude boasting, that no flesh might glory in his presence, 1 Cor. 1:29—31. Justification by works would not exclude it: if saved by our own works, we might put the crown on our own heads. But faith for ever excludes, for faith is a depending, self-emptying, self-denying grace, and casts every crown before the throne. Believers are not left lawless; *faith is a law*, a working grace, wherever it is in truth; and yet, because it acts in a strict and close dependence on Jesus Christ, *it excludes boasting*.

From all this he draws this conclusion, v. 28. *That a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law*.

Lastly, In the close of the ch. he shows the extent of this privilege of justification by faith, that it is not the peculiar privilege of the Jews, but pertains to the Gentiles also; for he had said, v. 22. that there is no difference: and as to this, 1. he asserts and proves it, v. 29, 30. *Is He the God of the Jews only?* He argues from the absurdity of such a supposition. Can it be imagined that a God of infinite love and mercy, should limit and confine his favors to that little, perverse people, the Jews, leaving all the rest of men in a condition eternally desperate? \*

\* May the same be said of the present heathen, who form the vast majority of mankind, and never had the Gospel? Why do not those who answer 'no,' immediately give them the Gospel? Ed.

too exactly describe the bulk of nominal Christians: and he who examines the state of society, even in this *Christian* country; nay, he who inquires seriously into the disposition of his own heart, and the tenor of his past and present life, comparing them with the holy law of God; will easily perceive, that his mouth, and 'every mouth must be stopped, and all the world must be brought in guilty before God.' How plain then is it to common sense, that 'by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified before God!' And whatever Pharisees, Sadducees, or Infidels may object; whatever antinomians, or enthusiasts may plead, or profess; the doctrine of faith establishes the law in its real honor, and lays the true foundation for all holy obedience; and this doctrine *alone* 'establishes the law.' SCOTT.

of faith, in every way magnifies and establishes the just, holy, good, and spiritual law of God, in all its honor and authority; while all other schemes of justification disgrace it, or weaken its authority and obligation, as if its precepts were unreasonably strict, and its penalty unrighteously severe; so that God would not be just, if He dealt with men according to it. We therefore *know* what the apostle's doctrine was: because we *know* what doctrine is objected to, as 'making void the law;' what doctrine is perverted by hypocrites and antinomians, as loosening man's obligation to holy practice; and what doctrine, when duly understood and truly believed, 'establishes the law' in the completest manner, and gives the most efficacious motives to all holy obedience. Sc.

(30.) *Through.* 'By.' St. 'It is plain, however, that the apostle [in using *ek* and *dia*, tr. *by* and *through*] meant to make *some* distinction.' BLOOMER.

(31.) 'Finally, it is evident that, by the faith to which he attributes justification, the apostle means not an idle faith, but a working faith, attended with works of love both toward God and our neighbor; and consequently, that the works which he excludes from justification are not evangelical works, or such as are done in, and proceed from, faith in Christ; but only, 1. works of perfect obedience, or sinless works, there being none such to be found among the sons of fallen man; or, 2. works done in the strength of the Mosaic law, without the grace of the Gospel; or, 3. the works of the ceremonial law, such as circumcision, sacrifice, and the like; or, 4. and lastly, all manner of works whatsoever, as far as they are relied on as meritorious causes of our justification or salvation; there being but one only cause of that kind, namely, the meritorious obedience and sufferings of our dear Redeemer and Savior.' Ep. BULL.

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. 'From this example of Abraham the apostle intended to draw a conclusion, which would necessarily take in all believers. And that he might do this fairly, he intimates, at the very entrance of the question, that he did not propose Abraham merely as one of the number of believers, but as the father of the church; that he might properly reason from the father to his children, [189]



2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not <sup>b</sup> before God.

3 For what saith the <sup>c</sup> Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

4 Now to him that worketh <sup>d</sup> is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith <sup>e</sup> is counted for righteousness.

6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

7 *Saying*, <sup>f</sup> Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

9 *Cometh* this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

b c. 3:27. 1 Co. c Ge. 15:6. e Hab. 2:4. 1:29. d c. 11:6. f Ps. 32:1, 2.

—from an equal case, as they say, but a *fortiori*,—from a stronger case. If Abraham, a man so famous for works, so eminent in holiness and obedience, was nevertheless justified by faith only, and not by those works; how much less can any other, especially any of those that spring from him, and come so far short of him in works, set up for a justification by their own works? And it proves likewise, *ex-abundanti*,—the more abundantly, as some observe, that we are not justified; no, not by those good works which flow from faith, as the matter of our righteousness; for such were Abraham's works, and are we better than he?

V. 1—8. Here the apostle recognises his kindred to Abraham, and asks, *What has he found*,—as pertaining to the flesh, i. e. by cir-

cumcision and his external privileges and performances? Those the apostle calls *flesh*, Phil. 3:3. Now what did he get by these? Was he justified by them? Was it the merit of his works that recommended him to God's acceptance? No, by no means; which he proves by several arguments.

I. If he was *justified by works*, room would be left for *boasting*, which must for ever be excluded. He might deserve well of men, but could never merit of God, v. 2. Paul himself had *whereof to glory before men*, and we have him sometimes *glorying in it*, yet with humility; but *nothing to glory in before God*, 1 Cor. 4:4. Phil. 3:8, 9. So Abraham.

II. It is expressly said, *that Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness*. In all controversies in religion, this must be our question, *What saith the Scripture?* v. 3. Is. 8:20. *thither is the last appeal*. Now the Scripture saith, *that Abraham believed, and that was counted to him for righteousness*, Gen. 15:6. therefore he had not *whereof to glory before God*, it being purely of *free grace that it was so imputed*, and having not in itself anything of the formal nature of a *righteousness*, further than as God Himself was graciously pleased to count it to him.

III. If he were *justified by works*, the reward would have been of *debt*, and not of *grace*; which is not to be imagined. This is his argument, v. 4, 5. *Abraham's reward was God Himself*; so He had told him but just before, Gen. 15:1. *I am thy exceeding great reward*. Now if Abraham had merited this by the perfection of his obedience, it had not been an act of *grace* in God, but Abraham might have demanded it, [and so had power over God Himself!] But it is impossible for man, much more guilty man, to make God a *debtor to him*, Rom. 11:35. Therefore *to him that worketh not*, that can pretend to no such merit, nor show any worth or value in his work, which may answer such a reward, but, disclaiming any such pretension, casts himself wholly on the *free grace* of God in Christ, by a lively, active, obedient faith; to such an *one faith is counted for righteousness*, is accepted of God as the qualification required in all those that shall be pardoned and saved.

*Him that justifieth the ungodly*, i. e. him that was before *ungodly*. His former *ungodliness* was no bar to his justification on his believing; *that ungodly one*, i. e. Abraham, who, before his conversion, it should seem, [but for this there is little authority,] was carried down the stream of the Chaldean idolatry, Josh. 24:2. No room therefore is left for despair; though God clears not the impenitent guilty, yet through Christ *He justifies the ungodly*.

IV. He further illustrates this, by a passage out of Pss. where David speaks of the remission of sins, the prime branch of justification, as constituting the happiness and blessedness of a man; pronouncing him blessed, not that has no sin, or none which deserved death, but *the man to whom the Lord imputeth not sin*; who, though he cannot plead Not guilty, pleads the act of indemnity, and his plea is allowed. It is quoted from Ps. 32:1, 2. *not entering into judgment, not marking iniquities*: being purely acts of grace, the acceptance and the reward cannot be expected as due debts; therefore Paul infers, v. 6. *that it is the imputing of righteousness without works*. *Blessed are they*. Pardoned people are the only blessed people. The sentiments of the world are, Those are happy, that have a clear estate, and are out of debt to man; but the sentence of the Word is, Those are happy, that have their debts to God discharged. Oh, how much therefore is it our interest to make it sure to ourselves that our sins are pardoned! For that is the foundation of all other benefits. Heb. 8:12.

V. 9—17. Paul observes in this paragraph, when and why Abraham was thus justified; it was before he was circumcised, and before the giving of the law; and there was a reason for both.

I. It was before he was circumcised, v. 10. It was *imputed*, Gen. 15:6. and he was *not circumcised till ch. 17*. Abraham is expressly said *to be justified by faith, 14 years, some say 25 years, before he was circumcised*: which, as it might silence the fears of the poor uncircumcised Gentiles, might lower the pride and conceitedness of the Jews, who gloried in their circumcision, as if they had the monopoly of all happiness.

the foundation of which he lays in v. 13. . . In whatever way Abraham, the father of believers, was justified, in the same must all his children (i. e. all believers) be justified: but Abraham was not justified, and made the father of the faithful, by any of his own works, either preceding or following his faith in Christ, as promised to him; but merely by faith in Christ, or the merit of Christ by faith imputed to him for righteousness. Therefore all his children become his children, and are justified, not by their works, either preceding or following their faith; but by faith alone in the same Christ, who was at length to come; . . . and thus they are at present justified, and shall be to the end of the world.' *Beza*.—Thus the apostle, by this single example, struck at the very root of their national vain confidence, in Abraham as their father, in circumcision, and in the law of Moses. Gal. 3:6—14. Heb. 11:11—19. Jam. 2:21—24. SCOTT.

(1.) *As pertaining to the flesh.* 'Kata sarka: by the works of the law and circumcision. And so Calvin, Beza, Ambrose, Aquinas, Cajetan, Ham., Zeger, Paraus, Whitty, Taylor, Mackn., and Wets.' BL.

(2.) *St.*, comparing 3:12. commences thus, '[Much]; if, however,' &c. Ep.

V. 4, 5. This imputation of faith is not because of its own excellency, or worthiness as a good work; but as it refers the Sovereign Judge for payment to the accepted righteousness and atonement of his Son; even as the receipt of a scrap of paper, intrinsically not worth a farthing, in the form of a draft on a creditable banker, is entered in the merchant's book, for a considerable sum of money, as if it had been paid in cash. The man 'who worketh not,' will indeed diligently use appointed means of grace, earnestly and perseveringly repent, forsake sin with decision, and conscientiously perform his several duties, and even become 'zealous of good works:' yet he 'worketh not' at all, with an aim or expectation of obtaining righteousness in this way, which he knows to be absolutely impossible. He comes to God, as 'the Justifier of the ungodly,' that he may obtain 'the gift of righteousness by faith,' of free grace, through the merits of the divine Surety. He is not indeed absolutely 'ungodly' at the time of his justification; for his humiliation, submission, and faith, are effects of regeneration; which is the source of all 'godliness' in a fallen creature. Yet he is justified, as 'ungodly' in himself, in strict justice, and according to the law: he comes for the blessing as 'ungodly'; God makes no account of anything in justifying him, except his faith as forming his relation to Christ; and the man has no respect to anything else himself, in expecting that blessing. Nay, the justified believer, whatever his holiness or diligence may be, never works *for this purpose*; and he still comes before God as 'ungodly,' in this respect, still depending on 'the righteousness of God by faith in Christ,' as his only hope; though his good works are evidences of the sincerity of his faith. Phil. 3:8—11.—Abraham seven-

ral years before, 'by faith, obeyed' the call and command of God: and therefore could not be, strictly speaking, altogether 'ungodly,' when it was said, 'He believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness:' so that the example of Abraham is a full and clear refutation of the construction, which some put on this text, that men are, altogether and in every sense, ungodly and unregenerate, at the time when God justifies them; a most obnoxious sentiment, and of most dangerous tendency. Heb. 11:8—10. "He that worketh," i. e. who hath deserved anything by his work, to whom is opposed "he that worketh not;" i. e. who brings no work, for which he claims a reward; but depends on the gratuitous promise of God. But this indeed is spoken, by concession, in a similitude taken from the commerce and contracts of men: for otherwise, "who hath first given? and it shall be rendered to him again." *Beza*. 11:1—6, vv. 5, 6, 33—36. SCOTT.

(5.) 'To him that worketh reward is not counted as a matter of grace, but as a debt.' *St.* 'The sentiment is here illustrated by an example deduced from common life, and the affairs of men. (*Grot.* and *Koppe.*) The words may be r.: "Now to the laborer, (one who fully performs his engagements, and fulfils his stipulated task,) his wages are not reckoned as a favor, but are regarded as a debt (being what he has earned)." The words contain both the *illustration* and the *application*. In the application, "him that worketh" must denote, *him who has exerted his full powers, and exactly performed his duty.*' BLOOMF.

V. 6—8. Not that forgiveness of sins is equivalent to justification; for this implies also treating a man as righteous, and entitled to the reward of eternal life; as it is evident, in all human transactions, that the pardon of a criminal is very distinct from giving him the title to an estate. But God always imputes righteousness, where He does not impute sin: for none are pardoned, except in virtue of their relation to Christ by faith; and if his atoning blood cover their sins, his righteousness also justifies their persons. 2 Cor. 5:18—21, v. 21. As their Surety, He suffered for their sins, which were imputed to Him; and they are rewarded and made heirs of eternal life, because his righteousness is imputed to them. 'From hence the expression of blotting out iniquity, so frequently used in Scripture, may be understood; that is, the striking it out of the account.' *Locke*.—It should be remembered, that the inspired apostle, under a clearer dispensation, expounds the words of the prophet; not the prophet the words of the apostle. We must therefore understand David, according to Paul's interpretation; and not the reverse. If Paul meant forgiveness exclusively; why should he add the clause, 'imputeth righteousness without works?' 9—12.—(7, 8) *Blessed, &c.* Exactly from the LXX. Ps. 32:1, 2. SCOTT.

V. 9—12. This language fully proves, that circumcision *sealed spiritual blessings to Abraham personally*, as the outward seal of the cove-



10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

11 And he received the sign of circumcision; a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised.

13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

Two reasons there are why Abraham was justified by faith in uncircumcision:

1. That circumcision might be a seal of the righteousness of faith, v. 11. The tenor of the covenants must first be settled, before the seal can be annexed. Sealing supposes a bargain-precedent, which is confirmed and ratified by that ceremony. After Abraham's justification by faith had continued several years, for the confirmation of his faith, God was pleased to appoint a sealing ordinance; and Abraham received it, though a bloody ordinance, even as a special favor, the sign of, &c. Now we may hence observe, (1.) The nature of the sacraments in general; they are signs, and seals; signs to represent and instruct; seals to ratify and confirm; signs

of absolute grace and favor; seals of the conditional promises: nay, mutual seals; God seals us to be to us a God, and we seal to Him to be to Him a people. (2.) The nature of circumcision in particular; it was the initiating sacrament of the O. T. and it is here said to be, [1.] A sign; a sign of that original corruption all are born with, and which is cut off by spiritual circumcision; a commemorating sign of God's covenant with Abraham; a distinguishing sign between Jews and Gentiles; a sign of admission into the visible church; a sign prefiguring baptism, which comes in the room of circumcision, now under the Gospel, when (the blood of Christ being shed) all bloody ordinances are abolished; it was on outward and sensible sign of an inward and spiritual grace signified thereby. [2.] A seal of the righteousness of the faith. In general, it was a seal of the covenant of grace, particularly of justification by faith; the covenant of grace, called the righteousness which is of faith, ch. 10:6. and it refers to an O. T. promise, Deut. 30:12.

Now if infants were then capable of receiving a seal of the covenant of grace, which proves that they then were within the verge of that covenant, how they come to be now cast out of the covenant, and incapable of the seal, and by what severe sentence they were thus rejected and incapacitated, those are concerned to make out, that not only reject, but nullify and reproach, the baptism of the seed of believers.

2. That he might be the father of all them that believe. Not but that there were those that were justified by faith before Abraham; but of Abraham first it is particularly observed, and in him commenced a much clearer and fuller dispensation of the covenant of grace, than any that had been before extant; therefore he is called the father of all that believe, because he was so eminent a believer, and so eminently justified by faith; as Jabbal was the father of shepherds, and Jubal of musicians, Gen. 4:20, 21. The father of all them that believe, a standing pattern of faith; as parents are examples to their children: and a standing precedent of justification by faith; as the liberties, privileges, honors, and estates of the fathers descend to their children. Abraham was the father of believers, because to him particularly the magna charta was renewed. Thus were [unbelievers, even if Jews, excluded, and] the doubts and fears of the poor Gentiles anticipated, and no room left to question but that righteousness might be imputed to them also, Col. 3:11. Gal. 5:6.

II. It was before the giving of the law, v. 13—16. The former observation was levelled against those that confined justification to the circumcision, this to those that expected it by the law; now the promise was made to Abraham long before the law. Comp. Gal. 3:17, 18. Observe,

1. What that promise was,—that he should be the heir of the world, i. e. of the land of Canaan, the choicest spot of ground in the world; or the father of many nations of the world, who sprang from him, beside the Israelites; or the heir of the comforts of the life which now is. Or rather, it points at Christ, the Seed here mentioned; comp. Gal. 3:16. Now Christ is the Heir of the world, the ends of the earth are his posses-

sion, and it is in Him that Abraham was so. And it refers to that promise, Gen. 12:3. In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

2. How it was made to him, not through the law, but through the righteousness of faith; not through the law, for that was not yet given; but on that believing which was counted to him for righteousness; on his trusting God, in leaving his country when God bid him, Heb. 11:8. Now being by faith, it could not be by the law; which he proves by the opposition that is between them, v. 14, 15. for then faith would be made void. Besides, The law worketh wrath, v. 15. wrath in us to God; it irritates and provokes that carnal mind which is enmity to God, as the damming up of a stream makes it swell,—wrath in God against us; it works this, it discovers it; or our breach of the law works it. How the law works wrath, he shows very concisely in the latter part of the v.; Where no law is, there is no transgression; an acknowledged maxim, which implies, Where there is a law, there is transgression, and [of course, punishment or] wrath.

3. Why the promise was made to him by faith; for three reasons, v. 16. (1.) That it might be by grace, that grace might have the honor of it; faith hath particular reference to grace granting, as grace hath to faith receiving. By grace, and therefore through faith, Eph. 2:8. (2.) That the promise might be sure. The first covenant, being a covenant of works, was not sure; but, through man's failure, the benefits designed by it [might be and] were cut off; therefore, the more effectually to ascertain and ensure the conveyance of the new covenant, there is another way found out, not by works, (were it so, the promise would not be sure, because of the continual frailty and infirmity of the flesh,) but by faith, which receives all from Christ, and acts in a continual dependence on Him, as the great Trustee of our salvation, and in whose keeping it is safe. (3.) That it might be sure to all the seed. If it had been by the law, it had been limited to the Jews, but therefore it was by faith, [that it might produce a more extensive happiness,] Gentiles as well as Jews becoming interested in it; the spiritual as well as the natural seed of faithful Abraham. Gen. 17:5. where the reason of the change of his name from Abram,—a high father, to Abraham,—the high father of a multitude, is thus rendered; For a father of many nations have I made thee; i. e. all believers, both before and since the coming of Christ in the flesh, should take Abraham for their pattern, and call him father.

V. 17—22. Having observed when Abraham was justified by faith, and why, the apostle here describes, magnifies, and commends the faith of Abraham; where observe,

I. Whom he believed; God. Observe what in God his faith eyed:

1. God, who quickeneth the dead. It was promised that he should be the father of many nations, when he and his wife were now as good as dead; Heb. 11:11, 12. therefore he looks on God as a God that could breathe life into dry bones. He that quickeneth the dead, can do anything, can give a child to Abraham when he is old; can bring the Gentiles, who are dead in trespass-

nant of grace, and the emblem of sanctification, however it might otherwise be applied or misunderstood. 'This seems an incontestable proof, that circumcision was the seal of the covenant of grace, and not merely of temporal promises; and consequently obviates the most considerable objection, that hath ever been urged against infant-baptism.' Doddr. Heb. 6:13—20.

(11.) 'As a seal of the righteousness by faith which (he possessed) in a state of uncircumcision.'

V. 13. Through the law.] 'By law.'

V. 14. 'Faith is rendered of none effect, and the promise is made void.'

V. 15. No law is.] 13:2:12. 'Nomos is used, by Paul, of every rule of life, of every revelation, especially of the Mosaic law. The various senses then of this word, are calculated to produce perplexity. . . . Our

English version, by having almost constantly said "the law," whatever be the meaning of nomos in the original, has made this most difficult epistle still more obscure.' Bp. Middleton.—When without the article, it is commonly used for law in general, or rule of conduct, whatever it be: when with the article, of the Mosaic law. Yet this rule has several exceptions, which the context alone can fully decide.

V. 16. 'Not only to him who is under the law, but to him who is of the faith of Abraham;—who is, &c. in the sight of God, in whom he believed, &c.'

V. 18—22. He confidently hoped to become the father of many nations, naturally in his posterity, and spiritually through Christ, who was to descend from him; because God had said, that his seed should be innumerable as the stars of heaven. Gen. 15:5, 6. 'His faith was imputed to him for righteousness.' That is, his faith was thus approved



19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb :

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

r He. 11:11. 10:11. 5:21. He. 9:28.  
 a Ge. 18:14. Lu. u Ac. 2:39. 1 Pe. 2:24. Ra.  
 1:37. 45. He. v Ma. 16:16. Jn. 1:5.  
 11:19. 3:14-16. = 1 Co. 15:17.  
 t c. 15:4. 1 Co. w 1a. 53:5, 6. 2 Co. 1 Pe. 1:21.

ses and sins, to a divine and spiritual life, Eph. 2:1. Comp. Eph. 1:19, 20.

2. Who calleth things which are not, as though they were; i. e. creates all things by the word of his power, as in the beginning, Gen. 1:3. 2 Cor. 4:6. The justification and salvation of sinners, the espousing of the Gentiles that had not been a people, were a gracious calling of things which are not, as though they were, giving being to things that were not. This expresses the sovereignty of God, and his absolute power and dominion; a mighty stay to faith, when all other props sink and totter.

#### II. How he believed.

1. Against hope, he believed in hope, v. 18. There was no natural hope; all the arguments of sense, and reason, and experience, which in such cases usually beget and support hope, were against him; but, against all those inducements to the contrary, he believed; for he had a hope, which arose, as his faith did, from the consideration of God's all-sufficiency. Therefore God enabled him thus to believe against hope, that he might pass for a pattern of great and

strong faith to all generations. Or, his being the father of the faithful is mentioned as the matter of the promise that he believed; and he refers to Gen. 15:5. So shall thy seed be, as the stars of heaven, so innumerable, so illustrious. This was that he believed, when it was counted to him for righteousness, v. 6. And it is observable, that that particular instance of his faith was against hope, against the surmises and suggestions of his unbelief. He had just before been concluding hardly that he should go childless, that one born in his house was his heir, v. 2, 3. and that unbelief was a foil to his faith, and bespeaks it a believing against hope.

2. Being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body, now dead, v. 19. utterly unlikely to beget a child; he did not dwell in his thoughts upon it. He said, indeed, Shall a child be born to him that is a hundred years old? Gen. 17:17. But that was the language of his admiration, and his desire to be further satisfied, not of his doubting and distrust; his faith passed by that consideration, and thought of nothing but the faithfulness of the promise, with the contemplation whereof he was swallowed up, and this kept up his faith. Being not weak in faith, he considered not. It is mere weakness of faith, that makes a man lie poring on the difficulties and seeming impossibilities that [are] in the way of a [clear] promise.

3. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, v. 20. and therefore, because he considered not the frowns and discouragements of second causes;—he disputed not, did not hesitate or stumble at it, but, by a resolute and peremptory act of his soul, with a holy boldness, ventured all on the promise. Unbelief is at the bottom of all our staggerings at God's promises.

4. He was strong in faith, giving glory to God,—he was strengthened in faith, his faith got ground by exercise. Though weak faith shall not be rejected, yet strong faith shall be commended and honored. The strength of his faith appeared in the victory it won over his fears. And hereby he gave glory to God; for as unbelief dishonors God, by making Him a liar, 1 John 5:10. so faith honors God, by setting to its seal that He is true, John 3:33. Abraham's faith gave God the glory of his wisdom, power, holiness, goodness, and especially of his faithfulness, resting on the word that He had spoken. We never hear our Lord Jesus commending anything so much as great

faith, Mat. 8:10. and 15:28. therefore God gives honor to faith, great faith, because faith, great faith, gives honor to God.

5. He was fully persuaded,—was carried on with the greatest confidence and assurance; it is a metaphor taken from ships that come into the harbor with full sail. Abraham saw the storms of doubts, and fears, and temptations, likely to rise against the promise; but trusts to the strength of his bottom, and the wisdom and faithfulness of his pilot, and bravely makes to the harbor, and comes home an unspeakable gainer. Such was his full persuasion, and it was built on the omnipotence of God: He was able, for our waverings rise mainly from our distrust.

And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness, v. 22. faith being chosen to be the prime condition of our justification, because it is a grace that of all others gives glory to God.

V. 23—25. In the close of the ch. he applies all to us; and having abundantly proved that Abraham was justified by faith, he here concludes that his justification was to be the pattern or sampler of ours.

It was not written for his sake alone. It was not intended only for an historical commendation of Abraham, or a relation of something peculiar to him: no, the Scripture did not intend hereby to describe some singular way of justification that belonged to Abraham as his prerogative. The accounts of the O. T. saints were not intended for histories only, barely to inform and divert us, but for precedents, to direct us, for ensamples, 1 Cor. 10:11. for our learning, ch. 15:4. and this particularly of Abraham was, to assure us what that righteousness is, which God requireth and accepteth to our salvation; for us also, that are mean and vile, us Gentiles as well as Jews, for us on whom the ends of the world are come, as well as for the patriarchs; for the grace of God is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

His application of it is but short. Only, observe, 1. Our common privilege; it shall be imputed to us, that is, righteousness shall; the gospel-way of justification is by an imputed righteousness; he uses a future verb, to signify the continuation of this mercy in the church, while there are any to be justified; for there is a fountain opened that is inexhaustible. 2. Our common duty, the condition of this privilege, and that is believing. The proper object of this believing is a divine revelation: the revelation to Abraham was concerning a Christ to

PRACT. OBS. No mere man, since the fall of Adam, could ever 'find' anything but death by his own works; and the history contained in the Scriptures, with the confessions of the best of men, proves that all who have been saved, escaped condemnation and obtained heaven by 'faith being imputed to them for righteousness.'—None can sincerely pray for this blessing, till he cease from working in order to justify himself: and indeed, no man performs good works from pure principles, till he learns to believe 'in Him who justifieth the ungodly.' Yet at the same time, no true believer will neglect 'working,' in order to glorify God, to do good to men, and to make his own calling and election sure; because he delights in the commandments of God, and 'hungers and thirsts after righteousness.'—This distinction [of believing and not be-

lieving] extends to all nations, sects, or forms of worship; some are justified, and some are not, in all countries, where the great truths of the Gospel are known: and this method of 'justifying the ungodly' is equally suited to preclude the most eminent saints from glorying, and the most atrocious sinners from despairing.—The seal of the Holy Spirit, in sanctification, is the inward evidence 'of the righteousness of faith: when the old nature is crucified, and the heart is circumcised to love God, it is evident that we are 'the children of Abraham,' and walk in his steps: and sacraments will in this case be really seals and pledges of the same blessing.—Blessed be God, that we are not left under the covenant of works! SCOTT.

to be genuine, meet to form the relation between him and the predicted Redeemer; and thus it marked him out as a proper person, to be justified by the everlasting righteousness which the Messiah would introduce. Gen. 17:17. Heb. 11:11, 12.—It is evident from the whole context, that Abraham's faith did not justify him, by its own merit or value, but as interesting him in Christ: for, though the sincerity of his faith was manifested on this occasion, he had actually been justified long before; and his example would not in any way aptly illustrate the Christian's justification by the righteousness of Christ, and not by that of his own faith, if we do not thus understand it.—A very common perversion of this passage must not pass unnoticed. Many speak of 'hoping against hope;' not that God will fulfil his promises to believers, notwithstanding all difficulties and improbabilities; but that themselves are believers, and shall be saved, contrary to the evidence of their tempers and lives: and this is often the grossest presumption and fanaticism imaginable, though sometimes in a measure countenanced by those who are not aware of its tendency.—(18) So shall, &c.] From the LXX, but it accords to the Heb. Gen. 15:5.

(22.) Imputed.] 'Counted.' St. : as also in v. 22. and 25. where he tr.; 'but also for our sake to whom it will be counted, to us who believe on Him who,' &c. Ed. 'The nature of the subject [here, and v. 4, &c.] which has been involved by dogmatists in far too much mystery, is thus popularly illustrated by Mackn.: "In judging Abraham, God will [192]

place on the one side of the account his duties, on the other his performances. And on the side of his performances he will place his faith, and by mere favor will value it as equal to a complete performance of his duties, and reward him as if he were a righteous person. But neither here, nor in Gal. 3:6. is it said, that Christ's righteousness was counted to Abraham. In both passages the expression is, Abraham believed God, and it, viz. his believing God, was counted to him for righteousness. and v. 9. of this ch. We affirm faith was counted to Abraham for righteousness. Also Gen. 15:6. And he believed the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness. See Rom. 4:22, 23, 24. Farther, as it is nowhere said in Scripture, that Christ's righteousness was imputed to Abraham, so neither is it said anywhere, that Christ's righteousness is imputed to believers. In short, the uniform doctrine of Scripture is, that the believer's faith is counted to him for righteousness, by the mere grace or favor of God through Jesus Christ; i. e. on account of what Christ hath done to procure that favor for them. This is very different from the doctrine of those who hold, that by having faith imputed or counted for righteousness, the believer becomes perfectly righteous; whether they mean thereby that faith is itself a perfect righteousness, or that it is the instrument of conveying to the believer the perfect righteousness of another. With respect to the first, it is not true that faith is a perfect righteousness, for if it were, justification would not be a free gift, but a debt. And with respect to the



## CHAP. V.

1 Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, 2 and joy in our hope, 3 that since we were reconciled by his blood, when we were enemies, 10 we shall much more be saved, being reconciled. 12 As sin and death came by Adam, 17 so much more righteousness and life by Jesus Christ. 20 Where sin abounded, grace did superabound.

**T**HEREFORE <sup>a</sup>being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom <sup>b</sup>also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice <sup>c</sup>in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory <sup>d</sup>in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope;

<sup>a</sup> Is. 32:17. Ep. 2:14. Col. 1:20. <sup>b</sup> Jn. 14:6. c He. 3:6. <sup>d</sup> Mat. 5:11, 12. Ja. 1:2, 12.

come, the revelation to us is concerning a Christ already come, which difference in the revelation does not alter the case.

Abraham believed the power of God, in raising up an Isaac from the dead womb of Sarah; we are to believe the same power exerted in a higher instance, in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The resurrection of Isaac was in a figure, Heb. 11:19. that of Christ, real. Now we are to believe on Him that raised up Christ; not only believe his power, that He could do it, but depend on his grace in raising up Christ as our Surety; so he explains it, v. 25. where we have a brief account of the meaning of Christ's death and resurrection, which are the two main hinges on which the door of salvation turns. (1.) He was delivered for our offences. God the Father delivered Him, He delivered up Himself as a sacrifice for sin, not his own sin, but of the people; He died to make atonement for our sins, to expiate our guilt, to satisfy divine justice. (2.) He was raised again for our justification, for the perfecting and completing of our justification. Therefore, the apostle puts a special emphasis on Christ's resurrection, because it was the greatest assurance possible that divine justice was satisfied; it is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, ch. 8:34.

So that upon the whole it is very evident, we are not justified by the merit of our own works, but by a fiducial, obediential dependence on Jesus Christ, and his righteousness, as the condition on our part of our right to impunity and salvation; which was the

truth Paul in this and the foregoing ch. had been fixing, as the great spring and foundation of all our comfort.

CHAP. V. V. 1—5. The apostle, having fully proved justification by faith, in this ch. proceeds in the explication, illustration, and application, of that truth. And the fruits of this tree of life are exceeding precious.

I. We have peace with God, v. 1. Sin breeds the quarrel between us and God, creates not only a strangeness, but an enmity; the holy, righteous God cannot in honor be at peace with a sinner, while he continues under the guilt of sin. Justification takes away the guilt, and so makes way for peace. There is more in this peace than barely a cessation of enmity, there is friendship and loving-kindness, for God is either the worst enemy or the best friend.

But this is through our Lord Jesus Christ; through Him as the great Peace-maker, the Mediator between God and man, that blessed Day's-man that has laid his hand on us both. Adam, in innocency, had peace with God immediately; there needed no such mediator; but to guilty, sinful man it is a very dreadful thing to think of God out of Christ; for He is our peace, Eph. 2:14. not only the Maker, but the matter and maintainer of our peace, Col. 1:20.

II. We have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, v. 2. Observe,

1. The saints' happy state; it is a state of grace, God's loving kindness to us, and our conformity to God; he that hath God's love and God's likeness, is in a state of grace. We have access,—an introduction; which implies that we were not born in this state; we are by nature children of wrath, and the carnal mind is enmity against God; but we are brought into it. We have had access. He speaks of persons already brought out of a state of nature into a state of grace. By whom we have access by faith; by Christ, as the Author and principal agent; by faith, as the means of this access. Not by Christ, in consideration of any merit or desert of ours; but in consideration of our believing dependence on Him, and resignation of ourselves to Him.

2. Their happy standing in this state; wherein we stand. Not only wherein we are, but wherein we stand: a posture that denotes our discharge from guilt, Ps. 1:5. also our progress and perseverance; we stand firm and safe, upheld by the power of God; stand as soldiers stand, that keep their ground, not borne down by the power of the

enemy, but pressing on. It denotes, not only our admission to, but our confirmation in, the favor of God. It is not in the court of heaven as in earthly courts, where high places are slippery places: but we stand in a humble confidence of this very thing, that He who has begun the good work, will perform it, Phil. 1:6.

III. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Beside the happiness in hand, there is a happiness in hope, the glory of God, which God will put on the saints in heaven; glory which will consist in the vision, [obedience,] and fruition of God. 1. Those, and those only, that have access by faith into the grace of God now, may hope for the glory of God hereafter. There is no good hope of glory but what is founded in grace; grace is glory begun, the earnest and assurance of glory. He will give grace and glory, Ps. 84:11. 2. Those who hope for the glory of God hereafter, have enough to rejoice in now. It is the duty of those that hope for heaven to rejoice in those hopes.

IV. We glory in tribulations also; not only notwithstanding our tribulations, (those do not hinder our rejoicing in hope of the glory of God,) but even in our tribulations, as those are working for us the weight of glory, 2 Cor. 4:17.

Observe, What a growing, increasing happiness, the happiness of the saints is; not only so:—one would think, such peace, such grace, such glory, and such a joy in hope of it, were more than such poor, undeserving creatures as we are could pretend to; and yet it is not only so, there are more instances of our happiness; we glory in tribulations also; especially tribulation for righteousness' sake; which seemed the greatest objection against the saints' happiness; whereas really their happiness did not only consist with, but take rise from, those tribulations. Acts 5:41. This being the hardest point, he sets himself to show the grounds and reasons of it. For tribulations, by a chain of causes, greatly befriend hope; which he shows in the method of its influence.

1. Tribulation worketh patience, not in and of itself, but the powerful grace of God working in and with the tribulation. It is not the efficient cause, but yields the occasion, as steel is hardened by the fire. That which worketh patience, is matter of joy; for patience does us more good than tribulations can do us hurt. Tribulation in itself worketh impatience; but, as it is sanctified to the saints, it worketh patience.

2. Patience, experience, v. 4. It works an

second supposition, although the perfect righteousness of another were conveyed to a sinner by faith, it would not make him perfectly righteous, because it is beyond the power of Omnipotence itself, by any means whatever, to make a person not to have sinned, who actually hath sinned. And yet, unless this is done, no believer can be perfectly righteous. On account of the perfect righteousness of another, God indeed may treat one as if he were perfectly righteous. But that is all. Nor does the Scripture carry the matter farther."

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. The expressions here used may also allude to the free access of sinners, from different nations, into the full enjoyment of the privileges of God's people, without any respect to the legal ceremonies and restrictions, in approaching his mercy-seat. (2) Access.] Eph. 2:18. 3:12. Not elsewhere. Introduction, as any one is introduced into the presence of a prince, by some person of superior distinction, or one appointed for that purpose. Eph. 2:18. 1 Pet. 3:18. Gr. Sc.

(1.) By faith.] 'I. e. gratuitously; by belief, instead of perfect obedience.'

(2.) Access.] 'Often applied [by the classics] specially to access, or the power of access (i. e. introduction) to great personages, nay, sometimes, gods.'

V. 3—5. The hope of the tried and experienced believer is not only warranted by the Word of God, but 'sealed' upon his heart by the gift of the Holy Spirit; through whose sacred influences the excellency and loving-kindness of God, especially in the work of redemption, are so discovered to him, and poured out through all the faculties of his soul, as to produce a similarity of disposition, a reciprocal love of the divine perfections, a longing desire of the favor of God, a delight in communing with Him and serving Him, a lively gratitude for his benefits, and zeal for his glory: these, being both full proofs of regeneration, the inward 'sent of the righteousness of faith,' and earnest of heavenly felicity, ensure the Christian's hope from the shame of disappointment. Is. 45:15—17. 1 Pet. 4:12—16. Many, both writers and preachers, interpret this clause, 'the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts,' almost exclusively of the perception and sense of the love of God to us, which is vouchsafed by the Holy Spirit. Yet our love to God, as 'the fruit of

the Spirit,' writing his law in our hearts, is in fact the only indisputable proof that our hope will never make us ashamed. The seal and consolations of the Spirit are distinguished from all enthusiastical delusions, and false affections, by their permanently sanctifying effects: 2 Cor. 1:21, 22. Eph. 1:13, 14. 4:30—32. no supposed sense of God's love to us, except as attended with the consciousness of loving Him, can warrant a scriptural assurance; and the Spirit of adoption is doubtless a Spirit of love to God, as well as confidence in Him. 8:14—17, 28—31. 1 John 4:19. It must, therefore, be evident, that the work of the Holy Spirit, in changing our natural enmity against God into supreme love of Him, must be intended, either as the primary meaning of the clause, or as the inseparable effect of a genuine sense and perception of the love of God to us.—It cannot be supposed, that the apostle mentioned this triumphant confidence as the habitual attainment of all justified persons: but rather as an invaluable privilege, consequent on justification; which must be sought with diligence and earnestness, and actually enjoyed nearly in proportion as it is thus sought. The sufferings of believers, especially from persecution, form a grand objection to what is spoken in Scripture concerning their happiness, in the opinion of men in general. To select, therefore, these very trials, as a special ground of the Christian's glorying and rejoicing, was peculiarly suited to meet that objection, and to produce a great effect on the reader's mind and heart.

(3.) Glory in tribulations.] 'Rejoice in our afflictions.' St. 'The Christians gloried not in any external privileges, but in the hope of happiness to come, and in those adverse events which tended to confirm and purify their principles, and so to make them fitter for that happiness. The apostle dwells on this subject, because the Jews thought adversity a mark of God's displeasure, and that it ill suited the kingdom of Messiah.' Doddr. and Mackn.

(4.) Experience.] 'Approbation.' St. 'Proof, as we sometimes use the word.' Bl. Hope.] 'For he who knows he is suffering evils, however severe, in the cause of God, feels himself more and more cheered with hope, as well from the goodness of God, (with which it would be inconsistent not to reward such pious endurance,) as also from the promise of Christ. Mat. 5:8. Johu 16:20.'



5 And hope <sup>o</sup> maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the <sup>f</sup> Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

6 For when we were yet without strength, <sup>g</sup> in due <sup>h</sup> time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while <sup>i</sup> we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his <sup>j</sup> blood, we shall be saved <sup>k</sup> from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much <sup>l</sup> more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by <sup>m</sup> his life.

<sup>o</sup> Phi. 1:20. <sup>h</sup> Ga. 4:4. <sup>k</sup> 1 Th. 1:10.  
<sup>f</sup> Ep. 1:13, 14. <sup>i</sup> Jn. 15:13. 1 Pe. 1 c. 8:32.  
<sup>g</sup> according to the time. <sup>j</sup> 3:18. 1 Jn. 3:16. <sup>m</sup> Jn. 14:19.  
<sup>l</sup> He. 9:14, 22.

experience of God; patient sufferers have the greatest experience of the divine consolations, which abound as afflictions abound. It works an experience of ourselves, an experiment of our own sincerity, therefore such tribulations are called trials. It works an approbation, as he is approved, that has passed the test. Thus Job's tribulation wrought patience, and that patience produced an approbation, that still he holds fast his integrity, Job 2:3.

3. Experience, hope. He who, being thus tried, comes forth as gold, will thereby be encouraged to hope. This experiment, or approbation, is not so much the ground, as the evidence, of our hope, and a special friend to it. Experience of God is a prop to our hope; He that hath delivered, doth and will. Experience of ourselves, helps to evidence our sincerity.

4. This hope maketh not ashamed, it is a hope that will not deceive us. Nothing confounds more than disappointment. Or, It maketh not ashamed of our sufferings, we having hopes of glory. It is in a good cause, for a good Master, and in good hope: therefore we are not ashamed. We will never think ourselves disparaged, by sufferings that are likely to end so well.

V. 6. It might perhaps be objected to the words, 'hope maketh not ashamed,' that, after all, it was not impossible, nor even highly improbable, the believer's hope should terminate in disappointment and shame, through the prevalence of sinful [abused] propensities, and the power of temptation; and that Satan might, at length, induce him to apostatize. The apostle therefore digresses in order to obviate this objection: and at the same time shows, what abundant reason believers have to love their God and Savior; and to adore with admiring complacency the glory of his grace. 'Without strength' to resist their offended Sovereign, or to deliver themselves; had neither natural power for so arduous a work, if they had been inclined to it; nor moral ability or inclination to attempt it: 'ungodly,' without any proper disposition of heart towards Him, nay, every way contrary to his nature, will, and worship.

SCOTT.

(6.) For.] *Huper*: Raphael has abundantly demonstrated, that *huper hēmōn apethane* [died for us] signifies, that He died in our room and stead: nor does it appear, that the phrase *to die for (huper) any one* has any other signification than that of a person rescuing the life of another at the expense of his own; and the very next-v. shows, independent of any other authority, how evidently it bears that sense here; for it can hardly be imagined that any one would die for a good man, unless it were to redeem his life by giving up his own.' *Doddr. Whitby*, too, proves, that the whole passage plainly denotes the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. Comp. John 11:50. 2 Cor. 5:14. 1 Tim. 2:6. BL.

V. 7—10. To illustrate the immensity of this love of God, the apostle shows . . . how this most rare instance, the very summit of human affection, falls immensely beneath the love of God to us.—There could be no danger of a reconciled believer falling under the wrath of God, except on the supposition of his committing sin, and dying without repentance; but had Christ suffered, and humbled Himself even to death on the cross, that He might bring him into this state of reconciliation? and would He, after all, so leave him to himself, and in the hands of the wicked one, as thus finally to perish, when his living power could prevent it, without any suffering or self-denial whatever?—Some expositors insert, 'If we be not wanting to ourselves.' But first, Is not this undeniably add-

Because the love of God is shed abroad. This hope will not disappoint us, because it is sealed with the Holy Spirit as a Spirit of love. It is the gracious work of the blessed Spirit, to shed abroad the love of God in the hearts of all the saints. The love of God, i. e. the sense of God's love to us, drawing out love in us to Him again. Or, the great effects of his love, special grace, and the pleasant gust or sense of it. It is shed abroad, as sweet ointment, perfuming the soul; as rain watering it, and making it fruitful: the ground of all our comfort and holiness, and perseverance in both, is laid in the shedding abroad of the love of God in our hearts; it is that which constrains us, 2 Cor. 5:14. Thus are we drawn and held by the bonds of love. Sense of God's love to us, will make us not ashamed, either of our hope in Him, or our sufferings for Him.

V. 6—21. The apostle here describes the fountain and foundation of justification, laid in the death of the Lord Jesus: it is in the precious stream of Christ's blood, that all these privileges come flowing to us: therefore he enlarges on the instance of that love of God, which is shed abroad.

Three things he notices for the explication and illustration of this doctrine.

1. The persons He died for, v. 6—8.  
2. The precious fruits of his death, v. 9—11.

3. The parallel between the communication of sin and death by the first Adam, and of righteousness and life by the second Adam, v. 12. to the end.

I. The character we were under when Christ died for us: 1. *We were without strength*, v. 6. altogether unable to help ourselves out of our sad condition; lost, and no visible way open for our recovery; our condition deplorable, and in a manner desperate; therefore our salvation is here said to come in due time. 2. *He died for the ungodly*: not only helpless, and therefore likely to perish, but guilty, and therefore deserving to perish; not only mean and worthless, but vile and obnoxious; unworthy of such favor with the holy God. Being ungodly, they had need of one to die for them, to satisfy for guilt, and to bring in a righteousness. This he illustrates, v. 7, 8. as an unparalleled instance of love; herein God's thoughts and ways were above ours. Comp. Jn. 15:13, 14. *Greater love has no man. The carnal mind is not only an enemy to God, but enmity itself*, ch. 8:7. Col. 1:21. This enmity is a mutual enmity; God loathing the sinner, and the sinner loathing God, Zech. 11:8. And that for such as these Christ should die,

is such a mystery, such a paradox, such an unprecedented instance of love, that it may well be our business, to eternity, to adore and wonder at it! This is a commendation of love indeed! Justly might He who had thus loved us, make it one of the laws of his kingdom, that we should love our enemies.

II. The precious fruits of his death:

1. Justification and reconciliation are the first and primary, v. 9, 10. Sin is pardoned, the sinner accepted as righteous, the quarrel [made] up, the enmity slain, an end made of iniquity, and an everlasting righteousness brought in: i. e. Christ has done all that was requisite on his part in order hereunto, and immediately on our believing, we are actually put into a state of justification and reconciliation. Our justification is ascribed to the blood of Christ, because without blood there is no remission, Heb. 9:22. The blood is the life, and that must go to make atonement. In all the propitiatory sacrifices, the sprinkling of the blood was of the essence of the sacrifice. It was the blood that made an atonement for the soul, Lev. 17:11.

2. Hence results salvation from wrath, v. 9, 10. When that which hinders our salvation is taken away, the salvation must needs follow. Nay, the argument holds very strongly; if God justified and reconciled us when we were enemies, at so great expense, as it were, much more will He save us when we are justified and reconciled. He that has done the greater, which is, of enemies to make us friends, will certainly do the less, which is, when we are friends to use us friendly, and to be kind to us. Therefore the apostle, once and again, speaks of it with a much more. The final justification and absolution of believers at the great day, together with the fitting and preparing of them for it, are the salvation from wrath here spoken of; it is the perfecting of the work of grace.

Reconciled by his death, saved by his life. His life, here spoken of, is not to be understood of his life in the flesh, but his life in heaven, that life which ensued after his death. Comp. ch. 14:9. Rev. 1:18. We are reconciled by Christ humbled, we are saved by Christ exalted: it is the living Jesus that perfects the work, He lives to make intercession, Heb. 7:25. It is Christ in his exaltation, that by his Word and Spirit effectually calls and changes, and reconciles us to God, is our Advocate with the Father, and so completes and consummates our salvation. Comp. ch. 4:25. 8:34. The arguing is very strong: He that puts Himself to the charge of purchasing our salvation, will not decline the trouble of applying it.

ing to the Scripture? Rev. 22:18—21, vv. 18, 19. And, secondly, does not this inevitably lead us to trust in our own hearts, instead of trusting in God, to 'hold us up that we may be safe?' Prov. 28:26. Jer. 17:9, 10. 2 Cor. 7:1. Phil. 2:12, 13. 2 Pet. 1:5—10. SCOTT.

(7.) Righteous . . . good.] *Dikaios . . . agathos*: some take both of things not persons, but this would require the article to *dikaion* also; and, moreover, the force of the antithesis would be destroyed. Others, as Godwin, Estius, De Dieu, Wetst., Ham., Whit., Kop., Carp., and Doddr., suppose here a distinction sometimes found in the classics, especially the philosophers, by which *dikaios* denotes one strictly just, *agathos* one who is generous, benevolent, *christos*: nay (so Vatablus and Kop.) a benefactor. Wetst., too, adverts to the well-known distinction of Cic., between *justus* and *bonus*. And this interpretation is ably maintained by Carpz. But such a refined, philosophical distinction was not likely to have been known to the apostle. Schoett., indeed, adduces an curious passage from Pirke Aboth, which, however, does not seem quite satisfactory, viz. "There are 4 kinds of men. One says: what is mine, is mine; and what is thine, is thine; he is a middling sort of man. Another says: what is mine, is thine, and what is thine is mine; he is a worldly-minded man. Now he who says: what is mine, is thine; and what is thine, is thine; he is a good and pious man (*chasid*). But he who says, what is thine is mine, and what is mine is my own, is a wicked man." Considering that the whole v. is meant to be a popular illustration, it seems safer, with Chrys., Eecm., Casaub., Pisc., Socinus, Paræus, Gat., Polet., Calv., and Beza, to take both to mean the same, yet as the latter has the article, a higher degree of goodness seems meant, by climax. The good man, has more force than, a good man.' BL.

(8.) Commendeth.] 'Displayeth.'

(10.) Reconciled.] 'The Gr., said of equals, means to be or become friends; but of God and man, enn only mean, on the part of God, the granting of pardon, and affording the means of attaining and preserving his future favor; and, on the part of man, a humble and thankful acceptance of the offered boon: and this wherever in the N. T. the phrase thus occurs, as in 2 Cor. 5:18, 19, 21. This v. 10. is (and so Bp. Barlington) parenthetical.' ID.



11 And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

13 (For until the law, sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.)

14 Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come:

n Hab. 3:13. p Ge. 3:6, 19. s 34.  
o or, reconcil- q or, in whom. s He. 9:27.  
iation. r c. 4:15. t 1 Jn. t 1 Co. 15:22, 45.

3. All this produces, as a further privilege, our joy in God, v. 11. God is now far from being a terror: He is our joy, and our hope in the day of evil, Jer. 17:17. We are reconciled and saved from wrath. Iniquity, blessed be God, shall not be our ruin. And not only so, there is more in it yet, a constant stream of favors; we not only go to heaven, but go triumphantly; are not only saved from God's wrath, but solace ourselves in his love, and this through Jesus Christ, by virtue of the atonement; for by Him we Christians, we believers, have now, now in gospel-times, or now in this life, received the atonement, which was typified by the sacrifices under the law, and is an earnest of our happiness in heaven. Receiving, the atonement is our actual reconciliation to God in justification, grounded on Christ's satisfaction. To receive the atone-

ment, is, (1.) To give our consent to the atonement, approving of, and agreeing to, those methods which infinite wisdom hath taken, of saving a guilty world by the blood of a crucified Jesus; being willing and glad to be saved in a gospel-way, and on gospel-terms. (2.) To take the comfort of the atonement, which is the fountain and foundation of our joy in God. God hath received the atonement, Mat. 3:17. 17:5. 28:2. if we but receive it, the work is done.

III. The parallel the apostle runs between the communication of sin and death by the first Adam, and of righteousness and life by the second Adam, v. 12. to the end, not only illustrates the truth he is discoursing of, but tends very much to commend the love of God, and comfort the hearts of true believers; in showing a correspondence between our fall and our recovery; and not only a like, but a much greater, power in the second Adam to make us happy, than there was in the first to make us miserable.

Now for the opening of this, observe,

1. A general truth laid down as the foundation of his discourse,—That Adam was a type of Christ, v. 14. Christ is therefore called the last Adam, 1 Cor. 15:45. Comp. v. 22. In this, Adam was a type of Christ, that in the covenant-transactions between God and him, and in the consequent events of those transactions, Adam was a public person; as a common father and factor, root and representative, of and for all his posterity; so that what he did in that station, as agent for us, we may be said to have done in him; and what was done to him, may be said to have been done to us in him. Thus Jesus Christ, the Mediator, acted as a public person, the head of all the elect; dealt with God for them, as their father, factor, root, and representative; died for them, rose for them, entered within the veil for them,

did all for them. When Adam failed, we failed with him; when Christ performed, He performed for us. Thus was Adam—the figure of Him that was to come, to come to repair that breach which Adam had made.

2. A more particular explication of the parallel.

(1.) Adam, as a public person, communicated sin and death to all his posterity, v. 12. We see the world under a deluge of sin and death, full of iniquities, and full of calamities. Now, it is worth while to inquire what is the spring that feeds it, and you will find that to be the general corruption of nature; and at what gap it entered, and you will find that to have been Adam's first sin. It was by one man, and he the first man; for if any had been before him, they would have been free; that one man from whom, as from the root, we all spring.

[1.] By him sin entered. When God pronounced all very good, Gen. 1:31. there was no sin in the world; it was when Adam ate forbidden fruit, that sin made its entry. Sin had before entered into the world of angels, but never the world of mankind, till Adam sinned; then entered the guilt of Adam's sin, imputed to [and affecting] posterity, and a general corruption and depravedness of nature. For that, so we read it; rather in whom all have sinned. Sin entered into the world by Adam, for in him we all sinned. As 1 Cor. 15:22. in Adam all die; so here, in him all have sinned: for it is agreeable to the law of all nations, that the acts of a public person are accounted theirs whom they represent; and what a whole body does, every member of the same body may be said to do. Now Adam acted thus as a public person, by the sovereign ordination and appointment of God, and yet that founded on a natural necessity; for God, as the Author of nature, had made this the law of nature,

V. 11. Had now 'received reconciliation.' This is the proper tr., referring to the whole of the pacification, between God and the believing sinner, through the mediation of Christ; and not merely to the atonement, which is the ground of it.—To explain all this of the Gentiles exclusively, as some do, as if the Jews did not want a reconciliation, makes the apostle speak of himself as a Gentile: and indeed it is so unscriptural, and so irrational, that one cannot but be astonished to find men of great learning and talents contend for it.

SCOTT.

(11.) Atonement.] I. e. putting, setting at one: at-one-ment; 'obtained reconciliation.' St. 'If the Scripture has, as surely it has, left this matter of the satisfaction of Christ mysterious, left somewhat in it unrevealed, all conjectures about it must be, if not evidently absurd, yet, at least, uncertain. Nor has any one reason to complain for want of farther information, unless he can show his claims to it. . . And it is our wisdom thankfully to accept the benefit, by performing the conditions upon which it is offered, on our part, without disputing how it was procured on his.'

Bp. BUTLER.

V. 12—14. In order more fully to illustrate the important subject, the apostle calls the reader's attention to the state of the whole human race, from the fall of Adam. He was the federal head, surety, and representative of all his posterity; nor did sin enter, save to the personal condemnation of Eve, till he also ate the forbidden fruit. Gen. 3:6. . . In Adam, as being in his loins when he thus apostatized, we all sinned and fell under condemnation; his blood was attained for rebellion; and thence that evil nature originated, from which all our personal transgressions proceed. Gen. 2:16, 17. 3:17—19. In proof of this our union with Adam, and our concern in his first transgression, which the proud heart of man is prone to deny, or object to, even with blasphemous enmity, it should be observed, that for 2500 years before the giving of the law, sin prevailed in the world, and was punished with death: but sin cannot be imputed, where no law is, of which it is a transgression, 4:14—17. None of the immense multitudes, who died between the fall of Adam, and the promulgation of the law, could personally violate the prohibition, to which the penalty of death had been originally annexed; yet they were included in the sentence denounced against Adam, and, after much toil and suffering, 'returned to the dust whence they were taken.' And, though adults might be thought to die for their personal violation of the law of tradition, or of their own reason and conscience; yet, during this long interval, an innumerable multitude had been subjected to death, who had never broken any law, 'after the similitude of Adam's transgression;' i. e., wilfully and deliberately. For the number of infants, who had been cut off, with great pain and agony, previously to their commission of actual sin, had been immensely great. They were involved in the destruction of the whole world by the deluge, and in that of Sodom and Gomorrah; and according to the ordinary course of things, 'death reigned over them,' before they were capable of actual and wilful transgression. Nor could this fact be accounted for, consistently with the divine perfections; otherwise than by allowing, that they, as one with Adam, had fallen in him under condemnation, through his violation of that covenant, in which he acted as surety for all his offspring.\* There may indeed be a comfortable hope; that as infants die

\* On this subject, which Henry above has treated at large, (note, \* p. 637, Vol. II.) was necessitated to use a language his auditors could best understand: covenant and surety are terms applicable here only by comparison, and arguments are not to be too closely drawn from similes, which are used from defect of language. Ed.

in Adam, without their own personal transgressions, so they will be saved in Christ, without their own personal faith in Him, as never living to be capable of it: yet that change must be wrought in them by the regenerating Spirit, which would have produced faith, had they lived longer. Indeed, the sufferings and death of infants, in every age, forms an irrefragable proof of 'original sin:' but it was more peculiarly so, from Adam to Moses; as that law was not then in being, which in some instances, entailed the guilt of the parents on their children, to the third and fourth generation. Ex. 20:5. Yet these laws were deduced from the same principle of the oneness between the root and the branches; though only applied in some special cases, while that of Adam reached in general to all his posterity. For he was 'a figure,' or type, 'of Him, who was to come,' as the Surety of a new covenant, in behalf of all related to Him. 1 Cor. 15:45—49. In many respects Adam might be considered as the contrast of Christ; but he resembled Him, and was his type, in the divine prescience, by acting as the surety of all related and united to him: for thus Christ acted as the Surety of all his people, who are one with Him, and deemed his spiritual progeny; Ps. 22:30, 31. Is. 53:11, 12. and they are interested in his obedience, sufferings, victories, and exaltation.—Adam is compared with Christ, both in what is similar, and what is contrary. They are alike in this; that each of them shares what he has with his: they are clearly unlike in this, that Adam by nature communicates sin unto death to his posterity; but Christ by grace communicates his righteousness to his people, unto life. Beza.—Many learned men explain what is said of 'death,' as meaning only mortality: but, do we not all derive a depraved, as well as a mortal nature from Adam? And does not Christ save his people from guilt and depravity, and eternal punishment, and not from mortality? And would immortality, without justification and sanctification, be a blessing? John 5:28, 29. 2 Tim. 1:10. If we are depraved, or 'dead in sin,' and mortal, as Adam's descendants; we must not only die, but be miserable and unholy for ever, without the salvation of Christ, 6:21—23. Gen. 2:16, 17.—(14) Death reigned.] 'Sin reigned unto death,' 20, 21, v. 21. What a grand, sublime, tremendous idea! Sin and death personified, as two united conquerors and tyrants reigning over all mankind; and, without mercy, consigning, by various tortures, their bodies to the grave, and their souls to hell! (12) Sin . . . death.] The article seems definitely to point out 'the sin,' and 'the death,' which by Adam's transgression entered into the world.—For that.] 'In whom.' Marg.—As of those, who die during infancy, it cannot be said, They 'have sinned,' the margin seems to give the true meaning in Adam, as one with him 'all sinned.'

SCOTT.

(12.) Passed upon.] 'I prefer, "was transmitted unto all from generation to generation."'

BLOOMF.

V. 12—19. St. considers this one of the most difficult passages in the New Test.; and concludes from it, (see his Exc. V.), that 'the fall of Adam brought our race into a new state of probation, one exceedingly different, in several respects, from that in which he himself first was. The whole race are now heirs by nature of a frail and dying state; they are no longer in that state and condition in which they are inclined to holiness. And this comes on all, without any concurrence of their own. But all this, too, may still be regarded in another light than that of simple punishment. It is trial; it is discipline; it is probation, sui generis. Adam has brought us into this state I freely concede. But Christ has more than made good all its apparent or real disadvantages: grace su-



15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one man be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ:)

18 Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

u Ep. 2:3. x or, by one of- fence. b or, by one  
v Is. 53:11. Mat. fence. c or, by one  
20:23. 26:23. y Jn. 10:10. righteousness.  
1 Jn. 2:2. z c. 6:23. c Jn. 12:32.  
w Is. 1:18. a or, by one of-

that man should beget in his own likeness, and so the other creatures. In Adam, therefore, as in a common receptacle, the whole nature of man was repositied, from him to flow down in a channel to his posterity; for all mankind is made of one blood, Acts 17: 26. so that according as this nature proves, through his standing or falling, before he puts it out of his hands, accordingly it is propagated from him.\* Adam therefore sinning and falling, the nature became guilty and corrupted, and is so derived. Thus in him all have sinned.

\* Especially if we believe that the intellectual faculties, animal propensities, and moral sentiments in man have material organs through which they manifest themselves; and that these may, like a muscle or nerve, be weakened or strengthened by habitual disuse or use, and so descend to posterity: principles at the foundation of all education. Ed.

perabounds. If evils come on our race because of Adam's sin, more, far more, than an equivalent is rendered for them, by the grace of the Gospel.—'The theory [of Edwards and the Reformers] I am opposing, makes all our race heirs also of the endless miseries of a future world, antecedent to any voluntary exercise of their own, and merely on the ground of Adam's offence. If this were true, then it would follow that 12—19. establishes a redemption from future misery as wide as the mischief of Adam's sin has spread; and this without any act on the part of the sinner. But such a redemption would contradict the first principles of the N. T.—'Others, understand these vs. to assert, that Adam's example led us to sin, and is the cause of sin; but some of his posterity, who sin, know nothing of his example, and, if example is the original cause of sin, whose example did Adam follow? And then, to make out the antithesis, we must understand that Christ's example is the cause of obedience and life to all men: a doctrine taught by some, but clearly not by Paul, nor any of his colleagues.—'Paul, then, neither asserts that Adam's sin is propagated; nor that it is imputed to us without any act of our own; nor that it is ours merely by the force of example. Nor does he say, that hereditary depravity is the ground and cause of all sin, (how could he say this when Adam sinned without it?) nor that we are condemned without being actual sinners. All this has been often said for him and in his name; but he does not once say this for himself. Why now should we attribute to him our own theories, and then insist on their being a part of Scripture?'—St., in whose Comm. see these theories detailed and examined. Also, Hodge on the Ep. Ed.

(13.) Imputed.] Note, 4:22. 'Although sin is not accounted of where,' &c. St. 'Ascribed, properly entered to our account. The word occurs in the physical sense in Philem. 18. place that to my account. Sin is not applicable, so as to bring the sinner under any penalty. See Whitby, On the true notion of imputation in theology.—It was certainly the common opinion of the Jews of that time, that all Moses' ancestors up to Adam had died because of the sin of the first man. So Wetst.'s citations.' But see also Hodge in loc. Bloomf.

(14.) The figure.] 'A type.' St. Note, 2:20. Ed.

(15., &c.) 'But not as the offence, so the free gift also; for if by the offence of the one the many [hoi polloi] died, much more has the grace of God, and the gift which is by the grace of one man, Jesus Christ, abounded unto the many. Yea, not as (the condemnation) by one who sinned, is the free gift; for sentence was by one (offence) unto condemnation, but the free gift is unto justification from many offences. For if by the offence of one, death reigned on account of one (offence), much more shall they who receive abundance of grace and of the gift

[2.] Death by sin; for death is the wages of sin. Sin, when it is finished, brings forth death. [Perhaps by perfect obedience, man would have passed to heaven without death, by the law of his original nature: for] when sin came, of course death came along with it. Death is here put for all that misery, which is the due desert of sin, temporal, spiritual, eternal death. If Adam had not sinned, he had not died: the threatening was, In the day thou eatest thou shalt surely die, Gen. 2: 17. So death passed, a sentence of death, as on a criminal,—passed through all men, as an infectious disease passes through a town, so that none escape it; death passes on all without exception. Common calamities, incident to human life, do abundantly prove this. Death reigned, v. 14. He speaks of death as a mighty prince, and his monarchy the most absolute, universal, and lasting. None are exempted from its sceptre; it is a monarchy that will survive all other earthly rule, authority, and power, for it is the last enemy, 1 Cor. 15: 26. Now all this we may thank Adam for; from him sin and death descend. Well may we say, as that good man, observing the change a fit of sickness had made in his countenance, O Adam! what hast thou done?

Further, to clear this, he shows, that sin did not commence with the law of Moses, but was in the world until, or before, that law; therefore that law of Moses is not the only rule of life; for there was a rule, and that rule transgressed, before the law was given. It likewise intimates, that we cannot be justified by our obedience to the law of Moses, any more than we were condemned by and for our disobedience to it. Sin was in the world, before the law; witness Cain's murder, the apostasy of the old world, the wickedness of Sodom. 1st. His inference from hence, is, Therefore there was a law; for sin is not imputed where there is no law. Original sin is a want of conformity to, and actual sin is a transgression of, the law of God: therefore all were under some law. 2dly. His proof of it, is, Death reigned from Adam to Moses, v. 14. It is certain death could not have reigned, if sin had not set up the throne for him. This proves, that sin was in the world before the law, and original sin, for death reigned over those that had not sinned any actual sin, after the simi-

litude of Adam's transgression, in their own persons, as Adam did; which is to be understood of infants, that were never guilty of actual sin, and yet died, because Adam's sin was imputed to them.

This reign of death, seems especially to refer to those violent and extraordinary judgments which were long before Moses, as the deluge, and the destruction of Sodom, which involved infants. It is a great proof of original sin, that little children, who were never guilty of any actual transgression, are yet liable to very terrible diseases, casualties, and deaths; which could by no means be reconciled with the justice and righteousness of God, if they were not chargeable with guilt.\*

(2.) How, in correspondence to this, Christ, as a public person, communicates righteousness and life to all true believers that are his spiritual seed. And, in this, he shows not only wherein the resemblance holds, but ex abundantia, wherein the communication of grace and love by Christ, goes beyond the communication of guilt and wrath by Adam.

[1.] Wherein the resemblance holds; that is laid down most fully, v. 18, 19. 1st. By the offence and disobedience of one, many were made sinners, and judgment came upon all men to condemnation. Where observe,

Adam's sin was, disobedience, disobedience to a plain, express command, and a command of trial. The thing he did was therefore evil, because forbidden, and not otherwise; but that opened the door to other sins, though itself seemingly small. The malignity and poison of sin are very strong and spreading, else the guilt of Adam's sin would not have reached so far, nor have been so deep and long a stream. By Adam's sin many are made sinners: many, i. e. all his posterity; said to be many, in opposition to the one that offended. Made sinners; it denotes the making of us such, by a judicial act: we were cast as sinners by due course of law. Judgment is come to

\* Are then beasts guilty, for they suffer! Existence is a boon which infinitely outpays suffering. What claim has a creature to a single joy? It is enough for us, that God willed that evil should exist; and the very faculties which pretend to judge of his 'righteousness' and 'justice' in the abstract, are the effects of that will: exist but as God wills! When will the creature cease to pretend to be as the Creator? When will the finite acknowledge that it cannot comprehend the infinite? Ed.

of justification reign in life by one (Jesus Christ); therefore, as by one offence (sentence came) upon all men unto condemnation, so by the righteousness of one (sentence came) upon all men unto justification of life; for as by the disobedience of one man the many were constituted sinners, so by the obedience of one, the many will be constituted righteous. The law, moreover, was introduced, so that offence would abound; but where sin abounded, grace superabounded: so that, as sin reigned by death, in like manner grace also will reign by justification unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. St.

(18.) 'The terms here used are all forensic.' SLADE.

(19.) As in Adam all die, so in Christ all can be saved if they will. Sec St. 'All, quantum in Christo.' Bloomf. We must not be too much afraid of the bugbear, materialism, to deny (what the observation of 'God's facts' teaches), that the soul or spirit in this present condition of our being manifests itself through a material organization, a plurality of cerebral organs. Note, end ch. 7. As these are affected by God's laws of hereditary descent, we do not expect (grapes of thorns or figs of thistles) a child to be born with the germs of an organization favorable to perfect virtue from parents, the organizations of both of whom (as well as their ancestors) are known to be, perhaps, extremely unfavorable to mental or spiritual excellence. (Perfection of organization and obedience, is, at this time of the world, out of the question.) Had Adam continued perfect, his children would doubtless have been in a condition for perfect obedience: but as he did not, his race have become more and more imperfectly organized, more and more unfit for communion with God, angels, and spirits, and identification of will with God, all which Adam enjoyed before his fall. Now, reasoning from analogy, as Paul here does, is there anything more or less 'mysterious' or 'incomprehensible' in the fact that our reception to God's favor, (notes, v. 11. and 3:25, 26.) should depend on another, even Christ, than that we should, by the accident of birth, be more or less liable to, and were in a manner necessitated (at least most strongly tempted), to sin, in consequence of the organization, era, place, education, and condition of our ancestors, and of Adam? Some, also, even ridicule the idea of vicarious suffering at all; but look at the analogy of the same Creator's universe; do such never, by the 'social law,' get evil from another's act and state, or good through another's suffering and obedience? the mother who bore, the father who toiled for them; the sister, or wife, or daughter, who wearily watched their sick bed? Why then arraign, or expect to fathom God's atonement laws, any more than his 'social law,' or 'law of hereditary descent?' Be content that all are his will, and conform to them without expecting to comprehend the infinite. Ed.



20<sup>d</sup> Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more<sup>e</sup> abound :

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

d Jn. 15:22. c. 7:8-13. Ga. 3:19.  
e Jn. 10:10. 1 Ti. 1:14.

f Jn. 1:17.

condemnation on all those that by Adam's disobedience were *made sinners*. All the race of mankind, lie under a sentence, like an attainder on a family. There is judgment given and recorded against us in the court of heaven; and if the judgment be not reversed, we are likely to sink under it to eternity. 2dly. In like manner, *by the righteousness and obedience of one*, (and that one is Jesus Christ, the second Adam,) *are many made righteous*, and so the *free gift comes upon all*. It is observable, how the apostle inculcates this truth, and repeats it again and again, as a truth of very great consequence. Here observe, The nature of Christ's righteousness, how it is brought in; it is by his obedience. The disobedience of the first Adam ruined us, the obedience of the second Adam, saves us: his obedience to the law of mediation, which was, that He should fulfil all righteousness, [observe every law of God,] and then make his soul an offering for sin. The fruit of it. There is a *free gift upon all men*, it is made and offered promiscuously to all. The salvation is *common*, the proposals general, the tender free; whoever will, may come, and take of these waters of life. This free gift is to all believers, on their believing, *unto justification of life*. It is not only a justification that frees from death, but that entitles to life. *Many shall be made righteous*; many, compared with one,

or as many as belong to the election of grace. *They shall be constituted righteous*, as by letters patent: the antithesis between these two, our ruin by Adam and our recovery by Christ, is obvious.

[2.] Wherein the communication of grace and love by Christ, goes beyond the communication of guilt and wrath by Adam; and this he shows v. 15-17. It is designed to magnify the riches of Christ's love, and to comfort and encourage believers, who, considering what a wound Adam's sin has made, might begin to despair of a proportionable remedy. His expressions are a little intricate, but this he seems to intend.

1st. If guilt and wrath be communicated, much more shall grace and love: for it is agreeable to the idea we have of the divine goodness, to suppose that God should be more ready to save on an imputed righteousness, than to condemn on an imputed guilt: *Much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace*. God's goodness is, of all his attributes, in a special manner his glory, and it is that grace that is the root, his favor to us in Christ, and the gift is by grace. We know that God is rather inclined to show mercy; punishing is his strange work.

2dly. If there were so much power and efficacy, as it seems there were, in the sin of a man, who was of the earth, earthy, to condemn us; much more are there power and efficacy in the righteousness and grace of Christ, who is the Lord from heaven, to justify and save us. *The one man that saves us, is Jesus Christ*. Surely Adam could not propagate so strong a poison, but Jesus Christ could propagate as strong an antidote, and much stronger.

3dly. It is but the guilt of one single offence of Adam's that is laid to our charge; *the judgment was by one*, i. e. by one offence, v. 16, 17. *Margin*. But from Jesus Christ we receive and derive an *abundance of grace*,

and of the gift of righteousness. The stream of grace and righteousness, is deeper and broader than the stream of guilt; for this righteousness doth not only take away the guilt of that one offence, but of many other offences, even of all. God, in Christ, forgives all trespasses, Col. 2. 13.

4thly. By Adam's sin *death reigned*; but by Christ's righteousness, there is not only a period put to the reign of death, but believers are preferred to *reign in life*, v. 17. See this observed, Rev. 1:5, 6. 5:9, 10. We are, by Christ and his righteousness, entitled to, and instated in, more and greater privileges, than we lost by the offence of Adam.

Lastly, In the last two vs. he seems to anticipate an objection, expressed Gal. 3: 19. *Wherefore then serveth the law?* Answer,

1. *The law entered, that the offence might abound*. Not to make sin to abound the more in itself, otherwise than as sin takes occasion by the commandment; but to discover the abounding sinfulness of it, as the letting in of a clearer light into a room discovers the dust and filth which were there before, but were not seen. *The offence, that offence*, the sin of Adam, the extending of the guilt of it to us, and the effect of the corruption in us, are the abounding of that offence which appeared on the entry of the law.

2. That grace might *much more abound*; that the terrors of the law might make gospel-comforts so much the sweeter. Sin abounded among the Jews; and to those of them that were converted to the faith of Christ, did not grace much more abound, in the remitting of so much guilt and the subduing of so much corruption? This abounding of grace he illustrates, v. 21. just as the reign of a tyrant and oppressor is a foil, to set off the succeeding reign of a just and gentle prince.

PRACT. OBS. A most blessed change takes place in the sinner's state, however guilty and depraved he has been, when he becomes a true believer. He has free access to the mercy-seat; he is established in the grace and favor of God; and he may now rejoice and triumphantly exult in the hope of everlasting glory; though he perhaps just before trembled, from well-grounded apprehensions of deserved vengeance. How immense then are our obligations to Him, who has made 'all things ready' by his agonizing death on the cross; and has made our hearts willing by his regenerating grace! Surely He is worthy of all this devotedness from every one of us! And it is inconceivable, that even God Himself could more have 'commended his love to us,' or have given us more powerful motives and encouragements to humble submission and grateful obedience. At the same time, we shall learn not to disdain or despair of any other sinners; for we shall be conscious, that they are not worse in themselves, or further from God, than we once

were; and that they are equally capable of being reconciled in the same way, whatever their character and crimes may heretofore have been.—Let us from this portion of the sacred Scriptures learn habitually to look on ourselves, and the whole human race, as lying in the ruins of the fall, exposed to condemnation, and no more able to save our own souls from hell, than to rescue our bodies from the grave. Instead of perplexing ourselves about the awfully deep and incomprehensible, but most righteous dispensation of God, in permitting the entrance of sin and death; let us learn to adore his grace for providing so adequate a remedy for that awful catastrophe, which we are sure was consistent with all his glorious perfections. Gen. 2:16, 17.—As our children have evidently, through us, received a sinful, suffering, and dying nature from the first Adam; we should be stirred up, even by their pains and sorrows in helpless infancy, to seek for them the blessings of the second Adam's righteousness and salvation. 1 Cor. 15:45-49. SCOTT.

V. 20. *Entered.*] 'Entered in privily.' Impr. Vers., 1809. So the Vulg. 'If the scruple be raised, what was the law doing so many years? It was given for a time, not primarily, or principally; its purpose was to destroy sin, but the event turned out the contrary, through the sloth of men, not through the nature of the law. Chrys., Theoph. Bloomf. *Abound.*] 'For this law prohibited many things in themselves lawful; it commanded many rites. These were often transgressed, and punishment ensued to the Jews.' Ros. 'Paraptōma [offence] should be carefully distinguished from *hē hamartia* in the next cl., and referred (as in v. 15.) to the transgression of Adam, which incurred the penalty of death. Now unless there had subsequently been a divine revelation, containing precepts and threatenings, the punishment of death inflicted on mankind, would have been due, not for their own sin, but that of Adam. The law, therefore, making every man personally answerable for all the consequences of his own guilt, may justly be described in its effects, as a multiplication of the original transgression; every sinner thereby becoming, on his own account, guilty of death, as much as Adam was for the first offence. Rom. 7:9-11. 2 Cor. 3:6-8. Gal. 3:10. Deut. 27:15. end.' Taylor. 'The superabounding of grace has no respect to the number of persons (how can this be the case, since the evils of Adam's transgression extend to all without exception?) but to the number of offences; see v. 16. So this passage cannot be used to prove the doctrine of universal salvation.' STUART.

Concluding Note. V. 15-19. The principal thing, which renders the expositions, generally given of these vs., perplexed and unsatisfactory, arises from an evident misconception of the apostle's reasoning, in supposing that Adam and Christ represented *exactly the same company*: whereas Adam was the surety of the whole human species as his posterity; Christ only of that chosen remnant, which has been, or shall be, one with Him by faith, who alone 'are counted to Him for a generation.' Ps. 22: 30, 31. Indeed all men, in consequence of the undertaking of Christ, are under a dispensation of mercy, and are 'endured with much long-suffering'; they are not left desperate, they have many temporal mercies, and they shall all arise to judgment. There is likewise such an infinite sufficiency in the atonement of Christ, and it is proposed to sinners in so general a manner, as a common salvation for all who will accept of it, that a foundation is laid for the most unreserved invitations, exhortations, and exhortations; and no one will be rejected, who sincerely seeks this salvation. Yet these important truths perfectly harmonize with the foreknowledge and predetermined purpose of God, in respect of the persons, who actually will embrace and obtain the proffered blessings. If we omit the consideration of the number, who perish in 'the first Adam,' or are saved in 'the second Adam,' if we wholly leave this to the wise, righteous, and merciful Creator and Judge of all men, as one of those 'secret things

which belong to Him,' and not to us; and if we exclusively consider the benefits which *believers* derive from Christ, as compared with the loss sustained in Adam, by the *human race*: we shall then see the passage open, most perspicuously and gloriously, to our view. For the thoughts of the *supposed* immense majority of those, who shall eventually perish, is not to encumber the mind in these contemplations: I say, *supposed*; for possibly we shall find our conjectures erroneous, when the doom of men, [in all worlds, and] through all ages and nations, shall be finally determined. Let us then advert to the apostle's words.—'The offence' of Adam, and its consequences, do not in all things coincide with the 'free gift,' or the *grace of redemption*. Through that one man's single offence, 'the many,' or the multitude, of mankind are *dead*; under condemnation, dead in sin, and exposed to death temporal and eternal. But the infinite grace and mercy of God, and the free gift of righteousness and salvation, through that 'one man Jesus Christ,' 'the second Adam,' who is also 'the Lord from heaven,' much more abound to 'the many,' even to all the multitude of believers; by bringing them into a far safer, happier, and more exalted state, than that from which they fell in Adam. For this gift, not merely answers to the loss sustained by Adam's sin, but far exceeds it in this respect: 'the judgment of God' came through Adam's single offence 'on all men to condemnation; but the free gift' not only delivers believers from that 'condemnation,' but from the punishment due to their own numerous, or rather innumerable transgressions; nor does it place them anew in a state of probation, at all resembling that of Adam before he sinned; but it fixes them in a state of justification, even as Adam would have been, if he had stood his time of trial. For if, by 'one offence of one man,' death acquired a complete dominion over the whole human race, without a personal trial, in that respect, whether they would be obedient or not; much more will they, who by faith 'receive the abundance of grace,' and of the gift of 'righteousness,' be assuredly preserved in that state of acceptance, and so 'reign in life' by the perfect obedience of their one Surety, Jesus Christ; without the infinite peril, or inevitably fatal consequences, of being put upon a personal trial of their perfect obedience, like that in which Adam had failed, and in which Christ had persevered.

Man is, indeed, in some respects, in a probationary state on earth; but no man is put on the trial, whether he can obtain exemption from the general condemnation of Adam and his seed, by his own personal obedience. A trial is made of him, tending to discover the wickedness of his heart by manifold experiments; the trial is made by the Gospel, whether the sinner will repent and believe; professed Christians are tried, whether they are sincere or not; and believers are proved in respect of the strength of their faith and grace; yet they are not put on any probation, with reference to their justification and eternal life; but 'are accounted righteous,' and appointed heirs by faith alone, through the righteousness of their one Divine Surety; which consisted not, like Adam's offence, in one action, but in a continued and perfect conformity to the whole divine law, through life, and unto his death on the cross.—Yet, notwithstanding these differences, the similarity is striking and instructive; for, 'as by the one offence of one man, sin entered,' and prevailed to the condemnation of all men; so, by 'the righteousness of One,' even Christ, grace entered and prevailed to the complete justification of all men, throughout the earth, and during all ages, who are related to Christ by grace and faith, or by regeneration, and partaking of the life-giving Spirit of Christ; as all men were related to Adam by natural gen-



CHAP. VI.

1 We may not live in sin, 2 for we are dead unto it, 3 as appeareth by our baptism. 12 Let not sin reign any more, 18 because we have yielded ourselves to the service of righteousness, 23 and for that death is the wages of sin.

WHAT shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

a c. 3:8. d 1 Co. 15:29. 13:4.  
b ver. 6-11. Col. e Col. 2:12. 1 Pe. g Mat. 28:2, 3.  
3:3. 1 Pe. 2:24. 3:21. h Ga. 6:15. Ep. 4:  
c or, are. c. 8:11. 2 Co. 22-24. 1 Jo. 2:6.

CHAP. VI. The apostle having at large asserted, opened, and proved, the great doctrine of justification by faith, for fear lest any should suck poison out of that sweet flower, and turn that grace of God into wantonness and licentiousness, he, with a

like zeal, copiousness of expression, and cogency of argument, presses the absolute necessity of sanctification and a holy life, as the inseparable fruit and companion of justification; for wherever Jesus Christ is made of God unto any soul righteousness, He is made of God unto that soul sanctification, 1 Cor. 1:30. The water and the blood came streaming together out of the pierced side of the dying Jesus. And what God hath thus joined together, let not us dare to put asunder.

V. 1-23. The transition, here, is observable, v. 1. What use shall we make of this sweet and comfortable doctrine? Shall we hence take encouragement to sin, because the more sin we commit, the more will the grace of God be magnified in our pardon? No, it is an abuse, and the apostle startles at the thought of it, v. 2. He entertains the objection as Christ did the devil's blackest temptation, Mat. 4:10. *Get thee hence, Satan.* Those opinions that countenance sin, or open a door to practical immoralities, how specious and plausible soever, through pretence of advancing free grace, are to be rejected with the greatest abhorrence; for the truth as it is in Jesus, is a truth according to godliness, Tit. 1:1.

He is very full in pressing the necessity of holiness in this ch., which may be reduced to two heads.

I. His exhortations to holiness, which

show the nature of it; what it is, and wherein it consists: in general, in mortification, and vivification; dying to sin, and living to righteousness; elsewhere expressed by putting off the old man, and putting on the new; ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well.

1. Mortification, putting off the old man, several ways expressed. (1.) We must live no longer in sin, v. 2. not be as we have been, nor do as we have done. 1 Pet. 4:3. Though none live without sin, yet, blessed be God, some do not live in sin; do not make a trade of it, live in it as their element: that is to be sanctified. (2.) The body of sin must be destroyed, v. 6. The corruption that dwelleth in us is the body of sin, consisting of many parts and members, as a body. This is the root to which the axe must be laid. We must not only cease from the acts of sin; but get the vicious habits and inclinations weakened and destroyed: \* not only cast away the idols out of the sanctuary, but the idols of iniquity out of the heart. (3.) We must be dead indeed unto sin, v. 11. as indifferent to the pleasures and delights of sin, as a man dying is to his former diversions. He that is dead

\* The lower propensities are not to be destroyed, of course, for that would be to commit suicide, but they are to be weakened, if too active; to be made obedient to the higher principles or elements of our nature, enlightened by revelation and reason: to be regulated, and their abuses destroyed; they must never rule. Ed.

eration. For, as 'by the disobedience' of one single person, being a public character, or representative of his posterity, 'many were made' or constituted 'sinners,' and dealt with accordingly, previously to the consideration of their personal transgressions: so, 'by the obedience of One,' who also was a public character, and the representative of his people, 'many,' even the whole multitude of believers, 'are constituted righteous' before God, and dealt with as such; even previously to the consideration of their personal holiness and obedience; which spring from their spiritual union with Christ, as depravity does from man's natural union with Adam. Thus, in many things, the type and Antitype coincide; though disobedience and condemnation are opposite to obedience and justification. But the believer, being justified by faith, has his title to life, in Christ, who preserves it for him: so that he is not left to perdition, or to the hazards arising from the mutability of creatures, as Adam was; but he is safe by his union with Him, who is 'God manifest in the flesh;' and his future felicity will be proportionably more exalted, in consequence of his endeared relation to the Godhead, in Christ, his Brother and Friend.

(17.) *Much more, &c.* Can anything be 'much more' certain, than that all men as one with Adam die? Yes, it is much more certain that all, who, by faith 'receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life with Christ.' Enoch and Elijah did not die, but were translated; and multitudes innumerable shall be living when Christ shall come: 1 Cor. 15:50-54, but not one true believer shall come short of 'reigning in life with Him!'—As it is evident, that all men, in the strict sense of the word, do not 'receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness,' or obtain 'justification of life;' and that 'all men,' in this universal sense, shall not 'reign in life,' for some shall 'go away unto everlasting punishment:' so the term must be explained, in the 1st clause, of all men in Adam, and in the 2d, of all men in Christ, if any consistent meaning is to be affixed to the words (18): except universal 'salvation, with eternal glory,' be contended for; as 'justification unto life,' and 'reigning with Christ in life,' are predicated emphatically of the whole company here described. It may, indeed, be admitted, that the 'free gift' is sufficient for 'all men,' and ought to be proposed to 'all men;' and if 'all men' (18) be thus understood, as some think it may be, it differs from the 'many' in some of the other vs.; yet the apostle's argument seems, through the whole, to be concerning the same companies, those in Adam and those in Christ. Scott.

NOTES. CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. The apostle does not set us an example of keeping out of sight, explaining away, or cautiously proposing the free grace of the Gospel: but, while he states his doctrine in the most explicit and decisive language imaginable, he shows also the inseparable connexion between justification and sanctification. Let 'the thought be abhorred,' says he, 'of continuing in sin that grace may abound.' The unbeliever has no part in that grace: and, as the believer is 'dead to sin, how shall he live any longer' in the practice of it? That view of the glory of God, of the holiness and excellency of the law, and of his own guilt and danger, which, as the effect of regeneration, convinced him that he needed the salvation of Christ, and made it precious to his heart, led him also to repent, and to abhor all sin. This change, begun in convictions, always humbling and often alarming, was more completely effected by further discoveries of the mercy, and experience of the comforts, of redemption: so that love and gratitude to the divine Savior, and other evangelical principles, concur with hatred of sin, to mortify his affections to its pleasures and interests, and to cause him to separate from iniquity, as a dead man ceases from the actions of life. John 16:8-11, 14, 15. 2 Cor. 5:13-15. Gal. 2:17-21. 5:13-26. Jam. 2:8-26. Not only ought this to be the believer's character, but in a measure it actually is so: and thus it forms the proper evidence, being the inseparable concomitant, of his justification. This effectually secures him from abusing the doctrines of grace: he may be seduced into sin, but he 'cannot live any longer' in the habitual practice of known transgression: 1 John 3:4-10.—The benefits of justification and sanctification are connected by a perpetual bond: each of them flows from Christ, by the grace of God. Sanctification is the destruction of sin, i. e. of our original depravity; in the place of which the purity of a renewed nature succeeds. This is the quality, which the Spirit creates in the members of Christ our Head.—'Dying unto sin,' and 'living unto God,' or Christ, or righteousness, answer to each other.' Beza.—It is surprising, that many learned expositors should, without hesitation or proof, interpret the phrase, as if it only meant the outward profession made in baptism: and, as if all baptized persons were indeed 'dead unto sin.' Note here, that if the faith, to which Paul in this epistle doth ascribe justification, did not [not?] only oblige to, but comprehend evangelical and constant obedience, there could be no color for this objection: that therefore must be a mistake.' Whitby. Sc.

(2.) *Living therein.* Zēn en plainly denotes living in the habitual commission of, being given up to. So the expression is used in [198]

Ælian., Philostr., Diod. Sic., and Wets., comp. v. 10 and 11. Col. 3:7. BL.

V. 3, 4. The spiritual meaning of the external sign is the same when baptism is administered to the infant-offspring of believers: even as the meaning of circumcision was the same, when it was performed on Abraham the aged believer, on Ishmael, who perhaps never believed, and on Isaac, an infant of 8 days old, long before he believed. 4:9-12. Gen. 17:7-12. Mat. 23:19, 20. It was the outward sign of regeneration, or 'a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness,' and it sealed justification by faith to all those who ever possessed the thing signified, but to none else. Thus Simon Magus, though baptized adult, derived no more benefit from the outward sign, than those multitudes do, who, having been baptized in infancy, when grown up despise the inward and spiritual grace of it. Acts 8:9-13, 36-40.—Great stress has been laid on the expression, 'buried with Him by baptism into death,' as proving that baptism ought to be performed by immersion, to which the apostle is supposed to allude. Col. 2:11, 12. But we are said also, to be 'crucified with Christ,' and circumcised with Him, without any allusion to the outward manner in which crucifixion and circumcision were performed: and, as baptism is far more frequently mentioned, with reference to the 'pouring out' of the Holy Ghost; Notes, Acts 1:4-8. 2:14-21. Tit. 3:4-7. and as the apostle is evidently treating on the inward meaning, not the outward form, of that ordinance; no conclusive argument is deducible from the expression, showing that immersion is necessary to baptism; or even, apart from other proof, that baptism was generally thus administered. Scott.

(3, 4) *Into his death.* 'The context plainly confines us to one sense, namely, that expressed in the preceding words, *dead to sin*; and must therefore mean, to be bound, by baptism, to die unto, and utterly renounce and forsake all sin, as Christ has laid down his life. At the same time it must be acknowledged, that the similitude is, like many others of Jewish writers, but remote and faint, and is, as Kop. observes, *more in words, than in the thing itself.* There is plainly a reference, v. 4. to the ancient mode of baptism by immersion, (see Suicer, and Bingham,) and I agree with Kop. and Ros., that there is reason to regret it should have been abandoned in most Christian churches, especially as it has so evidently a reference to the mystic sense of baptism. (Wets. adverts to the figurative use of bury, as employed of plunging under water; which, he says, was especially applied to those who were cast into the sea. And he cites Sil. Ital., Plin., and Anthol. And so it seems to have been taken by Theoph., who observes, that, as we are by baptism buried in the water, so Christ was buried in the earth.) [This reference St. disputes, pp. 252-4.] Though I grant, with Doddr., that that will not prove this particular circumstance to be essential to the ordinance: and in whatever manner it was administered, if it were intended as a declaration of faith in the death and resurrection of Christ, as it is well known that Christ died for sin, it would infer an obligation to die to it, and rise again to a holy life; which is the main point at which the apostle labors.' Bloomf.—'Baptism, or our immersion into water, according to the ancient mode of administering it, is a figure of our burial with Christ, and of our conformity to his death, and so, signifies our dying to sin, and walking in newness of life. For the death of Christ must be considered not barely as a natural death, a separation of soul and body, but as a sacrifice for sin, to destroy the power and dominion of it; and so our dying to sin (i. e. ceasing from the practice of it) is the truest conformity to the death of Christ; and we must consider his resurrection, not as his returning to life again, but as his living to God, his advancement into his spiritual kingdom, the design of which is to promote the interest of religion and a divine life; and so our walking in newness of life (a virtuous and religious life) is our conformity to his resurrection, and makes us the true subjects of his spiritual kingdom; which, the apostle tells us, gives an abundant assurance of a glorious resurrection, that we shall, in a proper sense, rise with Him; because this new life, wherein our spiritual conformity to the resurrection of Christ consists, is an immortal principle of life, which can no more die, than Christ can die again, now He is risen from the dead.' Knowl-edge of Christ. SHERLOCK, in Bl.

(4.) 'We then have been buried with,' &c. STUART.



5 For if <sup>1</sup> we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his resurrection* :

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body <sup>1</sup> of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 For <sup>2</sup> he that is dead is <sup>1</sup> freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him :

9 Knowing that <sup>m</sup> Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died <sup>n</sup> unto sin once : but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be <sup>o</sup> dead indeed unto sin, but <sup>p</sup> alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Phl. 3:10.  
1 Col. 2:11.  
1 Pe. 4:1.

1 or, *justified*.  
m Re. 1:18.  
n He. 9:28.

o ver. 2.  
p Ga. 2:19.

is separated from his former company, converse, business, enjoyments, employments ; is not what he was, does not what he did, has not what he had. Death makes a mighty change ; such a change doth sanctification make in the soul, it cuts off all correspondence with sin. (4.) *Sin must not reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it, v. 12.* Though sin may remain as an outlaw, may oppress as a tyrant, yet let it not reign as a king ; make laws, preside in councils, nor command the militia ; let it not be uppermost in the soul, so that we should obey it. Though we may be sometimes overtaken and overcome by it ; yet let not sinful lusts be a law to you, to which you would yield a consenting obedience. *In the lusts thereof*,—it refers to the body, not to sin. Sin lies very much in gratifying the body, [and its animal propensities,] and humoring that. And there is reason implied in that, *your mortal body* ; because it is a mortal body, and hastening apace to the dust, therefore let not sin reign in it. It was sin that made our bodies mortal, therefore do not yield obedience to such an enemy. (5.)

V. 5-7. 'By an elegant metaphor, the apostle compares Christ, who died and was buried, and rose again from the dead, to a plant, which, being covered in the earth, germinates in due time. And then, because he had said, that we "are dead to sin, and buried with Christ," that we might rise again unto righteousness ; in order to intimate, that all these things take place by the grace which we derive from Christ, he says, that we have grown together with Him into one plant ; as those things which are "planted together" with a tree, grow together, and live by one common sap.' *Beza*. 'We grow together with Christ, as moss, ivy, missletoe, or such like, grow up by a tree, and are nourished by the juice thereof.' *Leigh*. Sinful men, then, become 'one with Christ,' by partaking of the Holy Spirit, which animates his whole mystical body, as the soul does our natural bodies ; and, by the teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit, they believe unto justification : and then faith renders them in that way 'one with Christ ;' but the same Spirit also inclines and enables them to mortify all their sinful passions, and thus renews their souls unto holiness. . . . For he that is dead to the love and practice of sin, is freed for ever from its yoke : he has passed into the service of another Master ; sin has no further claim upon him, and shall never recover its lost authority. 8:3, 4, 12, 13. *Gal.* 5:22-26. *Col.* 2:11, 12. Thus v. 7. is commonly explained ; but it is most exactly tr. : 'He that is dead, has been justified from sin ;' *Marg.*—8:1, 2. and the lit. meaning seems still more aptly to coincide with the apostle's argument : he, and he only, who 'is dead to sin,' has been justified from the guilt of it, 'having received the free gift unto justification of life.' 5:15-19, v. 18. His death to sin is the requisite attestation of his being accounted righteous ; so that the doctrine, properly understood, is incapable of that perversion which is generally objected to it.—Indeed, Christ, when 'He died unto sin once,' (10) was justified as our Surety and Exemplar in consequence of his death : so that the believer's conformity to his Lord, of which the apostle discourses, is illustrated by the lit. tr.—(6) *Our old man*.] Our depraved nature is called 'a man ;' because it comprises a complete system of unholy dispositions and affections, and imparts its baleful influence to the whole soul and body ; and the 'old man,' because derived from the first Adam, and so in every one prior to grace, or the image of the second Adam. 1 *Cor.* 15: 45-49. *Eph.* 4:20-24. *Col.* 3:7-11.

(5.) 'For if we have become kindred with Him, by a death like his, then we shall be also by a resurrection.'

We must not yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness, v. 13. The members of the body are made use of by the corrupt nature as tools, by which the wills of the flesh are fulfilled ; but we must not consent to that abuse. The members of the body are fearfully and wonderfully made ; it is pity they should be the devil's tools of unrighteousness unto sin, instruments of the sinful actions, according to the sinful dispositions. Unrighteousness is unto sin ; the sinful acts confirm and strengthen the sinful habits ; one sin begets another ; it is like the letting forth of water, therefore leave it before it be meddled with. The members of the body may, perhaps, through the prevalence of temptation, be forced to be instruments of sin ; but do not yield them to be so, do not consent to it. This is one branch of sanctification, the mortification of sin.

2. Vivification, or living to righteousness ; and what is that ?

(1.) It is to walk in newness of life, v. 4. Newness of life supposes newness of heart, for out of it are the issues of life ; and there is no way to make the stream sweet, but by making the spring so. Walking, in Scripture, is put for the course and tenor of the conversation, which must be new. Walk by new rules, toward new ends, from new principles ; make a new choice of the way ; choose new paths to walk in, new leaders to walk after, new companions to walk with : old things should pass away, and all things become new. The man is what he was not, does what he did not.

(2.) It is to be alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, v. 11. To converse with God, to have a regard to Him, a delight in Him, a concern for Him, the soul on all occasions carried out toward Him, as towards an agreeable object, in which it takes a complacency : this is to be alive to God. The love of God reigning in the heart, is the life of the soul towards God. *The soul is where it loves, rather than where it lives* ; the affections and desires alive toward God. Or, living (our life in the flesh) unto God, to his honor and glory as our end, by his Word and will as our rule ; in all our ways to acknowledge Him, and to have our eyes ever toward Him ; that is to live unto God. *Through Jesus Christ our Lord*. Christ is our spiritual life ; there is no living to God but through Him. He is the Mediator ; there can be no comfortable receive-

ings from God, or acceptable regards to God, but in and through Jesus Christ ; no intercourse between sinful souls and a holy God, but by the mediation of the Lord Jesus. Through Christ, as the Author and maintainer of this life ; through Christ, as the Head from whom we receive vital influence ; through Christ, as the Root by which we derive sap and nourishment, and so live. In living to God, Christ is all in all.

(3.) It is to yield ourselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead, v. 13. The very life and being of holiness lie in the dedication of ourselves to the Lord, giving our own selves to the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 8:5. 'Yield yourselves to Him, not only as the conquered to the conqueror, because he can stand it out no longer ; but as the wife to her husband, to whom her desire is ; as the scholar to the teacher, the apprentice to his master, to be taught and ruled by Him : yield nothing less than your whole selves ; accommodate yourselves to God ; so *Tremellius*, from the *Syriac* : comply with Him ; not only present yourselves once for all, but be always ready to Him. Yield yourselves to Him as wax to the seal, to take any impression, to be, and have, and do, what He pleases.' When Paul said, *Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do ?* Acts 9:6. he was then yielded to God.—As those that are alive from the dead : not a dead carcase to a living God, but a living sacrifice, ch. 12:1. The surest evidence of our spiritual life is, the dedication of ourselves to God. It may be understood of a death, in law, and so of the justified and redeemed.

(4.) It is to yield our members, as instruments of righteousness, to God. The members of our bodies, when withdrawn from the service of sin, are not to lie idle, but to be made use of in the service of God. The powers and faculties of the soul are the immediate subjects of holiness and righteousness, yet the members of the body are to be instruments ; the body must be always ready to serve the soul in the service of God. Thus, v. 14. 'Yield your members servants of righteousness unto holiness. Let them be under the conduct, and at the command of the righteous law of God, and that principle of inherent righteousness, which the Spirit, as a Sanctifier, plants in the soul.—Righteousness unto holiness ; which intimates growth, and progress, and ground got. As every sinful act confirms the sinful habit,

(6.) 'The corrupt nature of man received in Scripture the name of the old man, in reference to the most critical condition in which we are placed, namely, at our birth, from which time (unless he be reformed) a man will more and more enslave himself to sinful habits. In continuation of the allegory, *body and members* are ascribed to this old man.' *Wolf*. 'Sin is here, by a continuation of prosopopœia, personified, as a master. But when a master is dead the slave no longer owes [gives] him service.' *Bloomf.* *With Him*.] 'As he was.—So that we should no longer, &c.'

V. 9-10. The promise of God, to give life, even eternal life, to all who believe, is the sole ground of our hope of obtaining the inestimable blessing ; but as all who hear the Gospel do not obtain it, nor all who profess and seem to believe it ; how shall we know, that we, rather than our fellow-sinners, are partakers of the promise, except by being conscious of having experienced a 'death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness ?' If a professed Christian is a stranger to this change, his confidence of 'reigning with Christ in glory' is presumptuous. But when a man becomes dead to his once most beloved sinful pleasures and pursuits ; his prospect is clear, and his interest in the righteousness of the Surety is demonstrated. 5:6-10. *John* 14:18-20. *Gal.* 2:17-21.—As the blessed Jesus was in Himself wholly free from sin ; it seems impossible to find any satisfactory meaning in the words, 'He died unto sin once ;' unless we allow, that He died as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of men, which were imputed to Him, and that He 'bare them in his own body on the tree.' *Col.* 2:20-23. 3:1-4. *Heb.* 9:27, 28. 1 *Pet.* 2: 18-25, v. 24. 4:1, 2.

(8.) *Believe*.] Perhaps we may tr. 'may trust.'

V. 11. The preceding vs. declare the character and experience of real Christians, according to their measure of grace : but the apostle here proceeds to exhort professed Christians to evince their sincerity by a suitable conduct ; and believers to live up to their privileges, and in consistency with their profession. *Dead unto sin*.] *Eph.* 2:1, 5. *Col.* 2:13. The context clearly shows, that being 'dead to sin,' or 'from sin,' is meant ; and not 'dead in sins ;' and sanctification by union with Christ, not pardon through his atonement, is the benefit insisted on. This appears by the clause, 'our old man is crucified with Him' (6) : i. e. not our persons but our depraved nature and propensities. 1, 2. *SCOTT*.

(11.) 'Dr. A. Clarke well paraphrases, Die as truly unto sin, as He died for sin ; live as truly unto God, as He lives with God.' *BLOOMF.*



12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

q Ps. 19:13. 119:133. s arms, or, weapons. t c. 12:1. r Col. 3:5. u Mi. 7:19.

and makes the nature more and more prone to sin; so every gracious act confirms the gracious habit: serving righteousness is unto holiness; one duty fits us for another; and the more we do, the more we may do, for God. Or, serving righteousness, as an evidence of sanctification.

II. His motives or arguments to show the necessity of this sanctification. There is such an antipathy in our hearts by nature to holiness, that it is no easy matter to bring them to submit to it: it is the Spirit's work, who persuades by such inducements as these, set home on the soul.

1. He argues from our sacramental conformity to Jesus Christ. Observe his reasoning:

(1.) In general, we are *dead to sin*, i. e. in profession, and in obligation. By our baptism we profess to have no more to do with sin. We are dead to sin by a participation of virtue and power for the killing of it, and by our union with Christ and interest in Him, in and by whom it is killed. All this is in vain if we persist in sin; we contradict a profession, violate an obligation, return to that to which we were dead, like walking ghosts; than which nothing is more unbecoming and absurd. For, v. 7. he that is dead, is freed from sin; i. e. he that is dead to it, is freed from the rule and dominion of it; as the servant that is dead, is free from his master, Job 3: 19.

(2.) In particular, being baptized into Jesus Christ, we were baptized into his death, v. 3. We were baptized,—unto Christ, as, 1 Cor. 10: 2. unto Moses. Baptism binds us to Christ as our Teacher, it is our allegiance

to Christ as our Sovereign. Particularly, we were baptized into his death, into a participation of the privileges purchased by his death, and into an obligation both to comply with the design of his death, which was to redeem us from iniquity, and to conform to the pattern of his death, that, as Christ died for sin, so we should die to sin: thereby we know the fellowship of his sufferings, Phil. 3: 10. Thus we are here said to be planted together in the likeness of his death, v. 5. not only a conformity, but a conformation; as the ingrafted stock is planted together into the likeness of the shoot, of the nature of which it doth participate. Planting is in order to life and fruitfulness: we are planted in the vineyard, in a likeness to Christ; which likeness we should evidence in sanctification. Our creed concerning Jesus Christ, is, among other things, that He was crucified, dead, and buried; now baptism is a sacramental conformity to Him in each of these, as the apostle here notices.

[1.] Our old man is crucified with Him, v. 6. The death of the cross was slow, but sure; such is the mortification of sin in believers. It was a cursed death, Gal. 3: 13. Sin dies as a malefactor, devoted to destruction; it is an accursed thing. Crucified with Him,—not in respect of time, but in respect of causality. The crucifying of Christ for us, has an influence on the crucifying of sin in us.

[2.] We are dead with Christ, v. 8. Christ was obedient to death: when He died, we might be said to die with Him, as our dying to sin is an act of conformity, both to the design, and to the sampler of Christ's dying for sin. Baptism signifies and seals our union with Christ, our ingrafting into Christ; so that we are dead with Him, and engaged to have no more to do with sin than He had.

[3.] We are buried with Him by baptism, v. 4. Our conformity is complete. We are in profession quite cut off from all commerce and communion with sin, as those buried are from the world; not only not of the living, but no more among the living, have nothing more to do with them. Thus must we be, as Christ was, separate from sin and sinners. We are buried, in profession and obligation. Why this burying in baptism should so much as allude to any custom of dipping under water in baptism, any more than our baptismal crucifixion and death should have any such references, I confess I cannot see. It is plain, it is not the sign,

but the thing signified, in baptism, that the apostle here calls being buried with Christ; and the expression of burying alludes to Christ's burial. As Christ was buried, that He might rise again to a new and more heavenly life, so we are in baptism buried, cut off from the life of sin, that we may rise again to a new life of faith and love.

Again, our conformity to the resurrection of Christ obliges us to rise again to newness of life. That is the power of his resurrection, which Paul was so desirous to know, Phil. 3: 10. Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, i. e. by the power of the Father; the power of God is his glory; it is glorious power, Col. 1: 11. Now in baptism we are obliged to conform to that pattern, to be planted in the likeness of his resurrection, v. 5. to live with Him, v. 8. See Col. 2: 12. Conversion is the first resurrection from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; and this resurrection is conformable to Christ's resurrection. This conformity of the saints to the resurrection of Christ, seems to be intimated, in the rising of so many of the bodies of the saints; which, though mentioned before by anticipation, is supposed to have been concomitant with Christ's resurrection, Mat. 27: 52. We are all risen with Christ. In two things we must conform to the resurrection of Christ:

[1.] He rose, to die no more, v. 9. others that were raised, rose to die again; but Christ, to die no more: thus, over Christ death has no more dominion; He was dead indeed, but is alive, and so alive, that He lives for evermore, Rev. 1: 18. Thus we must rise from the grave of sin, never again to return to it, or to have any more fellowship with the works of darkness, having quitted that grave, that land of darkness, as darkness itself.

[2.] He rose to live unto God, v. 10. to live a heavenly life, to receive that glory which was set before Him. Others, that were raised from the dead, returned to the same life in every respect they had before; but Christ, to leave the world. Now I am no more in the world, John 13: 1. 17: 11. He rose to live to God, i. e. to intercede and rule, and all to the glory of the Father. Thus must we rise to live to God: that is it he calls newness of life, v. 4. to live from other principles, by other rules, with other aims, than we have done. A life devoted to God is a new life; before, self was the chief and highest end, but now God. To live indeed, is to live to God, with our eyes

V. 12, 13. 'The vicious affections, like noxious weeds, sprout up and increase of themselves but too naturally; while the graces of the Christian temper, exotics in the soil of the human heart, like the more tender productions of the vegetable world, (though the breath of heaven must quicken them,) require on our part also, in order to their being preserved in health and vigor, constant superintendence and assiduous care.' *Wilberforce's View of Pract. Christ.*—Let none therefore suffer sin to reign in their bodies, that they should obey and comply with its corrupt lustings, to the injury of their immortal souls. If a professed Christian does this habitually, he can have no evidence of his conversion; as provision is made in the Gospel for deliverance from the dominion of sin, as well as from condemnation: and if a real Christian does this in any particular instances, it must weaken his evidence and confidence; and it is the effect of partial unbelief, unwatchfulness, and forgetfulness of his obligations and privileges. 8:12, 13. 1 Cor. 9:24—27. Thus our eyes should be employed in contemplating the works, and reading the Word, of God; our ears, in hearing his voice, and in attending to the cries of the distressed; our tongues, in speaking the praises of God, instructing the ignorant, preaching his Word, and in profitable conversation: and even our natural inclinations should be so regulated by his law, and subordinated to superior considerations, that 'whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we may do it to the glory of God.' 16—19. 12:1. 1 Cor. 6:18—20. 10:29—33. Phil. 1:19, 20. Col. 3:16, 17. 1 Pet. 2:11. Is it not most evident, that sin is here represented as having its seat in the soul, which employs the members of the body, as instruments of accomplishing its evil purposes? And if so, what becomes of that system of interpretation, which supposes animal nature to be the flesh, and the rational soul the spirit? 7:15—25. 8:1—13. Gal. 5:16—26. Sc.

(12.) 'It is judiciously remarked by Chrys., that "the apostle does not say, let not the flesh energize; for he does not bid us destroy nature, but regulate our dispositions." [Note, end of ch. 7.] It is scarcely necessary to observe, that by *hamartia* [tr. sin] is here denoted not *peccatum*, but *vitiositas*, that propensity to evil which exists in every man. *Mortal.* He hints, (so Chrys. and the Gr. comment.) 1st, that the pleasures of the body are not *permanent*, from its liability to disease and death, and therefore there is the less reason to gratify corporal appetites: 2dly,

that the labors of resisting temptations to vice are but of short continuance, and not, therefore, such as need seem formidable: 3dly, to admonish them of the near approach of that period when the dominion of sin would work death, spiritual and eternal.' *Bloomf.* 'Illicit pleasures are to be strangled in the very birth [conception]; nor ought even the lawful appetites to be indulged farther than nature requires, that the body may learn to obey the better part.' GROT.

(13.) I exhort you not in vain to throw off the tyranny of sin, for if you are not wanting to yourselves, promised spiritual aids shall help your infirmities: the law enjoined but helped not the performance, but ye are not now under it, but under grace, which forgave former, and helps against future transgressions. See *Bloomf.* Ed.

V. 14, 15. Hope of victory gives fresh ardor to the courageous: assurance of it would make a coward valiant. The slave emancipated from his yoke, or the captive escaped from his dungeon, will resist all attempts to reduce him to his former abject state, with a vigor proportioned to the prospect of preserving his beloved liberty. Thus the apostle assures believers, that sin shall not resume its hated dominion over them, in order to animate their opposition to its influence, in every instance. He shows, that the ground for this assurance of final liberty and victory, lies in the nature and securities of the new covenant. 2 S. 23:5. Is. 55:1—3. Jer. 31:31—34. 32:39—41. Heb. 6:7—13. He could not intend, merely to distinguish between the Mosaic dispensation and that of the Gospel; for all were not slaves to sin who were under the former, nor are all free from sin who live under the latter. But the moral law, as the foundation of the covenant of works, in whatever way or degree it is known, is evidently opposed to the covenant of grace. All, who remain under the covenant of works, must be held under the 'dominion of sin,' and their efforts to emancipate themselves be unsuccessful; because no grace is by it promised or communicated to a sinner. Ez. 19:5. But the believer passes from under this covenant, to be under that of mercy and grace; and as motives and encouragements are by it supplied, so effectual help is ensured to him, to preserve him from ever again becoming the willing slave of any sin; though he may be grievously harassed, huffed, or even polluted, by those temptations and corruptions, to which he once was wholly subjected. Sc.



16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin: but ye have obeyed from the heart that form<sup>v</sup> of doctrine<sup>x</sup> which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free<sup>v</sup> from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness.

20 For when ye were the servants<sup>z</sup> of sin, ye were free<sup>a</sup> from righteousness.

21 What fruit<sup>b</sup> had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end<sup>c</sup> of those things is death.

v Jn. 8:34. 2 Pe. 2:19. w 2 Ti. 1:13. x whereto ye were

ever toward Him, making Him the centre of all our actions.

2. He argues from the precious promises and privileges of the new covenant, v. 14. It might be objected, that sin is unavoidably too hard for us; 'No,' says he, 'there is strength laid up in the covenant of grace for your assistance, if you will but use it. *Sin shall not have dominion.*' Sin may struggle in a believer, may create him a great deal of trouble; but it shall not have dominion; may vex him, but it shall not rule over him. *For we are not under the law, but under grace*, not under the law of sin and death, but under the law of the spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus: we are actuated by other principles than we have been. Or,

V. 16—19. It could not but be known, and acknowledged, that all Christians were 'the servants of God.' *Is. 54:15—17. John 12:23—26.* The apostle therefore demanded, whether it might not be proved, what master any man served, by observing the constant tenor of his conduct. A person may do an occasional service for one to whom he is not servant; but no doubt he is the servant of that man, to whom he habitually yields and addicts himself; and in whose work he spends his time and strength, and skill, and abilities, day after day, and year after year. The case is the same in spiritual matters; a man may profess Christianity, and in some things appear to serve God; and yet habitually addict himself to sinful pursuits and pleasures. *Mat. 6:24.* But every one must be adjudged to be the servant of that master, to execute whose commands he willingly 'yields himself;' *2 Chr. 30:12.* whether it be the sinful propensities of his own heart, in such actions as lead to death; or the new and spiritual obedience implanted by regeneration, in habitually performing the righteousness required in the law, and daily seeking, and striving, and praying, to be more and more exactly conformed to it.—These things the apostle stated to the Christians at Rome, by similitudes taken from the affairs of men, 'because of the infirmity of their flesh;' which rendered them less capable of understanding abstract reasonings on subjects of this kind; and that he might guard them against those delusions, to which their weakness and remaining sinfulness would otherwise expose them.

(16.) *Righteousness.*] 'Justification.' SCOTT. (17.) 'But have become obedient from the heart to that model of doctrine in which ye have been instructed.' ID.

(18.) 'An allusion to the transfer of slaves resulting from conquest.' BL.

(19.) 'Proffered your members for servants [slaves, see *Bl.*] to impurity and iniquity, in order to commit iniquity; so now proffer your members to righteousness, in order to be holy.' ST. 'As the apostle had before used many arguments somewhat too mystical for Romans educated in idolatry, such as those concerning Adam, Abraham, and baptism; things of which, before their conversion, they had heard nothing; so now, in order that they may the more easily understand the meaning of what he has written, he uses an argument taken from a thing obvious to all, and well known; and this he calls speaking *after the manner of men.*' WETS. 'By *sarx* [flesh] is here meant, I believe, everything that partakes of human frailty, including the mind as well as the body [note, end of ch. 7.]; and therefore it may denote dulness and inaptitude to things spiritual. Comp. *Rom. 14:1. 1 Cor. 3:11.*' BL. *Uncleanness* . . . *iniquity.*] Sensuality, and every kind of vice. See *Bloomf.* 'It is the nature of all vices to grow upon a person by repetition.' GROT. ED.

V. 20. The willing slaves of sin, though by no means free from obli-

not under the covenant of works, which condemns on the least failure, which runs thus, 'Do this and live; do it not, and die;' but under the covenant of grace, which is herein well ordered, that every transgression in the covenant does not put us out of the covenant; and especially, that it does not leave our salvation in our own keeping, but lays it up in the hands of the Mediator, who undertakes for us, that sin shall not have dominion over us; hath Himself condemned it, and will destroy it; so that, if we pursue the victory, we shall come off more than conquerors. This is a very comfortable word to all true believers: if we were under the law, we were undone, for the law curses every one that continues not in everything; but we are under grace, grace which accepts the willing mind, which is not extreme to mark what we do amiss, which leaves room for repentance, which promises pardon on repentance: and what can be to an ingenuous mind a stronger motive than this, to have nothing to do with sin? Shall we sin against so much goodness, abuse such love? Sin because of it! The apostle starts at such a thought, v. 15. What can be more black and ill-natured than from a friend's extraordinary expressions of kindness and good-will, to take occasion to affront and offend him? To spurn at such bowels, to spit in the face of such love, is that which, between man and man, all the world would cry out shame on.

3. He argues from the evidence that this will be of our state, making for us, or against us, v. 16. All men are either the servants of God, or the servants of sin; these are the two families. Now, if we would know to which of these families we belong, we must inquire to which of these masters we yield obedience.

4. He argues, (1.) from their former sinfulness, v. 17—21. The servants of God do well to remember the time when they were the *servants of sin*; to keep them humble, penitent, and watchful, and to quicken them in the service of God. 'God be thanked that ye were so, i. e. that though ye were so, yet ye have obeyed.' Ye were so; God be thanked that we can speak of it as a thing past. Nay, your having been so formerly tends much to the magnifying of divine

gations to be righteous, are yet unrestrained by these obligations in following their own carnal inclinations. They perform no service to righteousness; they are not influenced by a single regard to the glory or authority of God, in any of their actions, but they uniformly gratify some of their own unholy passions, and seek happiness in so doing; or, in one way or other, are actuated by selfish motives: so that nothing which they do is 'good before God.'—*Free from righteousness.*] 'To righteousness.' 'The dominion of sin' consists in willingly being slaves to it; not in being harassed by its hated power, and occasional prevalence; as an expelled usurper struggling to resume his throne: and being 'made free from sin,' means deliverance from the 'dominion of sin;' not an exemption from its distressing and hated strugglings for victory and dominion; as many erroneously suppose, to their deep disconsolation. *Luke 11:14—26, v. 21, 22.*

(20.) *From.*] In respect to. *St. So Mich.* 'Free with respect to righteousness, free from all dependence upon it, or constraint from it, acknowledging no subjection to it.' *Bloomf.* ED.

V. 21—23. As 'death' is here opposed to 'everlasting life;' and as temporal death is the end of the most godly life, as well as the most ungodly; it is clearly absurd to restrict his meaning to the death of the body; doubtless the apostle meant the future state of final misery, in a total separation from the presence and favor of God, and under his awful wrath and vengeance. *8:13. Gen. 2:16, 17. Rev. 20:11—15.*—Thus the apostle closes his argument concerning justification, and sanctification as the seal and evidence of it.

(21.) *Death.*] 'Under this image, most terrible to human nature, the ancients adumbrated *misery of every kind*, and the reverse by *life.*' *Koppe.* 'He might have added, that though the *telos* [end] of sin be death, both in a physical and moral sense, yet, so untameable is human nature, that neither human laws, however severe, nor divine denunciations, however awful, have availed to repress it. This very propensity of our corrupt nature was clearly perceived [and lamented by many of the heathen themselves, see the citations in *Wets.* and *Kop.* on 7:15.] Here then it is, that divine laws come in aid of human enactments, and produce the strongest effects; because, though they suspend over the sinner denunciations the most terrible, yet they do what human laws never can effect [but ought, perhaps, in some degree to do, by offering rewards], namely, encourage the sinner to repent, by never leaving it (to use the words of the immortal Herod.) as an "hopeless case,—there being no room for repentance, nor getting rid of the sin." Let those, then, seriously reflect on this, who would remove capital punishments, and strive to cut out of the Scriptures what they term the *unphilosophical doctrine of eternal punishments.*' *Bloomf.*



22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness; and the end, everlasting life.

23 For <sup>d</sup> the wages of sin is death; but the gift <sup>e</sup> of God is eternal <sup>f</sup> life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### CHAP. VII.

<sup>1</sup> No law hath power over a man longer than he liveth. <sup>4</sup> But we are dead to the law. <sup>7</sup> Yet is not the law sin, <sup>12</sup> but holy, just, good, <sup>16</sup> as I acknowledge, who am grieved because I cannot keep it.

**K**NOW ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

2 For <sup>a</sup> the woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to *her* husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

<sup>d</sup> Ge. 2:17. <sup>e</sup> c. 5:17, 21. <sup>f</sup> 1 Pe. 1:4. <sup>a</sup> 1 Co. 7:39.

souls answering to it, complying with it, conformed to it: understanding, will, affections, aims, principles, actions, all according to that form of doctrine.

Being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness, v. 18. Servants to God, v. 22. We cannot serve two opposite masters. Conversion is a freedom from the service of sin; the shaking off of that yoke, resolving to have no more to do with it; a resignation of ourselves to the service of God and righteousness; to God as our Master, to righteousness as our work. When made free from sin, it is not that we may live as we list, and be our own masters; no: when delivered out of Egypt, we are, as Israel, led to the holy mountain, to receive the law, and there brought into the bond of the covenant.

(3.) What apprehensions they now had of their former work and way. He appeals to themselves, v. 21. whether they had not

**PRACT. OBS.** Self-righteous pride, and antinomian licentiousness, are two fatal rocks, on which immense multitudes are continually wrecked, and between which none but the Holy Spirit can pilot us: and the objections of open enemies to the doctrines of grace, derive their greatest plausibility from the unholy lives of many professed friends.—If indeed we have been so made 'one with Christ,' as to stand accepted in his righteousness; we shall certainly have conformity to Him in his death and resurrection; and his grace will enable us to 'crucify the old man, with his affections and lusts,' and excite us to determine on the destruction of 'the whole body of sin;' that we may no more serve that hated enemy, which crucified our beloved Lord; nor ever rest satisfied, till it has no place in our souls.—As our 'mortal bodies' will at last be raised immortal and incorruptible, by the almighty power of the Savior; 1 Cor. 15:50—53. Phil. 3:20, 21. so we should never allow 'sin to reign' in them, or obey it in the lusts thereof; but, praying

(22.) 'Ye have fruit in respect to holiness, and in the end (ye will have) eternal life.'

(23.) *Wages* .. gift.] *Opsōnia* .. *charisma*, allowances .. gratuity; a plain allusion to the regular *pay-and-rations* of the soldiery, and to the free donative, sometimes given at will by the Roman emperors. See Bloomfield, &c. Ed.

**NOTES.** CHAP. VII. V. 1—4. In interpreting these vs. the meaning of the word 'law' must be first carefully settled, whether the ceremonial law in particular, or the Mosaic dispensation in general; or the moral law, as requiring perfect obedience in order to 'justification of life,' he intended, 3:19, 20. Most expositors explain it either of the ceremonial law, or the Mosaic dispensation; but they do not assign any satisfactory reason, why sin must have dominion over a man, as long as he continued under the ceremonial law, or the Mosaic dispensation; or why deliverance from the law, in this sense, by professing the gospel, should ensure his liberty from that slavery: indeed, no such reason can be assigned. No doubt, great numbers under the Mosaic dispensation, were both justified and sanctified, by the mercy and grace of the new covenant; and their relation to the law did not prevent them from being made 'free from sin.' Ex. 19:5. On the other hand, immense numbers remain slaves to sin under the Christian dispensation; and their external privileges and profession do not deliver them. 2 Cor. 3:7—11. Gal. 4:21—31. But so long as a man continues 'under the law,' as a covenant, and seeks justification by his own obedience; he inevitably continues the slave of sin, in one form or other: because nothing but 'the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus' can make any sinner 'free from the law of sin and death;' 3:3, 4. And, on the other hand, every one who is delivered from the law, as a covenant, by living faith in Christ, is, by the 'Spirit of life' given to him, delivered from the bondage of sin, which shall never more have dominion over him.—The apostle's argument, through all the subsequent parts of this ch., relates exclusively to the moral law, and refers especially to the tenth commandment; as

found the service of sin, an unfruitful service. Besides the future losses, which are infinitely great, the very present gains of sin are not worth mentioning. It is an unbecoming service; that of which we are now ashamed; ashamed of the folly, ashamed of the filth of it. Shame came into the world with sin, and is still the certain product of it; either the shame of repentance, or, if not that, eternal shame and contempt. Who would wilfully do that which, sooner or later, he is sure to be ashamed of?

5. *Lastly*, He argues from the end of all these things; the prerogative of rational creatures is a power of prospect, of looking forward, considering the latter end of things. To persuade us from sin to holiness, here are *blessing and cursing, good and evil, life and death, set before us*; and we are put to our choice. (1.) The end of sin is death, v. 21. The way may seem pleasant and inviting, yet the end is dismal; *at the last it bites*; it will be bitterness in the latter end. Death is as *due* to a sinner, as *wages* to a servant, v. 23. This is true of every sin; there is no sin in its own nature venial; *death is the wages of the least sin*. (2.) *If the fruit be unto holiness*, if there be an active principle of true and growing grace, *the end will be everlasting life*; a very happy end! So, v. 23. *The gift of God is eternal life*. Heaven is life, consisting in the vision and fruition of God; and it is *eternal life*, no infirmities attending it, no death to put a period to it. This is *the gift of God*. The *death is the wages of sin*, it comes by desert; but *the life is a gift*, it comes by favor. And this gift is *through Jesus Christ our Lord*. He purchased it, prepared it, prepares us for it, preserves us to it; He is *the Alpha and Omega*, All in all in our salvation.

**CHAP. VII. V. 1—6.** Among other arguments used in the foregoing ch. to persuade us against sin, and to holiness, this was one, v. 14. *that we are not under the law*; and that argument he is here further insisting on and explaining, v. 6. *We are delivered from the law*. What does he mean by that? And

how is it an argument why sin should *not reign over us*, and why we should *walk in newness of life*. 1. *We are delivered from that power of the law*, which curses and condemns us for the sin committed by us. The sentence of the law against us is vacated and reversed, by the death of Christ, to all true believers, Gal. 3:13. 2. *We are delivered from that power of the law*, which irritates and provokes the sin that dwelleth in us. This the apostle seems especially to refer to, v. 5. We being lamed by the fall, the law comes and directs us, but provides nothing to heal and help our lameness, and so makes us halt and stumble the more. Understand this not of the law as a rule, but as a covenant of works.

Now each of these is an argument why we should be holy; for here is encouragement to endeavors, though in many things we come short. We are *under grace*, which promises strength to do what it commands, and pardon on repentance when we do amiss. This is the scope of these vs. in general, that, in point of profession and privilege, we are under a covenant of grace, and not of works; under the Gospel of Christ, and not the Law of Moses. The difference between a law-state and a gospel state he had before illustrated, by the similitude of rising to a new life, and serving a new master; here he speaks of it under the similitude of being married to a new husband.

1. Our first marriage was to the law, which, according to the law of marriage, was to continue only during the life of the law. The law of marriage is obliging, only till the death of one of the parties, no matter which, the death of either discharges both. For this he appeals to themselves, as persons knowing the law, v. 1. many of the Christians at Rome had been Jews, and so were well acquainted with the law. *The law hath power over a man as long as he liveth*; in particular, the law of marriage hath power; or, in general, every law is so limited. The obligation and condemnation extends no further; death is the finishing of the law. Thus while we were alive to the Law, we were

earnestly for help from above, we should refuse to yield any of our senses, or members, to be the instruments of unrighteousness; and seek to have them all devoted [and obedient] to God, and employed in his service; as those who have already entered on that divine and happy life, which we hope to lead to all eternity.—To this we may be encouraged, by the nature of the new covenant. If we be indeed Christians, we are 'not under the law,' which gives no power, and proposes no mercy; but 'under' the 'grace' of the Gospel; and this insures, to the regenerate and believing, the preservation and perfection of that 'liberty, with which Christ hath made him free.' Gal. 5:1—6. 13—15.—The real Christian finds, by experience, that his heart, as well as his state, is made new. Notwithstanding, therefore, 'the infirmities of the flesh,' he aims and prays to be enabled to spend all his powers and capacities, of body and soul, in the service of righteousness, unto increasing holiness. SCOTT.

those who explain these verses of the ceremonial law, or the Mosaic dispensation, are constrained to admit: 7—12. and though he speaks in the first three vs. of the law, in a more general sense; it should be noticed, that he is only illustrating his main subject by an apt similitude. — When the apostle particularly meant the *ceremonial*, in distinction from the *moral* law, he frequently spoke of it in diminutive terms. Eph. 2:15. Col. 2:20. Heb. 8:13. 9:10. .. But none of these lessening or distinctive characters of the law are found in this epistle, . . . to restrain it to the ceremonial law, in what is said about justification by its works.' *Guise*.—These remarks may prepare the way, for that interpretation of this passage, and of the ch., which, after mature deliberation, I have given. In ordinary cases, death alone dissolved the relation between the Jew and the law: yet in particular instances, the law became dead, and lost its authority to command or condemn a man, through his change of circumstances: and when the Jew became a Christian, and understood his Christian liberty, his relation to the Mosaic dispensation was finally terminated. From this case of a Jew, in respect of the law of Moses, as the condition of the national covenant, Ex. 19:5. 24:3, 4. Gal. 3:15—18. Heb. 8:7—13. 9:18—23. they might learn how the matter stood in respect of the *moral* law, as the condition of the covenant of works. The law respecting marriage in particular would aptly illustrate the subject.—The apostle does not, in this place, state the precepts concerning marriage, under the Christian dispensation; he merely shows, in one particular, how the case stood under the law: he says nothing concerning divorces or polygamy; neither does he intimate, that the man would be an adulterer, who took another wife, while his former was living, and not *legally* divorced: yet our Lord has taught this, Mat. 19:3—9. It would therefore be foreign to the apostle's design to interpret his words, as meaning that a woman, who had been equitably divorced, would be guilty of adultery, if she married again during her former husband's life: for neither the law of Moses, nor the precepts of Christ inculcate any such thing.—Now the case of the believer, in re-



3 So then, if, while <sup>b</sup> her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law <sup>c</sup> by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth <sup>d</sup> fruit unto God.

5 For when we were <sup>e</sup> in the flesh, the <sup>f</sup> motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit <sup>e</sup> unto death.

6 But now we are delivered from the law, <sup>h</sup> that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

7 What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not <sup>i</sup> known sin, but by the law: for I had not known <sup>j</sup> lust, except the law had <sup>k</sup> said, Thou shalt not covet.

b Mat. 5:32. c Ga. 5:19. d Ga. 5:22. e Ro. 8:3, 9. f passions. g c. 6:21. h or, being dead to that. i c. 3:20. j or, concupiscence. k Ex. 20:17.

under the power of it; while we were in our O. T. state, before the Gospel came into the world, and before it came with power into our hearts.

Such is the law of marriage, v. 2. the woman is bound to her husband during life, so bound to him, that she cannot marry another; if she do, she shall be reckoned an adulteress, v. 3. It will make her an adulteress, not only to be defiled by, but to be married to, another man; for that is so much the worse, on this account, that it abuses an ordinance of God, by making it to patronize the uncleanness.

Thus were we married to the law, v. 5. When we were in the flesh, i. e. in a carnal

aspect of the subject under consideration, bore some analogy to that which had been stated. Not only were the Jewish converts 'dead to' the Mosaic law, by its virtual abrogation; but all true Christians were become dead to the moral law, as a covenant of works, 'by the body of Christ,' by his incarnation, obedience, and sacrifice on the cross for their transgressions. Eph. 2:14-18. He having thus answered its demands as their Surety, it had no further power to condemn; but believers were looked upon as if they had fully endured its sentence, and fulfilled its righteousness, by their Surety and Representative. Thus the relation between them and the law, as the condition of a covenant between God and them, was dissolved, even as marriage is dissolved by the natural or legal death of either party; and this was in order to their being 'married to Christ as risen from the dead,' that, being united to Him, according to the covenant of grace, and made partakers of all his 'unsearchable riches,' they might, by 'the supply of his Spirit,' bring forth such fruit in their lives, as bore the holy stamp of God upon it, was meet for his gracious acceptance, and honorable to his name.—It should be remembered, that many (probably most) of the Christians at Rome had been Gentiles, who never were under the Mosaic law; and even the Jewish converts were not, as yet, required to renounce it. This consideration fully proves, that no mere change of external state is exclusively meant, as many learned commentators have supposed. Gal. 2:17-21. SCOTT.

(1.) 'Commentators seem agreed upon little else in this ch. than that vs. 1-6. have a close connexion with the preceding ch. So that the present division occurs at a very wrong place. . . That Paul addresses Jewish Christians, and by law means that of Moses, is held by Chrys., the Gr. comtrs., and most moderns, as Grot., Beza, Willet, Tolet., Wetst., Ros., Hardy, and especially Locke, "as evident from the whole ch., especially v. 1, 4, 6." But Estius, Crell., Sch., Kop., Mid., and partly Mackn., think he addresses all Christians, and means law universally. Kop. strenuously maintains, that any law is meant, including, of course, the Mosaic, which he acknowledges is especially adverted to in this ch. ['Law, in this v. seems used generally.' Hodge.] BLOOMF.

(4.) 'Thus, my brethren, ye also have become dead. . . in order that ye should be joined to another who is risen,' &c. St. 'Now ye Jewish Christians being dead by baptism, (6 3, 4.) the bond between you and the Mosaic law is broken. . . "So that now ye are another's," i. e. "are no longer subject to the dead and abrogated law, but are immediately added unto Christ." The church also is compared to a spouse, at 2 Cor. 11:2. Eph. 5:49.' Ros.

state, under the reigning power of sin and corruption; our desire was to sin, as that of the wife to her husband, and sin ruled over us; we embraced it, loved it, devoted all to it, conversed daily with it, made it our care to please it; we were under a law of sin and death, and the product of this marriage was fruit brought forth unto death, i. e. actual transgressions were produced by the original corruptions, such as deserve death. This comes of the motions of sin working in our members. And this continues during life, while the law is alive to us, and we to the law.

II. Our second marriage is to Christ: and how comes that about? Why,

1. We are freed, by death, from our obligation to the law as a covenant, as the wife is from her obligation to her husband, v. 3. This application is not very close, nor needed it to be, v. 4. Ye are become dead to the law, He does not say, 'The law is dead;' some think, because he would avoid giving offence to those who were yet zealous for the law; but, which comes all to one, Ye are dead to the law. We are delivered from the law, v. 6. we are nulled as to the law; our obligation to it is made void. And then he speaks of the law being dead, as far as it was an imprisoned law to us, that being dead wherein we were held; not the law itself, but its obligation to punishment, and its provocation to sin, that is dead, it has lost its power; and this, v. 4. by the body of Christ, i. e. by the sufferings of Christ in his body, crucified, which abrogated the law, answered the demands of it, made satisfaction for our violation of it, purchased for us a covenant of grace, in which righteousness and strength are laid up for us, such as were not, nor could be, by the law. We are dead to the law, by our union with the mystical body of Christ; by being incorporated into Christ in our baptism professedly, in our believing powerfully and effectually, we are dead to the law, have no more to do with it than the dead servant, that is free from his master, hath to do with his master's yoke.

2. We are married to Christ. The day of our believing, is the day of our espousals to the Lord Jesus. Married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead; a periphrasis of Christ, very pertinent here; for as our dying to sin and the law is in conformity to the death of Christ, and the cru-

cifying of his body; so our devotedness to Christ in newness of life, is in conformity to the resurrection of Christ. Comp. 2 Cor. 11:2. Eph. 5:29 Now the great end of this is, our fruitfulness in love, and grace, and every good work. That is fruit unto God, pleasing to God, according to his will, aiming at his glory. Whatever our professions and pretensions be, there is no fruit brought forth to God, till then; it is in Christ Jesus that we are created unto good works, Eph. 2:10. This distinguishes the good works of believers, from the good works of hypocrites and self-justifiers, Col. 3:17. Without controversy, this is one of the great mysteries of godliness.

(1.) That we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter, v. 6. Being married to a new husband, we must change our way. Still we must serve, but it is a service that is perfect freedom, whereas the service of sin was a perfect drudgery: we must now serve in newness of spirit, by new spiritual rules, from new spiritual principles, in the spirit, and in truth, John 4:24. There must be a renovation of our spirits, wrought by the Spirit of God, and in that we must serve.

(2.) Not in the oldness of the letter; we must not rest in mere external services, as the carnal Jews did, and minded not the spiritual part of worship. The letter is said to kill with its bondage and terror, but we are delivered from that yoke, that we might serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness, Luke 1:74, 75. We are under the dispensation of the Spirit, and therefore must be spiritual, and serve in the Spirit. Comp. 2 Cor. 3:3, 6, &c. It becomes us to worship within the veil, and no longer in the outward court.

V. 7-14. To what he had said in the former paragraph, the apostle here raises an objection, which he answers very fully; What shall we say then? Is the law sin? When he had been speaking of the dominion of sin, he had said so much of the influence of the law as a covenant on that dominion, that it might easily be misinterpreted as a reflection on the law; to prevent which he shows from his own experience, the great excellency and usefulness of the law, not as a covenant, but as a guide; and further discovers how sin took occasion by the commandment.

V. 5, 6. 'Some of "the works of the flesh do not require the members of our body," . . . but only the faculties of our minds, for their performance.' Locke. SCOTT.

(5.) 'Grot. truly remarks, that few under the law were spiritual; most were carnal, having little or no hope of another life, and therefore given up to the cares and pleasures of this. The strongest confirmation of this, I add, may be found in the facts recorded by their great historian [Jos.], and the confessions of their equally great moralist and philosopher [Philo].—Chrys. and Theoph. observe, that the blame of sin is laid on the passions, not the members. For, add they, "the soul is like a harper, and the members are the harp: if the harper plays badly, the harp sounds ill." Bl. 'V. 5. here is the theme of discussion through vs. 7-25; while v. 6. (the antithesis of v. 5.) constitutes the theme of 8:1-11. which is in all important respects the antithesis of 7:7-25.' St. Also Kuapp, Tholuck, Flatt, &c. EN.

(5, 6.) Motions of sins.] 'A Heb. expression, signifying "the sinful affections, lusts, passions, and evil propensities of our corrupt nature." Bloomf. 'Our sinful passions . . . wrought powerfully, &c., but now we are freed from the law by which we were held in bondage, inasmuch as we have become dead to it; so that we must serve (God) in newness of spirit, and not in the old and literal manner.' St. I. e. 'according to a new and spiritual mode, not in the old and literal one.' Bl. Held.] 'As in stocks.' STUART.

(5-25.) Since many regard the psychological system of the phrenologists as most helpful to explain the apostle's language, it is added at the end of the ch. The reader will consult with profit the discussions hence arising, in Stuart's Com. on Rom. comparing with Hodge. Ed.

V. 7, 8. It might be objected to the above statement, that if those who were under the law inevitably remained the slaves of sin, and if none could serve God in newness of spirit, till they were 'dead to the law,' and it to them; surely 'the law' and 'sin' were in reality the same: and would not this cast a vile aspersion on the holy law of God? 1-4. 5:20, 21.—In particular, the apostle observes, that, by his natural conscience without the law, he should not have known that 'lust,' or coveting, was sinful: he should not have supposed, that, while free from adultery, theft, or murder, [&c.] the desire of a forbidden indulgence, or an object withheld by Providence, was criminal, even so criminal as to expose him to the curse of the law. Ex. 20:17. Mat. 5:27, 28. That man has no deep knowledge of human nature, or the perverse wickedness of his own heart, who does not observe, or is not conscious, of this irrational propensity, to fancy that there is something exquisitely pleasurable, in what



8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law, sin was dead.

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

1 Eze. 20:11, &c.

I. The great excellency of the law in itself. Far be it from Paul to reflect on the law.

1. It is holy, just, and good, v. 12. The law in general is so, every particular commandment is so; laws are as the law-makers are; God, the great Lawgiver, is holy, just, and good, therefore his law must needs be so: it is holy, as being agreeable to the holy will of God, the original of holiness; just, as consonant to the rules of equity and right reason; and good, as given for the good of mankind. Wherever there is true grace, there is an assent to this,—that the law is holy, just, and good.

2. The law is spiritual, v. 14. not only in regard of the effect of it, as it is a mean of making us spiritual; but in regard of the extent of it, it reaches our spirits, [our thoughts and desires.] Heb. 4:12. it forbids spiritual wickedness, it commands spiritual service. It is spiritual, as given by God, who is a Spirit, and the Father of spirits;

and given to man, whose principal part is spiritual; herein it is above all other laws. Other laws cannot take cognizance, unless there be some overt act; but the law of God takes notice of the iniquity regarded in the heart, though it go no further. Wash thy heart from wickedness, Jer. 4:14. Farther, wherever there is true grace, there is an experimental knowledge (we know, v. 14.) of the spirituality of the law of God.

II. The great advantage he had found by the law.

1. It was discovering, v. 7. As that which is straight discovers that which is crooked, as the looking-glass shows us our natural face, with all its spots and deformities; so there is no way of coming to that knowledge of sin which is necessary to repentance, and consequently to peace and pardon, but by comparing our hearts and lives with the law. Particularly, he came to the knowledge of the sinfulness of lust, by the law of the tenth commandment: the law spake in other language than the Scribes and Pharisees made it to speak in; it spake in the spiritual sense and meaning. By this, he knew that lust [inordinate desire] is sin, and very sinful; that those motions and desires of the heart toward sin, which never came into act, are sinful, exceeding sinful. There is nothing about which the natural man is more blind, than about original corruption, concerning which the understanding is altogether in the dark, till the Spirit by the law reveal it, and make it known. We never see the desperate venom and malignity there are in sin, till we come to compare it with the law, and the spiritual nature of the law, and then we see it to be an evil and a bitter thing.

2. It was humbling, v. 19. he thought himself in a very good condition, was alive in his own opinion and apprehension; very secure and confident of the goodness of his state. Thus he was once, in times past, and the reason was, he was then without the law. He had the letter, but not the spiritual meaning; the shell, but not the kernel. He had the law in his hand, in his head, but not in his heart; the notion of it, but not the power of it. Many are so, and it is their strangeness to the law, that is the cause of the mistake. But when the commandment came, came in the power of it, sin revived, as the dust in a room rises, i. e. appears, when the sunshine is let into it. Paul then saw that in sin which he had never seen before; he then saw sin in its causes, the bitter root, the corrupt bias, the bent to backslide; sin in its colors, deforming, defiling, breaking a righteous law, affronting an awful Majesty, profaning a Sovereign crown by casting it to the ground; sin in its consequences, sin with death at the heels of it, sin and the curse entailed upon it.

Of this excellent use is the law, it is a lamp and a light, it converts the soul, opens the eyes, prepares the way of the Lord in the desert, rends the rocks, levels the mountains, makes ready a people prepared for the Lord.

III. The ill use his corrupt nature made of the law notwithstanding.

1. Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence, v. 8. Observe, Paul, though one of the best unregenerate men that ever was, as touching the righteousness of the law, blameless, was yet sensible of all manner of concupiscence. And it was sin that wrought it,

is out of our reach, or prohibited. Indeed it seems natural to expect, that it would be so with the posterity of those, who could be satisfied with no fruit in the garden of God, except that which He had forbidden. We readily observe this propensity in others, especially in our children; though perhaps self-love may make us blind to it in ourselves.—Thus the spiritual precepts and awful sanctions of the law, excite the depravity of the heart by their contrariety to it; as the alkali produces an effervescence by its contrariety to the acid; and so the heart rises in blasphemous enmity to the law, and rushes more impetuously into transgression.—In what sense can this be applied to the ceremonial law, the ordinances of which a carnal mind might readily comply with, provided their relation to the gospel were not perceived? Does the tenth commandment belong to the ceremonial law? Where is the marked transition, from the ceremonial to the moral law, to be found in this discussion? Is not the apostle evidently throughout illustrating one proposition; namely, that 'those who are under the law are slaves to sin?' The inconsistency of expositors, who set out with confining the meaning to the ceremonial law, or the Mosaic dispensation; and then glide, either imperceptibly to themselves, or at least without hinting it to their readers, to the most spiritual precept of the moral law, must be obvious to every attentive student: and the perplexity which arises from this source is inexpressible.—It is surprising to me, that the learned Mr. Locke, and some others after him, should make the sense of the passage to be, "without the law," (meaning the law given by Moses,) "sin is dead," not able to hurt me; or, without the law of Moses, which annexes death to transgression, sin is as good as dead, is not able to have its will against me, and bring death upon me. For this is contrary to the apostle's peremptory assertions, that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin;" "that sin was in the world until," or all along before, "the law;" and that "death reigned from Adam to Moses." (5:12—14.) How then could it be said, that sin was not able to hurt the apostle, or to bring death on him, or on any other Jew, without the law of Moses: since "it had reigned unto death" so many hundred years before that law was given; and we are told, that the very heathens, who had only the law of nature, knew the judgment of God, that the transgressors of that law were worthy of death? Rom. 1:32. Guise. Scott.

(7.) 'Still, I had not known sin except by the law; for I had not known even inordinate desire, [and what desire, or degree of it, was to be accounted by God and by myself inordinate? Ed.] unless the law had said: "Thou shalt not lust." St. Photinus, (Ecum., [the most ancient fathers, St.] and the best modern contrs. are agreed, that Paul here, and to the end of the ch., is not speaking in his own person, or of his own case, but assumes that of human nature; [but see Scott, seq.] to avoid offence to the Jews.' Bl.: and see Stuart's Exc. VI. All men, however, have moral perceptions, and conversion regulates and controls but does not annihilate any primitive faculty or instinct. Ed.

(8.) Concupiscence.] 'Inordinate desire. Was.] Is' St. The Gr. epithumia, here tr. lust, at v. 7. signifies a strong desire of any kind; and is used in a good sense; (see on Luke 22 15.) or in a general but evil sense, Gal. 5:16. Eph. 2:3. 1 Pet. 4:2, 3.' Sc. 'By sin is here meant, the propensity to sin, and that even involuntary, as 9, 15, the lamentable perversity of inclination incident to human nature, and so unequivocally acknowledged even by the heathen writers.' Bl. Philo compares these desires to a tiger, or other wild beast; so Livy speaks of 'luxury, (sensuality,) as a fierce beast, irritated by its very chains;' moralists still use the expressions, 'animal propensities,' 'animalism;' and we all experience in a greater or less degree how restraint, or a rule which fixes our thoughts to them and their objects, operates to increase their force. Prayer, which quiets their action by leading the thoughts far away, and

excites the other and higher nature, is the best remedy; for we have the precept, 'Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.' Ed.

V. 9—12. It seems evident, that the apostle in these vs., and in the subsequent part of the ch., spoke literally of himself, and his own experience. If he personated another man, why did he not give some intimation of his design? In another place he fairly brought forward the Jew; 2:17—29. and ambiguity is no characteristic of his writings. Indeed, I apprehend, that the more humble and spiritual any Christian is, the more clearly will he perceive, that the apostle describes the experience of the true believer, from his first convictions, to his greatest progress in grace during this present imperfect state. His avowed object is to show, that the law can do nothing for a sinner, either to justify or sanctify him; and that the believer feels this daily, as long as he lives. 'I was,' says he, 'alive, without the law once;' he was once a Pharisee, ignorant of the spirituality of the law, and, . . . having some general decency of character, without any acquaintance with his inward depravity, he concluded that his heart and life were good, and that he was in a state of acceptance with God. But when 'the commandment came' to his conscience, by the convictions of the Holy Spirit, and he perceived its righteous and extensive requirements, and its severe denunciations; he found the sinful propensities of his heart, which before seemed dormant, rise against it; and every endeavor to fulfil its precepts, showed him more plainly his inability to do it. Thus his former hopes died away; he found himself a helpless sinner, under merited condemnation, and became as a dead man, except as the Gospel revived him from despondency. 2 Cor. 5:13—15. Thus the law, which was originally ordained to life for holy creatures, and from which, he, though a sinner, had expected heaven, was 'found to be unto death:' even as the law of any country, which secures the lives of honest men, is 'found to be unto death' by the murderer or robber.—The ceremonial law was not 'ordained unto life,' except as it pointed out Christ, the Substance of its shadows; and it was found unto death by none, but those who made it an appendix to the covenant of works, and rejected Christ for the sake of it: and this perfectly coincides with the interpretation above given.—Sin, the corruption of fallen nature, being averse to the holy strictness of the moral law, by its extreme deceitfulness, seduced Paul into various transgressions, and thus slew all his self-righteous hopes, and actually brought him under deeper condemnation. Not that the law caused this, or even gave any just occasion for it: but 'sin took occasion' from it; as a wicked man takes occasion from a pious discourse, or a friendly admonition, to scoff, blaspheme, or rage the more. Prov. 9:7—9. 23:9. Mat. 7:6. Acts 18:1—6. The whole law must therefore be allowed to be perfectly holy, the transcript of the divine character; and each commandment most 'holy,' at the utmost distance from moral evil; most 'just,' as requiring nothing more than what is righteously due to God and our neighbors; and most 'good,' as tending to the true welfare of ourselves, our families, the community, and all mankind: so that the universal observance of it would almost annihilate the evils of the world, and convert earth into heaven. Ex. 20:1, 17. Ps. 19:7—11. Gal. 3:19—22. 1 Tim. 1:8—11.—The apostle never passes such eulogiums on the ceremonial law, or the Mosaic dispensation: they had a temporary fitness and goodness; but they 'made nothing perfect,' and consisted of 'carnal ordinances,' which continued in force 'till the time of reformation,' and no longer. Heb. 9:8—10. Scott.

(9.) 'To say that sin was dead, and to say that I was alive, is saying the same thing, as to sentiment; for wherever sin lives the man dies [and vice versa], as the sequel of the v. clearly shows.' Stuart.

(10.) 'But I died; yea, the commandment which was unto life, the very same was found to be death to me.' St. 'This law may be said to



12 Wherefore the law <sup>m</sup> is holy ; and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me ? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good ; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

14 For we know that the law is spiritual : but I am carnal, sold <sup>n</sup> under sin.

15 For that which I do, I <sup>o</sup> allow not : for what I would, that do I not ; but what I hate, that do I.

m Ps. 19:7,9. n 2 K. 17:17. o know.

indwelling sin, his corrupt nature ; (he speaks of a sin that did *work* sin ;) and it took *occasion by the commandment*. The corrupt nature would not have swelled and raged so much, if it had not been for the restraints of the law ; it is incident to corrupt nature, *in vetitum niti*,—to lean towards what is forbidden. Ever since Adam ate forbidden fruit, we have all been fond of forbidden paths ; the diseased appetite is carried out most strongly toward that which is hurtful and prohibited. *Without the law sin was dead*, as a snake in winter, when the sunbeams of the law quicken and irritate.

2. It *deceived me*. Sin puts a cheat on the sinner, a fatal cheat, *v. 11*. *By it*, by the commandment, *slew me*. There being in the law no such express threatening against sinful lustings, sin, i. e. his own corrupt nature, took occasion from thence to promise him impunity, and to say, as the serpent to our first parents, *Ye shall not surely die*. Thus it deceived and slew him.

3. It *wrought death in me by that which is good*, *v. 13*. That which works concupis-

cence, works death, for sin bringeth forth death. Nothing so good but a corrupt and vicious nature will pervert it, and make it an occasion of sin ; no flower so sweet, but it will suck poison out of it. Now in this, *sin appears sin*. The worst thing sin does, and most like itself, is the perverting of the law, and taking occasion from it to be so much the more malignant.

Thus the commandment, which was *ordained to life*—was intended as a guide in the way to comfort and happiness, proved unto *death*, through the corruption of nature, *v. 10*. Many a precious soul splits upon the rock of salvation. And the same Word which to some is an occasion of life unto life, is, to others, an occasion of death unto death. The same sun that makes the garden of flowers more fragrant, makes the dunghill more noisome : the same heat that softens wax, hardens clay ; and the same Child was set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel. The way to prevent this mischief, is, to bow our souls to the commanding authority of the word and law of God, not striving against, but submitting to it.

V. 14—25. Here is a description of the conflict between grace and corruption in the heart, applicable two ways ; I. To the struggles in a convinced soul, but yet unregenerate : in the person of whom it is supposed, by some, Paul speaks. II. To struggles in a renewed, sanctified soul, but yet in a state of imperfection, as others apprehend.

I. Applying it to the struggles in a convinced soul, yet in a state of sin, that knows his Lord's will but does it not, approves the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law, and yet lives in the constant breach of it, *ch. 2:17—23*. though he has that within him that witnesses against the sin he commits, and it is not without great reluctancy he does commit it ; the superior faculties striving against it, natural conscience warning against it before it is committed, and smiting for it afterward,

yet the man continues a slave to his reigning lusts.\*

It is not thus with every unregenerate man, but with those only that are convinced by the law, but not changed by the gospel. The apostle had said, *ch. 6:14*. *That sin shall not have dominion, because ye are not under the law, but under grace*. For the proof of which, he here shows that a man under the law, and not under grace, may be, and is, under the dominion of sin ; the law may discover sin, and convince of sin, but it cannot conquer and subdue sin, witness the predominancy of sin [a selfish propensity] in many that are under very strong legal convictions : it may make him feel the *burden* of sin, *Mat. 11:28*. but cannot relieve him ; Christ only can do that. It may make a man cry out, *O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me ?* and yet leave him thus fettered and captivated, as being too weak to deliver him, *ch. 8:3*. give him a spirit of bondage to fear, *ch. 8:15*. Now a soul, advanced thus far by the law, is in a fair way towards a state of liberty by Christ ; though many rest here, and go no further, as Felix. A man *may* go to hell with his eyes open, *Num. 24:3, 4*. illuminated with common convictions ; and carry about with him a self-accusing conscience, even in the service of the devil ; he may *consent to the law, that it is good ; delight to know God's ways*, as they, *Is. 58:2*. may have that within him, that witnesses *against sin, and for holiness* ; and yet all this overpowered by the reigning love of sin. Drunkards, [misers, gluttons, cruel, quarrelsome, selfish, malicious, proud, or] unclean persons, have some faint desires to leave off their sins, and yet persist in them notwithstanding, such are the impotency and insufficiency of their convictions.

Of such as these many will needs have all this understood, and contend earnestly for it : though it is very hard to imagine why,

\* This might seem untrue, if asserted absolutely, yet the struggle is less and less, as the propensities get more entirely the upper hand. See farther onward. Ed.

have been *intended for life*, though by sin made the occasion of death ; as medicines which, not being rightly applied, prove fatal, may nevertheless be said to have been *intended for cure*.  
DODD.

(12.) *Holy . . . just . . . good.*] *Hagios . . . dikaios . . . agathos . . . hagios*, like the Latin *sanctus*, is an epithet especially appropriated to law, and signifies what may justly claim reverence. *Dikaios* signifies *just in itself*, and is here employed to denote, that the law is not the cause of the misery of those who violate it. As to *agathē*, it signifies *calculated for good* ; and all this by the eternal rule of right [i. e. God's will].  
BL.

V. 13. Wholesome food, or a valuable medicine, through a diseased state of the body, or when taken improperly, may 'occasion' death, contrary to its general and proper tendency : but poison kills, as a *cause*, by its native efficacy. The law may *occasion* death through man's depravity ; but sin is the poison that *causes* death. Thus through the commandment 'sin became exceeding sinful ; i. e. the odious and ruinous nature of sin, as well as the sinfulness of the human heart, were most clearly shown ; in order that the abounding grace of God might appear the more glorious.  
SCOTT.

(13.) "Has then that which is good become death to me?"—By no means ; but sin (becomes death), in order that it might manifest itself, causing death to me by that which is good, so that sin, through the commandment, might be exceeding sinful.' *St.* 'But by means of this good law, sin produced my ruin ; thus showing, through the law, its really detestable character. *Turner*. Just like a disorder, which, when it has become worse, may be said to display, by *means of the medical art*, its malignity, as not being removed even by *that*.  
THEOPH.  
BLOOMF.

V. 14. The apostle here proceeds to confirm his position. 'We know,' says he, and allow, 'that the law is spiritual,' . . . and allows of nothing but what is done from the most pure and sublime motives, and in perfect love, zeal, gratitude, and delight. Compared with this most holy rule of conduct, the apostle found that he was 'carnal, sold under sin ;' his nature was perfectly opposite to this spiritual law ; and, even after all his attainments in grace, he found himself so very far short of this perfection, and in every respect so unable to attain to it, though he ardently aspired after it ; that he seemed comparatively to be 'carnal,' and like a man who is sold against his will to a hated master, from whom he can by no means set himself at liberty. (*M. R. q-s.*)—Numbers cannot conceive, that Paul could mean this of himself as a confirmed believer ; and, finding it to be inseparably connected with what follows, they would explain the whole of an awakened Jew, or some other convinced sinner, who is seeking justification by the 'works of the law ;' or at most an unconfirmed believer. But such things are spoken, as are true of none but real Christians ; and the whole is actually verified in their experience. Every believer is 'carnal' in exact proportion to the degree, in which he falls short of *perfect* conformity to the law of God : and he indignantly and reluctantly thus far serves an abhorred master ; yet cannot shake off the galling chain, till his powerful and gracious Friend comes to rescue him from it. . . . As the apostle was far more enlightened and humble than Christians in general are, doubtless this clog was more uneasy to him, than it is to them ; though most of us find our lives at times greatly embittered by it. So that this energetic language,

which many imagine to describe an unestablished believer's experience, or even that of an unconverted person, seems to have resulted from the extraordinary degree of Paul's sanctification, and the depth of his self-abasement and hatred of sin ; and the reason of our not readily understanding him seems to be, because we are so far beneath him in holiness, humility, acquaintance with the spirituality of God's law, and the evil of our own hearts, and in our degree of abhorrence of moral evil. In the former part of the *ch.*, the apostle had spoken in the past tense, 'I was alive, &c.' (9) but here he uses the present, to which he uniformly adheres in what follows. Thus in another place he says, 'What things were gain to me, these I *counted* loss for Christ ; yea, doubtless, and I *count* all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, &c.' *Phil. 3:1—11. vv. 7—9*. Some, indeed, suppose the transition from the experience of the apostle, under his first convictions, to his subsequent conflict with indwelling sin, to be made at the next *v.* ; but the change of tense in this place does not admit of that construction.—In the very same *ch.* in which our Lord pronounces Peter 'blessed,' as a believer, he says, 'Thou savorest not the things that be of God. but those that be of men :' *Mat. 16:17—23*. i. e. thou art 'carnal,' not totally, but in a considerable degree. Humbly to confess, and deeply to lament, that we are thus 'carnal and sold under sin,' is very far indeed from the disposition and conduct of the willing slave to his lusts ; and the readiness with which numbers of the most eminent believers adopt the apostle's language, shows that it is very suitable to their strong feelings of abhorrence of sin, and of self-abasement. 'I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.' *Job 1:1. 42:1—9. P. O. 1—6* 'Woe is me ! for I am undone : for I am a man of unclean lips.' *Is. 6:5. P. O. 1—8*. 'My soul cleaveth unto the dust.' *Ps. 119:25*. 'Surely I am more brutish than any man !' *Prov. 30:2, 3*.—Indeed all the complaints of the prevalence of sin, and all the longings and pantings after holiness, and all the earnest cries for pardon, teaching, quickening grace which pervade the book of Psalms, especially *Ps. 119*. are entirely coincident with this complaint of the apostle, and arise precisely from the same source ; a 'delight in the law of God ;' and a painful consciousness of great remaining want of conformity to it. *Ps. 119:5. Mat. 5:6.—Sold under sin.*] *Mat. 18:25, et al.—1 S. 23:7. 1 K. 21:25. Is. 50:1. 52:3. Sept. 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 17, 20, 23.*—In all these texts with the article, 'the sin, which dwelleth in us,' and which the apostle speaks of as a person, or agent, is evidently intended.  
SCOTT.

V. 15—17. The apostle here begins more particularly to enlarge on the conflict he daily maintained with the remainder of his original depravity. He earnestly desired, and fully determined, if possible, to perform a perfect obedience to the law of God ; but he continually fell short of this : and, while he 'hated' and abhorred every kind and degree of sin, he found it impracticable wholly to avoid committing it in work, or word, or thought. In thus doing what he 'hated,' and desired above all things to shun, he 'consented to the law, that it was good ;' and as the prevailing bias of the soul was to holiness, he was evidenced by it to be a regenerate man, under the covenant of grace ; so that it would not be laid to his charge, in the day of judgment, that he did the evil which he hated, but it would be placed to the account of 'the sin,



16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that *it is good*.

17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

p Ge. 6:5.

q Ga. 5:17.

if the apostle intended this, he should speak all along in his own person; and not only so, but in the present tense. Of his own state under conviction he had spoken at large, as of a thing *past*, v. 7, &c. *I DIED*; *the commandment I FOUND to be unto death*; and if here he speaks of the same state as his *present state*, and the condition he was *now* in, surely he did not intend to be so understood: therefore,

II. It seems rather to be understood of the struggles between grace and corruption, in sanctified souls. That there are remainders of indwelling corruption, even there where there is a living principle of grace, is past dispute; that that corruption is daily breaking forth in sins of infirmity, (such as are consistent with a state of grace,) is no less certain. If we say we have no sin, *we* deceive ourselves, 1 John 1:8, 10. That true grace strives against these sins and corruptions, does not allow of them, hates them, mourns over them, groans under them as a burden, is likewise certain, Gal. 5:17. These are the truths which, I think, are here contained. And the apostle's design is further to open the nature of sanctification, that it does not attain to a sinless perfection in

which dwelt in him, as a detested inmate, and which he was not able to expel, though not willing to obey it. Ps. 66:18, 19. 119:113. Phil. 3:12-14. The apostle certainly did not mean to excuse his sinfulness, as if he might not *justly* have been condemned for it: but to show that 'righteousness could' in no case 'be by the law;' and that, by the grace of the gospel, a man's state and character are determined, according to what *habitually* prevails in his heart and life; notwithstanding impediments and restraints. A wicked man feels some inward opposition to his crimes, from conscience, fear, or shame, [&c.] and he meets with various obstacles to the gratification of his desires: yet all this is accounted for nothing, while sin habitually prevails in his heart and conduct, and he does not hate it. Ps. 36:3, 4. A godly man has great hindrances in his holy progress, from indwelling sin and outward temptation: yet this is not imputed to him for *condemnation*, seeing the prevailing state of his heart and tenor of his conduct are holy. Thus Judas, in betraying Christ, acted in character, according to the habitual, though concealed, state of his heart; it was 'Judas that did it;' but Peter, through sudden temptation, acted out of character, and contrary to the habitual state of his heart, in denying Christ; it was 'not he, but the sin that dwelt in him;' i. e. according to the gracious tenor of the new covenant. Sc.

(15.) *Allow.*] 'Approve, by a Hebraism for *ylá*, as in Hos. 8:4.' *Bl.* 'A continual struggle between the animal and rational desires. The ancients referred the origin of all vice in action to the body.' *Ros.* 'It is plainly the effect of sin, especially of habitual sin, so to darken the understanding and sear the conscience, that the sinner is scarcely aware of his criminality, nor even distinctly sees the consequence of his crimes. Most assuredly the want of this intellectual and moral liberty is one of the most striking features of spiritual bondage. Such was the fate of all who lived before the Gospel, [and of the heathen now,] and such is that of all regenerate persons under it.'

BLOOME.

(17.) *Whitby and Mackn.* here observe, that Paul, for the purpose of his argument, considers man as having two distinct natures, the spiritual and the carnal. Comp. v. 22. 8:1, 2. 2 Cor. 4:16. Rom. 6:6. Eph. 4:22. Col. 3:19. In Xen. (Cyp.) Araspus complains of two souls contending within him.' *Bl.* Where two impulses clash, that which regards the most extensive happiness is the superior: thus love to God, as it comprehends the universe, is the highest motive. Note, end of ch. Ep.

V. 18-21. The apostle 'knew, that in him,' as a fallen creature, apart from regenerating grace, 'no good thing,' but sin and only sin was found; though its actings were more specious at one time than another. Gen. 6:5. Jer. 17:9, 10. Mat. 15:15-20. It is evident from the limitation, 'that is, in my flesh,' that he spoke as a believer, who had grace, as well as 'sin dwelling in him:' for by 'flesh,' in this connexion, he does not mean the body as distinct from the soul, but 'the old man,' or unregenerate human nature, as the subsequent parts of the argument fully prove; and this nature,\* derived from fallen Adam, never concurs with

\* Others would explain this to be the inherited tendency of man's constitution to inordinancy: since man has not two identities at one time. *Ed.*

this life: and therefore to quicken us to, and encourage us in, our conflicts with remaining corruptions; our case is not singular, that which we do sincerely strive against, shall not be laid to our charge; and through grace the victory is sure at last. Understanding it thus, observe,

1. What he complains of; the remainder of indwelling corruptions; to show that the law is insufficient to justify even a regenerate man, that the best man in the world hath enough in him to condemn him, if God should deal with him according to the law; which is not the fault of the law, but of our own corrupt nature, which cannot fulfil the law. The repetition of the same things over and over again in this discourse, shows how much Paul's heart was affected with what he wrote, and how deep his sentiments were. Particularly,

(1.) *I am carnal, sold under sin*, v. 14. He speaks of the Corinthians as *carnal*, 1 Cor. 3:1. Even there where there is spiritual life, there are remainders of carnal affections, and a man may be so far *sold under sin*; he does not sell himself to work wickedness, as Ahab did, 1 K. 21:25. but he was *sold* by Adam when he sinned and fell; sold, as a poor slave that does his master's will, against his own will; sold under sin, because conceived in iniquity, and born in sin.

(2.) *What I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I*, v. 15. And to the same purport, v. 19, 21. Such was the strength of corruptions, that he could not reach at that perfection in holiness which he did [conceive of] desire and breathe after. Thus, while he was pressing forward toward perfection, yet he acknowledges he had not already attained, neither was already perfect, Phil. 3:12. Fain he would be free from all sin, and perfectly do the will of God, such was his settled judgment; but his corrupt nature drew him another way; it was like a clog, that checked and kept him down when he would have soared upward; like the bias in a bowl, which, when it is thrown straight, yet draws it aside.

(3.) *In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good*, v. 18. Here he explains himself concerning the corrupt nature, which he calls *flesh*; as far as that goes, there is no good to be expected; any more than one would expect good corn growing on a rock, or on the sand by the seaside. As the new nature, as far as that goes, cannot commit sin, 1 John 3:9. so the *flesh*, the old nature, as far as that goes, cannot perform a good duty. How should it? For the *flesh serveth the law of sin*, v. 25. it is under the conduct and government of that law; and while it is so, it is not like to do any good. The corrupt nature is elsewhere called *flesh*, Gen. 6:3. John 3:6. and though there may be good things dwelling in those that have this flesh, yet, as far as the flesh goes, there is no good, the flesh is not a subject capable of any good.

(4.) *I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind*, v. 23. The corrupt and sinful inclination is here compared to a law, because it controlled and checked him in his good motions. It is said to be seated in *his members*; because Christ having set up his throne in his heart, it was only the rebellious members of the body that were the instruments of sin. In the sensitive appetite, [the lower, selfish, or the animal propensities,] or we may take it more generally, for all that corrupt nature which is the seat not only of sensual but of more refined lusts. This wars against the *law of the mind*, the [higher, impulsive sentiments, enlightened and inspired, the] new nature; it draws the contrary way, drives on a contrary interest; which corrupt disposition and inclination are as great a burden and grief to the soul, as the worst drudgery and captivity could be. *It brings me into captivity*. To the same purport. v. 25.

(5.) His general complaint we have, v. 24. *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* The thing he complains of, is, a body of death; either the body of flesh, which is a mortal, dying body, or the body of sin, the old man, the corrupt nature, which tends to death; or,

the Holy Spirit in regeneration, or with the new man afterwards, but always strives against both. 5, 6. 8:1-13. John 3:6. Gal. 5:6-18. The apostle became more deeply acquainted with this humiliating truth by his experience subsequent to conversion, than he had been before. Formerly he perhaps supposed, that a little good disposition, or moral ability to holiness, was in man; but this was now experimentally disproved. He was obliged, contrary to his habitually prevalent inclinations, to live under a sort of necessity of being sinful; and he could only persist in maintaining the conflict with his inward enemies, without being able entirely to extirpate them. Ps. 119:5. 2 Cor. 7:1. For, indeed, he found, by painful experience, that there was 'a law' imposed on him, in his present state of warfare, that when he was most desirous of 'doing good, evil was present with him,' to interrupt, [aggrieve,] buffet, discourage, and defile him.—Let any man who knows his own heart, and the *spirituality* of the law of God, compare his actual conduct, comprising his thoughts, motives, affections, words, and works, during any given time, with his purposes, prevailing desires, and earnest, persevering prayers: let him take that one duty, which he especially aims to perform most perfectly, or that wrong temper, or evil propensity, which he most longs to rectify or extinguish; let him examine himself very exactly in these respects every night; and he will surely find, that he cannot but be a sinner still, and subjected to 'a law, that when he would do good, evil is present with him.' God has wise reasons for permitting this to be so, especially to give us a deeper sense of the malignity of sin, and our own deep depravity, in order to commend the grace of the Gospel; but those who are most acquainted with the excellency of the law, and most diligently aim in everything to obey it, will be most deeply conscious that the case is actually thus with *them*, whatever their opinion may be of those, whom they suppose to be more eminent Christians.—This opposition to sin, however, though in a measure unsuccessful; and this humiliating and distressing disappointment, respecting the object of their most ardent desires, must not be confounded with the willing slavery of sin, and the convenient *excuse* of indwelling depravity. The apostle 'daily exercised himself to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man;' and could call others to witness, 'how holily, and justly, and unblameably, he had behaved among them.' Yet this was not inconsistent with his being deeply humbled in the sight of God, by the consciousness of wandering thoughts in prayer, want of fervor, of love and gratitude to God, of zeal for his glory, and of enlarged good-will to men; the rising of evil tempers, the intrusion of vain imaginations, and the intermixture of selfish motives. 24:10-21, v. 16. 1 Thes. 2:9-12. All these are 'sin,' and as such hated and abhorred, in proportion to the degree of a man's sanctification: Ps. 119:113. yet no mere man on earth, after all possible diligence, watchfulness, fasting, and prayer, could truly say, that, in these respects, he was perfectly free from sin, in his worship and obedience. So that, even the person who is not conscious of at any time neglecting one duty, or committing one actual transgression, in word or deed, (which is at least a most uncommon case,) yet,



21 I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man :

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?

r Ps. 65:3. u c. 6.15,19. x or, this body of  
s Ps. 1:2. v Ps. 14:7. d. a. b.  
t 2 Co. 4:16. w Ps. 38:2, 10. y Ps. 83:5.  
1 Pe. 3:4. 77:3-9.

comparing it to a dead body, the touch of which was by the ceremonial law defiling. If actual transgressions be *dead works*, Heb. 9:14. original corruption is a *dead body*. It was as troublesome to Paul, as if he had had a dead body tied to him, which he must have carried about with him. A man that had learned in every state to be content, yet complains thus of his corrupt nature. Had I been to have spoken of Paul, I should have said, 'O blessed man that thou art, an ambassador of Christ, a favorite of heaven, a spiritual father of thousands !' But in his own account he was a wretched man, because of the corruption of nature, because he was not so good as he *felt* would be. *Who shall deliver me ?* He speaks like one sick of it, that would give anything to be rid of it; looks to the right hand and to the left for some friend, that would part between him and his corruptions. The remainders of

aspiring to be holy as an angel, or as Jesus Christ was, will very painfully feel, that 'he doeth not the things that he would;' and will 'find a law, that when he would do good, evil is present with him;' and the more spiritual the services are in which he engages, the greater clog and hindrance it will be to him. Had the apostle intended to describe the case of any of those, however distinguished, who habitually live in sin, against the conviction of their own judgment and conscience; it cannot be conceived, that he would not, with his usual concise energy, have reprobated their conduct, as far more aggravated, than that of ignorant and thoughtless transgressors; but nothing of this kind appears; on the contrary, he leads on the character, which he is describing, to exultation and joy in believing. (Notes, 22-25. 8:1 2.)—(21) *A law.* 23, 25, 8:2.—Men, in various respects, do those things *voluntarily*; which yet they are very reluctant to do, and perhaps previously had resolved not to do. Thus Homer, 'I indeed willingly gave unto thee, but with an unwilling mind.' This unwilling willingness pervades a great proportion of human actions. 'I really could not refuse him.'—'I could not, as I was circumstanced, do otherwise.' So that free-agency and responsibility still remain the same, notwithstanding this 'law, that when we would do good, evil is present with us.'

(18.) 'For, to desire what is good, is easy for me, but to do it I find difficult.' *St.* Yet this tr. seems hardly an improvement; nor the placing of 'desire,' for 'will' and 'would' in vs. 15-21.

(21.) 'I find, then, that it is a law [note, v. 25.] to me, when desirous to do good, that evil is near to me.' *St. Law.* 'Nomos: here has the laxer sense of norma, dictamen; a term not inapplicable to the *impetus animi humani*, (and so used, v. 23. and 8:2.) and so employed from its resemblance to the *force* by which laws excite and impel men to action. Now this *impetus* is represented as driving the disposition to do evil, when the *will* is disposed to do good. Here, then, the sense seems to be: "I experience this impulse of contrary action, that when I would do good evil is at hand, is ready, and besets me." BLOOMER.

V. 22-25. By 'the inward man,' the apostle must mean the soul, as renewed by divine grace. He alone uses the term; and he uses it concerning believers only. 2:25-29. 2 Cor. 4:13-18, v. 16. Eph. 3:14-19, v. 16. The affections and faculties of the soul in fallen man, are more opposite to the law of God, than the bodily appetites, nay, the latter are not sinful, except as improperly gratified through the lusts of the heart. 6:12, 13, 16-19. Gal. 5:16-21. Jam. 1:13-15. But to approve, and even 'delight in, the law of God,' according to the habitual judgment and affections of the soul, through a kind of spiritual sympathy, or congeniality of heart with its most strict and holy requirements, must be peculiar to the regenerate; nay, it must imply a high degree of sanctification. This the apostle had attained to; yet he 'found another law in his members,' the constituent parts of the old man, 6:5-7, which continually enjoined a conduct, or suggested inclinations, contrary to 'the law of his mind;' and this tended to 'bring him into captivity to the law of sin,' and in some cases for a time it produced that effect.—'So then,' says he, 'I myself with my mind,' my prevailing judgment, affections, and purposes, as a regenerate man, 'serve and obey the law of God;' but with the flesh, the carnal nature, the remains of depravity, 'I serve the law of sin,' or that 'law which wars against the law of my mind.' Before conversion, the whole man serves this law, with a very feeble opposition from conscience, fear, and shame [&c]; but, at length, the usurper is dethroned, and grace reigns in the heart. Yet still the usurper lurks in the kingdom, reigns over his own part, makes war, creates immense disturbance, and gains temporary advantages; but he is hated, opposed, proscribed, and shall die. Gal 5:22-26.—(22) De-

indwelling sin are a very grievous burden to a gracious soul.

2. What he comforts himself with.

(1.) His conscience witnessed for him, that he had a good principle ruling and prevailing in him, notwithstanding. The rule of this good principle which he had, was, the *law of God*; his threefold regard to which he here speaks of; which is certainly to be found in all that are sanctified, and no others. [1.] *I consent, give my vote, unto the law that it is good, v. 16.* There is the approbation of the judgment. Wherever there is grace, there is not only a dread of the severity of the law, but a consent to the goodness of the law; it is good in itself, it is good for me. This is a sign that the law is written in the heart, that the soul is delivered to the mould of it. To consent to the law, is so far to approve of it as not to wish it otherwise constituted than it is. The sanctified judgment not only concurs to the equity of the law, but to the excellency of it, as convinced that a conformity to the law [obedience to all God's will] is the highest perfection of the human nature, and the greatest honor and happiness we are capable of. [2.] *I delight in the law of God after the inward man, v. 22.* His conscience bore witness to a complacency in the law. He delighted not only in the promises of the Word, but in the precepts and prohibitions of the Word; the Gr. word speaks a becoming *delight*. He did herein concur in affection with all the saints. All that are savingly regenerate, and born again, do truly delight in the law of God; delight to know it, to do it; cheerfully submit to the authority of it, and take a complacency in that submission; never better pleased than when heart and life are in the strictest conformity

to the law and will of God. *After the inward man*; i. e. 1st. The mind or rational [and unselfish] faculties, in opposition to the sensitive appetites and wills of the flesh. The soul is the *inward man*, and that is the seat of gracious delights, which are therefore sincere and serious, but secret; it is the renewing of the inward man, 2 Cor. 4:16. 2dly. The new nature. The new man is called the *inner man*, Eph. 3:16. the *hidden man of the heart*, 1 Pet. 3:4. Paul, as far as he was sanctified, had a delight in the law of God. [3.] *With the mind I myself serve the law of God, v. 25.* It is not enough to consent to the law, and to delight in the law, but we must serve the law; our souls must be entirely delivered up into the obedience of it. Thus it is with every sanctified, renewed mind; that is the ordinary course and way; thitherward goes the bent of the soul, [the *I myself*.]

(2.) That the fault lay in that corruption of his nature, which he did really bewail and strive against; *It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* This he mentions twice, v. 17, 20. not as an excuse for the guilt of his sin, but as a salvo for his evidences, that he might not sink in despair, but take comfort from the covenant of grace, which accepts the willingness of the Spirit, and has provided pardon for the weakness of the flesh. He likewise herein enters a protestation against all that which this indwelling sin produced. 'It is not I, I disown the fact, it is against my mind that it is done.' As when, in the senate, the major part are bad, and carry everything the wrong way, it is indeed the act of the senate, but the honest party strive against it, bewail what is done, and enter their protestation against it; so that it is no more they that

*light in the law of God.* 'This is so sure a trace of real piety, and is represented in Scripture as in this view so decisive; that if it be supposed a true representation of a character, we must surely allow it to have been that of a truly good man.' *Doddr.* It is especially spoken of Christ; and of the man after God's own heart, as the type of Him. Ps. 40:6-8. 112:1. 119:47, 48, 92, 97-110, 111. It is the effect of 'the law being written in the heart;' and it is the direct opposite of 'the carnal mind, which is enmity against God; for that is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.' 8:5-9. Jer. 31:31-34. Heb. 8:7-13. 10:5-18. 'Consenting to the law that it is good;' 'delighting in' the holy, just, good, and spiritual law of God; hating all evil; loving all good; and being deeply distressed at not being able to do the good which is loved, are all exclusively peculiar to the regenerate, and widely different from a heathen's saying in one particular: 'I see and approve the better, but follow the worse;' which in fact any man might say. 'Araspus' (in Xenophon) 'complains, of two souls contending within him, which contains an agreeable illustration of this paragraph.' *Doddr.* But in the case of Araspus, the conflict was between *ambition and sensual indulgence*, equally corrupt principles; not between 'delight in the holy law of God,' and the opposition of remaining depravity to earnest endeavors after perfect conformity to it. Indeed, such a conflict as is here described, must exist where sin is hated, and 'the law of God delighted in,' till holiness is perfected. 'Abhorrence of evil' must increase in proportion to the love of God and holiness; so that the least degree of evil rising in the heart, and escaping from the lips, in some passionate or vain word, will necessarily more grieve and burden an eminent saint, than perhaps the grossest crimes did before his conversion; even as a speck of dirt gives more uneasiness to a very cleanly person, than the most squalid filthiness does to those, who are used to live in it as their element. Ez. 11:17-20.—There is, therefore, no need to have recourse to such unnatural expedients in expounding this ch., as to imagine, that when the apostle said, 'I myself,' he meant some other person of a widely different character; or the whole family of Abraham, before and under the law. However these theories have been sanctioned by eminent names, they go on suppositions, for which the Scripture gives not the least ground; and which are wholly unprecedented and unparalleled, in the writings of any good author, sacred or profane. No doubt, numbers have perverted the words of the apostle: and it is fairly allowed, that no man, who is not himself engaged in this conflict, can clearly understand his meaning, or fully enter into those feelings which dictated his energetic language. But, as to the former case, those who want an evence for sin, 'wrest the other scriptures also to their own destruction:' 2 Pet. 3:14-16. and as to the latter, 'the secret of the Loan is with them that fear Him;' and 'the heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.' Ps. 25:14. Prov. 14:10. It cannot be expected, that a man, who never saw war, could enter into the feelings, and fully understand the ardent language of an experienced soldier, when he related all his conflicts, dangers, hardships, terrors, narrow escapes, victories, and triumphs. But I apprehend, that many pious persons exclude themselves from the rich source of instruction and consolation, in their warfare, provided for them in this chap., either from fear lest others should pervert it to bad purposes; or because men of great name have affected to reprobate the evidently obvious interpretation, and have tried to force some other meaning on the words, of which it is impossible they can admit. Ps. 119:81-83, 97-100, 131, 173-176. SCOTT.

(22.) *Inner man.* 'I. e. the *mind*, the inner and sentient part of man. Now this is to be understood by a reference to the modes of think-



25 I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

CHAP. VIII.

1 They that are in Christ, and live according to the Spirit, are free from condemnation. 5, 13 What harm cometh of the flesh, 6, 14 and what good of the Spirit: 17 and what of being God's child. 19 whose glorious deliverance all things long for, 29 was beforehand decreed from God. 38 What can sever us from his love?

THERE is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

z 1 Co. 15:57. a Ju. 3:18. b Ga. 5:16.

do it. Dwelleth in me, as the Canaanites among the Israelites, though they were put under tribute: dwelleth in me, and is likely to dwell there, while I live.

(3.) His great comfort lay in Jesus Christ, v. 25. In the midst of his complaints he breaks out into praises. It is a special remedy against fears and sorrows, to be much in praise: many a poor drooping soul hath found it so. And in all our praises, this should be the burden of the song. 'Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.'

Who shall deliver me? says he, v. 24. as one at a loss for help. At length, he finds an all-sufficient friend, even Jesus Christ. When we are under the sense of the remain-

ing power of sin and corruption, we shall see reason to bless God, through Christ, (for as He is the Mediator of all our prayers, so He is of all our praises,) to bless God for Christ; it is He that stands between us and the wrath due to us for this sin. If it were not for Christ, this iniquity that dwells in us, would certainly be our ruin. He is our Advocate with the Father, and through Him God pities, and spares, and pardons, and lays not our iniquities to our charge. Through Christ death will put an end to all these complaints, and waft us to an eternity which we shall spend without sin or sigh.

CHAP. VIII. The apostle having fully explained the doctrine of justification, and pressed the necessity of sanctification, in this ch. applies himself to the consolation of the Lord's people. And we have here such a draught of the gospel-charter, such a display of the unspeakable privileges of true believers, as may furnish us with abundant matter for joy and peace in believing, that by all these immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation. Many of the people of God have, accordingly, found this ch. a well-spring of comfort to their souls, living and dying; and have been satisfied herefrom.

V. 1-9. The apostle here begins with one signal privilege of true Christians, and describes the character of those to whom it

belongs, v. 1. This is his triumph after that melancholy complaint and conflict in the foregoing ch.; sin remaining, disturbing, vexing, but blessed be God, not ruining.

I. It is the unspeakable privilege and comfort of all in Christ Jesus, that there is therefore now no condemnation to them. He does not say, 'There is no accusation against them, nothing in them that deserves condemnation;' but it shall not be their ruin. Not, 'There is no cross, no affliction to them, or no displeasure in the affliction,' for that there may be; but no condemnation. They may be chastened of the Lord, but not condemned with the world. Now this arises from their being in Christ Jesus; because they are interested in the satisfaction Christ by dying made to the law. In Christ, God does not only not condemn, but is well pleased with them, Mat. 17:5.

II. It is the undoubted character of all who are so in Christ Jesus, as to be freed from condemnation, that they walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. The character is given from their walk, not any one particular act, but their course and way. And the great question is, What is the principle of the walk, the flesh or the spirit, the old or the new nature, corruption or grace? Which of these do we mind, for which of these do we make provision, by which of these are we governed, which of these do we take part with?

1. How we come by these privileges,—

PRACT. OBS. We stand in such a relation to the holy law of God, as the rule of our present conduct and future judgment, that none but He who formed the union can dissolve it; and unless 'we become dead to the law by the body of Christ,' renouncing all expectations from it, that we may be united to Him, who 'died for our sins and rose again for our justification,' we must inevitably abide under the dominion of sin, and the curse of the law for ever.—A proper knowledge of the holy law of God, is the two-edged sword, which gives the death-wound both to self-righteousness, and to antinomianism: for it is perfectly fit to be the rule of our duty, to be written in our hearts, and obeyed in our lives, for the very same reasons on account of which it cannot justify or save us.—But, if a man speak on this subject [the tendency to sin] with indifference or with satisfaction; if 'sin dwelling in him' be the excuse for crimes committed, without remorse or godly sorrow; if he 'allow the

evil, and desire not the good,' presuming that he has all things in Christ; if, instead of consenting to the goodness of the law, condemning himself, and loathing his sins, he depreciates the law and extenuates his own guilt; if his utmost willingness be to escape hell at any rate, without longing to be holy according to the spiritual and good law of God; if he do not 'delight in it after the inward man,' nor serve it with the prevailing desire of his mind, but willingly 'serve the law of sin'; then doubtless he is 'without Christ,' whose name he profanes; he is under the law which he hates; and his presumptuous confidence and quietness only prove, that he is given over to 'a strong delusion to believe a lie.' Nor does this much disputed and abused chap. more evidently condemn the hope of the proudest Pharisee on earth, than it does that of such a professor of evangelical truth. SCOTT.

ing among the Jewish theologians. So Jalkut Rubeni, "the skin and flesh is the garment of a man, but the interior spirit is called the man;" and Philo "the mind, which is the map lording it in the man, the better in the worse;" and in another passage he calls it "the leader man." Carpzov thinks the doctrine derived from the Platonic school; and Wets. cites Plato, de Rep. "we should do and say so, that the inner may overpower the outer man." Plotinus speaks of "the man within." The expression was used in the Pythagorean philosophy. Nay, it had passed even to the poets. Thus Plautus, "the health of the inner man." Philo seems to have borrowed it, not from Plato, but rather from the more ancient theology of his own countrymen, vestiges of which are found in Jos. and the Rabbins, and also in the Epistles of Peter, as well as Paul's.—The struggles between the good and the bad principles of the mind are ably depicted by Euripides in the Medea.

(23.) After.] 'As to,' STUART. (24.) 'As to the opinion of some (as Doddr.), that Paul here alludes to the horrible punishment of ancient times, adverted to by Virg. (Æn. 3. 483-8), of fastening a living body to a dead one, I can find no ground for it.' Bloomf. Why not? Ed. 'The body which causes this death.' Id. (25.) 'The apostle, though still subject to the infirmities of human nature, could not represent himself as the slave of carnal appetite and sin [and so St.]; since such a representation would be untrue in point of fact, and wholly unsuitable to the contrast which has been previously drawn between the Christian and the believer,' v. 15. Slade. 'Wherefore I, the same person, serve.' Id.

Concluding Note. The following is the system hinted at on vs. 5-25. Besides the senses and limbs, the instinctive feelings and faculties (or intellect, sentiments, and appetites) of man have cerebral organs necessary in this life to their manifestation; and these organs are propagated in greater or less force, according to the physiological laws; are increased in size and power by use, and diminished by disuse; are excited when their appropriate objects are presented to them, and at rest otherwise, except that, after a certain rest, they, in a healthy state, have spontaneous activity. The manner in which life, or soul, or spirit, or mind, or 'heart,' (the self,) is connected with and operates upon and in these organs, is beyond the reach of our limited powers. Each human being is endowed, in greater or less relative proportions, with the organs of,

Propensities: (or, blind, impulsive, animal appetites.) Gal. 5:17.

Table with 3 columns: Names, Use, Abuse. Lists various propensities like Vitality, Alimentiveness, Destructiveness, etc., with their uses and potential abuses.

Sentiments: (also instinctive and blind.) Mic. 6:8.

Table with 3 columns: Names, Use, Abuse. Lists sentiments like Cautiousness, Approbativeness, Self-esteem, etc., with their uses and potential abuses.

Intellectual faculties: (Perceptive.)

Table with 3 columns: Names, Use, Abuse. Lists intellectual faculties like Individuality, Form, Size, Weight and resistance, etc., with their uses and potential abuses.

Intellectual faculties: (Reflective.)

Table with 3 columns: Names, Use, Abuse. Lists reflective faculties like Comparison, Causality, with their uses and potential abuses.

These two last comprehend in part what are indefinitely termed Reason and Judgment; which need to be enlightened by Revelation. Ro. 1:21. Eph. 1:18. 2 Pet. 1:19. See the works of Gall, Spurzheim, and G. Combe, also S. Jones' Pract. Phrenology. The first class being now predominant in size and activity in the majority of the race, all the motives the Gospel can present are necessary, to arouse and increase the superior nature (enlightened and energized by the Holy Spirit and revelation), and subdue the inferior; and thus induce the race to act habitually, infallibly, unhesitatingly, and perfectly, according to the rule Christ gives in the two precepts, 'Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and mind, and strength; and thy neighbor as thyself.' See Dr. Epps' 'Evid. of Christ, from Phren.' repub. by Rev. J. A. Warren. Ed.

NOTES. CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. Some explain 'the law of the Spirit of life,' of the doctrine of the Gospel, through which the Spirit is com-



2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For, what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh :

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh ; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death ; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace :

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

c 2 Co. 3:6.	h ver. 1.	k the minding of the flesh.
d Ga. 2:19. 5:1.	i Jn. 3:6.	l Ga. 6:8.
e Ac. 13:39. He. 7:18, 19.	j 1 Co. 2:14.	m the minding of the spirit.
f Ga. 3:13.		

the privilege of justification, that there is no condemnation to us,—the privilege of sanctification, that we walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh, which is no less our privilege than duty.

(1.) The law could not do it, v. 3. It could neither free us from the guilt, nor from the power of sin, having not the promises either of pardon or grace : through the corruption of human nature, we became incapable either of being justified or sanctified

municated, rather than of his commanding influence in the believer's soul ; but the latter is the more exact contrast to the ' law of sin and death,' from which he is by divine grace effectually set at liberty.

(1.) *Who, &c.* St. omits this latter clause, as ' probably spurious.' Ep. ' In the 1st II vs. are described the happiness and privileges of the justified, which are, (1.) Reconciliation with God, and by that mean, liberation from the curse of the law and from the punishment of sin ; v. 1—8. (2.) Union with Christ. (3.) Indwelling of the Holy Spirit ; v. 9—11. Then follows a two-fold exhortation : (1.) That the faithful should make a right use of these privileges ; v. 12—17. (2.) That they should patiently bear calamities, so as even to glory in them ; v. 18. fin.' CARPZOV.

V. 3. *Do.* ' Accomplish . . . sinful flesh (accomplished), and (by an offering) for sin, &c. St. ' For the expiation of sin, i. e. as it were, a *prophora peri tes hamartias*, Heb. 10:18. *Crellius* and *Taylor* wrongly explain this, ' *propter peccata*, ' i. e. to repress sin by the example of a holy life ; than which nothing can be more harsh. (See *Carpz* and *Weller*.) *Petri* (tr. *for*), is often used in the Gr. classics in the sense above detailed ; and in the O. T. it occ. very frequently, and with *hamartias* [sin], (Philo Jud. also thus uses it), or some noun expressive of a victim offered up to God. See *Ham., Whit., Mackn.* Thus, too, *Koppe* explains the *peri* for *hyper hamartias*, to wit, *prophoran dosian*, [offering,] Heb. *chatah*, where the Sept. tr. Ps. 40:6. Nu. 8:8. Le. 6:25. Heb. 10:6. 2 Cor. 5:21. Philo de Vict. 837 D. 843 A. and tr. *ad capianda peccata*, adding, that, unless a piaculum be offered to God, human sins cannot be pardoned, is a constant doctrine of the O. and N. T. Heb. 9:22.' BL.

V. 4. That the ' righteousness, &c. required by ' the law, ' might be fully written in our hearts, and habitually, in all its parts, performed in our lives, though too imperfectly to justify us ; and that, hereafter, we might be perfectly conformed to the holy law, in its substantial requirement of perfect love to God and his creatures, and obey it fully for evermore.—Many expositors explain this of Christ, as One with his people, having fulfilled the righteousness of the law in their stead ; and of its imputation to those, who walk after the Spirit. But the former sense seems more obvious, and best to answer the apostle's design ; who was proving, that deliverance from the law as a covenant was necessary, in order to our obeying the law as a rule. 7:5, 6. Gal. 2:17—21. ' Sanctification, begun in us, is the sure evidence of our union with Christ ; which is the richest fruit of a holy life.' *Beza*. The completion, however, of sanctification seems especially intended. Eph. 5:22—27. Col. 1:21—23. Jude 22—25. SCOTT.

(4.) *Righteousness.* ' Precepts.' St. What is required by the law : so many expl., as in 2:26. Others, the rewards promised by the law to the righteous. Lev. 18:5. ' Those internal principles of holiness, justice, and goodness comprised in it. Mat. 23:23. Slade, Locke, Taylor, &c. obs. that this *dikaiōma* being said to be done by us, not in us, is an unanswerable argument against the antinomian dogmas.' ' That which the divine law could find fault with justly in us.' BL. *Condemned.* ' I. e. The Son contended with it before God the Father, whether it should hurt believers ; and when, in the judgment of the Father, He conquered it, sin, as a cause, was cast, and is condemned by Christ, incarnate, and suffering for us in flesh.' *Schoet.* ' Destroyed, or rather, punished sin in the human nature.' *Hodge.* So D. *Martin, &c.* Ed.

V. 5—9. The discrimination of character, before referred to, is here N. T. VOL. V. 27

by the law. Or, understand it of the ceremonial law ; and that could never take away sin, Heb. 10:4.

(2.) The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, does it, v. 2. The covenant of grace made with us in Christ, is a treasury of merit and grace, and from thence we receive pardon and a new nature ; are freed from the law of sin and death, i. e. both from the guilt and power of sin ; from the curse of the law, and the conduct of the flesh, v. 3. The best exposition of this v. is, Heb. 10:1—10. To make the sense of the words clear, which in our tr. is a little intricate, we may read it thus, with a little transposal, *God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, that the,—v. 4.* Observe, [1.] Christ appeared not sinful, for He was holy, harmless, undefiled ; but in the likeness of that flesh which was sinful. He took upon Him that nature which was corrupt, though perfectly abstracted from the corruptions of it. His being circumcised, redeemed, baptized with John's baptism, speak the likeness of sinful flesh. How great condescension, that He who was God, should not only be made in the likeness of flesh, but sinful flesh ! And for sin, there the best Greek copies place the comma :—*and as a sacrifice for sin.* The LXX call a sacrifice for sin no more than for sin ; so Christ was a Sacrifice ; He was sent to be so, Heb. 9:26. [2.] By this appearance of His, sin was condemned, i. e., God did therein more than ever manifest his hatred of sin ; and not only so, but for all that are Christ's, both the damning and the domineering power of sin is broken and taken out of the way. Christ was made sin for us, 2 Cor. 5:21. and, being so made, when He was condemned, sin was condemned in the flesh of Christ ;

condemned in the human nature : so was satisfaction made to divine justice, and way made for the salvation of the sinner. [3.] The happy effect of this on us, v. 4. A righteousness of satisfaction for the breach of the law, is fulfilled by the imputation of Christ's complete and perfect righteousness, which answers the utmost demands of the law ; and a righteousness of obedience to the commands of the law, is fulfilled in us, when by the Spirit the law of love is written on the heart, ch. 13:10. though the righteousness of the law is not fulfilled by us. *Who walk not, &c.* Those who are interested in this privilege, act from spiritual, not carnal principles ; as for others, the righteousness of the law will be fulfilled on them in their ruin. Now,

2. Observe how we may answer to this character, v. 5, &c.

(1.) By looking to our minds ; examining what we mind, the things of the flesh, or of the Spirit. Carnal pleasure, worldly profit and honor, the things of sense and time, are the things of the flesh, which unregenerate people mind. The favor of God, the welfare of the soul, the concerns of eternity, are the things of the Spirit, which they that are after the Spirit, do mind. The man is as the mind is, Prov. 23:7. Which way do the thoughts move with most pleasure ? On what do they dwell with most satisfaction ? Which way go the projects and contrivances ? Whether are we more wise, for the world, or for our souls ? It is a great matter what our savor is, so the word is tr. Mat. 16:23. what truths, what tidings, what comforts, we most relish, and are most agreeable to us.

Now, to caution us against this carnal-mindedness, he shows the great misery and malignity of it, and compares it with the unspeakable excellency and comfort of spiritual mindedness.

more fully stated. Habitual prevalence stamps the character, as carnal or spiritual ; so that, if a man be ' carnal,' in the prevailing judgment, temper, and affections of his mind, he is under condemnation, dead in sin, and meet for destruction ; but if he be ' spiritual,' in the habitual, prevailing temper of his soul, he is evidently alive to God, and at peace with Him ; and the spiritual mind is, in proportion as it prevails, the very essence of life and peace. 7:13, 14. The importance of this distinction is manifest, ' because the carnal mind is enmity against God : ' man's apostasy originated in his preferring the satisfaction to be found in the creatures through disobedience, to the felicity to be enjoyed in God by obedience. This is in fact the *universal idolatry* ; and men thus preferring self-satisfaction, and created good, to the favor and service of God, not only rebel against Him, but become enemies to Him, and ' haters ' of Him.—' The carnal mind is not subject to the divine law, and indeed cannot be ; ' it is morally unable to do anything but revolt against it, and refuse obedience to it. 7:7—12.—Evangelical religion is equally remote from self-righteousness, which cleaves to the law as a covenant ; and [from] antinomianism, which rejects it as a rule : for, not being subject to the law, men ' cannot please God.'—If ' the flesh,' be explained of the body, as distinguished from the soul, or spirit ; it follows, beyond all doubt or evasion, that no man can ' please God,' while he lives in this world ; and also that the Romans were disembodied spirits, which is palpably absurd ; yet the interpretation of other scriptures, concerning the flesh and spirit, by many learned men, unavoidably leads to this absurdity. Nor is it less unreasonable and unscriptural to aver, that living under the Mosaic dispensation was ' being in the flesh ; ' and professing the Gospel, especially if miraculous powers were vouchsafed, was being in the Spirit. Mat. 7:21—23. 1 Cor. 13:1—3. Yet these seem the only ways, by which the above plain and natural interpretation can possibly be evaded. John 6:52—53. 14:15—17, 21—24. 17:20—23. 2 Cor. 13:5, 6. SCOTT.

(5.) *After the flesh*, i. e. living so.] ' Those who are actuated by the impetus of appetite, like the brutes, who have no knowledge of religion.' Ros. *Mind.* ' This verb [phronein] denotes the judgment of the intellect, together with the affection of the will.' *Toletus.* ' The word is here transferred from the intellect to the affections.' *Grot.* BL.

(6, 7.) ' Mind of the flesh . . . mind of the Spirit.' St. ' Death, life, peace, are used, by metonymy, for the cause of each. *Thanatos* signifies misery and death, both temporal and eternal ; and *zoē* happiness, both in this world and in the next. *Mind.* [Phronēma : disposition, mores ; a sense frequent in the classics. *Neither can be.*] I. e. as long as it remains such, as a lewd woman cannot be chaste, i. e. not now, not while she remains such. So Theoph. and Chrys. best explain. ' Of this language the Calvinists have taken a very unfair advantage, for the support of their favorite doctrine, of the utter impotency of the unregenerate man in appreciating, much less conforming to, the divine injunctions. Thus Carpz. calls such a person a trunk and stone, who can no more begin the work of reformation than a statue ; nay, is worse than a stock or stone, as being naturally rebellious, which those are not. It is unnecessary to observe, that this doctrine is contrary to the plainest rules of justice, as it is unsupported by Scripture. For, as for the present passage, it may be understood (and so *Kop.*) in a popular sense ; or will admit of an easy interpretation on metaphysical principles, quite accordant with revelation, so as entirely to put aside any such doctrine.' [209]



8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell <sup>in</sup> you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, <sup>he</sup> that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies <sup>by</sup> his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not <sup>to</sup> the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify <sup>the</sup> deeds of the body, ye shall live.

14 For as many as are led <sup>by</sup> the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

n 1 Co. 6:19. Ga. 4:6. p or, because of. r Col. 3:5.  
o 2 Co. 4:14. q Ps. 116:16. s Ga. 5:18.

[1.] It is *death*, v. 6. spiritual death, the certain way to eternal death, the death of the soul; for it is its alienation from God, in union and communion with whom the life of the soul consists. Death includes all misery; carnal souls are miserable souls. But to be *spiritually minded*, to have — a *spiritual savor*, the wisdom that is from above, a principle of grace, is *life and peace*, the felicity and happiness of the soul, eternal life and peace begun, and an assuring earnest of the perfection of it.

[2.] It is *enmity to God*, v. 7. and this is worse than the former; not only an enemy, but enmity itself; not only the alienation of the soul *from* God, but the opposition of the soul *against* God; it rebels against his authority, thwarts his design, opposes his interest, [hates his love.] To prove this, he urges, that *it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*. The holiness of the law of God, and the unholiness of the carnal mind, are as irreconcilable as light to darkness. See how wretchedly the corrupt will of man is enslaved to sin; as far as the carnal mind prevails, there is no inclination to the law of God; therefore wherever there is a change wrought, it is by the power of God's grace, not by the freedom of man's

So *Bl.* Man indeed is not a machine, nor driven by fatal necessity of fixed natural laws, like a vegetable, nor is his body a part of that of God; he has a separate identity from God, an eternal consciousness that he is not God, but a self; yet when he comes to explain where God's will ends and his own begins, or *how* God has connected Himself with his spirit, it is beyond the power of the constitution God has endowed him with, and he is of course at a loss, and drowns himself in a sea of theology, shoreless and fathomless. Nor is this dispute, (or kindred ones,) profitable, or practical; we acknowledge we have no power but as God wills, yet every act at every instant is done with a present, distinct, and indisputable consciousness of the agency, the free agency of self. Disputes will not make either point clearer, any more than they will the facts included under the terms, *self, existence, object, matter, space, time, thought, &c.* The reader may well, however, consult Hodge, Stuart, Edwards, &c.

(9.) *If so be.* The apostle *trusts* they are not in the flesh. And so *Kop.*

V. 10, 11. Several readers may be aware, that the celebrated Mr. Locke explains, quickening the mortal body, by sanctifying the immortal soul! But . . . . in no book, which the author has read, does the pride of human reason, opposing the express testimonies of God, and striving to wrest them from their obvious meaning, appear so prominent, as in most parts of the great Mr. Locke's exposition of Paul's epistles. S.

(10.) 'The body indeed is mortified . . . but the Spirit liveth on account of,' &c. *St.* 'Whoever is a true Christian, he, although he inhabits a body prone to sin, miserable and mortal, yet, by the Divine Spirit which worketh in him, is studious of virtue, and may have a sure expectation of eternal felicity.' So at 7:25. *Kop.* 'The words are exceedingly obscure and mystical.' *Bl.* Some argue from it a resurrection of the body. On the terms, *pneuma, psyche, soma, &c.*, see *Bibl. Repos.* Oct. 1837. Art. 'Immortality of the soul.' Ed.

will. Hence he infers, v. 8. They that are in a carnal, unregenerate state, cannot do the things that please God; wanting grace, the pleasing principle, and an interest in Christ, the pleasing Mediator. The very *sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination*, Prov. 15:8.

We may know our state and character, (2.) By inquiring whether we have the Spirit of God and Christ, or no, v. 9. states and conditions of the soul vastly different. All the saints have *flesh and spirit* in them; but to be *in the flesh*, and to be *in the Spirit*, are contrary. It denotes our being overcome and subdued by one of these principles. The Spirit dwelling in us, is the best evidence of our being in the Spirit, for the indwelling is mutual, 1 John 4:16. The Spirit *visits* many that are unregenerate, with his motions, which they resist and quench; but in all that are sanctified He *dwells*; there He resides and rules.

To this he subjoins a general rule of trial; *If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*. 1. That are spirited as He was spirited, meek, lowly, humble, peaceable, patient, charitable. We cannot tread in his steps unless we have his Spirit; the frame and disposition of our souls must be conformable to Christ's pattern. 2. That are actuated and guided by the Holy Spirit of God, as a Sanctifier, Teacher, and Comforter. Having the *Spirit of Christ* is the same with having the *Spirit of God to dwell in us*. But those two come much to one; for all that are actuated by the Spirit of God as their rule, are conformable to the Spirit of Christ as their pattern.

V. 10—16. In these vs. the apostle represents two more excellent benefits of true believers.

1. *Life*. The happiness is not barely negative, but positive, an advancement to a life that will be the unspeakable happiness of the man, v. 10, 11. If the Spirit be in us, Christ is in us. He dwells in the heart by faith, Eph. 3:17. Now we are here told what becomes of the bodies and souls of those in whom Christ is.

1. The life purchased and promised does not immortalize the body in its present state, *because of sin*. This was the first threatening, Gen. 3:19. *Dust thou art*. The death even of the bodies of the saints is a remaining token of God's displeasure against sin.

2. But *the spirit*, the precious soul, that is life; it is now spiritually alive, nay it is life. Grace in the soul is its new nature; the life of the saint lies in the soul, while the life of the sinner goes no farther than the body. When the body dies, and returns to the dust, *the spirit is life*; not only living and immortal, but swallowed up of life.

When Abraham was dead, yet God was the God of Abraham, for even then his spirit was life, Mat. 22:31, 32. See Ps. 49:15. And this *because of righteousness*. The righteousness of Christ, imputed to them, secures the soul, the better part, from death; the righteousness of Christ, inherent in them, the renewed image of God on the soul, preserves it, and, by God's ordination, at death elevates and improves it, and makes it meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light. The eternal life of the soul consists in the vision and fruition of God, and both assimilating, for which the soul is qualified by the righteousness of sanctification, Ps. 17:15.

3. There is a life reserved too for the poor body at last, v. 11. though at death it is cast aside as a despised broken vessel, yet God will have a desire to the work of his hands, Job 14:15. will remember his covenant with the dust, and will not lose a grain of it; but the body shall be re-united to the soul, and clothed with a glory agreeable to it. Vile bodies shall be new fashioned, Phil. 3:21. 1 Cor. 15:42. Two great assurances of the resurrection of the body are mentioned. (1.) The resurrection of Christ. Christ rose as the Head and first-fruits and forerunner of all the saints, 1 Cor. 15:20. (2.) The indwelling of the Spirit. The same Spirit that raiseth the soul now, will raise the body shortly; by *his Spirit that dwelleth in you*. The bodies of the saints are the temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 3:16. 6:19. Now, though these temples may for a while lie in ruins, yet they shall be rebuilt again. The Spirit, breathing on dead and dry bones, will make them live, and the saints even in their flesh shall see God.

From hence the apostle by the way inferences, how much it is our duty to walk *not after the flesh*, but after the Spirit, v. 12, 13. for, [1.] *We are not debtors to the flesh*; neither by relation, gratitude, nor any other bond or obligation. It is implied that we are debtors to Christ and to the Spirit: there we owe our all, all we have, and all we can do, by a thousand bonds and obligations. See 1 Cor. 6:19, 20. [2.] Consider the consequences, the end of the way; life and death, blessing and cursing, are set before us. *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*; die eternally. Pleasing, and serving, and gratifying the flesh, is the ruin of souls; that is the second death. Dying indeed is the soul's dying: the death of the saints is but a sleep. But on the other hand, *Ye shall live*, live and be happy to eternity; that is the true life; *If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body*, subdue and keep under all fleshly lusts and affections, deny

V. 12, 13. The natural appetites of the body need only to be moderated, regulated, and subordinated; but the carnal desires 'of the body of sin and death,' the 'old Adam,' 'the flesh, with its affections and lusts,' must be extirpated, and all its actings terminated. 6:5—7. 7:22—25. 1 Cor. 9:24—27. Col. 2:11, 12. 1 Pet. 2:11. This must be done by the Holy Spirit, working in us both 'to will' and 'to do,' what God commands; Phil. 2:12, 13. yet we are to do it through Him, and by dependence on Him, which is energetically enforced by the words; 'If ye, through the Spirit, &c.'

(13.) 'Mortify, destroy the evil [inordinate] desires of the body. *Præcis* [deeds] denotes evil actions (as in Col. 3:9.), which show themselves in the body. Not only (so *Kop.*) external actions, but internal feelings, the passions of the mind, and the desires of the heart. [Comp. note, end of ch. 7.] From the copious Rabbinical citations by Schoet. it appears, that *thanatoute* [kill, mortify] is used here agreeably to the Jewish sacrificial metaphors *shecht ytsr, to sacrifice*, (i. e. destroy.) evil concupiscence. So Sanchid. fol. 43. 3. 'Whoever sacrifices (slays) evil concupiscence, it is the same as if he glorified God in both worlds, in this and in the next.' Thus there is no reason to suppose, with *Crellius*, that this alludes to the former evil life of the Roman converts.' *Bl.*

V. 14—17. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit prepares the heart for receiving Christ by living faith; and communicates a new and divine life to the soul, though in a feeble state, as that of a 'new-born babe.' 1 Pet. 2:1—3, v. 2.—The Holy Spirit leads a man into the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus, and of his own heart; into humble repentance, faith in Christ, holy love, communion with God, and delight in his worship and commandments; on the other hand, He leads him away from vanity and iniquity, from vice and ungodliness, from pride and discord: Ps. 143:8—10. and in proportion as we willingly give up ourselves to be led in the paths of truth and holiness, we may know our adoption.—The Mosaic dispensation had a greater tendency to foster this temper, [slavish



15 For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage 'again, to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

t 2 Ti. 1:7. w 2 Co. 1:22. 1 Pe. 1:4.  
u 1 Co. 2:12. 1 Ju. 4:13. y 2 Ti. 2:11, 12.  
v Je. 3:19. Ga. 4:5, 6. x Ac. 26:18. z 2 Co. 4:17.

yourselves in the pleasing and humoring of the body; and this through the Spirit: we cannot do it without the Spirit working it in us; and the Spirit will not do it without us doing our endeavor. So that, in a word, we are put on this dilemma, either to displease the body, or destroy the soul.

II. The Spirit of adoption is another privilege belonging to those that are in Christ Jesus, v. 14—16. All such are taken into the relation of children to God, v. 14. Observe, They are led by the Spirit of God; as a scholar, a traveller, or a soldier; not driven as beasts, but led as rational creatures; drawn with the cords of a man, and the bands of love. They are the sons of God; owned and loved by Him as his children.

And these sons of God have the Spirit, 1. To work in them the disposition of children, v. 15. Understand the spirit of bondage, of that, [1.] Which the O. T. church was under, by reason of the darkness and terror of that dispensation. The veil signified bondage, 2 Cor. 3:15. Comp. v. 17. The Spirit of adoption was not

fear,] than the Christian religion has: and the Jews, too generally, considering the whole as a covenant of works, worshipped God in this slavish manner. But the greater number of the Roman converts had never been under the Mosaic law; yet they are spoken of indiscriminately, as having been formerly influenced by 'the spirit of bondage;' we may therefore suppose, that those convictions were also intended, under which awakened sinners, even if in consequence converted, act more from fear and selfish principles, than established believers do; abstaining from many sins through dread of consequences, without decidedly hating them; and practising duties without loving them. These convictions indeed proceed from the moving of the Spirit of God on their minds, and prepare them for receiving Christ by faith; but they are very different from the disposition, and state of mind and heart, of those who are brought into the full light and liberty of the Gospel, and have received 'the Spirit of adoption.' Num. 17:12, 13. Mat. 25:24—30. John 16:8—11, 14, 15. Gal. 4:4—7, 21—31. Eph. 1:13, 14. 2 Tim. 1:6—8. 1 John 4:18. Then they are taught and animated to 'serve [and obey] God,' with filial reverence, confidence, love, gratitude, submission, zeal, and admiring, adoring complacency; and are especially encouraged and emboldened to call upon Him as 'a Father,' for all things which they want, and for support and deliverance under all their trials, notwithstanding their conscious unworthiness. The use of different languages, in this connexion, [to express the filial relation,] sweetly indicates the harmony of Jews and Gentiles, and of different nations, in this filial worship of God according to the Gospel. Mat. 6:6, 9. Mark 14:36. Gal. 4—7. Thus the Holy Spirit, by producing in believers the affections which dutiful children bear to a wise and good father, in their habitual state of heart toward God, most manifestly attests their adoption into his family. This is not done by a voice, or immediate revelation, or impulse, or merely by a text brought to the mind; (for all these things are equivocal and delusory;) but by 'bearing witness with their spirits,' or coinciding with the testimony of their own enlightened minds and consciences, as to their uprightness in embracing the Gospel, and giving themselves up to the service of God. 2 Cor. 1:12—14, v. 12. So that, while they are examining themselves concerning the reality of their conversion, and find scriptural evidence of it; the Holy Spirit, from time to time, shines on his own work, excites their holy affections into lively exercise, renders them very efficacious upon their conduct, and thus puts the matter beyond doubt; for while they feel the spirit of dutiful children towards God, as described in his holy Word, they become satisfied concerning his parental love to them. 9:1—3. So that, this 'witness of the Spirit' is borne along with that of our own consciences, not without it, nor against it; and it coincides with the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the Scripture, and must be proved and saved by it. But this being clearly ascertained, we may confidently regard ourselves as the heirs of the heavenly inheritance, (for 'if children, then heirs,') and of God Himself as our Portion; even 'joint heirs with Christ,' the beloved Son of the Father, being accepted in Him, and

then so plentifully poured out as now. [2.] Which the saints were, many of them, under at their conversion; convictions of sin and wrath set home by the Spirit; as they, Acts 2:37. the jailer, Acts 16:30. Paul, Acts 9:6. 'God as a Judge,' says Dr. Manton, 'by the spirit of bondage, sends us to Christ as Mediator, and Christ as Mediator, by the Spirit of adoption, sends us back again to God as a Father.' But you have received the Spirit of adoption; this works in the children of God a filial love to God as a Father, a delight in Him, and a dependence on Him, as a Father. A sanctified soul bears the image of God, as the child the image of the father. Whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Praying is here called crying; which is not only an earnest, but a natural expression of desire; children that cannot speak, vent their desires by crying. Now, the Spirit teaches us in prayer to come to God as a Father, with a holy, humble confidence, emboldening the soul in that duty. Abba is Syriac, signifying father, or my father; so Christ in prayer, Mark 14:36. Abba, Father: and we have received the Spirit of the Son. It denotes an affectionate, endearing importunity, and a believing stress laid on the relation; also, that the adoption is common both to Jews and Gentiles.

2. To witness to the relation of children, v. 16. The former is the work of the Spirit as a Sanctifier, this as a Comforter. Beareth witness with our spirit, is to be understood not of any immediate, extraordinary revelation, but an ordinary work of the Spirit, in and by the means of comfort speaking peace to the soul. This testimony is always agreeable to the written Word, and therefore always grounded on sanctification; for the Spirit in the heart cannot contradict the Spirit in the Word. The Spirit witnesses to none the privileges of children, who have not the nature and disposition of children.

V. 17—25. In these words, the apostle describes a fourth illustrious branch of the happiness of believers, that is, a title to the

future glory. This is fitly annexed to our sonship. If children, then heirs, v. 17. Heaven is an inheritance all the saints are heirs to; not by any merit or procurement of their own; but purely by the act of God; for God makes heirs. The saints are heirs, though in this world under age; see Gal. 4:1, 2. Their present state is a state of education and preparation for the inheritance. How comfortable should this be to all the children of God, how little soever they have in possession, that, being heirs, they have enough in reversion! But the honor and happiness of an heir lies in the value and worth of that he is heir to; we read of those that inherit the wind; and therefore we have here an abstract of the premises.

I. Heirs of God. The Lord Himself is the portion of the saints' inheritance, Ps. 16:5. a goodly heritage! v. 6. saints are spiritual priests, that have the Lord for their inheritance, Num. 18:20. the vision of God and the fruition of God make up the inheritance of the saints. God Himself will be with them, and will be their God, Rev. 21:3.

II. Joint heirs with Christ. Christ, as Mediator, is said to be the Heir of all things, Heb. 1:2. and true believers, by virtue of their union with Him, shall inherit all things, Rev. 21:7. John 17:24. Rev. 3:21. Now, this future glory is further spoken of, as the reward of present sufferings, and as the accomplishment of present hopes.

1. As the reward of the saints' present sufferings; and it is a rich reward; If so be that we suffer with Him, v. 17. or, forasmuch as we suffer with Him. The state of the church in this world always is, but was then especially, an afflicted state; to be a Christian, was certainly to be a sufferer. Now, to comfort them, he tells them that they suffered with Christ, for his sake, for his honor, and for the testimony of a good conscience; and we shall be glorified with Him: this the Gospel is filled with the assurances of. The sufferings of the saints are but for the present, strike no deeper, last no longer, 2 Cor. 4:17. light affliction, and but for a moment. In the other scale he

appointed with Him to share the glorious inheritance: John 14:15—17. 2 Cor. 1:21, 22. Eph. 1:3—3, 13, 14. 1 Pet. 1:3—5. and of this we may be still more fully assured, if we patiently endure sufferings after his example, and for his sake, and [in] the hope of being also 'glorified with Him.' Luke 22:28—30. 2 Tim. 2:3—13. 1 Pet. 4:12—16. 5:1—4. Rev. 1:9—11. 3:20—22.

SCOTT.  
(14) Sons. 'By this term the Hebrews expressed any close connexion, either by affection, or similarity of habits. See Noesselt. It has here a fuller meaning, even than "being animated with the mind of God, imitating his perfections, learning and strongly infixing in the mind the doctrine of Christ, which is that of God;" viz. the being dear to God, as a son to the father; the having a right and interest in the felicity of the Father; as the son is heir to his father's goods: v. 17. Carpzov's illustrations from Philo show, that the notion was not unknown to that spiritual Jew.'

BLOOMF.  
(15) Slaves naturally abstain from offences, not from love to their master, but fear of punishment; the Mosaic and Gentile religions required laborious and expensive rites, or daily and unceasing expiations. 'Polytheism necessarily weakens the reliance of man on divine protection [Intro. Vol. I. p. 3.], while it, in the same degree, increases his fear of divine wrath, since he can hardly hope to propitiate such numerous deities, especially as they are often at variance with one another.' See Bloomf. Adoption. Sonship, rather; see Bloomf. Ed.—'A servile spirit, that ye should again be in fear . . . but . . . a filial spirit.' St. Pnevma, [spirit,] like the Heb. *ruch*, has (as often) the sense of *affectus*; indeed it is used of all the stronger emotions of the mind, as love, wrath, &c. See 1 Cor. 2:12. 4:21. Gal. 6:1. The Mosaic economy dealt in threatenings and punishments, and fear constituted a great part of heathen worship.

ED.  
(16) 'The same Spirit,' &c. St. Bloomf. 'The testimony of the [Holy] Spirit was not unknown to the Jews. See Schoettg.' Ed.

(17) 'In order that we may also be glorified with Him.' St. Heirs. 'Kleronomoi: there is in this term a reference to fixed, certain, and unalienable possession, as of heritable property among the Jews. Grot. So the verb and noun are often used in the Gospels and Epistles. According to Jewish law, all the children (males, at least) were co-heirs. Suffer.] This is brought in with great address.'

BLOOMF.  
V. 18—23. By a kind of constraint, through the guilt and righteous condemnation of Adam and his posterity, everything seems perverted from its intended use: the inanimate creatures are pressed into the service of man's rebellion; the luminaries of heaven give him light, by which to work wickedness; the fruits of the earth are sacrificed to his luxury, intemperance, and ostentation; its bowels are ransacked for metals, from which arms are forged for public and private murder and revenge; or to gratify man's avarice, and excite him to fraud, oppression, and war. . . . Above all, nearly every part of the creation has been, and is perverted, in one way or other, to idolatry, which is especially 'vanity.' 1:21—23. The heavenly luminaries, the earth, rivers, woods, and



19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope;

21 Because <sup>a</sup> the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Pe. 3:13.

puts the glory; and finds that a weight, an exceeding and eternal weight; glory that shall be revealed. In our present state we come short, not only in the enjoyment, but in the knowledge of that glory, 1 Cor. 2:9. 1 John 3:2. it shall be revealed. It surpasses all that we have yet seen or known, though present vouchers are very precious, very sweet. Revealed not only to us, to be seen, but in us, to be enjoyed. The kingdom of God is within you, and will be so to eternity. He determines the sufferings not worthy to be compared with the glory. They cannot merit that glory; and if suffering for Christ will not merit, much less will

mountains, as well as animals, have been adored as gods; while metals, stone, and wood, have been fashioned into idols, and decorations of idols; and all the prime of the productions of the earth have been offered in sacrifice unto them. So that, everything is in an unnatural state: the good creatures of God appear evil, through man's abuse of them; and even the enjoyment originally to be found in them, is turned into vexation, bitterness, and disappointment, by man's idolatrous love of them, and expectation from them. Thus we are assured, that 'the whole creation groans' in every part, as with one sympathizing expression of anguish, expecting and impatiently longing for a glorious event of all these distractions. This it has done ever since the fall, and will do, in a measure, till the end of the world. The miseries also of the human species, through their own and each other's wickedness, as well as the state of the inferior creatures, declare the world to be in such a situation, as is not intended always to continue. Nay, not only do all creatures, and all other men here below, as it were, groan under the burdens imposed on them through sin; but even 'the children of God,' who have 'the Spirit of adoption,' and his holy consolations, as the first-fruits and pledge of their everlasting felicity, 14—17. yet groan within themselves, through manifold pains, conflicts, temptations, and difficulties; and especially through the disquietude of indwelling sin, 7:22—25. 2 Cor. 5:1—3. [But at the final consummation of all things] Satan, sin, death, misery, and all wicked creatures, will be confined to hell; and the rest of God's creation will appear glorious, pure, beautiful, orderly, and happy; in every respect answering the end for which it was formed, and in nothing abused to contrary purposes. Rev. 20:11—15. 21:1—4.—The sufferings of animals, though very many and grievous, yet being unfeared and transient, are doubtless overbalanced by their enjoyments; and to infer an individual resurrection of all or any of them, from this passage, is surely one of the wildest reveries, which ever entered into the mind of thinking man.—The happy effects produced by the Gospel, when extensively successful, even in this present world, may be considered as earnest of the glorious scene, of which the apostle speaks; Rev. 20:1—6. but 'the manifestation of [this glory of, St.] the sons of God' (19), and 'the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body' (23), clearly show, that the general resurrection, and the state which follows, were especially, and indeed exclusively meant; for then only will 'the children of God be manifested' as such, and be separated from all others. 1 John 3:1—3, v. 2.

(18.) 'Moreover, I count not the sufferings of the present time as worthy of comparison with the glory which is to be revealed to us.' St. 'The objection which might probably be raised to the Christian religion, that by it men expected everything good, and yet scarcely ever met with anything but tribulations and afflictions, Paul overrules: 1st, by reminding them, that men cannot have the fruition of any good that is yet future, and only in hope, v. 19—25. 2dly, by pointing out the present good which, amidst its very miseries, the Christian religion affords, 26—30. inasmuch as by it we are assured that, according to the divine ordination, the pious worshippers of God shall find evils themselves turn to good, v. 28. and shall hereafter enjoy supreme felicity, even as Christ, who endured the like tribulations and afflictions before He attained the summit of felicity and dignity which He now enjoys.'

ROSENH.

(19, &c.) Creation.] 'Ktisis: The difficulty of this passage, v. 19, &c. (considered the most difficult of Paul's writings, and which has perhaps, beyond all others, perplexed commentators,) turns on the sense to be assigned to this word. 1. It has been tr. nature, the whole terrestrial creation, spoken by a prosopopeia common both to the Scriptures and the classics, by which that is ascribed to universal nature which is only properly applicable to intelligent beings. Koppe instances Gen. 4:10. Lev. 26:34. Dent. 32:1. Ps. 19:1. 114:3—6. Is. 55:12. Jer. 47:6. Hos. 13:14. Hab. 3:10. Baruch 3:34. Ja. 5:4. Also Philo de Præm. And so the classical writers, when speaking of the golden age, as Hesiod, Virg., Theoc. — Chrys., Ambr., Hil., T. Aq., and the Gr. cmtts.; also Luther, Grot., Cap., Parr., Mosheim, Lakemacher, [Flatt., Tholuck, Carpz., Danhauer, Jacobi, Mich., Kop., Boltz, [Hodge.] and Ros., thus tr. For, says Carpz., "(1.) It is required by the following ktisis in v. 20, which has the same sense. (2.) The tr. is supported by other SS. where to ktisma and hē ktisis, used alone, signify creatura, and phusis, viz. Mark 10:6. 13:19. Col. 1:15. and especially Rom. 1:25. Rev. 5:13. (3.) By the characteristics of universality at v. 22. (4.) By the antithesis;

doing. The sufferings are small and short, and concern the body only: but the glory is rich and great, concerns the soul, and is eternal.

This he reckons, very seriously and deliberately considers. He had reasoned the case within himself, weighed the arguments on both sides, and thus at last resolves the point, as an arithmetician balancing an account; he first sums up what is disbursed for Christ, in his sufferings of this present time, and finds they come to very little; he then sums up what is secured to us by Christ in the glory that shall be revealed, and that he finds an infinite sum, transcending all conception, the disbursement abundantly made up, and the losses infinitely counter-vailed. And who would be afraid then to suffer for Christ, who, as He is beforehand with us in suffering, so He will not be behindhand with us in recompense?

Now Paul was a competent judge; could reckon not by art only, but by experience; for he knew both. He knew what the sufferings of this present time were; see 2 Cor. 11:23—28. He knew what the glory of heaven is; see 2 Cor. 12:3, 4. And on the view of both, he gives this judgment here. There is nothing like a believing view of the glory which shall be revealed,

to support and bear up the spirit under all the sufferings of this present time. Heb. 11:26.

2. As the accomplishment of the saints' present hopes and expectations, v. 19, &c. As the saints are suffering for it, so they are waiting for it. Heaven is therefore sure; for God, by his Spirit, would not raise and encourage those hopes only to defeat and disappoint them; He will establish that word unto his servants, on which He has caused them to hope, Ps. 119:49. and heaven is therefore sweet; for if hope deferred makes the heart sick, surely when the desire comes it will be a tree of life, Prov. 13:12. Now he observes an expectation of this glory; (1.) In the creatures, v. 19—22. This observation in these vs. has some difficulty in it, which puzzles interpreters a little: and the more, because it is a remark not made in any other scripture, with which it might be compared.

By the creature here we understand, not as some do, the Gentile world, and their expectations of Christ and the Gospel; which is an exposition very foreign and forced; but the whole frame of nature, especially that of this lower world; the whole creation, the compages of inanimate and sensible creatures; which, because of their har-

ktisis being opposed to those who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, i. e. the faithful. Therefore ktisis cannot mean the faithful. Neither, moreover, can it mean the unfaithful, or unbelievers; since to this the words subjoined are repugnant. (5.) By the attributes, For, 1st, this ktisis is made obnoxious to vanity and abuse, contrary to its end, and against its proper use, solely by the permission of God. 2dly, it groans under that servitude, and anxiously expects to be restored to liberty. 3dly, and will finally obtain it. Such allegory is frequent, too, in the SS. Lak. and Ros. think, also, there is allusion to a Jewish opinion, that at Messiah's reign the whole creation, corrupted and depraved by the fall, would be restored to its original perfection. But to the introduction of Jewish opinions here, I must take strong exception, even though supported by the authority of Philo, and some ancient fathers, who held the doctrine of a millennium; as Iren. adv. Hæc.—Ammon objects, that ktisis, in the N. T., denotes the creation, actively taken, and is to be understood of the things created, (Col. 1:23. Rev. 14.) but not the rerum creatorum complexus. Nor, thinks he, would the apostle here, in a doctrinal discussion, introduce a poetic allegory so sublime, as scarcely to be paralleled in the Zendavesta. Besides, the for, v. 19. unites it to troubles endured by men, and v. 21. this ktisis is to be associated with the inhabitants of heaven. Turner, too, objects, that if it have a figurative sense here, it must in v. 20, 21, 22. "which seems inconsistent with what is said of ktisis." [But see Hodge, Rom. pp. 335—346.]

2. Another class, as Ham., Le Clerc, Wets., Schl., take ktisis, not of a physical but moral creation, (as 2 Cor. 5:17.) and explain Christians recently converted, from Judaism or heathenism, or (as Noesselt) the latter only. But to this, Am. and Turn. with reason, object, that then v. 23. must be restricted to Jewish converts, or to Paul, with his brethren, perhaps, in the ministry, which is very improbable, as v. 23. is as applicable to all Christians. "Ou monon de alla [and not only but] v. 23. (he adds), is used elsewhere in Rom. (5:3, 11. 9:18.) to denote opposition, and v. 22. shows it should thus be understood here. Further, if ktisis referred to Christians, it would, as in other places, have some adjunct." See Eph. 4:24. 2 Cor. 5:17. Gal.

3. Many eminent cmtts., as Locke, Whit., Taylor, Henm., Semler, Mackn., Cætel., Doed., Am. Jaspis, [St.,] &c. interpret ktisis, of mankind generally, of whom the Gentiles formed the greatest bulk; the popular use of language (as Turn. obs.), allowing that to be affirmed of all which is applicable to a large proportion. Am. remarks, that ktisis, like the Heb. bryth, has undoubtedly the sense of the human creation, in Mark 16:15. Col. 1:15 and 23. Heb. 4:13. And Schoet. says, that in the Rabbinical writings bryth is frequently used for man. "And, (says Am.) the sense at v. 20. sqq. proves that creatures endowed with free-will are entreated of. Besides, the apolutrōsis tou sōmatos [deliverance from the bondage of corruption, v. 21.], expressly adverts to the frailty of human nature, derived from the dominion of sin. Again, the inheritance with Christ, v. 17. does, according to Paul's intent, belong not only to all Israel, 11:26. but also to the fullness of the Gentiles, v. 25." Turner thus gives the sense, "What mankind were anxiously expecting, i. e. an amelioration of their condition, expected in different degrees of excellency, and with different degrees of certainty, according to circumstances." See Scholar Armed, and Bishop Blomfield, on the Traditional Knowledge. "We need consider as expected only that part of these blessings which is the earnest and pledge of the rest. From the same terms being used to express both the present and future blessings of the Gospel, they seem here considered in connexion, as constituting one whole, the expectation of which may be affirmed, although the expectants were not aware of the full extent of them, their views differing according to situation and circumstances." Turner. [St. refers to the innate longing after immortality, shown in the heathen pictures of Elysium, and compares Cic. and Sen.]

"The 1st and 2d of the above interpretations deserve the preference, the 2d is utterly untenable, though each is pressed with peculiar difficulties. Perhaps, however, the last is liable to the fewest." [See Stuart, Rom. pp. 327—342.]

BLOOMF.

(20.) Vanity.] 'The Gr. has so extensive a meaning, that it may be expl. on any of the above interpretations, note, v. 19. &c. See Dr. A. C., and Schl.' Bloomf. 'Frailty, (not of its own choice, but by Him who put it in subjection,) in hope that this same creature may be freed from the bondage of a perishing state, and (brought) into, &c.' St. Hope.] 'For the felicity which admits no increase, is imperfect.' JASPIS.



22 For we know that <sup>b</sup> the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits <sup>c</sup> of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan <sup>d</sup> within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption <sup>e</sup> of our body.

24 For we are saved by hope <sup>f</sup>; but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope <sup>f</sup> for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for it.

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but <sup>g</sup> the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

<sup>b</sup> or, every creature. d 2 Co. 5:2,4. f 2 Co. 5:7.  
c Ep. 1:14. e Lu. 21:28. g Zec. 12:10.

mony and mutual dependence, and because they all constitute and make up one world, are spoken of in the singular number as *the creature*. The sense of the apostle in these four vs. we may take in these observations: [1.] That there is a present *vanity*, which the creature, by reason of the sin of man, is *made subject to*, v. 20. the ground was cursed, and with it all the creatures became mutable and mortal. *Under the bondage of corruption*, v. 21. the creature contracted an impurity, deformity, and infirmity, and an enmity of one to another. When the world was drowned, it was made subject to vanity; and the whole species of creatures is designed for, and hastening to, a total dissolution by fire. Nor is it the least part of their vanity and bondage, that they are used, or abused rather, by men as instruments of sin; as when they are made the food and fuel of our lusts. And this, *not willingly*; all desire their own perfection and consummation: when made instruments of sin, it is not willingly. Or, They are thus captivated, not for any sin they had committed, but for man's sin; *By reason of Him who hath subjected the same*. Adam did it meritoriously [meritingly?]; the creatures being delivered to him, when he by sin delivered himself, he delivered them likewise into the bondage of corruption. God did it judicially; He passed a sentence on the creatures for the sin of man, by which they became subject. And this yoke (poor creatures) they bear, *in hope* that it will not be so always,—*in hope that the creature itself*;

V. 22. 'All creatures sigh together and are in anguish.' *St.* 'The Gr. (so the best critics) is to be taken in a metaphorical sense, for *deep lamentation* and extreme agony; without ascribing to the latter term any reference to its original acceptance. The chief cause was (not merely the political evils of that time, as Koppe, nor *mortality*, as Locke and Ros., but their conviction of sin, and fear of punishment from an offended God, whom they know not how to appease, nor how to obtain expiation and atonement.'

BLOOMF.  
(23.) *They.* 'So . . . (our) adoption as children, the redemption,' &c. *St. Turner*, in Bl. thus nently paraphrases vs. 18—23. 'I consider that the afflictions to which we are now subject, do not in the least counter-balance the blessings which the Gospel displays for our enjoyment. And (v. 13.) such blessings as, by the Gospel, God imparts to his children, (that is to say,) an amelioration of the present unhappy state of the world, vast numbers of mankind are ardently expecting. And (v. 20.) this is a reasonable expectation; for although mankind are subject, in their present state, to frailty and death, by the providence of God, permitting it, for wise purposes, it was not in consequence of any direct act of their own, and therefore they entertain the hope (v. 21.) that they shall be delivered from their present miserable situation, and brought into that state of happiness, of present favor with God, and of well-grounded expectation of future bliss, which Christians now enjoy (v. 22.) For it is well known, that, till the present day, mankind have been earnestly longing for some such improvement of state and character as the Gospel offers (23.) And not they only, not merely the great mass of the Gentile world, but we Christians also, who are already partakers of the privileges of the Gospel, even we ardently aspire after its full blessings, when our adoption, as God's children, shall be publicly recognised, by the deliverance of our bodies from corruptibility at the general resurrection.'

ED.

so many Greek copies join the words. We have reason to pity the poor creatures, that for our sin are become subject to vanity. [2.] That the creatures *groan and travail in pain* together under this *vanity and corruption*, v. 22. It is a figurative expression. Sin is a burden to the whole creation; the sin of the Jews, in crucifying Christ, set the earth a quaking under them. Comp. Is. 46: 1. Hab. 2: 11. Job 31: 38. [3.] That the creature, that is now thus burdened, shall, at the time of the restitution of all things, be *delivered from this bondage into the glorious liberty of the children of God*, v. 21. shall no more be subject to vanity and corruption, and the other fruits of the curse; but, on the contrary, this lower world shall be renewed: when there will be new heavens, there will be a new earth, 2 Pet. 3: 13. Rev. 21: 1. and there shall be a glory conferred on all the creatures, which shall be (in the proportion of their natures) as suitable and as great an advancement as the glory of the children of God shall be to them. The fire at the last day shall be a refining, not a destroying, annihilating fire. What comes of the souls of brutes, that go downward, none can tell. But it should seem by the Scripture there will be some kind of restoration of them. And if it be objected, What use will they be of to glorified saints? we may suppose them of as much use as they were to Adam in innocency; and if it be only to illustrate the wisdom, power, and goodness of their Creator, that is enough. Comp. with this, Ps. 96: 10—13. 98: 7—9. [4.] That the creature doth therefore earnestly expect and wait for the *manifestation of the children of God*, v. 19. Now the saints are God's hidden ones, the wheat seems lost in a heap of chaff; but then they shall be manifested. 1 John 3: 2. And this redemption of the creature is reserved till then; for as it was with man, and for man, that they fell under the curse, so with man, and for man, they shall be delivered. This the whole creation looks and longs for; and it may serve as a reason why now a good man should be merciful to his beast.

(2.) In the saints, who are new creatures, v. 23—25. Observe,

[1.] The grounds of this expectation in the saints. It is our having received the *first-fruits of the Spirit*; which both quickens our desires, and encourages our hopes, and both ways raises our expectations. The first-fruits did both sanctify and insure the lump. Grace is the first-fruits of glory, it is glory begun. We, having received such clusters in this wilderness, cannot but long for the full vintage in the heavenly Canaan. *Not only they*; not only the creatures, who are not capable of such a happiness as the first-fruits of the Spirit; but even we, who

have such present rich receivings, cannot but long for something more and greater. We *groan within ourselves*; which denotes the strength and secrecy of these desires. Or, *among ourselves*. It is the unanimous vote, the joint desire of the whole church, all agree in this; *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*. Present receivings and comforts are consistent with many groans; not as the pangs of one dying, but as the throes of a woman in travail; groans that are symptoms of life, not of death.

[2.] The object of this expectation; *The adoption*; to wit, *the redemption of our body*. The resurrection is here called *the redemption of the body*. It shall then be rescued from the power of death and the grave, and the bondage of corruption; and though a vile body, yet it shall be refined and beautified, and made like that glorious body of Christ, Phil. 3: 21. 1 Cor. 15: 42. This *adoption* is that *manifested* before all the world, angels and men. The deed of adoption, now written, signed, and sealed, will then be recognised, proclaimed, and published. As Christ was, so the saints will be, declared to be the sons of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead, ch. 1: 4. It is the *adoption perfected* and completed. The children of God have bodies as well as souls; and till those bodies are brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God, the adoption is not perfect. But *then* it will be complete, when the Captain of our salvation shall bring the many sons to glory, Heb. 2: 10. Ps. 16: 9, 10. Job 14: 14, 15.

[3.] The agreeableness of this to our present state, v. 24, 25. Our happiness is not in present possession; *We are saved by hope*. It is acknowledged that one of the principal graces of a Christian, is *hope*, 1 Cor. 13: 13. which necessarily implies a good thing to come, as the object of that hope. Faith respects the promise, hope the thing promised. Faith is the evidence, hope the expectation, of things not seen. Faith is the mother of hope. *We do with patience wait*. In hoping for this glory, we have need of patience, to bear the sufferings we meet with in the way to it, and the delays of it.

V. 26—28. The apostle here suggests two privileges more, which true Christians are entitled to.

I. The help of the Spirit in prayer. Hope supposes desire, and desire, offered up to God, is prayer; we groan. Observe,

1. Our weakness in prayer; *We know not what we should pray for as we ought*, both as to *matter and manner*. We are not competent judges of our own condition, Eccl. 6: 12. short-sighted, very much biassed in favor of the flesh, and apt to separate the end from the way, Mat. 20: 22. like foolish children, ready to cry for fruit before it is

V. 24—27. True believers are saved 'by,' or in, 'hope;' they have been actually brought into a state of safety; but their comfort consists 'in hope,' rather than fruition. The future felicity of the saints will chiefly consist in beholding the manifested glory of God; \* some glimpses by faith they here 'see, as in a glass darkly;' for the full vision and fruition of his glory they hope, and wait, in reliance on his promise, and 'by patient continuance in well doing,' amidst manifold trials and temptations; and from this hope they cannot be diverted, by the vain expectation of finding satisfaction in the things of time and sense. *Mind of, &c.* 'The phrase is here . . . the very same as in v. 6.; and expresses, not merely the meaning, but the temper and disposition, of the mind, as under the influences of the Divine Spirit, pursuing and breathing after such blessings, as suit its rational and immortal nature.' *Doctr.* 5—9. *Eph.* 6: 18—20, v. 18.—The clause, in one of the collects of our liturgy, seems well to express this: 'That they may love the thing which Thou commandest, and desire that which Thou dost promise.' When the Holy Spirit produces this state of the judgment and affections; the prayers which spring from it will be graciously accepted, through our heavenly Advocate, by the holy, heart-searching God.

(21.) 'For even we are saved (only) in hope.' STUART.  
(26.) *Infirmities.* 'Recent comtrs. (from *Grot.*) explain *griefs from adversity*, but it also comprehends all those infirmities, frailties, and weaknesses, arising from the flesh, which disincite us to sustain the trials and temptations of virtue, and, indeed, indispose to discern our real good, or to form such prayers as may be acceptable to God. This ignorance of our real good, and consequent inability to pray for it aright, was not unknown to the heathen sages. Pythagoras, says *Diog. Laert.*,

\* This phraseology, though common, gives us, of course, a very inadequate idea of the progressive, busy, happy life of obedience, Christians will hereafter enjoy: for certainly more than a single faculty, that of sight, will be immortal.



27 And he <sup>h</sup> that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, <sup>i</sup> because he maketh intercession for the saints according <sup>j</sup> to the will of God.

28 And we know <sup>k</sup> that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

29 For whom he did <sup>l</sup> foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.

h Je. 17.10. Re. 2:23. j 1 Jn. 5:14. 12:6-12.  
i or, that. k Ps. 46:1, 2. He. 1:1 Pe. 1:2.

ripe, and fit for them, Luke 9:54, 55.; we know not how to pray as we ought: we are often at a loss; graces are weak, affections cold, thoughts wandering: and it is not always easy to find the heart to pray, 2 S. 7:27. The apostle speaks of this in the first person; *We know not.* He puts himself among the rest. Folly, and weakness, and distraction in prayer, are what all saints complain of.

2. The assistances the Spirit gives us in that duty. He *helps our infirmities*; meant especially of our praying infirmities, which most easily beset us in that duty, against which the Spirit helps, in the *Word*, in the *heart*, dwelling in us, working in us, as a Spirit of grace and supplication; especially with respect to the infirmities we are under when in a suffering state, when our faith is most apt to fail; for this end the Holy Ghost was poured out. *Helpeth, heaves with us, over against us*, as we help one that would lift a burden, by lifting over-against him at the other end; helps with us, with us doing our endeavor, putting forth the strength we have. We cannot without God, and He will not without us. What help? Why, the *Spirit itself makes intercession for us*, dictates our requests, indites our petitions, draws up our plea; Christ intercedes for us in heaven, the Spirit, in our hearts; so graciously has God provided for the encouragement of the praying. The Spirit, as an enlightening Spirit, teaches us what to pray for; as a sanctifying Spirit, works and excites our praying graces; as a comforting Spirit, silences our fears, and helps us over all discouragements. The Holy Spirit is the Spring of all our desires

and breathings toward God. Now this intercession which the Spirit makes is, (1.) *With groanings that cannot be uttered.* The strength and fervency of those desires which the Holy Spirit works, are hereby intimated. There may be praying in the Spirit, where there is not a word spoken, Ex. 14:15. 1 S. 1:13. *Cannot be uttered*; they are so confused, the soul is in such a hurry with temptations and troubles, we know not what to say, nor how to express ourselves. (2.) *According to the will of God*, v. 27. The Spirit in the heart never contradicts the Spirit in the Word. The Spirit interceding in us evermore, melts our wills into the will of God. *Not as I will but as Thou wilt.*

3. The sure success of these intercessions; *He that searches the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit*, v. 27. To a hypocrite, nothing is more dreadful, than that God searches the heart, and sees through all his disguises. To a sincere Christian, nothing is more comfortable than that God searches the heart, for then He will hear and answer those desires we want words to express. He knows *what we have need of before we ask*, Mat. 6:8. He knows what is the mind of his own Spirit in us. And as He always hears the Son interceding for us, so He always hears the Spirit interceding in us, because his intercession is according to the will of God.

What could have been done more for the comfort of the Lord's people, in all their addresses to God? Christ had said, 'Whatever you ask the Father according to his will, He will give it you.' But how shall we learn to ask according to his will? Why the Spirit will teach us that. Therefore it is, that the seed of Jacob never seek in vain.

II. The concurrence of all providences for the good of those that are Christ's, v. 28. It might be objected, that, notwithstanding all these privileges, we see believers compassed about with manifold afflictions; though the Spirit makes intercession for them, yet their troubles are continued. It is very true; but in *this* the Spirit's intercession is always effectual, that, however it goes with them, all this is working together for their good. Observe here,

1. The character of the saints, who are interested in this privilege, here described by properties common to all that are truly sanctified. (1.) *They love God.* This includes all the outgoings of the soul's affections toward God, as the chiefest good and

highest end. (2.) *They are the called according to his purpose*; effectually called according to the eternal purpose.

2. The privilege of the saints, that *all things work together for good to them*, i. e. all the providences of God that concern them. Their sins are not of his performing, therefore not intended here, though his permitting of sin is made to work for their good, 2 Chr. 32:31. But all the providences of God are theirs; merciful providences, afflicting providences, personal, public: they are all for good; perhaps for temporal good, as Joseph's troubles; however, for spiritual and eternal good; directly or indirectly, every providence has a tendency to the spiritual good of those that love God, [comp. Note, Job 36:1.] breaking them off from sin, bringing them nearer to God, weaning them from the world, fitting them for heaven. *Work together*: as physic on the body, various ways, according to the intention of the physician, but all for the patient's good; *work together*, as several ingredients in a medicine concur to answer the intention. All this *we know*; know it for a certainty, from the Word of God, from our own experience, and from the experience of all the saints.

V. 29, 30. The apostle, having reckoned up so many ingredients of the happiness of true believers, comes here to represent the ground of them all, which he lays in predestination. For the explication of which, he here sets before us the order of the causes of our salvation, a golden chain, which cannot be broken. There are four links of it. 1. *Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.* All that God designed for glory and happiness as the end, He decreed to grace and holiness as the way. Not, whom He did foreknow to be holy, them He predestinated to be so. The counsels and decrees of God, do not truckle to the frail and fickle will of men; no, God's foreknowledge of the saints is the same with that *everlasting love* wherewith He is said to have loved them, Jer. 31:3. God's knowing his people, is the same with his owning of them, Ps. 1:6. John 10:14. 2 Tim. 2:19. See ch. 11:2. Words of knowledge often in Scripture denote affection: so here: *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God*, 1 Pet. 1:2. And the same word is rendered *fore-ordained*, 1 Pet. 1:20. *Whom He did foreknow*, that is, whom He designed for his

did not permit [his disciples, or some of them?] to pray for themselves, because they knew not what was fit." Bl. Hodge, from this, asserts too broadly, it seems, that 'the heathen philosophers gave this as a reason why men ought not to pray.' Let us judge the benighted heathen, of old, and now, with more candor, if we must at all. We are too apt, perhaps, to consider them as destitute of every virtue. *With groanings.* 'In sighs.' St. 'The Holy Spirit intercedes, not as Mediator, by virtue of his own merit, which is Christ's only, but as Advocate, who excites the faithful, as it were his *clients*, to prayer, shows them what they are to pray for, and cherishes their hope of obtaining their petitions.' So Erasmus, Beza, Estius, Par., Grot., Wolf, Bl. &c. 'The intercession of the H. S. differs from the intercession of Christ, as well in respect of person as of office. For the H. S. is the *allos Paraklētōs* [another Comforter] promised by Christ, John 14:16. It differs in these respects: 1. That the H. S. is our *Paraclete*, by virtue of his abiding and dwelling in the heart (v. 37); but Christ, by virtue of his office, as *Sponsor*, or *Advocate in heaven*. (Heb. 9-24.)—2. That Christ intercedes with the Father *formally*, as *God-man*, *Mediator*, and our *High Priest*, by virtue of his own merit: (Heb. 7:25.) But the H. S., sent by the Father and the Son to the faithful, intercedes *effectively* in the heart, as our *Helper*, by strengthening us from the efficacy of Christ's merits, and claiming it for us as our own, by faith, (2 Cor. 4:12.) by impelling us to prayer, and suggesting to us how we ought to supplicate (Zech. 12:10.): by exciting in our hearts *spiritus occulta ineffabilique* to the heavenly Father (3:26.): finally, by Himself praying, as it were, *in us, for us*, so that we by Him cry *Abba, Father*, 3:15. Gal. 4:6. *Carppz. Cannot be uttered.* Rather, unspoken. Bl. tr. 'low whisperings and secret suggestions.' *Wets.* 'those made in *imo pectore*. [the recesses of the breast;] and not uttered with the voice, so as to be heard.' En.

V. 23-31. *All things.* Providential appointments are doubtless primarily intended: but as these often lead men into temptation, and so prove *occasions* of sin, we could have no assurance that they would 'all work together for good,' if we were absolutely to except the effects of our own sin and folly. Gen. 22:1. The sins, indeed, even of true believers, are not always overruled for their increase of present grace, or of future glory; in this respect they 'snuff loss, and are saved as by fire.' 1 Cor. 3:10-15. yet the whole concurs, as one complex plan, to prepare them for the inheritance intended for them; and many of their own mistakes

and miscarriages, being *deeply repented of*, work together eminently for their humiliation, and the increase of their grateful love. As far as they act *in character*, and live in the habitual exercise of 'love to God,' all things concur in augmenting their final recompense. [Note, Job 36:3-14.] When they act *out of character*, corrections, and perhaps terrors, will be employed to bring them back again; and if a man allow himself in sin, expecting to derive good from it, he 'does evil that good may come,' he 'sins on that grace may abound,' he bears the broad mark of a hypocrite, and 'his damnation will be just.' So that we need not invalidate this animating assurance, to guard it from the perversion of wicked men, as some have done, to the great discouragement of humble Christians; who fear nothing so much by far, even in their sharpest afflictions, as their own lamented propensity to sin. John 10:26-31.—The persons intended, once did not 'love God'; 5-9. 5:7-10. but they had been 'called' into a state of reconciliation and love to Him, according to his purpose and choice of them, which He will never suffer to be frustrated. Having, in his infinite, but incomprehensible wisdom and righteousness, permitted the fall and apostasy of man; He looked upon the *whole human species as deserving of destruction*, and meet for it; yet, purposing to provide and reveal a gracious salvation to them, for the glory of his name, He knew that they would as certainly reject this salvation, as they would break his holy law. For reasons, therefore, not revealed to us, He determined to leave some *deservedly* to perish in obstinate enmity; and *graciously* to recover others by regeneration and efficacious grace. These 'He foreknew,' not merely in respect of external privileges, or as a part of favored nations, but as individually chosen to eternal life; for, in consequence of this foreknowledge, 'He predestinated, or before decreed them' to be conformed to the image of his Son.' Acts 2:22-24. . . . Sanctification is not expressly mentioned in this golden chain; but 'predestination to be conformed to the image' of Christ, effectual calling, and final glory, so describe the beginning, the progress, and the consummation of sanctification, that no omission can in this respect be imputed to the apostle. In the language of faith and hope, he speaks of the whole work as already done, because ensured by the purposes and promises of God; and he demands what can be said unto, or against, such things.—From this and similar passages, some persons have absurdly spoken of our having been *justified from eternity*, &c. but the *fixed intention* of doing anything, is perfectly dis-



30 Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also <sup>m</sup> called: and whom he called, them he also <sup>n</sup> justified: and whom he justified, them he also <sup>o</sup> glorified.

31 What shall we then say to these things? If <sup>p</sup> God be for us, who can be against us?

32 He <sup>q</sup> that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

m He. 9:15. o Jn. 17:22. q c. 5:6-10.  
n 1 Co. 6:11. p Ps. 118:6.

friends and favorites. Ex. 33:12. Now those whom God thus foreknew, He did predestinate to be conformed to Christ. (1.) Holiness consists in our conformity to the image of Christ. That takes in the whole of sanctification, of which Christ is the great pattern and sampler. (2.) All that God hath from eternity foreknown with favor, He hath predestinated to this conformity. It is not we that can conform ourselves to Christ; our giving of ourselves to Christ, takes rise in God's giving of us to Him: and in giving us to Him, He predestinated us to be conformable to his image. It is a mere cavil, therefore, to call the doctrine of election a licentious doctrine; and to argue that it gives encouragement to sin, as if the end were separated from the way, and happiness from holiness. None can know their election but by their conformity to Christ; for all that are chosen are chosen to sanctification, 2 Thess. 2:13. and surely it cannot be a temptation to any to be conformed to the world, to believe that they were predestinated to be conformed to Christ. (3.) What is herein chiefly designed, is, the honor of Christ, that He might be the *First-born among many brethren*; have the honor of being the great Pattern, as well as the great Prince; and in this, as in other things, might have pre-eminence. And blessed be God that there are many brethren; though but a few in one place, at one time, yet, when all together, a great many. There is, therefore, a

distinct from the *actual performance of it*. God as absolutely determined the final glorification of every believer, as He did the justification of every elect person; we might then as well say, they have been glorified in body and soul from all eternity; this could not be more absurd or unscriptural, than the notion of being justified from eternity; and probably it would be less capable of perversion.—Dr. Whitby says, that all the fathers, before Augustine, understood this passage of those, 'whom God foresaw would love Him?' But does God foresee, that any of our race, while unregenerate, will love Him? Eph. 1:3-8. And is not the clause, 'called according to his purpose,' of the same import as regenerated? And can this choice of some, rather than others, of our fallen race, because of something spiritually good in them, as the ground of it, in order to their being thus 'called,' possibly consist with the doctrines of original sin, or the total depravity of human nature, and of a regeneration from the death of sin to the life of righteousness? Does it not border on Pelagianism? This, however, gives up the notion of a national election being intended. Indeed, if all the Gentiles, or all the inhabitants of any one nation, whom God foreknew, and determined to call into his church, be actually 'conformed to the image of Christ,' and 'justified,' and shall, without exception, partake of eternal glory; the interpretation of the passage, as referring to the election of collective bodies, may stand; but otherwise it cannot. So that, if this were the only passage, in which the humiliating subject was expressly mentioned; we might confidently maintain, that the doctrine of individual predestination to eternal life, and the authority of the apostle as an inspired writer, must stand or fall together. Nothing more fully shows this, than the difficulties to which its very learned and sagacious opposers are reduced; and the different and discordant grounds on which they rest their cause: for they scarcely agree in anything, but in determining to oppose the most natural and obvious meaning of the words. Perhaps the apostle's doctrine was never more justly expressed by any uninspired writer, than in the former part of the seventeenth article of our church. 'Predestination unto life, is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) He hath constantly decreed by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom He hath chosen in Christ out of mankind; and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honor. Wherefore they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God's purpose, by his Spirit working in due season; they through grace obey the calling; they be justified freely; they be made the sons of God by adoption; they be made like the image of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works, and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity.'

(28.) 'To those who are called.' St. Being united with 'loving God,' this word must mean those who also *obey* that calling and embrace the Gospel. See Bl. &c. Purpose.] 'Will, good pleasure.' Bl. There

certain number *predestinated*, that the end of Christ's undertaking might be infallibly secured.

2. Whom He did predestinate, them He also called. Not only with the external call; many are so called, that were not chosen, Mat. 20:16. 22:14. but with the internal and effectual call. The former comes to the ear only, this to the heart. All that God did from eternity predestinate to grace and glory, He does, in the fulness of time, effectually call. The call is then effectual, when we come at the call; and we then come at the call, when the Spirit draws us, convinces the conscience of guilt and wrath, enlightens the understanding, bows the will, persuades and enables us to embrace Christ in the promises, makes us willing in the day of his power. Them He called, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand; we are called to that to which we were chosen. So that the only way to make our election sure, is, to make sure our calling, 2 Pet. 1:10.

3. Whom He called, effectually called, them He also justified; absolved from guilt, and accepted as righteous through Jesus Christ: no sin they have ever been guilty of, shall come against them, to condemn them. Those that stand it out against the Gospel call, abide under guilt and wrath.

4. Whom He justified, them He also glorified. The power of corruption being broken in effectual calling, and the guilt of sin removed in justification, all that hinders is taken out of the way, and nothing can come between that soul and glory. Observe, It is spoken of as a thing done, He glorified, because of the certainty of it; He hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling. In the eternal glorification of all the elect, God's design of love has its full accomplishment; created wills are fickle, created powers feeble, but this God Himself hath undertaken the doing of, from first to last, that we might abide in a constant hope in, and dependence on, and subjection to Him, and ascribe all the praise to Him; that every crown may be cast before the throne.

V. 31-39. The apostle closes his dis-

course on the privileges of believers with a holy triumph, in the name of all the saints, What shall we then say? What use shall we make of all that has been said? He speaks as one amazed and swallowed up with the contemplation and admiration of it, wondering at the height and depth, and length and breadth, of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. The more we know of other things, the less we wonder at them; but the further we are led into an acquaintance with gospel-mysteries, the more we are affected with the admiration of them. If ever Paul rode in a triumphant chariot, on this side heaven, here it was: with such a holy height and bravery of spirit, with such a fluency and copiousness of expression, does he here comfort himself, and all the people of God, on the consideration of these privileges.

In general, he here makes a challenge, dares all the enemies of the saints to do their worst: The ground of the challenge is, God's being for us; for, if so, who can be against us, so as to prevail, so as to hinder our happiness? Be they ever so great, strong, many, mighty, malicious, what can they do? While God is for us, and we keep in his love, we may with a holy boldness defy all the powers of darkness. Who then dares fight against us, when God Himself is fighting for us? And this we say to these things, this is the inference we draw from these premises.

I. We have supplies ready in all our wants, v. 32.

1. Observe what God has done for us, on which our hopes are built; He spared not his own Son; was willing to part with Him, did not think Him too precious a gift to bestow for the salvation of poor souls; now we may know He loves us, in that He hath not withheld his Son, his own Son, his only Son, from us, as He said of Abraham, Gen. 22:12. Thus did He deliver Him up for us all, for all the elect, for us all; not only for our good, but in our stead, as a sacrifice of atonement, to be a propitiation for sin.

2. What we may therefore expect He will do; with Him freely give us all things. It is implied, He will give us Christ, for other

seems a reference to the doctrine (so great a mystery to the Jews) of the calling of the Gentiles. Eph. 3:1-11. Turner, Bl. &c. Chrys. thinks, 'this v., and most of the preceding, are to be considered with a view to the peculiar trials and persecutions of the Christians of Rome.' See Bloomf.

(29.) 'The most judicious agree, that this whole passage has a direct reference to the calling of the Gentiles. Did foreknow.] Many comtrs. tr. "hath from eternity loved:" but for this use of the simple verb, the authority is very weak, and for the compound none at all. Besides, in the consideration of so very important a portion of S., nothing but the most rigid accuracy can guide us to the true meaning. With Koppe, I retain the common tr., especially as it includes the other. The sense (and so Wetst. and Kop.) is; "If any one is brought to the religion of Christ, that is not to be attributed to accident and fortune, but solely to the eternal and most wise counsel of God." See 1 Pet. 1:2, 20. Acts 2:23. Bloomf. Some ask, does the apostle here teach, that the Great Disposer of events so arranges things, that some have circumstances, condition, imagination, privileges, and disposition, education, &c. more favorable to true religion than others, and all this, as well as their conduct in this state, is perfectly known to God from eternity? Bloomf. thinks, it would be extraordinary, indeed, if Paul, who all along speaks of communities, and even in this ch., should here mean 'individuals; and that the prothesis in v. 28. refers to a community, is evident by the meaning in the parallel place, Eph. 3:3.' But see Scott. First-begotten, and First-born Son, are terms applied to the Logos by Philo; and see Koppe. Id.

(30.) Called.] 'Simply invited to participate in the benefits of the Christian religion.' Ros. 'The absolute necessity of holiness to salvation is the very subject of the apostle's discourse.' Turner. 'In v. 28 and 29. are mentioned the divine benefits before the creation of the world, i. e. from eternity. 1. The prothesis, or determinate purpose of granting felicity to those who should believe in Christ to the end of life. 2. The prognosis, the prescience of God, (conjoined with his love,) by which He foreknew all and each who would believe in Christ. 3. The prodrismos, the determination and decree of conferring eternal happiness on all and each of them. At v. 30. are enumerated the divine benefits granted in this life: (1.) Hē klēsis, calling to faith, or an offering of grace, which here comprehends actual conversion, and regeneration; since God illumines the intellect of man by the Holy Ghost, sways the will, and confers faith on those who do not perversely reject his offer. (2.) Dikaiōsis, justification, by which is meant, the being declared just by God, and absolved from guilt and punishment. (3.) Doxa, glorification, which takes its commencement in renovation and sanctification, and is perfected in life eternal.' Yet see Scott, ns above. CARPZ.

V. 32-34. The omnipotence and omniscience of God had been, in the preceding v., opposed to the puny efforts of every enemy: here, his former benefits are shown to be assured pledges of final felicity, to all real Christians. All things in heaven and earth, the universal creation,



33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is God that justifieth.*

34 Who is he that condemneth? *It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.

r Is. 50:8, 9. t Ps. 44:22. 1 Co. u 1 Co. 15:57.  
s Re. 12:10, 11. 15:30, 31. v Jude 24.

things are bestowed *with Him*: He will *with Him freely give us all things*, all things that He sees needful and necessary for us; all good things, and more we would not desire, Ps. 34:10. *Freely give*; freely, without reluctancy; He is ready to give; freely, without recompense, without money, and without price. *How shall He not?* Can it be imagined, that He should do the greater, and not the less? That He should give so great a gift for us, when we were enemies, and should deny us any good thing, now that through Him we are friends and children?

II. We have an answer ready to all accusations, and a security against all condemnations, v. 33, 34. Doth the law, their own consciences, or the devil, the accuser of the brethren, accuse them? This is enough to answer, *It is God that justifieth*. Men may justify themselves, as the Pharisees did, and yet the accusations be in full force against them; but if God justifies, that answers all. *Who is he that condemneth?* Though they cannot make good the charge, yet they will be ready to condemn; but we have a plea ready to move in arrest of judgment, a plea which cannot be overruled. *It is Christ that died, &c.* It is by virtue of our interest in Christ, our relation to Him, and our union with Him, that we are thus secured. By the merit of his death, He paid our debt; and his resurrection is a convincing evidence, that divine justice was satisfied by the merit of his death. His resurrection was his acquittance, it was a legal discharge. Therefore the apostle mentions it with a *yea rather*. If He had died, and not risen again, we had been where we were. So his sitting at the right hand of God, is a further evidence, that He had done his work, and denotes, that He

is ready there, always at hand, and ruling there; all power is given to Him. Our friend is Himself the Judge. Moreover, He is there, not unconcerned about us, not forgetful of us, but *making intercession*. He is agent for us there; an Advocate for us, to answer all accusations, to put in our plea, and to prosecute it with effect, to appear for us, and to present our petitions. And is not this abundant matter for comfort?

Some understand the accusation and condemnation here spoken of, of that which the suffering saints met with from men. The primitive Christians had many black crimes laid to their charge,—heresy, sedition, rebellion, and what not? For these the ruling powers condemned them; 'But no matter for that;' (says the apostle;) 'while we stand right at God's bar, it is of no great moment how we stand at men's. To all the hard censures, the malicious calumnies, and the unjust and unrighteous sentences of men, we may with comfort oppose our justification before God, through Christ Jesus, as that which doth abundantly countervail,' 1 Cor. 4:3, 4.

III. We have good assurance of our preservation and continuance in this blessed state, v. 35. to the end. We have here,

1. A daring challenge to all the enemies of the saints, to separate them, if they could, from the love of Christ. *Who shall?* None shall, v. 35—37. God having manifested his love in giving his own Son for us, and not hesitating at that, can we imagine that anything else should divert or dissolve that love? Observe here, (1.) The present calamities of Christ's beloved ones, supposed a very black and dismal case, illustrated, v. 36. by a passage quoted from Ps. 44:22. which intimates, that we are not to think strange, no, not concerning the fiery, bloody trial; for the O. T. saints had the same lot; so persecuted they the prophets that were before us. *Killed all the day long*, continually exposed to, and expecting, the fatal stroke. *Accounted as sheep for the slaughter*; they make no more of killing a Christian, than of butchering a sheep. They kill them to please themselves, to be food to their malice. *They eat up my people as they eat bread*, Ps. 14:4. (2.) The inability of all these things to separate us from the love of Christ. Shall they, can they, do it? No, by no means. Christ doth not, will not, love us the less for all this. We do not, will not, love Him the less for this; and that for this reason, because we do not think that He loves us the less. (3.) The triumph of believers in this, v. 37. We are *conquerors*: though killed all the day long, yet conquerors, Rev. 12:11. Nay, not only conquerors, but *more than conquerors*, i. e. triumphers. Those are more than conquerors, that conquer with little loss, and great gain. The spoils are exceeding rich; glory, honor, and

peace, a crown of righteousness that fades not away; but the loss is only the dross the gold loses in the furnace. In this the suffering saints have triumphed; not only have not been separated from the love of Christ, but have been taken into the most sensible endearments and embraces of it. *As afflictions abound, consolations much more abound*, 2 Cor. 1:5. There is one more than a conqueror, when pressed above measure. He that embraced the stake, and said, 'Welcome the cross of Christ, welcome everlasting life;' He that said, 'In these flames I feel no more pain, than if I were on a bed of down;' Those that have gone smiling to the stake, and stood singing in the flames; these were more than conquerors. But it is only *through Christ that loved us*; the merit of his death taking the sting out of all these troubles: the Spirit of his grace strengthening us, and enabling us to bear them with holy courage and constancy, and coming in with special comforts and supports. Thus we are conquerors, not in our own strength, but in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. He hath overcome the world for us, John 16:33. both the good things and the evil things of it; so that we have nothing else to do but to pursue the victory, and to divide the spoil, and so are more than conquerors.

2. A direct and positive conclusion of the whole matter; *For I am persuaded*, v. 38, 39. It denotes a full, and strong, and affectionate persuasion, arising from the experience of the strength and sweetness of the divine love: enumerating all those things which might be supposed likely to separate between Christ and believers, (1.) *Neither death nor life*; neither the terrors of death on the one hand, nor the comforts and pleasures of life on the other; neither the fear of death, nor the hope of life. Or, we shall not be separated from that love, either in death or in life. (2.) *Nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers*. Both the good angels and the bad are called *principalities* and *powers*: the good, Eph. 1:21. Col. 1:16. the bad, Eph. 6:12. Col. 2:15. And neither shall do it. The good will not, the bad shall not; and neither can. The good are engaged friends, the bad restrained enemies. (3.) *Nor things present, nor things to come*: neither the sense of troubles present, nor the fear of troubles to come. Time shall not separate us, eternity shall not. Things present separate us from things to come, and things to come from things present; but neither from the love of Christ, whose favor is twisted in with both present things and things to come. (4.) *Nor height, nor depth*: neither the height of prosperity and preferment, nor the depth of adversity and disgrace; nothing from heaven above, no storms, no tempests; nothing on earth below, no rocks, no seas, no dungeons. (5.) *Nor any other creature*: anything that can be named or thought of; it will not, it cannot,

yea, the everlasting enjoyment of the Creator Himself, as their Portion, are not so great a display of his free love to them, as the gift of his co-equal Son to be the atonement on the cross for their sins; and all the rest necessarily follows on their union with Him, and interest in Him. John 3:16. The emphasis is evidently here laid, not on Christ, as *incarnate*, being given up to death for us; but in God's giving his own Son to become incarnate for such a purpose.

(32.) 'The apostle has set forth the benevolence of God in the divine decrees; which, however, being as it were hidden in God, he brings forward a palpable and indubitable proof of his love; as much as to say: He who gave the greater, shall He not also give the less?' *Crellius*. *Chrys.*, with his usual fine taste, observes, that the words are spoken with *hyperbole* and *great warmth*. The expressions are indeed extremely energetic, and pregnant with meaning. *For us*.] *Crell.* interp. this, "for our benefit." But it also means, "for our expiation;" although *Ros.* says, "in our stead." *Causâ locoque nostro*. *Kop.*

(33.) *Charge*.] Jewish Christians, with levity and innovation, in abandoning the once only true religion; Gentile Christians, in embracing Christianity, in preference to Judaism.

(34.) 'It is Christ who died (for us), &c.' *St. Right hand, &c.* 'Into the mode in which [Christ's intercession] is done, it becomes us not too curiously to pry.'

V. 35—39. As infinite and unchangeable power and love are engaged in behalf of all believers, and the mercy already shown them is greater than all that which is further needful; they may even triumph on the field of battle, and exult amidst their conflicts and groans.—It is frivolous to say, that sin, being no creature of God, may separate the believ-

er from his love, notwithstanding all this: for such a restriction wholly invalidates the passage. Tribulation, persecution, the terror of death, the frowns or smiles of the world, and the machinations of evil spirits, have not the smallest tendency to 'separate us from the love of God,' except as they prove occasions of sin. *Professed* believers, in such circumstances, often forsake God, and perish; but 'all his saints are in his hand,' and 'are kept by his power through faith unto salvation:' so that they either resist and overcome every temptation; or if baffled and foiled, they are brought back by convictions and corrections, with penitent tears and fervent supplications; and they dread suffering chiefly, because they fear lest it should prove the occasion of indwelling sin gaining some victory over them. *Luke 22:31—34. John 10:26—31. 1 Pet. 1:3—5.*—If a man take encouragement to sin from such assurances, he renders it extremely probable that he has no interest in them: no one can triumph on this ground, who has not scriptural evidence of his conversion, and his love to God; 28:31. or take the warrantable comfort of them, except he is, at present, striving against sin, and harassed by fears lest some future event should give that detested and dreaded foe a fatal advantage over him. We must not, therefore, take the cordials from the weary and almost fainting combatants, because others unwarrantably seize on them, and fatally intoxicate themselves with them. (39) *Creature*.] 'Created thing.' *St.*

(35) *Tribulation . . distress*.] 'Affliction . . anguish.' *St.* 'The words are all modifications of misery arising from persecution.' *BL.*

(36.) 'Continually exposed to death.' *St.* 'The words exactly correspond to, and are taken from, the Sept. of Ps. 44:2, 3. where, as here, the subject is, bitter persecution for religion's sake.' *Id.*



38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### CHAP. IX.

<sup>1</sup> Paul is sorry for the Jews. <sup>7</sup> All the seed of Abraham were not the children of the promise. <sup>18</sup> God hath mercy upon whom He will. <sup>21</sup> The potter may do with his clay what he list. <sup>25</sup> The calling of the Gentiles and rejecting of the Jews were foretold. <sup>32</sup> The cause why so few Jews embraced the righteousness of faith.

I SAY the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

w. Jn. 10:28.

separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. It cannot cut off or impair our love to God, or God's to us; nothing does it, can do it, but sin. Observe, The love between God and true believers, is through Christ; it is in and through Him that God can love us, and we dare love God.

An eminent Christian, when dying, called for a Bible; but finding his sight gone, he said, Turn me to the eighth of the Romans, and set my finger at those words, *I am persuaded that neither death nor life, &c.* 'Now,' said he, 'is my finger on them?' And when they told him it was, without speaking any more, he said, 'Now, God be with you, my children; I have breakfasted with you, and shall sup with my Lord Jesus Christ this night;' and so departed.

**PRACT. OBS.** What can a worldly life present to our view, worthy for a moment to be put in competition with the noble 'prize of our high calling?' All that we owe to the flesh, [the corruptness of propensity,] is a holy revenge for the injuries already done, and the hindrances continually given us: and instead of rendering our state doubtful, by living after it in any degree; we should, by the Spirit, continually endeavor, more and more entirely, to mortify it, and repress all its actings. Thus, giving up ourselves to be 'led by the Spirit,' our adoption will be manifest, we shall gradually be emancipated from servile motives and fears, and shall trust and obey God.—It is the will of our heavenly Father.

(38.) 'Sure I am, that, in the whole universe, there is nought that can seduce me to desert the religion of Christ. *Koppe*. To me it appears, that the most powerful things and persons are mentioned first: 1. No fear of death, no hope of life. 2. No being, however powerful, no, not even angels, principalities, nor powers, [i. e. magistrates, presidents, even the emperor himself, *Wets.*] Angels are, therefore, simply mentioned, as being the most powerful of God's creatures: and thus it is needless to refine upon the mode [of temptation, opposition, &c.] It would be scarcely necessary to notice, (were it not for the error of some comtrs.,) that *archai* and *dunamis* do not express other orders of angels, still less demons (though the Jews believed in several kinds of such; see *Koppe*); but *human powers*, *archai* denoting the principal, *dunamis*, the inferior ones; and both (like *exousia*, *kuriotes*, &c.) are abstracts instead of concretes; as is remarked by *Grot.*, who rightly numbers this idiom among oratorisms. Comp. 1 Cor. 3:22.' **BLOOMF.**

**NOTES.** CHAP. IX. V. 1—3. From the apostle's arguing so strenuously for 'salvation by grace,' 'through faith' alone, without any respect to the Mosaic law, or the peculiar privileges of the Jews; it might, perhaps, be inferred, that he had no great attachment to his countrymen; nay, that the persecutions he had endured from them, had alienated him from them. Being, therefore, about still more fully to discuss the subject, of the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, and to resolve the whole into the sovereign, electing love of God; he introduced these topics, by expressing, in the most energetic language, his cordial affection for his people. The appeal is evidently equivalent to a solemn oath. Now, an oath being an act of religious worship, the apostle, by thus solemnly appealing to Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit, fully shows, that he considered them as entitled to religious worship, as one with the Father. *Mat.* 28:19, 20. (3) *Accursed from Christ*, or, *after the manner of Christ*; to be excommunicated from his visible church, loaded with infamy, crucified, or in any way put to the utmost pain and disgrace; or even for a time to be excluded from all the comfort of communion with Christ, and shut up under the deepest horror and distress of mind which could be endured without sin; if, by any personal sufferings of his own, that could consist with his final salvation, he might rescue his beloved brethren and kinsmen, from that national and personal destruction, which he saw was about to come upon them for their obstinate unbelief. *Ex.* 32:30—33.—This seems to be the utmost the apostle could mean; \* as it would be utterly unlawful, on any consideration whatever, to wish to be eternally miserable, and an implacable enemy of God, as all who perish will be. 1 *John* 3:16, 17.—*I could wish.*] I have wished, &c., or prayed, so it may be tr. On some occasion, perhaps, the apostle had passionately wished, or prayed to this effect. This appears to me the

\* The apostle speaks with strong emotion, and it seems not necessary, or just, to explain away the expression. The language is not to be taken as a sober, reasonable wish, but as a burst of feeling, uttered, as usual, in hyperbole. Ed.

CHAP. IX. The apostle, having asserted, and proved, that justification and salvation are to be had by faith only, and not by the works of the law, comes, in this and the following chs. to anticipate an objection. If this be so, then what becomes of the Jews, especially those that do not embrace Christ, nor believe the Gospel? Must they not come short of happiness; and then, what becomes of the promise to the fathers, which entailed salvation on the Jews? Is not that promise nullified, and made of none effect? Which is not a thing to be imagined concerning any word of God. That doctrine therefore, might they say, is not to be embraced, from which flows such a consequence. That the consequence of the rejection of the unbelieving Jews, follows from Paul's doctrine, he grants, but endeavors to soften and mollify, vs. 1—5. But that from thence it follows, that the Word of God takes no effect, he denies, v. 6. and proves the denial in the rest of the ch.; which serves likewise to illustrate the great doctrine of predestination, which he had spoken of, ch. 8:28. as the first wheel, which, in the business of salvation, sets all the other wheels a going.

V. 1—5. We have here the apostle's solemn profession of a great concern for the Jews: that he was heartily troubled, that so many of them were enemies to the Gospel, and out of the way of salvation. And, lest this should be thought only a copy of his countenance, to flatter and please them,

I. He asserts it with a solemn protestation, v. 1. 'I speak it as a Christian, one of God's people, that will not lie: as one that knows not how to give flattering titles.' Or, 'I appeal to Christ, who searches the heart.' He appeals likewise to his own conscience, which was instead of a thousand

witnesses. What he was going to assert, was not only a great and weighty thing, but likewise secret; it was concerning a sorrow in his heart, to which none was a capable, competent witness, but God and his own conscience. *That I have great heaviness*, v. 2. He does not say for what; the very mention of it was unpleasant and invidious; but it is plain he means for the rejection of the Jews.

II. He backs it with a very serious imprecation, which he was ready to make, out of love to the Jews. *I could wish*; he does not say, *I do wish*, for it was no proper means appointed for such an end; but if it were, *I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren*,—a very high pang of zeal and affection for his countrymen. He would be willing to undergo the greatest misery to do them good. Love is apt to be thus bold and venturesome, and self-denying. Because the glory of God's grace in the salvation of many, is to be preferred before the welfare and happiness of a single person, Paul, if they were put in competition, would be content to forego all his own happiness, to purchase theirs.

1. He would be content to be cut off from the land of the living, in the most shameful and ignominious manner, as an anathema, or a devoted person. 'Abuse me as much as you will, count and call me at your pleasure; your unbelief, and rejection, create in my heart a heaviness, so much greater than all these troubles can, that I could look on them not only as tolerable, but as desirable, rather than this rejection.'

2. He would be content to be excommunicated from the society of the faithful, to be separated from the church, and from the communion of saints, as a heathen man and a publican, if that would do them any good.

that 'in the world we should have tribulations,' and have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, before we 'be glorified together' with Him.—Indeed, sin has filled the world with suffering, yea, with unspeakable disorder and misery; all creatures seem to proclaim man's fatal apostasy, and to recommend the inestimably precious salvation of Christ.—But the Gospel opens a brighter prospect; a glorious crisis approaches, of which all things seem in anxious expectation. May we then give diligence to ensure our interest in this redemption, and to possess 'the first-fruits of the Spirit, the earnest and pledge' of our inheritance.

SCOTT.

most lit. and natural construction of the clause; but, as I can bring no support to the interpretation, from more competent critics, I propose it with great hesitation.—*Euchomai* is not used in any other sense in the N. T.; though it is in the Greek writers. *Accursed.*] See on *Acts* 23:14.—*From Christ.*] The prep. here tr. *from*, may be r. *after the example of.*—'Whom I serve from my forefathers;' i. e. 'after the example' of my forefathers. 2 *Tim.* 1:3—5.

(1.) 'Chs. 9, 10, 11, one of the difficult portions of Scripture, are a completely new subject.' *Bloomf.* 'A resumption and fuller handling of the subject slightly touched at 3:3.' *Mackn.* 'Paul is now disputing with conceited, proud, hypocritical, and worldly-minded persons, who claimed dignity, not according to virtue, but according to vain, external ceremonies.' *Koppe*. One cause of the obscurity, *Grot.* says, is 'because, impartial to Jews and Gentiles he, in speaking secret and bitter things to both, passes, without due notice, from one to the other, and often loves to imply more than he says.' See *Bloomf.* Ed.—In chs. 9—11. [and so *Chrys.* and the Gr. comtrs., see *BL.*], the apostle argues with Jewish Christians. For at that time the Jewish state was fast tending to ruin, and God might seem to have forsaken his people, and to have taken others, (the Christians,) from all nations as his people, which indeed would appear extraordinary, and God, who had made so firm a covenant with the Jews, might be accused of inconstancy. It must, therefore, especially be borne in mind, that here the apostle is not speaking of the election of individuals to eternal salvation, but of the election of a whole nation, or nations, to be the people of God. For one nation's being the people of God never hinders the individuals of another from being converted to the one true God, and attaining salvation.—To remove, then, this scruple, Paul enters upon a separate treatment of this subject, of which the following are the contents: 1. We have a *pre-occupatio*, which was necessary, lest any one should think, from his having abandoned their religion, that certain things were said against them from a hostile feeling. (9:1—3. repeated in 10:1, 2.) 2. He shows that God had alone, of his good pleasure, chosen Jacob, rather than Esau; and that, therefore, the Israelites had not, by nature, any superiority, (9:4—33.) 3. That the Jews must submit to the divine dispensation; or otherwise, though they are the people of God, they will not be saved. (10:3—15.) 4. That they had always been disobedient. (V. 16—21.) 5. Therefore God justly rejected them, though He reserved to Himself some. (11:1—32.) 6. After which the apostle utters an exclamation of wonder, and praises God in his works. (V. 33—36.)—In 11:11—24. is introduced an admonition to the Gentile converts, not to suffer their reception into the divine favor to puff them up, and lead them to neglect the will of God.' **SCHOETT.**—'This v. will supply us with full authority, for the use of oaths. *In.*] By. *In.*] Under the guidance of' **BL.**

(2.) *Accursed.*] *Anathema*: I think, with *Selden*, there is here an allusion to the Jewish excommunication.' **BL.** See its form, in *St.* Ed.



3 For <sup>a</sup> I could wish that myself were <sup>b</sup> accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh :

4 Who are Israelites ; to whom *pertaineth* the <sup>c</sup> adoption, and the <sup>d</sup> glory, and the <sup>e</sup> covenants, and the giving of the <sup>f</sup> law, and the <sup>g</sup> service of God, and the <sup>h</sup> promises ;

5 Whose are the <sup>i</sup> fathers, and of <sup>k</sup> whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is <sup>l</sup> over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

6 Not as though the word of God hath taken <sup>m</sup> none effect. For <sup>n</sup> they are not all Israel, which are of Israel :

a Ex. 32:32. f Ge. 17:2. Da. j c. 11:28.  
 b or, separated. 29:14. Jo. 31:33. k Lu. 3:23, &c.  
 c De. 7:6. g Pa. 147:19. l Jn. 1:1.  
 d Ps. 90:16. 1s. c. 32. m Is. 55:11. n  
 60:19. h Ex. 12:25. o c. 2:23, 29.  
 e or, testaments. i Ep. 2:12.

It may be, some of the Jews had a prejudice against Christianity for Paul's sake ; such a spleen they had at him, that they hated the religion that he was of ; ' If that stumble you,' says Paul, ' I could wish I might be cast out, not embraced as a Christian, so you might but be taken in.' Thus Moses, Ex. 32:32. in a like holy passion of concern, *Blot me, I pray Thee, out of the book which Thou hast written.*

3. Nay, some think the expression goes further, and that he could be content to be cut off from all his share of happiness in Christ, if that might be the means of their salvation. It is a common clarity, that begins at home ; this is something higher, and more noble and generous.

III. He gives us the reason of this affection and concern.

1. Because of their relation to him ; *My brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh.* It shows him to be a man of a forgiving

spirit, Acts 28 : 19. *My kinsmen.* Paul was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. We ought to be in a special manner concerned for the spiritual good of our relations, our *brethren and kinsmen.*

2. Especially because of their relation to God, v. 4, 5. *Who are Israelites,* the seed of Abraham, God's friend, and of Jacob his chosen ; taken into the covenant of peculiarity, dignified and distinguished by visible church-privileges ; many of which are here mentioned. (1.) *The adoption* ; not what is saving, and entitles to eternal happiness, but what was external and typical, and entitled to the land of Canaan. *Israel is my son,* Ex. 4:22. (2.) *The glory* ; the ark and the mercy-seat, over which God dwelt, between the cherubims, was the glory of Israel, 1 Sam. 4:21. The many symbols and tokens of the divine presence and guidance, the cloud, the Shechinah, the distinguishing favors conferred on them, these were *the glory.* (3.) *The covenant* ; that made with Abraham, and often renewed with his seed on divers occasions ; at Sinai, Ex. 24. in the plains of Moab, Deut. 29. at Shechem, Josh. 24. and often afterward ; and still these pertained to Israel. Or, the covenant of peculiarity, and in that, as in the type, the covenant of grace. (4.) *The giving of the law,* the ceremonial and judicial, and the moral law pertained to them. It is a great privilege to have the law of God among us. Ps. 147:19, 20. This was the grandeur of Israel, Deut. 4:7, 8. (5.) *The service of God* ; the ordinances of God's worship, the temple, altars, priests, sacrifices, feasts, and the institutions relating to them. They were in this respect greatly honored, that, while other nations were worshipping and serving stocks, stones, devils, [deified lusts,] and they knew not what other idols of their own invention, the Israelites were serving the true God, in the way of his own appointment. (6.) *The promises* ; particular promises added to the general covenant ; promises relating to the Messiah and the gospel-

state. Observe, The *promises* accompany the *giving of the law,* and the *service of God* ; for the comfort of the promises is to be had in obedience to that law, and attendance on that service. (7.) *The fathers* ; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, those men of renown, that stood so high in the favor of God. But the greatest honor of all, was, that of *them as concerning the flesh,* i. e. as to his human nature, *Christ came,* Heb. 2:16. As to his divine nature, He is the Lord from heaven ; but as to his human nature, He is of the seed of Abraham. This was the great privilege of the Jews, that Christ was of kin to them.

Mentioning Christ, he interposes a very great word concerning Him, that He is *over all, God blessed for ever.* Lest the Jews should think meanly of Him, because He was of their alliance, Paul here speaks thus honorably of Him : and it is a very full proof of the Godhead of Christ ; He is not only *over all,* as Mediator, but He is *God blessed for ever.*

V. 6—13. The apostle, having made his way to what he had to say, concerning the rejection of the body of his countrymen, with a protestation of his own affection for them, and a concession of their undoubted privileges, comes, in these vs. and the following part of the ch., to prove, that the rejection of the Jews, by the establishment of the gospel-dispensation, did not at all invalidate the word of God's promise to the patriarchs, v. 6. This he does four ways. 1. By explaining the true meaning and intention of the promise, v. 6—13. 2. By asserting and proving the absolute sovereignty of God, in disposing of men, v. 14—24. 3. By showing how this rejection of the Jews, and the taking in of the Gentiles, were foretold in the O. T., v. 25—29. 4. By fixing the true reason of the Jews' rejection, v. 30. to the end.

And Paul here makes it out, that, when God said He would be *a God to Abraham, and to his seed,* He did not mean it of all

(3.) ' Even myself to be devoted to destruction by Christ, instead of my, &c., i. e. that (eternal) destruction which threatens them. It is not a possible, only a supposed case, comp. Gal. 1:8. [4:15.] . . Who can draw the line where benevolence would stop short ? . . But the inference, that Paul " was willing to be damned," or that Christians must come to such a state of willingness, is made without any ground from this v. If Paul's being cast off by the Savior could occasion the reception and salvation of the whole Jewish people, this apostle expresses his readiness to submit to it. But as such a thing was impossible ; and as he really knew it to be so ; all that we can well suppose the passage teaches, is, that Paul possessed such a feeling of benevolence toward the Jewish nation, that he was ready to do or suffer anything whatever, provided their salvation might be secured by it. In other words, this is a high and glowing expression, springing from an excited state of feeling, which the use of common language could not at all satisfy. And in making use of such an expression, Paul did not depart from a mode of speaking which is still very common in the E. The Arabs, for example, very commonly, in order to testify strong affection, say, [*nafsy 'yfalha leka,*] *let my soul be a ransom for thee.* So Maimon., in explaining the Talmudic expression [*hareyny kapparaka,*] *see, I am thy ransom,* states, that this is a common expression of strong affection.' STUART.

V. 4. *Adoption.*] ' This privilege of being the children of God, the Israelites derived from their progenitor, Seth, Gen. 4:26. 6:2. renewed to Shem, Gen. 9:26.—*Glory.*] The glory of God resided in Seth's family till the flood. Subsequently it appeared occasionally to the patriarchs, to Moses, Joshua, Sammel, and finally (as the Almighty's agent for good or evil, *Schoett.*) dwelt in Israel [the Shechinah] from erecting the tabernacle to the destruction of the temple.' BOWYER.—*Service.*] ' Rites of the temple, priesthood, etc.' ID.

V. 5. ' Christ (*descended*) in respect to the flesh, who is God over all, blessed for ever, Amen! *St.* The expr., ' come, the flesh,' implies that Christ had a far higher and nobler nature ; as when Paul used it concerning the Jews, his brethren, he intimated his sorrow, that they were not his brethren, as the children of God, born of the Spirit, and believers in Christ. This, with various other considerations, undeniably proves, that the apostle here meant, in the most decided manner, to attest the Deity of Christ, as One with the Father, and equally the Object of universal and everlasting adoration. 1 John 4:1—3. — There is no example, either in the N. T., or in the Gr. tr. of the O. T., in which the doxology, ' Blessed be God,' is expressed in the same words, and arranged in the same manner, as in this place. So that the only way, in which the Socinians and Arians have attempted to evade the conclusion, unavoidably deducible from this text, namely, by rendering the clause, ' Who is over all ; God be blessed for evermore ;' rests on a most harsh, unnatural, and unclassical construction, of which no example can be adduced ; at the same time that it destroys the antithesis, without which the v. would be wholly destitute of propriety and animation. SCOTT.

(5.) ' The words [*according to the flesh*] are plainly *emphatical,* and unquestionably refer to the other or *celestial* origin of Christ. The Jews maintained, that the Messiah would be *man,* and the more enlight-

ened, that He [is also] God. See Kop. And of whom, as concerning the flesh, (i. e. his *human capacity,*) Christ came, who is (in that human capacity) *Lord of, supreme over,* all (created beings) ; being indeed God, (and claiming of right the appropriate *title* of Godhead,) *the blessed for ever.* " This memorable text [is] a proof of Christ's proper Deity, which all the opposers of that doctrine have never been, nor ever will be able to misver." DODD. For, 1. As to the unauthorized cancelling of *Theos* [God] (found, contrary to what *Schoett.* says, in all the MSS. ; also, in all the versions and nearly all the fathers, see Koppe), it is so desperate a measure, that few, even of Socinians, have ventured on it ; and for others, who have scribbled at the words, it cuts, not *unties,* the knot. 2. Crellins, Wnkefeld, &c. would take *Theos* for *Kurios* [Lord] ; as in Acts 10:36. But this sense rests in mere assumption, without a shadow of proof, and is so evidently formed for the nonce, that none could have resorted to it but those who were so persuaded of the impossibility of Christ's Divinity, that they were ready to take up *with any ground* of objection, however weak : 3. They propose a change in the reading ; viz. (as *Schlichting* conject.) *hōn ho for ho ōn.* But this is totally destitute of MS. authority, and merely rests on the *supposition,* that the one reading was confounded with the other ; but this the contrary testimony of many hundreds of MSS. may be sufficient to refute : and how improbable, the mistake, not easily made, should have occupied every known MS ! Further, " whose is the Lord," (so it would be) would represent the Almighty as God of the Jews *only,* contrary to Paul, at 3:3. Again, it would be very incorrect Greek, and at all events would require a *kaí* and another *ōn* subjoined. What but a [sectarian] stomach could digest such a mixture of improbability and harshness ! 4. As to the attempt to convert the words, by a change of punctuation, into a *doxology,* it has the least to plead, for such would be out of place, and, in his sorrowful state of mind, Paul would use an *intercession* rather ; moreover, wherever it is found, the *Theos* follows the *eulogias* [blessed], because the strongest expression is put in the strongest place, at least, according to Jewish ideas. The *article,* too, would be requisite ; it would require a most harsh *transposition* ; nay *Schlicht.,* Crell., and even Socinus himself, reject this plan. Besides, the context requires the common interpretation ; since, " by referring these words to the *Father,* the sense is abruptly broken ; but if to Christ, the consistency is preserved, and the climax rises." BLOOMF., whom see, as also *St. and Hodce.* ED.

V. 6—9. The apostle evidently speaks of a true Israel, among the descendants of Israel ; a remnant, as distinguished from the nation at large ; and he introduces the case of Abraham and his two sons, and afterwards that of Esau and Jacob, not as *examples,* but as *illustrations,* of his main subject. Gal. 4:21—31. 6:15, 16. If this were carefully noted, the perplexity which involves the reasonings of many learned men on this passage, would in a great measure vanish. ' The children of the promise,' are those ' whom God gives to Abraham, by a spiritual generation, whether alone, as in the case of us Gentiles ; or added to the carnal generation, as in the case of Isaac, and of all believing Jews. . . . They who interpret " the children of promise," to mean those, who by faith embrace the promise ; say indeed what is fact, but



7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In ° Isaac shall thy seed be called.

8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are not* the children of God: but the children ° of the promise are counted for the seed.

9 For this *is* the word of promise, At ° this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.

10 And not only *this*; but when Rebecca ° also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac;

o Ge. 21:12. q Ge. 13:10, 14. r Ge. 25:21, 23.  
p Ga. 4:28.

his seed according to the flesh, as if it were a necessary concomitant of the blood of Abraham; but that He intended it with a limitation, only to such and such. And as from the beginning it was appropriated to Isaac, and not to Ishmael; to Jacob, and not to Esau; and yet for all that, the Word of God was not made of no effect; so now the same promise is appropriated to believing Jews that embrace Christ and Christianity, and, though it throw off multitudes that refuse Christ, yet the promise is not therefore defeated and invalidated, any more than it was by the typical rejection of Ishmael and Esau.

I. He lays down this proposition,—that *they are not all Israel, which are of Israel, v. 6. neither because they are, &c. v. 7.* Many, descended from the loins of Abraham and Jacob, and surnamed by the name of Israel, were very far from being Israelites indeed, interested in the saving benefits of the new covenant. It does not follow, that, because they are the seed of Abraham, therefore they must needs be the children of God; though they themselves fancied so, boasted much of, and built much on, their relation to Abraham, Mat. 3:9. John 8:38, 39.

II. He proves this by instances; and therein shows, not only that some of Abraham's seed were chosen, and others not, but that God therein wrought according to the council of his own will; and not with

regard to that law of commandments, which the present unbelieving Jews were so strangely wedded to.

1. He specifies the case of Isaac and Ishmael, both of them the seed of Abraham; yet Isaac only taken into covenant with God. For this he quotes Gen. 21:12. which comes in there as a reason why Abraham must be willing to cast out the bond-woman and her son, because the covenant was to be established with Isaac, ch. 17:19. And yet the word God had spoken, that He would be a God to Abraham and to his seed, did not *therefore* fail; for the blessings wrapt up in that great word, being communicated by God as a benefactor, He was free to determine on what head they should rest, and accordingly entailed them on Isaac, and rejected Ishmael. This he explains further, v. 8, 9. and shows what God intended to teach us by this dispensation.

(1.) That the children of the flesh, as such, by virtue of their relation to Abraham according to the flesh, are not *therefore* the children of God, for then Ishmael had put in a good claim. This remark comes home to the unbelieving Jews, who boasted of their relation to Abraham according to the flesh, and looked for justification in a fleshly way, by these carnal ordinances which Christ had abolished. They had confidence in the flesh, Phil. 3:3. Ishmael was a *child of the flesh*, and there was nothing extraordinary or supernatural in his conception, as there was in Isaac's; he was *born after the flesh*, Gal. 4:29. representing those that expect justification and salvation by their own strength and righteousness.

(2.) That the *children of the promise are counted for the seed*. Those that have the honor and happiness of being counted for the seed, have it not for the sake of any merit or desert of their own, but purely by virtue of *the promise*, in which God hath obliged Himself of his own good pleasure to grant the promised favor. Isaac was a child of promise; that he proves, v. 9. quoted from Gen. 18:10. He was conceived and born by *force and virtue* of the promise, and so a proper type and figure of those who are now counted for the seed, even true believers, who are born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; of the incorruptible seed, even the word of

promise; by virtue of the special promise of a *new heart*: see Gal. 4:20. It was *through faith* that Isaac was conceived, Heb. 11:11. Thus were the great mysteries of salvation taught under the O. T., not in express words, but by significant types and dispensations of providence, which to them then were not so clear as they are to us now, when the veil is taken away, and the types are expounded by the antitypes.

2. In the case of Jacob and Esau, v. 10—13. which is much stronger to show that the carnal seed of Abraham were not, as such, interested in the promise, but only such of them as God in sovereignty had appointed. There was a previous difference between Ishmael and Isaac, before Ishmael was cast out: Ishmael was the son of the bond-woman, born long before Isaac, was of a fierce and rugged disposition, and had mocked, or persecuted Isaac; to all which it might be supposed God had regard, when He appointed Abraham to cast him out. But in the case of Jacob and Esau, it was neither so nor so, they were both the sons of Isaac by one mother: they were conceived *by one conception*, so some copies. The difference was made between them by the divine counsel, before they were born, or had done any good or evil. Both lay struggling alike in their mother's womb, when it was said, *The elder shall serve the younger*; without respect to good or bad works done or foreseen; *that the purpose of God according to election might stand*; that this great truth may be established, that God chooses some and refuses others, as a free agent; by his own absolute and sovereign will, dispensing his favors, or withholding them, as He pleases.

This difference, that was put between Jacob and Esau, he further illustrates by a quotation from Mal. 1:2, 3. where it is said, not of Jacob and Esau the persons, but the Edomites and Israelites, their posterity; *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated*. The people of Israel were taken into the covenant of peculiarity, had the land of Canaan given them, were blessed with the more signal appearances of God for them in special protections, supplies, and deliverances, while the Edomites were rejected, had no temple, altar, priests, or prophets; no such particular care taken of them, or kindness showed to them. Such a difference did God

do not speak with suitable precision; for the apostle does not in this place distinguish the children of Abraham from others, by their faith as known; but he discourses concerning the primary cause, i. e. the fountain of their faith itself, namely, the eternal purpose of gratuitous election. *Beza*.—Isaac was promised some time before his birth; and the faithfulness and power of God having fulfilled that promise, he was 'the child of promise,' in whom Abraham's 'seed should be called,' and in whose 'Seed the nations should be blessed'; but Ishmael was not thus previously promised; and it was foretold, that the chosen nation, which was to inherit Canaan, and from whom the Messiah was appointed to spring, would not descend from him, but from Isaac. In like manner, all the descendants of Israel were not entitled to the spiritual blessings of the covenant; but only 'the remnant according to the election of grace,' which was found among them: and these, being regenerated and having believed in Christ, were brought into the family of believing Abraham, as the children of promise, in whom the promises to him, concerning his numerous posterity and their extraordinary privileges, should be especially fulfilled. 4:9—17. 11:1—6. Mat. 3:7—10. Gal. 3:26—29. Heb. 6:13—15.—In thus adducing the case of Isaac and Ishmael, the apostle certainly did not decide on the eternal state of either of these individuals; yet the subject which he thus illustrated, namely, a remnant of believers among an unbelieving nation, must refer, not to outward advantages and disadvantages, but to eternal salvation or damnation; for 'he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.' And this is equally clear, whether it be held, that this remnant believed, in consequence of their being elected; or that they were chosen, in consequence of their faith, either as foreseen, or as actually exercised.—(7) *In Isaac, &c.* From the Sept. who accord with the Heb. (Gen. 21:12.)—(9) *At this time, &c.* Not exactly according to the Sept., or the Heb.; though it agrees more nearly with the latter. The cl. tr. in Gen., 'according to the time of life,' is changed by the apostle, from the Sept. for 'according to this time.' Gen. 18:10.

(6.) 'However, it is not so that the Word of God has been rendered void; for, &c.' *St. Taken none effect.* 'Missed: a metaphor, apparently, from archery.'

(7, 8.) 'Neither are all the seed of Abraham children, but, &c.' *St.* 'The apostle gives us not the *whole* of the texts he intends should be taken into his argument, he only hints them, as the Jews were generally well versed in the SS.' *Taylor*. 'In making the natural seed the type of the spiritual, and the temporal blessings the emblems of the eternal, there was the greatest wisdom, not only because the emblematical method of representing things was usual in the early ages, but because

the birth of Isaac was a pledge of the birth of the spiritual seed, and because, when the temporal blessing promised to the natural seed, particularly their introduction into Canaan, was accomplished by the most extraordinary exertions of the divine power, it was such a pledge and proof of the introduction of the spiritual seed into the heavenly country, as must in all ages, till that event happen, strengthen their faith, and give them the greatest consolation.'

(9.) *At.* 'According to.' *St.* 'God is said to "come unto men," when He is bestowing on them great benefits.'

V. 10—14. As Isaac was Abraham's only son, by Sarah his wife; it might have been supposed, that the covenant blessings were limited to him on that account. Yet not only Ishmael, Abraham's son by Hagar, the bond-woman, and his children by Keturah, were excluded; but even Esau and his posterity, though the elder son of Isaac and Rebekah, and twin-brother to Jacob, was set aside; and this not subsequent to any crime by which he forfeited the birthright, but previously. This clearly indicated, that 'the purpose of God,' in respect of 'the heirs of promise,' would be established according to his sovereign election; who calls men to partake of the blessing as He pleases; and not in the foresight of any works which they would perform. Doubtless, God foresaw, that Esau's works would be profane and evil; Gen. 25:31—34. 27:41, 42. Heb. 12:15—17. and Jacob's, in a measure, pious and holy; but the good works of Jacob could only be foreseen, *as the effect* of his election and consequent regeneration; and thus foreseen *as the effect*, they could not be the *cause* of these blessings. *Marg.* and *Eph.* 1:3—8. God foresaw both Esau and Jacob as 'born in sin, and by nature the children of wrath, even as others?' *Eph.* 2:3. and He knew that, if left to themselves, they would continue in sin through life; but (for wise and holy reasons, known to Himself, but not revealed to us), He purposed to change Jacob's heart, and to leave Esau to his native perverseness; because He freely loved Jacob, but did not in the same manner love Esau. Wickedness foreseen is doubtless the cause of the Lord's purpose to condemn; because it is of a man's self by nature, and God condemns none, who do not justly deserve it; but holiness foreseen in a *fallen* creature, cannot be the cause of his election; because it is the effect of new-creating grace, and never comes from any other source. Thus *preterition*, or non-election, of a fallen creature, is not *gratuitous*, but merited: *election*, shown in *regeneration*, is *gratuitous*. This instance of Esau and Jacob was intended as an *illustration* of the divine conduct towards the fallen race of man. It has often been urged, that Jacob and Esau were not so much personally intended, as their posterity; and that temporal, and not eternal things, are spoken of; and this is certainly true. Jacob never had



11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger :

13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

<sup>s</sup> or, greater. <sup>u</sup> Mal. 1:2, 3. <sup>w</sup> Ex. 33:19.  
<sup>t</sup> or, less. <sup>v</sup> De. 32:4.

put between those two nations, that both descended from the loins of Abraham and Isaac; as at first there was a difference put between Jacob and Esau, the distinguishing heads of those two nations.

So that all this choosing and refusing was typical, and intended to shadow forth some other election and rejection.

(1.) Some understand it of the election and rejection of conditions or qualifications. As God chose Isaac and Jacob, and rejected Ishmael and Esau, so He might and did choose faith to be the condition of salvation, and reject the works of the law. Thus Arminius understands it, *De reiectis et assumptis talibus, certa qualitate notatis*.—Concerning such as are rejected and such as are chosen, being distinguished by appropriate qualities; so John Goodwin. But this very much strains the Scripture; for the apostle speaks all along of persons,\* He has mercy on whom, He does not say on what kind of people He will have mercy. Besides, against this sense, those two objections, v. 14, 19.

\* Some, it is granted, as heads of families. Ed.

dominion over Esau, personally, but his posterity ruled over Esau's. Gen. 25:22, 23. 27:27—29, 39, 40. Mal. 1:2—5.—The election, the prediction, the birthright, and the blessing, secured to Jacob and his seed the same religious advantages, which the promise of God secured to Isaac and his seed; and excluded Esau, as well as Ishmael, from them; and this, without determining anything of Esau's eternal state, though his character, and the epithet *profane*, annexed to his name by the apostle, seem to indicate, that he was not a believer. It is, however, evident, that the subject illustrated related to individuals and to their eternal state, whether as believers or unbelievers. As Esau, that 'the purpose of God according to election might stand,' had no inheritance in Canaan, and was not the progenitor of Christ; so those Israelites, who did not belong to 'the election of grace,' were excluded from the true church, had no part in Christ, and no inheritance in heaven. But the reverse was true of 'the election of grace;' those who belonged to this election were 'called,' and in consequence believed; they were 'justified' in Christ and 'glorified;' 8:28—31. and the same is the case in respect of men, in all other ages and nations. If, indeed, there were any of our race, not fallen like other men, or not 'by nature dead in sin, and children of wrath, even as others; if there were any inclined, without preventing grace, to repent and to believe the humbling, holy Gospel of Christ, to love God and obey his will; then indeed the election might be made, with respect to their foreseen faith and obedience. But on this supposition, what ground would there be for the objections, which the apostle evidently supposes would be made to his doctrine? or what reason to silence them, in the manner he afterwards does; when he might easily, and consistently with truth, have given an answer far more satisfactory to the objectors, by clearly explaining his meaning? It is then inquired, First, Are all men, as born of Adam, equally depraved? and secondly, Is man willing of himself to do what is spiritually good; or does the grace of God make him willing? When these questions are answered, according to the Scriptures, and the articles and liturgy of our church, it will readily be perceived, that no good, foreseen, either in the hearts or lives of sinners, could be the cause of their election to eternal life.—If then God loved Jacob, and hated Esau, (or showed him less favor than Jacob,) without any reference to their works, as comparatively good or bad, then the grand principle is established, that God does show more favor to one man, than to another, independently of their righteousness or unrighteousness. And, 'is there unrighteousness with God?' could any injustice be objected to Him? By no means: He did Esau no wrong in leaving him to his own choice; and he, and his posterity, received more favors than they deserved; nor did the unmerited love of God to Jacob, and his posterity, in any measure injure Esau.—Even in respect of holy creatures, we must either allow, that God may justly permit them to sin, and punish them for it, and so at least foreknow, both the permission and the punishment; or else we must deny that He can act as a moral Governor of the universe. For, if this were not just, God would be bound to prevent all his creatures from sinning; and if any were left to sin, He only would be the cause of it. Indeed, men are not aware what blasphemy is involved, in their bold

do not at all arise; and his answer to them, concerning God's absolute sovereignty over the children of men, is not at all pertinent, if no more be meant than his appointing the conditions of salvation.

(2.) Others understand it of the election and rejection of particular persons; some loved, and others hated, from eternity. But the apostle speaks of Jacob and Esau, not in their own persons, but as *ancestors*; Jacob the people, and Esau the people; nor does God condemn any, or decree so to do, merely because He will do it, without any reason taken from their own deserts.

(3.) Others therefore understand it of the election and rejection of people, considered complexly. His design is, to justify God, and his mercy and truth, in calling the Gentiles and taking them into the church, and into covenant with Himself, while He suffered the obstinate part of the Jews to persist in unbelief, and so to unchurch themselves: thus hiding from their eyes the things that belonged to their peace.

The apostle's reasoning for the explication and proof of this, is, however, very applicable to, and, no doubt, (as is usual, in Scripture,) was intended for the clearing of the methods of God's grace toward particular persons; for the communication of saving benefits bears some analogy to the communication of church-privileges.

The choosing of Jacob the younger, and preferring him before Esau the elder, (so crossing hands,) were to intimate, that the Jews, though the natural seed of Abraham, and the first-born of the church, should be laid aside; and the Gentiles, who were as the younger brother, should be taken in in their stead, and have the birthright and blessing.

The Jews, considered as a body politic, a nation and people knit together by the bond and cement of the ceremonial law, the temple and priesthood, the centre of their unity, had for many ages been the darlings and favorites of heaven, a kingdom of

priests, a holy nation, dignified and distinguished by God's miraculous appearances among them and for them. Now that the Gospel was preached, and Christian churches planted, this national body was thereby abandoned, their church-polity dissolved, and Christian churches (and in process of time, Christian nations) embodied in like manner, become their successors in the divine favor, and those special privileges and protections which were the products of that favor. To clear up the justice of God in this great dispensation, is the scope of the apostle here.

V. 14—24. The apostle, having asserted the true meaning of the promise, comes here to maintain and prove the absolute sovereignty of God, in disposing of men, with reference to their eternal state. And herein God is to be considered, not as Rector and Governor, distributing rewards and punishments according to his revealed laws and covenants, but as a [Creator,] Owner and Benefactor, giving to men such grace and favor as He has determined in and by his secret and eternal will and counsel: both the favor of visible church-membership and privileges, which is given to some people and denied to others, and the favor of effectual grace, which is given to some particular persons and denied to others.

Now this part of his discourse is in answer to two objections.

I. It might be objected, *Is there unrighteousness with God?* This the apostle startles at the thought of; *God forbid!* Far be it from us to think such a thing; shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Gen. 18:25. ch. 3:5, 6. He denies the consequences, and proves the denial.

1. In respect of those to whom He shows mercy, v. 15, 16. He quotes that scripture, to show God's sovereignty in dispensing his favors, Ex. 33:19. All God's reasons of mercy are taken from within Himself. All men being plunged alike into a state of sin and misery, equally under guilt and wrath,

objections on this subject.—Much more than may God righteously leave fallen creatures to themselves, to proceed in rebellion, and sink into destruction. He might justly have thus left all: it is of infinite mercy that any are saved; their salvation can be no injury to those, who are punished only according to the desert of their own sins; and it is evident, that most of the objections, brought against these doctrines, originate from the want of a deep conviction, that God would have been just, had he left our whole fallen race under final condemnation; as the supposition that He leaves a large proportion of them thus to perish, excites in numbers the same opposition, and leads them to the same exclamations and objections, as the doctrine of personal election. Indeed, the sentence to be denounced at the last day, on the unnumbered millions of the wicked, is as dreadful, as anything in this doctrine can be. 3:5—8. Mat. 25:41—46.—The election of nations, to special privileges and religious advantages, not vouchsafed to other nations, which some expositors suppose to be here meant, (contrary to the whole tenor of the context,) is liable to all the same objections, as personal election; and can be vindicated only in the same way. All nations might justly be left without them; and when some are mercifully favored with them, 'that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth;' no wrong is done to the others.—(12) *The elder, &c.*] Gen. 25:23.—(13) *Jacob, &c.*] From the Sept. which both accord with the Hebrew. Mal. 1:2. SCOTT.

(10.) 'In Rebecca's case there was one mother, one father, one conception, being twins, for so the Gr. (says Theod.) means.' BLOOMF.

(11.) 'Strange [some] cannot, or will not, see, that in all this (comp. Gen. 25:23.), there is only reference to the election of nations, not of individuals: a point on which all the fathers, up to Augustin (a slight authority, from his ignorance of the original languages, where idioms are concerned), and all the most judicious modern comtrs., are agreed.' Bl. See his arguments, from Schoet.; Wets., Mackn., Whit., and Taylor. Carpz. too, refers it to God's free benignity in electing certain to greater worldly advantages, and external prerogatives, political and ecclesiastical. Comp., however, with Scott, above. Ep.

(13.) *Hated, &c.*] The penalty of the Heb. not affording the middle of comparisons, this strong hyperbolic phrase of orientalisms means, 'On the posterity of Jacob I confer greater worldly advantages and superior external prerogatives. But on the posterity of Esau, the Idm. means, I bestow benefits more sparingly.' So Carpz. paraphrases, and see Bloomfield. Id.

V. 15—18. 'Mercy presupposes misery and sin, or the voluntary corruption of the human race; and this corruption presupposes a creation in purity and uprightness.' Beza.—Believers greatly desire the salvation of Christ, and labor to secure it; yet these desires are strains from the fountain of electing love. They 'were by nature children of wrath, even as others; but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with He loved them, even when they were dead in sins, hath quickened them together with Christ.' John 15:12—16. Eph. 2:3—10. Tit. 3:4—7. Thus He makes them willing by regeneration; and they are inclined and excited to the diligent use of means, and through these they are



16 So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

17 For the scripture saith <sup>x</sup> unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth.

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who <sup>y</sup> hath resisted his will?

20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that <sup>z</sup>repliest against God? Shall <sup>a</sup>the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus?

21 Hath not the potter <sup>b</sup>power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?

x Ex. 9:16. y 2 Ch. 20:6. Da. 4:35. z or, answerest again, or, disputest with

God. a Is. 29:16. b Is. 64:8.

God, in a way of sovereignty, without giving us any reason, according to his own good pleasure, pitches on some to be monuments of mercy and grace, preventing grace, effectual grace, while He passes by others. The expression is very emphatical, and the repetition makes it more so; *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*. It imports a perfect absoluteness in God's will; He will do what He will, and giveth not account of any of his matters, nor is it fit He should. Therefore God's mercy endures for ever, because the reason of it is fetched from within Himself; therefore his gifts and callings are without repentance.

Hence he infers, v. 16. *It is not of him that willeth*. Whatever good comes from God to man, the glory of it is to be ascribed only and purely to the free grace and mercy of God. In Jacob's case, it was not the earnest will and desire of Rebecca, that Jacob might have the blessing; not Jacob's haste to get it, (for he was fain to run for it,)

made partakers of salvation, the sinfulness attending their very diligence, being graciously forgiven. *Phil.* 2:12, 13. Whereas they, who are not thus willing and diligent, are not *made unwilling* by any positive act of God; but their unwillingness is the consequence of their own pride, self-will, love of sin, and aversion to God and holiness. It springs from innate depravity, and is increased and strengthened by habits of disobedience; and can never be removed, except by an act of almighty power, which God cannot be bound in justice to perform for any of his rebellious creatures. Men are indeed *naturally willing* to be saved from misery, and made happy; and are often very diligent in proud and unbelieving endeavors to obtain their object: 10:1—4. but this is widely different from [supreme love to God and his will] a cordial willingness to be saved from sin as well as misery, and made holy and happy, in the humbling method of the Gospel: diligently to use all the means, freely to submit to all the privations, and patiently to endure all the self-denial, requisite in order to obtain it.—This hardening, also, is voluntary, because the Lord, offended by their depravity, makes use of their own will, in executing this judgment on those whom He hardens. Then follow the fruits of this hardening, namely, unbelief and sins, which are the real causes of the condemnation of the reprobate. *Beza.*—(15) *I will have mercy, &c.* From the Sept. (*Ex.* 33:19).—(17) *Even for this same, &c.* This varies considerably from the Sept. and gives a far more energetic tr. of the Heb. *Ex.* 9:16.

(15.) *Mercy.* 'Rather benignity, grace in general.' *Bl.* 'Should an unskilful spectator take on him to find fault with an upright human judge, might not the judge well say, "I will acquit whom I see fit to acquit," &c., meaning, not arbitrarily, but, as alone having knowledge of the law and fact, his sentence is not to be questioned by unskilful spectators.'

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(17.) 'For this very purpose have I roused thee up, that I might show forth my power in thee, and declare my name in all the land.' *St.* 'Many refer the Gr. [for raised] to Pharaoh's wonderful preservation from the preceding plagues. *All the earth.* Somewhat hyperbolic, but it must signify, "far and wide," i. e. as far as the communications between nations then extended: and that of Egypt with other nations, was very extensive, on account of its early advance in legislation, arts, and sciences [note, *Ez.* 30: end]: so that (as *Mackn.* obs.), it is reasonable to believe, that any thing extraordinary which happened in that country would soon be divulged through all the earth.'

BLOOMF.

V. 19—21. The unhumiliated opposer would be sure here to object and cavil.—As if the secret purpose of God were, or possibly could be, a

that procured him the blessing, but only the mercy and grace of God. Wherein the holy, happy people of God differ from other people, it is God and his grace that makes them differ.

Applying this general rule to the particular case Paul has before him; the reason why the unworthy, undeserving, ill-deserving Gentiles are called, and grafted into the church, while the greatest part of the Jews are left to perish in unbelief, is not because those Gentiles were better deserving, or better disposed for such a favor, but because of God's free grace that made that difference. The Gentiles did neither *will* it, nor *run* for it, for they *sat in darkness*, *Mat.* 4: 16. In darkness, therefore not willing what they knew not; *sitting* in darkness, a contented posture, therefore not running to meet it, but *prevented* with these invaluable blessings of goodness. Such is the method of God's grace towards all that partake of it, for He is found of them that sought Him not, *Is.* 65: 1. In this preventing, effectual, distinguishing grace, He acts as a benefactor, whose grace is his own. Our eye therefore must not be evil, because his is good; but of all the grace that we or others have, He must have the glory: *Not unto us*, *Ps.* 115: 1.

2. In respect of those who perish, v. 17. God's sovereignty, manifested in the ruin of sinners, is here discovered in the instance of Pharaoh, quoted from *Ex.* 9: 16.

(1.) God *raised him up*, brought him into the world, made him famous, gave him the kingdom and power; set him up as a beacon on a hill, as the *mark* of all his plagues, comp. *Ex.* 9: 14. hardened his heart, as He had said He would, *Ex.* 4: 21. *I will harden his heart*, i. e. withdraw softening grace, [and] leave him to himself, [as in that tremendous sentence, *Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone!* *Hos.* 4: 17. 'This is of itself enough to insure the ruin of an impenitent sinner.] Or, by raising him up, may be meant the intermission of the plagues which gave Pharaoh respite, and the reprieve of Pharaoh in those plagues. In the Hebrew, *I have made thee stand*, continued thee yet in the land of the living. Thus doth God *raise up* sinners, make them for Himself, even for the day of evil, *Prov.* 16: 4. raise them up in outward prosperity, external privileges, *Mat.* 11: 23. sparing mercies.

*rule of duty* to his creatures! Or, as if a man could intend to do the will of God, by breaking his express commandments, out of enmity to Him, and to gratify his own lusts!—The apostle could not mean, as it is plain from the whole context, that God might justly make innocent creatures [perfectly, entirely, utterly] miserable by prerogative, which some seem at least to suppose; for he goes on the supposition, that the sovereignty of God is that of infinite wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness; and that He always decrees to do what is the most proper to be done. The words, 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,' imply, that all deserved wrath; so that 'the lump of clay, in the hands of the potter,' must refer to men already existing in God's foreknowledge as fallen creatures. But the apostle intended to repress the arrogance of ignorant, presumptuous worms, who venture to speak about injustice, enmity, and tyranny, in discoursing of their offended Creator and Judge; who decide, by vain reasoning in their own minds, how the infinite God ought to act; and then forgetting who He is, and who they are, charge Him foolishly, and say, that if such and such doctrines be indeed true, then God is,—but their words ought not to be repeated. This very common practice is such a compound of arrogance, irreverence, and folly, that it seems the most glaring proof of human depravity, which even this wicked world exhibits; especially when it is added, that pious men sometimes appear, in the violence of controversy, to be betrayed into it.—It is wonderful, that the great Mr. Loeke should confidently assert, that the apostle here speaks of men *nationally*, and not *personally*, in reference to their eternal state; when the rejection of the Jewish nation, with the reservation only of 'a remnant according to the election of grace,' was the apostle's main subject, to illustrate which all the other examples are introduced. This remnant consisted of a small number of *individuals*, not of a *nation*; and the Gentile converts were individuals out of their several nations, forming, with the Jewish converts, the Christian church; and not whole nations, or one whole nation, chosen as a collective body, to succeed to the external advantages, which the nation of Israel had forfeited; and surely 'the vessels of mercy before prepared unto glory,' which the apostle next mentions, must have been chosen, not to external advantages, but to eternal life! 8:28—31. 2 *Thes.* 2:13, 14. 1 *Pet.* 1:1—5.

SCOTT.

(19.) 'Although the conclusion could not be legitimately drawn from \* Thus we do not, when hungry, wait till we ascertain what God has predestinated as to that particular act of eating, (yet nothing happens without his will,) but we eat, and after the act, we know that it was predestinated, and not till then, and so of every act and thought: thus God's predestination can be no *motive* to us, one way or the other, and consequently disputes about election, &c. are of no *practical* utility.'

Ed.



22 What <sup>c</sup> if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels <sup>d</sup> of wrath <sup>e</sup> fitted to destruction;

23 And that he might make known the riches <sup>f</sup> of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which <sup>g</sup> he had afore prepared unto glory;

24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

25 As he saith also in Osee, <sup>h</sup> I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.

26 And <sup>i</sup> it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

27 Esaias also <sup>j</sup> crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.

c Pr. 16:4. f Ep. 1:18. i Ho. 1:10.  
d 2 Ti. 2:20. g 1 Th. 5:9. j Is. 10:22, 23.  
e or, made up. h Ho. 2:23.

He find fault with those to whom He denies it? If He hath rejected the Jews, and hid from their eyes the things that belong to their peace, why doth He find fault with them for their blindness? If it be his pleasure to discard them as not a people, and not obtaining mercy, their knocking off themselves was no resistance of his will.

This objection he answers at large

1. By reproving the objector, v. 20. This is not an objection fit to be made by the creature against his Creator, by man against God. The truth, as it is in Jesus, is that which abases man as nothing, less than nothing, and advances God as sovereign Lord of all. Observe how contemptibly he speaks of man, when he comes to argue with God his Maker; 'Who art thou, so foolish, so feeble, so short-sighted, so incompetent a judge of the divine counsels; art thou able to fathom such a depth, dispute such a case, to trace that way of God which is in the sea, his path in the great waters?' *That repliest against God?* It becomes us to submit to Him, not to reply against Him; to lie down under his hand, not to fly in his face, or to

charge Him with folly. *That answerest again.* God is our Master, and we his servants; and it does not become servants to answer again, Tit. 2:9.

2. By resolving all into the divine sovereignty. The rude and unformed mass of matter, hath no right to this or that form, but is shaped at the pleasure of Him that formeth it. [Man has no claim on his Creator.] God's sovereignty over us is fitly illustrated by the power that the potter hath over the clay; compare Jer. 18:6. where, by a like comparison, God asserts his dominion over the nation of the Jews, when He was about to magnify his justice in their destruction by Nebuchadnezzar. He gives us the comparison, v. 21. and the application, v. 22—24. Two sorts of vessels God forms out of the great lump of fallen mankind:

(1.) *Vessels of wrath*; vessels filled with wrath, as a vessel is with wine, Is. 51:20. In these, God is willing to show his wrath, i. e. his punishing justice, and his enmity to sin. This must be showed to all the world; God will make it appear that He hates sin. He will likewise make his power known, a power of strength and energy, an inflicting power, which works and effects the destruction of those that perish, 2 Thess. 1:9. preying as it were on guilty consciences, and yet at the same instant wonderful to preserve the being of the creature. In order to this, God endured them with much long-suffering; exercised a great deal of patience toward them, let them alone, to fill up the measure of sin, to grow till they were ripe for ruin. When Christ said to the Jews, Mat. 23:32. *Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers*, that on you may come all the righteous blood, v. 35. He did, as it were, endure them with much long-suffering, that they might, by their own obstinacy and wilfulness in sin, fit themselves for destruction.

(2.) *Vessels of mercy*; filled with mercy. The happiness bestowed on the saved remnant, is the fruit, not of their merit, but of God's mercy. Observe, 1st. What He designs in them; *to make known the riches of his glory*, i. e. of his goodness; for God's goodness is his greatest glory, especially when communicated with the greatest sovereignty, Ex. 33:18, 19. God makes known his glory, this goodness of his, in the preservation and supply of all the creatures; the earth is full of his goodness, and the year crowned with it; but when He would demonstrate the riches of his goodness, un-

searchable riches, He does it in the salvation of the saints, [who] will be to eternity glorious monuments of divine grace. 2dly. What He does for them; He does before *prepare them to glory*. Sanctification is God's work; sinners fit themselves for hell, but it is God that prepares saints for heaven; and all those that God designs for heaven hereafter, He prepares and fits for heaven now: He works them to the self-same thing, 2 Cor. 5:5.

And would you know who these vessels of mercy are? Those whom He hath called, v. 24. and these not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles; and the question is not now, whether of the seed of Abraham or no, but whether or no called according to his purpose.

V. 25—29. Having explained the promise, and proved the divine sovereignty, the apostle here shows how the rejection of the Jews, and the taking in of the Gentiles, were foretold in the O. T. and therefore must needs be very well consistent with the promise made to the fathers under the O. T.

I. Hosea speaks of the taking in of a great many of the Gentiles, Hos. 2:23. and 1:10. The Gentiles had not been the people of God; not owning Him, or owned by Him in that relation: 'But,' says He, 'I will call them my people, make them such, and own them as such, notwithstanding all their unworthiness.' And lest it might be supposed they should become God's people only by being proselyted to the Jewish religion, and made members of that nation, he adds, from Hos. 1:10. *In the place where it was said, &c. there shall they be called.* They need not be embodied with the Jews, nor go up to Jerusalem to worship; but wherever they are scattered over the face of the earth, there will God own them.

II. Isaiah speaks of the casting off of many of the Jews, in two places.

1. One is Is. 10:22, 23. which speaks of the saving of a remnant, i. e. but a remnant; which, though, in the prophecy, it seems to refer to the preservation of a remnant from the destruction and desolation coming on them by Sennacherib, yet is to be understood as looking further; and sufficiently proves that it is no strange thing, for God to abandon to ruin a great many of the seed of Abraham, and yet maintain his word of promise to Abraham in full force and virtue. In this salvation of the remnant we are told, v. 28. from the prophet, (1.) That He will complete the work. The rejection of the un-

Paul's doctrine [see Bl.], yet it was necessary to take from the Jews every opportunity of evading and contradicting.' Ros. This temerity was disdained by all pious Jews; see Schoett.

(21.) 'In such similitudes we ought to choose such parts as are useful and apposite, and let alone the rest.' CHRYS. 'God has plainly a right to place the object his power has produced in any rank among his creatures, and to give it as many or few advantages as He pleases.' TURN.

V. 22, 23. Suppose that God was pleased, (as in the instance of Pharaoh,) in order more conspicuously to display his powerful wrath against his enemies, to endure their provocations with patience and forbearance for a long time, till they had acted out the desperate wickedness of their hearts, and filled up the measure of their sins, and so become ripe for signal vengeance; what injustice could there be in this? ... On the other hand, should the Lord choose to display the abundance of his glorious power, truth, and love, in his dealings with some; and what was this to others? These were not in themselves more meet for holy felicity than the former; but He was pleased to prepare them before for it, by his regenerating and sanctifying grace; as well as to make them capable of actively glorifying Him here on earth. But did his free love to them imply injustice to others? Their cause for gratitude was immense; but had those, who suffer no more than they deserve, any ground for complaint? while He withholds from none their due, He has surely a right 'to do what He will with his own.' Mat. 20:1—16, vv. 10—16.—The different language used concerning 'the vessels of wrath,' and 'the vessels of mercy,' is of the greatest importance in stating this doctrine solidly and scripturally; the former are 'fitted for destruction:' it is not said, that God had fitted them. For He saw them, in themselves, both deserving wrath, and fit for the place of torment, and the society of fallen angels; but God Himself 'had afore prepared the vessels of mercy,' for that glory to which He intended to advance them. The term 'vessels of mercy,' implies, that they too had deserved wrath; and the 'preparation for glory,' shows, that in themselves they had been unprepared. Eph. 2:1—10. Tit. 3:3—7.—The words used in these verses uniformly relate to eternal perdition or felicity.

(22.) *Willing, &c.* 'Purposing to manifest his indignation, &c. . . fitted, &c.' St. 'Fit for.' Grot. 'But if God, when He might have displayed his wrath, and shown his power, still bore with those men who

were fitted for destruction, will you be so unreasonable as to complain, or to find fault on this account?'

(23.) On.] 'Toward. Unto, &c.] For glory, (shewed mercy,) even to us whom He hath called, not only of the Jews, but, &c.' St. *Glory.* 'That of being made the church and people of God.' Mackn. BL.

V. 24—29. A remnant of Israel, reserved by God for Himself, while the rest were given up to just punishment, demonstrates, that the election, however understood, was personal, not national.—*I will call, &c.* 25, 26. Hos. 1:9. 2:23.—Not exactly, either from the Sept., or from the Heb.: but the variations are immaterial as to the general meaning; yet, on the whole, more nearly according to the Heb.—*Though the number, &c.* 27—29. The case is the same in these quotations. Is. 1:9. 10:21—23. Nothing can be more clear, than that the inspired writer intended to give the general sense of the Scriptures, in such a tr. into the Gr. as was proper; yet, as the Romans were chiefly conversant in the Sept., he used the words of that version, except when there was a good reason for varying from them.—'From comparing the original with the Sept., no one can deny, that the Gr. interpreters have in fact rendered the passage very negligently, as far as words are concerned. Should any one ask, why the apostle nevertheless used that tr.; I answer, that he did this very properly, because those to whom he wrote had been used to that tr.; and that, as far as the sentiment is concerned, in support of which Paul adduced this testimony, the Gr. interpreters had preserved it sufficiently faithful. Nor does it signify any other, either in the Heb. or the Gr., than that God had determined to render the number of an ungrateful people extremely small.' Beza.

(24.) Them.] 'Him.' SCOTT. STUART.

(25.) 'If the apostle thought fit to accommodate what was originally said of the restoration of the Jews, to the calling of the Gentiles, he would take the further liberty of slightly altering the words, so as to adapt them the better to his purpose.' BL. 'Indeed, that great event [the calling of the Gentiles] might with some probability be inferred, partly from the temporary rejection of the Jews from the privileges of his people, of which this text spake, (for it was not to be imagined God would have no people in the world,) and partly as it was in the nature of things more probable He should call the heathen, than restore [that ungrateful nation].'

DODDR.



28 For he will finish <sup>k</sup> the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because <sup>l</sup> a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.

29 And as Esaias said before, <sup>m</sup> Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we <sup>n</sup> had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorraha.

30 What shall we say then? That <sup>o</sup> the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness <sup>p</sup> which is of faith.

31 But Israel, which <sup>q</sup> followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law: for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone;

33 As it is written, <sup>r</sup> Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

<sup>k</sup> or, *the account.* Is. 13:19. q c. 10:2. 11:7.  
<sup>l</sup> Is. 28:22. o c. 10:20. r Pf. 113:22. Is.  
<sup>m</sup> Is. 1:9. La. 3:22. p c. 1:17. Phil. 8:14.  
<sup>n</sup> Ge. 19:24, 25. 3:9. s or, *confounded.*

believing Jews, God would finish in their utter ruin by the Romans, who soon after this quite took away their place and nation. The assuming of Christian churches into the di-

vine favor, and the spreading of the Gospel in other nations, was a work which God would likewise finish, and be known by his name JEHOVAH. Margin, *He will finish the account.* God, in his eternal counsels, has allotted men to such or such a condition, as they come into being, and He will finish the account, complete the mystical body, call in as many as belong to the election of grace; and then the account will be finished. (2.) That He will contract it; not only finish it, but finish it quickly. Under the O. T. He seemed to tarry, and to make a longer and more tedious work of it; but now He will cut it short, and make a short work on the earth. Gentile converts were now flying as a cloud. But He will cut it short in righteousness, both in wisdom and in justice. Men, when they cut short, do amiss; but when God cuts short, it is always in righteousness. So the fathers generally apply it. Some understand it of the evangelical law and covenant; which Christ has introduced: He has in that finished the work, put an end to the types and ceremonies of the O. T. And He will cut it short, the work, the word: the law under the O. T. was very long, a long train of institutions, ceremonies, conditions: our duty is now, under the Gospel, summed up in much less room, religion is brought into a less compass; and in righteousness, in favor to us, in justice to his own design and counsel.

2. Another is Is. 1:9. where the prophet is showing how, in a time of general calamity and destruction, God would preserve a seed. This is to the same purport with the former: and the scope of it is, to show that it was no strange thing for God to leave the greatest part of the Jews to ruin, and to re-

serve to Himself only a small remnant: so He had done formerly, as appears by their own prophets; and they must not wonder if He did so now. He is the Lord of Sabaoth, of hosts, a Hebrew word retained in the Greek, as Ja. 5:4. When God sees a seed to Himself out of a degenerate, apostate world, He acts as Lord of Sabaoth. It is an act of almighty power and infinite sovereignty. His people, too, are a seed, a small number; as the corn reserved for next year's seedings, but little, compared with what is spent and eaten; yet useful, the seed, the substance, of the next generation, Is. 6:13.

It is so far from being an impeachment of the justice and righteousness of God, that so many perish and are destroyed, that it is a wonder of divine power and mercy that all are not destroyed, that any are saved: for even those that are left to be a seed, if God had dealt with them according to their sins, had perished with the rest. This is the great truth here taught.

V. 30—33. The apostle comes here at last to fix the true reason of the reception of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews. There was a difference in the way of their seeking, and therefore that different success; though still it was the free grace of God that made them differ.

I. Concerning the Gentiles, observe, 1. They had been alienated from righteousness, they followed not after it, knew not their guilt and misery, and therefore were not at all sollicitous to procure a remedy. In their conversion, preventing grace was greatly magnified, Is. 65:1. free grace alone disposed them for such a favor. Thus God delights to dispense grace in a way of sove-

PRACT. OBS. The command of 'loving our neighbor as ourselves,' and the example of Christ, require us to mourn over obstinate transgressors, especially when near to us 'according to the flesh;' at the same time, that we vindicate the justice of God in his dealings with them. Lu. 13:41-44.—Those who know nothing of a change of heart, ought to be far otherwise employed, than in disputing either for or against this doctrine of free electing love. Let them 'strive to enter in at the strait gate,' before the door be for ever shut; and leave the discussion of these abstruse questions to those, who are walking with God in the way to heaven.—We cannot at present know the purposes of God respecting others: it will be soon enough for us to be 'without natural affection,' when perfected in holiness; and to rejoice in the destruction of the enemies of God *individually*, when the event makes them known to us. In the mean time, insensibility to the eternal condition of our fellow-creatures, is contrary both to the love required by the law, and the mercy of the gospel; and the more we sincerely pity, pray for, and are ready to suffer anything to save, our most virulent despisers and persecutors, the greater confidence we may use, in affectionately warning them of their danger, and of the delusions into which they are fallen.—There is abundant encouragement to the diligent use of the means of grace, which God has appointed; and where there is a willing mind, and humble diligence in seeking Him, the blessing will certainly be given; and the happy believer will, in due time, ascribe even this *willingness* to electing love. But if men wilfully harden themselves in disobedience and impenitence,

God will show his power and vengeance in their destruction, and cause all their abused prosperity to increase their condemnation, and his own glory in it.—Who could have previously thought, that any of our race would have presumed to say, that 'there is unrighteousness with God?' to quarrel with his judgments, and plead, that 'none hath resisted his will' or counsel! Shall criminals cite their offended Sovereign to their blasphemous tribunal? If they do, let them see to it, for 'evil is before them.' He will proceed with his own plan, exercising his holy sovereignty as He sees good; and distinguishing between those who adore, and those who blaspheme, the depths which they cannot fathom; and He will number with the latter, all those who profess to believe the doctrines in question, and then take occasion from them to sin with greater presumption. But surely, all who love and fear God, however such truths may dazzle and dismay them, should reverently keep silence before Him. And even if they hear them stated unscripturally or licentiously; they should take care what words they use in disputing against those who pervert the truth; that they may not appear to countenance the impieties of infidels and ungodly men. In short, modesty, caution, humility, and profound awe of the holy Majesty of God, should restrain and guide the tongues and pens of all, who speak or write on these subjects, however satisfied they may be with their own views of them; and every sentence which is written or spoken, in a manner, which, on any supposition, imputes injustice to God, is a proof of the pride and irreverence of the writer or speaker. SCOTT.

(27.) 'Only a remnant,' &c. Sr. 'Kataleimma: I incline to think this was the same given to the leaving of the dough reserved for the next bread-making, i. e. the *leav-en*, i. e. the *leav-ed*, left.' BLOOMF.

(28.) 'For He will execute his word (which) He hath decreed in righteousness; for the Lord will execute his word decreed concerning the land.' Sr. The several terms used here mean, to try; to sentence; to execute the sentence. So El, Carpz., Kop., Kypke, &c. Ed.

(29.) Seed ] 'Remnant.' Sr. 'Most, with Lowth and Koppe, refer this to some invasions of Judca by Rezin and Pekah; others think it describes the times of Ahaz, when Judca was invaded on the north by Syrians and Israelites, south by Edomites, west by Philistines.' 2 Chr. 28:5—19. Ros., to the miserable times of Uzziah, 2 K. 14:3—14. 2 Chr. 14—24. BLOOMF.

V. 30—33. The apostle having shown, that both the purposes and predictions of God were fulfilled, in the rejection of the unbelieving Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, here proceeds to show by what means the things had been effected; for this also illustrated the argument, that the Lord had acted righteously, and the Jews wickedly, in the whole concern. The Gentiles, who before lived in the grossest religious ignorance, idolatry, and vice, without at all 'following after righteousness,' had suddenly, through the surprising grace of God, been brought into a state of acceptance with Him, being called to partake of 'the righteousness of God by faith.' 1:17. 3:21—26. 4:9—12. Gal. 3:26—29. Phil. 3:—3 11. Heb. 11:7. 2 Pet. 1:1, 2.—But Israel, who had the law, both that which contained the rule of righteousness, and that which shadowed forth the way of justification; and who had sedulously paid regard to it as 'the law of righteousness,' had not attained to the law of righteousness. Not living up to their law, they were not justified, but condemned by it; yet, eluding to it, they rejected Christ and his salvation. 10:1—4. Wherefore then had they failed of acceptance? Was it merely through God's decree? Or did He refuse to receive them, in the same way as the Gentiles were justified? By no means; but they refused to seek the blessing 'by faith,' as an *unmerited favor*; and persisted in claiming it

'by the law,' as a *matter of right*. This they did, 'as it were, by the works of the law;' they did not think that they perfectly kept the law, but they expected to make up their deficiencies in one respect, by abound- ing in others; or by repentance, and amendment, and the legal sacrific- es; or by superstitious additions, and observing the traditions of men. Thus they sought the blessing from that law, which denounced a curse on them; and refused to trust in Him who was raised up to bless them. Their obstinate pride and unbelief were the immediate cause of their ruin; and God had decreed, in righteousness, nothing more than to give them up to the lusts of their own hearts. Is. 3:11—15. 23:16. 1 Pet. 2: 7, 8.—Some expositors think, the apostle had reference to a *race*, in which the Jews, with all their advantages, were so far from coming in before the Gentiles, that they were left at a great distance behind; 'for the last shall be first, and the first last.' 19:29, 30.—Mr. Locke and many others argue, that the apostle only meant, that the Gentiles here spoken of, as those whom God had called (24), had embraced the true religion; not that they were actually and individually brought into a state of sal- vation; but surely, if they 'attained to righteousness, even the right- eousness which is of faith,' they were justified persons, 'children of Abraham,' children of God, and heirs of heaven; and they had before been spoken of 'as vessels of mercy, prepared before unto glory.' Though all, who *professed* the Gospel, were not of this character, yet none else were partakers of 'the righteousness which is of faith.'—It is also granted, as these learned expositors maintain, that the dealings of God with the Jews, and not his general conduct towards mankind at large, as to their eternal concerns, is the *primary* subject of the chap.; but the dispensations of God with Israel are explained, illustrated, and justified, on such principles, as establish, in the clearest manner, the method of his dealings with mankind at large. And if we are not allowed to infer general conclusions, from the commands, testimonies, promis- es, and dispensations of God to Israel, in respect of individuals; it does not appear, how we can use the Scriptures, or a great proportion of them, at least, either for doctrinal or practical purposes; either for encourage-



## CHAP. X.

5 The Scripture sheweth the difference betwixt the righteousness of the law, and this of faith, 11 and that all, both Jew and Gentile, that believe, shall not be confounded, 13 and that the Gentiles shall receive the Word and believe. 19 Israel was not ignorant of these things.

**BRETHREN**, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

2 For I bear them record, that they have a zeal<sup>a</sup> of God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant<sup>b</sup> of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves<sup>c</sup> unto the righteousness of God.

a Ac. 21:20. c. 9:31.

b c. 9:31.

reignty and absolute dominion. 2. They attained to righteousness, notwithstanding; by faith, not by being proselyted, but by embracing Christ, believing in Christ, and submitting to the Gospel.

II. Concerning the Jews, observe,

1. They missed their end; they followed after the law of righteousness, v. 31. they talked much of justification and holiness, seemed very ambitious of being the people of God, and the favorites of heaven, but they did not attain to it, i. e. the greatest part of them did not.

2. They mistook their way, which was the cause of their missing the end, v. 32, 33. They sought, but not in the right way, not by faith, (depending on Christ, and submitting to the terms of the gospel, the very life and end of the law;) but by the works of the law; as if they were to expect justification by their observance of the law of Moses, a corrupt principle, which, having espoused, they could by no means get over, and so could not be reconciled to the doctrine of Christ, which brought them off from that, to expect justification through the merit and satisfaction of another. Christ, Himself, is to some a stone of stumbling, Is. 8: 14. 28: 16. It is sad He should be set for the fall of any, yet it is so, Luke 2: 34. But still there is a remnant that do believe on Him; and they shall not be ashamed, their hopes and expectations of justification by Him shall not be disappointed, as theirs are, who expect it by the law.

So that, on the whole, the unbelieving Jews have no reason to quarrel with God,

for rejecting them; they had a fair offer of righteousness, and life, and salvation, made them on gospel-terms, which they did not like, and would not come up to; therefore if they perish, their blood is on their own heads.

CHAP. X. The dissolving of the peculiar church-state of the Jews, and the substituting and erecting of a catholic [general, or universal] church-state among the Gentile nations; though to us, now, they may seem no great matter; yet to them who lived when they were doing, who knew how high the Jews had stood in God's favor, and how deplorable the condition of the Gentile world had been for many ages, it appeared very great and marvellous, and a mystery hard to be understood. The apostle in this ch. as in the foregoing and that which follows, is explaining and proving it; but with several very useful digressions, which a little interrupt the thread of his discourse.

V. 1—11. The scope of this part of the ch. is to show the vast difference between the righteousness of the law and that of faith, and the great pre-eminence of the latter; that he might induce and persuade the Jews to believe in Christ, aggravate the folly and sin of those who refused, and justify God in their rejection.

I. Paul here professes his good affection to the Jews, with the reason of it, v. 1, 2. where he gives them,

1. A good wish, v. 1. that they might be saved—from the temporal ruin and destruction coming on them; from the wrath to come, eternal wrath, hanging over their heads. It is implied, that they might be convinced and converted; he could not pray in faith, that they might be saved in unbelief. It is our duty, truly and earnestly to desire the salvation of the souls of others, next to the salvation of our own. This, he says, was his heart's desire and prayer: which intimates its strength and sincerity.

2. A good witness, as a reason of his good wish, v. 2. The unbelieving Jews were his most bitter enemies, yet he gives them as good a character as the truth would bear. We should say the best we can, even of our worst enemies; this is blessing them that curse us. We should notice what is commendable even in bad people. They have a zeal of God. Their opposition to the gospel, is from a principle of respect to the law, which they knew to have come from God. There is such a thing as a blind, misguided

zeal: such was that of the Jews, they hated Christ's people and ministers, and cast them out, saying, *Let the Lord be glorified*, Is. 66: 5. nay, they killed them, and thought they did God good service, Jn. 16: 2.

II. He here shows the fatal mistake the unbelieving Jews were guilty of; which was their ruin. Their zeal was not according to knowledge. It is true, God gave them that law which they were so zealous for; but they might have known that, by the appearance of the promised Messiah, an end was put to it. He gave the most convincing evidence that could be of his being the Messiah, the Son of God; yet they did not know, and would not own Him, but shut their eyes against the clear light, so that their zeal for the law was blind. This he shows further, v. 3. where observe,

1. The nature of their unbelief; not submitting to the righteousness of God, not yielding to gospel-terms, not accepting the tender of justification by faith in Christ, made in the Gospel. In true faith, there is need of a great deal of submission, therefore the first lesson Christ teaches, is, to deny ourselves; it is a great piece of condescension for a proud heart to be content to be beholden to free grace.

2. The causes of their unbelief, and those are two, ignorance of God's righteousness, pride, and conceit. They did not understand, and believe, and consider, the strict justice of God, and what need we have of a righteousness, wherein to appear before Him; or, God's way of justification now appointed, revealed by Jesus Christ. They did not know it, because they would not; they shut their eyes against the discoveries of it, and loved darkness, rather. They thought they needed not to be beholden to the merit of Christ, and therefore depended on their own performances, as sufficient to make up a righteousness wherein to appear before God. See an instance of this pride in the Pharisee, Luke 18: 10, 11. Comp. v. 14.

III. He here shows the folly of that mistake, and how unreasonable it was for them to be seeking justification by the works of the law, now that Christ was come, and had brought in an everlasting righteousness; considering,

1. The subserviency of the law to the gospel, v. 4. The design of the law was to lead people to Christ. The moral law was for the searching of the wound; the ceremonial for the shadowing forth of the remedy;

ment, warning, or 'instruction in righteousness.'—'Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning.'—'All these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come. Therefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.' 15:4—7. 1 Cor. 10: 1—12.—The Jews, as a nation, had outward privileges; and so have Christians, as a collective body. Most of them trusted in these outward privileges, and rejected the salvation of Christ; and so do the bulk of professed Christians. A remnant, however, believed and were saved, while the rest were hardened and rejected: the case is the same with professed Christians. This remnant was 'the election of grace;' and so is the remnant of true Christians.

(30, 31.) Righteousness.] 'Justification. The law.] A law.' ST.

(32.) 'Because (they sought) not by faith, &c. That.] The.' SR. 'Not because it had been so determined by God in any absolute decrees, but because they rejected Christ.' KOR. 'There is every reason to think, that the prophets themselves intermixed with promises of temporal deliverance, encouraging anticipations of that deliverance, both temporal and spiritual, which was to be expected from the Messiah.' BLOOMF.

(53.) And whosoever.] 'But every one.' STUART.

NOTES. CHAP. X. V. 1—4. Aware of the offence which his doctrine would give the Jews, and even many of the Jewish Christians, the apostle repeated his protestation of his earnest desires, and fervent prayers, for the salvation of his people; notwithstanding their prejudices against him, and the persecutions which he had endured from them. 9: 1—3.—The expression, 'establish their own righteousness,' seems to be taken from a person, who allows that his house is out of repair, and in some danger of falling; but will not be convinced that the foundation is destroyed, and that it must come down, and be entirely rebuilt on a new foundation. He therefore endeavors, by props and buttresses, and various repairs, to make the house stand; but all his expense and labor are thrown away; and if he persist in his vain endeavor, it will be likely to fall down, and bury him in its ruins. Mat. 7:24—27. Thus the Jews, (and immense numbers in every age do the same, for substance, though in varied forms,) when convinced of defects in their moral righteousness, endeavored to repair them, by ceremonial or superstitious observances; nor would they be convinced, that they were building on a false foundation; that they must totally give over these vain and perilous endeavors; and come for a gratuitous salvation to Christ by faith,

even as the poor Gentiles did.—Some argue, that if the apostle had in the preceding ch. meant, that the rejection of the Jewish nation was absolutely decreed, he would not have prayed for them; but it may be answered, that he knew a remnant was excepted; he did not know to what number this remnant might extend, and his 'good-will,' or benevolence, towards them was so strong, that he prayed for the conversion of Israelites, in a way which implied a longing desire that they all might be saved. Had it depended on him, this would have been the case; he prayed according to the knowledge which he had, and left secret things to God; adoring his wisdom and justice, even in those events which were contrary to the feelings and desire of his heart.—The author of these notes can answer for one, that his firm belief of personal election and the divine decrees, does not in the least interfere with his joining heartily in that prayer of our excellent liturgy, 'That it may please God to have mercy upon all men.' Jer. 14:10—12. 15:1.—(4) The end.] Teros. Phil. 3:19. 1 Tim. 1:5. The final cause; the end proposed and intended.

(1.) In our tr. men, equivalent to *for my part*, (Bl.) is omitted. ED. (2.) Record.] 'Witness. Zeal.] Philo, Jos., and the N. T. writers, most abundantly confirm this. There may be zeal without knowledge, which is superstitious, persecuting, hostile to the spirit and happiness of the community; and there may be knowledge without zeal, which is cold, skeptical, unfeeling, and which devils may possess as well as men. An actual union of both is accomplished only by sincere piety; and a high degree, only by ardent piety.' STUART.

(3.) 'For, being ignorant of the justification which is of God, seeking to establish their own justification, they have not submitted themselves to the justification which is of God.' ST.; who tr. the Gr. justification also at vs. 4, 5, 6, 10. St. makes the scope of the ch. to be: 'The unbelief and rejection of the Jews, and the reception of the Gentiles through faith, are truly consistent with the declarations of the ancient SS.' ED. Establish.] 'The idea (so Chrys., Theoph.) seems, of propping and buttressing up a weak structure.' BL. 'The Pharisees certainly inculcated the external duties of morality, how much soever they might themselves fail in observing them, or rest merely in outward acts; but they trusted in legal expiations to procure the pardon of those evils which might happen; and the composition of these, if I may be permitted to use the expression, constituted the righteousness which they went about stēsai, to establish, or prop up, decrepit as it was.' DODDR.



4 For Christ is the end ° of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

5 For Moses describeth a the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say ° not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus; and shalt believe in thine heart ° that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the Scripture saith, h Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

c He. 10:14. e De. 30:12-14. g Ac. 8:37.  
d Le. 13:5. f t Jn. 4:2. h Is. 28:16. 49:23.

Christ the end of both; see 2 Cor. 3:7. and comp. Gal. 3:23, 24. Christ is the end of the ceremonial law; the sacrifices, offerings, and purifications appointed under the O. T. prefigured Christ, and now He had come, they were at an end. Christ is the end of the moral law, in that He did what the law could not do, ch. 8:3. and secured the great end of it: viz. to bring men to perfect obedience, and so to obtain justification; this is now impossible, by reason of the power of sin, and the corruption of nature; yet the law is not destroyed, nor the intention of the Lawgiver frustrated; but full satisfaction being made by the death of Christ, for our breach of the law, the end is attained, and we put in another way of justification. Christ is thus the end of the law for righteousness, for justification; but only to every one that believeth; on our believing, our humble consent to the terms of the Gospel, we become interested in Christ's satisfaction, and so are justified through the redemption that is in Jesus.

2. The excellency of the gospel above the law: proved by showing their different constitution.

(4.) 'I. e. belief in Christ, receiving Him by faith, and thus attaining to *dikaiosunē Theou* [justification that is of God], accomplishes the end or object of what the law would accomplish, viz. which perfect obedience to the law would accomplish. In this simple way, and consonant with the context, I interpret this long agitated and much controverted text. That *telos* [tr. end] has often substantially the same meaning here given it, may be abundantly shown. St., whom see. 'The most favorite tr. is, (so Cypr., Crell., Kop.,) Christ has put an end to the law. But this is not agreeable to the context. The most simple and satisfactory interpr. seems that of Chrys., Theoph., Gec., Phot., and Theod., also Carpz. "The words are meant for the Jews, and Jewish Christians, to assure them, that nothing is lost by abandoning the law. Paul shows there is only one justification, and that what the law attempted, the gospel fulfils; and, therefore, he who chooses the one by faith, fulfils the other; whereas, he who aims at the other, must miss of this; q. d. The intent and end of the law, viz. justification, is fulfilled and perfected in Christ.'" BLOOMF.

V. 5-11. Moses had repeatedly shown the righteousness, which the law demanded of a man, in order to his justification; and his statement proved, that, without a sinless obedience to every precept, no man could be accepted according to the law; and thus it effectually cut off all transgressors from every hope, in this way. Lev. 18:5. Deut. 27:26. Ez. 20:11. Luke 10:25-29. Gal. 3:10-14. But 'the righteousness of faith' might be introduced, as using the words of Moses, on an especial occasion. Deut. 30:11-14.—The self-condemned sinner is not called on to perplex himself with inquiries, how this righteousness may be found. For Christ has already come down from heaven, and finished his work of righteousness. He had, too, come back from the grave, or the place of departed spirits, and was exalted at the right hand of the Fa-

(1.) What is the righteousness which is of the law? v. 5. The tenor of it is, *Do, and live*, i. e. be happy, not only in Canaan, but in heaven: abstracted from its respect to Christ and the gospel, the law owneth nothing as a righteousness sufficient to justify a man, but that of perfect obedience. For this he quotes Lev. 18:5. See, likewise, Gal. 3:12. Now, was it not extreme folly in the Jews, to adhere so closely to this way of justification and salvation, which was in itself so hard, and by the corruption of nature now become impossible, when there was a new and a living way opened?

(2.) What is that righteousness which is of faith, v. 6, &c. This he describes in the words of Moses, Deut. 30:11-14. and shows that it is not at all hard or difficult. We need not go to heaven, to search the records there, or to inquire into the secrets of the divine counsel. It is true, Christ is in heaven, but we may be justified and saved without going thither, to fetch Him thence, or sending a special messenger to Him. Nor need we go to the deep, to fetch Christ out of the grave, or from the state of the dead. It is true, Christ was in the grave, and it is as true, He is now in heaven: but we need not perplex and puzzle ourselves with fancied difficulties, nor must we create to ourselves such gross and carnal ideas of these things, as if the method of salvation was impracticable, and the design of the revelation only to amuse us. No, salvation is not put at so vast a distance from us.

But it is very plain and easy; *The Word is nigh thee*; Christ in the promise, Christ exhibited to us, and offered, in the Word. Christ is nigh thee, for the Word is nigh thee: nigh thee indeed: it is *in thy mouth, and in thy heart*; there is no difficulty in understanding, believing, and owning of it. The work thou hast to do lies within thee; *the kingdom of God is within you*, Luke 17:21. There is nothing now to be done, but a work in us; that must be our care, to look to our heart and mouth. The Word is very nigh us, in our mouth, we are reading it daily; it is in our heart, we are, or should be, thinking of it daily—even *the Word of faith*; the Gospel and the promise of it; called *the Word of faith*, because it is conversant about the object of faith, makes faith the great condition of justification, and is the ordinary means by which faith is wrought and conveyed.

Now what is this *Word of faith*? We have the tenor of it, v. 9, 10. the sum of the Gospel, which is plain and easy enough. Observe the promise; *Thou shalt be saved*. What the Gospel exhibits and tenders, is, salvation, and this on two conditions. [1.] *Confessing the Lord Jesus*; openly professing relation to Him, and dependence on Him, as our Prince and Savior; owning his religion

in the face of all the allurements and affrightments of this world, standing by Him in all weathers, a very great thing, especially when the profession of Christ and Christianity hazarded estate, honor, preferment, liberty, life, and all that is dear in this world; which was the case in the primitive times: and, [2.] *Believing in the heart, that God raised Him from the dead*. The profession of faith with the mouth, if there be not the power of it in the heart, is but a mockery; the root of it must be laid in an unfeigned assent to the revelation of the Gospel concerning Christ, especially concerning his resurrection, which is the fundamental article of the Christian faith; for thereby He was declared to be the Son of God with power, and full evidence was given, that God accepted his satisfaction.

This is further illustrated, v. 10. and the order inverted, because there must first be faith in the heart, before there can be an acceptable confession with the mouth. 1st. Concerning faith; it is *with the heart that man believeth*; which implies more than an assent of the understanding, and takes in the consent of the will, an inward, hearty, sincere, and strong consent. This is unto *righteousness*, the righteousness of justification, and the righteousness of sanctification. Faith is the condition of our justification, ch. 5:1. and the root and spring of our sanctification; in it, it is begun; by it, it is carried on, Acts 15:9. 2dly. Concerning profession; it is *with the mouth that confession is made*; confession to God in prayer and praise, ch. 15:6. confession to men, owning the ways of God before others, especially when called to it in a day of persecution. It is part of the honor of Christ, that every tongue shall confess, Phil. 2:11. And this is said to be *unto salvation*; because it is the performance of the condition of that promise, Mat. 10:32. Comp. Luke 21:15. Justification by faith lays the foundation of our title to salvation; but by confession we build on that foundation, and come at last to full possession.

So that we have here a brief summary of the terms of salvation; and they are very reasonable; in short, this, that we must devote, dedicate, and give up to God, our souls and our bodies; our souls in believing with the heart, and our bodies in confessing with the mouth. This do, and thou shalt live. For this, v. 11. he quotes Is. 28:16. He that believeth will not make haste, so the prophet has it; will not make haste to run away from the sufferings he meets with in the way of his duty; will not be ashamed of a despised religion; will not be ashamed to own that Christ in whom he trusts; it is sinful shame that makes people deny Christ, Mk. 8:38. He shall not be ashamed of his hope in Christ; nor disappointed of his end. It is our duty that we must not, and our

ther, to confer the blessing on all who in true faith applied to Him for it.—The distinction between 'confessing with the mouth,' and 'believing in the heart,' shows that the apostle was discoursing, not of a mere profession of Christianity, but of the genuine sincerity of him, who made that profession. Mark 16:14-16. 1 Pet. 3:21, 22. 'Justification is here expressly ascribed to faith, not as including works, but only as being that principle, which, when it is cordial and sincere, will certainly produce them.' Whitby. Mat. 10:32, 33.—(5) *The man which doeth, &c.* Nearly from the LXX, which accord to the Heb. Lev. 18:5.—(6-8) *Say not, &c.* The apostle here takes the general sentiment, and expresses it in his own language; which is not exactly according either to the LXX or the Hebrew. Deut. 30:12-14. SCOTT.

(6.) 'Paul means simply to affirm, that if Moses could say, that his law was intelligible and accessible, the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, is even still more so. The quotations before us (v. 7, &c.) are clear examples of the liberty Paul takes, of accommodating the spirit of the O. T. to the objects and truths of the Gospel, without any slavish subjection to the mere form of words.' STUART.

(8.) 'In thy mouth, in thine own language, i. e. a subject of conversation and teaching. In thy heart, i. e. a subject of meditation and thought.' In.

(9.) *That if.* 'For if. It is not the simple fact of a resurrection of Jesus' body from the tomb, which, in the apostle's view, is the great and distinguishing feature of Christian belief; it is the exaltation, glory, and saving power that are consequent on the resurrection, which he evidently connects with this event. So in Phil. 2:8-11. Acts 2:24, 31-33. Comp. Heb. 2:9. 2 Cor. 4:14. Acts 17:31. Rom. 4:25. 1 Cor. 15:17-20.' In.

(10.) *For with.* 'Because with.'



12 For <sup>i</sup> there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for <sup>j</sup> the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

13 For <sup>k</sup> whosoever shall call <sup>l</sup> upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, <sup>m</sup> How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

16 But <sup>n</sup> they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, <sup>o</sup> Lord, who hath believed <sup>p</sup> our <sup>q</sup> report?

17 So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their <sup>r</sup> sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

i Ac. 15:9. Ga. 3:28. j 1 Ti. 2:5. k Joel 2:32. l 1 Co. 1:2. m Is. 52:7. Na. 1:15. n Ac. 23:24. He. 4:2. o Is. 53:1. Na. 12:38. p *the hearing of us, or, preaching.* q Ps. 19:4. Mat. 28:19. Col. 1:6, 23.

privilege that we *shall* not be ashamed of our faith in Christ.

V. 12—21. The first words express the design of the apostle through these vs., that there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles. See Col. 3:11. For the proof of this, he urges,

1. That God is the same to all; not one God to the Jews, that is *more* kind, and another to the Gentiles, that is *less* kind; but a common Father to all mankind; *the same Lord*, not only good, but rich, plenteous in goodness to all, to all that call upon Him; so that we have nothing to do but to draw out by prayer, as there is occasion, Ez. 36:37.

11. That the promise is the same to all, v. 13. *Whoever shall call*; one as well as another, without exception. Calling on the name of the Lord, is here put for all practical religion.

For further illustration, he observes,

1. How necessary it was the Gospel should be preached to the Gentiles, v. 14, 15. This was it the Jews were so angry with Paul for. Now, he shows how needful it was, to bring them within the reach of the forementioned promise, an interest in

V. 12—17. The Christian church seems, during many ages, to have forgotten her obligation to send the Gospel to the nations; but it has in our days been brought to remembrance. May it be acted on more and more!—The manner in which the apostle applies the words to Christ, which Isaiah spoke of JEREMIAH, forms a strong proof of our Lord's Deity.—(15) *Feet, &c.* 'The feet of those who have travelled far, in a hot country, through rough and dusty roads, present a spectacle naturally offensive: ... nevertheless, the consideration, that the persons themselves are, to us, the messengers of peace and felicity, would make us behold with delight this indication of their embassy. *Haud indecoro putvere sordidos.* Horace.' Campbell.—The whole passage most clearly shows, that without calling on Christ none can be saved; that without faith none can call on Him; and without the preaching, or publication in some way, of the Gospel, none can believe in Him.—The awful state of the heathen nations, and our imperious [imperative?] duty towards them, can hardly be more strongly stated, nor the opinion of those who argue that multitudes will be saved by Jesus, who never heard of his name, more energetically reprobated.—(15) *How beautiful, &c.* From the Heb., omitting 'upon the mountains.' 'The Sept. seems much corrupted here.' Raulolph. (Is. 52:7.)—(16) *Lord, who, &c.* Verbatim from the LXX, which add, 'Lord,' not found in the Heb. Is. 53:1. Sc.

(12.) *For there is.* 'There is, then. . . For there is the same Lord of all, who is rich (in mercy) unto, &c.' The quotation from Is. 23:16, which in Heb. contains the word *all*, gives Paul occasion to bring in what he had often taught, especially in chs. 3 and 4, that salvation is proffered to all men, without distinction, and on the same terms. The *for* (Gr. *gar*) is "illustrative," i. e. of the word *all*. In fact, there is here a singular succession of 5 clauses, arising one out of another, to all of which *gar* [for] is prefixed. This is altogether characteristic of

which they should not envy to any of their fellow-creatures. (1.) *They cannot call on Him in whom they have not believed.* Except they believe that He is God, they will not call on Him by prayer; to what purpose should they? He that comes to God, by prayer, must believe, Heb. 11:6. (2.) *They cannot believe in Him of whom they have not heard.* Some way or other the divine revelation must be made known to us, before we can receive it and assent to it. In hearing, is included reading, which is tantamount, and by which many are brought to believe, Jn. 20:31. But hearing only is mentioned, as the more ordinary and natural way of receiving information. (3.) *They cannot hear without a preacher; how should they? Preachers and hearers are correlates, and imply each other.* (4.) *They cannot preach except they be sent,* be both commissioned, and in some measure qualified. This proves, that to the regular ministry there must be a regular mission and ordination. It is God's prerogative to send ministers; therefore to Him we must pray, that He would send forth laborers, Mat. 9:38. He only can qualify men for, and incline them to, the work of the ministry. But the competency of that qualification, and the sincerity of that inclination, must needs be referred to the judgment of a competent number of those of approved wisdom and experience in that office; who, as in all other callings, are presumed the most able judges; and who are empowered to set apart such as they find so qualified and inclined, to this work of the ministry; that by this preservation of the succession, the name of Christ may endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. And they that are thus set apart, not only *may*, but *must* preach, as those that are sent.

2. How welcome the Gospel ought to be to those to whom it was preached; because it showed the way to salvation, v. 15. For this he quotes Is. 52:7. The like passage we have, Na. 1:15, which, if it point at the glad tidings of the deliverance of Israel out of Babylon, in the type, yet looks further to the Gospel, the good news of our salvation by Jesus Christ. Observe, (1.) What the Gospel is: *the Gospel of peace*; the Word of reconciliation between God and man. Luke 2:14. Or, peace in general, for all good, so explained here; *glad tidings of good things*, the best news that ever came from heaven to earth. (2.) What the work of ministers is; to *preach* this Gospel, to *bring these glad tidings*; to *evangelize* peace, so the original, to evangelize good things. Every preacher is in this sense an evangelist: they are not only messengers to carry the news, but ambassadors to treat; and the first gospel-preachers were angels, Luke 2:13, &c. (3.) How acceptable they should therefore be for their work's sake; *How beautiful are the feet,*

how welcome are they! When Christ was sending forth his disciples, He washed their feet. Those that preach the Gospel of peace, should see to it that their feet, their life and conversation, be beautiful: the holiness of ministers' lives is the beauty of their feet. *How beautiful*, in the eyes of them that hear them! Those that welcome the message, cannot but love the messengers. See 1 Thess. 5:12, 13.

3. He answers an objection against all this, which might be taken from the small success the Gospel had in many places, v. 16. All the Jews, all the Gentiles, have not obeyed; for the greater part of both remain in unbelief and disobedience. Observe, The Gospel is given us, not only to be *known* and *believed*, but to be *obeyed*. It is not a system of notions, but a rule of practice. This little success of the Word was likewise foretold by the prophet, Is. 53:1. Very few have believed, to the many that persist in unbelief. Under such a melancholy consideration, it is good for us to go to God and make our complaint to Him. *Lord, who hath, &c.* In answer to this,

(1.) He shows that the Word preached is the ordinary means of working faith, v. 17. *So then,—however*; though many that hear do not believe, yet those that believe have first heard. *Faith cometh by hearing.* It is the summary of what he had said before, v. 14. God gives faith, but it is by the Word, as the instrument. See 1 Thess. 2:13.

(2.) That those who would not believe the report of the Gospel, yet, having heard it, they were thereby left inexcusable, and may thank themselves for their own ruin, v. 18. *to the end.* [1.] The Gentiles have heard it, v. 18. Yes, more or less, they have either heard the Gospel, or heard of it. The commission the apostles received, runs thus; *Go ye into all the world, preach to every creature, disciple all nations*; and they did, with indefatigable industry and wonderful success, pursue that commission. See the extent of Paul's province, ch. 15:19. even to Britain, one of the utmost corners of the world, not only the sound, but the words of the Gospel came within a few years after Christ's ascension. In order to this, the gift of tongues was at first poured so plentifully on the apostles, Acts 2. In the expression, here, he plainly alludes to Ps. 19:4. which speaks of the notices, which the visible works of God in the creation give to all the world, of the power and Godhead of the Creator. As under the O. T. God provided for the publishing of the work of creation, by the sun, moon, and stars; so now for the publishing of the work of redemption to all the world, by the preaching of gospel-ministers, who are therefore called *stars*. [2.] The Jews have heard it too, v. 19—21. For this, he appeals to two passages of the O. T. to show

the manner of Paul; who, in the course of making a single declaration, often throws out words, which suggest whole trains of thought that are but indirectly connected with the main object of the declaration, but which the apostle stops to express; and in expressing them, he is often led to other thoughts connected with these subordinate ones; and these other thoughts again lead to a third series (if they may be so named); and, after expressing all these, the writer returns again, and resumes his main subject; comp. for example, 1:1—7. where vs. 1, and 7. belong together; 5:12—18. where v. 18. resumes the subject of v. 12. and completes the comparison there begun. So in Eph. 3:1—4:1. where 3:1. is immediately connected with 4:1. while there is a parenthesis (so to speak) of 20 verses between.

(13.) 'Is the *principle* [comp. on v. 6.] the same under the Christian, as under the Jewish dispensation, viz. that those who are exposed to danger and distress, and who put their trust in God, shall obtain deliverance? Is this true in a spiritual, as well as temporal respect? Or, rather, is there not a *plerösis* [fulfilling] to this promise, under the Gospel? Paul did not expect his readers to deny this; consequently his appeals, vs. 11, 13. apply *specialty* to Christ; (though the passages, in their original connexion, do not seem to;) thus authorizing us to apply to Christ the same divine worship and honor, which the saints of ancient days applied to Jehovah.'

Id. (15.) *Preach, &c.* 'Publish salvation, who proclaim good tidings. Yet all, &c.'

V. 18—21. The Jews, especially, had almost universally heard the Gospel. Very few of that nation, therefore, could plead, that they had had no opportunity of hearing this report; and their unbelief was the effect, not of ignorance or want of instruction, but of obstinate enmity against the truth. Again, could Israelites plead, that no intimations had



19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, 'I will provoke you to jealousy by *them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.*

20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; 'I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

## CHAP. XI.

God hath not cast off all Israel. 7 Some were elected, though the rest were hardened. 16 There is hope of their conversion. 18 The Gentiles may not insult upon them: 25 For there is a promise of their salvation. 33 God's judgments are unsearchable.

I SAY then, Hath a God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

a De. 32:21. a 1 Sa. 12:22. Ps. b c. 8:29.  
c Tit. 3:3. 77:7, 8. 99:31 c in.  
d Is. 65:1, 2. —37. d 1 K. 19:10—18.

how inexcusable they are too. *Did not Israel know that the Gentiles were to be called in? They might have known it from Moses and Esaias. 1st. One is taken from Deut. 32:21. The Jews had the offer first, Acts 3:26. and the Gentiles had but their leavings. If one would not, another would. Now this provoked them to jealousy, as the elder brother in the parable, Luke 15. The Gentiles are here called no people, and a foolish nation, not the professing people of God. Such was the state of the Gentile world, who yet were made the people of God, and Christ to them the Wisdom of God. What a provocation it was to the Jews, to see the Gentiles taken into favor, we may see, Acts 13:45. 17:5, 13. and especially 22:22. It was an instance of the great wickedness of the*

PRACT. OBS. Faithful ministers bear most affectionate good will to those, from whom they receive the greatest injuries; and offer their fervent and persevering prayers for the salvation of the very persons, against whom they denounce the wrath of God, if they persist in unbelief.—Careless and shameless profligates, infidels, and blasphemers are not the only persons who through the broad road to destruction, but many also who have 'a zeal for God' and religion. *Mat. 7:13, 14.* While, therefore, we should inculcate earnestness in that most important concern; we must also insist on the absolute necessity of its being regulated by the Word of God; without which even the most self-denying earnestness can do no more, than speciously deceive and ruin the souls of men.—Manifold are men's devices and endeavors to 'establish their own righteousness;' but all their labor is lost, and their souls continue in the most imminent danger; for, in opposition to all other methods of obtaining the divine favor, whether devised by ignorance, superstition, philosophy, enthusiasm, or grave morality, we must still insist on it, that 'Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;' and that every unbeliever remains under 'the curse of the law,' and 'the wrath of God.' If a man object to this, let him take the moral

previously been given, that God intended to cast them off for their unbelief and disobedience, and to take others in their stead? Even Moses, in that prophetic song, which all the people were commanded to learn throughout their generations, had represented JEHOVAH declaring, that He would excite them to jealousy by those who had been no people to Him, and raise their indignation by his favors shown to a nation, which had been despised as foolish, because idolatrous. *Deut. 31:19. 32:21.* This had been most remarkably accomplished, in the virulent opposition to the Gospel, which the calling of the Gentiles had excited in the Jews; when it should have stirred them up to a pious emulation, not to be surpassed in faith and holiness by those who had before been so ignorant and far from God.—(18) *Their sound, &c.* From the LXX, which vary from the Heb., having *sound* instead of *line*. (*Ps. 19:4*)—(19) *I will provoke, &c.* From the Sept. (*Deut. 32:21*).—(20, 21) *I was found, &c.* This agrees with the LXX, only transposing the words.—It varies little from the Hebrew. *Is. 65:1, 2.*

(18.) 'Paul uses the words (of *Ps. 19:5*) in this place, simply as the vehicle of his own thoughts, as they were very convenient and appropriate.' *Sr. Sound.* 'The words agree with the Sept. Also with the Heb., if Paul read *gol* for *gom*.' *Koppe*, whom see. *Ep.*

(19.) 'I say, moreover: Doth not Israel know? *Provoke.* Moves,' *St.*, 'i. e. to envy, by conferring favors on those you regard as despicable.'

Jews, that they were thus enraged; and this in Deuteronomy, is the matter of a threatening. God often makes people's sin their punishment. A man needs no greater plague than to be left to the impetuous rage of his own lusts. 2dly. Another is taken from *Is. 65:1, 2.* which is very full, and in it Esaias is very bold; bold, indeed, to speak so plainly of the rejection of his own countrymen. Those that will be faithful need be bold, and those who resolve to please God, must not be afraid to displease any man.

Now Esaias speaks boldly and plainly, 1. Of the preventing grace and favor of God, in the reception and entertainment of the Gentiles, *v. 20.* The prescribed method is, *Seek and find*; that is a rule for us, but not for God, who is often found of those that do not seek. Thus He manifested Himself to the Gentiles, when they were so far from seeking Him and asking after Him, that they were following after lying vanities, and serving dumb idols.

2. Of the obstinacy and perverseness of Israel, notwithstanding the fair offers and affectionate invitations they had, *v. 21.* Observe, (1.) God's great goodness to them; his offers; *I have stretched forth my hands*; his patience in making them, *All day long.* Stretching forth the hands, is the gesture of those that require audience, *Acts 26:1.* or desire acceptance, *Prov. 1:24.* *Stretched forth my hands* as offering reconciliation; come, let us shake hands and be friends; and our duty is, to give the hand to Him, *2 Chr. 30:8.* The time of God's patience is here called a *day*, fiftysome as a day, and fit for work and business; but limited as a day, and a night at the end of it. He bears long, but will not always. (2.) Their great badness to Him. They were a *disobedient, gainsaying people.* One word in the Heb. in Esaias, is here well explained by two; not only *disobedient* to the call, not yielding to it, but *gainsaying* and quarrelling with it, which is much worse. It is a wonder of mercy in God, that his goodness is not overcome by man's badness; and it is a wonder of wickedness in man, that his badness is not overcome by God's goodness.

CHAP. XI. The apostle, having reconciled that great truth of the rejection of the Jews, with the promise made unto the fa-

thers, is, in this ch. further laboring to mollify the harshness of it, and to reconcile it to the divine goodness in general. It might be said, Hath God then cast away his people? The apostle therefore sets himself, in this ch., to make a return to this objection.

V. 1—22. The apostle proposes here a plausible objection, which might be urged against the divine conduct in casting off the Jewish nation, *v. 1.* 'Hath God cast away his people? Is the rejection total and final?' In opposition to this, he shows, that there was great goodness and mercy expressed along with this seeming severity; particularly, he insists on three things. That though some of the Jews were cast off, yet not all; though the body of them were, yet the Gentiles were taken in; and that, though cast off at present, yet in God's due time the Jews should be taken in again.

I The Jews, it is true, were many of them cast off, but not all. *God forbid.*

1. A chosen remnant, of believing Jews, had obtained righteousness and life by faith in Jesus Christ, *v. 1—7.* said to be such as He foreknew, *v. 2.* i. e. had thoughts of love to, before the world was; for whom He thus foreknew He did predestinate. There lies the ground of the difference. They are called the *election*, *v. 7.* the elect, God's chosen ones: whom He calls the election, because, what first distinguished them from, and dignified them above others, was, God's electing love. Believers are the *election*. Now, (1.) He shows himself one; for I also am an Israelite; as if he had said, 'Should I say all the Jews are rejected, I should cut off my own claims, and see myself abandoned.' Paul was a chosen vessel, *Acts 9:15.* (2.) He suggests, that, as in Elias' time, so now, this chosen remnant was really more and greater than one would think it was: which intimates, likewise, that it is no new or unusual thing for God's grace and favor to Israel to be limited and confined to a remnant of that people; for so it was in Elijah's time. The Scripture saith it of Elias,—*in the story of Elias*, the great reformer of the O. T. Observe,

[1.] His mistake concerning Israel; as if their apostasy in the days of Ahab was so general, that he himself was the only faithful servant God had in the world. He refers to *1 K. 19:14.* where (it is here said)

'law of God,' (for rules which men prescribe, to themselves and to each other, are out of the question,) and, having produced a sinless obedience to it, through the whole of his continuance here, in thought, word, and deed, let him then demand the reward as a debt. But if this be a desperate attempt; let him submit to the degradation of a criminal, and apply for pardon to the clemency of his offended Lord, and for eternal life as his free gift through Jesus Christ, and by faith in Him. *6:21—23.* *Pract. Obs. 16—23.*—The humble, trembling sinner has, however, no cause for discouragement. 'The righteousness of faith,' as it were, invites him to accept of it; the Surety has finished his obedience and atonement, and is risen and exalted to be our all-prevailing Advocate. *8:32—39.* *Heb. 7:23—28.* *9:24—26.* *1 John 2:1, 2.*—As faith (whence all true prayer proceeds) comes 'by hearing the Word of God,' we should take care to be found among those who hear, believe, and obey the Gospel; and we should zealously and diligently endeavor to communicate the same blessing to others, even to 'the ends of the earth,' with all the influence and talent which we possess; and with every self-denying exertion of which we are capable. *SCOTT.*

*Not a people.* 'I. e. not peculiarly so, by any covenant or relation. *Foolish.* Also, as idolatrous, *impious*; since the knowledge of God is alone true wisdom. *Grot.* Moses meant the Philistines; Paul applies it also to the Greeks, the Gentiles in general. The Jews themselves (as Salomo, Bechai, Abarbanel, so *Wets.*) understand, by *foolish nations*, the Christians, whom they call *Idumeans* or *Romans*, so *Alting.* *Bl.* (20.) 'I made myself manifest to those who did not inquire for Me. The Sept. here, as expressing the general idea of the prophet, Paul uses, as fully adequate to his purpose.' *Sr. Found .. sought.* *Koppe* and *Ros.* observe, that God is said to be found, and to become manifest, when He by his benefits excites men to worship and obey Him: and the terms *zētein* [seek] and *eperōtan* [inquire for], like the Heb. *bksh* and *shal*, are synonyms used to denote devout worship of God.' *Id.*

NOTES. CHAP. XI. V. 1—6. An entirely free favor must be absolutely distinct from a reward, conferred in consequence of some work performed; as the price of one farthing, paid for what is worth a thousand pounds, must, in exact propriety of speech, essentially distinguish it from an entirely free gift.—This text is so decisive on the subject, that great pains have been taken to explain it away; but really the arguments of the most able and learned men, on the other side, prove nothing so much as the weakness of their cause. I shall, therefore, only observe in general; that *in fact*, those are not always or even generally



8 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded,

8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear,) unto this day.

e c. 9:27. f c. 4:4, 5. Ga. 5:4. Ep. 2:8. g c. 9:31. h hardened. i or, remorse. j Is. 29:10. k De. 29:4 Is. 6:9.

he maketh intercession to God against Israel. A strange kind of intercession. He deals with God against Israel; so it may be read; so the word is tr. Acts 25:24. Now Elijah in this prayer spake as if there were none left faithful in Israel but himself only. The powers of Israel were then persecuting powers; They have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars, and they seek my life. The multitude of Israel were then idolatrous: I am left alone. The few faithful were not only lost in the crowd of idolaters, but crushed and driven into corners by the rage of persecutors. When the wicked rise, a man is hidden, Prov. 28:12. God's altars were not only neglected, and let go out of repair, but digged down, when altars were set up for Baal. This was his intercession against Israel; as if he had said, 'Lord, is not this a people ripe for ruin, worthy to be cast off? What else canst Thou do for thy great name?'

[2.] The rectifying of this mistake by the answer of God, v. 4. I have reserved. Things are often much better with the church of God, than wise and good men think. In times of general apostasy, there

called, who, to our apprehension, are best disposed to perform good works, but the contrary, as the examples recorded in Scripture alone undeniably demonstrate; Mat. 19:29, 30. 21:28—32. Luke 13:22—30. that every truly good disposition, in a fallen creature, must be the effect, and cannot, therefore, be the cause, of the grace of God bestowed on him; that God did not act without reason in choosing one rather than another, though we are not made acquainted with his reasons; and that the display of the infinite riches of his mercy, the omnipotence of his grace, and the glory of his own sovereignty, in converting the most unlikely persons in the world, are far more probable reasons of his choice, than any foreseen comparative goodness of natural disposition in those who are saved, above those that perish.—(5) The election of grace. [Not those who chose grace, but those whom grace chose; that is, those whom God freely chose. Neither would "grace be grace," if we were in the smallest degree chosen for our foreseen good works; nor would "work be work," if in any measure it needed the help of grace.] Beza.—(3, 4) They have killed, &c.] The first part comes nearer to the Heb. than to the LXX; and the second, is plainly another tr., 'and seems to be a better one, of the Hebrew.' Randolph.

(1.) Cast away.] 'The Greek is lit. to reject, with abhorrence, as a nauseous potion, and, from the adjunct, to push away, cast off. Here it must have great force, and imply absolute and perpetual rejection and abandonment.' BLOOMF.

(2.) Of Elias.] 'In (the history of) Elijah, where he, &c.' STUART. 'This is supported by classical examples.' BLOOMF.

(3.) Digged down.] The altars being of earth, says Stade; but, says Bloomf., the word is used of the destruction of solid edifices and even cities, in the SS. and classics. Ed.

(4.) Answer.] 'Chrematismos': used (so Grot.) of every extraordinary method by which God makes his will known to men. But here it has especial reference to that still, small, oracular voice, called by the Hebrews, the bath qol, as in I K. 19:12. Reserved.] Grot. and Koppe properly observe, that the verb is to have a future sense; so the Sept. by the force, perh., of the *vau conversive*. Baal.] The article is fem., the

is usually a remnant that keep their integrity; God reserves them to Himself, otherwise, they had gone down the stream with the rest: his free and almighty grace makes the difference. Seven thousand: a competent number to bear testimony against the idolatry of Israel; yet, compared with the many thousands of Israel, a very small number. The description of them is, that they have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. The best evidence of integrity is freedom from present, prevailing corruptions, to swim against the stream when it is strong. 2 Pet. 1:12. Sober singularity is commonly the badge of true sincerity.

[3.] The application of this instance to the case in hand, v. 5—7. As it has been, so it is. In Elijah's time there was a remnant, and so there is now; nay, much more now under the Gospel, when the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, appears more illustrious. A remnant, a few of many; a remnant of believing Jews, when the rest were obstinate in their unbelief; called a remnant according to the election of grace; concerning which, observe, 1st. Whence it takes its rise; from the free grace of God, v. 6. that grace which excludes works: works done, or foreseen; if so, it would not be grace. It is not grace, properly so called, if it be not perfectly free. Election is purely according to the good pleasure of his will, Eph. 1:5. Paul's heart was so full of the freeness of God's grace, that in the midst of his discourse he turns aside, as it were, to make the remark, If of grace, then not of works. And some observe, that faith itself, which in the matter of justification is opposed to works, is here included in them; for faith has a peculiar receptivity to receive the free grace of God for our justification, but not to receive that grace for our election. 2dly. What it obtains: that which Israel, i. e. the body of that people, in vain sought for, v. 7. justification, and acceptance with God; see ch. 9:31. Such was the favor of God to the chosen remnant. But,

2. The rest were blinded, v. 7. left to perish in their unbelief; nay, made worse by that which should have made them better: blinded; hardened, so some; were seared, and made braway and insensible. Blindness and hardness are expressive of the same senselessness and stupidity of spirit. They shut their eyes and would not see; that was their sin: and then God, in a way of righteous judgment, blinded their eyes, that they could not see; there was their punishment. This seemed harsh doctrine: to qualify it, therefore, he vouches two wit-

nesses out of the O. T., which speak of such a thing.

(1.) Isaiah, who spake of such a judgment in his day, ch. 29:10. 6:9. The spirit of slumber, i. e. an indisposedness to mind either their duty or interest. The following words explain what is meant; eyes, that they should not see, and ears, that they should not hear. They were quite infatuated, saw Christ, but did not believe in Him; heard his Word, but did not receive it; so both their hearing and their seeing were in vain. It was all one as if they had neither seen nor heard. Of all judgments spiritual judgments are the sorest, and most to be dreaded, though they make the least noise. Ever since Esaias prophesied, this hardening work hath been in the doing unto this day; some among them have been blind and senseless. Or, rather, ever since the first preaching of the Gospel; multitudes of them, even to this day in which we live, are hardened and blinded; the obstinacy and unbelief go by succession, from generation to generation, according to their own fearful imprecation, which entailed the curse; His blood be upon us, and upon our children.

(2.) David, v. 9, 10. quoted from Ps. 69:22, 23. where David having, in the Spirit, foretold the sufferings of Christ, from his own people the Jews, particularly that of their giving Him vinegar to drink; in the next words, under the form of an imprecation, foretells the dreadful judgments of God on them for it; Let their table become a snare: which the apostle here applies to the present blindness of the Jews, and the offence they took at the Gospel, which increased their hardness. The passage speaks, [1.] Of the ruin of their comforts; Let their table be made a snare, i. e. an occasion of sin and misery. [2.] Of the ruin of their powers and faculties, v. 10. their eyes darkened, their backs bowed down; that they can neither find the right way, nor, if they could, be able to walk in it. The Jews, after their national rejection of Christ and his Gospel, became infatuated in their politics, so that their very counsels turned against them, and hastened their ruin by the Romans. Or, it may be understood spiritually; their backs are bowed down in carnality and worldly-mindedness,—Curva in terris animarum,—an exact description of the state and temper of the present remainder of that people; they are manifestly to this day under the power of this curse. Divine curses will work long. It is a sign we have our eyes darkened, if we are bowed down in worldly-mindedness.

masc. form is general in the O. T., yet the fem. occ. Hos. 2:8. Wisd. 1:4. Tob. 1:5. where, from the Vulg., it seems the idol was of both sexes. It is commonly supposed to designate the sun and moon, but what it was is uncertain. Kop. See Selden. 'Ros. remarks, that the image was of a bull, or female calf, or cow, the former designating the sun, the latter the moon: the first worshipped (so Abarbanel) by the men, the last by the women.' Bloomf.

(6.) And if, &c. Some reject this clause, but, as Bloomf. shows, on insufficient authority. Id.

V. 7—10. 'The election' here mentioned, as distinct from Israel, God's chosen people, (i. e. an election within an election,) clearly marks the difference between an election of a people to special external privileges, and a personal choice of individuals to eternal life: and it refutes unanswerably the reasonings of those, who would confine all these Scriptures to the former kind of election, and exclude the latter. O—q.—This judicial blindness of the enemies of Christ, had been clearly foretold; and might have been previously expected. Deut. 29:4. Ps. 69:22—28. Is. 6:9, 10. 29:9—12. Acts 1:20—22. These Scriptures have already been explained in this sense; but we may add, on the version here given of David's words, that the provision made for the souls of the Jews (as well as their temporal plenty), was, in righteous judgment, made the occasion of their being more deeply ensnared in guilt, and sinking under more dreadful condemnation, as the recompense of their unbelief; till at length they were totally blinded, and given up as slaves to the oppression of their enemies, to be bowed down [cut, page 34, Vol. III.] continually with the heavy burdens laid on them; an emblem of their base and ruinous bondage to sin and Satan. Lev. 26:31—45. Deut. 28:15—68. Dan. 9:25—27. Mat. 21:40—44. 23:29—36. 27:24, 25. Acts 3:22, 23. 7:51—53. 1 Thes. 2:13—16.—(8) God hath given, &c.] 'This by no means implies, that God infuses any new viciousness; but that He, as a just Judge, delivers up those, who are destitute of his grace, unto Satan, and to their own lusts, to be more and more blinded.' Beza. This venerable reformer certainly adopts, what is generally called the supralapsarian doctrine; and ventures on expressions, which few mod-



9 And David saith, Let <sup>1</sup> their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompense unto them :

10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the <sup>n</sup> Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

12 Now if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the <sup>n</sup> diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?

13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I <sup>o</sup> am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office;

14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* my flesh, and might save <sup>p</sup> some of them.

15 For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of *them be*, but life from the dead?

1 Pa. 69:22, 23. n or, decay, or, 1:16. Ep. 3:8.  
in Ac. 13:46. 23: loss. p 1 Co. 7:16.  
24-28, c. 10:19. o Ac. 9:15. Ga.

II. Another thing which qualified this doctrine of the rejection of the Jews, was, that though they were cast off and unchurched, yet the Gentiles were taken in, v. 11—14, which he applies by way of caution to the Gentiles, v. 17—22.

1. The rejection of the Jews made room for the reception of the Gentiles, v. 11. Not but that salvation might have come to the Gentiles if they had stood; but by the divine appointment it was so ordered, that the Gospel should be preached to the Gentiles, on the Jews' refusal of it. Thus in the parable, Mat. 22:8, 9. Luke 14:21. And so in the history, Acts 13:46, 18:6. *The fall of them*, v. 12, hastened the Gospel so much the sooner into the Gentile world; which was its greatest riches, better than thousands of gold and silver. Or, The riches of the Gentiles was the multitude of converts among them. True believers are God's jewels. To the same purport, v. 15. *The casting away of them is the reconciling of the world.* God's displeasure toward them made way for his favor toward the Gentiles. God was in Christ *reconciling the world*, 2 Cor. 5:19.

2. The use he makes of this.

(1.) As a kinsman to the Jews, here is a word of excitement and exhortation to them; to stir them up to receive and embrace the gospel-offer. This God intended in his favor to the Gentiles, to provoke the Jews to jealousy, v. 11. and Paul endeavors to enforce it accordingly, v. 14. See an instance of such an emulation in Esau, Gen. 28:6—9. There is a commendable emulation in the affairs of our souls: why should not we be as holy and happy as any of our neighbors? In this emulation there needs no suspicion, undermining, or counterming; for the church hath room enough, and the new covenant grace and comfort enough, for us all. The blessings are not lessened by the multitude of the sharers. See what was Paul's business, to save souls; and yet the utmost he promises himself is but to *save some*: though he were such a powerful preacher, and spoke and wrote with such evidence and demonstration of the Spirit. Ministers must think their pains well bestowed, if they can but be instrumental to save some.

(2.) As an apostle to the Gentiles, here is a word of caution for them: take heed, *you Gentiles*, believing Romans, lest you do anything to forfeit it. Paul takes this, as other occasions, to apply his discourse to the Gentiles, because he was the apostle of the Gentiles, Acts 22:21. compare Acts 9:15. It was likewise the intention of his ordination, Gal. 2:9. Comp. Acts 13:2. we must particularly mind our own work. *I magnify mine office.* There were those that vilified it, and him because of it: for this the Jews were so outrageous against him, Acts 22:21, 22. It is a sign of true love to Jesus Christ, to reckon that service and work for Him truly honorable, which the world looks upon with scorn, as mean and contemptible. The office of the ministry is an office to be *magnified*. *Mine office*, —*my ministry*, my service, not my lordship and dominion. It was not the dignity and power, but the duty and work of an apostle, that Paul was so much in love with.

Two things he exhorts the Gentiles to, with reference to the rejected Jews. [1.] To respect the Jews, notwithstanding, and to desire their conversion. This is intimated in the prospect he gives them of the advantage that would accrue to the church by their conversion, v. 12, 15. [2.] To take heed to themselves, lest they also should stumble and fall, v. 17—22. Where observe,

1st. The privilege the Gentiles had by being taken into the church. *They were grafted in*, v. 17, as a branch of a wild olive into a good olive. It is applicable to a saving union with Christ; all that are by a lively faith grafted into Christ, partake of Him as the branches from the root; receive from his fulness. But it is here spoken of as a

visible church-membership, from which the Jews were as branches broken off; and so the Gentiles were grafted in, among them that continued, or in the room of them that were broken off, and partake of the same privileges the Jews did, *the root and fatness*. The olive-tree is the visible church, called so, Jer. 11:16. the root was Abraham; not the root of communication, so, Christ only is the Root; but the root of administration, he being the first with whom the covenant was so solemnly made. Now the believing Gentiles partake of this root, Luke 19:9. Gal. 3:14. the same fatness of the olive-tree, the same for substance, special protection, lively oracles, means of salvation, a standing ministry, instituted ordinances; and, among the rest, the visible church-membership of their infant seed, which was part of the fatness of the olive-tree that the Jews had, and cannot be imagined to be denied to the Gentiles.

2dly. A caution not to abuse these privileges. 1. 'Be not proud, vs. 18, 19. Do not therefore trample on the Jews as a reprobate people, nor insult over them that are broken off, much less over those that do continue.' Grace is given, not to make us proud, but to make us thankful. The law of faith excludes all boasting, either of ourselves or against others. 'But remember, *thou bearest not the root, but the root thee*; though thou art grafted in, thou art still but a branch borne by the root; nay, and an engrafted branch, brought into the good olive *contrary to nature*, v. 24. not free-born, but by an act of grace enfranchised and naturalized.' 2. 'Be not secure, v. 20. Be not too confident of your own strength and standing.' A holy fear is an excellent preservative against high-mindedness: happy is the man that thus feareth always. The church of Rome now boasts of a patent of perpetual preservation; but the apostle here, in his epistle to that church when she was in her infancy and integrity, enters an express caveat against that boast, and all claims of that kind. *But fear*,—what? 'Why, lest thou commit a forfeiture, as they have; lest thou lose the privileges thou now enjoyest, as they have lost theirs.'

Consider, (1.) 'How they were broken off. It was not undeservedly, by an act of absolute sovereignty and prerogative, but *because of unbelief*.' It seems, then, it is possible for churches that have long stood by faith, to fall into such a state of infidelity as may be their ruin. Further, observe, they were *natural branches*, v. 21. not only interested in Abraham's covenant, but descending from Abraham's loins; and so born on the promises, and thence had a kind of tenant-right: yet when they sunk into unbelief, God did *not spare them*; called here *severity*, v. 22. a word that sounds harsh; and I do not remember it anywhere

ern Calvinists (as they are called) would subscribe; yet he by no means admits those consequences, which numbers, who speak evil of what they understand not, indiscriminately charge on all who hold the doctrine of personal election to eternal life. Ex. 4:21. 2 Thes. 2:8—12. The apostle seems to have given the sense of the several prophecies to this effect referred to, rather than the exact words from the Sept., or a lit. tr. from the Heb. 'The Sept., after the usual way of this tr., puts the optative, (or rather, the imperative,) 'for what is, in the Heb., the future.' *Randolph*. This is, I apprehend, often done very improperly; but here the context requires it; as several verbs, in the same passage, are imperative. Ps. 69:22—23.

(7, 8.) *Seeketh*.] 'Sought. Election.] Elect .. Eyes that see not, ears that hear not.' St. *Blinded*.] 'The best comtrs., both ancient and modern, are agreed, that this [επιρωθῆσαν], like many other passive verbs, must have a reciprocal sense; as in John 12:40. So *Grot.* induerunt; i. e. with their prejudices, adds *Ros*. The verb properly signifies, *calto obducere* [to cover over with callosity], and [the passive] is therefore used to denote being *fat*, *stupid*, and also *blind*; and since, in these cases, the natural sense is either lost or weakened, the word comes to denote being (as we say) *callous* to any sense or virtue, hardened in conscience, and consequently vicious in conduct. The quotation, v. 8. is made up from Is. 29:10. 6:10. and Deut. 29:3. *Stumber*.] l. e. (so the Gr.) a state of mind stupid, and destitute of all sense of good and evil; God permitting.' So *Kop*.

(9.) 'A snare to catch them, and an occasion of falling.' STUART.

V. 11—15. For this [in order to acknowledge in one full body their long despised Messiah] they [the Jews] have ever since been preserved a distinct people, almost by a continued miracle: Num. 23:9. Jer. 30:10, 11. and as their conversion will fulfil so very many ancient prophecies

concerning their restoration, and will probably be effected by the fulfilment of many other prophecies; so it will doubtless exceedingly conduce to the conversion of the remaining heathen nations. Lev. 26:40—42. Deut. 4:29—31. 30:1—10. Is. 11:11—16. 63:15—19. 64. Jer. 32:39—41. Ez. 34:23—31. 35:25—27. 31. 37:25—28. 39:23—29. Hos. 3:4, 5. Joel 3:9—21. Am. 9:13—15. Mic. 5:7—9. 7:18—20. Zeph. 3:14—17. Zech. 8:20—23. 10:5—12. 12:6—14.—The English word 'provoke,' being now fixed in common use to the idea of exciting indignation, is very apt to perplex the reader's mind, and to prevent his clearly seeing, that the apostle spoke of exciting them to holy, and not to unholy passions; the latter indeed was generally the event of his conduct, but contrary to his intentions. Heb. 10:23—25.—This event [the restoration] will accomplish so many prophecies, in so open and signal a manner, that infidelity in every form must be finally confuted and silenced; and the attention of the most heedless must be excited to the astonishing display of the power of God, in performing his Word: and, as 'He delighteth in mercy,' He will effectually concur with these impressions, by pouring out his Holy Spirit to convert the nations, and to render genuine Christianity universally triumphant; probably to a very great degree by ministers and missionaries of converted Israel. Rev. 19:11—21. 20:1—6. SCOTT.

(11.) 'Stumbled, so as utterly to fall. *Jealousy*.] Emulation.' St. (12.) *Bloomf.* says, 'the best interpreters, ancient and modern, think, there is here no allusion to any future return in a visible and remarkable manner to their own land, but only to their final admission into the church of Christ, by faith and repentance'; but refers to *Whitby* and

*Doddr.*, who ably maintain the common opinion. (15, 16.) *For if*.] 'If then. *For if, &c.*] If, moreover, the first-fruits were holy, so shall the mass be; and if the root be holy, so will be the branches.' St. See *Hodge*, pp. 467, 468. 'The spirit of Ebion



16 For if <sup>a</sup> the first-fruit *be* holy, the lump *is* also *holy* : and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches.

17 And if some of the branches <sup>r</sup> be broken off, and thou, <sup>a</sup> being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in <sup>t</sup> among them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive-tree ;

18 Boast <sup>u</sup> not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

20 Well ; because of unbelief they were broken off ; and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but <sup>v</sup> fear :

21 For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee.

22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God ; on them which fell, severity ; but towards thee, goodness ; <sup>w</sup> if thou continue in *his* goodness : otherwise thou <sup>x</sup> also shalt be cut off.

23 And they also, if <sup>y</sup> they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in : for God is able to graft them in again.

24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive-tree ; how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive-tree ?

q Le. 23:10. Nu. 15:18-21. r Je. 11:16. s Ep. 2:12, 13. t or, for. u 1 Co. 10:12. v Phil. 2:12. w He. 3:6, 14. 10:23,33. x Jo. 15:2. y 2 Co. 3:15.

else in Scripture ascribed to God ; and here applied to the unchurching of the Jews. God is most severe toward those that have been in profession nearest to Him, if they rebel against Him, Amos 3:2. Patience, and privileges abused, turn to the greatest wrath. Of all judgments, spiritual judgments are the sorest ; for of those he is here speaking, v. 8.

(2.) 'How thou standest ; thou that art engrafted in.' He speaks to the Gentile

was now working among the Jews, as well as that of Marcion among the Gentiles : against both the apostles had strenuously to contend ; and these remarks tend to prevent a separation of Christian Jews and Gentiles, because the former were addicted to the rites of the law. So difficult is it to preserve a medium. Grotius. Ed.

V. 16-21. The attentive reader will readily perceive, that *relative* holiness, or consecration to God, is here exclusively meant. Abraham was, as it were, the root of the visible church in all subsequent ages. After Ishmael and the sons of Keturah had been broken off, the tree grew up in Isaac ; then Esau being broken off, it shot forth abundance of branches, in Jacob and his twelve sons. When any Gentiles were converted, or proselyted, they were 'grafted into this tree,' by circumcision, as long as the legal dispensation lasted ; (but by baptism after the Christian dispensation entered) ; and they, with their posterity, were from that time considered as branches of the tree, a part of the visible church as springing from Abraham. Notwithstanding all former rebellions, the Jews were the branches of this tree, till as a nation they rejected the Messiah ; (though the most of the ten tribes had long before been broken off) ; but after that, their relation to Abraham and to God, was, as it were, suspended. They were broken off from the olive-tree in immense multitudes ; neither they, nor their posterity, any longer retained even the outward seal of the covenant ; for circumcision lost its validity, and baptism became the sign of regeneration, and 'the seal of the righteousness of faith ;' and they were, thenceforth, deprived of the ordinances of God. 4:9-12. John 15:1-5. At the same time the Gentiles 'were grafted' into this tree, in their room ; by professing faith in Christ, and being baptized into his name, they were admitted into the visible church of God, and attained a *relative* holiness ; they were favored with the means of grace, and the ordinances of God, 'for their good, and that of their children after them,' as the Jews formerly had been ; and multitudes, who had been the branches of the wild, unfruitful olive-tree, were thus made heirs of Abraham's faith, holiness, and blessedness. Gal. 3:28-29. Heb. 6:16-20.—This [20] doubtless refers to the collective body of professing Christians, and not to individual believers ; though the latter are preserved, through humility and holy fear. It has also a peculiar

churches in general ; though perhaps tacitly reflecting on some particular person, who might have expressed some such pride and triumph in the Jews' rejection. 'Consider then, [1.] By what means thou standest ; by faith, a depending grace, and not in any strength of thine own, of which thou mightest be confident.' [2.] 'On what terms, v. 22. continuing in a dependence on, and compliance with, the free grace of God, the want of which ruined the Jews ; if thou be careful to keep up thine interest in the divine favor, by being continually careful to please God, and fearful of offending Him.' The sum of our duty, the condition of our happiness, is, to keep ourselves in the love of God. Fear the Lord and his goodness, Hos. 3: 5.

III. Another thing that qualifies this doctrine, is, that the rejection is not final ; but when the fulness of time is come, the Jews will be taken in again. Observe,

1. How this conversion of the Jews is here described, (1.) As *their fulness*, v. 12. i. e. the addition of them to the church, the filling up again of that place which became vacant by their rejection. (2.) As *the receiving* of them. The conversion of a soul is the receiving of that soul, so of a nation. Christ's arms are stretched out to receive all that will come to Him. And this will be as *life from the dead* ; so strange and surprising, and yet withal so welcome and acceptable. (3.) As *the grafting of them in again*, v. 23. into the church, from which they had been broken off. That which is grafted in, receives sap and virtue from the root ; so does a soul, truly grafted into the church, from Christ the quickening Root. They shall be *grafted into their own olive-tree*, v. 24. i. e. into the church, of which formerly they had been the most eminent and conspicuous members. (4.) As *the saving of all Israel*, v. 26. True conversion may well be called *salvation* ; it is salvation begun. See Acts 2:47.

2. What it is grounded upon, and what reason we have to look for it.

(1.) Because of the holiness of the *first-fruits* and the *root*, v. 16. Some, by the *first-fruits*, understand those Jews already converted to the faith of Christ, and received into the church ; which were, as the first-fruits, dedicated to God, as earnest of a more plentiful and sanctified harvest. Others, by the *first-fruits*, understand the same with the root, the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from whom the Jews descended, and with whom, as the prime trustees, the covenant was deposited : and so they were the root of the Jews, not only as a people, but as a church. *Holy*, is not

meant so much of inherent as of federal holiness ; the Jews are in a sense a holy nation, Ex. 19: 6. being descended from holy parents. Now it cannot be imagined, that such a holy nation should be totally and finally cast off. This proves, that the seed of believers, as such, are within the pale of the visible church, and verge of the covenant, till they do, by their unbelief, throw themselves out ; for *if the root be holy, so are the branches*. Though real qualifications are not propagated, yet relative privileges are. Look how they will answer it another day, that cut off the entail, by turning the seed of the faithful out of the church, and so [in so far] not allowing the blessing of Abraham to come on the Gentiles. The Jewish branches are reckoned *holy*, because the root was so. This is expressed more plainly, v. 28. In this love to the fathers, the first foundation of their church-state was laid, Deut. 4:37. And the same love would revive their privileges, for still the ancient loving-kindness is remembered ; they are *beloved for the fathers' sakes*. It is God's usual method of grace. Kindness to the children for the father's sake, is therefore called *the kindness of God*, 2 S. 9: 3, 7. Though, as concerning the Gospel, i. e. in the present dispensation of it, they are enemies to it *for your sakes*, for the sake of the Gentiles, against whom they have such an antipathy ; yet when God's time is come, that will wear off, and God's love to their fathers will be remembered. See a promise that points at this, Lev. 26:42. Many fare the better for the sake of their godly ancestors. On this account, the church is called their own *olive-tree*. That which hath been may be again. Though particular persons and generations wear off in unbelief, yet there having been a national church membership, though for the present suspended, we may expect it will be revived again.

(2.) Because of the power of God, v. 23. The conversion of souls is a work of almighty power ; and when they seem most hardened, and blinded, and obstinate, our comfort is, that God is able to work a change, able to graft those in, that have been long cast out and withered. The condition of their restoration is, faith ; *If they abide not still in unbelief* : nothing is to be done but to remove that unbelief, and God is able to take that away, though nothing less than an almighty power will do it ; the same power that raised up Christ from the dead, Eph. 1: 19, 20. Otherwise, can these dry bones live ?

(3.) Because of the grace of God manifested to the Gentiles. Those that have

prophetic energy, when we consider it as addressed to the Roman church, which so soon after, attempting to domineer over other churches, to be the metropolis of the Christian world, and at length to be infallible, fell through pride and presumption ; till it became 'the mother of harlots, and of abominations of the earth.' Rev. 17:1-6.—It is obvious to observe, that though the illustration of grafting, excellently suited the apostle's purpose, yet the effect, in the case before us, is the reverse of that in natural grafting ; for there, the good scion communicates its changing efficacy to the [juices of the] wild stock ; here, the stock imparts its efficacy to the corrupt branches, which by divine power are grafted into it.—The apostle's reasoning, in this place, strongly evinces the *oneness* of the visible church, under every dispensation ; and the change of the initiatory ordinance since the coming of Christ is manifest ; his statement therefore implies more substantial arguments in favor of infant-baptism, than has generally been supposed. SCOTT.

(17.) *Among them.* 'Engrafted in their stead.' Sr. It was usual to graft the olive with the oleaster, (wild olive,) to promote the fecundity of the former. So *Columella*. See B1. Ed.

(18.) 'Glory not over . . . thou dost not support.' STUART. Ed.

(21.) 'Then surely He will not spare thee.' V. 22-24. This was spoken prophetically, both respecting the apostasy of the Roman church, and the future conversion of the Jews. 2 Thes. 2:3, 4.—'This "grafting in again," seems to import, that the Jews shall be a flourishing nation again, professing Christianity in the land of promise ; for that is to be reinstated again in the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This, Paul might, for good reasons, be withheld from speaking out here ; but in the prophets there are very plain intimations of it.' Locke. SCOTT.

(22.) 'Severity toward them who have fallen away . . . provided thou dost hide in his kindness.' Sr. 'Remain in that state in which thou hast been placed by the benignity of God, through faith in Christ, by which this benignity is retained, Beza, Vorst., Grot. Christians were under no overruling necessity of persevering in their state of grace.' Slade. BL. So *Scott*—'if in humble birth they received, and lived in persevering dependence on, the grace of the Gospel.' Ed.



25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, 'There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.

29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:

31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.

z or, hardness. d Je. 31:31, &c. f Nu. 23:19.  
a ver. 7. 2Co. 3:14. He. 10:16. g Ep. 2:2.  
b Lu. 21:24. e De. 10:15. h or, obeyed.  
c Is. 59:20.

themselves experienced the grace of God, preventing, distinguishing grace, may from thence take encouragement to hope well concerning others. This is his argument, v. 24. and a suggestion very proper to check the insolence of those Gentile Christians, that looked with disdain and triumph on the condition of the rejected Jews, and trampled on them; as if he had said, 'Their condition, bad as it is, is not so bad as yours was, before your conversion; therefore why may it not be made as good as yours is?' This is his argument, v. 30, 31. It is good for those that have found mercy with God, to be often

thinking what they were in time past, and how they obtained that mercy. Further, 'You have obtained mercy through their unbelief; much more shall they obtain mercy through your mercy, that they may be beholden to you, as you have been to them.' He takes it for granted, that the believing Gentiles would do their utmost endeavor to work on the Jews; that when God had persuaded Japhet, he would be laboring to persuade Shem. True grace hates monopolies.

(4.) Because of the promises and prophecies of the O. T., which point at this. He quotes a very remarkable one, v. 26. from Is. 59:20, 21. Where observe, [1.] The coming of Christ promised; in Isaiah He is called the Redeemer; here the Deliverer. [2.] Its end and purpose. Christ's errand into the world was to turn away ungodliness, especially from Jacob; which is that for the sake of which Paul quotes the text, as a proof of the great kindness God intended for the seed of Jacob. In Is. it is, *The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob*: which shows who in Zion were to share in, and to reap benefit by, the deliverance promised those, and those only, that leave their sins, and turn to God; to them Christ comes as a Redeemer, but as an Avenger to them that persist in impenitence. See Deut. 30:2, 3. Those that turn from sin, will be owned as the true citizens of Zion, Eph. 2:19. the right Jacob, Ps. 24:4, 6. Putting both these readings together, we learn, that none have an interest in Christ, but those that turn from their sins, nor can any turn from their sins but by the strength of the grace of Christ.

For this is my covenant with them; this, that the Deliverer shall come to them; this, that my Spirit shall not depart from them, as it follows, Is. 59:21. The apostle adds, when I shall take away their sins; which some think, refers to Is. 27:9. or only to the foregoing words, to turn away ungodliness. Pardon of sin, is laid as the foundation of all the blessings of the new covenant, Heb. 8:12. Now from all this, he infers, that certainly God had great mercy in store for that people, something answerable to the extent of these rich promises: and he proves his

inference, v. 29. by this truth, *For the gifts and callings of God are without repentance.* Repentance is sometimes taken for a change of mind, and so, God never repents, for He is in one mind, and who can turn Him? A change of way is here understood. We find God repenting that He had given man a being, Gen. 6:6. and repenting that He had given a man honor and power, 1 S. 15:11. but never that He had given man grace, or effectually called him; those gifts, and callings, are without repentance.

3. The time and extent of this conversion, when and where it is to be expected. It is called a mystery, v. 25. as not obvious, and what one would not expect on the view of the present state of that people; who appeared generally so obstinate against Christ and Christianity, that it was a riddle to talk of their unanimous conversion. The conversion of the Gentiles is called a mystery, Eph. 3:3, 6, 9. The case of the rejected Jews, seemed as bad now as that of the Gentiles had been. Observe, (1.) Their present state v. 25. a remnant see the things that belong to their peace; but part, the far greater part, are in blindness, v. 7, 8. To the same purport, v. 32. *Shutting up*, is sometimes put for conviction, as Gal. 3:22. They all stand before God convicted of unbelief. They would not believe; which refusal of theirs was, as it were, entered on record in the court of heaven, and was conclusive against them. (2.) When this blessed change should be; when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, when the Gospel has had its intended success, and made its progress in the Gentile world; comp. v. 12. The Jews shall continue in blindness, till God hath performed his whole work among the Gentiles, and then their turn will come next to be remembered. (3.) The extent of it, v. 26. He will have mercy on all, v. 32. Not every individual person, but the body of the people. Not that ever they should be restored to their covenant or peculiarity again, to have their priesthood and temple, and ceremonies again; but they should be brought to believe in Christ, the true Messiah, whom they crucified, and be incorporated in the Christian church, and become

(11—24.) From these vs. we gather the doctrine, that 'all organized communities, civil and ecclesiastical, have a common responsibility, a moral personality in the sight of God, and are dealt with accordingly, (in this world, where alone their organized existence is) rewarded or punished according to their conduct, as such. Witness the state of the Jewish and eastern churches, in consequence of their fathers' sins. Christians, then, should not feel as though they were isolated beings, as if each one need be concerned for himself alone, having no joint responsibility with the community to which he belongs. God will deal with our church and country as a whole [and terrible omens hang over us], and visit our sins upon those who are to come after us [as well as ourselves]. We should feel, therefore, that we are one body, members one of another, having common interests and responsibilities. We ought 'to weep over [and labor to reform] the sins of the community to which we belong, as being in one sense, and in many of their consequences, our sins.' HOOGE, slightly varied. Ed.

V. 25—32. Perhaps the apostle was aware, that 'the mystery of iniquity already wrought' in the church at Rome; and therefore labored the more to check its fatal progress. 2 Thes. 2:5—7.—In the intermediate ages, immense numbers would be gathered into the church; but, about the time of the last great harvest of the nations, 'the blindness' will be removed from Israel, and the nation saved from its rejected and dispersed state, and be brought in a body to embrace the Gospel; probably it will be restored to the holy land, and most of the Jews at least will become true believers. 11—15.—The principal conversion of Jews, in the times of the apostles, had taken place before this epistle was written; and it is evident the conversion predicted is yet future.—(26, 27) *There shall come, &c.* Not exactly, either from the Sept. or the Heb.; yet the general meaning is the same, and the variation does not at all affect the argument. It is, however, most evident, that the apostle, even when writing to the Gentiles, who in general had no copy of the Scriptures but the Sept., did not uniformly quote from it. Is. 59:20, 21. SCOTT.

(25.) *Fulness, &c.* The Ed. is at a loss to conceive, how an attentive reader of the prophecies can come to any other conclusion, than that there is yet to be a glorious restoration of the Jews, probably to their own land, certainly to the church and gospel privileges; and this has been, as Whitby shows, the constant doctrine of the church. Nor can this of Paul, apply to aught else, than that, when the heathen shall generally have become Christians nations, the Jews will be converted also; for 'though it be true, that James mentions many thousands or myriads of Jewish converts, all zealous of the law, Acts 21:20. yet were they all converted, at or before Paul wrote this epistle, and so belonged only to the remnant, according to the election of grace here mentioned, not to the residue that were blinded, of whose conversion the apostle here speaks, v. 12—32. Nor could their conversion and salvation be a mys-

tery to be then revealed to the Gentiles. That no such conversion, after this blindness, happened to them, on their seeing the abomination of desolation in the holy place, (Mat. 24.) or soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, has been already showed (for there was an apostasy rather); as that Justin Martyr says nothing of such a remarkable conversion. Nor do we learn of any such since, nor of any such a fulness of converted Gentiles as could be called the riches of the world, v. 12. When, moreover, has the blindness been removed? It evidently has not yet ceased.' Whitby: who proves farther, that a double 'fulness' is mentioned in the SS. viz. (1.) Their evangelization, alluded to in v. 12. before the destruction of Jerusalem, and according to Christ's prediction, Mat. 24:14. Mark 13:10.—(2.) A more glorious conversion, of those who have not embraced, or relapsed from the Gospel, heathens and Mahometans: of which only can we understand the cl. riches, &c. v. 12. also what is said, v. 15, 25. (3.) Jerusalem is yet trodden down, and the Jews oppressed: nor have yet come the glorious times predicted, Luke 21:24. Ps. 2:8. Dan. 7:4, 27. 2:34, 35. Mic. 5:4. Zach. 14:9. Ps. 72:3. for (so Breerewood) dividing the known regions of the world into 30 equal parts, Christianity has 5, Mahomet 6, Idolatry 19. Nor have wholly been fulfilled to Israel, Is. 54:9, 10. 59:20, 21. 60:15, 18—20. 61:7, 8. 62:4, 12. 65:19. 66:22. Jer. 32:39, 40. Ez. 34:28, 25. 37:25—27. 39:28, 29. Am. 9:15. After this conversion of Israel, *I will gather all nations, saith God, and tongues, &c.* Is. 55:5. 56:8. 66:18, 22. *Then all nations shall turn, and fear the Lord truly.* Tob. 13:10, 11. And this I conceive to be that fulness of which Paul speaks.' Whitby: of whose proof the above is a much abridged exhibition. Ed.

(26.) *So.* 'Then.' *St.*, who omits to inclose v. 20, 27. in parenthesis, but incloses from 'lest' to 'conceit,' incl. *Ed.* 'Vitr. supposes Paul connected, in his mind, Is. 59:20. with Ps. 14. Turner says, "the prophet speaks of the Redeemer's coming to Zion (it being the centre of national glory); this Paul denies not, but, equivalently to Is. 2:3. speaks of his marching, as it were, triumphantly out of Zion, and subduing all opposition." Shall turn, &c.] The Sept. seems only to have too freely tr. the Heb. here. "The general tenor of God's covenant with Israel gave no hope of deliverance, after rejection and abandonment, but in a way of repentance and reformation." Doddr. Almost the first word of Christ's ministry was, *repent!* Mat. 4:14. and so of John Baptist. Mat. 3:2. So of Peter, Acts 2:33. *Jaspis.* BLOOMF.

(27.) *For.* 'Also.' STUART.

(28.) 'In respect to the Gospel, (they have become) enemies on your account.' ID.

(29.) 'He will not repent of.'

(30, 31.) 'For as ye were formerly disobedient to God, but, &c. . . ; thus also they have now become disobedient, so that they may obtain mercy through the mercy shown to you.'



32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

i c. 3:9. Ga. 3:22. 1 Job 11:7. n Job 41:11.  
j or, shut them all Ps. 92:5. o 1 Co. 8:6. Col.  
up together. m Is. 40:13. Je. 1:16.  
k Ps. 107:8, &c. 23:18. p Him.

one sheep-fold with the Gentiles, under Christ, the great Shepherd.

But the question is, concerning the accomplishment of all this. [1.] Some think, it is done already; when before, and in, and after, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, multitudes of the Jews were convinced of their infidelity, and turned Christians; and most of this work, they suppose, was done toward the close of the ministry of the apostles, when the Gentiles were generally come in. [2.] Others think, it is yet to have its accomplishment toward the end of the world; that those Jews which yet wonderfully remain distinct from the rest of the nations, shall, by the working of the Spirit with the Word, be convinced of their sin, and brought generally to embrace the Christian faith, and so to join Christian churches; which will contribute much to their strength and beauty. Alas! who shall live when God doeth this?

V. 33—36. The apostle, having insisted so largely on reconciling the rejection of the Jews with the divine goodness, concludes here with the acknowledgment and admiration of the divine wisdom and sovereignty in all this: with great affection and awe, adoring,

I. The secrecy of the divine counsels; *O the depth!* in these proceedings toward the Jews and Gentiles; or, in general, the whole mystery of the Gospel, which we cannot fully comprehend. Those that know most, in this state of imperfection, cannot but be most sensible of their own weakness and short-

sightedness; and that, after all their searches, and all their attainments in those searches, while they are here, they cannot order their speech, by reason of darkness. Praise is silent to Thee, Ps. 65:1.

There is not only *depth* in the divine counsels, but *riches* too; which denotes an abundance of the precious and valuable; so complete are the dimensions of the divine counsels, they have not only depth and height, but *breadth and length*, Eph. 3:18. and that passing knowledge, v. 19.

*Riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God.* His seeing by one clear, certain, and infallible view all things that are, or ever were, or ever shall be, is his *knowledge*. His ruling and ordering all to his own glory, and the bringing about of his own purposes and counsels in all, is his *wisdom*. And the vast reach of both these is such a depth as is past our fathoming, and we may soon lose ourselves in the contemplation of them. Such *knowledge is too wonderful for me*, Ps. 139:6. Comp. v. 17, 18.

*How unsearchable are his judgments!* i. e. his counsels and purposes: and his *ways*, i. e. the execution of these counsels and purposes. we know not what He designs; it is past *finding out*. This does not only overturn all our positive conclusions about the divine counsels, [and elective decrees,] but it also checks all our [too] curious inquiries. Secret things belong not to us, Deut. 29:29. God's way is in the sea, Ps. 77:19. Comp. Job 23:8, 9. Ps. 97:2. What He does, we know not now, Jn. 13:7. nor the reason, see Job 5:9. 9:10. Our duty, blessed be God, is plain and easy; but the ways of Providence are dark and mysterious, which therefore we must silently adore and acquiesce in.

The apostle speaks this here, especially with reference to that strange turn, the casting off of the Jews, and the entertainment of the Gentiles, with a purpose to take in the Jews again in due time; these were strange proceedings, the choosing of some, the refusing of others, and neither according to the probabilities of human conjecture. Even so, Father, because it seemed good in thine eyes.

*Past finding out,—cannot be traced.* God leaves no prints or footsteps behind Him; but his paths of providence are new every morning; He does not go the same way so often, as to make a track of it. *How little a portion is heard of Him!* Job 26:14. It follows, v. 34. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord?* There is that vast distance and disproportion between God and man, be-

tween the Creator and the creature, as for ever excludes the thought of [our comprehending his mode of being and thoughts, in] such an intimacy and familiarity. The apostle makes the same challenge, 1 Cor. 2:16. yet there adds, *But we have the mind of Christ:* which intimates, that, through Christ, true believers, who have his Spirit, know so much of the mind of God as is necessary to their happiness.

*Or who has been his counsellor?* That would be like lighting a candle to the sun. This seems to refer to Is. 40:13, 14. It is the substance of God's challenge to Job, Job 38: and applicable to all the methods of his providence.

II. The sovereignty of the divine counsels. In all these things God acts as a free agent, does what He will, because He will, and gives not account of any of his matters, Job 23:13. 33:13. yet there is no unrighteousness with Him. To clear which,

1. He challenges any to prove God a debtor to him, v. 35. 1 Chr. 29:14. If any can prove [a claim on God, or that He is] their debtor, the apostle here proclaims, in God's name, that payment is ready, *It shall be recompensed to him again*; but never any one yet durst make a demand of this kind, or attempt to prove it. This is here suggested, to silence the clamors of the Jews. When God took away their visible church-privileges from them, He did but take his own: and may He not do what He will with his own?

2. He resolves all into the sovereignty of God, v. 36. God is all in all; especially those things which relate to our salvation, the things that belong to our peace, are *all of Him* by way of creation, *through Him* by way of providential influence, that they may be *to Him* in their final tendency and result. *Of God*, as the spring and fountain; *through Christ*, God-man, as the conveyance; *to God* as the ultimate end. If all be *of Him*, and *through Him*, there is all the reason in the world, that all should be *to Him*, and *for Him*. It is a necessary circulation; if the rivers receive their waters from the sea, they return them to the sea again, Eccl. 1:7. And so he concludes with a short doxology; *To whom be glory for ever, Amen.* God's universal agency as the first Cause, the sovereign Ruler, and the last end, ought to be the matter of our adoration.

He had been discoursing at large of the counsels of God concerning man, sifting the point with great accuracy; but, after all, he concludes with the acknowledgment of the divine sovereignty, as that into which all

PRACT. OBS. God never 'casts away those, whom He hath fore-known,' and 'predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son'; and if this seal of conformity to Christ be affixed to our souls, we may be assured of his everlasting favor, and all the felicity which springs from it. 2 Cor. 1:21, 22. Eph. 1:13, 14.—The Lord overrules the fall and ruin of some, to the salvation of others. But what extensive, permanent, and most glorious effects may be produced, in the whole creation of God, through eternal ages, by the fall of angels and men, by redemption in Christ, and by the dispensations of God towards his church and the world, who can tell? However, a hint of this, a glimpse, as it were, of the invisible world, should remind us, that the Lord may have ten thousand wise and gracious reasons, for his most severe and terrible judgments, of which we can form no conception.—We, the ministers of the

Gospel, however mean and unworthy in ourselves, should 'magnify our office,' as conducing unspeakably more to enrich and bless mankind, (provided it be faithfully executed,) than all arts, sciences, commerce, or improvements whatever, unitedly, ever have done, or can do.—Alas! how has the once flourishing church of Rome fallen, by neglecting the apostle's caution! And how many other churches, and what an immense number of individuals, have, in a measure, trodden the same path!—As pride is the genuine offspring of ignorance, so an enlarged spiritual knowledge of the mysterious truths and dispensations of God, tends to prevent our being 'wise in our own conceits.' . . . Instead of perplexing our minds about secret things, let us walk in the light the Lord has graciously afforded us.

SCOTT.

(32.) *Concluded.* 'Given over all.' Bl. 'Sunckleise: the ancient commentators, as Chrys., Phot., &c., also Glass., Carpz., Wets., &c. tr. hath convicted all of sin, proved them under sin, by his law, as 3:19, 20, 24, 9. and their merits to be none at all. So Gal. 3:22. This tr. is after the Lat. idiom, and unauthorized. Others, as Pisc., Eng. Vers., and most recent commentators, tr. "has concluded or shut up all (i. e. permitted it) to disobedience, and sin subjected them to its control," which *shutting up* one thing *under* or *to* another means. This tr. is safer: Locke's and Macknight's are contrary to the usage of the language, and utterly inadmissible.'

BLOOMF.

V. 33—36. Paul had gone as far, in unravelling, illustrating, and vindicating, the mysterious purposes and decrees of God, as was suitable or profitable; yet he well knew, that much darkness and difficulty must still rest on them; and that presumption, pride, and unbelief, would still multiply inquiries and objections. 2 Pet. 3:14—16. Thus he gave no countenance, either to those who, with absurd arrogance, attempt to reduce all possible existence, truth, and knowledge, to the measure of their own intellect, and to believe no more than they can comprehend; or to those, who know no end of speculating, and of arguing from revealed truths to unrevealed causes and consequences, as they suppose

them to be. Instead of this, he closed the subject, by breaking forth into admiration and adoration of the unfathomable depth, and infinite treasures, of the wisdom and knowledge of God. His views are immense and eternal; and his reasons, for every part of his vast designs, are taken from Himself. Pr. 16:4. Eph. 1:3—8, 13, 14. 2:4—10. 3:9—12. His judgments and decrees, and his wisdom in them, cannot be fully investigated, or comprehended, by any created being, much less by us *fallen* creatures. We should then be satisfied to understand, and receive by faith, the information which He graciously reveals; and to believe, that He acts with perfect wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness, when we cannot comprehend what He is doing; or when his dispensations *seem* to us not reconcilable to these his essential perfections. (35) *First given.* None can render anything to God which he has not first received from Him.

SCOTT.

(36.) *Through.* 'By . . . for.' St. 'From Him, as their original Creator, all things are derived; through Him, as their continual Preserver, and constant Conductor, (Acts 17:28. Heb. 1:3.) all things consist and subsist; and to Him, as their ultimate end, all things and all actions tend, so as to contribute to his praise and glory, illustrate his perfections, and finally accomplish his wise and benevolent purposes.' BLOOMF.



## CHAP. XII.

1 God's mercies must move us to please God. 3 No man must think too well of himself, 6 but attend every one on that calling wherein he is placed. 9 Love, and many other duties, are required of us. 19 Revenge is specially forbidden.

**I BESEECH** you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office;

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

a 1 Co. 6:15-20. d c. 11:20. g 1 Co. 12:4,12.  
b 1 Jn. 2:15. e to sobriety. h Ep. 1:23.  
c Ep. 5:10,17. f Ep. 4:7, &c.

these things must be ultimately resolved, and in which alone the mind can safely and sweetly rest. This is, if not the scholastic way, yet the Christian way, of disputation. **WHATEVER ARE THE PREMISES, LET GOD'S GLORY BE THE CONCLUSION; ESPECIALLY WHEN WE COME TO TALK OF THE DIVINE COUNSELS AND ACTINGS, IT IS BEST FOR US TO TURN OUR ARGUMENTS INTO AWFUL AND SERIOUS ADORATIONS. THE GLO-RIFIED SAINTS, THAT SEE FURTHEST INTO THESE MYSTERIES, NEVER DISPUTE, BUT PRAISE TO ETERNITY.**

CHAP. XII. The apostle, having at large cleared and confirmed the prime, fundamental doctrines of Christianity, comes in the next place to press the principal duties. Religion is eminently practical, and is designed

NOTES. CHAP. XII. V. 1. The body with its members, senses, and organs, is the instrument of the carnal mind, in executing its purposes, and gratifying its evil inclinations; when, therefore, the mind is made spiritual, the body should, in like manner, execute its holy purposes, and express its spiritual affections. (6:12-19.) Thus the soul becomes the consecrated priest, and the body 'the living sacrifice unto God through Jesus Christ.' Phil. 4:14-20. Heb. 13:15,16. 1 Pet. 2:4-6. Rev. 1:4-6.

(1.) 'Here is the compendium and synopsis of moral theology. It extends up to 15:13. and consists of three sections. The first inculcates the general duties of Christianity, which respect all Christians, of whatever rank or degree, station or dignity. (ch. 12.) Sect. 2 treats of political or social duties, such as are to be observed by Christians with respect to their superiors, their equals, and themselves. (ch. 13.) Sect. 3 treats of private duties, economical and ceremonial, such as are to be attended to by Christians in their social intercourse with each other, especially towards those who have not hitherto been convinced, but are as yet weak in the faith. (ch. 14: 15:13.) CARPZOV.—'Consecrate your bodies, i. e. yourselves, (so Beza and Koppe, rightly,) as at 6:13. Ja. 3:6. It is said, in accommodation to the preceding metaphor from sacrifices, "by a Hebraism," says Schoett., who gives examples on 8:27. Living.] It means (and so Phot. and Jasp.) the moral, i. e. tropical and spiritual sacrifice of the Gospel, in opposition to the Mosaic corporal and ceremonial ones. Comp. 1 Cor. 6:20. Rom. 6:3, 4, 6, 8, and 13.' BLOOMF.

V. 2. In thus wholly dedicating themselves to the service of God, Christians must not seek happiness from the world, or conform to the maxims, customs, and fashions of mankind in general. They must not comply with common usages, as to their pursuits or employments, in any respect, where such usages are contrary to the holy commands of God, the spirit of the Gospel, the interests of piety, the prosperity of their own souls, and the improvement of their talents. In all these things the reproach of singularity is honorable, the want of it suspicious: and to be fashionable is to be unchristian.—A serious regard to this, and a few other maxims of a similar nature, would soon show men, in what things they must 'not be conformed to this world;' and would convince them that, on the one hand affected singularity, in things minute or indifferent, comes far short of the spirituality of the exhortation; and on the other hand, that they excuse their vain amusements, splendid

not only to inform our judgments, but to reform our hearts and lives. From the method of the apostle's writing in this, as in some other of the Epistles, the stewards of the mysteries of God may take direction how to divide the Word of truth: not to press duty abstracted from privilege, nor privilege abstracted from duty; but let both go together, the duties drawn from the privileges, by way of inference. The particular exhortations of this ch. are reducible to the three principal heads of Christian duty; our duty to God, to ourselves, and to our brother. The grace of God teaches us, in general, to live godly, soberly, and righteously, and to deny all that which is contrary hereunto. Now this ch. will give us to understand what godliness, sobriety, and righteousness are, though somewhat intermixed.

V. 1-21. I. Concerning our duty to God: godliness is,

1. To surrender ourselves to God, and so lay a good foundation, 2 Cor. 8:5. This is here pressed as the spring of all duty and obedience, v. 1, 2. Man consists of body and soul, Gen. 2:7. Eccl. 12:7.

(1.) The body must be presented to Him, v. 1. 1 Cor. 6:13, 14. The exhortation is very pathetic. Though he might with authority command, yet for love's sake he rather beseeches, Philem. v. 8, 9. This is to insinuate the exhortation, that it might come with the more pleasing power. Many are soonest wrought upon, if accosted kindly; more easily led than driven.

[1.] The duty pressed. To present our bodies a living sacrifice; alluding to the sacrifices under the law, which were presented or set before God at the altar, ready to be offered to Him. Our bodies and spirits are designed. Sacrifice is here taken for whatsoever is by God's own appointment dedicated to Himself; see 1 Pet. 2:5. There were sacrifices of atonement, and sacrifices of acknowledgment. Christ is the only Sacrifice of atonement; but our persons and performances, tendered to God through Christ our Priest, are as sacrifices of acknowledgment to the honor of God. Presenting, denotes a voluntary act, and implies, not only the avoiding of the sins that are committed with or against the body, but the using of the body as a servant of the soul in the service of God. Bodily exercise alone profits little, yet in its place is a proof and product of the dedication of our souls to God. They are to be a living sacrifice; not killed as the sacrifices

under the law. A body sincerely devoted to God is a living sacrifice. It is called living by way of allusion; that which was dead of itself might not be eaten, much less sacrificed, Deut. 14:21. and by way of opposition; 'The sacrifice was to be slain, but you may be sacrificed, and yet live on,' an unbloody sacrifice. A living sacrifice, inspired with the spiritual life of the soul. Christ living in the soul by faith, makes the body a living sacrifice, Gal. 2:20. Holy love kindles the sacrifices, puts life into the duties; see ch. 6:13. Alive, i. e. to God, v. 11.

They must be holy. The soul is the proper subject of holiness: but a sanctified soul communicates a holiness to the body it acts and animates. That is holy which is according to the will of God; [even as revealed in his natural laws;] when the bodily actions are so, the body is holy. They are the temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 6:19. Possess the body in sanctification, 1 Thess. 4:4, 5.

[-2.] Three arguments to enforce this. 1st. Consider the mercies of God; I beseech you by the mercies of God. An affectionate obtestation, which should melt us into a compliance, an argument most sweetly cogent. There is the mercy that is in God, and the mercy that is from God; mercy in the spring, and mercy in the streams: both are included here; but especially gospel-mercies, mentioned, ch. 11. the transferring of what the Jews forfeited and lost by their unbelief unto us Gentiles, Eph. 3:4-6. the sure mercies of David, Is. 55:3. 2dly. It is acceptable to God. The great end we should all labor after, is, to be accepted of the Lord, 2 Cor. 5:9. to have Him well pleased with our persons and performances. 3dly. It is our reasonable service. There is an act of reason in it; for it is the soul that presents the body. There is all the reason in the world for it, and no good reason can possibly be produced against it. God does not impose on us anything hard or unreasonable, Is. 1:18. but that which is altogether agreeable to the principles of right reason: your service according to the Word, so it may be read. The Word of God does not leave out the body in holy worship. That is a reasonable service, which we are able and ready to give a reason for; in which we understand ourselves. Thus must the body be presented to God.

(2.) The mind must be renewed for Him. This is pressed, v. 2. 'See to it that there be a saving change wrought in you, and that

decorations, expensive feasting, eager pursuits of wealth, power, or distinction, waste of time, and other parts of their conduct, because they love the friendship of the world, 'savor earthly things,' and cannot endure self-denial, or the cross; not because they can fairly prove that the maxims and customs of the world, in these respects, are so agreeable to the spirit of the Gospel, that they may safely conform to them.—This 'transformation' of the soul into the holy image of Christ; this daily renovation of the understanding, judgment, and affections, by the power of the Holy Spirit, is the only effectual cure of 'conformity to this world;' because it produces conformity to 'the spirits of just men made perfect;' and a capacity for delighting in such society and employments, as most resemble the inhabitants, worship, and joys of heaven. Animated, urgent, and affectionate exhortations to seek this inward transformation, as essential to duty and happiness, are the appointed and proper means of leading Christians to plead the promises, and attend on the ordinances of God, in order to attain unto it more and more.—There does not appear in these vs. any distinction intended between the Jewish and Gentile converts; or any reason to conclude, as some have done, that the Gentiles were especially addressed. The customs and practices of the unbelieving Jews were as little to be conformed to by Christians, as those of the heathen were; and the case is exactly the same in respect of a vast majority, in countries called Christian. SCOTT.

(2.) 'Learn what the will of God is, even that which is good, and acceptable, and perfect.' ST. Prove.] Dokimazein: prove, try, examine, experience, approve, not speculatively only, but practically. Paul mentions it as one of the most remarkable effects of regeneration. So Bl. Ed.

V. 3-5. The preceding general exhortation was in the affectionate style of brotherly love, but this is in that of apostolical authority.—The measure of faith.] It is commonly said, that faith is here put for those spiritual gifts, which were conferred on believers, and exercised in proportion to the measure of their faith. Yet it is evident, that in some instances even miraculous powers were possessed by those, who had not saving faith. Mat. 7:21-23. 17:19-21. 21:21, 22. 1 Cor. 13:1-3.—'For faith, in one MS. we find grace.' Beza.

(3.) Sobriety.] 'Modestly, according to the measure of faith God hath imparted to him.' ST. 'Grace: i. e. an inspired and supernatural faculty from God; this, in Paul's case, would be the highest measure of inspiration. See Macknight



6 Having then gifts, differing<sup>1</sup> according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or ministry, *let us wait on our ministering*; or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that<sup>1</sup> giveth, *let him do it<sup>k</sup>* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with<sup>m</sup> cheerfulness.

9 *Let love be without<sup>n</sup> dissimulation.* Abhor<sup>o</sup> that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pe. 4:10, 11.    <sup>1</sup> Ps. 101:2, &c.    <sup>n</sup> 1 Pe. 1:22.  
<sup>k</sup> or, *impartially.*    <sup>m</sup> 2 Co. 9:7.    <sup>o</sup> Ps. 34:14.  
<sup>k</sup> or, *liberally.*

it be carried on.' Conversion and sanctification are the renewing of the mind; a change not of the substance but of the qualities [or habits] of the soul; the same with making a *new heart* and a *new spirit*; new dispositions and inclinations; new sympathies and antipathies; the understanding enlightened, the conscience softened, the thoughts rectified, the will bowed to the will of God, and the affections made spiritual and heavenly: so that the man is not what he was; old things are passed away, all things are become new; he acts from new principles, by new rules, with new designs. The mind is the acting, ruling part of us; so that the renewing of that is the renewing of the whole man; for out of it are the *issues of life*, Prov. 4:23. The progress of sanctification, dying to sin more and more, and living to righteousness more and more, is the carrying on of this renewing work, till it be perfected in glory.

This is called the *transforming* of us; it is like putting on a new shape and figure. The transfiguration of Christ is expressed by this word, Mat. 17:2. when He put on a heavenly glory, which made his face to shine like the sun; and the same word is used, 2 Cor. 3:18. where we are said to be *changed into the same image from glory to glory*. This transformation is here pressed as a duty; not that we can work such a change ourselves; we could as soon make a new world as make a new heart by any

power of our own; it is God's work, Ez. 11:19. 36:26, 27. But *be ye transformed*, i. e. 'use the means which God hath appointed and ordained for it.' It is God that turns us, and then we are turned; but we must *frame our doings to turn*, Hos. 5:4. 'Lay your souls under the changing, transforming influences of the blessed Spirit; seek unto God for grace, in the use of all the means of grace.' Though the new man be *created of God*, yet we must *put it on*, Eph. 4:24. and be pressing forward toward perfection.

In this v. we may further observe,

[1.] The great enemy to this renewing, which we must avoid, conformity to this world; all the disciples and followers of the Lord Jesus must be nonconformists to this world, to the things of the world, [to selfishness, the rule of the world,] to the men of the world; true Christianity consists much in a sober singularity. Yet we must take heed of the extreme of affected rudeness and moroseness, which some run into. In civil things, the light of nature and the custom of nations take place for our conduct; and the rule of the Gospel in those cases is a rule of direction, not a rule of contraries.

[2.] The great effect of this renewing, which we must labor after; *That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.* By the will of God, here, we are to understand his revealed will concerning our duty, what the Lord our God requires of us. It is *good, acceptable, and perfect*; three excellent properties of a law. It is *good*, Mic. 6:8. exactly consonant to the eternal reason of good and evil, good in itself, good for us; the evangelical law, so some, in distinction from the ceremonial. Ez. 20:25. It is *acceptable*, pleasing to God, and prescribed by Him. It is *perfect*, containing all things which tend to the perfection of the man of God, to furnish us thoroughly to every good work, 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. This it concerns Christians to *prove*, to know it with judgment and approbation, experimentally; those are best able to prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, who are *transformed by the renewing of their mind*. A living principle of grace is in the soul, disposes the soul to [search for,] receive, and entertain the revelations of the divine will, John 7:17. Thus to be godly, is to surrender ourselves to God.

2. When this is done, to serve Him in all

manner of gospel-obedience. Some hints of this we have here, v. 11, 12. (1.) We must make a business of it, and not be slothful in that business. Those that would approve themselves Christians indeed, must make religion their business, must choose it, and learn it, and give themselves to it; they must love it, and employ themselves in it, and abide by it, as their great, main [and only] business. (2.) We must be *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*. God must be served with the spirit, ch. 1:9. John 4:24. Whatever we do in religion, it is pleasing to God no further than it is done with our spirits, wrought upon by the Spirit of God. And there must be *fergency*, a holy zeal, and warmth, and ardency of affection, in all we do; as those that love God not only with their heart and soul, but with all our hearts, and with all our souls. *Serving the Lord*. Some copies read it, *-serving the time*, improving your opportunities, and making the best of them; complying with the present seasons of grace. (3.) *Rejoicing in hope*. God is worshipped and honored by our hope and trust in Him, especially when we rejoice in that hope, take a complacency in that confidence; which argues a great assurance of the reality, and a great esteem of the excellency, of the good hoped for. (4.) *Patient in tribulation*. Thus also God is served, not only by working for Him when He calls us to work, but by sitting still quietly when He calls us to suffer. *Patience* for God's sake, and with an eye to his will and glory, is true *piety*. Observe, Those that rejoice in a believing hope, are likely to be patient in tribulation. (5.) *Continuing instant in prayer*. Prayer is a friend to hope and patience, and we do in it serve the Lord. It signifies both fervency and perseverance in prayer. We should not be cold in the duty, nor soon weary of it, Luke 18:1. 1 Thess. 5:17. Eph. 6:18. Col. 4:2. This is our duty, which immediately respects God.

II. Concerning our duty which respects ourselves; this is sobriety.

1. A sober opinion of ourselves, v. 3. It is ushered in with a solemn preface; *I say, through the grace given unto me*: the grace of wisdom, by which he understood the necessity and excellency of this duty, the grace of apostleship, by which he had authority to press and enjoin it. It is said to every one of us, one as well as another. We must not be *self-conceited*, not *think ourselves*

V. 6—8. I am aware, that these vs. are explained by many exclusively of the different orders of church-officers and rulers; and so every man endeavors to find his own system of ecclesiastical polity in them; but, though the various duties of the ministry, in all its parts, are principally intended, there is no proof that the apostle meant them exclusively. He seems rather to have inculcated a general improvement of every man's talents, for the common benefit of the church whatever his gifts and place were. And as there were 'saints in Cesar's household' soon after, it is not improbable, that Christians might be called to the lower functions of the magistracy, 16:21—23. Acts 13:6—12. Phil. 4:21, 22. The epistle, however, was intended, by the Holy Spirit, for the edification of the church in all ages; and it may be supposed, that the duties of Christian magistrates, as well as those of church-rulers, are hinted at in the general language used by the apostle.—Some consider the word, rendered 'ministry,' (7) to be a general term for the different orders of ministers in the church, which are afterwards enumerated; but the disjunctive particle *or*, seems unfavorable to that interpretation. The original word may point out the office of the primitive deacons; but the exhortation to 'give with simplicity,' or *liberality*, appears more properly addressed to those, who distributed their own property, than to the deacons who were entrusted with the treasures of the church; and to whom, faithfulness, prudence, and impartiality, were especially necessary.—(6) *Gifts*.] Many seem to think that spiritual, or miraculous, gifts are exclusively intended by this word; but this is evidently different from the general use of the word; and the office of a minister, of whatever order, is itself a distinct thing from a man's qualifications for it. Other endowments were even at that time necessary to the due performance of the ministerial duties, even more so, than supernatural gifts; and the money, which some distributed, whether their own or the church's, was a talent of entirely another nature; yet all were the free gifts of God, and as such to be received and improved. SCOTT.

(6, &c.) 'Whether prophecy, (let it be) according to the proportion of faith; whether ministry, (let there be diligence) in ministration; whether teaching, in instruction; or exhorting, in exhortation. Let the distributor (do his duty) with simplicity; the superintendent, with diligence; he who performs offices of compassion, with cheerfulness. Let benevolence be sincere.' Sr. *Proportion, &c.* 'If we suppose the prophetic gift to be given in proportion to the exercise of faith, i. e. of [234]

dependence on God, when He signified a disposition in general to impart it, we have the clearest explication the phrase will admit.' DODD. 'So, nearly, the fathers.'

(7) *Ministry*.] 'Diakonia: Paul first lays down *propheteia* and *diakonia* each as a *genus*, and then proceeds to enumerate their *species*, viz., of *propheteia*, two, and of *diakonia*, three.' CRELL, *Phot.*, &c. 'It is clear, that the words *diakonos*, *diakonein*, and *diakonia*, though they be general terms, and used of the apostles themselves, Rom. 11:13. 1 Cor. 3:5. yet are often, in the N. T., used of some certain kind of offices undertaken for the cause of the Christian religion, (comp. 1 Cor. 12:5. 2 Cor. 9:1.) and appropriated to those Christians who did not so much employ themselves upon the doctrines of the Gospel, as the external affairs of the church, and of individuals. Among these were especially the *proestotes*, *Episcopoi*, *presbuteroi*, as well as others of somewhat inferior rank and dignity, as the deacons properly so called. See Acts 6:1—7. In this passage, however, the *proestotes* also seem to be comprehended. See on v. 8. and comp. Eph. 4:12. 1 Pet. 4:11.' KOPPE.

(8) *He who exhorteth*.] 'Ho *parakalōn*: one who, excited by the affluents of the Holy Spirit, admonishes, exhorts, and consoles the people; as Acts 15:15. 1 Cor. 14:3. And so *Kop.*, adding, that the teaching [*didaskōn*] and this were employed conjointly, the terms being used of one who, excelling in wisdom and eloquence, used to rise up in the church, and address the congregation, for the purpose of instruction and edification. His inference, however, that the "miraculous" gifts (healing and of tongues) were not enjoyed by the church at Rome, or else they would have here been mentioned, is uncertain: as are many points respecting the constitution of the primitive church.' BL. Of the primitive form of worship, *Justin Martyr* says, 'On Sunday, all the Christians in the city or country, meet together, because, that is the day of our Lord's resurrection, and then we have read unto us the writings of the prophets and the apostles; this done, the president makes an oration to the assembly, to exhort them to imitate and do the things they heard; then we all join in prayer, and after that, we celebrate the sacrament, and they that are willing and able, give alms, &c.' *Him that ruleth*.] *Ho proistamenas*: 'Preses Ecclesie, Bishop, Presbyter, Pastor; by which names he is called in 1 Tim. 5:17. 1 Thes. 5:12,' [and also 1 Pet. 5:1, 2. in the Gr.]. BL. See *Bingham*. ED.

V. 9. The apostle next exhorted the Christians at Rome, to see to it,



10 Be kindly <sup>p</sup> affectioned one to another <sup>q</sup> with brotherly love; in honor preferring one <sup>r</sup> another;

11 Not slothful in <sup>s</sup> business; <sup>t</sup> fervent in spirit; serving <sup>u</sup> the Lord;

12 Rejoicing <sup>v</sup> in hope; patient <sup>w</sup> in tribulation; continuing <sup>x</sup> instant in prayer;

13 <sup>y</sup> Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to <sup>z</sup> hospitality.

14 Bless <sup>a</sup> them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

p 1 Pe. 2:17. t Col. 4:12. y Ps. 41:1. He.  
q or, in the love u He. 12:23. 13:16.  
of the brethren. v c. 5:2,3. z He. 13:2. 1 Pa.  
r 1 Pe. 5:5. w Ja. 1:4. 4:9.  
s Ac. 20:34,35. x Lu. 13:1. a Mat. 5:44.

to be something, Gal. 6:3. But, on the other hand, we should think soberly, have a humble and modest opinion of ourselves and our own abilities, our gifts and graces, according to what we have received from God, and not otherwise; not be confident and hot in matters of doubtful disputation; not stretch ourselves beyond our line; not judge and censure those that differ from us; not desire to make a fair show in the flesh. These and the like are the fruits of a sober opinion of ourselves. It may be read, *That no man be wise above what he ought to be wise, but be wise unto sobriety.* There is a knowledge that puffs up, which reaches after forbidden fruit. We must take heed of that, and labor after that knowledge which tends to sobriety, to the rectifying of the heart, and the reforming of the life. Some understand it, of the *sobriety* which keeps us in our own place and station, from intruding into the gifts and offices of others. See an instance of this, 2 Cor. 10:13—15. To this head refers also that exhortation, v. 16. *Be not wise in your own conceits.* It is good to be wise, but bad to think ourselves so; it was an excellent thing for Moses to have his face shine, and not know it. Now the reasons are:

(1.) Because whatever we have that is good, *God hath dealt it to us*; every good and perfect gift *comes from above*, James 1:17.

(2.) Because God deals out his gifts in a certain measure; according to *the measure of faith*. Observe, the measure of spiritual gifts he calls *the measure of faith*; for that is the radical grace: faith and other spiritual gifts are dealt by *measure*, according as Infinite Wisdom sees meet for us. Christ had the Spirit given Him *without measure*, John 3:34. But the saints have it by *measure*; see Eph. 4:7.

(3.) Because God has dealt out gifts to others, as well as to us: *to every man*. God is a common Father, and Christ a common Root, to all the saints, who all derive virtue from Him; therefore it ill becomes us to lift up ourselves, and to despise others, as if we only were the people in favor with heaven, and wisdom should die with us. This reasoning he illustrates by a comparison taken from the members of the natural body, as 1 Cor. 12:12. Eph. 4:16. v. 4, 5. Here observe, [1.] All the saints make up *one body in Christ*, who is the Head of the body, and the common Centre of their unity. [2.] Particular believers are *members* of this body, constituent parts, which

proper enough to be done by the same person, at the same time; and when he does the one, let him mind that; when he does the other, let him do that too as well as he can. *Pastors and teachers* are the same office, Eph. 4:11. but the particular work somewhat different. Now he that has a faculty of teaching, and has undertaken that province, let him stick to it, be frequent and constant, and diligent in it; let him abide in that which is his proper work, and be in it as his element. See 1 Tim. 4:15, 16. Let him that *exhorteth*, wait on *exhortation*. Let him give himself to that. This is the work of the pastor, as the former of the teacher; to apply gospel-truths and rules more closely to the case and condition of the people, and to press on them that which is more practical. To wait on our work, is to bestow the best of our time and thoughts on it, to lay hold on all opportunities for it; and to study, not only to do it, but to do it well.

2. A sober use of the gifts God hath given us. As we must not on the one hand be proud of our talents, so on the other hand we must not bury them. He specifies the ecclesiastical offices appointed in particular churches; in the discharge of which, each must study to do his own duty, for the preserving of order, and the promoting of edification in the church; each knowing his place, and fulfilling it. There were in the primitive church extraordinary gifts of tongues, of discerning, of healing; but he speaks here of those that are ordinary. Comp. 1 Cor. 12:4. 1 Tim. 4:14. 1 Pet. 4:10. Seven particular gifts he specifies, v. 6—8. which seem to be meant of so many distinct offices, used by the prudential constitution of many of the primitive churches, especially the larger. Two general ones are here expressed by *prophesying* and *ministering*; the former the work of the *bishops*, the latter the work of the *deacons*; the only two standing officers, Phil. 1:1. The five latter will therefore be reduced to the first two.

(1.) *Prophesy*; not meant of the extraordinary gifts of foretelling things to come, but the ordinary office of preaching the Word: so *prophesying* is taken, 1 Cor. 14:1—3. &c. 1 Cor. 11:4. 1 Thess. 5:20. Now those that preach the Word, must do it *according to the proportion of faith*, i. e., [1.] As to the *manner*: our prophesying must be according to the proportion of the *grace of faith*. As people cannot hear well, so ministers cannot preach well, without faith. And we must remember the *proportion* of faith: that though all men *have not faith*, yet many have beside ourselves: and therefore we must allow others to have a share of knowledge and ability to instruct, as well as we, even those that in less things differ from us. [2.] As to the *matter*: our prophesying must be according to the proportion of the *doctrine of faith*, as it is revealed in the Bible. Truths that are more dark, must be examined by those that are more clear; and then entertained, when found to agree and comport with the analogy of faith; for it is certain, one truth can never contradict another. It is not so necessary that the prophesying be according to the proportion of art, the rules of logic and rhetoric; but it is necessary that it be according to the proportion of faith.

Two particular works he that prophesieth hath to mind,—*teaching* and *exhorting*;

proper enough to be done by the same person, at the same time; and when he does the one, let him mind that; when he does the other, let him do that too as well as he can. *Pastors and teachers* are the same office, Eph. 4:11. but the particular work somewhat different. Now he that has a faculty of teaching, and has undertaken that province, let him stick to it, be frequent and constant, and diligent in it; let him abide in that which is his proper work, and be in it as his element. See 1 Tim. 4:15, 16. Let him that *exhorteth*, wait on *exhortation*. Let him give himself to that. This is the work of the pastor, as the former of the teacher; to apply gospel-truths and rules more closely to the case and condition of the people, and to press on them that which is more practical. To wait on our work, is to bestow the best of our time and thoughts on it, to lay hold on all opportunities for it; and to study, not only to do it, but to do it well.

(2.) *Ministry*. If a man hath—the *office of a deacon*, or assistant to the pastor and teacher, let him use that office well; a churchwarden, (suppose,) an elder, or an overseer of the poor; and perhaps more were in these offices, and more solemnity was in them, and a greater stress of care and business lay on them, in the primitive churches, than we are now well aware of. It includes all those offices which concern the [order] of the church, the *outward business of the house of God*. See Neh. 11:16. *Serving tables*, Acts 6:2. Now he on whom this care of ministering is devolved, let him attend to it with faithfulness and diligence; particularly,

[1.] *He that giveth*, let him do it with *simplicity*,—*liberally* and faithfully; not converting what is received to his own use, or distributing it with any sinister design, or with respect of persons. It may be meant of church-officers; but some understand it in general of all almsgiving; He that hath wherewithal, let him give, and give plentifully and liberally; so the word is tr., 2 Cor. 8:2. 9:13. God loves a cheerful, bountiful giver.

[2.] *He that ruleth, with diligence*. It should seem, he means the assistants to the pastors, in exercising church-discipline; or those ministers that in the congregation did chiefly undertake and apply themselves to this ruling work; for we find those ruling, that labored in the Word and doctrine, 1 Tim. 5:17. Now such must do it *with diligence*. It denotes both care and industry to discover what is amiss, to reduce those that go astray, to reprove and admonish those that are fallen, to keep the church pure.

[3.] *He that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness*. Some think it is meant in general of all that in anything show mercy; but it seems to be meant of some particular church-officers, whose work it was to take care of the sick, and strangers; and they were generally widows; deaconesses, 1 Tim. 5:9, 10. though others, it is likely, might be employed [as it is every one's duty]. Now this must be done with *cheerfulness*. A pleasing countenance, in acts of mercy, is a great relief and comfort to the miserable; when they see it is not done grudgingly and unwillingly, but with pleasant looks and gentle words, and all possible indications of readiness and alacrity.

that their professed love of each other was sincere, and free from dissimulation, and from that unmeaning and deceitful compliment, with which the world abounded, notwithstanding its selfishness. SCOTT.

V. 10. 'As to brotherly love, (be) kindly affectionate one toward another; as to honor, give to each other the preference; as to diligence, be not slothful, be fervent, &c. . . persevere in prayer. Supply the wants of the saints.' ST. Many of the poor were fed from the heathen sacrifices; to those of them who joined the Christians, this support was now cut off. ED. 'Practise hospitality.' ST. 'It was the more proper for Paul to enforce this duty [considered almost a sacred one in the E.] so frequently, as the want of public inns rendered it difficult for strangers to procure accommodations, and as many Christians might be banished

their native country for religion, and perhaps were laid under a kind of ban of excommunication, [for idolatry mingled with every custom of life.] both among Jews and heathens, which would make it a high crime for any of their former brethren to receive them into their houses.' DODDR.

V. 11. This would ennoble every business, and render it acceptable to God; and it would redound to the credit of the Gospel, if every Christian acquitted himself better in the business which he undertook, than other men did. SCOTT.

V. 13. *Wants*. 'Chreia: as to the reading *mnetais* [memorials], it is entitled to no attention, being supported by only 3 MSS. and no versions and early commentators.' BLOOMF.



15 Rejoice <sup>b</sup> with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 Be <sup>c</sup> of the same mind one toward another. Mind <sup>d</sup> not high things, but <sup>e</sup> condescend to men of low estate. <sup>f</sup> Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense <sup>g</sup> to no man evil for evil. Provide <sup>h</sup> things honest in the sight of all men.

b 1 Co. 12:26. e or, be content. f Is. 5:21.  
c 1 Pe. 3:8. ed with mean g Mat. 5:39. 1 Pe. 3:9.  
d Je. 45:5. things. h 2 Co. 8:21.

III. Concerning that part of our duty which respects our brethren, of which we have many instances, in brief exhortations.

Now all our duty towards one another, is summed up in one word, and that a sweet word, *love*; sincere love, John 3:18. 2 Cor. 8:3. more particularly, there is a love owing,

1. To our friends. He that hath friends, must show himself friendly. There is a mutual love that Christians owe, and must pay.

(1.) An affectionate love, v. 10. *Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love*; it signifies not only love, but a readiness and inclination to love; the most genuine [disinterested] and free affection, kindness flowing out as from a spring. It properly denotes the love of parents to their children; which as it is the most tender, so it is the most natural, of any other; unforced, unconstrained; such must our love be to one another; and such it will be, where there is a new nature, and the law of love is written in the heart.

(2.) A respectful love; *In honor preferring one another*. This is explained, Phil. 2:3. *Let each esteem other better than themselves*. And there is this good reason for it, because, if we know our own hearts, we know more evil of ourselves than we do of any one else in the world. We should be forward to take notice of the gifts and graces, and performances of our brethren, and value them accordingly; be more forward to praise another, and more pleased to hear another praised, than ourselves; *going before, or leading one another in honor*; so some: not in taking honor, but in giving honor. 'So the sense is the same with Tit. 3:14. *Let them learn,—to go before in good works*. For though we must prefer others (as our tr. reads it), and put on others, as more capable and deserving than ourselves, yet we must not make that an excuse for our lying by, and doing nothing; nor, under a pretence of honoring others, and their serviceableness and performances, indulge ourselves in ease and slothfulness. Therefore he immediately adds, v. 11. *Not slothful in business*.

(3.) A liberal love, v. 13. *Distributing to the necessities of saints*. It is no strange thing for saints in this world, to want necessities for the support of their natural life. In those primitive times, prevailing persecutions must needs reduce many of the suffering saints to great extremities; and still, the poor, even the poor saints, we have always with us. It is the duty, therefore, of those who have

wherewithal, to distribute, or (as it might better be read) to *communicate* to those necessities. It is not enough to draw out the *soul*, but we must draw out the *purse*, to the hungry. See James 2:15, 16. 1 John 3:17. *Communicating intimates*, that our poor brethren have a kind of interest in what God hath given us; and that our relieving of them should come from a sense and fellow-feeling of their wants, as though we suffered with them. The charitable benevolence of the Philippians to Paul, is called their communicating *with his affliction*, Phil. 4:14. We must be ready, as we have ability and opportunity, to relieve any in want; but we are in a special manner bound to communicate to *the saints*, Gal. 6:10. *Communicating,—to the memories of the saints*; so some of the ancients read it; a debt is owing to the memory of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises; to value it, to vindicate it, to embalm it. Let the memory of the just be blessed, so some read, Prov. 10:7.

He mentions another branch of this bountiful love; *given to hospitality*. Nor is it yet an antiquated, superseded duty; as there is occasion, we must welcome strangers, for we know not the heart of a stranger. *I was a stranger, and ye took me in*, is mentioned as one instance of the mercifulness of those that shall obtain mercy: *following or pursuing hospitality*. It intimates, not only that we must take, but seek opportunity, thus to show mercy. As Abraham, who sat at the tent-door, Gen. 18:1. and Lot, who sat in the gate of Sodom, Gen. 19:1. expecting travellers, whom they might meet and prevent with a kind invitation, and so they entertained angels unawares, Heb. 13:2.

(4.) A sympathizing love, v. 15. Where there is a mutual love between the members of the mystical body, there will be such a fellow-feeling. See 1 Cor. 12:26. True love will interest us in the sorrows and joys of one another, and teach us to make them our own. Not that we must participate in the sinful mirths or inourings of any, but only in just and reasonable joys and sorrows: not envying those that prosper, but rejoicing with them; truly glad that others have the success and comfort we have not; not despising those that are in trouble, but concerned for them, and ready to help them, as being ourselves in the body. This is to do as God does; who not only has *pleasure in the prosperity of his servants*, Ps. 35:27. but is likewise *afflicted in all their afflictions*, Is. 63:9.

(5.) A united love; *Be of the same mind one toward another*, v. 16. labor, as much as you can, to agree in apprehension; and wherein you come short of that, yet agree in affection; endeavor to be all one, not affecting to clash, and contradict, and thwart one another; but keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, Phil. 2:2. 3:15, 16. 1 Cor. 1:10. *wishing the same good to others that you do to yourselves*; so some understand it. This is to love our brethren as ourselves, desiring their welfare as our own.

(6.) A condescending love; *Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate*, v. 16. True love cannot be without lowliness, Eph. 4:1, 2. Phil. 2:3. When our Lord Jesus washed his disciples' feet, to

teach us brotherly love, John 13:5. 14:34. it was designed especially to intimate to us, that to love one another aright, is to be willing to stoop to the meanest offices of kindness for the good of one another. Love is a condescending grace. Observe how it is pressed here. [1.] *Mind not high things*. [This is said to those who lived in magnificent Rome,] the imperial city which reigned over the kings of the earth. We must not be ambitious of honor and preferment, nor look upon worldly pomp and dignity with any inordinate value or desire, but rather with a holy contempt. Christians would be ready to look scornfully on other Christians, as some citizens do on the country; therefore the apostle so often cautions them against high-mindedness; comp. ch. 11:20. [2.] *Condescend to men of low estate*. It may be meant of mean things; *Be contented with mean things*. Be reconciled to the place God in his providence hath put you in, whatever it be. We should make a low condition, and mean circumstances, more the centre of our desires, than a high condition. It may be meant of mean persons: so we read it; I think both are to be included. We must associate ourselves with, and accommodate ourselves to, those that are poor and mean in the world, if they be such as fear God. The contrary to this *condescension* is reproved, Jam. 2:1—4. Some think the original word a metaphor taken from travellers, when those that are stronger, and swifter of foot, stay for and take along those that are weak and slow; thus must Christians be tender toward their fellow-travellers.

As a mean to promote this, he adds, *Be not wise in your own conceits*; to the same purport with v. 3. We shall never find in our hearts to *condescend* to others, while we find there so great a conceit of ourselves: therefore, that must needs be mortified. *Be not wise by yourselves*, be not confident of the sufficiency of your own wisdom, so as to despise others, or think you have no need of them, Prov. 3:7. nor be shy of communicating what you have to others. We are members one of another, depend on one another, are obliged to one another; and therefore, *Be not wise by yourselves*; remembering it is the *merchandise* of wisdom that we profess; now merchandise consists in commerce, receiving and returning.

(7.) A love that engages us, as much as *lies in us, to live peaceably with all men*, v. 18. we must be harmless and inoffensive, not giving others occasion to quarrel with us; and we must be gall-less and unrevengeful, not taking occasion to quarrel with them. Observe how the exhortation is limited. It is not expressed so as to oblige us to impossibilities; *if it be possible, as much as lies in you*. Thus Heb. 12:14. *Follow peace*. Eph. 1:3. *Endeavoring to keep*. Study the things that make for peace. *If it be possible*. It is not possible to preserve the peace, when we cannot do it without offending God and wounding conscience: *That is possible, which is possible without incurring blame*. The wisdom that is from above, is *first pure*, and then *peaceable*, Jam. 3:17. Peace without purity, is the peace of the devil's palace. *As much as lieth in you*. There must be two words to the bargain of peace. We can but speak for ourselves, and our care must be,

V. 15. 'It requires a more generous and philosophic spirit (says Chrys. in Bloomf.) to rejoice with them that rejoice, than to weep with them that weep; since in the latter case, nature inclines us to sympathy; but, in the former, the baleful passion of envy is apt to rise. So that it is difficult not to envy, and much more so to rejoice with them. And yet there is no stronger cement to love than this sympathetic affection, when genuine.' Comp. on Acts 10:23. Ed.

V. 16, &c. 'Think mutually the same thing; do not regard high things, but suffer yourselves to be influenced by humble ones. . . . Render to no man evil for evil; seek after that which is good in the sight of all.' St. 'The sentiment was not unknown to the Jewish writers: nor to the classics. [The Hindoos sometimes extend hospitality to an enemy, remarking, "the tree does not withdraw its shade even from the wood-cutter."] Certain it is, that to the publication of the N. T. alone, can we usually ascribe that higher tone and more refined purity of ethics, so ob-

servable in the moral philosophy of the second and succeeding centuries. But they were unsupported by those *all-powerful motives*, those divine sanctions, in vain sought for out of Christian theology.' BLOOMF.

V. 17—21. The preceding exhortations had principally respected the behavior of Christians one toward another; but these relate to their conduct among their unconverted neighbors.—When they were insulted, defrauded, or assaulted, even if no redress could be obtained from the magistrate, they must not on any account presume to avenge themselves; but rather give way to the wrath of their enemies, and without opposition endure the effects of it.—(20) *Heap coals, &c.* 'I believe the sense is rather this, that, if he persevere in his enmity, . . . after these kind offices, thou by thy patience shalt engage the wrath of God to fall upon him, and to maintain thy cause against him. . . . So Prov. 20:22. "Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and He shall save thee."—This is the import of the phrase in the O. T., where



18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably<sup>i</sup> with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge<sup>j</sup> not yourselves; but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written,<sup>k</sup> Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if<sup>l</sup> thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be<sup>m</sup> not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

<sup>i</sup> Ps. 34:14. <sup>j</sup> Le. 19:18. <sup>l</sup> Pr. 25:21,22. <sup>m</sup> Pr. 16:32. <sup>k</sup> De. 32:35. <sup>l</sup> Mat. 5:44.

that nothing be wanting on our parts to preserve the peace, Ps. 120:7.

2. To our enemies. Since men became enemies to God, they have been found very apt to be enemies one to another. And of all men, those that embrace religion have reason to expect to meet with enemies, in a world whose smiles seldom concur with Christ's. Now Christianity teaches us how to behave towards our enemies; and in this instruction it quite differs from all other rules and methods, which generally aim at victory and dominion; but this at inward peace and satisfaction. Whoever are our enemies, our rule is, to do them no hurt, but all the good we can.

(1.) To do them no hurt, v. 17. *Recompense to no man evil for evil.* For that is brutish, and befitting only those animals, which are not conscious either of any being above them, or of any state before them: we have not so learned God, who does so much for his enemies, Mat. 5:45. much less have we so learned Christ, who died for us when we were enemies, ch. 5:8, 10.

To the same purport, v. 19. *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves.* And why must this be ushered in with such an affectionate compellation, rather than any other of the exhortations of this ch.? Surely, because this is intended for the composing of angry spirits, that are hot in the resentment of a provocation. He addresses himself to such, in this endearing language, to mollify and qualify them. Call him *dearly beloved*. Such a soft word, fitly spoken, may be effectual to turn away wrath. *Avenge not yourselves*; when anybody has done you any ill turn, do

not desire or endeavor to bring the like mischief or inconvenience on him.' It is not forbidden to the magistrate to execute just and wholesome laws; but it forbids private revenge. Nay, if persons wronged, in seeking the defence of the law, and magistrates in granting it, act from any particular personal pique or quarrel, and not from a concern that public peace and order be maintained, and right done; even such proceedings, though seemingly regular, will fall under this prohibited self-revenging. See how strict the law of Christ is in this matter, Mat. 5:38-40. This is a hard lesson to corrupt nature; therefore he subjoins,

[1.] A remedy against it; *Rather give place unto wrath.* Not to our own wrath; to give place to that, is to give place to the devil, Eph. 4:26, 27. but, 1st. The wrath of our enemy; do not answer wrath with wrath, but with love rather, Eccl. 10:4. So it explains that of our Savior, Mat. 5:39. Instead of meditating how to revenge one wrong, prepare to receive another. When others are angry, let us be calm; this is a remedy against revenge, and seems to be the genuine sense. But, 2dly. Many apply it to the wrath of God; 'Give place to that, make room for Him to take the throne of judgment, and let Him alone to deal with thine adversary.'

[2.] A reason against it; *For it is written, Vengeance is mine.* We find it written, Deut. 32:35. God is the sovereign King, the righteous Judge, and to Him it belongs to administer justice. Some of this power He hath trusted in the hands of the civil magistrates, Gen. 9:6. ch. 13:4. their legal punishments therefore are to be looked upon as a branch of God's revengings. This is a good reason why we should not avenge ourselves; for if vengeance be God's, then, 1st. We may not do it. We step into the throne of God, if we do, and take his work out of his hand. 2dly. We need not do it, for God will, if we meekly leave the matter with Him; He will avenge us, as far as there is reason and justice for it; and further we cannot desire it. See Ps. 35:14, 15.

(2.) We must not only not hurt our enemies, but our religion goes higher, and teaches us to do them all the good we can. It is a command peculiar to Christianity, and highly commends it; *Love your enemies*, Mat. 5:44. We are here taught to show that love to them, both in word and deed.

[1.] In word, v. 14. *Bless them who per-*

secute you; for it has been the common lot of God's people to be persecuted, either with a powerful hand, or spiteful tongue. If there be anything in them that is commendable and praiseworthy, notice it, and mention it to their honor. Speak respectfully to them, according as their place is; not rendering railing for railing, and bitterness for bitterness. Wish well to them, and desire their good; so far from seeking any revenge, pray for them. If it be not in the power of our hand to do anything else for them, yet we can testify our goodwill by praying for them; for which our Master hath given us not only a rule, but an example, Lu. 23:34. *Bless, and curse not.* It denotes a thorough goodwill in all the instances and expressions of it; not, 'Bless them when you are at prayer, and curse them at other times;' but, 'Bless them always, and curse not at all.'

[2.] In deed, v. 20. *If thine enemy hunger, as thou hast ability and opportunity, be ready and forward to show him any kindness, and never the less so for his having been thine enemy, but rather the more, that thou mayest thereby testify the sincerity of thy forgiving of him.* It was said of Abp. Cranmer, that the way for a man to make him his friend, was to do him an ill turn. It is quoted from Prov. 25:21, 22. So that, [as] high a precept as it seems to be, the O.T. was not a stranger to it. Feed him abundantly, (the Gr. is very significant,) nay, carefully and indulgently; as we do children and sick people, with much tenderness. Contrive to do it so as to express thy love. So confirm your love to him. Because, in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head; i. e. Thou shalt either melt him into repentance and friendship, and mollify his spirit toward thee; or, it will aggravate his condemnation, and make his malice against thee the more inexcusable. Thou wilt hereby hasten on him the tokens of God's wrath and vengeance. Not that this must be our intention in showing him kindness, but, for our encouragement, such will be the effect.\*

To this purpose is the exhortation in the

\* The best comtrs., and *Bl.*, make 'coals of fire' a symbol of *divine vengeance*, but perhaps it means, rather, that, thus doing, you will so excite his better feelings that he will be *excessively uncomfortable* in continuing to indulge his bad feelings, and thus both you and he will be benefited by his leaving them off. See a ch. on '*Benevolence to the Injurious*,' in *Wayland's* *Elys. Mor. Science*, perhaps the only 'system of ethics,' whose author has dared to *carry out* the principles of Christ. *Ed.*

PRACT. OBS. Surely they strangely misunderstand the doctrines which the apostle teaches, who suppose them inconsistent with exhortations, and instruction in all the several duties of Christianity; or as inimical to the practice of them! The same inspired writer, who most fully establishes, and most earnestly argues for, the doctrines of grace, is also most exact and particular in exhorting Christians to their various duties. Those who seem afraid that his doctrine may tend to licentiousness, will be equally averse to the *impracticable* strictness of his precepts; and many, who profess to be zealous friends to the former, are apt to find fault with the latter as *legal*, when echoed by the faithful preachers of the Gospel. But the mercies of God, apprehended by faith, and experienced in the heart, and exciting by divine grace reciprocal love and gratitude, form the grand motive to all willing obedience. *Luke 7:40-50. 2 Cor. 5:13-15. 1 John 4:19.*—Experience will convince us, and this alone can do it effectually, how good and pleasant 'the acceptable and perfect will of the Lord is;' so that the more we refuse conformity to a vain and wicked world, that we may walk with God in his

only it occurs. *Ps. 140:9, 10. . . Is. 47:14. . . Ez. 10:2. 2 Esdras 16:52.* *Whitby.*—Those commentators, who argue that this cannot be the meaning, for that would be 'applying to revenge, and building upon it,' while it is expressly forbidden, seem not to have duly adverted to some other parts even of the N. T. *Luke 18:7, 8. 2 Thcs. 1:5-9. Rev. 6:9, 10. 16:5-7. 18:20.* To expect that God will avenge Himself on those who injure us out of hatred to Him, and are not won over by any kindness shown to them, is very different from 'avenging ourselves;' and it is evident, from the texts referred to, that in some cases, to *desire* that God would deliver his servants, by taking vengeance on their persecutors, or to rejoice when this is done, is not an unholy passion. At the same time, it is asserting *far too much* to say, that in all cases (or in any case, without the special grace of God), our kindness will melt down our obdurate enemies. On the other hand, Dr. Whitby too readily takes it for granted, that in the passage in Proverbs, which the apostle quotes, 'coals of fire' mean the vengeance of God; and one text, at least, he has overlooked, in which that expression is used of the intense fervor and great strength of love, *Cant. 8:6, 7.* while he appears to have misunderstood another; *Prov. 20:22.* Upon the whole, it appears to me, that both interpretations may stand. The line of our duty is clearly

holy ways; the more indifferent we shall grow to the former, and the greater delight we shall take in the latter. It is our duty, and should be our constant endeavor, from 'undissembled love,' to exceed in *evident* benevolence, kindness, and courteousness, all those appearances, which polite selfishness assumes; and to be *really* as ready to oblige and be serviceable, as polite, worldly people *profess to be.*—While religion cuts the sinews of that selfish activity, which keeps the world in motion, it supplies its place by still more efficacious principles. *Gal. 2:17-21.* Love to God and man, with zeal for the honor of the Gospel, will influence the intelligent Christian to be diligent in his worldly business, and in acquiring superior skill, that in it he may 'serve the Lord' with 'fervency of spirit.' The joyful hope, also, of heavenly felicity will better support him, in his labors and trials, and endure his soul with more patient constancy, than the expectation of worldly riches or distinctions can do their deluded votaries: while, by 'instant continuance in prayer,' he will find his hope confirmed, and his alacrity in duty revived from time to time. *SCOTT.*

marked out; and if our enemies are not melted down by persevering kindness, they will be consumed by the fiery wrath of 'that God to whom vengeance belongeth.' This does not, however, at all deduct from the loving and spiritual import of the exhortation; which being found in the O. T., and not exceeded even in the New, is a full refutation of the opinion held by very many, that a more spiritual rule of duty is established under the Gospel, than had before existed. *1 S. 24:8-15. 25:39-42. 26:8-12.* *SCOTT.*

(17.) *Render not evil, &c.* 'This, of course, only respects *individuals*, not *communities*. There, evil may be recompensed with evil; as is clear from Rom. 13:4.' *Bl.* True, if nations, in going to war, could stop at the precise point where the demands of *justice cease*, and *revenge* begins. But, besides that in national quarrels, the retribution falls heaviest on the most innocent, a nation that takes justice into its own hands, like an individual, goes a little further to gratify excited feeling or revenge, and this surplus of punishment must be retaliated, without end, till, as in our Indian tribes, it is checked by the extermination of one party, by duel, murder, or war. A mutual umprage is in both cases best. See *Wayland*, and '*Advocate of Peace.*' *En.*

(19.) 'Give place to (divine) indignation . . . Retribution is mine, I



## CHAP. XIII.

<sup>1</sup> Subjection, and many other duties, we owe to the magistrates. <sup>8</sup> Love is the fulfilling of the law. <sup>11</sup> Gluttony and drunkenness, and the works of darkness, are out of season in the time of the Gospel.

LET every soul be subject <sup>a</sup> unto the higher powers. For there <sup>b</sup> is no power but of God: the powers that be are <sup>c</sup> ordained of God.

2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

a 1 Pe. 2:13.

b Da. 2:21.

c or, ordered.

last v. which suggests a paradox not easily understood by the world; that in all matters of strife and contention, those that revenge are the *conquered*; and those that forgive are the *conquerors*.

1. *Be not overcome of evil.* Let not the evil of any provocation given you, have such a power over you, or make such an impression on you, as to dispossess you of yourselves; to disturb your peace, to destroy your love, to ruffle and discompose your spirits, to transport you to any indecencies, or to bring you to study or endeavor any revenge. He that cannot quietly bear an injury, is perfectly conquered by it.

2. *But overcome evil with good;* with the good of patience and forbearance, nay, kindness and beneficence to those that wrong you; learn to defeat their ill designs against you, and either to change them, or however, to preserve your own peace. He that hath this rule over his spirit, is better than the mighty.

To conclude, there remain two exhortations yet untouched, which are general, and which recommend all the rest as good in themselves, and of good report. We must not only *not do evil, but abhor it*; not only *do that which is good, but cleave to it*. It denotes a deliberate choice of, a sincere affection for, and a constant perseverance in, that which is good. It is subjoined to the precept of brotherly love, as directive of it; we must love our brethren, but not love them so much as for their sakes to commit any sin, or omit any duty; not think the better of

will make it, &c. Sr. *Revenge*, being the gratification of excited feeling, over and above just *punishment*, (a gratification we have no right to demand of another,) has no place in God's justice, and should have none in man's. See on v. 17, and *Wayland's* *Ets. Mor. Sci.* *Revenge*, like war, causes more injustice than it remedies. Ed.

NOTES. CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. The apostle used the most decisive language on this subject [subjection to rulers]; 'every soul,' or person, whether a Jewish or a Gentile convert, a private Christian or a minister, or however distinguished by miraculous gifts, or by his station in the church, or in any other way, was absolutely required to be subject to the laws and edicts of those who held authority in the state; i. e. in all things lawful.—Nero, who was then emperor, was a monster of cruelty, caprice, and wickedness, almost unparalleled in the annals of mankind; yet no exception was made on that account. Christians were required to look above such concerns; and to consider God as the Source of all authority, and civil government as his appointment for the benefit of mankind: the several forms of government, prevailing in different places, were to be regarded as the effect of his superintending providence; and the persons raised to authority as his deputies. *Til.* 3:1, 2. *1 Pet.* 2:13—17.—It is evident, that the apostle did not mean to determine the divine right of *absolute monarchy*, or exclusively of any form of government; but to inculcate subjection to the ruling powers of every place and time, in which believers lived.—The benefits of civil government are very many and great; and it is the appointment of God for maintaining order among the apostate and selfish race of men; so that any man, who should set himself to oppose the established government of that nation in which he lived, [especially in a republic,] would be considered as resisting the providence and rebelling against the authority of God, who gave the rulers their authority, and will Himself call them to account for the use which they make of it.—'All other governments derived their power from God, as well as that of the Jews; though they had not the whole frame of their government immediately from Him, as the Jews had. . . . Whether we take *powers* here, in the abstract, for political authority, or in the concrete, for the persons actually exercising political power and jurisdiction, the sense will be the same. . . . How men come by a rightful title to this power, or who has this title, the apostle is wholly silent, and says nothing of it. To have meddled with that, would have been to decide of civil rights, contrary to the design and business of the Gospel, and the example of our Savior, who refused meddling in such cases, with this decisive question, "Who made Me a judge or a divider over you?"' *Locke*.—The words, rendered 'the powers that be,' or 'the existing authorities,' seem expressly intended to exclude all such inquiries. Perhaps nothing involves greater difficulties, in very many instances, than to ascertain, to whom, either individually, or

any sin, for the sake of the person that commits it, but forsake 'all the friends in the world, to cleave to God and duty.' *Provide things honest in the sight of all men*; do not only do, but study, and forecast, and take care to do, that which is amiable and creditable, and recommends religion to all with whom you converse.' See *Phil.* 4:8. These acts of charity and beneficence are in a special manner of good report among men; and therefore are to be industriously followed by all that consult the glory of God, and the credit of their profession.

CHAP. XIII. There are three good lessons taught us in this ch. where the apostle enlarges more on his precepts than he had done in the foregoing ch., finding them more needful to be fully pressed. I. A lesson of subjection to lawful authority, v. 1—6. II. A lesson of justice and love to our brethren, v. 7—10. III. A lesson of sobriety and godliness in ourselves, v. 11—14.

V. 1—6. We are here taught how to conduct ourselves toward magistrates, and those that are in authority over us. He had taught us, in the foregoing ch. not to avenge ourselves, or to recompense evil for evil: lest that should seem to cancel civil government among Christians, he takes occasion to assert the necessity of it, and of the due inflicting of punishment on evil doers, however it looks like recompensing evil for evil. Observe,

I. The duty enjoined; *let every soul be subject.* Every person, one as well as another, not excluding, as the church of Rome does, the clergy. Not that our consciences are to be subjected to the will of any man. It is God's prerogative to make laws immediately to bind conscience, and we must render to God the things that are God's. But it intimates, that our subjection must be free and voluntary, sincere and hearty. *Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought, Eccl.* 10:20. To *compass and imagine*, is treason begun.

The subjection, here required, includes inward honor, *1 Pet.* 2:17. and outward reverence and respect, both in speaking to them and of them; obedience to their commands in things lawful and honest, and in

other things a patient subjection to the penalty without resistance; a conformity in everything to the place and duty of subjects [or citizens], bringing our minds to the relation and condition, and the inferiority and subordination of it.

Now there was good reason for the pressing of this duty of subjection to civil magistrates: 1. Because of the reproach the Christian religion lay under in the world, as an enemy to public peace, order, and government; Jerusalem was represented as *hurtful to kings and provinces, Ezra* 4:15, 16. and Jesus was so reproached, though He told them his kingdom was not of this world: no marvel, then, if his followers have been loaded in all ages with the like calumnies; called *factious, seditious, and turbulent*, and looked upon as the troublers of the land; their enemies having found such representations needful to justify their barbarous rage against them. The apostle, therefore, to obviate that reproach, and clear Christianity from it, shows that obedience to civil magistrates is one of the laws of Christ, whose religion helps to make people good subjects; and it was very unjust to charge on Christianity that faction and rebellion, which its principles and rules are so directly contrary to. 2. Because of the temptations the Christians lay under to be otherwise affected to civil magistrates; some being originally Jews, and so leavened with a principle, that it was unmeet for any of the seed of Abraham to be subject to one of another nation; their king must be of their brethren, *Deut.* 17:15. Besides, Paul had taught them, that they were *not under the law*, they were made free by Christ. Lest that liberty should be turned into licentiousness, and misconstrued to countenance faction and rebellion, the apostle enjoins obedience to civil government; which was the more necessary to be pressed now, because the magistrates were heathen and unbelievers; which yet does not destroy their civil power and authority. Besides, the civil powers were persecuting powers; the body of the law was against them.

II. The reasons to enforce this duty.

1. For *wrath's sake.* Because of the danger we run ourselves into by resistance. The Christians were then obnoxious to the sword

collectively, the authority *justly* belongs; or, in fact, what constitutes a lawful title to authority. If then the most learned and intelligent men find insuperable difficulties, and differ widely in their opinions respecting this subject; how shall the bulk of the people be able to decide it? And if Christians are first to determine concerning the *right* by which their rulers possess and exercise authority, before they think themselves bound to obedience; they must very commonly indeed be engaged in opposition to 'the existing authorities.' But the apostle's design was, to mark out the plain path of duty to Christians, however circumstanced. [See further at the end of ch. Ed.]—(1) *Powers.* *Mat.* 23:18. *John* 1:12. The word signifies *authority*, political authority rather than *power*: but they who argue that it means *lawful authority*, seem to forget, that it is used for the dominion of the devil. *Acts* 26:18. *Eph.* 2:2. *Col.* 1:13. *Scott*.

(1.) 'Let every soul be subject to the supreme magistracies; for there is no magistracy except by divine permission, and those which be, are ordained by God.' Sr. 'At that time there were, at Rome, both Jews and Christians, who, from hatred of the tyranny of Claudius and Nero, had, there is reason to believe, plotted against them.' *Carpz.* 'Well did the apostle know how impatient the Jews were, of the Roman yoke.' *Kop.—Of God.* 'That to some singular providence of God the origin and whole fortunes of rulers are to be referred, is an opinion so common to, and constantly prevailing among all people, that it may seem to have been instilled by the Almighty Himself.' *Kop.* 'God having designed mankind to live in society, He has, by the frame of their nature, and by the reason of things, authorized governments to be exercised in every country.'

MACKNIGHT.

(1—7.) Nothing in this forbids the exercise of 'political rights.' Indeed, where the elective franchise is so fully enjoyed, as in most of these United States, it is the bounden duty of a Christian, so to inform himself that he may properly exercise it; nor can he bury this precious talent in the earth, and be innocent. The government should act *religiously*, but how will it, if those who administer it are not religious? And are we to expect that those who are not Christians will elect religious men to office? Is it not rather a disqualification for office in our country? We would hope not, yet how seldom do we hear religious arguments used by statesmen; *is it not* thought a weakness? Is *sectarism* so rife among us, that we fear, as *Christians*, to elect *Christians* to office, lest we be advancing a *sect*; giving temporal power to the church? Is the church so unwise, so corrupt? Is pure religion so dead among us? Never was the responsibility of the Christian citizen so great, his duty so momentous, as in these times, and in this country. See *Wayland*. Ed.

(2.) *Powers.* [Magistracy. *Damnation.*] *Krma*: judgment.' *Stuart.* 'Divine and human punishment. See *Hammond's* masterly annotation.'

BLANK.



3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do<sup>a</sup> that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

d 1 Pe. 2:14. e Ec. 8:2.

of the magistrate for their religion, and needed not make themselves more so by their rebellion. The least show of resistance or sedition, in a Christian, would soon be aggravated and improved, and would be very prejudicial to the whole society; therefore they had more need than others to be exact in their subjection, that those who had so much occasion against them in the matter of their God, might have no other occasion.

To this head must that argument be referred, v. 2. *They that resist shall receive to themselves damnation: they shall be called to an account for it.* God will reckon with them for it, because the resistance reflects on Him; the magistrate will reckon with them for it, for they will come under the lash of the law, and will find the higher powers too high to be trampled on, all civil governments being justly strict and severe against treason and rebellion; so it follows, v. 3. *Rulers are a terror.* This is a good argument, but low for a Christian.

2. We must be subject, not only for wrath, but for conscience-sake: not so much from the fear of punishment, as from the love of virtue. This makes common civil offices acceptable to God, when they are done for conscience-sake, with an eye to God, to his providence putting us into such relations, and to his precept making subjection the duty of those relations. Thus the same thing may be done

from a very different principle. Now, to oblige conscience to this subjection, he argues, v. 1—4, 6.

(1.) From the institution of magistracy; *There is no power but of God.* By Him kings reign, Prov. 8:15. The usurpation and abuse of power are not of God, for He is not the Author of sin; but the power itself is. The most unjust and oppressive princes in the world, have no power but what is given them from above, Jn. 19:11. the Divine Providence being, in a special manner, conversant about those changes and revolutions of governments which have such an influence on states and kingdoms, and such a multitude of particular persons and less communities. Or, it may be meant of government in general: God has not left men like the fishes of the sea, where the greater devour the less.

*The powers that be:* whatever the particular form and method of government are, whether by monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy; wherever the governing power is lodged, it is an ordinance of God, and it is to be received and submitted to accordingly; though immediately an ordinance of man, 1 Pet. 2:13. yet originally an ordinance of God. *Ordained of God;* a military word, signifying not only the ordination of magistrates, but the subordination of inferior magistrates to the supreme, as in an army; for among magistrates there is a diversity of gifts, and trusts, and services. Hence it follows, v. 2. that whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. There are other things from God, that are the greatest calamities: but magistracy is from God, as an ordinance, it is a great law, and it is a great blessing: so that the children of Belial, that will not endure the yoke of government, will be found breaking a law, and despising a blessing. Magistrates are therefore called gods, Ps. 82:6. because they bear the image of God's authority. This is not at all applicable to the particular rights of kings and kingdoms, and the branches of their constitution; nor can any certain rule be fetched from hence for the modelling of the original contracts between the governors and governed; but it is intended for direc-

tion to private persons in their private capacity, to behave themselves quietly and peaceably in the sphere which God has set them in, with a due regard to the evil powers which God, in his providence, has set over them, 1 Tim. 2:1, 2.

Magistrates are here again and again called God's ministers. He is the minister of God, v. 4, 6. In the administration of public justice, the determining of quarrels, the protecting of the innocent, the righting of the wronged, the punishing of offenders, and the preserving of national peace and order, that every man may not do what is right in his own eyes; in these things it is, that magistrates act as God's ministers. As the killing of an inferior magistrate, while he is actually doing his duty, is accounted treason against the prince; so the resisting of any magistrates, in the discharge of these duties of their place, is the resisting of an ordinance of God.

(2.) From the intention of magistracy, as designed to be,

[1.] A terror to evil works, and evil workers. They bear the sword, the sword of justice. They are heirs of restraint, to put offenders to shame; Laish wanted such, Judg. 18:7. Such is the power of sin and corruption, that many will not be restrained from the greatest enormities, and such as are most pernicious to human society, by any regard to the law of God and nature, or the wrath to come; but only by the fear of temporal punishments, which the willfulness and perverseness of degenerate mankind have made necessary. Hence it appears, that laws with penalties for the lawless and disobedient, 1 Tim. 1:9. must be constituted in Christian nations, and are agreeable with, and not contradictory to, the Gospel. In this work of restraint, the magistrate is the minister of God, v. 4. He acts as God's agent, to whom vengeance belongs; therefore must take heed of infusing into his judgments any private, personal resentments of his own. *To execute wrath upon him that doeth evil:*—yet the judicial processes of the most vigilant, faithful magistrates, though some faint resemblance of the judgments of the great day, come far short of the judgment of God, which extends

V. 3—5. If the ruler abuse his authority, God will call him to an account for it; there are, in many countries, legal and constitutional checks on those who attempt to introduce tyranny; and on great occasions, the people will sometimes, with one consent, arise against a cruel oppressor, and subvert his government; as the Romans did against Nero, who was condemned, by the senate, to die, as an enemy to mankind, with the approbation of the whole world. But Christians are seldom called on to take any active or leading part in such transactions; [though their duty at the ballot-box, at least, is imperious, note, 1—7. Ed.] If laws be unreasonably formed, or iniquitously executed, this should be endured as a cross laid on them, till they, who are legally authorized, apply a remedy to the evil; or nothing more be attempted than by [orderly votes and] peaceable and respectful petitions. And if we be required by human authority to sin against God, we must steadfastly refuse obedience, and cheerfully and meekly endure the consequence, well satisfied with the blessings ensured by the promise of God, to those 'who suffer for righteousness' sake.' Mat. 5:10—12. Acts 4:13—22. 5:29—31. 1 Pet. 3:13—16. 4:12—16.

(3—7.) 'And wilt thou not stand in awe of the magistracy? Do good and thou shalt have praise for it; for (the magistrate) is a servant of God for thy benefit. But if thou doest evil, fear; for he beareth the sword not in vain, since he is the minister of God, condemning to punishment the evil-doer. Therefore we ought to yield subjection, not only because of punishment, but for conscience' sake.'—'On the same account, moreover, we should also pay tribute; for they are God's ministers who attend to this matter.' Sr. 'Not the collecting tribute, but the ministrations, as ministers, Gr. *leitourgoi*: a very strong term, properly denoting (*Schl.*) "persons who were obliged, either by their own tribe, or the people at large, to perform certain public forms of worship, or, at their own expense, supply the wants of the state, and in a case of necessity, undertake all the most burdensome and irksome offices in the state, yield up their property, nay, even their life and blood, to promote the welfare of the state." See on Luke 1:23. BL., who remarks, that 'according to the most learned philologists and antiquaries, *phoros* and *phorot*, [tr. tribute.] denote the *land tax* and the *capitation tax*, and are nearly the same with the *kensos*, Luke 20:21. The *telē* [tr. customs] were the *vectigalia*, and the *customs* levied on the imports and exports.' Ep.

(4.) 'By bearing the sword is meant, having the power of life and death; which was represented by the Roman magistrates' being girded with the sword [as the Turkish Sultan is now], or having it carried before them, (so Sueton.,) a custom which is partly retained [Burder says, in England] in modern times. See Grot., who refers to Tac. (I add Liban., Philoster, and Herodian.) and says, that in the Rabbinical writers frequently occurs the expression, *The king who bears the sword*. Decapitation, performed (as in Germany now) by the sword, was the

most frequent capital punishment.' BL. 'The three designs of penalties being, to promote observance of law (by deterring from crime, and thus general security); restitution, or reformation: does capital punishment for murder best accomplish these designs; and, if so, do the O. and N. T. give the right to take life for murder? Now, as penalties respect a whole community, and their being prevented from crime, if the prevention of a man from becoming a criminal is at least as beneficial as his reformation, prevention of crime in the whole community is millions to one, incomparably, more important than either of the other objects, restitution or reformation, which respects but one or two individuals: and restitution is the next most important. Of the two punishments for murder, then, which best answers the primary design of penalties (the welfare of the whole by) prevention of crime, death, or imprisonment for life (with, of course, meagre diet, hard labor, rigid supervision by day, and solitary confinement at night)? After providing against the abuse of this penalty, considering that the love of life is the strongest principle of the human soul; that the dread of death includes also a dread of the awful retributions of the eternal world, selected by God Himself to deter men from sin; that all generations have regarded death as the greatest punishment; that it accords with the experimental legislation of Pennsylvania, which has greatly decreased the number of murders; that those governments which have abolished capital punishment for murder, were all, after a trial of a few years, compelled to abandon it; that the imprisoned not unfrequently commit other murders, and not unfrequently escape; we are constrained to maintain the position, (to which, indeed, the Prison Discipline Society, after all their investigations, firmly adhere.) "That the punishment of death for murder could not be abolished with safety."—"That," again to use the words of their Report for 1835, "the law of God seems holy, just, and good, Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Prof. Schmucker, in Bib. Repos. July, 1837, where see the *right of death* fully considered. It seems sufficient here, to say, that God has an undoubted right to take life, and Himself asserts, in this v. that He has given governments this right, as his vicegerents. Comp. Ex. 21:11, 14. Num. 35:17—21. Deut. 19:11—13. Gen. 9:6. Mat. 26:52. Acts 25:11. Rom. 13:1—7. 13:10.—As to the duty of a sworn juror, when trying a murderer, he commits perjury if he does not bring him in guilty, provided he thinks him so, whatever the consequence to the criminal; which indeed is not the juror's business, as a juror. Ed.

(5.) 'Hardy well observes, that, from this passage, "it is certain, that human laws, legitimately enacted, are not only binding in *foro externo* [before men], but in *foro conscientie et Dei* [before conscience and God], and not only bind the transgressor to punishment, but to blame." [How eminently is this true of popular governments and legislation!] Thus transgression becomes not only a breach of law, but a sin.' BLOOMF.



6 For, for this cause pay ye tribute also : for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render therefore to all 'their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

f Mat. 22:21.

g Ja. 2:8.

to the evil thought, and is a discerner of the intents of the heart. *He beareth not the sword in vain.* It is not for nothing that God hath put such a power into the magistrate's hand; but it is intended for the restraining and suppressing of disorders. It is a good thing when the punishment of malactors is managed as an ordinance of God, instituted and appointed by Him, as a holy God, that hates sin; as King of nations, and the God of peace and order; the Protector of the good, whose persons, families, estates, and names, are by this mean hedged about; and One that desires not the eternal ruin of sinners, but by the punishment of some would prevent the like wickedness, that others, hearing and fearing, may do no more presumptuously.

[2.] A praise to them that do well. Those that keep in the way of their duty, shall have the commendation and protection of the civil powers, to their credit and comfort, v. 3. This is the intention of magistracy, and therefore we must, for conscience' sake, be subject to it, as a constitution designed for the public good, to which all private interests must give way. But pity it is, that ever this gracious intention should be perverted, and that those who bear the sword, while they countenance and connive at sin, should be a terror to those that do

well. But so it is, when the vilest men are exalted; and yet even *then*, the blessing and benefit of a common protection, and a face of government and order, are such, that it is our duty in that case rather to submit to persecution for well-doing, and to take it patiently, than by any irregular and disorderly practices to attempt a redress. Never did sovereign prince pervert the ends of government as Nero did, and yet to him Paul appealed, and under him had the protection of the law, and the inferior magistrates, more than once. Better a bad government, than none at all.

(3.) From our interest in it; 'He is the minister of God to thee for good.' Protection draws allegiance. If we have protection from the government, we owe subjection to it; by upholding the government, we keep up our own hedge. This subjection is likewise consented to by the tribute we pay, v. 6. By paying tribute, you not only own the magistrate's authority, but the blessing of that authority to yourselves. He does not say, 'You give it as an alms,' but, 'You pay it as a just debt, or lend it, to be repaid in all the blessings and advantages of public government, which you reap the benefit of.' This is the lesson the apostle teaches, and it becomes all Christians to learn and practise it, that the godly in the land may be found, (whatever others are,) the quiet and the peaceable in the land.

V. 7—10. We are here taught a lesson of justice and charity.

I. Of justice, v. 7. *Render therefore to all their dues;* especially to magistrates, for this refers to what goes before; and likewise to all with whom we have to do. He specifies,

1. Due taxes; *Tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom.* Most of the countries where the Gospel was first preached, were subject at this time to the Roman yoke, and were drained by taxes and impositions, to the just and honest payment of which they are here pressed by the apostle.

Some indeed understand by *tribute*, standing taxes, and by *custom*, occasional: both which are to be faithfully and conscientiously paid, as they become legally due. Our Lord was born, when his mother went to be taxed; and enjoined the payment of tribute to Cesar. Many, who in other things seem to be just, yet make no conscience of this, but pass it off with a false, ill-favored maxim, that it is no sin to cheat the king; directly contrary to Paul's rule, *Tribute to whom tribute is due.*

2. Due respect; *Fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.* This sums up the duty we owe not only to magistrates, but to all superiors, parents, masters, all that are over us in the Lord, according to the fifth commandment. Comp. Lev. 19: 3. *Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father;* not with a fear of amazement, [or slavishness,] but a loving, reverent, respectful, obediential fear. Where there is not this respect in the heart to our superiors, no other duty will be paid aright.

3. Due payment of debts, v. 8. 'Owe no man anything; do not continue in any one's debt, while you are able to pay it, farther than by, at least, the tacit consent of the person to whom you are indebted. Give every one his own. Do not spend that on yourselves, much less heap it up for yourselves, which you owe to others.' The *wicked borroweth, and payeth not again*, Ps. 37: 21. Many that are very sensible of the trouble, think little of the sin of being in debt.

II. Of charity; *Owe no man anything; you do owe no man anything;* so some read it; 'Whatever you owe to any relation, or to any with whom you have to do, it is eminently summed up and included in this debt of love. But to love one another, that is a debt that must be always in the paying, and yet always owing.' Love is a debt; the law of God and the interest of mankind made it so; it is not a thing we are left at liberty about; but it is enjoined us, as the principle

V 6, 7. For similar reasons, it is the duty of Christians to pay taxes also; because as the advantages of government are great, so must its expenses be very large. Rulers are 'the ministers of God,' in providence, who are called 'to attend constantly to this very thing.' It is proper, and for the good of the people, that they, their families, and attendants, should appear in dignity and [in a monarchy, in] splendor: they are, and ought to be, taken from the highest ranks [from the best men. Ed.] in the community; as the temptations of such exalted stations must in general be irresistibly strong, to those who have been educated in comparative indigence, [or not at all.] *Prov. 23: 3. 30: 21—23. Ec. 10: 5—7, 16—19.*—Both governors and governed are fallen creatures; and therefore selfishness can by no method whatever be excluded. Some excess of expediture, some improper accumulation of treasure, some waste of it, in providing for relatives and dependants, may be expected, though not justified.—Taxes must, therefore, be imposed, and ought to be scrupulously paid. Sometimes they will be oppressive, or very heavy; but this grievance should be patiently endured, till it be constitutionally redressed. So that it is the will of God, that his worshippers and servants render to rulers, the tribute, custom, excise, or impost, demanded legally from [them], with as much exactness as they would pay any other debt. *Mat. 22: 15—22.* They must use no collusion or fraud; they should not hesitate or murmur; and *all* smuggling, or dealing in contraband goods; *all* withholding or evading duties imposed on any commodity, and every species of this kind of imposition, is a direct rebellion against the providence and most express commandment of God. And, however it may be palliated or varnished over, it is not merely a defalcation of the revenue, but likewise a robbery of all who pay taxes. For such collusions will not prevent the sum required from being raised on the public; so that, when one tax falls short another is imposed; and when he, who should pay five [dollars], pays but three, his more conscientious neighbor must pay seven instead of five, and is therefore directly robbed of [two dollars.] At the same time, all the atrocious crimes of the whole body of smugglers, and others who combine to defraud the revenue in a great variety of ways, are abetted by *every one*, [however gentlemanly,] who puts his hand to such a dishonest business. *Ex. 20: 15.* In this case, to declaim about the vices and extravagances of rulers, is to add one sin to another, *2 Pet. 2: 10, 11. Jude 5—10.* These things never were worse than in the days of Nero; they are inseparable from human nature: the great Lawgiver was aware of them, when He gave the commandment; and if no man paid a tax, till the character and administration of all concerned in managing public business, and the disposal of the public money, and the tax itself, met his full approbation; none would ever be paid, by the selfish and unreasonable part of the community, and the public exigences could never be answered. This subject is the more enlarged on, because the arguments and examples of some avaricious professors of the Gospel, draw in well-meaning people to wound their consciences and disgrace the cause of religion, by evading or refusing taxes, in a disingenuous and fraudulent manner; which is as contrary to simple truth, as to common honesty.—Moreover, the apostle enjoins on Christians, to render 'fear,' or reverence, and 'honor,' to those to whom they are due, on account of their

authority, rank, or any other civil distinction; neither supposing, that religion requires a stiff and rude singularity, in refusing customary titles or expressions of honor and respect to superiors; *Luke 1: 1—4.* nor that it allows that petulance and scurrility, with which many delight to vilify the characters and conduct of their rulers, and those in high stations. Their faults should in general be regarded with candor and silence; (for their situation is conspicuous, and their temptations very great;) and, though the honor due to their rank and authority may consist with disapprobation of their conduct; yet not with reviling and defamation of them [and their families]! The same authority which commands children to honor their parents, commands subjects to honor their rulers; and they should honor them in the same manner. *Gen. 9: 20—23. Ex. 20: 12. Luke 20: 19—26. 1 Pet. 2: 13—17.*

(7, 8.) How can an honest man (much less a Christian) embark in 'speculations,' foreign from his regular business, that capital, on which his business credit is based, and which is *therefore pledged* to his creditors, without forfeiting his character? How can he that maketh haste to be rich, be innocent? All 'preference' of creditors is excluded also by the apostle's rule of honesty. Ed.

V. 8—10. It cannot be supposed, that the apostle meant to prohibit the contracting of debts, *on any account*, which is next to impossible, to the greatest part of mankind. Christians are indeed under the highest obligations to pay all legal demands, without reluctance or needless delay, and with great punctuality; and they should avoid all superfluous expense, and carefully guard against contracting any debts, which they have not a reasonable prospect of discharging. They ought also to stand aloof from all adventurous speculations, or rash engagements as sureties for others, beyond their circumstances; and whatever may needlessly involve them in debts, and expose them to the danger and discredit of not 'rendering to all their dues.' *Ex. 20: 15. Pr. 6: 1—5.* Yet, when all such demands are answered, and all these rules observed; they still 'owe love' to all men, with the various duties which result from its enlarged exercise.—The learned Erasmus long since remarked, that the first clause might as properly and literally be rendered, 'Ye do owe no man anything, but to love one another;' and though subsequent commentators, almost without exception, take the words *imperatively*, yet it may be worthy of consideration, whether the *indicative* construction do not, far more simply and evidently, accord to the context. The apostle was exhorting Christians to render to all their *dues*; (7) and, having branched out the general precept into a few particulars, he closes, by adding, 'Ye owe no man anything, &c.' as if he had said, 'All that I would inculcate is reducible to this; Obey the law of love to others, in all its branches, and then you will render to all their dues.' *Ex. 20: 12—17.* The sense in this construction is obvious and important, but the ordinary interpretation, seeming at least to forbid Christians to contract any debts; and to condemn such, as cannot at present discharge those already contracted, may embarrass the minds of the most upright; it requires considerable management in expounding it, so as to prevent this embarrassment; and after all, in the literal import, scarcely any so much as attempt to obey it; indeed to numbers it is, strictly speaking, impracticable. The usual exposition of the next clause, 'but to love one another;' 'Be not a debt-



9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

h Ex. 20:13, &c. k Ep. 5:11. 2:12.  
i Le. 19:18. Mat. 1 Ep. 6:13, &c. o 1 Pe. 4:3.  
22:39, 40 m or, decently. p 1 Co. 6:9, 10.  
j 1 Th. 5:5-8. n Phi. 4:8. 1 Pe.

and summary of all duty owing one to another; for love is the fulfilling of the law; not perfectly, but it is a good step towards it. It is inclusive of all the duties of the second table, which he specifies v. 9. and those suppose the love of God. See 1 John 4:20. Loving and being loved, is all the pleasure, joy, and happiness of an intelligent being. [This strikes at the root of all evil, selfishness.] God is love, 1 Jn. 4:16. and love is his image on the soul: where it is, the soul is well moulded, and the heart fitted for every good work. Now, to prove that love is the fulfilling of the law, he gives us,

1. An induction of particular precepts, v. 9. He specifies the last five of the ten commandments, which he observes to be all summed up in this royal law, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*; with an *as* of quality, not of equality; [not *as much*, but in the *same manner*, says *Bl.*] On this is built that golden rule, of doing as we would be done by.

2. A general rule concerning the nature of brotherly love; *Love worketh no ill*, v. 10. he that walks in love, that is acted and governed by a principle of love, he *worketh no ill*; more is implied than is expressed. It not only worketh no ill, but it worketh all the good that may be, deviseth liberal things. For it is a sin, not only to *devise evil* against thy neighbor, but to *withhold good* from them

to whom it is due; both are forbidden together, Prov. 3:27-29. This proves, that love is the fulfilling of the law, answers all the end of it; for what else is that, but to restrain us from [selfishness and] evil-doing, and to constrain us to [benevolence and] well-doing? Love is a living, active principle of obedience to the whole law. The whole law is written in the heart, if the law of love be there.

V. 11-14. Four things we are here taught, as a Christian's directory, for his day's work; when to awake, how to dress, how to walk, and what provision to make.

I. When to awake, v. 11. to awake out of the sleep of sin; out of the sleep of carnal security, sloth, and negligence; out of the sleep of spiritual death, and deadness; both the wise and foolish virgins slumbered and slept, Mat. 25:5. We have need to be often excited and stirred up to awake. Considering,

1. The time we are cast into; *Knowing the time*. It is gospel-time, the accepted time, working time, a time when more is expected than was in the times of that ignorance which God winked at, when people sat in darkness. Know the time to be a busy time, a perilous time; time to awake, for we have slept enough, 1 Pet. 4:3. high time indeed, for *Behold, the Bridegroom cometh*.

2. The salvation we are on the brink of; *Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed*; The eternal happiness we chose for our portion is now nearer us, than it was when we became Christians. The nearer we are to our centre, the quicker should our motion be. Is there but a step betwixt us and heaven, and shall we be so very slow and dull in our Christian course, and move so heavily? The more the days are shortened, and the more grace is increased, the nearer is our salvation, and the more quick and vigorous we should be in our spiritual motions.

II. How to dress ourselves. Observe, 1. What we must *put off*; put off our night-clothes, which it is a shame to appear abroad in. Sinful works are works of darkness; they come from the darkness of ignorance and mistake, they covet the darkness of privacy and concealment, and they end in the darkness of hell and destruction.

2. What we must *put on*: *wherewithal shall our souls be clothed?* (1.) *Put on the armor of light*. The graces of the Spirit are this armor, to secure the soul from Satan's temptations, and the assaults of this present evil world; called the armor of light, some think, alluding to the bright, glittering armor the Roman soldiers used to wear; Christians need this armor, as soldiers exposed; or such armor as becomes us to wear in the daylight: [and which it was considered soldierly to keep bright.] The graces of the Spirit are suitable, splendid ornaments; and are,

in the sight of God, of great price. (2.) *Put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, v. 14. This stands in opposition to a great many base lusts, mentioned v. 13. *Put on Christ*, includes all. Put on the righteousness of Christ for justification; he found in Him, Phil. 3:9. as a man is found in his clothes; put on the *new man*, Eph. 4:24. get the habit of grace confirmed, the acts of it quickened. By baptism we have in profession *put on Christ*, Gal. 3:27. Let us do it in truth and sincerity. Put Him on as a lord to rule you, as Jesus to save you, and in both, as Christ anointed and appointed by the Father, to this ruling, saving work.

III. How to walk. When up and dressed, we are not to sit still in an affected closeness and privacy, as monks and hermits. What have we good clothes for, but to appear abroad in them?

*Let us walk, walk honestly as in the day*, 1 Thess. 4:1. *as children of light*, comp. Eph. 5:8. Our conversation must be as becomes the Gospel; *honest, decent*, and becoming, so as to credit our profession, adorn the doctrine of God our Savior, and recommend religion in its beauty to others; we must abstain from all excess in eating and drinking; not indulge our sensual appetite in any private excesses. Christians must not walk in any of those lusts of the flesh, those works of darkness, which are forbidden in the seventh commandment. Downright adultery and fornication are the *chambering* forbidden; lascivious thoughts and affections, lascivious looks, words, books, songs, gestures, dances, dalliances, which lead to, and are degrees of that uncleanness, are the *wantonness* here forbidden; whatsoever transgresseth the pure and sacred law of chastity and modesty. *Strife and envying* are also works of darkness; for though the acts and instances of strife and envy are very common, yet none are willing to own the principles, or to acknowledge themselves envious and contentious. Where there are *riot and drunkenness*, there usually are *chambering and wantonness*, and *strife and envy*. Solomon puts them all together, Prov. 23:29, &c. Those that tarry long at the wine, v. 30. have contentions and wounds without cause, v. 29. and their eyes behold strange women, v. 33.

IV. What provision to make, v. 14. make no provision for the flesh. Be not careful about the body: two things are here forbidden;

1. Perplexing ourselves with an inordinate care, in forecasting for the body; be not careful and cumbered about it, do not *take anxious thought*, Mat. 6:31. It [enjoins content, and] forbids an anxious, incumbering care.

2. Indulging ourselves in an irregular desire. We are not forbidden barely to *provide* for the body, (it is a lamp that must

or to any man of ought, but love and affection, which ye ought so to pay, as that ye should have more to pay; (Bp. Hall) is not, to me at least, satisfactory; for why should we be allowed so to come short, in rendering 'love to whom love is due,' as to be always there in arrears, and there only? If we daily rendered all that love to our neighbor, which is due to him, we should not remain in his debt. The next day would indeed require a fresh payment, but there would be no arrears due. Upon the whole, therefore, I cannot but decidedly prefer the *indicative* construction; 'Ye do owe, &c.' In short, the whole of what the apostle would inculcate was, 'love,' in its various exercises and effects; so that he who loved another, actually 'fulfilled the law,' in respect of its requirements towards his neighbor; and this 'love of our neighbor as ourselves,' in obedience to the command of God, would also be the best evidence of our loving Him with all our hearts, according to the first and great commandment of the law. Ex. 20:1-11. Lev. 19:18. Deut. 6:5. Mat. 19:16-22. Mark 12:23-34. Luke 10:25-37.—The apostle, by thus appealing to the moral law as the standard of duty, after having so fully shown, that no man can be justified by it, completely establishes the distinction between the law, as a *covenant*, and the law, as a *rule*; and proves, that our deliverance from it in the former sense, is in order that we might obey it in the latter.—'Not that the law is exactly fulfilled by doing no evil to our neighbor; but, because, in Christ's interpretation, the neglect of doing any good we are able, and have opportunity to do for Him, is doing evil. (Mark 3:4.) . . . For "charity is also kind," (1 Cor. 13:4.) and engageth us "by love to serve one another." (Gal. 5:13-15.)' Whitby. 1:13-16. 1 Cor. 13:4-7. Gal. 6:1-5. 1 John 3:16, 17.) Perfect love, with all its effects, fulfils the command of 'loving our neighbor as our-

selfes;' but *imperfect* love, for a part of our lives, falls very short of this.

(8.) *Hath fulfilled.*] 'Fulfilleth the law. For this (is the law).' Sr. SCOTT.  
(9.) *Briefly.*] 'Summarily.' Id.

V. 11-14. Some think the apostle here refers to the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, and the more complete establishment of Christianity which followed; but the ruin of the Jewish nation could not much affect the Christians at Rome; and the situation of believers in this life, as expecting complete and eternal salvation, is evidently intended.—The redemption, by which salvation comes to sinners, was finished with the humiliation of the Savior, and when He expired on the cross. John 19:28-30. Salvation becomes ours, and is begun, when we come to Him by faith; it will be finished as to the soul at the hour of death, and as to the body at the day of judgment; when sin and all its consequences will finally be abolished; and 'death be swallowed up in victory.' 1 Cor. 15:50-53. The life of faith might be called 'day,' in comparison of the darkness of the idolatrous and unconverted state; yet it was but 'night,' or twilight, in comparison of the light of heaven. 1 Cor. 13:8-12. Eph. 5:8-14. Col. 1:9-14, v. 12. But this 'night was far spent,' that 'day was at hand;' it was therefore incumbent on them to anticipate it, and prepare for it.

(11.) 'And this (do), considering the time, that the hour is already come when we should,' &c. STUART.

(13, 14.) 'Let us walk in a becoming manner, as by day. *Rioting.*] Revelling. *To fulfil.*] In respect to its lusts.' Sr. 'Compare with this purity and spirituality of Christianity, the bestial grossness of *Epicurus*, in his own words, cited by *Grot.*' BLOOMF.



14 But put <sup>a</sup>ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make <sup>r</sup>not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

## CHAP. XIV.

<sup>3</sup> Men may not condemn nor condemn one the other for things indifferent: <sup>13</sup> but take heed that they give no offence in them: <sup>15</sup> for that the apostle proveth unlawful by many reasons.

**H**IM that is weak in the faith receive ye, but <sup>a</sup>not to doubtful disputations.

<sup>q</sup> Ga. 3:27. <sup>a</sup> or, not to judge his doubtful thoughts.  
<sup>r</sup> Ga. 5:16.

be supplied with oil,) but we are forbidden to fulfil the lusts thereof. The necessities of the body must be considered, but the lusts of it must not be gratified. Natural desires

**PRACT. OBS.** The grace of the Gospel directs our thoughts to the providence of God, as well as to his promises and commandments; and thus it induces [content], submission, and cheerful composure; where pride and the carnal mind see nothing but cause for murmurs and discontent.—It is far more agreeable to the pride of man, to rise to reputation, by declaiming against kings and princes; than to be employed in humbling ourselves before God for our own sins, and in diligently mortifying our own corrupt inclinations. But surely, there can be no sufficient reason, why ministers of the Gospel, and private Christians, should leave their peaceful duties, and bring the truth into disgrace, by becoming volunteers in such services, as apostles, evangelists, and martyrs, never intermeddled with!—Let then Christians recollect, that 'the world lieth in wickedness,' and that they are 'strangers and pilgrims' in it; that their time here is short; that it is their wisdom and duty to make the best of things as they find them; that submission to the providence and command of God requires their peaceable subjection to governors; and that in refusing this subjection, they rebel against God, and must give an account to Him of it.—At the same time magistrates may hence learn, from whom, and for what, they have their power, and what account they must render of it; that they too may attend to their duty in the fear of God, with 'whom there is no respect of persons;' remembering the solemn and strict account they must render to God.—Let those, who eagerly declaim concerning liberty, without distinguishing it from licentiousness, seriously ask themselves, whether their reasoning can be made consistent with such Scriptures as these? Whether Christ,

(14.) Put on.] 'Take his manners, follow his example, as Phil. 2:5. A metaphor from the *re vestiaria*, or perhaps from the *theatre*. It is found both in the Hebrew, and in the best Greek writers.' BLOOMF.

*Concluding Note.* 'The resistance, which consists in non-subjection, or a refusal to yield actual obedience to the law of the superior, can be allowed, only when the matter of the law is sinful, and so forbidden by the higher Power; not when it is judged inexpedient or unprofitable only: for of this, subjects are not to judge, but the law-giver only; in that they lawfully may, and, therefore, to avoid scandal and punishment, and from respect to him who is God's vicegerent, ought to obey; even as servants ought to obey their froward masters, and children their parents, in all lawful things, (Col. 3:20. 1 Pet. 2:13.) and this from conscience towards God. No resistance of the higher powers by force, can be allowed to any who have not the power of the sword. For he that thus uses it, takes the sword without authority, from Him "to whom belongeth vengeance;" and so, without authority from Him to whom this power of the sword originally belongs. Where a people hath conferred not an absolute power, but a government according to the law, they must be supposed to have reserved to themselves a power necessary to preserve their laws.' *Whitby.*—Thus in mixed governments, there are legal and constitutional methods, by which the encroachments of one part of the government on the rights of the others, may be resisted. But Christians, in private stations, have not much concern in this: [Yet see note, v. 1-7. *Ed.*] and complicated cases may possibly arise, in which no previous rules or counsels can give adequate direction. Submission in all things lawful, to the 'existing authorities,' is our duty at all times and in all cases; though in civil convulsions, and amid great revolutions, and sudden changes in governments; there may frequently, for a season, be a difficulty in determining which are to be considered as the 'existing authorities.'—To claim the protection of the law, against the illegal violence even of magistrates, is not 'resisting the powers that be.' Acts 13:35-39. 22:28-30. 25:9-11.—The word rendered *damnation*, properly signifies judgment: and is by many expositors explained exclusively of the punishment inflicted by the magistrate: but the apostle is speaking of our duty to God, in obeying magistrates; which if we neglect, He will call us to account for it, and finally condemn us, except we repent.—Some have urged, against the interpretation here given, that if this be indeed the rule of religion, it lies open to the charge of abetting tyranny, and being inimical to civil liberty. But I apprehend, that this is not the case; for all the crimes committed by usurpers, tyrants, and oppressors, are at least as severely condemned in Scripture, as those committed by rebels and traitors. Now a religion cannot justly be regarded as abetting tyranny, or as inimical to civil liberty, which denounces the severest vengeance of God on those who act tyrannically, and unjustly deprive men of liberty. The apostle was not writing a  *treatise on politics*; but teaching a company of private Christians their duty. Had he been called on by Nero, or any other oppressive ruler, as he was by Felix, he would doubtless have 'reasoned with him on righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come.' Acts 24:24-27. and had he been sent immediately by God to rulers, as the ancient prophets were; he would doubtless have plainly told them their duty, and protested against particular instances of their tyranny and oppression, in the 'spirit and power of Elijah,' and of John the Baptist, when he said to Herod, concerning Herodias, 'It is not lawful for thee to have her.' 1 K. 21:17-25. Mat. 14:3-5. But it should be very seriously considered, on the other hand, whether the charge of being selfish, and 'hurtful to kings and provinces,' has not in every age been brought against the zealous worshippers of God. Ezra 4:12-24. Luke 23:1-5. Acts 16:19-24. 17:3-9. whether this has not been, and is not at this day, the main pretext of persecutors; and of those who would exclude the preachers of the Gospel out of their several districts: and whether the necessity, which is laid on Christians, 'to obey God rather than man,' is not in many cases likely enough to exasperate the spirit of haughty princes, without openly avowing, that there are other cases, in which we are not bound to obey them.—cases, which in fact call their right to authority in question, and directly impeach their wisdom and justice. Surely this is suited to increase their jealousy against the ministers, missionaries, and professors of the Gospel, in the minds of rulers, in all parts of the world, which to this day forms one grand barrier to the propagation of Christianity; a barrier, insurmountable except by the power of God. Had the primitive Christians explained the apostle's doctrine, with so many exceptions, and limitations, and cautions, as numbers do at present, and acted accordingly; and had Christianity assumed that political aspect, which it has generally borne in latter ages, (arising from the circumstances of the times,) nothing but a constant succession of miracles could have prevented its extirpation, by the rage of its numerous persecutors. But, in this respect, the apostles, and primitive ministers and Christians, and their successors for some ages, when situated 'as lambs amidst wolves,' were indeed 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves.' Yet they did not escape the charge of being seditious; but where do we read of an accusation brought against them as abettors of tyranny and enemies of liberty? Scott.

must be answered, but wanton appetites checked and denied, Gal. 5:16.

**CHAP. XIV.** The apostle having, in the former ch., directed our conduct one towards another in civil things, and prescribed the sacred laws of justice, peaceableness, and order, to be observed by us as members of the commonwealth; he comes, in this and part of the following ch., in like manner to direct our demeanor one towards another in sacred things, which pertain more immediately to conscience and religion, and which we observe as members of the church. Particularly, he gives rules how to manage our different apprehensions about indifferent things; in the management of which, it seems, there was something amiss among the Roman Christians, to whom he wrote, which he here labors to redress. But the rules are

general, and of standing use in the church, for the preservation of that Christian love which he had so earnestly pressed in the foregoing ch. as the fulfilling of the law. It is certain, nothing is more threatening, nor more often fatal, to Christian societies, than the contentions and divisions of their members. By these wounds the life and soul of religion expire. Now in this ch., we are furnished with the sovereign balm of Gilead; the blessed apostle prescribes like a wise physician. Why then is not the hurt of the daughter of my people recovered, but because his directions are not followed? This ch., rightly understood, made use of, and lived up to, would set things to rights, and heal us all.

V. 1-23. We have here,

I. An account of the unhappy contention which had broken out in the Christian church.

his apostles, or his primitive disciples, ever spent their zeal about such topics? And whether such declamations and frequent invectives against those, whom the Scripture commands us to honor and obey, can be for the credit of the Gospel, and the benefit of true religion?—As to the efforts, which are anywhere made by those, on whom such trusts constitutionally devolve, to preserve, increase, or assist, the *real* liberty of mankind, personal, civil, or religious; or to check the career of despotism or oppression, over men of any climate, complexion, or religion; let us zealously forward them with our prayers, and by every mean consistent with the peace and good order of the community; and, if we would enjoy the blessing of good government, we should pray earnestly and constantly for our rulers, and all in authority; else we have no just cause to complain of any real or supposed grievances, to which we may be subjected by them. 1 Tim. 2:1, 2.—While we rejoice at deliverance from the condemnation of the holy law of God, may its precepts be written in our hearts, and transcribed into our lives; that prudence, honesty, and punctuality may mark all our transactions, and regulate all our expenses, and the payment of our debts, and make way for liberal kindness to the poor.—Emerging from the night of unconversion, and the twilight of our first glimmering views of heavenly things, and looking forward to the day of perfect knowledge and purity, let us study to walk in a manner consistent with our profession, to 'put on the Lord Jesus Christ,' to imbibe his spirit, to copy his conduct, to walk in every respect even as He walked. SCOTT.

**NOTES.** CHAP. XIV. V. 1. Notwithstanding the authority vested by Christ in his apostles, and their infallibility in delivering his doctrine to mankind, differences of opinion prevailed even among real Christians; nor did Paul, by an express decision and command, attempt to put a final termination to them. 2-6, 14-18. 2 Pet. 1:20, 21.—If the method of subsequent ages had been then in use, the persons here spoken of would have been excluded from the church, and anathematized as obstinate heretics; or driven, for relief to their consciences, to separate from those, who imposed on them what they counted sinful: and afterwards they would have been shunned and stigmatized as schismatics. But Paul, in all the plenitude of his apostolical authority, could endure his fellow Christians to differ from him in opinion, as to matters of inferior consequence; and, instead of peremptory injunctions, he gave a general rule of the greatest importance, for our conduct in all similar cases. He exhorted the pastors and members of the church at Rome, to receive among them, as a brother, the weak believer; and not to perplex him with disputations about such things, as might appear doubtful to conscientious persons; but to leave him, under the general use of means, and loving instructions, to grow stronger in faith, and ripen in judgment, by the inward teaching of the Holy Spirit. This general rule applies to many particulars, both respecting doctrine, worship, and practice. If a man do not profess repentance, and a believing dependence, as a *partly* condemned sinner, on the righteousness and atonement of Christ, 'Emmanuel,' 'God manifest in the flesh,' and a reliance on the Holy Spirit for teaching and sanctification; it does not appear, that he can properly be regarded as a believer, or admitted into the communion of the saints. 2 John 7:11. But when these things are professed in words, and not denied in works, a man ought, *at least*, to be received as one, who is 'weak in the faith;' and more established believers should meekly help him forward, though he may yet be under the power of many prejudices and mistakes. 15:1-3.—'The force of the apostle's reasoning in favor of candor and mutual condescension, cannot be overrated by saying, as some have unhappily done, . . . that there was no separation between Jewish and Gentile Christians.—Had the things judged indifferent by the latter, and apprehended sinful by the former, been imposed; a separation of communion would have ensued, and the schism, on the apostle's principles, would have been chargeable on the *imposers*. When it shall please God to awaken in the governors of established protestant churches such a spirit of moderation and goodness, joined with a true zeal for religion; as to leave such things in that natural state of indifference, in which almost all sensible men confess it best they should be left, many separations will cease of course.' *Doddr.*—Thus the guilt of *schism* is reciprocally charged, by all parties, on their opponents; and indeed *truly*, when it is not done *exclusively*; or so as to suppose that all the fault lies on one side. For the same state of mind and heart generally prevails, in those who impose unscriptural terms of communion; and in those who separate themselves from their brethren, without sufficient reason; and then endeavor to make the cause of their separation appear as cogent as they can, in order to justify themselves. So that, not only 'the governors of protestant established churches,' but the leading men among dissenters, and seceders also, need to be brought, by the illumination and grace of the Holy Spirit, to a fuller knowledge of the Scriptures, and more entire conformity to the temper there inculcated. In proportion as men approach nearer and nearer, in judgment and disposition, to the Word of God, they will be brought nearer to each other; as the lines, from the circumference of a circle, approximate to each other, and to the centre, proportionably. Then each person concern-



2 For one believeth that he may eat all things : another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not ; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth ; for God hath received him.

4 Who <sup>b</sup>art thou that judgest another man's servant ? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up : for God <sup>c</sup>is able to make him stand.

5 One <sup>d</sup>man esteemeth one day above another : another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be <sup>e</sup>fully persuaded in his own mind.

b Ja. 4:12. c Is. 40:29. d Col. 2:16. e or, assured.

1. There was a difference among them about the distinction of *meats* and *days* ; those are the two things specified. There might be other similar occasions of difference, while these made the most noise, and were most noticed. The case was this : the members of the Christian church at Rome, were some of them originally Gentiles, and others of them Jews, Acts 8:21. The latter had been trained up in the observance of the ceremonial appointments, touching *meats* and *days*, and were not well instructed touching the cancelling of the ceremonial law by the death of Christ ; therefore they retained the ceremonial institutions, and practised accordingly ; while other Christians, that understood themselves better, and knew their Christian liberty, made no such difference.

(1.) Concerning meats, v. 2. *One believeth that he may eat all things* ; he is well satisfied, that the ceremonial distinction of meats, into clean and unclean, is no longer in force, but that every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused ; nothing *unclean of itself*, v. 14. Acts 10:15, 28. This the strong Christian is clear in, and practises accordingly ; eating what is set before him, and asking no question for conscience-sake, I

Cor. 10:27. On the other hand, *another, who is weak*, is not clear in his Christian liberty, but rather inclines to think, that the meats forbidden by the law, remain still unclean ; and therefore, to keep at a distance from them, he will eat no flesh at all, but *eateth herbs*, contenting himself only with the fruits of the earth.

(2.) Concerning days, v. 5. Those who thought themselves still under some kind of obligation by the ceremonial law, esteemed *one day above another* ; kept up a respect to the times of the passover, pentecost, new moons, and feasts of tabernacles ; those who knew that all these things were abolished and done away by Christ's coming, esteemed *every day alike*. We must understand it with an exception of the Lord's day, which all Christians unanimously observed ; but they made no account of those antiquated festivals of the Jews.

Here the apostle speaks of the distinction of meats and days as a thing indifferent, when it went no further than the opinion and practice of some particular persons, who had been trained up all their days to such observances, and therefore were the more excusable, if they hardly parted with them. But in the Epistle to the Galatians, where he deals with those that were originally Gentiles, but were influenced by some judaizing teachers, not only to believe such a distinction, and to practise accordingly, but to lay a stress on it as necessary to salvation, and to make the observation of the Jewish festivals, public and congregational ; here the case was altered, and it is charged on them as the frustrating of the design of the Gospel, falling from grace, Gal. 4:9—11. This epistle is supposed to have been written some time before that to the Galatians. The apostle seems willing to let the ceremonial law wither by degrees, and to let it have an honorable burial ; now these weak Romans, seem to be only following it weeping to its grave, but those Galatians were raking it out of its ashes.

2. It was not so much the difference itself that did the mischief, as the mismanagement of the difference, making it a bone of contention. (1.) Those who knew their Christian liberty, and made use of it, *despised the*

weak, who did not ; they trampled on them as silly, and humorously, and superstitious, for scrupling those things which they knew to be lawful. (2.) Those who were weak, and durst not use their Christian liberty, *judged* and censured the strong, who did, as if they were loose Christians, carnal professors, that cared not what they did, but walked at all adventures, and stuck at nothing.

Well, this was the disease, and we see it remaining in the church to this day ; the like differences, in like manner mismanaged, are still the disturbers of the church's peace. But,

II. We have proper directions and suggestions laid down for allaying this contention, and preventing the ill consequences of it ; not by excommunicating, suspending, and silencing either side, but by persuading them both to a mutual forbearance : if the contending parties will but submit to this fair arbitration, each abate of his rigor, and sacrifice their differences to their graces, all will be well quickly. Let us observe the rules he gives, some to the strong, and some to the weak, and some to both, for they are interwoven ; and reduce the reasons to their proper rules.

1. Those who are weak, must be *received*, but not to doubtful disputations, v. 1. Spend your zeal in things wherein all the people of God are agreed, and do not dispute about matters that are doubtful. *Receive him, take him to you*, welcome him, receive him with the greatest affection and tenderness. *Lend him your hand*, so the Syriac ; *Receive him*, not to quarrel with him, and to argue about uncertain points. *Not to judge his doubtful thoughts*, so the margin ; not to pump out his weak sentiments concerning those things, which he is in doubt about, that you may censure and condemn him. Receive him, not to expose him, but to instruct and strengthen him. See 1 Cor. 1:10. Phil. 3:15, 16.

2. Those who are strong, must by no means *despise* the weak ; nor those who are weak, *judge* the strong, v. 3. This is levelled directly against the fault of each party. He argues against both these jointly ; we must not despise or judge our brethren. Why so ?

ed, (instead of decidedly justifying every particular among those with whom he is connected, and disputing against everything in use among such as he differs from,) will seriously compare all particulars, on every side, with the sacred oracles ; and, in consequence, will discover, that neither party is *entirely right*, and neither *entirely wrong*. And this conviction, avowed and reduced to practice by the leading men, would gradually be communicated to the rest of the body ; and would make way for such amendments, retrenchments, and concessions, on all sides, and such fairness, gentleness, and candor, in debating on the controverted subjects, as would in process of time effectually terminate our unhappy divisions. But 'until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high,' it cannot be expected that these events will generally take place. It is, however, highly important, that individuals should well consider, from what source contentions in the church, as well as 'wars and fightings in the world,' actually arise ; and what is indispensably necessary, in order to terminate them. Eph. 4:1—6. Phil. 1:27—30. 2:1—4. Jam. 1:19—21. 3:13—18. 4:1—3. P. O. 1—6.—*Weak in faith.*] 'That is, in the knowledge of the benefit of Christ ; or the benefit to be derived from Him.'—*Doubtful disputations.*] 'The altercations of disputations, or the ambiguities of disputations ; i. e. lest he should depart more uncertain than he came, through various and perplexing controversies, or turn aside with a disturbed conscience.' Beza. Scott.

(1, &c.) 'This third portion of the practical part of the epistle, may be distributed under three heads, in the 1st of which the Jews, in particular, are addressed, 14:1—18. in the 2d, the Gentiles, in particular, 19—23. in the 3d, all of them at once, 15:1—13.—In the 1st part we have, 1st, a *Proposition* : That no one is to be judged or condemned because of certain kinds of food, v. 1, 2. 2dly, *Arguments* ; 1) Because we are all servants of God, v. 3, 4, 7—9. 2) Because every one ought to live according to his knowledge, and the dictates of his conscience, v. 5. 3) Because both may be done to the glory of God, v. 6. 4) Because every one shall give account of himself to God, v. 10—12. 5) Because no one ought to put a stumbling-block in his brother's way, v. 13—15. 6) Because, in the Christian dispensation, distinction between meats is done away with, v. 16—18. In the 2d part we have 1st, a *Prop.* : That peace and edification are to be followed after, and no stumbling-block to be thrown in another's way, v. 18, 19. 2dly, *Args.* : 1) Because meats are things too inconsiderable to deserve being made an occasion of offending others, v. 19—21. 2) Because everything is to be done according to a conscience certain, not doubtful, v. 22, 23. In the 3d part we have, 1st, a *Prop.* : That no one, whether Jew or Gentile, ought to please himself, ch. 15:1, 2, 7. 2dly, *Args.* : 1) From the example of Christ, v. 3, 4. 2) Because God loveth both the Jews and Gentiles, v. 8—17. 3dly, A wish, v. 5, 6, and 13.' SENOERT.—'Him that is weak in faith receive with kind-

ness, not so as to increase his scrupulous surmings.' Sr. 'Bewilder him not in the discussion of abstruse and subtle controversies.' Valpy. Bl. 'To the precept, inculcating love one towards another, Paul subjoins an admirable corollary, highly necessary in those times and circumstances, . . . to prevent schism, . . . and great was the apostles' struggle to reconcile both parties, . . . and, in accommodating themselves first to one and then the other, they eminently displayed their prudence and philanthropy.' GROT. Faith.] 'Here it means a full persuasion of this thing ; the article seems put for of it ; and *weak* means doubtful. So the best commentators.'

V. 2—4. The apostle next proceeded to exemplify his general rule, by a particular instance.

(2.) *Eateth herbs.*] 'The Jews, (i. e. the Essenes, &c.) from religious scruples, the Romans and Greeks, from philosophical dogmas.' Bloomf. 'Thousands of Hindoos taste nothing which has had animal life, even an egg ; but live on herbs, roots, fruits, grain, milk, butter, and honey ; believing all who take life will go to one of the 7 hells. They appear to be as strong and as healthy as those who live on flesh. It has a distressing effect on their minds, to show them, through a microscope, the animalcules in the water they drink.' ROB. 'That it might not be said they abstained only from *swine's* flesh, [the converted Jews] abstained from every kind of fish. Theoph. Ammon thinks there is a reference, as in 1 Cor 8:4? BL. Paul abstains from impugning the decree of the Jerusalem council, Acts 15:20 ; and (so Theoph.) 'wisely steers a middle course' between the Jew party and the Gentile party.

(3.) *Received.*] 'Accepted.' STUART. (4.) *Judged.*] 'Condemned. To.] By. Be holden up.] Stand.' ST. Standeth . . . falleth.] 'Judicial terms : acts uprightly, stands in judgment, or falls in judgment, is delinquent, in the wrong.' BLOOMF.

V. 5. *Fully persuaded in his own mind.*] "'Let every man freely enjoy his own sentiment ;' and go on in his own way without impediment or censure.' DODDR. This interpretation is very ancient ; but it does not seem to be the most natural construction of the clause.—'Let a man have [such] persuasion of the lawfulness of what he doeth, or abstains from, as will preserve him from sinning against conscience in it. . . . Let him not search into the judgments and actions of other men, about these matters, to condemn them for them.' WHITBY.—'I do not agree with those, who think that the apostle meant nothing more, than that each person should be careful not to do anything with a doubting or hesitating conscience. For it is not enough, that our conscience consents to what we do ; but it is necessary, in the first place, that our conscience be certified from the Word of God.' BEZA.

(5) Some Christians abstained from flesh only on certain days. Theod., see Koppe.



6 He that <sup>f</sup> regardeth the day, regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord; for he giveth God thanks: and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not; and giveth God thanks.

7 For <sup>g</sup> none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For <sup>h</sup> to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

f or, observeth. g 1 Pe. 4:2. h Phil. 2:9-11.

(1.) Because God *hath received* them; and we reflect on Him, if we reject those whom He hath received. It will be good for us to put this question to ourselves, when tempted to behave scornfully towards our brethren, to disdain and censure them; 'Has not God owned them; and if He has, dare I disown them?' 'Nay, God doth not only receive him, but *hold him up*, v. 4. You think, he who eateth, will fall by his presumption, or that he who eateth not, will sink under the weight of his own fears and scruples: but if they have true faith, the one in the intelligent use of his Christian liberty, and the other in the conscientious forbearance of it, they shall be *held up*; the one in his *integrity*, and the other in his *comfort*. This hope is built upon the power of God, for *God is able to make him stand*; and being able, no doubt He is willing to exert that power, for the preservation of those that are his own.'

(2.) Because they are servants to their own Master, v. 4. We reckon it a piece of ill manners, to meddle with other people's servants, and to find fault with them, and censure them. This rash judging is reproved, Jan. 3:1. under the notion of being *many masters*. In judging and censuring our brethren, we meddle with that which does not belong to us: we have work enough to do at home; and if we must needs be judging, let us exercise our faculty on our own hearts and ways. *To his own Master he stands or falls*; his doom will be according to his Master's sentence, and not according to ours. How well for us is it, that we are not to stand or fall by the judgment one of another, but by the righteous and unerring judgment of God, which is according to truth!

(3.) Because both the one and the other, if true believers, and right in the main, have an eye to God, and do approve themselves to God in what they do, v. 6.

He that makes conscience of observing

V. 6. *Unto*.) 'To (the honor of).'

V. 7-9. It ought to be established as an acknowledged principle, that no real Christian allows his own humor, indulgence, interest, credit, or ease, to be the end for which he lives or acts, as to the general tenor of his conduct; nor does he even avoid, desire, or meet death from selfish motives; but whether his life be prolonged, he aims to spend it to the glory of Christ; or whether death be expected, he refers it to Him, to be ordered in all respects for the glory of his own name. . . . For to this very end, Christ both died on the cross, and rose again, and liveth in heaven to die no more; that in human nature He might be the sovereign Lord of all his people, both during their lives and after their death; as they willingly devote themselves to Him, and are prompt to labor, suffer, or die for his sake; ns He orders all things respecting the time and circumstances of their death, for his own glory and their good; and as, when they die, they are taken to be with Him for ever, and He will raise their bodies to share the same felicity. 1 Cor. 6:18-20. Phil. 1:19-25.—Christ is also the Lord of all the dead, and of the living, who do not believe in Him: He spares their lives, or cuts them off by death, and executes vengeance [244]

the Jewish fasts and festivals, not imposing them on others, or laying stress on them, but willing to be, as he thinks, on the surer side, it is well. We have reason to think, because in other things he conducts himself like a good Christian, that in this also his eye is single, and that *he regardeth the day unto the Lord*; and God will accept of his honest intention, though he be under a mistake; for the sincerity and uprightness of the heart were never rejected for the weakness and infirmity of the head: so good a Master do we serve! On the other hand, he *that regards not the day*, that does not make a difference between one day and another; but esteems every day alike: he does not do it out of a spirit of opposition, contradiction, or contempt of his brother; and therefore we charitably conclude, that to the *Lord he doth not regard it*. He *therefore* makes no such difference of days, because he knows God hath made none; and therefore intends his honor in endeavoring to dedicate every day to Him.

So *he that eateth*, and he *that eateth not*, those meats which were forbidden by the ceremonial law, if he be conscientious, that is enough. Thus while both have an eye to God in what they do, and approve themselves to Him in their integrity, why should either of them be judged or despised?

Observe, Whether we eat flesh, or eat herbs, it is a thankful regard to God, the Author and Giver of all our mercies, that sanctifies and sweetens it. Bp. Sanderson, in his 34th sermon, on 1 Tim. 4:4. justly makes this observation: It appears by this, that *saying grace* (as we commonly call it, perhaps from 1 Cor. 10:20.) before and after meat, was the common known practice of the church, among Christians of all sorts, weak and strong: an ancient, commendable, apostolical, Christian practice, derived down from Christ's example through all the ages of the church, Mat. 14:19. 15:36. Luke 9:16. John 6:11. Mat. 26:26, 27. Acts 27:35. blessing the creatures in the name of God before we use them, and blessing the name of God for them after, both included; for *blessing* and *giving thanks* are used promiscuously.

To clear this argument against rash judging and despising, he shows how essential it is to true Christianity, to have a regard to God, and not to ourselves; which therefore, unless the contrary do manifestly appear, we must presume, concerning those that in less things differ from us. Observe his description of true Christians, taken from their end and aim, v. 7, 8. *the ground of it*, v. 9. [1.] *Our end and aim*: not self, but the Lord. We have learned to deny ourselves; that was our first lesson; *None of us liveth to himself*. We neither *live to ourselves*, nor *die to ourselves*, we are not our own proprietors, nor at our own disposal. The business of our lives is, not to please ourselves, but to please God. The business of our deaths, which we are every day exposed to, is, not to make ourselves talked of; and when we come to die actually, neither is that to ourselves; it is not barely that we would be *unclothed*, and eased of the burden of the flesh; but it is

to the *Lord*, that we may depart, and be with Christ, may be *present with the Lord*. It is to the *Lord*, v. 8. Christ, to whom all power and judgment are committed, and in whose name we are taught, as Christians, to do everything we do, Col. 3:17. with an eye to the will of Christ as our rule, to the glory of Christ as our end, Phil. 1:21. This is true Christianity, which makes Christ all in all. So that whether *we live or die*, we are the *Lord's*, devoted to Him, depending on Him, designed and designing for Him. [2.] The ground of this, v. 9. It is grounded on Christ's absolute sovereignty and dominion, which were the fruit and end of his death and resurrection. He is the Lord of those that are *living*, to rule them, of those that are *dead*, to revive them, and raise them up. It was after He had died and risen, that He said, *All power is given unto Me*, Mat. 28:18. and presently He exerts that power in issuing out commissions, v. 19, 20. Now if Christ paid so dear for his dominion over souls and consciences, and has such a just and undisputed right to exercise that dominion; we must not so much as seem to invade it, or intrench upon it, by judging the consciences of our brethren, and arraigning them at our bar.

And this leads to another reason against judging and despising;

(4.) Because both the one and the other must shortly give an account, v. 10-12. Why all this elating, and contradicting, and censuring, among Christians? [It is a needless work, this judging, for] *we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ*, 2 Cor. 5:10. Christ will be the Judge, and He has both authority and ability to determine men's eternal state according to their works, and before Him we shall *stand*, as persons to be tried, and to give up an account; expecting our final doom from Him, which will be eternally conclusive. To illustrate this v. 11. he quotes Is. 45:23. *I have sworn by Myself*; here, *As I live*. It is a prophecy, in general, of Christ's dominion; and here very fully applied to the judgment of the great day, which will be the highest and most illustrious exercise of that dominion. Here is a proof of Christ's godhead, He is *the Lord*, and He is *God*, equal with the Father. Divine honor is due to Him, and must be paid. It is paid to God through Him as Mediator. God will judge the world *by Him*, Acts 17:31. The *bowing of the knee* to Him, and the *confession* made with the *tongue*, are but outward expressions of inward adoration and praise. *Every knee*, and *every tongue*, either freely, or by force. All his friends, *freely*; made willing in the day of his power. Grace is the soul's cheerful, entire, and avowed subjection to Jesus Christ. *Bowing* to Him; the understanding to his truths, the will and actions to his laws, the whole man to his authority. *Confessing* to Him; acknowledging his glory, grace, and greatness; our own meanness and vileness, our sins, so some. All his foes are constrained, whether they will or no. When He shall come in the clouds, and every eye shall see Him; then will all those promises have their accomplishment: then his foes shall be his footstool, and all his en-

on them as He sees good; yet the former sense seems to have been principally intended. Mat. 28:18. Acts 10:36-43. Eph. 1:15-23. Rev. 1:12-20. It is worthy of observation, that the apostle most cogently showed professed Christians, what they ought to be and do, by stating the character and aims of true believers, and by teaching them what charity would suppose, concerning their brethren who differed from them, if their conduct were in other respects consistent with their profession.—'The Lord,' evidently means Jesus Christ, in these vs.; which contain a very conclusive argument in proof of his Deity, and the next vs. undeniably confirm it; for to what mere creature can we be thus entirely devoted, without manifest idolatry, and evidently giving to another that supreme affection, which God Himself demands? 2 Cor. 5:13-15. Tit. 2:14.

V. 10-12. The apostle's transition from 'the judgment-seat of Christ,' to 'giving an account of ourselves to God,' shows how familiar it was to him, to understand the predictions uttered by JENOVAH, as the words of his divine Lord and Savior.—(11) *Shall confess to God*. 'I. e. shall adore and acknowledge Me as God.' Beza. 10:5-11.—'If these words,

SCOTT.



11 For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more : but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself : but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

1 Is. 45:23. k according to 1 1 Co. 8:11.  
j common. charity.

emies shall lick the dust. Hence he concludes, v. 12. *Every one of us shall give account of himself to God* : not we for others, nor they for us : but every one for himself. We must give account how we have spent our time, how we have improved our opportunities : what and how we have done. Therefore, We have little to do, to judge others, for they are not accountable to us, nor we for them, Gal. 2:6. And we have the more to do, to judge ourselves ; and that is enough for us ; let every man prove his own work, Gal. 6: 4. let that take up his thoughts, and he that is strict in judging himself and abasing himself, will not be apt to judge and despise his brother. Let all these differences be referred to the arbitration of Christ at the great day.

(5.) Because the stress of Christianity is not to be laid on these things, nor are they at all essential to religion, either on the one side or on the other. This is his reason, v. 17, 18. which is reducible to this branch of exhortation ;

Why should you spend your zeal either for or against those things which are so minute and inconsiderable in religion? Some make it a reason, why, in case of offence likely to be taken, we should refrain the use of our Christian liberty ; but it seems directed in general against that heat about those things, which he observed on both sides. Observe here,

[1.] The nature of true Christianity,

which the prophet certainly spake of JEROVAN, . . . be well applied by the apostle to Christ ; Christ must also be the Person intended by them : for how could the apostle prove, that " every knee-must bow " to Christ, from the words of God, " to Me every knee shall bow ; " if Christ were, in his whole nature and essence, as different from that God who spake those words of Himself, as is a creature from his great Creator ? *Whitby*.—*As I live*, &c.] Neither exactly from the Sept. nor from the Heb. ; but giving the precise meaning of each. Is. 45:23. SCOTT.

(10.) Judge.] 'Condemn. Set at nought.] Despise.' STUART.  
V. 13—18. The apostle assuredly knew, by the revelation of Christ, that no kind of food was any longer polluted in itself : yet if a man supposed the ceremonial distinctions to be still in force, the meat which he ate, contrary to his judgment and conscience, would be unclean to him ; he, therefore, ought to abstain, till more fully satisfied. Now, if a stronger and better informed believer induced his weaker brother, by his example and influence, to eat such things as his conscience protested against, and so to bring guilt and distress on himself ; it was obvious that he did not 'walk charitably,' loving his brother as himself. For his conduct directly tended to the ruin of one, for whom Christ died ; seeing it tempted him to sin, which naturally leads to condemnation. *Jam.* 1:13—15. This does not imply, that the weak brother would actually perish : but the contrast is made between the love of Christ to the weak believer, who shed his blood to save him ; and the want of love in his stronger brother, who would not abridge himself of his indulgent meal, from regard to his welfare ; but would rather prove an occasion of sin to him, and so hazard the loss of his soul, than restrain himself in the exercise of his Christian liberty.—Yet, had the apostles written in that exact, systematical style, which some affect and require ; they would scrupulously have avoided such language. *2 Pet.* 2:1—3.—Christians ought then to be very careful not to use their liberty, which was good and valuable in itself, in so unguarded a manner, or with such bad effects, as might give occasion to its 'being evil spoken of:' for the privileges of the kingdom of God, no more consisted in meats and drinks, than its requirements did : so that a believer, who would use his

what it is : called, *The kingdom of God* ; intended to rule us, a kingdom : the gospel-dispensation specially, called the *kingdom of God*, in distinction from the legal dispensation, *Mat.* 3: 2. 4:17. It consists not either in using, or in abstaining from, such and such meats and drinks. Christianity gives no rule in that case, one way or other. The matter is left at large ; every creature of God is good, *1 Tim.* 4:4. So, as to other things, it is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, *Gal.* 5:6. 6: 15. *1 Cor.* 7: 19. not being of this party and persuasion, of this or the other opinion in less things. Nothing more destructive to true Christianity than placing it in modes and forms, and circumstantial, which eat out the essentials. *It is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, very comprehensive words ; might I limit the sense of them, it should be thus : As to God, our great concern is righteousness ; to appear before Him justified by the merit of Christ's death, sanctified by the Spirit of his grace. As to our brethren, it is peace ; to live in peace and love, and charity with them ; following peace with all men ; Christ came into the world, to be the great Peace-maker. As to ourselves, it is joy in the Holy Ghost ; that spiritual joy which is wrought by the blessed Spirit in the hearts of believers, which respects God as their reconciled Father, and heaven as their expected home. It is in these things to serve Christ, v. 18. to do all this out of respect to Christ Himself as our Master, to his will as our rule, and to his glory as our end : which puts an acceptableness on all our good duties. What is Christianity but the serving of Christ ? And we may well afford to serve Him, who for us and for our salvation took on Him the form of a servant.

[2.] The advantages of it. He that duly observeth these things, is acceptable to God, though He be not in everything just of our length. He is also approved of men, of all wise and good men, and the opinion of others is not to be regarded. Observe, The approbation of men is not to be slighted ; but the acceptance of God is to be desired and aimed at in the first place, because, sooner or later, God will bring all the world to be of his mind.

3. Another rule here given, is this, that in these doubtful things, every one not only may, but must, walk according to the light that God hath given him, v. 5. *Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind* ; i. e. 'Practice according to your own judgment in those things, and leave others to do so too.' In doubtful things, it is good keep-

ing on the sure side of the hedge. We must not pin our faith on any one's sleeve, or make the practice of others our rule ; but follow the dictates of our own understanding. To this purport he argues, v. 14. and 23. which explain this, and give us a rule not to act against the dictates,

(1.) Of a mistaken conscience, v. 14. If a thing be indifferent, so that it is not in itself a sin not to do it, if we really think it a sin, to do it, it is to us a sin, though not to others, because we act against our consciences, though mistaken and misinformed. He specifies the case in hand. Observe, [1.] His own clearness in this matter ; 'I know and am persuaded, I am fully satisfied, that nothing, no kind of meat, lies under any ceremonial uncleanness, nor is forbidden to be eaten, if it be food proper for human bodies.' Sin had brought a curse on the whole creation ; use of the creatures and dominion over them were forfeited, so that to man they were all unclean. *Tit.* 1: 15. In token of which, God in the ceremonial law prohibited the use of some, to show what He might have done, concerning all ; but now that Christ has removed the curse, the matter is set at large again, and that prohibition is taken away. It was not only from the revelation made to Peter in this matter, but from the tenor and tendency of the whole Gospel, and the manifest design of Christ's death in general, Paul had learned to count nothing common or unclean. This was his own clearness, and he practised accordingly. [2.] But here he gives a caution to those who had not his clearness in this matter. *To him that esteemeth anything to be unclean*, though it be his error, yet to him it is unclean. This particular case, thus determined, gives a general rule, That he who does a thing which he verily believes to be unlawful, however the thing be in itself, to him it is a sin. This arises from that unchangeable law of our creation, which is, that our wills, in all their choices, motions, and directions, should follow the dictates of our understandings. Not that it is in the power of any man's conscience to alter the nature of the action in itself, but only as to himself. It must be understood likewise with this proviso ; though men's judgments and opinions may make that which is good in itself, to become evil to them, yet they cannot make that which is evil in itself, to become good, either in itself or to them. If a man were verily persuaded, (it is Dr Sanderson's instance, sermon on *ch.* 14: 23.) that it were evil to ask his father's blessing, that misperception would make it become evil to him : but if he should be as verily persuaded that

liberty, at any rate, and at all events, laid as undue a stress on the indulgence of the new dispensation, as a Jewish convert did on the ceremonial distinctions of the old one. To stand justified before God, to be at peace with Him, to possess peace in the heart and conscience, and to experience that pure joy, which the Holy Spirit communicates, are the great privileges of the kingdom of God : *Mat.* 3:2. 6:33,34. and to walk by faith before Him, as a reconciled Father, in righteousness, and in cheerful, holy obedience, according to the grand requirements of the moral law, by 'the sanctification of the Spirit,' is the substance of the duties of the kingdom : and he, who in such things, serves and obeys Christ, is 'acceptable to God,' and is approved before men, to be a true believer ; and should, therefore, be received as such by his brethren, without respect to difference of opinion or practice, in more doubtful matters.—To infer from hence, as some have incautiously done, that a peaceable, exemplary Christian, who is not too rigid in his sentiments, or tinctured with bigotry, will generally be esteemed and loved by mankind ; would imply a censure on Paul, on the other apostles, on the prophets, on the most eminent believers in every age, nay, on Christ Himself, as if they had not been so candid and liberal as we ought to be : for we know what favor the world showed them. But in fact, the men of the church, and not those of the world, are exclusively meant.—

(15.) Grieved.] 'The grief is that which arises from the consciousness of having acted amiss, in conformity to the example of a superior.' SCOTT.

(13.) Judge.] 'Condemn . . ; but rather let us decide, not to put, &c.' STUART.

(14.) By.] 'Of. Of.] In, Esteemeth.] Deemeth.' ST. See, on our blame and guilt in having an erroneous conscience, and on the means of correcting it, and the responsibility connected with the endowment, *Wayland's Mor. Sci.* Each (though ever so minute) refusal to obey its dictates precisely, injures, in so far, its perfection. ED.

(15.) 'Now if thy brother is grieved because of meat, thou dost not demean thyself as benevolence requireth.' ST. Destroy.] 'Evidently used in a popular and restricted sense ; it cannot possibly import more



16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of.

17 For <sup>m</sup> the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but <sup>n</sup> righteousness, and <sup>o</sup> peace, and joy <sup>p</sup> in the Holy Ghost.

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 Let <sup>q</sup> us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and <sup>r</sup> things wherewith one may edify another.

20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are <sup>s</sup> pure; but it is <sup>t</sup> evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy <sup>u</sup> is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

m Mat. 6:33. p c. 15:13. s Tit. 1:15.  
n Phil. 3:9. q Ps. 34:14. He. t 1 Co. 8:10-13.  
o Jn. 16:33. c. 5:1. 12:14. u 1 Jn. 3:21.  
r 1 Co. 14:12.  
Phi. 4:7.

it were good to curse his father, that would not make it become good. The Pharisees taught people to plead conscience, when they made *corban* an excuse for denying relief to their parents, Mat. 15: 5, 6. But that would not serve, any more than Paul's erroneous conscience would justify his rage against Christianity, Acts 26:9. or theirs, John 16:2.

(2.) Nor must we act against the dictates of a *doubting* conscience. In those indifferent things, which we are sure it is no sin not to do, and yet are not clear that it is lawful to do them, we must not do them while we continue under those doubts; for he that *doubteth is damned if he eat*, v. 23. it turns into sin to him; he is *damned, condemned* of his own conscience, because he *eateth not of faith*, because he does that which he is not fully persuaded he may lawfully do. Here his own heart cannot but condemn him as a transgressor. Our rule is, to walk as far as we have attained, not further, Phil. 3:15, 16. *For whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.* Taking it in general, it is the same with that of the apostle, Heb. 11:6. *Without faith it is impossible to please God.* Whatever we do in religion, it will not turn to any good account, except we do it from a principle of faith, with a believing regard to the will of Christ as our rule, to the glory of Christ as our end, and to the righteousness of Christ as our plea. Here it seems to be taken more strictly; whatever is not of faith, whatever is done while we are not clearly persuaded of the lawfulness of it, is a sin against conscience.

This seems to be the meaning of that aphorism, which sounds somewhat darkly, v. 22. *Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he allows.* Many a one al-

lows himself in practice to do that, which yet in his judgment and conscience he *condemns* himself for; allows it for the sake of the pleasure, profit, or credit of it; or in conformity to custom; and yet, whilst he does it, and pleads for it, his own heart gives him the lie, and his conscience condemns him for it. Now, happy is the man who so orders his conversation, as not in any action to expose himself to the reproaches of his own conscience, as he must needs do, who does that which he is not clear he may lawfully do, 1 John 3:21.

4. Another rule here prescribed is to those who are clear in these matters, and know their Christian liberty, yet to take heed of using it so as to give offence to a weak brother. This is laid down, v. 13. 'Let it suffice, that you have hitherto continued in this uncharitable practice, and do so no more.' The better to insinuate the exhortation, he puts himself in; Let us not; as if he had said, 'It is what I have resolved against, therefore do you leave it: but judge this rather; instead of censuring the practice of others, let us look to the conduct of our own, that no man put a *stumbling-block*, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way.' We must take heed of saying or doing anything which may occasion our brother to stumble or fall; that may be an occasion of grief, (See Mat. 18: 6, 10.) or of guilt, to our brother. The former is a *stumbling-block*, that gives our brother a great shake, and is a hinderance and discouragement to him; but this is an *occasion to fall*. See this case explained, 1 Cor. 8:9-11. To the same purport, v. 21. he recommends it to our care, not to give offence to any one by the use of lawful things. This is to be extended to all such indifferent things, whereby thy brother *stumbleth*, or is *offended*, is involved either in sin or in trouble: or is *made weak*; his graces weakened, his comforts, his resolutions. Observe the motives to enforce this caution. Consider,

(1.) The royal law of Christian love and charity, which is hereby broken, v. 15. *If thy brother be grieved with thy meat*, be troubled to see thee eat those things which the law of Moses did forbid, which yet thou mayest lawfully do; possibly thou art ready to say, 'Now he talks foolishly and weakly, and it is no great matter what he says.' But the reproof here is to the stronger and more knowing Christian; *Now walkest thou not charitably.* Thus the apostle takes part with the weakest, and condemns the defect in love, on the one side, more than the defect in knowledge on the other side; agreeably to his principles elsewhere, that the way of love is the *more excellent way*, 1 Cor. 12:31. 8: 1-3.

(2.) The design of Christ's death; *Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died*, v. 5. Drawing of a soul to sin, threatens the destruction of that soul. It notes an utter destruction. The consideration of the love of Christ in dying for souls, should make us very tender of the happiness and salvation of souls, and careful not to do anything which may obstruct and hinder it. But are any destroyed, for whom Christ

died? If we understand it of the sufficiency and general intendment of Christ's death, which was to save all on Gospel terms, no doubt but multitudes are. If of the particular determination of the efficacy of his death to the elect, then, though none that were given to Christ shall perish, John 6: 39. yet thou mayest, as much as in thy power, destroy such. No thanks to thee if they be not; by doing that which hath a tendency to it, thou dost manifest a great opposition to Christ. Comp. this with 1 Cor. 8:10, 11.

(3.) The work of God, v. 20. *For meat destroy not the work of God*, the work of grace, particularly the work of faith in thy brother's soul.' The works of peace and comfort are destroyed by such an offence given; take heed of it therefore: do not undo that which God hath done; you should work together with God, do not counter-mine his work. Observe, The same *for whom Christ died*, v. 15. are here called the *work of God*; every saint is God's *workmanship*, his husbandry, his building, Eph. 2: 10. 1 Cor. 3:9. We must be very careful to do nothing which tends to the destruction of this work, either in ourselves or others. Many do for meat and drink destroy the work of God in themselves; nothing more destructive to the soul than pampering and pleasing the flesh, and fulfilling the lusts of it; so likewise in others, by wilful offence given.

(4.) The evil of giving offence, and what an abuse it is of our Christian liberty. And the apostle directs his reproof most against those who gave the offence; not as if they were not to be blamed, who causelessly and weakly took the offence; but he directs his speech to the strong, because they were better able to bear the reproof, and to begin the reformation.

For the further pressing of this rule, we may here observe two directions which have relation to it. 1st. *Let not then your good be evil spoken of*, v. 16. take heed of doing anything which may give occasion to others to speak evil, either of the Christian religion in general, or of your Christian liberty in particular. We must deny ourselves in many cases for the preservation of our credit and reputation; forbearing to do that which we rightly know we may lawfully do, when our doing of it may be a prejudice to our good name: as, when it is suspicious, and hath the appearance of evil; or when it is become scandalous among good people; or hath any way a brand on it. 2dly. *Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God*, v. 22. It is not meant of justifying faith; but of a knowledge and persuasion of our Christian liberty in things disputed. *Have it to thyself*, enjoy the comfort of it in thy own bosom, and do not trouble others by the imprudent use of it, when it might give offence, and cause thy weak brother to stumble and fall. *Have it to thyself*; a rule to thyself, not to be imposed on others, or made a rule to them; or a rejoicing to thyself. Clearness in doubtful matters contributes very much to our comfortable walking, as it frees us from those scruples, jealousies, and suspicions, which those who

than "cause him to fall from a state of salvation;" whether that fall shall be final or temporary, will depend upon his future repentance or non-repentance, [ &c. ] The circumstance, "for whom Christ died," is skilfully thrown in, to show the peculiar baseness of this conduct, since it involves a contravening of the designs of Christ in favor of one's brother.

BLOOMF.

(16.) 'Suffer not, that, by your fault, the transcendent benefits of the Christian religion should be despised and profaned by the Gentile nations.' Kop. See 2 Cor. 6:3. Rom. 7:13. *Evil spoken of.* 'Blasphemeth': he brought into calumny, contempt, and hatred, which must necessarily arise from the mutual strifes and disputes of those who profess a religion of peace.' Bl. What missionary has not found the wars of Christendom, the bickerings of sects, and the conduct of Christian nations, in their intercourse with each other, or with Mahometans, heathen, and savages, a great hindrance to the progress of the Gospel? What minister has not known those, who put these things as stumbling-blocks in the way of their own conversion and profession of religion? Ep.

(17.) Joy, &c.] 'Virtue, peace, spiritual joy, &c.: a divinely spiritual benevolence and humanity.'

KOPPE.

V. 19-23. The apostle proceeded to inculcate an assiduous and persevering attention to the interests of peace among Christians; and to all those things by which mutual edification might be promoted.—It is obvious how groundless the scruples of some serious persons from this text, (23) concerning the Lord's supper, must be; for the apostle's argument is about a subject entirely of another nature.

SCOTT.

(19.) 'Therefore let us strive after peace and mutual edification.' Sr.

(20.) For.] 'On account of... All (meats) are clean; yet they are hurtful to him, who enteth so as to stumble thereby.'

Id.

(21.) 'Nor (to do anything) whereby, &c. . . or hath cause of offence.' Sr. 'From Augustin, it appears, that wine was scrupled at by some weak brethren, on the same ground as was meat; viz. that what was publicly sold, had sometimes been used at libations, to the honor of the heathen gods.' Bl.

The apostle's precept justifies and recommends a 'temperance pledge.' See Perm. Temp. Documents.

Ep.

(22, 23.) Have it.] 'Keep it. Damned.] Condemned . . . because it is not, &c.' Sr. 'For whatever is not done, with a full persuasion that it is lawful, is sinful.' Bl. Hence the heinous sin of the Pharisees and their modern imitators, who make that matter of conscience to their



23 And he that <sup>v</sup> doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever <sup>w</sup> is not of faith is sin.

## CHAP. XV.

1 The strong must bear with the weak. 2 We may not please ourselves, 3 for Christ did not so, 7 but receive one the other, as Christ did us all, 8 both Jews, 9 and Gentiles. 15 I will excuse his writing, 28 and promise to see them, 30 and requesteth their prayers.

WE then that are strong ought to <sup>a</sup> bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please *his* neighbor <sup>b</sup> for *his* good to edification.

3 For even Christ <sup>c</sup> pleased not himself: but, as it is written, <sup>d</sup> The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

4 For whatsoever <sup>e</sup> things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

<sup>v</sup> or, discerneth and putteth a difference between meats. w He. 11:6. a c 14:1. Ga. 6:2. b 1 Co. 9:19. Phil. 2:4,5. c Jn. 6:38. d Ps. 69:9. e 1 Co. 10:11. 2 Ti. 3:16,17.

have not such clearness, are entangled in endlessly. Comp. Gal. 6:4. How happy were it for the church, if those that have a clearness in disputable things, would be satisfied to have it to themselves before God, and not impose those things on others, and make their terms of communion; than which nothing is more opposite to Christian liberty, nor more destructive both to the peace of churches and the peace of consciences.

*Before God.* The end of such knowledge is, that, being satisfied in our liberty, we may have a conscience void of offence toward God, and let that content us.

5. One rule more is laid down here, a general one, v. 19. Here is the sum of our duty towards our brethren. (1.) We must study mutual peace. Many wish for peace, and talk loud for it, that do not follow the things that make for peace, but the contrary. Meekness, humility, self-denial, and love, are the springs of peace; the things that make for our peace. (2.) We must study mutual edification. The former makes way for this. We cannot edify one another, while we are quarrelling and contending; but many ways we may edify one another,

**PRACT. OBS.** It is of great importance for us to distinguish, between those who are 'weak in faith,' and such as are strangers or enemies to the faith; for we ought to receive, and affectionately to cherish the former, but to beware of the latter, and withdraw from them. —The distinctions between meats and days were at least as important, as many things which are now controverted among us; and it was far more certain on which side the truth was found. Yet men might be real Christians, who could not receive even the apostle's determination on the controversy. Surely then we should enlarge our candor, beyond those narrow limits, which many would assign to it.—All who love the Gospel ought to shun such persons as excite divisions among those who appear to love Christ and hate sin; and such shibboleths, as tend to multiply, to perpetuate, or to exasperate them. Let us, then, cease to despise, or judge one another, especially about things which are not essential to salvation; let us beware, that we do not attempt to reject, or to cast down, those whom God has received and will uphold; or to judge and condemn his conscientious servants.—It behooves us, to remember our own unworthiness and proneness to err, and liability to be deceived through inattention, ignorance, prejudices, and corrupt passions; and the numerous instances, in which we have been entirely mistaken, when confident that we were in the right; and, endeavoring to be 'fully persuaded' in our own minds about our conduct, as regulated according to the Holy Scriptures, let us leave others to the judgment

pupils, which is not so in itself. See *Wayland*, on Conscience. El. Mor. Sci. This [passage] will, in no respect, justify Augustin for inferring from hence, that the very best acts of the heathens were only *splendid sins*. For (as *Mackn.*) though they had not faith in any [?] the divine revelation, they might have the faith mentioned by the apostle; i. e. a firm persuasion of the lawfulness of their own actions, and an inclination to please God, by doing what they thought right and acceptable to Him. *Wolf, Carpz.*, &c. however, make it an aphorism, extending to faith of every kind, not only historical, and of conscience, but also of *doctrine*; as when used of a *justifying* faith. But all this is more easily asserted than proved.

NOTES. CHAP. XV. V. 1. Vs. 1—13. belong to ch. 14. *Infirmities.* 'I. e. false and superstitious opinions.' *Bl.*

if we seriously mind it; by good counsel, reproof, instruction, example; and we have need to be edified; and therefore must study to promote the spiritual growth one of another. None so strong but they may be edified; none so weak, but may edify; and while we edify others, we benefit ourselves.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—4. The apostle, in this ch., continues the discourse of the former, concerning mutual forbearance in indifferent things; and so draws towards a conclusion of the epistle. He here lays down two precepts, with reasons to enforce them, showing the duty of the strong Christian to consider and condescend to the weakest.

I. We must bear the infirmities of the weak, v. 1. All have infirmities; but the weak are more subject to them than others; the weak in knowledge or grace. We must consider these; not trample on them, but encourage them, and bear with their infirmities. If through weakness they judge and censure us, and speak evil of us, we must bear with them, pity them, and not have our affections alienated from them; we must also bear their infirmities, by sympathizing with them, concerning ourselves for them, ministering strength to them, as there is occasion. That is bearing one another's burdens.

II. We must not please ourselves, but our neighbor, v. 1, 2. We must deny our own humor, in consideration of our brethren's weakness and infirmity. Not please ourselves; but please our brethren. The design of Christianity is, to soften and meek the spirit, to teach us the art of obliging and true complaisance; to comply with all that we have to do with, as far as we can with a good conscience. Christians should study to be pleasing. How amiable and comfortable a society would the church of Christ be, if Christians would study to please one another, as now we [often] see them industrious to cross, and thwart, and contradict one another!

We are to please our neighbor, not in everything, but for his good, especially for the good of his soul; for his profit, and the profit of others, to edify the body of Christ, by studying to oblige one another. Now observe the reason, why Christians must please one another; for even Christ pleased not Himself. The self-denial of our Lord Jesus is the best argument against the selfishness of Christians. Observe,

1. Christ pleased not Himself. His whole life was a self-denying, self-displeasing life.

of God. Let us be careful not to abuse our liberty, by an inexpedient use of things lawful, or by venturing on such as are doubtful. For sneerily, it cannot be an imitation of the love of Christ, who died for the weak as well as the strong, if we put any personal satisfaction in competition with the spiritual good of our brethren. Let us follow after all those things, which tend to peace and mutual edification; let us study a holy indifference about the most lawful earthly enjoyments, and learn to renounce whatever comes in competition with the welfare of our brethren, the peace of the church, and the glory of God. Numbers venture into places, and upon actions, against which their own consciences revolt; because they are induced by inclination, or emboldened by the example of those, who, on some account, have obtained the reputation of pious men. But whether the things themselves be lawful or not, as they cannot 'do them in faith,' as they hesitate concerning the lawfulness of them, and as they cannot heartily pray for the presence and blessing of God in them, they are condemned for indulging themselves in a doubtful case. But few are so happy, as to be quite free from self-condemnation, in everything which they allow; a sound judgment, a simple heart, a tender conscience, and habitual self-denial, are necessary for the enjoyment of this comfort; and most of us see frequent cause to condemn ourselves in this respect, and, by daily repentance, faith, and prayer, to deprecate the merited condemnation of our God. 1 Cor. 6:12—17. 8:7—13. 10:23—28. 1 Jn. 5:18—24. SCOTT.

V. 2, &c. For his, &c.] 'In respect to that which is good, into edification. For Christ did not seek his own pleasure . . . on Me,' (so it was with Him.) 'Now whatsoever things were written in ancient times, were written for our instruction; that through patience, and the admonition of the Scriptures, we might obtain hope.' Sr. *Bl.* understands 'hold fast our hope.'

V. 3. The reproaches, &c.] 'How inexpressible a grief and burden the sight of so much wickedness must have been to so pure and holy a mind, as that of our Lord, it is impossible for us fully to conceive: but were we more like Him, we might, and we certainly should, enter more into it, than we generally do.' *Dodd.* Heb. 2:16—18—The quotation is from the LXX., which exactly tr. the Heb. Ps. 69:9. SCOTT.



5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded <sup>f</sup>one toward another, <sup>g</sup> according to Christ Jesus;

6 That ye may with one <sup>h</sup> mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also <sup>i</sup> received us, to the glory of God.

8 Now I say, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm <sup>j</sup> the promises *mude* unto the fathers;

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, <sup>k</sup> For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

f 1 Co. 1:10. h Ac. 4:24,32. j Ac. 3:25,26.  
g or, after the i Ep. 1:6. k Ps. 18:49.  
example of.

written, that we might know what to hope for from God, on what grounds, and in what way. This should recommend the Scripture to us, that it is a special friend to Christian hope. *Patience* and *comfort* suppose trouble and sorrow; such is the lot of the saints in this world; and were it not so, we should have no occasion for *patience* and *comfort*. But both these befriended that hope, which is the life of our souls. *Patience* works *experience*, and *experience* *hope*, that maketh not ashamed, *ch. 5:3-5*. The more patience we exercise under troubles, the more hopefully we may look through our troubles; nothing more destructive to hope than impatience. And the *comfort of the Scriptures*, that comfort which springs from the Word of God, is likewise a great stay to hope, as it is an earnest in hand of the good hoped for. The Spirit, as a *Comforter*, is the Earnest of our inheritance.

V. 5, 6. The apostle, having delivered two exhortations, before he proceeds to more, intermixes here a prayer for the success of what he had said. Observe,

I. The title he gives to God; the *God of patience and consolation*, who is both the Author and the Foundation of all the patience and consolation of the saints; from whom it springs, and on whom it is built. He is the *God of patience and consolation*; 1. As a God that bears with us, and comforts us; is not extreme to mark what we do amiss, but is ready to comfort them that are cast down; to teach us so to testify our love to our brethren, and by these means to preserve and maintain unity, by being patient one with another, and comfortable one to another. Or, 2. As a God that gives us *patience and comfort*. He had spoken, v. 4. of patience and comfort of the Scriptures; but here he looks up to God, as the God of *patience and consolation*: it comes through the Scripture, but from God as the fountain-head. The more patience and comfort we receive from God, the better disposed we are to love one another. Nothing breaks the peace more than an impatient, and peevish, and fretful, melancholy temper.

II. The mercy he begs of God; *Grant you to be like minded one towards another, ac-*

*ording to Jesus Christ*. 1. The foundation of Christian love and peace is laid in like-mindedness; a consent in judgment, as far as you have attained; or, however, a concord and agreement in affection. 2. This like-mindedness must be *according to Christ Jesus*; his precept, law, pattern, example, v. 3. Or, 'Let Christ Jesus be the Centre of unity. Agree in the truth, not in any error.' It was a cursed concord and harmony of those who were of one mind, to give their power and strength to the beast, Rev. 17:13. like the Babel-builders, who were one in their rebellion, Gen. 11:6. The method of our prayer must be, first for truth, and then for peace; for such is the method of the wisdom that is from above; *it is first pure, then peaceable*. That is to be like-minded according to Christ Jesus. 3. Like-mindedness among Christians, according to Christ Jesus, is the gift of God; and a precious gift it is, for which we must earnestly seek unto Him.

III. The end of his desire; that God may be glorified, v. 6. This is his plea with God in prayer, and is likewise an argument with them to endeavor it. We should have the glory of God in our eye in every prayer; therefore our first petition, as the foundation of all the rest, must be, *Hallowed be thy name*. Like-mindedness among Christians, is in order to our glorifying of God;

1. With one mind and one mouth. It is desirable that Christians should agree in everything, that so they may agree in this, to praise God together. It tends very much to the glory of God, who is one, and his name one, when it is so. It will not suffice, that there be one mouth, but there must be one mind; and God will scarcely be glorified, where there is not a sweet conjunction of both.

2. As the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is his N. T. style. God must be glorified, as He has now revealed Himself in the face of Jesus Christ. The unity of Christians glorifies God, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; because it is a kind of counterpart or representation of the oneness that is between the Father and the Son. We are warranted so to speak of it, and, with that in our eye, to desire it, and pray for it, from John 17:21. *That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee*: a high expression of the honor and sweetness of the saints' unity. And it follows, *That the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me*; and so God may be glorified as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

V. 7-12. The apostle here returns to his exhortation to Christians. What he says here, v. 7. is to the same purport with the former; but the repetition shows how much his heart was upon it. He had exhorted the strong to receive the weak, *ch. 14:1*. here, *Receive one another*. Those that have received Christ by faith, must receive all Christians by brotherly love; though poor, persecuted, and despised, though it may be matter of reproach and danger to you to receive them; though in the less weighty matters of the law they are of different apprehensions, though there may have been occasion for private piques; yet, laying aside these, and the like considerations, *receive ye one another*. The reason is taken, as before, from

the condescending love of Christ to us; *As Christ also received us, to the glory of God*. Can there be a more cogent argument? Those words, *to the glory of God*, may refer both to Christ's receiving us, which is our pattern; and to our receiving one another, which is our practice according to that pattern.

I. Christ hath received us *to the glory of God*. The end of our reception by Christ, is, that we might glorify God in this world, and be glorified with Him in that to come. We are called to an eternal glory by Christ Jesus, John 17:24. See to what He received us, to a happiness transcending all comprehension; see for what He received us, for his Father's glory; He had that in his eye in all the instances of his favor to us.

II. We must receive one another *to the glory of God*. And nothing more conduces to his glory, than the mutual love and kindness of those that profess religion; comp. v. 6. the different apprehension they had about meats and drinks, took rise in distinction between Jews and Gentiles. Now, to prevent and make up this difference, he shows how Jesus Christ hath received both Jews and Gentiles, Eph. 2:14-16.

1. He received the Jews, v. 8. Let not any think hardly or scornfully therefore of those that were originally Jews, and still, through weakness, retain some savor of their old Judaism: for, (1.) Jesus Christ was a *Minister of the circumcision*. He was Himself circumcised, and made under the law, and did in his own person preach the Gospel to the Jews alone, who were of the *circumcision*,—this makes the nation more considerable than otherwise they appear. (2.) He was so for the *truth of God*. What He preached to them, was, the *truth*; for He came into the world to bear witness to the truth, John 18:37. And He is Himself the Truth, John 14:6. Or, for the *truth of God*, i. e. to make good the promises given to the patriarchs, concerning the special mercy God had in store for their seed. The best confirmation of promises is the performance of them; and when Messiah the Prince appeared, in the fulness of time, as a *Minister of the circumcision*, all these promises were confirmed, and the truth of them was made to appear; for in Christ all the promises of God, both those of the O. T. and those of the New, are Yea, and in Him Amen. Understanding by the *promises made to the fathers*, the whole covenant of grace, darkly administered under the O. T., and brought to a clearer light now under the Gospel; it was Christ's great errand to confirm that covenant, Dan. 9:27. He confirmed it by shedding the blood of the covenant.

2. He received the Gentiles likewise, v. 9-12.

(1.) Observe Christ's favor to the Gentiles, in taking them in to praise God,—the work of the church on earth, and the wages of that in heaven. One design of Christ was, that the Gentiles likewise might be converted; that they might be one with the Jews in Christ's mystical body. A good reason why they should not think the worse of any Christian for his having been formerly a Gentile; for Christ hath received him. Now observe, how their conversion is here expressed; *That the Gentiles might glorify*

V. 5, 6. 'Now may the God who giveth patience and admonition, give to you mutual unity of sentiment: [others understand, of minds and wills, affections.] *Mouth*.] Voice.' Sr. 'Grot. observes, there is here reference to the ancient doxologies and litanies.' BLOOMF.

V. 7. *Receive . . . received*.] 'Deal kindly with . . . dealt kindly with you, unto the glory of God.' Sr. 'This cl., if referred to "receive one another," will signify, 1. "in honor of God;" q. d. "and this your mutual love will redound to the honor of God." And so *Chrys.*, *Theoph.*, and many early modern comtrs. 2. It may, with most recent comtrs., be referred to what immediately preceded, i. e. "hath placed you in a state of salvation, by which you may finally attain to the glory of God." This *Koppe* thinks preferable, on account of v. 8 and 9, in which is declared how Christ hath promoted the glory of God, viz., by receiving Jews and Gentiles into his favor.—That this passage has a reference to church communion, has been shown by several able comtrs.; [and, in that

view, deserves most serious attention.] See *Doddr.*, *Mackn.*, or *Slade.* Bl. 'That there were schismatic assemblies among them at this time, is evident from 16:17. Besides, in v. 6. he expressly enjoins them to worship God jointly in the public assemblies.' MACKNIGHT.

V. 8-13. In order to unite Jews and Gentiles in one church, and conciliate them to each other, Jesus Christ assumed his human nature among the Jews; He was 'made under the law,' and was circumcised.—(10) *Rejoice, &c.*] 'The Heb. interpreters tr. the original, (*Deut.* 32:43.) "Celebrate, O ye nations, his people." . . . Certainly the nations could not cordially extol the people as happy and blessed; unless, affected with their felicity, they acknowledged and worshipped the same God. . . . The apostle, as it were, seals all his preceding exhortations with prayers; that the Lord would bestow on them the things which he commanded.' *Beza.*—(9) *For this cause, &c.*] From the Sept. and accords to the Heb. (2 *S.* 22:50. *Ps.* 18:49.)—(10) *Rejoice, &c.*]



10 And again he saith, <sup>1</sup> Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again, <sup>m</sup> Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

12 And again Esaias saith, <sup>n</sup> There shall be a root ° of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all <sup>p</sup> joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

14 And I myself also am persuaded <sup>q</sup> of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all <sup>r</sup> knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because <sup>s</sup> of the grace that is given to me of God,

l De. 32:43. o Re. 5:5. 22:16. 1:12.  
m Ps. 117:1. p c. 14:17. r t Co. 8:1,7,10.  
n Is. 11:1,10. q He. 6:9. 2 Pe. s Ep. 3:7,8.

*God for his mercy.* A periphrasis of conversion. They shall have matter for praise, even the *mercy* of God. The greatest mercy of God to any people, is, the receiving of them into covenant with Himself: and it is good to notice God's mercy in receiving us. They shall have a heart for praise. They shall *glorify God for his mercy*: converting grace works in the soul a disposition to speak and do all to the glory of God; God intended to reap a harvest of glory from the Gentiles, who had been so long turning his glory into shame.

(2.) The fulfilling of the Scriptures in this. The favor of God to the Gentiles was not only mercy, but *truth*. There were many prophecies concerning them, which related to the calling of them, and the embodying of them in the church: some of which he mentions, because it was a thing the Jews were hardly persuaded to believe. Thus, by referring them to the O. T., he labors to qualify their dislike of the Gentiles, and so to reconcile the parties at variance. [1.] It was foretold, that the Gentiles should have the Gospel preached to them, '*I will confess to Thee among the Gentiles*, v. 9. quoted from Ps. 18:49. Taking the words as spoken by David, they were spoken when he was old and dying, and he was not likely to confess to God among the Gentiles: but when David's Psalms are read and sung among the Gentiles, to the praise and glory of God, he that was once the sweet psalmist of Israel, is now the sweet psalmist of the Gentiles. Converting grace makes people greatly in love with David's Psalms. Taking them as spoken by Christ, the Son of David, it may be understood of his spiritual indwelling by faith in the hearts of all the praising saints. *I live, yet not I, but Christ lieth in me*; so, I praise, yet not I, but Christ in me. [2.] That the Gentiles should rejoice with his people, v. 10. This is quoted from that song of Moses, Deut. 32:43. The partition-wall being taken down, the Gen-

tiles are welcome to rejoice with his people. Being brought into the church, they share in its sufferings, are companions in patience and tribulation; to recompense which, they share in the joy. [3.] That they should praise God, v. 11. This is quoted from Ps. 117:1. The Gentiles had been, for many ages, praising their idols, but now are brought to praise the Lord: and this, David in spirit speaks of. In calling on all the nations to praise the Lord, it is intimated, that they shall have the knowledge of Him. [4.] That they should believe in Christ, v. 12. quoted from Is. 11:10. Where observe, 1st. The revelation of Christ, as the Gentiles' King, here called *the Root of Jesse*; comp. Is. 11:1. Christ was David's Lord, and yet without his Son, Mat. 22:45. *the Root and Offspring of David*, Rev. 22:16. Christ, as God, was David's Root; as Man, David's Offspring. His rising to reign over the Gentiles, explains the figurative expression of the prophet, *He shall stand for an Ensign of the people*. 2dly. The recourse of the Gentiles to Him; *In Him shall the Gentiles trust*. Faith is the soul's confidence in Christ, and dependence on Him. The method of faith, is, first to seek unto Christ, as to one proposed to us for a Savior; and, finding Him able and willing to save, then to trust in Him. Or, this seeking to Him is the effect of a trust in Him; seeking Him by prayer, and pursuant endeavors.

Jews and Gentiles being thus united in Christ's love, why should they not be united in one another's love?

V. 13. Here is another prayer directed to God, as the *God of hope*; and, as the former, v. 5, 6, for spiritual blessings, the best blessings, and to be first and chiefly prayed for. He addresses himself to God, as the *God of hope*. That hope is but fancy, and will deceive us, which is not fastened on God, (as the Goodness hoped for, and the Truth hoped in,) and which is not of his working in us. We have both together, Ps. 119:49. 1 Pet. 1:3. He asks of God,

1. *That they might be filled with all joy and peace in believing*. Joy and peace are two of those things in which the kingdom of God consists, ch. 14:17. Joy in God, peace of conscience, both arising from a sense of our justification; see ch. 5:1, 2. Joy and peace in our own bosoms would promote a cheerful unity and unanimity with our brethren. Observe, True, heavenly, spiritual joy is *filling* to the soul; it has a satisfaction in it answerable to the soul's vast and just desires. Nothing more than this joy, only more of it, even the perfection of it in glory, is the desire of the soul that hath it, Ps. 4:6, 7. 36:8. 63:5. 65:4. It is attainable by prayer, and believing; true, substantial joy, is the fruit of faith. 1 Pet. 1:8. It is owing to the weakness of our faith, that we are so much wanting in joy and peace. Observe, It is *all* joy and peace; all sorts of true joy and peace: for such we must ask when we come to God by prayer, we must enlarge our desires; open thy mouth wide, and He will fill it.

2. *That they might abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost*. The joy and peace of believers, arise chiefly from their hopes. What is laid out on them, is but little, compared with what is laid up for them; therefore the more hope they have, the more joy and peace they have. Christians should

desire and labor after an abundance of hope, such hope as will not make ashamed. This is through the *power of the Holy Ghost*. The same almighty power that works grace, begets and strengthens this hope. Our own power will never reach it; therefore where this hope is, and is abounding, the blessed Spirit must have all the glory.

V. 14—16. Here,

I. He commends these Christians with the highest characters that could be. It was not a piece of idle flattery and compliment, but a due acknowledgment of their worth, and of the grace of God in them. Paul had no personal acquaintance with them, and yet he says, he was *persuaded* of their excellences, only by hearsay: we must be forward to believe good concerning others: it is safer to err on that hand. Now observe, what he commended them for:

They were full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to admonish one another: from their goodness therefore more likely to take in good part what he had written, and to put it in practice; especially that which relates to their union, and to the healing of their differences. Goodness and knowledge are a very rare and an excellent conjunction: the head and heart of the new man. All knowledge, all necessary knowledge, all the knowledge of those things which belong to their everlasting peace. To be able to admonish one another, a further gift is requisite, even the gift of utterance. Those that have *goodness and knowledge*, should communicate what they have for the use and benefit of others. How gladly would ministers leave off their admonishing work, if people were able and willing to admonish one another!

II. He clears himself from the suspicion of intermeddling needlessly with what did not belong to him, v. 15. Observe how affectionately he speaks to them; *My brethren*, v. 14. and again, *brethren*, v. 15. He calls them all his *brethren*, to teach them brotherly love, one to another. Probably, he wrote the more courteously to them, because, being Roman citizens, living near the court, they were more genteel, and made a better figure. He acknowledges he had written *boldly in some sort*; in a manner that looked like boldness and presumption, and for which some might perhaps charge him with taking too much upon him. But then consider,

1. He did it only as their remembrancer; *as putting you in mind*. Such humble thoughts had Paul of himself, though he excelled in knowledge; he would only pretend to remind them of that in which they had formerly been by others instructed. So Peter, 2 Pet. 1:12. 3:1.

2. He did it as the apostle of the Gentiles. It was in pursuance of his office, v. 16. Because of this grace given him, he thus laid out himself among the Gentiles, that he might not receive that grace of God in vain. Christ received, that He might give; so did Paul. Places and offices must be filled up with duty. It is good for ministers to be often remembering the grace that is given unto them of God. Paul was a minister, the *minister of Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. 4:1. a minister to the Gentiles. So God had appointed him, Acts 22:21. So Peter and he had agreed, Gal. 2:7—9. He ministered the *Gospel of God* to the end, *that the offering up, or sacrificing, of the Gentiles, might be accept-*

From the Heb.; the Sept. has, 'Rejoice, ye heavens, with Him.' (Deut. 32:43.)—(11) *Praise the Lord, &c.* Nearly from the Sept. which accords to the Heb. (Ps. 117:1.)—(12) *There will be, &c.* Nearer to the Sept. than the Heb. (Is. 11:10.) 'That which is out of the Heb. rightly tr., "for an ensign," is by the Greek trs. rendered, . . . "to bear rule;" because it is the office of the king to defend, and by arms to protect, his people.' Hammond. (8) *A minister.* Diakonon.

(9) *Was.* 'Became.' Sr. *Of the circumcision.* 'Sent to the circumcised.'

(10) *Confess to thee.* 'Celebrate thy praise.'

(12) 'And One shall arise to be a Leader of thee; upon Him shall the Gentiles place their hopes.' Sr. 'The word *root* is often used by the Heb. writers for *sucker*, springing from the root. Comp. Ros. on Is. in loc., or see Is. 53:2. Hos. 14:6.'

(13.) *Power.* 'Influence. Ghost.' Spirit.

V. 14. 'With this v. begins the 4th, and the last part of this epistle, viz. the *epilogus*, or *conclusion*, which, it may be observed, is written with admirable prudence and wisdom. In the former part of it, Paul addresses endearing language to the Romans, and apologies, v. 14 to end of ch. In the latter part, (ch. 16.) he testifies his love at large, and in various ways.' CARPZ. 'Moreover, I myself am well persuaded concerning you, that ye are full of kindness, abounding in all knowledge, and able to, &c.' Sr. 'Ye yourselves also; which (as Pisc. obs.) involves the farther sense, "even without my admonition; even though I admonish you." Filled with all knowledge necessary to mutual instruction. Carpz., compare 1 Jn. 2:20, 27.'

V. 15. *In some, &c.* 'When reminding you concerning some things.'

STUART.

BLOOMF.

TURNER.



16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the 'offering' up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

17 I have, therefore, whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

21 But, as it is written, 'To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.'

t or, *sacrificing*. x He. 5:1. a c. 1:14—15.  
u Is. 65:20. y Ga. 2:8. b 2 Co. 10:13—16.  
v Ac. 20:32. z Ac. 19:11. c Is. 52:15.  
w 2 Co. 12:1, &c.

able, that God may have the glory which would redound to his name by the conversion of the Gentiles. Observe how the conversion of the Gentiles is expressed; it is the offering up the oblation of the Gentiles: in which the Gentiles are looked upon, either, as the priests, offering the oblation of prayer and praise, and other acts of religion: or, as themselves the sacrifice offered up to God by Paul, in the name of Christ; a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, ch. 12:1. Paul preached to them, and dealt with them; but that which made them sacrifices to God, was, their sanctification; and that was not his work, but the work of the Holy Ghost. None are acceptably offered to God, but those that are sanctified: unholy things can never [as such] be pleasing to the holy God.

V. 17—21. The apostle here gives some account of himself and of his own affairs. Having mentioned his ministry and apostleship, he goes on further to magnify his office

in the efficacy of it; and to mention, to the glory of God, the great success of his ministry, and the wonderful things God had done by him; for encouragement to the Christian church at Rome, that they were not alone in the profession of Christianity; but though, compared with the multitude of their idolatrous neighbors, they were but a little flock, yet, up and down the country, there were many that were their companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. It was likewise a great confirmation of the truth of the Christian doctrine, that it had such strange success, and was so far propagated by such weak and unlikely means; such multitudes captivated to the obedience of Christ by the foolishness of preaching. Therefore Paul gives them this account; which he makes the matter of his glorying; not vain glory, but holy, gracious glorying; which appears by the limitations; it is through Jesus Christ. Thus does he centre all his glorying in Christ; he teaches us to do so, 1 Cor. 1:31. Ps. 115:1. And it is in those things which pertain to God. The conversion of souls is one of those things that pertain to God, and therefore is the matter of Paul's glorying; not the things of the flesh.

Whereof I may glory, &c. I would rather read it; Therefore I have a rejoicing in Christ Jesus, concerning the things of God; or those things that are offered to God,—the living sacrifices of the Gentiles, v. 16. Paul would not boast of things without his line, nor take the praise of another man's work, as he might have done when he was writing to distant strangers, who perhaps could not contradict him; a faithful man dares not lie, however he be tempted; dares be true, however he be terrified.

Now, in this account of himself, we may observe,

I. His unwearied diligence and industry in his work. He was one that labored more abundantly than they all.

1. He preached in many places; from Jerusalem, even unto Illyricum, many hundred miles distant. We have, in the Acts, an account of Paul's travels. There we find him, after he was sent forth, Acts 13. laboring in Seleucia, Cyprus, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycania, ch. 13, 14. afterward travelling through Syria and Cilicia, Phrygia, Galatia, Mysia, Troas; and thence called over to Macedonia, and so into Europe, ch. 15, 16. Then at Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, and the parts adjacent. Illyricum is the country now called Sclavonia, bordering on Hungary. Some take it for the same with Bulgaria; others for the lower Panno-

nia: however, it was a great way from Jerusalem. Nor did he do his work slightly, but he fully preached the Gospel of Christ, Acts 20:27. Keeping back nothing that was necessary for them to know.

2. He preached in places that had not heard the Gospel before, v. 20, 21. He brake up fallow ground. Those who preached in Judea, had, on this account, a much easier task than Paul, who was the apostle of the Gentiles; for they entered into the labors of others, John 4:33.

Paul, being a hardy man, was called out to the hardest work; there were many instructors, but Paul was the great father; many that watered, but Paul was the great planter: he ventured the first onset in many places, and suffered greatly for it. He mentions this as a proof of his apostleship; for the office of the apostles was especially, to bring in those that were without, and to lay the foundations of the new Jerusalem; see Rev. 21:14. Not but that Paul preached in many places where others had been at work before him; but he was in care not to build upon another man's foundation, lest he should thereby disprove his apostleship, and give occasion to those who sought occasion to reflect on him: for this, he quotes Is. 52:15. The prophet has it, much to the same purport.

II. The great and wonderful success he had in this work. It was effectual to make the Gentiles obedient. The design of the Gospel is, to bring people to be obedient; it is not only a truth to be believed, but a law to be obeyed. Now how was this great work wrought?

1. Christ was the principal Agent. He does not say, 'which I worked,' but, 'which Christ wrought by me,' v. 18. Whatever good we do, it is not we, but Christ by us, that does it, Phil. 2:13. Is. 26:12. Paul takes all occasions to own this, that the whole praise might be transmitted to Christ. Paul was a very active minister; By word and deed, i. e. by his preaching, and by the miracles he wrought to confirm his doctrine; or his preaching and his living. This is according to Christ's example, who began both to do and teach, Acts 1:1. Through mighty signs and wonders: by the power, or in the strength, of signs and wonders. These made the preaching of the Word so effectual, being the appointed means of conviction, and the divine seal affixed to the gospel-charter, Mark 16:17, 18.

2. The power of the Spirit of God made this effectual, and crowned all with the desired success, v. 19. (1.) The power of the Spirit in Paul, as in the other apostles, for the working

V. 16. *The minister.* [A minister. Ministering.] Performing the office of a priest in respect to. Sanctified.] Purified. Sr. "That I should bestow my especial attention on the conversion of the Gentiles to the religion of Christ," seems to be the simple sense: but the apostle has here expressed himself by a formula, [full of sacrificial terms,] derived from the Jewish religion, in order thereby to impress more strongly, on the minds of the Jewish Christians, the weight and dignity of the apostolical office. He therefore does not call himself *diakonos*, [servant, minister,] but *leitourgos*, a sacred minister, a priest; which is the perpetual signification of *leitourgein* and its derivatives in the Gr. vers. of the N. T. (See *Schl. Lex.*) Nor does he say, that it is his office *kērusssein*, [to herald, proclaim,] but *hierourgein*, [sacredly administer as a priest,] the Gospel. Finally, he does not make the fruit of his labor consist in this, "that he may turn the nations or Gentiles to God, through the Holy Spirit:" but in this, "that there may be an offering of the Gentiles acceptable, sanctified, (holy, offered to God,) in the Holy Spirit," i. e. themselves be offered to God, as a victim sacred and acceptable to Him. 12:1. Kor. "But there is a more profound meaning also: and Carpz. remarks, that *hierourgein ton euaggelion tou Theou* means to preach the Gospel, as a priest of the N. T., that Gospel, by which men are consecrated unto God, and made living sacrifices, holy, well-pleasing to God. 12:1. Phil. 2:17. So *Theoph.* from *Chrys.* "According to the law, the sacrifices were sanctified, or made acceptable to God, by being salted and laid on the altar by the priest, Mat. 23:19. Mk. 9:49. So these idolaters, converted to the true God, were, through the apostle's labors, offered by him to God, as a free-will offering; and were sanctified, or made acceptable to God, by the influences and gifts of the Holy Ghost, which the apostle had conferred upon them. By these gifts, the Gentiles were strongly confirmed in the faith of the Gospel, and cleansed from their former impurities. This was an exercise of the priests' office, and a sanctification of the offering, far more excellent, effectual, and acceptable, than the sanctification and offering of the sacrifices of beasts prescribed in the Law." Mackn.

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BLOOMF.

V. 17. 'I have, then, cause of glorying in Christ Jesus, as to, &c. For I do not venture to mention anything which, &c.' Sr. 'If I mistake not, we shall, in the interpretation of this v. 18. as on many other occasions, find, that in the ancient fathers alone, is preserved the pure, unadulterated truth. "When he had said, I am the minister of the Gospel to all nations, he adds, "I am not arrogant, nor do I arrogantly boast anything of those things which I have not done; yet not I did, but Christ effected, using me as an instrument. For whether I speak aught, talking and philosophizing of the things of heaven, or labor, exercising a divine conversation, or performing miracles, all are of Christ." *Theoph.* So *Chrys.* (&c., *Theod.*, *Phot.*, &c. The obscurity, in fact, is occasioned by a remarkable brevity of expression, arising in modesty.' BLOOMF.

V. 18—21. From Jerusalem in a very extensive circle of several thousands of miles, even to Illyricum, on the borders of Italy, he 'had fully preached the Gospel of Christ,' and instructed large multitudes, with great accuracy, in that holy doctrine. Nor was he disposed, in general, to 'build on the foundation' laid by other ministers.—Probably, in mentioning this, he may glance on those false apostles, who crept into churches which he had planted, and endeavored to establish their own reputation and influence there, by alienating the hearts of his own converts from him, their spiritual father; while, like some in our own days, ... they built on his grand and noble foundation, an edifice of wood, and hay, and stubble. 1 Cor. 3:12. *Doddr.* (18) *By word and deed.* 'By the manner in which He hath enabled me to speak, and the things which He hath strengthened me to perform.' *Id.* As there is no preposition in the Greek, the clause may be rendered, 'In word and deed,' and applied, as above, to the obedience of the Gentiles; and this seems better to accord with the general language of Scripture.—(21) *To whom he, &c.* From the Sept. which accords to the Heb. Is. 52:15. SCOTT.

(21.) 'But in accordance with what is written, They shall see, to whom no declaration was made respecting Him, &c.' Sr. *As it, &c.* 'I. e. "Thus was fulfilled in my case," &c. Plainly an accommodation of Is. 52:15. [referred to the Messiah, by common consent of the Jewish



22 For which cause also I have been <sup>d</sup> much hindered <sup>e</sup> from coming to you ;

23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you :

24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be <sup>f</sup> brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled <sup>g</sup> with your *company*.

25 But now I go <sup>h</sup> unto Jerusalem, to minister unto the saints.

26 For it hath pleased them of <sup>i</sup> Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

<sup>d</sup> or, many ways, f Ac. 15:3. 3 Ju. 6. h Ac. 19:21.  
or, oftentimes. g with you. i 2 Co. 8:1. 9:2, 12.  
e 1 Th. 2:18.

of those miracles, Acts I:8. Or, (2.) The power of the Spirit in the hearts of those to whom the Word was preached, and who saw the miracles, making these means effectual to some, and not to others. It is the Spirit's operation that makes the difference. This is an encouragement to faithful ministers, who labor under the sense of great weakness and infirmity, that it is all one to the blessed Spirit to work by many, or by those that have no power. The same Almighty Spirit that wrought with Paul, often perfects strength in weakness, and ordains praise out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. This success which he had in preaching, is that which he here rejoices in; for the converted nations were his joy, and crown of rejoicing: and he tells them of it, not only that they might rejoice with him, but that they might be the more ready to receive the truths which he had written to them, and to own him, whom Christ had thus signally owned.

V. 22—29. Paul here declares his purpose to come and see the Christians at Rome. On this head, his *matter* is but common and ordinary, appointing a visit to his friends; but the *manner of his expression* is gracious and savory, very instructive, and for our imitation. Even our common discourse should have an air of grace; by that it will appear what country we belong to. It should seem, Paul's company was very much desired at Rome. And should the apostle of the Gentiles be a stranger, at the metropolis of the Gentile world?

I. He carefully excuses it, that he never came yet; to keep in with his friends, and prevent any exceptions against him.

1. He assures them he had a great desire to see them; not to see Rome, its pomp and splendor, the emperor's court, the philosophers and learned men there, but *you*, v. 23. a company of poor, despised saints in Rome, hated of the world, but loving God, and he-

loved of Him, the excellent in whom He delighted, Ps. 16:3. And he had a special desire to see them, because of the great character they had in all the churches for faith and holiness; as men that excelled in virtue. This desire Paul had had for *many years*, and yet could never compass it. The providence of God wisely overrules the purposes and desires of men. Yet all that delight in God, have *the desire of their heart* fulfilled, Ps. 37:4. though all the *desires* in their heart be not humored.

2. He tells them, that *therefore* he could not come to them, because he had so much work elsewhere. *For which cause*, i. e. because of his labors in other countries. Observe, in this, (1.) The gracious providence of God about his ministers, casting their lot, not according to their contrivance, but according to his own purpose. Ministers purpose, and their friends purpose concerning them, but God overrules both, and orders the journeys, removes, and settlements, of his faithful ministers as He pleases. (2.) The gracious prudence of Paul, in bestowing his time and pains there, where there was most need. Had Paul consulted his own ease, wealth, and honor, the greatness of the work would never have hindered him from seeing Rome, but would rather have driven him thither, where he might have had more preferment, and taken less pains. But Paul sought the things of Christ. The Romans needed not the physician, so as other poor places that were sick and dying. While men and women were every day dropping into eternity, and their precious souls perishing for lack of vision, it was no time for Paul to trifle. It concerns us all to do that first, which is most needful. True grace teaches us to prefer that which is necessary before that which is unnecessary, Luke 10:41, 42. And Christian prudence teaches us, to prefer that which is more necessary, before that which is less so. This, Paul mentions as a sufficient, satisfying reason. We must not take it ill of our friends, if they prefer necessary work, which is pleasing to God, before unnecessary visits and compliments, which may be pleasing to us. In this, as in other things, we must deny ourselves.

II. He promised to come and see them shortly, v. 23, 24, 29. *Having no more place in these parts*, i. e. in Greece, where he then was. The whole of that country being more or less leavened with the savor of the Gospel, and pastors settled, Paul had little more to do there. He was one that went through with his work, and yet then did not think of taking his ease, but set himself to contrive more work. Observe,

1. How he forecasted his intended visit. He would see them on his way to *Spain*. It appears by this, Paul intended to plant Christianity even there: whether ever he fulfilled this purpose, is not certain. Many of the best expositors think he did not, but was hindered in this, as he was in others of his purposes. He did indeed come to Rome, but he was brought thither a prisoner, and whether he went after is uncertain: but several of his epistles which he wrote in

prison, intimate his purpose to go eastward, and not toward Spain.

But, observe his prudence in what he proposed, *I trust to see you*: not, 'I am resolved I will,' but, 'I hope I shall.' We must purpose all our purposes, and make all our promises, in like manner, with a submission to the Divine Providence; not boasting ourselves of to-morrow, because we know not what a day may bring forth, Prov. 27:1. Ja. 4:13—15.

2. What he expected in this intended visit: that they would bring him on his way toward Spain, then a province of the empire, well known to the Romans, who had a great correspondence with it; therefore they might be helpful to Paul in his voyage thither; and not only out of respect to him, but out of respect to the souls of those poor Spaniards, Paul was going to preach to. What Paul desired, was, their *company* and conversation. He intimates, he intended to make some stay with them, for he would be filled with their company; not just look at them, and away: and yet he thinks their converse so pleasant, he should never have enough of it; it is but *somewhat* filled, he should leave them with a desire of more. The communion of saints, in this world, is but partial. He expected, v. 29. to come in the *fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ*. Observe, Concerning what he expected from them he speaks doubtfully, *I trust*, &c. But concerning what he expected from God, he speaks confidently. It was uncertain whether he should come or no, but *I am sure when I do come, I shall come in the fulness*, &c. We cannot expect too little from man, nor too much from God. Comp. ch. 1:11. *That I may impart unto you some spiritual gift*. When Paul would raise their expectation of something great and good in his coming, he directs them to hope for the blessing of the Gospel, spiritual blessings, knowledge, and grace, and comfort. When ministers are fully prepared to give out, and people fully prepared to receive, this blessing, both are happy.

III. He gives them a good reason why he could not come and see them now; because he had other business on hand, which required his attendance, upon which he must first make a journey to Jerusalem, v. 25—28. He gives a particular account of it, to show the excuse was real. He was going to Jerusalem, as the messenger of the church's charity to the poor saints there.

1. Concerning this charity itself. He speaks of that on this occasion,—probably, to excite the Roman Christians to do the like, according to their ability. Examples are moving, and Paul was very ingenious at begging, not for himself, but for others.

(1.) It was intended for the poor saints at Jerusalem, v. 26. It is no strange thing for saints to be poor. It seems, those at Jerusalem were poorer than other saints, either, because the wealth of that people in general was now declining, as their utter ruin was hastening on; or, because the famine that was over all the world, in the days of Claudius Cesar, did in a special manner prevail

interpreters,) to the apostle's own case. This quotation exactly agrees with the Sept.; but in the Heb. there is nothing for *peri autou* [respecting Him].

V. 22—29. It is not known, whether the apostle ever accomplished his intended journey into Spain. But as Clement, writing from Rome, in the first century, said that he preached... to the utmost bounds of the west; it is most probable he did. He, however, went to Rome in a far different manner than he had proposed. Acts 21:—28:—(25) *I go unto Jerusalem*. Here at length... but fetched from three different writings, we have obtained the several circumstances, ... which the epistle to the Romans brings together; viz. a contribution in Achaia for the Christians at Jerusalem; a contribution in Macedonia for the same purpose; and an approaching journey of Paul to Jerusalem. We have these circumstances, each by some hint in the passage in which it is mentioned, or by the date of the writing in which the passage occurs, fixed to a particular time; and we have that time, turning out, on examination, to be in all the same; namely, towards the close of Paul's second visit to the peninsula of Greece. Paley.—This fixes the writing of this epistle to a particular part of the narrative of the apostle's labors; but there is some difficulty, in determining in what year those events

took place. Some date them A. D. 53, others A. D. 60, or 61. Sc.

(23.) *Place*.] 'There being no longer any sufficient or urgent occasion for my ministerial labors.'

(24.) 'Whenever I may go into Spain, I hope, as I pass on, to see you, and to be sent on my way thither, when I am in part first satisfied with your company.' Sr. 'After I have been partly refreshed.' Bl. 'The Roman Catholics maintain, not only that this contemplated journey to Spain (where we may perhaps allow them simply, that James first planted the Gospel) was made by Paul, but that he staid there two years. "Writers of the most credit (as Origen and Eusebius), do not mention the journey, even where they might have been expected to;" says Koppe. But he has not proved that the ancient fathers, (as Clem. Rom., Hippol., Athan., and Chrys.) spoke from mere opinion, founded on the present passage; and Theod. usually draws from very pure sources. To me, it appears highly probable, that Clem. Rom., Theod., and the others, had positive authority, now lost, for their assertion, [that Paul did take this journey.] I know not how else to account for so general a persuasion of it, as is found in the early ecclesiastical writers.'

(25.) *Minister unto*.] 'Supply the wants of.'



27 It hath pleased them, verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

28 When, therefore, I have performed this, and have sealed to them this <sup>k</sup> fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

29 And I am sure that, when <sup>l</sup> I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the <sup>m</sup> love of the Spirit, that ye strive <sup>n</sup> together with me in your prayers to God for me;

31 That <sup>o</sup> I may be delivered from them that <sup>p</sup> do not believe in Judea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

f 1 Co. 9:11.  
l Phi. 4:17.  
i c. 1:11, 12.

m Phi. 2:1.  
n Col. 4:12.  
o 2 Th. 3:2.

p or, are disobedient.

in Judea, a dry country; and God having called the poor of this world, the Christians smarted most by it. This was the occasion of that contribution, mentioned Acts 11:28—30. Or, because the saints at Jerusalem suffered most by persecution; for, of all people, the unbelieving Jews were most inveterate in their rage and malice against the Christians, wrath being come on them to the uttermost, 1 Thess. 2:16. The Christian Hebrews are particularly noted as having had their goods spoiled, Heb. 10:34. in consideration of which this contribution was made for them; this example here should teach us, as we have ability, and as there is occasion, to stretch out the hand of our charity to all of the household of faith, though in places distant from us: in personal instances of poverty, every church should maintain their own poor, yet sometimes, when more public instances of poverty are presented as objects of our charity, though a great way off from us, we must extend our bounty.

(2.) It was collected by them of Macedonia, the chief of whom were the Philippians; and Achaia, the chief of whom were the Corinthians; two flourishing churches, though yet in their infancy, newly converted to Christianity. And I wish the observation did not hold, that people are commonly more liberal at their first acquaintance with the Gospel, than afterward; that, as well as other instances of the first love, and the love of the espousals, being apt to cool and decay after a while. It seems, they of Macedonia and Achaia were rich and wealthy, while they at Jerusalem were poor and needy; Infinite Wisdom ordering it so, that some should have what others want, and so this mutual dependence of Christians one on another might be maintained for mutual benefit.

It pleased them. This intimates, how ready they were to it; they were not pressed or constrained to it, but they did it of their

own accord; and how cheerful they were in it, they took a pleasure in doing good; and God loves a cheerful giver. To make a certain contribution, a communication; in token of the communion of saints, and their fellow membership; as in the natural body one member communicates to the relief, and succor, and preservation of another, as there is occasion. Everything that passes between Christians, should be a proof and instance of that common union which they have one with another in Jesus Christ. Time was, when the saints at Jerusalem were on the giving hand, and very liberal they were, when they laid their estates at the apostle's feet for charitable uses, and took special care that the Grecian widows should not be neglected in the daily ministration, Acts 6:1, &c. And now that the providence of God had turned the scale, and made them necessitous, they found the Grecians kind to them; for the merciful shall obtain mercy.

(3.) What reason there was for it, v. 27. And their debtors they are. Alms are called righteousness, Ps. 112:9. Being but stewards of what we have, we owe it there where our great Master orders us to dispose of it: but here there was a special debt owing; the Gentiles were greatly beholden to the Jews, and were bound in gratitude to be very kind to them. From the stock of Israel came Christ Himself, the prophets, and apostles, and first preachers of the Gospel; also the lively oracles, and the law out of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Thus did the Gentiles partake of their spiritual things, therefore their duty is, they are bound in gratitude, to minister unto them in carnal things: it is the least they can do: to minister as unto God in holy things; so the word signifies. A conscientious regard to God, in works of charity and almsgiving, makes them an acceptable service and sacrifice to God, and fruit abounding to a good account. Paul mentions this, probably, as the argument he had used with them to persuade them to it, and it is an argument of equal cogency to other Gentile churches.

2. Concerning Paul's agency in this business. He could himself contribute nothing; silver and gold he had none, but lived on the kindness of his friends; yet he ministered unto the saints, v. 25. by stirring up others, receiving what was gathered, and transmitting it to Jerusalem. Paul's labor in this work is not to be interpreted as any neglect of his preaching-work; nor did Paul leave the Word of God, to serve tables; for beside that, Paul had other business in this journey, to visit and confirm the churches, and took this by the by; this was indeed a part of the trust committed to him, in which he was concerned to approve himself faithful, Gal. 2:10. Paul was one that laid out himself to do good every way, like his Master, to the bodies as well as the souls of people. Ministering to the saints is good work, and not below the greatest apostles. This, Paul had undertaken, therefore he resolves to go through with it, before he fell on other work, v. 28. He calls the alms, fruit, for it is one of the fruits of righteousness; it sprang from the root of grace in the givers, and redounded to the benefit and comfort of the receivers. And his sealing of it intimates his great care about it, that what was given might be kept entire, and not embezzled, but disposed of according to the design of the givers: an excellent pattern.

V. 30—33. Here we have,

1. Paul's desire of a share in the prayers of the Romans for him, expressed very earnestly, v. 30—32. Paul was a great apostle, yet begged the prayers of the meanest Christians, not here only, but in several other of the epistles. He speaks like one that knew himself, and would hereby teach us how to value the effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous. How careful should we be, lest we do anything to forfeit our interest in the love and prayers of God's praying people!

1. Observe why they must pray for him. He might suspect they would forget him, having no personal acquaintance with him; therefore he urged them very closely, and begs it with the most affectionate obtestations, by all that is sacred and valuable; I beseech you, (1.) 'For the Lord Jesus Christ's sake; I am going about his work, and his glory is interested in the success of it: if you have any regard to Jesus Christ, and to his cause and kingdom, pray for me.' (2.) 'For the love of the Spirit. As a proof and instance of that love which the Spirit works in the hearts of believers one to another, pray for me; as a fruit of that communion which we have one with another by the Spirit, though we never saw one another.'

2. How they must pray for him; strive together. Those that would prevail in prayer, must strive in prayer. True love to our brethren should make us as earnest for them, as sense of our own need makes it for ourselves: He did not intend to excuse his praying for himself; no: 'Strive together with me, who am wrestling with God daily, on my own and my friends' account.' Paul and these Romans were distant in place, and likely to be so, yet they might join together in prayer.

3. What they must beg of God for him. He recommends himself to their prayers, with reference to three things. (1.) The dangers he was exposed to. The unbelieving Jews were the most violent enemies Paul had, and most enraged against him, and some prospect he had of trouble from them in this journey: therefore they must pray that God would deliver him. This prayer was answered in several remarkable deliverances of Paul, recorded Acts 21:22, 23, 24. (2.) His services; Pray, that my service which I have for Jerusalem, may be accepted of the saints. Why, was there any danger it would not be accepted? Can money be otherwise than acceptable to the poor? Yes, there was some ground of suspicion in this case; for Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles, and as the unbelieving Jews looked spitefully at him, which was their wickedness, so those that believed, were shy of him on that account, which was their weakness. (3.) His journey to them, v. 32. That I may come unto you with joy. If his present journey to Jerusalem proved unsuccessful, his intended journey to Rome would be uncomfortable. If he should not do good, and prosper, in one visit, he thought he should have small joy of the next; may come with joy, by the will of God. All our joy depends on the will of God. The comfort of the creature is in everything according to the disposal of the Creator.

II. Here is another prayer of the apostle for them, v. 33. The Lord of hosts, the God of battle, is the God of peace, the Author and Lover of peace. He describes God under this title here, because of the divisions

(27.) '(I say) it hath seemed good; for verily they are their debtors.' ST. 'But the *gar* [verily] is very elliptical. q. d. "For I acknowledge, it was of their own good pleasure, without necessity, and yet they are under moral obligation to them." BL. "They ought surely to assist them in temporal things." STUART.

(28.) 'Having safely delivered this money, as under seal. So the best comtrs.' BL., who comp. our word *consign*, and the words *consignare* and *consignatio* of Suet. and Quint. 'Now when this duty shall have been performed, and this fruit secured to them, I shall pass through the midst of you into Spain.' STUART.

(29, 30.) 'With abundant blessings . . . by our Lord . . . by the love . . . for me . . . in my behalf.' STUART.

V. 30—33. 'If Paul, saith Estius, might desire the prayers of the Romans, why might not the Romans desire the prayers of Paul? I answer they might desire his prayers, as he did theirs, by a letter directed to him to pray for them. He adds, If they might desire his prayers for them when living, why not when dead, and reigning with Christ? I answer, Because they could direct no epistle to him, or any other way acquaint him with their mind.' Whitby.—(30) *Love of the Spirit.* This may denote the love of the Holy Spirit shown to us, in quickening, sanctifying, and comforting us. Ps. 145:10. Col. 1:3—8. SEOTT.

(31.) 'How extreme their bigotry and rage was, appears from their behavior to him, at the very time here referred to, Acts 21—24.' POP.

(32.) *By the will of God.* 'If God will.' STUART.



33 Now the God of peace <sup>a</sup> be with you all. Amen.

## CHAP. XVI.

<sup>3</sup> Paul willeth the brethren to greet many, <sup>17</sup> and adviseth them to take heed of those which cause dissension and offences, <sup>21</sup> and after sundry salutations endeth with praise and thanks to God.

**I** COMMEND unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea :

2 That ye receive <sup>a</sup> her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you : for she hath been a succorer of many, and of myself also.

3 Greet <sup>b</sup> Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus :

q 1 Co. 14:33. He. 13:20. a Phi. 2:29. b Ac. 13:2, &c.

among them, to recommend peace to them. The O. T. blessing, was, *Peace be with you*; now, *The God of peace be with you*. They who have the fountain, cannot want any of the streams. *With you all*; both weak and strong. To dispose them to a nearer union, he puts them all together in this prayer. Those who are united in the blessing of God, should be united in affection one to another.

CHAP. XVI. Paul is now concluding this epistle, and does it with great affection. As in the main body of the epistle he appears

PRACT. OBS. The powerful of this world often domineer over the weak, but it ought not to be so in the church of Christ; *Matt. 20:24—28. Luke 22:24—27.* on the contrary, every one, in proportion as he is strong in faith and grace, should be tender, patient, and compassionate to the feeble-minded, to those 'who are compassed with infirmities;' perplexed in their views; harassed with scruples, doubts, and temptations; and unable to enjoy the peace and comfort of the Gospel, while they appear to walk in the obedience of it. He is the most advanced Christian, who is most conformed to Christ, and most willing to renounce his own ease or indulgence, and to endure reproach and suffering, after his example, and in prosecution of that great design, for which He shed his blood: and if, in doing this, he be reviled by zealots and uncharitable bigots, he may, with humble accommodation, use the Redeemer's words; 'the reproaches of them that reproach Thee, are fallen upon me.' For whatever is written, either in the O. or the N. T., is intended for our instruction, and may be applied to our case, for direction and encouragement; that, by patient faith, persevering obedience, and comfort derived from the Word of God, 'we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life as given to us in Jesus Christ.' The whole plan of redemption is so formed, that it is suited to reconcile us to one another, as well as to our gracious God; and we may say of every contention among Christians, 'An enemy hath done this.'—If we would have 'the God of hope to fill our hearts with all peace

NOTES. CHAP. XVI. V. 1, 2. Probably this epistle was sent by Phebe, according to its common ending; but these additions are of no authority, and sometimes palpably erroneous. SCOTT.

(1.) 'Koppe sees no reason to recede from the common opinion, that this ch. forms an integral part of the epistle, contrary to Semler. He says, the ch. is an *appendix*, or *postscript*; added, so *Wets.*, after the apostle had read the preceding part of the epistle to the church then at Corinth. Phebe seems to have been one of a company, travelling together [note, Acts 10:23.] to Rome; some suppose she had a cause at law, brought on appeal before the imperial court.' BLOOMF.—*Servant.* 'Diakonon: Deaconess.' ST. So *Bl.*, who adds, that, 'according to the constitution of the primitive church, there was an order of females attending on part of the public business of the church, which consisted of two kinds: 1. Elderly women (*presbutides*) presiding over, and superintending the morals of, the female Christians; and, 2. *diakonoi*, who discharged some of the offices of the ministry, as baptizing the female converts, and who also collected and distributed the contributions for the relief of sick and poor females, and discharged other minor offices. So *Plin.* Ep. 10, 97. says, "I thought it necessary to inquire by torture, of the two damsels, who were called *ministra* [servants, ministers, deaconesses], what the truth was." See *Voss.* there. *Wets.*, too, cites *Theod.*, H. E. 3, 10. "a certain woman, famous in reputation, and who had obtained the gift or office of deaconess;" and refers to *Jer.* on the passage. Consult, too, *Coteler.* and *Const. Apost.* 3, 15, and especially *Bingham*, Ant. Eccl. 11, 12., as also *Suic.* Thes. in v. *diakonos*; also *Doddr.* and *Taylor.*' BLOOMF. It would be difficult, perhaps, to give a good reason for the discontinuance of these orders; especially, now female education is so much more attended to than it then was. Ep. *Church which is at Cenchrea.* 'Nothing remains of the ancient Cenchrea (now, 1829), except the foundations of houses, and a part of the mole that defended the harbor; the spot is uninhabited. Calamakl, near which were the Isthmian games, is the port of entry for the head of the Gulf of Ægina; but the government of Greece gave Dr. Howe (as agent of the American Greek Committees) about 3,500 acres, including the port of Cenchrea, on which to found a colony, (called Washingtonia,) of such Greek families as were deprived, by the revolution, of home and livelihood; furnishing them, by means derived from America, with habitations, seed-corn, working-cattle, and agricultural implements. The superintendent aims to set an example of a regularly built village, and

to have been a very knowing man, so in these appurtenances of it he appears to have been a very loving man. So much knowledge and so much love are a very rare, but a very excellent and amiable composition: for what is heaven, but knowledge and love made perfect? It is observable, how often Paul speaks as if he were concluding, and yet takes fresh hold again. One would have thought that solemn benediction which closed the foregoing ch. should have ended the epistle; and yet here he begins again, and in this ch. repeats the blessing, v. 20. And yet he has something more to say; nay, again he repeats the blessing, v. 24. and yet has not done; an expression of his tender love: speaking him loth to part.

V. 1—16. Here we have such remembrances as are usual in letters between friends; and yet Paul, by the savoriness of his expressions, sanctifies these common compliments.

I. Here is the recommendation of a friend, by whom, so some, this epistle was sent,—one Phebe, v. 1, 2. it should seem, a person of quality and estate, who had business which called her to Rome, where she was a stranger; and, therefore, Paul recommends her to the acquaintance of the Christians there: an expression of his true friendship to her. Sincere courtesy and Christianity, agree well together.

1. He gives a very good character of her. (1.) As a *sister*, not in nature, but in grace; loving Paul, and beloved of him, with a pure, and chaste, and spiritual love, as a sister in

Christ Jesus, Gal. 3:28. Both Christ and his apostles had some of their best friends among the *devout* (and on that account *honorable*) women. (2.) As a *servant to the church at Cenchrea*, a servant by office, a stated servant, not to preach the Word, (that was forbidden to women,) but in acts of charity and hospitality; one of the widows, so some, that ministered to the sick, and were taken into the church's number, 1 Tim. 5:9. Cenchrea was a small, seaport town, adjoining to Corinth, about twelve furlongs distant. Some think there was a church there, distinct from that at Corinth; [so *Scott*]; though, being so near, it is very probable the church of Corinth is called the *church of Cenchrea*, because their place of meeting might be there, perhaps at Phebe's house, on account of the great opposition to them in the city, Acts 18:12. as at Philippi they met out of the city by the water-side, Acts 16:13. (3.) As a *succorer of many*, and particularly of Paul, v. 2. a good copy for women that have ability. Observe, Paul's gratitude in mentioning her particular kindness to him; and to myself also. Acknowledgment of favors is the least return we can make. It was much to her honor, that Paul left this on record; for wherever this epistle is read, her kindness to Paul is told for a memorial of her.

2. He recommends her to their care and kindness, as one worthy to be noticed with peculiar respect; 'Receive her in the Lord. Entertain her, bid her welcome.' This pass, under Paul's hand, could not but recommend

and joy in believing;' (and we can have no abiding holy joy and peace in any other way;) if we would 'abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost;' we must rely on and pray for the teaching and influences of that divine Agent; and we must be careful neither to grieve Him, by our evil tempers or sinful passions, nor to quench his sacred fire, by negligence, or procrastination; for thus we often bring darkness and discouragement on ourselves.—We should also hope the best of others, and commend what is good in their conduct.—It is indeed an honor to be employed by the Lord Jesus, and for Him to 'work by us, in those things which pertain to God,' and in rendering sinners 'obedient in word and deed.' But the whole glory must ultimately be referred to Him; ostentation should carefully be avoided in speaking on such subjects; and it is seldom expedient to mention ourselves, except as we want to obviate men's prejudices against our ministry, when they impede our usefulness.—There is a blessing, 'a fulness of blessing, in the Gospel of Christ,' which we should expect to know and to communicate, but with which numbers are totally unacquainted, and which most of us experience in a degree far beneath what the primitive believers did: especially the degree, in which the preaching and labors of ministers at present are blessed to the conversion of sinners, and the edifying, and rejoicing, and fruitfulness of believers, compared with that of former times, is lamentably small. We should, therefore, 'strive,' nay wrestle, 'together in our prayers' for each other. SCOTT.

well cultivated farms; and several houses have been erected, and a quantity of ground, on the site of the ancient Cenchrea, has been converted into a plantation of cotton. 36 to 50 families, who arrived poor, hungry, and naked, were prosperously settled in 1829. The surplus of this year's crop, says Dr. H. "will support a hospital of 50 beds; in 10 years we shall probably have 1000 souls; a large hospital will be supported; and a useful example given to the rest of Greece, of improved agriculture: the people around begin to appreciate the establishment. Our school is rapidly filling from the neighboring hamlets." Rev. Dr. Anderson. 'Observations on the Peloponnesus,' &c. Ed.

(2.) 'That ye may receive her as being in the Lord.' STUART. V. 3, 4. 'Priscilla and Aquila had originally been inhabitants of Rome. (Acts 18:2) . . . They were connected, therefore, with the place to which the salutations were sent. . . . Paul became acquainted with them at Corinth, during his first visit into Greece. They accompanied him on his return into Asia; were settled for some time at Ephesus; (Acts 18:18—26.) and appear to have been with Paul when he wrote from that place 1 Cor. (1 Cor. 16:19.) Not long after, . . . he went from Ephesus into Macedonia, and after "he had gone over those parts," proceeded from thence on his second visit into Greece; during which visit, or rather at the conclusion of it, this epistle was written. . . . We have, therefore, the time of Paul's residence at Ephesus, after he had written to the Corinthians; the time taken up by his progress through Macedonia; and his three months' abode in Greece; we have the sum of these three periods allowed for Aquila and Priscilla going back to Rome, so as to be there when the epistle was written. Now what this leads us to observe, is, the danger of scattering names and circumstances in writings like the present; how implicated they often are with dates and places; and that nothing but truth can preserve consistency. Had the notes of time in this epistle fixed the writing of it to any date, prior to Paul's first residence at Corinth, the salutation of Aquila and Priscilla would have contradicted the history; because it would have been prior to his acquaintance with these persons. If the notes of time had fixed it during that residence at Corinth; during his journey to Jerusalem, when he first returned out of Greece; or during his progress through the Lesser Asia, on which he proceeded to Antioch; an equal contradiction would have been incurred; because it appears, Acts 18:2—26. that during all this time, they were either with Paul, or abiding at Ephesus. Lastly, had the notes of time in this epistle, which we have seen to be perfectly



4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my well-beloved Epenetus, who is the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ.

6 Greet Mary; who bestowed much labor on us.

7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles; who also were in Christ before me.

8 Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.

9 Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ; and Stachys my beloved.

10 Salute Apelles, approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.

11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which labored much in the Lord.

13 Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord; and his mother and mine.

c 1 Cor. 16:19. d Gal. 1:22. e or, friends. f Ep. 1:1. 2 Ju. 1.

her to any Christian church. Assist her in whatsoever business she has need of you. It becomes Christians to be helpful one to another in their affairs, especially to be helpful to strangers; for we are members one of another.

II. Here are commendations and salutations to some particular friends among those to whom he wrote, more than in any other of the epistles, in divers of which there is something observable.

1. Concerning *Aquila and Priscilla*, a famous couple, that Paul had a special kindness for: originally of Rome, these were banished thence by the edict of Claudius, Acts 18:2. He calls them his *helpers in Christ Jesus*; by private instructions, and converse, furthering the success of Paul's public preaching; one instance whereof we

have in their instructing of Apollos, Acts 18:26. Nay, they did not only do much, but ventured much, for Paul; they have for my life laid down their own necks. Paul was in great danger at Corinth, while he sojourned with them; but they sheltered him, though they thereby made themselves obnoxious to the enraged multitude, Acts 18:12, 17. It was a good while ago they had done Paul this kindness; yet he speaks as sensibly of it, as if it had been but yesterday. Paul mentions this, to engage the Christians at Rome to be more kind to Aquila and Priscilla. He sends likewise greeting to the church in their house, v. 5. Perhaps a congregation of Christians used to meet at their house at stated times; and then, no doubt, it was, like the house of Obed-Edom, blessed for the ark's sake. Others think, the church was no more than a religious, pious, well-governed family, that kept up the worship of God. [Splendid and large churches were built when religion became more corrupt: the less promiscuous the congregation, the more edifying the meeting. Ed.] When Priscilla and Aquila were at Ephesus, though but sojourners there, yet there also they had a church in their house, 1 Cor. 16:19. A truly godly man will be careful to take religion along with him, wherever he goes. When Abraham removed his tent, he renewed his altar, Gen. 13:18.

2. Concerning *Epenetus*, v. 5. He calls him his *well-beloved*. Endearing language should pass among Christians, to express love, and to engage love. So he calls *Amplias*, beloved in the Lord, with true Christian love, for Christ's sake; and *Stachys*, his beloved: a sign that Paul had been in the third heaven, he was so much made up of love. Of *Epenetus* it is further said, he was the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ: not only one of the most eminent, but one of the first converted to the faith of Christ; one that was offered up to God by Paul, as the first-fruits of his ministry there; an earnest of a great harvest; for in Corinth, the chief city of Achaia, God had much people, Acts 18:10. The household of *Stephanas* is likewise said to be the first-fruits of Achaia, 1 Cor. 16:15. Perhaps *Epenetus* was one of that household.

3. Concerning *Mary*, and some others who were laborious in that which is good; Some think this *Mary* had been at some of those places where Paul was, though now removed to Rome, and had personally ministered to him; others think, Paul speaks of her labor as bestowed on him, because it

was bestowed on his friends and fellow-laborers, and he took what was done to them as done to himself.

4. Concerning *Andronicus and Junia*, v. 7. Some take them for a man and his wife, which the original will bear; and, considering the name of the latter, is more probable than that they should be two men, as others think, and brethren. Observe, They were Paul's *cousins*, akin to him; as *Herodion*, v. 11. Religion does not take away, but rectifies, sanctifies, and improves, our respect to our kindred; engaging us to lay out ourselves most for their good, and to rejoice in them the more, when we find them related to Christ by faith. They were his fellow-prisoners. Partnership in suffering, sometimes does much to unite souls and knit affection. We do not find in the Acts, any imprisonment of Paul before the writing of this epistle, but that at *Philippi*, Acts 16:23. But Paul was in prisons more frequent, 2 Cor. 11:23. in some of which, it seems, he met with his friends *Andronicus and Junia*. They were of note among the apostles; not so much, perhaps, because persons of estate and quality, as because eminent for knowledge, gifts, and graces, which made them famous among the apostles. Who also were in Christ before me, i. e. were converted to the Christian faith. How ready was Paul to acknowledge in others any kind of precedency!

5. Concerning *Apelles*, who is here said to be approved in Christ, v. 10. a high character!

6. Concerning *Aristobulus and Narcissus*; notice is taken of their household, v. 10, 11. Those of their household which are in the Lord, (as it is limited, v. 11.) that were Christians. How studious was Paul to leave none out of his salutations, that he had any knowledge of or acquaintance with! *Aristobulus* and *Narcissus* themselves, some think, were absent, or lately dead; others think they were unbelievers; so *Pareus*: and some think this *Narcissus* was the same with one of that name, who is frequently mentioned in the life of *Claudius*, as a very rich man that had a great family, but was very wicked and mischievous. It seems then, there were some good servants, or other retainers, even in the family of a wicked man; a common case, 1 Tim. 6:1. Comp. v. 2.

7. Concerning *Rufus*, v. 13. chosen in the Lord; a choice Christian, whose gifts and graces did evidence that he was eternally

incidental, compared with the notes of time in 1 Cor., fixed this epistle to be either contemporary with that, or prior to it, a similar contradiction would have ensued; first, because, when 1 Cor. was written, *Aquila and Priscilla* were along with Paul, 1 Cor. 16:19, and because, 2dly, the history does not allow us to suppose, that between the time of their becoming acquainted with him, and the writing of that epistle, . . . they could have gone back to Rome, so as to have been saluted in an epistle to that city; and then have come to Paul at Ephesus, so as to be joined with him, in saluting the church at Corinth. As it is, all things are consistent. *Paley*.—This passage is transcribed chiefly to give the less learned reader an idea and a specimen of the manner, in which able critics can, almost in all cases, detect literary forgeries, and establish the authenticity of ancient writings. This is peculiarly needful, in an age of bold infidelity; in which the most confident assertions are made, and suppositions advanced, without the shadow of proof; as if a literary forgery were attended with little difficulty, or danger of detection; when in fact it is nearly the most difficult thing, which can possibly be attempted, and scarcely ever escapes detection.

(3.) *Helpers*.] *Sunergos*: 'Fellow-laborers.' Sr. 'So Phil. 2:25. 1 Th. 3:2. and often in Paul's epistles. It is thought by *Vitr.* and *Schoett.*, that as the whole liturgy of the Jewish church was prescribed by the Christians, they also retained the titles of the ministers of the Word, except that of *Rabbi*, abolished by Christ Himself. "Now among these (continue they) is *chrb*, fellow-colleague, which meant one who had been advanced to the dignity of *Rabbi*; but, out of modesty, did not assume the name, till after the death of those who had advanced him to the honor. Thus, here, *Aquila and Priscilla* are called *chrbym*, since the title *apostle*, they could not, neither wished to assume." The learned contrs. then adduce many examples, which prove the existence of such an office in the Jewish church, but by no means sufficient to countenance their notion, that Paul here intended to invest *Aquila and Priscilla* with a title of ecclesiastical dignity. Nor is there any proof that *sunergos* was the word by which the *chrb* was expressed: and as in the other passages of the N. T. where *sunergos* occurs, there is no vestige of such an allusion, so I cannot think there is any here; and I can only see, in the notion, that too great fondness for system and hypothesis which distinguished *Light.*, *Vitr.*, *Rhenford*, *Schoett.*, and has more or

less all, who have dedicated themselves to any confined branch of study, as that of the Rabbinical writers.'

(4.) *Necks*, &c.] 'Strong and hyperbolic: lit. submitted their necks to the sword, [the usual mode of decapitation].'*Bl. St.* tr. 'Who exposed themselves to great danger in my behalf?' Perhaps Acts 13 or 19. is referred to. Give thanks.] 'Am grateful.' *St.*

V. 5. The words tr. 'greet' and 'salute,' are the same in the original (3).

(5.) *House*.] 'There is reason to think, the Christians would scarcely yet be allowed the privilege of having public buildings for religious worship. Comp. Acts 20:20.' *Bl. Of Achaia.* 'Of Asia.' 'So several ancient MSS. and some editions and fathers, also *Grot.*, *Mill*, *Beng.*, *Whit.*, *Kop.*, *Ros.*, *Griesb.* Indeed, it is so supported, by external and internal evidence, that there is every probability it is the true reading.' *Bl.*

V. 6—15. It is not known what *Mary* this was (6); or in what respect she had 'bestowed much labor' on the apostle and his friends. Of the persons mentioned [after *Andronicus and Junia*], nothing certain is known.—Probably *Aristobulus* was not a Christian. [But see the British tradition of him in *Taylor's Calm.*] *Rufus* seems to have been the son of *Simon the Cyrenian*.—It is remarkable, that the apostle, amidst all his engagements, should be so well acquainted with the names and characters of many Christians, residing in a city which he had never visited. Most of them, indeed, were such as he had previously been acquainted with; and they formed but a small part of the believers at Rome. Yet this shows his indefatigable diligence, and his attention to everything relative to the churches of the Gentiles. *Xenophon* states it as peculiarly admirable in *Cyrus*, that he so knew all the officers of his numerous army, that, in giving his orders, he addressed each of them by name; and that he made it his study, to be able to do this.—Paul's not mentioning *Peter*, powerfully militates against all the traditions of antiquity respecting *Peter*, on which so enormous a fabric of usurpation and superstition has been erected.

(7.) *Junia*.] 'A wife or sister of *Andronicus*?' *Bl.*, though *St.* tr. '*Junias*, masc. Ed. *Fellow-prisoners.*' [*Clemens Rom.* says, Paul was 7 times imprisoned. *Apostles.*] *Whit.*, *Kop.*, &c. take it to mean, they were eminent teachers, *apostolos* being sometimes used in the lower sense; as in 2 Cor. 8:23. Phil. 2:25. But there (in both) the article is not



14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

16 Salute one another with an holy <sup>s</sup> kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause <sup>h</sup> divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid <sup>i</sup> them.

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own <sup>j</sup> belly; and by good <sup>k</sup> words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

19 For your obedience is come <sup>l</sup> abroad <sup>m</sup> unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you <sup>n</sup> wise unto that which is good, and <sup>o</sup> simple concerning evil.

20 And <sup>p</sup> the God of peace shall <sup>q</sup> bruise <sup>r</sup> Satan under your feet <sup>s</sup> shortly. 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

g 1 Co. 16:20.	j Phil. 3:19.	o c. 15:33.
h 1 Pe. 5:14.	k Col. 2:4.	p or, tread.
i 1 Ti. 6:3-5.	l c. 1:8.	q Ge. 3:15.
1 Mat. 18:17.	m Mat. 10:16.	r Re. 12:10.
Co. 5:11.	n or, harmless.	s 1 Co. 16:23, &c. Re. 22:21.

chosen in Christ Jesus; one of a thousand for integrity and holiness. And his mother and mine; his mother by nature, and mine by Christian love and spiritual affection; as he calls Phebe his sister, and teaches Timothy to treat the elder women as mothers, 1 Tim. 5:2.

8. Concerning the rest, this is observable, that he salutes the brethren which are with them, v. 14. and the saints which are with them, v. 15. with them in family relations, with them in the bond of Christian communion. Lest any should find themselves aggrieved, as if Paul had forgotten them, he concludes with the remembrance of the rest, as brethren and saints, though not named. Among all these to whom Paul sends greeting, here is not a word of Peter; which gives occasion to suspect that he was not bishop of Rome, as the papists say he was; for if he was, we cannot but suppose him resident: or however, how could Paul write so long an epistle to the Christians there, and take no notice of him?

Lastly, He concludes with the recommendation of them to the love and embraces one of another; Salute one another with a holy kiss, a chaste kiss, in opposition to that which is wanton; a sincere kiss, in opposition to that which is treacherous and dissembling, as Judas', when he betrayed Christ with a kiss. He adds, in the close, a general salutation to them all, in the name of the churches of Christ, v. 16. This is one way of maintaining the communion of saints.

found, as here, which, I think, determines it to mean apostle in the high-sense: and so most commentators.

(15.) Julia.] 'Wife or sister of Philologus?' BL. 'Julias.' STUART.

V. 16. An holy kiss.] This expression of spiritual affection, to which the apostle exhorted them, in order to show that his epistle had produced its intended effect in promoting mutual love among them, has been supposed to have been used by men and women separately [i. e. men kissing men, women, women]; yet, as it seems afterwards to have been laid aside, because of abuse or slander, that opinion, perhaps, is groundless, and rather the effect of modern ideas of propriety, resulting from licentious refinement, than suited to the pure simplicity of those primitive times.—The apostle further informed them, that the several churches of Christ, which he had visited, desired to express their affectionate regard to them.

(16.) Kiss.] 'On this, much has been written by Grot., Whit., &c. who trace it to ancient oriental custom. and one borrowed from the synagogue. It appears, that in the apostolic age, the kiss was given to each

V. 17—20. The apostle having endeavored by his endearing salutations to unite them together, it was not improper to subjoin a caution, to take heed of those whose principles and practices were destructive to Christian love. And we may observe,

I. The caution itself, which is given in the most obliging manner that could be; I beseech you, brethren. He does not will and command, as one that lorded it over God's heritage, but, for love's sake, beseeches. How earnest, how endearing, are Paul's exhortations! He teaches them,

1. To see their danger; Mark them which cause divisions and offences. Our Master had Himself foretold, that divisions and offences would come; but had entailed a woe on those by whom they come, Mat. 18:7. against such we are here cautioned. Those who burden the church with dividing and offending impositions, who uphold and enforce those impositions, who introduce and propagate dividing and offending notions, which are erroneous or justly suspected; who, out of pride, ambition, affectation of novelty, or the like, causelessly separate from their brethren, and by perverse disputes, censures, and evil surmises, alienate the affections of Christians one from another; these cause divisions and offences, contrary to, or different from, (for that also is implied,) the doctrine which we have learned. Whatever varies from the form of sound doctrine which we have in the Scriptures, opens a door to divisions and offences. If truth be once deserted, unity and peace will not last long. Now, mark those that thus cause divisions; and especially that in them which causes them; those lusts on each side, whence come these wars and fightings. A danger discovered is half prevented.

2. To shun it; Avoid them. Shun all unnecessary communion and communication with them, lest you be leavened and infected by them. Some think, he especially warns them to take heed of the Judaizing teachers, who, under the covert of the Christian name, kept up the Mosaic ceremonies, and preached the necessity of them; who were industrious in all places to draw disciples after them, and whom Paul in most of his epistles cautions the churches to take heed of.

II. The reasons to enforce this caution.

1. Because of the pernicious policy of these seducers, v. 18. Observe, (1.) The Master they serve: not our Lord Jesus Christ; but their own belly, their carnal, sensual, secular interests; some base lust or other; pride, ambition, covetousness, luxury, lasciviousness, these are the designs they are really carrying on, Phil. 3:19. (2.) The method they take to compass their design; By good words and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple. Their words and speeches have a show of holiness and zeal for God, a show of kindness and love to those into whom they instil their corrupt doctrines, speaking them fair when they intend them the greatest mischief. By good words and fair speeches was Eve beguiled.

2. Because of the peril we are in, through our proneness and aptness to be inveigled and ensnared by them; 'For your obedience is come abroad unto all men; you are noted in all the churches for a willing, tractable,

complying people.' And, (1.) Therefore these seducing teachers would be the more apt to assault them. The devil and his agents have a particular spite at flourishing churches and flourishing souls. (2.) Though it were so, yet they were in danger from these seducers. This Paul suggests with great modesty and tenderness; not as one suspicious of them, but as one solicitous for them; 'Your obedience is come abroad unto all men; we grant that, and rejoice in it; I am glad therefore on your behalf.' Thus does he insinuate their commendation, the better to make way for the caution. A holy jealousy of our friends, may very well consist with a holy joy in them. 'You think yourselves a very happy people, and so do I too: but for all that you must not be secure; I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. You are a willing, good-natured people, but you had best take heed of being imposed on by those seducers.' Be wise unto that which is good, be skilful and intelligent in the truths and ways of God. Be simple concerning evil; so wise as not to be deceived, and yet so simple as not to be deceivers. It is a holy simplicity, not to be able to contrive, or palliate, or carry on, any evil design;—harmless, unmixed, inoffensive, 1 Cor. 14:20.

Paul was the more solicitous for the Roman church, that that might keep its integrity, because it was so famous; it was a city on a hill, so that an error prevailing there would be a bad precedent, and have an ill influence on other churches. As indeed it has since proved in fact; the great apostasy of the latter days taking its rise from that capital city. The errors of leading churches, are leading errors. When the bishop of Rome fell, as a great star from heaven, Rev. 8:10. his tail drew a third part of the stars after him, Rev. 12:4.

3. Because of the promises of God, that we should have victory at last; which is given to quicken and encourage, not to supersede, our watchful cares and vigorous endeavors. It is a very sweet promise, v. 20. The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet. (1.) The titles he gives to God; the God of peace, the Author and Giver of all good. God, as the God of peace, will restrain and vanquish all those that cause divisions and offences, and so break and disturb the peace of the church. (2.) The blessing he expects from God; a victory over Satan. If he mean primarily those false doctrines and seducing spirits spoken of before, of which Satan was the prime founder and author, yet, doubtless, it comprehends all the other designs and devices of Satan against souls, to defile, disturb, and destroy them; all his attempts to keep us from the purity of heaven, the peace of heaven, here, and the possession of heaven hereafter. It plainly alludes to the first promise of the Messiah made in paradise, Gen. 3:15. which is in the fulfilling every day, while the saints are enabled to resist and overcome the temptations of Satan; and will be perfectly fulfilled, when, in spite of all the powers of darkness, all that belong to the election of grace shall be brought triumphantly to glory. The victory shall be speedy; He shall do it shortly. Yet a lit-

other at the end of the liturgy, and before the communion service. It was understood to express mutual love, and in things spiritual, equality. This custom continued during a great part of the first century, and is noticed by several early ecclesiastical writers, cited by Grot.; as Justin, and Tertull. By the cause of its unrequited mention by the apostle (only here, and in 1 and 2 Cor., and Thess.) there is reason to think, that this custom, so liable to abuse and misrepresentation [e. g. the heathens' scandals, as to the promiscuous intercourse of the Christians at their evening meetings, see Doddr.], was laid aside at a very early period of the Christian church.

V. 17, 18. Mark.] 'Beware of. Belly.] Appetite. Good words.] Flattery.'

(18.) 'Perhaps reference is had to some Jews, who joined to an outward show of sanctity a sensual life, and sought no more than to make the profession of the Gospel a mean of obtaining a luxurious living. See Mich. and Ros.'

V. 20. 'May the God of peace bruise, &c.'



21 Timotheus my work-fellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

22 I Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, salute you in the Lord.

23 Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

25 Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ; (according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith;)

27 To God only wise, be glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen.

¶ Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe, servant of the church at Cenchrea.

t 1 Co. 1:14. v ver. 20. 26, 27.  
3 Ju. 1. w Ep. 3:20. Jude 24. y Mat. 28:19.  
u Ac. 19:22. x Ep. 1:9. Col. 1: z 1 Ti. 1:17. Ju. 25.

the while, and He that shall come will come. He hath said it, *Behold, I come quickly*. Some refer it to the happy ending of their contentions in true love and unity; others to the period of the church's persecutions in the conversion of the powers of the empire to Christianity, when the bloody enemies of the church were subdued and trampled on by Constantine, and the church under his government; it is rather to be applied to the victory all the saints shall have over Satan, when they come to heaven, and are for ever out of his reach; together with their present victories, through grace.

To this therefore he subjoins the benediction, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you*; the good will of Christ toward you, the good work of Christ in you. Paul, not only as a friend, but as a minister and an apostle, who had received grace for grace, thus with authority blesses them with this blessing, and repeats it, v. 24.

V. 21—24. As the apostle had before sent his own salutations to many of this church, and that of the churches round him to them all; he here adds an affectionate remembrance of them from some particular persons now with him, the better to promote acquaintance and fellowship among distant saints; and that the subscribing of these worthy names, known to them, might the more recommend this epistle. He mentions,

1. Some that were his particular friends,

PRACT. OBS. True religion teaches men humbly and frankly to acknowledge their obligations, even to those who in many respects are their inferiors.—If an apostle so kindly remembered each of those, who had bestowed labor upon him; much more will the Lord remember all the services which have been performed from love to Him and the Gospel. (Mat. 10:40—42. 25:34—40. Heb. 6:9, 10.)—Seniority in faith gives a real precedence; and the bonds of grace are nearer than those of nature.—Christ is as much present in the family-worship of those, who meet in his name, as in the more public assemblies of his saints. Believers are often found in those families, of which the principals are unconverted; and they should perform their several relative duties with cheerfulness, and a deference to their superiors, though strangers to the

V. 21. 'Paul, after closing with the usual formula, at the end of an epistle, in v. 17. here, having opportunity to add more, subjoins another postscript.'

V. 23. *Gaius*.] 'Not of Derbe, Acts 19:29, 20; but probably the one, 1 Cor. 14, afterwards, (so Origen) bishop of Thessalonica. *Host*.] Permitting them to assemble at his house: so the best comrs. *Chamberlain*.] *Oikonomos*: city-treasurer or steward; an office of great dignity. See *Jos.*, &c.'

V. 24. 'Added by Paul's own hand, as was his custom.' JASPIUS.

V. 25—27. By 'the only wise God,' we must understand the Deity, [256]

and, probably, known to the Roman Christians; *Timotheus*, whom Paul sometimes calls his *son*, as an inferior; but here his *work-fellow*, as an equal; such a respect does he put on him: and *Lucius*, probably Lucius of Cyrene, a noted man in the church of Anioch, Acts 13:1. as *Jason* at Thessalonica, where he suffered for entertaining Paul, Acts 17: 5, 6. and *Sosipater*, supposed to be the same with *Sopoter of Berea*, mentioned Acts 20:4. These last Paul calls his *kinsmen*; not only more largely, as they were Jews, but as they were in blood or affinity nearly allied to him. It seems, Paul was of a good family, that he met with so many of his kindred in several places.

2. One that was Paul's amanuensis, v. 22. *Tertius*; Paul used a scribe, not out of state, or idleness, but because he wrote a bad hand, which he excuses, when he wrote to the Galatians with his own hand, Gal. 6:11.—with what kind of letters. Perhaps this *Tertius* was the same with *Silas*; for *Silas* (as some think) signifies *the third*, in Hebrew, as *Tertius*, in Latin. *Tertius* either wrote as Paul dictated, or transcribed it fair.

3. Some others that were of note among the Christians, v. 23. It is uncertain whether this was *Gaius of Derbe*, Acts 20:4. or *Gaius of Macedonia*, Acts 19:29. or rather *Gaius of Corinth*, 1 Cor. 1:14. and whether any of these was he to whom John wrote his 3d epistle. *Erastus, the chamberlain of the city*, is another; he means of the city of Corinth, whence this epistle was dated. His estate, honor, and employment, did not take him off from attending on Paul, and laying out himself for the good of the church, it should seem, in the work of the ministry; for he is joined with *Timothy*, Acts 19:22. and is mentioned 2 Tim. 4:20. *Quartus* is also mentioned, as a *brother*; for as one is our Father, even Christ, so all we are brethren.

V. 25—27. Here the apostle solemnly closes his epistle with a magnificent ascription of glory to the blessed God, as one that terminated all in the praise and glory of God, and studied to return all to Him, seeing all is of Him, and from Him. He does, as it were, breathe out his soul to these Romans in the praise of God, choosing to make that the end of his epistle, which he made the end of his life. Observe here,

I. A description of the Gospel of God, which comes in as a parenthesis; Paul calls it *his Gospel*, because he was the preacher of it, and because he did so much glory in it. Some think he means especially that declaration, explication, and application, of the doctrine of the Gospel, which he had now made in this epistle: but it rather takes in all the preaching and writing of the apostles, among whom Paul was a principal laborer.

1. It is the *preaching of Jesus Christ*. Christ was the Preacher of it Himself; it began to be spoken by the Lord, Heb. 2:3. He is the subject-matter of it; the sum and substance of the whole Gospel.

2. It is the *revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, and by the*

scriptures of the prophets made known. The subject-matter of the Gospel is a *mystery*; our redemption and salvation by Jesus Christ, in the foundation, method, and fruits of it, are, without controversy, a great mystery.

(1.) This mystery was *kept secret since the world began*; *wrapped up in silence from eternity*, so some; it is no new and upstart notion, no late invention, but took rise from the days of eternity, and the purposes of God's everlasting love. Or, *since the world began*, so we tr. it; during all the times of the O. T. this mystery was comparatively kept secret, in the types and shadows of the ceremonial law, and the dark predictions of the prophets, which pointed at it, but so that they could not steadfastly look to the end of those things, 2 Cor. 3:13. Even the disciples of Christ themselves, before his resurrection and ascension, were very much in the dark about the mystery of redemption, their notion of it much clouded and confused; such a secret was it for ages. But,

(2.) It is now *made manifest*. The veil is rent, the shadows of evening are done away, and life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel, and the Sun of righteousness is risen on the world. But how is it made manifest by the *scriptures of the prophets*? Surely, because now the event has given the best exposition to the prophecies of the O. T. If the N. T. explains the Old, the O. T. very much illustrates the New. Thus the O. T. prophets *prophecy again*, now their prophecies are fulfilled, *before many people, and tongues*, Rev. 10:11.

(3.) It is manifested *according to the commandment of the everlasting God*, the purpose, counsel, and decree of God from eternity; and the commission and appointment given first to Christ, and then to the apostles, in the fulness of time. The attribute of eternity is here given to God very emphatically. He is *from everlasting, to everlasting*. Christ in the Gospel, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

(4.) It is *made known to all notions for the obedience of faith*. The extent of this revelation he often takes notice of; that whereas hitherto in Judah only God was known, now Christ is Salvation to the ends of the earth, to all notions.

II. A doxology to that God whose Gospel it is; ascribing *glory to Him for ever*, v. 27. acknowledging that He is a glorious God, and adoring Him accordingly, with the most awful affections; desiring and longing to be at this work with the holy angels, where we shall be doing it to eternity.

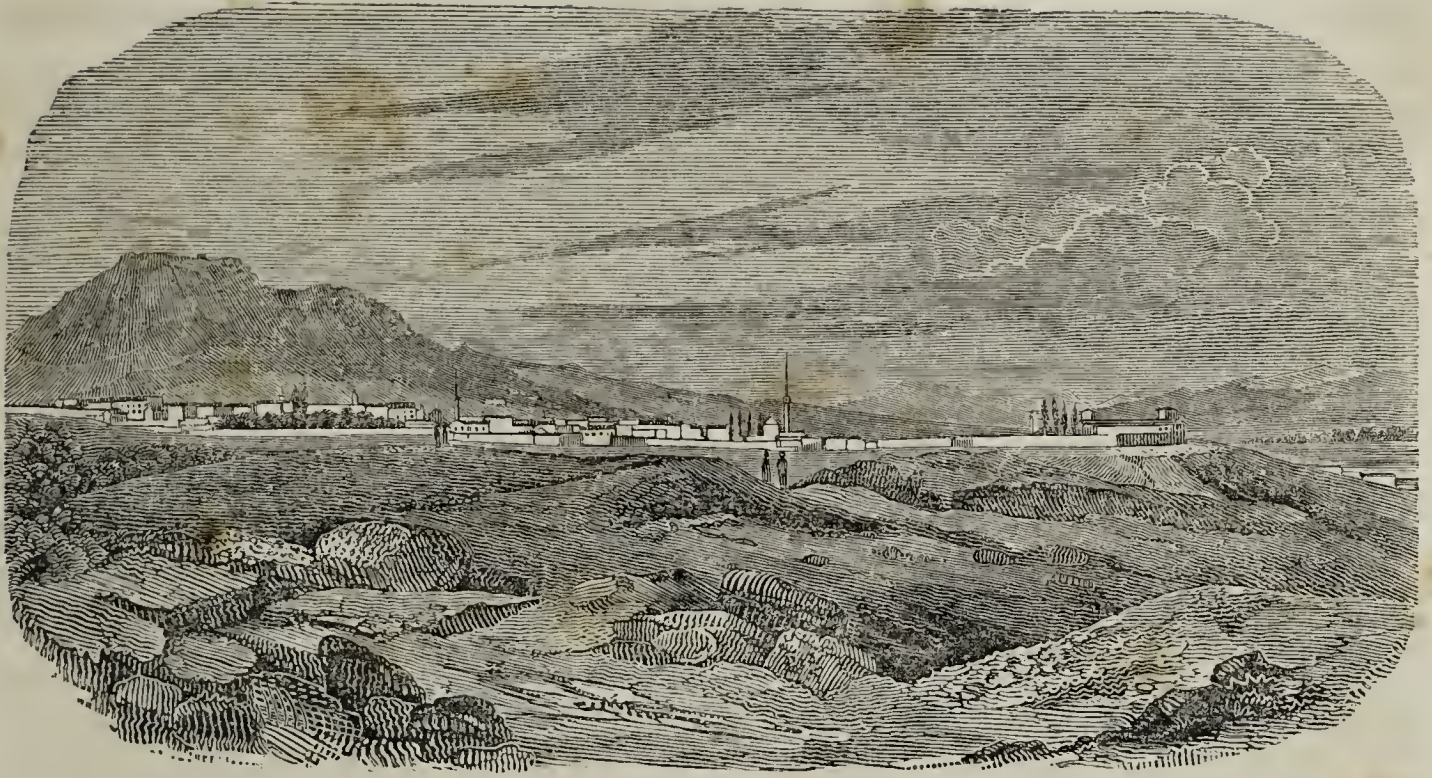
The Mediator of this praise is *Jesus Christ*. To God *only wise through Jesus Christ*; so some. It is in and through Christ, that God is manifested to the world as the only wise God; for He is the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God. Or, rather, as we read it, *glory through Jesus Christ*. All glory that passes from fallen man to God, so as to be accepted of Him, must go through the hands of the Lord Jesus.

grace of God; 1 Tim. 6:1—5. 1 Pet. 2:18—25. nor are they, on account of their low condition, less regarded or beloved by the Lord, or by his faithful and zealous ministers.—In order to maintain our communion with the Lord and with his saints uninterrupted; those persons must be marked with decided disapprobation, and avoided, who aim to prejudice believers against each other, to draw them off from faithful pastors, or to seduce them into strange doctrines, contrary to the simple truths of God's Word. For, notwithstanding their zeal and confidence, as if they alone were the servants of Christ, they evidently do not belong to our 'Prince of Peace;' but are the slaves of their selfish interests, sensual appetites, or ambition.—Every expression of the most endearing affection should be used among believers, but in the most pure and holy manner. SCOTT.

without respect to the distinction of Persons; or the Father, without excluding the Son or the Holy Spirit; who, in many scriptures, are shown to be coequal with the Father, in all divine perfections. But as the Godhead is revealed to us, in and by the incarnate Word, our divine Mediator; so we must in Him see the glory of God, and our adoration and worship must in the same way be presented. SCOTT.

(25.) *Mystery*.] 'Of the Gentiles' reception without the law: a doctrine of greater importance than any of the heathen "mysteries;" yet like them hitherto kept secret.' Mackn. 'Kept silent in ancient times.' St. 'For a very long time,' Grot. tr. Ed.





CORINTH.

AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
FIRST EPISTLE OF  
PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. Simon Brown.)

CORINTH\* was a place of great trade, and it is not to be wondered at, if a place so famous for wealth and arts should be infamous for vice. It was particularly noted for fornication, inasmuch that a *Corinthian woman* was a proverbial phrase for a strumpet, and, to *play the Corinthian*, was to play the whore, or indulge whorish inclinations. Yet in this lewd city did Paul, by the blessing of God on his labors, plant and raise a Christian church, chiefly among the Gentiles, as seems very probable from the history of this matter, Acts 18:1—18. compared with some passages in this epistle, particularly *ch. 12:2*. though it is not improbable many Jewish converts might be also among them; for we are told, *that Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house*, Acts 18:8. He continued in this city near two years, as is plain from Acts 18:11, 18. and labored with great success, being encouraged by a divine vision, assuring him *God had much people in that city*, Acts 18:9, 10. Nor did he use to stay long in a place, where his ministry met not with acceptance and success.

Some time after he left them, he wrote this epistle to them,† to rectify some gross disorders, which during his absence had been introduced, partly from the interest some false teacher or teachers had obtained amongst them, and partly from the leaven of their old *maxims* and *manners*, that had not been thoroughly purged out by the Christian principles they had entertained. Pride, avarice, luxury, lust, (the natural offspring of a carnal and corrupt mind,) are all fed and prompted by outward affluence. And with all these, either the body of this people, or some particular persons among them, are here

\* Corinth is situated on the verge of a plain (spread with 15 ruinous villages), somewhat elevated, and at a little distance from the southern extremity of the gulf, bearing its name. Its situation enabled it to avail itself of the commerce of the Saronic and Corinthian gulfs, and of the Ægean and Adriatic seas, and, anciently, it was the mart both of Europe and Asia. Being the most commercial and richest, it became the most dissolute of the Grecian cities. Upon this celebrated city the cup of cursing has long since been wrung out to its very dregs. Captured, plundered, and devastated, successively, by Roman, Goth, Hun, and Turk, it was reduced, before the revolution, to about 1000 Greek and 300 Turkish houses. (Turner.) During the revolution, lying as it did, in the highway of both Turk and Greek, on entering or leaving the Morea, (the isthmus is only 4 to 6 miles across, in its narrowest part,) and being the seat of a civil broil, it was pillaged and wasted by every party, and we found it a more perfect desolation, than almost any other modern city in Greece. Of six churches, the walls of one only were entire, and with the strictest truth may it be said, that not one private dwelling escaped destruction. The streets were obstructed by ruins or rank weeds. 150 or 200 families seek a shelter among the ruins of the city. But as both citadel and city are abundantly supplied with water, its position will help it to the first place, among the cities of modern Greece. From the foundations of a temple, on the highest point of the isolated mountain on the S. W., (shooting a thousand feet above the city, where stands the citadel, called the Acrocorinthus,) we had one of the finest prospects in the world. Regarding only the mere natural scenery, the mountains, plains, seas, and islands, there is a charm, which no man, gifted with reason and taste, can fail to perceive, or can perceive without admiration. But how many pages of interesting recollections, historical, [scriptural,] and classical, does a single glance here call up to the mind of the scholar! Every object seems a volume;—the isthmus of Corinth, with its games, and wall, and the numerous armies and barbaric hordes that have crossed it,—the Saronic gulf, and Ægina, and “unconquered Salamis,”—the Athenian acropolis, like a speck, at the foot of mount Hymettus,—the mountains of Attica, and others, great in song, round to

the long and lofty ridge of which Parnassus is a part,—the site, and plain, and gulf of Corinth,—the road to Nemca, to Mycenæ, to Argos, now seldom trod,—and the mountains of Arcadia and Achaia, with Cyllene, towering in snowy majesty above them all! Dr. ANDERSON.

† It is most evident, that the epistle was written by the apostle, when residing at or near Ephesus, and some time before he left that city:—16:5—9. learned men generally calculate, about A. D. 55, 56, or 57.—‘In the 9th year of Claudius, saith Orosius, in the 10th say others, in the 12th says Dr. Pearson, the Jews were banished from Rome; and Paul, coming to Corinth, finds Aquila and Priscilla newly come from thence to Corinth on that occasion. Acts 18:2. He stays there a year and a half (11;) . . . at Ephesus 3 years, Acts 20:31. and at the close of these 3 years, he writes this epistle. . . If, with Dr. Pearson, you begin them only at the 12th of Claudius, they will end in the 3d of Nero, A. D. 57.’ *Whitby*. But this learned writer has allowed no time for the apostle’s voyage, and journey to Jerusalem, and his progress through the churches of Syria, Galatia, and other parts of Asia Minor: and the same oversight has been fallen into by most of those, whom the author has had the opportunity of consulting, who date the epistle so early.—A. D. 54. Paul at Corinth, meets with Aquila and Priscilla. . . A. D. 56. Paul departs from Corinth, and passeth to Ephesus; thence he sets out towards Jerusalem, . . . he lands at Cesarea, goes down to Antioch, and comes into the regions of Galatia and Phrygia, confirming the disciples in all these places.—A. D. 57. Paul returns to Ephesus. . . A. D. 60. About this time a schism ariseth in the church at Corinth, which causeth Paul, (now in or about Ephesus,) to write his First Epistle to the Corinthians.’ *Index to Ato Oxf. Bib.*, 1734. This index seems to place the writing of the epistle subsequent to the tumult at Ephesus, which it certainly was not. *Notes*, 16:5—9 2 Cor. 1:8—11. It could not, however, be written long before the apostle left Ephesus; and probably the index, above quoted, does not allow too much time, for the apostle’s progress from Jerusalem to Ephesus. Acts 18:18—23. 19:8—12. This computation, therefore, the author has fixed on, as more satisfactory than any other which he has seen.



charged by the apostle. Their *pride* discovered itself in their factions, and the notorious disorders they committed in the exercise of their spiritual gifts. And this vice was not wholly fed by their wealth, but by the insight they had into the Greek learning and philosophy. Some of the ancients tell us, the city abounded with rhetoricians and philosophers; men naturally vain, full of self-conceit, and apt to despise the plain doctrine of the Gospel, because it did not feed the curiosity of an inquisitive and disputing temper, nor please the ear with artful speeches, and a flow of fine words.\* Their *avarice* was manifest in their lawsuits and litigations about *mine*, and *thine*, before heathen judges. Their *luxury* appeared in more instances than one, in their dress, in their debauching themselves even at the Lord's table, where the rich, who were most faulty on this account, were guilty also of a very proud and criminal contempt of their poor brethren. Their *lust* broke out in a most flagrant and infamous instance, such as had not been named among the Gentiles, nor spoken of without detestation,—that a man should have his father's wife, either as his wife, or so as to commit fornication with her. This indeed seems to have been the fault of a particular person; but the whole church were to blame, that they had this crime in no greater abhorrence, that they could endure one of such very corrupt morals, and of so flagitious a behavior, among them. And it is plain from other passages of the epistle, that they were not so entirely free from their former lewd inclinations, as not to need very strict cautions and strong arguments against *fornication*: see *ch. 6:9—20*. The pride of their learning had also carried many of them so far, as to disbelieve or dispute against the doctrine of the *resurrection*.

It is manifest from this state of things, that there was much that deserved reprehension, and needed correction, in this church. And the apostle, under the direction and influence of the Holy Spirit, sets himself to do both with all wisdom and faithfulness, and with a due mixture of tenderness and authority, as became one in so elevated and important a station in the church. †

It appears, that this letter to the Corinthians was written by Paul, in answer to one he had received from them, (7:1.) and that the seventh, and some of the following chs., are taken up in resolving certain doubts, and regulating certain points of order, concerning which the Corinthians had . . . consulted him. . . . Though . . . they had written to Paul, requesting his answer and directions, in these points; they had not said one syllable about the enormities and disorders which had crept in among them, and in the blame of which they all shared; but his information concerning these irregularities had come round to him from other quarters, . . . by more private intelligence. ‡ *Paley*. The epistle was therefore written, not only as an answer to the inquiries of the Corinthians by letter; but in order to oppose, and if it could be, terminate the various corruptions, in doctrine and practice, which prevailed, to subvert the influence of the false teachers, and to re-establish the apostle's own authority in that church. By general truths, he, with great address and prudence, made way for a more direct and particular opposition to the several gross irregularities and dangerous mistakes, into which they had been seduced. He stated the truth and will of God in various particulars, with great energy of argument and animation of style; he satisfactorily resolved the several questions which had been proposed to him; he, with great tenderness and wisdom, intermixed exhortations and directions with his other subjects; and he concluded with affectionate and pathetic prayers for them.— Though this epistle is not so systematic as that of the Romans, it is replete with instruction, and contains the fullest and most interesting declaration and demonstration of the resurrection of the believers, in consequence of the resurrection of their Lord, which is anywhere to be found.—The epistle contains no express prophecies; but nothing can exceed the decided claim to divine inspiration, which the writer advances. 2:6—13. He either, therefore, claimed what he was not entitled to; or his epistles are not only genuine and authentic, but divinely inspired. † (*Præf. to the Epistles.*) *Scott*.

\* For a vast number of classical citations, on the character of the Corinthians, corresponding with this epistle, see *Wetstein*, who says, 'they were not less remarkable for lasciviousness, than wealth, and the study of philosophy.'

BLOOMF.

† *Ros.* thus neatly arranges the various subjects of this epistle. 'I. The dissensions which had arisen among the Corinthians, and the pride of those engaged therein, the apostle sharply rebukes, and exorts them to concord, *ch. 1—4*. II. A reproof, because of an incestuous person not having been expelled from the society, *ch. 5*; and III. because of the quarrelsome and litigious spirit to which many were, in a manner, enslaved, *6:1—11*. IV. The apostle admonishes them to abstain from fornication, and not to abuse the Christian liberty, *6:12—20*. He answers various questions put to him by the Corinthians, and treats, V. of Chris-

tian matrimony; *ch. 7*; tot. VI. of idolothya, *8:1—11:2*; VII. of women making their appearance veiled at the congregations of Christians, *11:2—16*; VIII. of the Lord's Supper, *11:17—34*; IX. of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, *chs. 12. 13. 14*; X. of the resurrection of the dead, *ch. 15*; finally, XI. of the collecting of alms in the church, *ch. 16*.' *Ed.*

‡ 'The genuineness of 1 Cor. was never doubted. It was cited, or alluded to, repeatedly, by Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp, in the 1st cent.: in the following cent. by Tatian, Irenæus, Athenagoras, and Clement of Alexandria. In the 3d cent. this epistle was acknowledged to be Paul's, by Tertullian, Caius, and Origen. The testimonies of later writers are too numerous and explicit, to render any detail of them necessary.' *Horne*.

## CHAP. I.

1 After his salutation and thanksgiving, 10 he exhorteth them to unity, and 12 reproveth their dissensions. 18 God destroyeth the wisdom of the wise, 21 by the foolishness of preaching, and 26 calleth not the wise, mighty, and noble, but 27, 28 the foolish, weak, and men of no account.

**PAUL**, called <sup>a</sup> to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, and Sosthenes <sup>b</sup> our brother,

2 Unto the church of God which is at <sup>c</sup> Corinth, to them <sup>d</sup> that are sanctified <sup>e</sup> in Christ Jesus, called <sup>f</sup> to be saints, with all that in every place call <sup>g</sup> upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours :

a Ro. 1:1. d Jude 1. 1:15.  
b Ac. 18:17. e Ja. 17:19. g 2 Ti. 2:22.  
c Ac. 18:1, &c. f 2 Ti. 1:9. 1 Pe.

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 2. The passage, [calling upon the name, &c.] shows how inseparable the invocation of Christ was, from the profession of Christianity, in those days. *Acts 2:14—21. 9:10—14. Rom. 10:5—11*. Some would indeed render it, 'those, who are called by the name of the Lord Jesus;' but it is evidently inconsistent with the proper construction of the Gr. language, thus to render it; and this interpretation, we may confidently assert, would never have been adopted, if the previous opposition of men's minds to the divine adoration of Christ, had not induced them to have recourse to it; though it must be allowed that some have favored it, who by no means denied the Deity of Christ.—*To them that are sanctified, &c.* (2.) To explain the terms 'sanctified,' and 'saints,' as implying no more than the profession of Christianity, and including all *nominal Christians*, as many learned men do, would enervate the language of the apostle, and confound the distinction between the *form* and the *power* of godliness, which it is his grand object to maintain. No doubt there were unconverted persons, in the several churches, even in those days; but the apostles addressed their epistles to the collective body, according to their profession; thus teaching them what that profession implied; but if they were not truly saints, they were no more intended, than if they had not been called Christians. The arguments by which these learned writers support their opinion, [258]

CHAP. I. V. 1—9. In this preface to the whole epistle, notice,

I. The *inscription*; in which, according to the custom of writing letters then, the name of the person by whom, and the persons to whom it was written, are both inserted.

1. It is from Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, to the church of Corinth, which himself had planted, though there were some among them, that now questioned his apostleship, *ch. 9:1, 2*, and vilified his ministry, *2 Cor. 10:10*. The most faithful and useful ministers are not secure from this contempt. He begins with challenging this character. It was proper at any time, but faithfulness to his trust made it necessary at this, when false teachers made a merit of running him down, and their giddy and deluded followers were so apt to set them up

in competition with him. And to make this more fully appear, he joins Sosthenes, a minister of a lower rank, not a fellow-apostle, but a fellow-minister: once a ruler of a Jewish synagogue, afterward a convert to Christianity: a Corinthian by birth, as is most probable, and dear to this people; for which reason, Paul, to ingratiate himself with them, joins him with himself in his first salutations. Paul did not in any case lessen his apostolical authority, yet he was ready on all occasions to do a kind and condescending thing, for their good, to whom he ministered.

2. The persons to whom this epistle was directed, are, the church of God that was at Corinth, sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints. All Christians are thus far sanctified in Christ Jesus,—that they are by baptism dedicated and devoted to Him,

would equally prove, that the worst persons in the church at Corinth, were indeed 'the temple of the Holy Spirit,' the 'temple of the living God,' and entitled to all spiritual and eternal blessings, equally with true believers. *3:16. 6:11, 19. 2 Cor. 6:16*.—'Even here from the beginning he lays the foundation of his future reasoning; for if the Corinthians, and all other believers, were called by one God, and sanctified in one Christ; if they all had, and owned, the same Lord; whence did the dissensions arise and get strength among them, as if Christ was divided?' *Beza*. 'The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. Now, before this time, we find not only Stephen calling on this name, and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" and Paul bid "to wash away his sins, calling on the name of the Lord;" . . . but Annius speaks to the Lord Jesus, of Paul, "He hath authority from the high priest, to bind all that call on thy name;" and of him it is said, "He destroyed them that called on this name in Jerusalem."—Dr. Hammond, who here tr. this phrase passively, doth elsewhere tr. it actively, the context forcing him so to do. *So Rom. 10:13*. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord;" i. e. pray and adhere to Christ. . . . And *Acts 9:14*. "He hath authority to bind all that call upon thy name;" i. e. saith he, that publicly own the worship of Christ.' *Whitby*.

Scott.

(2.) 'To the body or assembly of Christians resident at Corinth.



3 Grace <sup>h</sup> be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I thank <sup>i</sup> my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all <sup>j</sup> utterance, and in all knowledge;

6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you.

7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting <sup>k</sup> for the <sup>l</sup> coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

8 Who shall also confirm <sup>m</sup> you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship <sup>n</sup> of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>o</sup> that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no <sup>p</sup> divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.

h 1 Pe. 1:2. 3:12. n 1 Jn. 1:9.  
i Ro. 1:8. 1 revelation. o 2 Co. 13:11.  
j 2 Co. 8:7. m 1 Th. 3:13. 1 Pe. 3:8.  
k Tit. 2:13. 2 Pa. 5:23,24. p schisms.

they are under strict obligations to be holy, and they make profession of real sanctity. It is the design of Christianity to sanctify us in Christ. In conjunction with the church at Corinth, he directs the epistle to all that in every place call on the name of Christ Jesus our Lord, both theirs and ours. Hereby Christians are distinguished from the profane and atheistical,—that they dare not live

without prayer: and from Jews and Pagans,—that they call on the name of Christ. Observe, In every place, in the Christian world, some call on the name of Christ, a remnant in all places; and we should hold communion with all that do so.

II. The apostolical benediction; Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. This blessing every preacher of the Gospel should heartily wish and pray may be the lot of all among whom he ministers. Grace and peace; the favor of God, and reconciliation to Him. It is indeed the summary of all blessings. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace, was the form of benediction under the O. T., Num. 6:26. but this advantage we have by the Gospel, 1. That we are directed how to obtain that peace from God: it is in and by Christ. 2. We are told what must qualify us for this peace; namely, grace.

III. The apostle's thanksgiving. Paul begins most of his epistles with thanksgiving to God for his friends, and prayer for them. The best way of manifesting our affection to our friends, is, by praying and giving thanks for them. It is one branch of the communion of saints, to give thanks to God mutually for our gifts, graces, and comforts. He gives thanks, 1. For their conversion to the faith of Christ; that grace was given them by Jesus Christ, v. 4. He is the great Procurer and Disposer of the favors of God. 2. For the abundance of their spiritual gifts; this the church of Corinth was famous for, v. 7. He specifies utterance and knowledge, v. 5. Many have utterance, that have not knowledge; others have knowledge, but want utterance to employ it. But where God gives both, a man is qualified for eminent usefulness. When the church of Corinth was enriched with all utterance, and all knowledge, it was fit a large tribute of praise should be rendered to God; especially when these gifts were a testimony

to the truth of the Christian doctrine, a confirmation of the testimony of Christ among them, v. 6. And it is no wonder, that, when they had such foundation for their faith, they should live in expectation of the coming of their Lord Jesus Christ, v. 7. It is the character of Christians, that they wait for Christ's second coming; all our religion hath regard to that: we believe it, and hope for it, and it is the business of our lives to prepare for it, if we are Christians indeed. And the more confirmed we are in the Christian faith, the more firm is our belief of our Lord's second coming, and the more earnest our expectation of it.

IV. Of the encouraging hopes the apostle had of them, for the time to come, founded on the power and love of Christ, and the faithfulness of God, v. 8, 9. Those that wait for the coming of Christ, will be kept by Him, and confirmed to the end; and those that are so, will be blameless in the day of Christ; not on the foot of strict justice, but gracious absolution; not in rigor of law, but from rich and free grace. How desirable is it to be confirmed and kept of Christ for such a purpose as this! How glorious are the hopes of such a privilege, whether for ourselves or others! To be kept, by the power of Christ, from the power of our own corruptions and Satan's temptations, that we may appear without blame in the great day! O glorious expectation, especially when the faithfulness of God comes in to support our hopes! He who hath called us into the fellowship of his Son, is faithful, and will do it, 1 Thess. 5:24.

V. 10—13. Here the apostle enters on his subject.

I. He exhorts them to unity and brotherly love, and reproves them for their divisions. He writes to them in a very engaging way; 'I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; If you have any regard to that dear and worthy name by which you are called, be unanimous: avoid divisions or

Sanctified...called, &c.] Both these expressions are designations of Christians, and used (with reference to the phraseology of the O. T.) of those who are separated from the bulk of the heathens, and set apart for religious and holy purposes, for the profession of true religion. See Dent. 7:6. 14:2. Benson on 1 Pet. 1:2, and Bp. Lowth on Is. 13:3. By κλητοί [called], are denoted Christians, those who, being called, obeyed the call, and were thus placed in a state of salvation. The Jews (Krause obs.) called themselves *mqay yohoh*, the peculiar people of God; and therefore this is, by Paul, especially applied to Christians. See Rom. 1:7.

V. 3. 'Is not this to desire for them grace and peace from God the Father, and consequently to pray for it? Why therefore is it not also to desire the same blessings from God the Son?' Whitby; and consequently to pray for them. SCOTT.

V. 4—9. (Phil. 1:3—8.) Before the apostle entered on the immediate subject of his epistle, he endeavored to conciliate the affections of the Corinthians, by calling to their recollection the benefits which they had derived from his ministry. He continually thanked God on their account, for having bestowed his grace upon them, through Jesus Christ. (8) *Blameless, &c.* 'He calls them blameless; not whom none had ever blamed, but those whom none could justly blame; i. e. those who are in Christ Jesus. Rom. 3:1, 33.' Beza. Certainly neither spotless innocence, nor sinless perfection, nor such a tenor of conduct from their first profession of Christianity, as was wholly unblameable, could be meant; for the apostle blames many things afterwards, which were very general among them; yet their renewal to holiness seems intended, and their conduct as harmless and blameless, at least equally with their justification. Eph. 5:22—27. Col. 1:21—23. 'God will make good his promise, . . . if you do not fail yourselves.' Hammond. It seems, that the system, which this learned writer adopts, cannot be maintained, without 'adding to the Word' of God; for he and his coadjutors frequently insert a clause of this kind, as if the inspired writers had forgotten it, and had expressed themselves incautiously! In fact, it is an interpolation, and as such must be rejected. All professed Christians, indeed, at Corinth, would not be 'kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation;' for some were not true believers; yet all those whom the apostle especially addressed, would thus persevere; namely, 'the saints,' even those whom God had 'called to the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ.' Rom. 3:28—39. Sc.

(7.) *Gift.* 'Charismata signifies not only gifts extraordinary, but also, and here especially, the ordinary and general benefits of Christianity; as the tranquillity it bestows, and the firmness, constancy, energy, and progress in well doing which it imparts.' Ros. *Waiting, &c.* 'Expecting the revelation, to judgment and destruction; called the second advent, epiphaneia, &c. See 2 Thess. 2:8. 1 Tim. 6:14. 2 Tim. 4:1—3. Tit. 2:13. The Gr. [tr. waiting] carries with it the notion of secure, without fear. Comp. Rom. 8:18.' BLOOMF.

(8.) *Day, &c.* 'I. e. of judgment. Called.] Brought into the Christian church, placed in the way of salvation: to the end that you might be partakers of the felicity which He has destined for his Son.' Bl.

V. 10—16. Considering the different capacities, educations, habits,

and prejudices of mankind, it seems impossible to avoid all difference of opinion; but it is equally true, that fallen men will never, on earth, 'love God with all their heart,' and 'their neighbors as themselves;' yet the rule and exhortation must not be changed on that account. As we have one rule, and one standard of truth, and one Spirit to be our Teacher; so, in proportion to our humility, simplicity, and diligence, we come to be of 'one mind and judgment,' in the great concerns of religion; and were we perfect in these things, we should also be perfectly united in sentiment and affection. Jer. 32:39—41. This will be the case in heaven; and it will at length be so in a great degree on earth. The nearer we come to it, the more we approximate to perfection; all our divisions arise from a sinful cause, which must not be excused; but while this cause subsists, we should endeavor to bear with each other in respect of it, and so to 'keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' Eph. 4:1—6. Phil. 1:27—30. 2:1—4. Yet we ought continually to pray for the more abundant pouring out of the Spirit of truth and love, on ourselves and all our fellow Christians, that we may be 'perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.' It has been thought, with probability, that the apostle does not mention these names, as really the heads of the parties into which the Corinthians had divided; but in order more emphatically to mark the evil of the thing itself, and the absurdity of dividing the church, out of a disposition inordinately to honor some particular teacher; or to despise faithful ministers, under pretence of honoring Christ. However respectable the names might be, which were thus used, the thing was indefensible; but it would give less umbrage for him to mention himself, Apollus, and Cephas, than expressly to name the false teachers, who were the authors of the discord. (10) *Divisions.* 'Schisms.' 11:18. 12:25. See on Mat. 9:16. The word here evidently signifies 'divisions,' among persons who held the same grand doctrines, and met together for worship in the same ordinances. Thus 'schisms,' as the word is here used, differed from heresies, which related also to doctrines. Acts 28:21, 22. SCOTT.

(10.) *Divisions.* 'Schismata: synonymous with dichostasiai, v. 33. and Gal. 5:21. where also occ. haireseis, sects. And this seems to be the sense here, (and so Dr. Nott,) though it may include heresies, and disagreements of every kind. "In this place, the 'schism' appears to have consisted in the formation of religious parties, which pretended to follow, one the cause of Paul, and another that of Apollus. In 11:18. the charge is grounded upon the adoption of new modes, which some had wantonly introduced in the administration of the sacrament. And in 12:25. the offence, of schism, appears to have consisted in the violation of that subordination of teaching, ministering, and governing, which was originally appointed in the church. 'Schism,' therefore, may be defined to be, an open violation of church unity, when individuals assume to themselves the power either of forming new communions, or of instituting new rites, or of creating a new ministry, in opposition to such as have been established by regular authority, as being the ministry and the ordinances originally of apostolic institution." NOTT. Perfectly joined.] Lit. the Gr. is, to repair a broken vessel, or restore a torn vestment.' BLOOMF.



11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house of Chloë*, that there are contentions among you.

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of <sup>q</sup> Apollos; and I of <sup>r</sup> Cephas; and I of Christ.

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you but <sup>s</sup> Crispus and <sup>t</sup> Gaius;

15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

16 And I baptized also the household of <sup>u</sup> Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom <sup>v</sup> of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them <sup>w</sup> that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power <sup>x</sup> of God.

19 For it is written, <sup>y</sup> I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

q Ac. 19:1. 3 Jn. 1. &c. x 2 Co. 2:15.  
r Jn. 1:42. u c. 16:15, 17. y Ro. 1:16.  
s Ac. 18:8. v c. 2:1, 4, 13. z Is. 29:14.  
t Ro. 16:23. w or, speech. Je. 8:9.

*schisms*, as the original is, 'that is, all alienation of affection from each other.' In the great things of religion be of a mind: but when there is not a unity of sentiment, let there be a union of affections. The con-

sideration of being agreed in greater things, should extinguish all feuds and divisions about less ones.

II. He hints at the original of these contentions. Pride lay at the bottom, Prov. 13:10. *Only of pride cometh contention*. They quarrelled about their ministers: some cried up Paul, perhaps as the most sublime and spiritual teacher; others cried up Apollos, perhaps as the most eloquent speaker; some Cephas, or Peter, perhaps for the authority of his age, or because he was the apostle of the circumcision; and some were for neither, but Christ only. So liable are the best things in the world to be corrupted, and the Gospel and its institutions, which are at perfect harmony with themselves and one another, to be made the engines of variance, discord, and contention. This is no reproach to religion, but a very melancholy evidence of the corruption and depravity of human nature.

III. He expostulates with them on their discord and quarrels; '*Is Christ divided?* No, there is but one Christ, therefore Christians should be of one heart. *Was Paul crucified for you?* Was he your sacrifice and atonement? Did I ever pretend to be your Savior, or any more than his minister? Or, *were ye baptized in the name of Paul?* Were ye devoted to my service, or engaged to be my disciples, by that sacred rite? Did I challenge such right in you, or dependence from you, as are the proper claims of your God and Redeemer?' No; ministers, however instrumental they are of good to us, are not to be put in Christ's stead. They are not to usurp Christ's authority, nor encourage anything in the people, that looks like transferring his authority to them. He is our Savior and Sacrifice, He is our Lord and Guide. And happy were it for the churches, if [satisfied with the name of Christians] there were no name of distinction among them, as *Christ is not divided*.

V. 14—16. Here the apostle gives an account of his ministry among them. But how was it a proper matter for thankfulness

that he had baptized so few? In this sense only, that now he had baptized so few, it could not be said he had baptized in his *own name*, made disciples for himself, or set himself up as the *head* of a sect. He left it to other ministers to baptize, while he set himself to the more important business of preaching. He had assistants that could baptize, when none could discharge the other part of his office as well as himself. In this sense, he says, *Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel*; not so much to baptize as to preach. Ministers should esteem themselves sent and set apart more especially to that service in which Christ will be most honored, and the salvation of souls promoted, and for which themselves are best fitted; though no part of their duty is to be neglected. The principal business Paul *did* among them, was, to preach; to preach *the Gospel*, v. 17. *the cross*, v. 18. *Christ crucified*, v. 23. not his own fancy, but the Gospel; the glad tidings of peace, and reconciliation to God, through the Mediation of a crucified Redeemer. This is the sum and substance of the Gospel.

V. 17—31. We have here,

I. The manner in which Paul preached the Gospel, v. 17. *ch. 2:4*. not with the flourish of oratory, or the accuracies of philosophical language, on which the Greeks so much prided themselves, and which seem to have been the peculiar recommendations of some of the heads of the faction in this church, that most opposed this apostle. He did not preach the Gospel in this manner, lest *the cross of Christ should be of none effect*; lest the success should have been ascribed to the force of art, and not of truth; and hereby the honor of the cross had been diminished or eclipsed. He preached a crucified Jesus, in plain language, and told the people, that that Jesus, who was crucified at Jerusalem, was the *Son of God*, and *Savior of men*; and that all who would be saved must repent of their sins, and believe in Him, and submit to his government and laws. This truth needed no artificial dress;

'Neither sameness of opinion, nor exact uniformity in external forms and modes of worship is required here. The church never enjoyed a greater semblance of uniformity, than just before the Reformation; yet it never was more corrupt. This enforcement of uniformity has often occasioned unhappy disputes, and persecutions, which have led to the very evils here deprecated,—divisions and separations. Those who insist on an exact uniformity, at the expense of the conscience of their brethren, are chargeable with the sin of schism, not the individuals who resist impositions of human authority.'

REV. W. LOTHIAN.

'Nothing more abhorrent from the principles and maxims of the sacred oracles can be conceived, than the idea of a plurality of true churches, neither in actual communion with each other, nor in a capacity for such communion. . . . We have become so familiarized to it, as to be scarcely sensible of its enormity. . . . To see Christian societies regarding each other with the jealousies of rival empires; each aiming to raise itself on the ruins of all others; making extravagant boasts of superior purity, generally in exact proportion to their departure from it, and scarcely deigning to acknowledge the possibility of obtaining salvation out of their pale, is the odious and disgusting spectacle which modern Christianity presents. The bond of charity, which unites the genuine followers of Christ in distinction from the world, is dissolved, and the very terms by which it was wont to be denoted, exclusively employed to express a predilection for a sect. The evils which result from this state of division are incalculable; it supplies infidels with their most plausible topics of invective; it hardens the conscience of the irreligious; weakens the hands of the good; impedes the efficacy of prayer; and is probably the principal obstruction to that ample effusion of the Spirit, which is essential to the renovation of the world.'

REV. ROBERT HALL.

(13) 'Were you bound by baptism to obey the injunctions of Paul? (so, "to be baptized in the name of" means,) i. e. religious injunctions, whether of faith or practice. See Mat. 23:19. and note. Rom. 6:3. Gal. 3:26. comp. Acts 8:16. Also Mackn. and Locke.'

BLOOMF.

(14) 'This Crispus was the ruler of the synagogue, Acts 18:8; and Gaius, Paul's host at Corinth, Rom. 16:23.'

IN.

(16.) *House*.] 'I. e. all the family; and Wolf and Vitr. rightly maintain from hence the use of infant baptism in the primitive church. Thus Ignatius, Ep. p. 21. *aspazomai* the houses of my brethren, with women and children. See Wets. on Mat. 28. fin. *I know not*, &c.] The phrase indicates, (as *Ec.*) the little interest he took in the matter.' Id.

V. 17—19. Many, supposing the administration of sacraments to be the most honorable part of the ministerial work, have conjectured reasons, why Paul did not himself baptize the Corinthian converts; but the reason he assigns, entirely subverts their imaginations.—Some, indeed, of the Corinthians might think, that he was not so competent to preach the Gospel, as this declaration [that he was sent to preach] seemed to imply; and he readily allowed, that he had not used the 'wisdom of words.' For 'Christ sent him' to deliver an important message, in plain language; and he was aware that these decorations, instead of

giving efficacy to his doctrine, would degrade it, and even 'render the cross of Christ of none effect.' The apostles made no claim to elegance; but certainly precision, and perspicuity, and simplicity, are found in their writings, in no common degree.—(17) *To baptize*.] Whence did the almost universally prevailing opinion originate, that the administration of sacraments is the peculiar and highest office of the Christian ministry, above even that of preaching the Gospel? Perhaps the reader has never thought of asking this question. I have, however, no hesitation in answering, from popery, in its incipient or more matured state; to change, by the *opus operatum*, which the priest alone can perform aright, 'a child of the devil' into 'a child of God,' which must be the case if baptism be regeneration or inseparable from it; and to change, in the same way, a piece of bread into the body, soul, and divine nature of Christ, and render it an object of adoration, derives a far higher dignity to the priesthood, than even apostolical preaching can do.

SCOTT.

(17.) 'The apostle now passes to a vindication of his doctrine, and the method he had pursued in communicating it. Up to 2:2. he treats of the nature of his doctrine, and declares, that this he cannot accommodate to the prejudice of men, so as, like pseudo-apostles, to keep out of view, or sophisticate, what would be cried down by many, and seem to them foolishness. Then 2:3, sqq. he details the method he had pursued at Corinth, in preaching the Gospel.' Ros. *Made void*.] 'Be deprived of its proper force: and so *Theoph.*, who thus illustrates, "A Greek asks me concerning some divine truths above my comprehension. If I attempt to prove these from syllogisms [the Aristotelian and Greek method] and heathen wisdom, I shall show my weakness; for no reason can prove these. And so this, my weakness, will appear to be the weakness of the Gospel, and the most important truths of it will appear empty and vain."

BLOOMF.

'Amidst all the beautiful simplicity which a deep conviction of the Gospel tended to produce, there was room left for the most manly and noble kind of eloquence; which, therefore, the Christian preacher should labor to make habitual to him.' Doddr. See Prof. Park, on 'The best mode of presenting Christian Truth.' Bib. Repos., Oct., 1837. Ed.

(18.) 'Is, i. e. appears to them, folly. *Thucyd.* has a similar expression. *Power*, &c.] It is God's powerful means of bestowing salvation on men.'

BLOOMF.

(19.) 'Those who seem wise and prudent. . . . I will make their folly evident. By *sophia* [wisdom] is here meant, mere human wisdom, and especially that sort of erudition in which the Greeks especially prided themselves.' Bl. So, 'during the dark ages, the doctrines of Christ, instead of being explained from the Scriptures, were defended and enforced by appeals to the authority of Aristotle! and the presidents of the ancient Alexandrian school, aimed at identifying the Christian faith with the tenets of Plato.' *Lothian*. There are indications that speculative minds are not yet delivered from the heathen philosophy, *vain*, because it insists on *knowing* what is not within the range of the human faculties.

ED.



20 Where <sup>a</sup> is the wise? where <sup>b</sup> is the scribe? where <sup>c</sup> is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish <sup>d</sup> the wisdom of this world?

21 For <sup>e</sup> after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

22 For the Jews require a <sup>d</sup> sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a <sup>e</sup> stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the <sup>f</sup> power of God, and the wisdom of God.

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not <sup>g</sup> many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

27 But God <sup>h</sup> hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise: and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty;

a Is. 33:18. d Mat. 12:38, &c. g Zep. 3:12.  
b Is. 41:25. e Is. 8:14. 1 Pe. Jn. 7:43.  
c Lu. 10:21. Ro. 2:8. h Ps. 8:2. Mat. 11:25.

it shone out with the greatest majesty in its own light, and prevailed in the world by its divine authority, and the demonstration of the Spirit, without any human helps. The plain preaching of a crucified Jesus, was more powerful, than all the oratory and philosophy of the heathen world.

II. We have the different effects of this preaching, v. 18, 23, 24.

1. Christ crucified is a *Stumbling-block* to the Jews. They could not get over it. They had a conceit, that their expected Messiah was to be a great temporal Prince, and therefore would never own one who made so

mean an appearance in life, and died so accursed a death, for their Deliverer and King. They despised Him, and looked upon Him as execrable, because hanged on a tree; and because He did not gratify them with a sign to their mind, though his divine power shone out in innumerable miracles. *The Jews require a sign, v. 22. See Mat. 12: 38.*

2. He was to the Greeks foolishness. They laughed at the story of a crucified Savior, and despised the apostle's way of telling it. *They sought for wisdom.* They were men of wit and reading, men that had cultivated arts and sciences, and had, for some ages, been in a manner the very mint of knowledge and learning. There was nothing in the plain doctrine of the cross to suit their taste, or humor their vanity, or gratify a curious and wrangling temper: they entertained it therefore with scorn and contempt. What, hope to be saved by one that could not save Himself! And trust in one who was condemned and crucified for a malefactor, a man of mean birth and poor condition in life, and cut off by so vile and opprobrious a death! This was what the pride of human reason and learning could not relish. The Greeks thought it little better than stupidity to receive such a doctrine, and pay this high regard to such a person; and thus were they justly left to perish in their pride and obstinacy. It is just with God to leave those to themselves, who pour such proud contempt on divine wisdom and grace.

3. To them which are called and saved, *He is the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God.* Those who are called and sanctified, who receive the Gospel, and are enlightened by the Spirit of God, discern more glorious discoveries of God's wisdom and power in the doctrine of Christ crucified, than in all his other works. Those who are saved, are reconciled to the doctrine of the cross, and led into an experimental acquaintance with the mysteries of Christ crucified.

III. We have here the triumphs of the cross over human wisdom, Is. 29:14. v. 19, 20. All the valued learning of this world was confounded, baffled, and eclipsed, by the Christian revelation, and the glorious triumphs of the cross. This scheme lay out of the reach of the deepest statesmen and philosophers, and the greatest pretenders to learning, both among the Jews and Greeks. When God would save the world, He took a way

by Himself; and good reason, for the world by wisdom knew not God, v. 21. All the boasted science of the heathen world did not, could not, effectually bring home the world to God. In spite of all their wisdom, ignorance still prevailed, iniquity still abounded. Men were puffed up by their imaginary knowledge, and rather further alienated from God: therefore it pleased Him, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. By the foolishness of preaching,—not such in truth, but in vulgar reckoning.

1. The thing preached was foolishness in the eyes of worldly-wise men. Our living through one who died, our being blessed by one who was made a curse, our being justified by one who was Himself condemned, was all folly and inconsistency to men blinded with self-conceit, and wedded to their own prejudices, and the boasted discoveries of their reason and philosophy.

2. The manner of preaching the Gospel was foolishness to them too. None of the famous men for wisdom or eloquence were employed to plant the church, or propagate the gospel. A few fishermen were called out, and sent on this errand. These were commissioned to disciple the nations; the vessels chosen to convey the treasure of saving knowledge to the world: there was nothing in them, that at first view looked grand or august enough to come from God; and the proud pretenders to learning and wisdom despised the doctrine for the sake of those who dispensed it. And yet the foolishness of God is wiser than men, v. 25. Those methods of divine conduct that vain men are apt to censure as unwise and weak, have more true, solid, and successful wisdom in them, than all the learning and wisdom that are among men; 'Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called, v. 26, &c. Ye see the state of Christianity; not many men of learning or authority, or honorable extraction, are called.' There is a great deal of meanness and weakness in the outward appearance of our religion. For, (1.) Few of distinguished character in any of these respects were chosen for the work of the ministry. God did not choose philosophers, nor orators, nor statesmen, nor men of wealth and power, and interest in the world, to publish the Gospel of grace and peace. Not the wise men after the flesh; not the mighty and noble, but the foolish,

V. 20. *The wise.*] *Sophos*: Scribe.] *Grammateus*. Paul (so the best comtrs.) strikes both at the Gentile and Jewish "wisdom." Those among the Greeks who applied themselves to intellectual, especially moral and ethical inquiries, were anciently called *Sophoi*; which answers to the Heb *hakym*. Thus the 7 wise men were called *hoi sophoi*. Afterwards, however, such inquirers were called *philosophoi*. Yet the above use of *sophos* may be said never to have been quite laid aside. Pythagoras (so Diog. Laert.) said, there was but one wise,—and modestly took the title of *philosophos*, lover of wisdom. The *grammateus* is plainly the Jewish *sphr*, which, Grot. obs., in the Hellenistic style, denoted a *civilian* and *historian*; now, in a certain sense, the Jewish scribes were both. *Bl.* Comp. Note, Num. 11:16, on *Shoterim*. *Disputer.*] See *Bl. Grot.* tr. 'an explorer of nature, *Physicus*.—Fuller and others understand, the subtle, sophistical disputants, called by the Hebrews *drshn*: hence the mystical and allegorical comtrs. on the SS. were named *mdrshym*. 'So *Lightf.*, *Fessét.*, and *Schoett.*, who observes, "that these *suzētētai* [disputers] *drthkym*, were persons who deduced from Scr. many allegorical, anagogical, mystical, and cabbalistic senses, and moreover could hold such subtle disputations concerning the *deuterōseis* and *patroparadotoi* decrees and customs: with these they pleased themselves, as did the Scholastics in the dark ages, who propounded theology and philosophy so subtly and acutely, that they scarce knew what themselves meant. But those whom, before, no one could refute or contradict, afterward were publicly and safely derided, God making the *pseudosophy* of both Jew and Gentile, folly." *Bl.*, who refers *disputers* to sophists of both classes, and thinks 'these Rabbinical scholars, as usual, carry the matter too far.' *Ed.*

'God by promulgating a plan of salvation which no human wisdom could have devised, much less accomplished, has, thereby, placed in a strong point of view the weakness and inefficiency of mere human wisdom, for the purpose of salvation.' *Bl.* How unlikely then that our intellects can fully explain it! *In.*

V. 21. 'By the force of its own wisdom. *Sophia* [tr. wisdom] denotes intellectual inquiry of every kind.' *Bloomf.*

V. 22. 'He now shows by what cause, and through what prejudice, neither the Jewish nor Gentile wise men believed.—The Jews sought a sign, (or signs, as some MSS., Verss., and Eds., and Griesb., but too rashly, I think.) Many signs had been exhibited by Christ and the apostles, but not what they properly called *semeia*, by which they meant, signs from

heaven, Mark 8:8. There were probably those who desired some such sign as their deliverance from the Roman yoke, by an interposition similar to that at the Exodus, or at the destruction of Sennacherib's army, bread from heaven, or the sun standing still, &c. For such they were prone in all ages to ask; see the Bible, and Rabbins. A sign they would have, agreeable to their wishes and gross conceptions.—The more rational Greeks do not so much ask for miracles, as require wisdom, but it must be that of their own kind, or (as *Hardy*, from *Grot.* and the early comtrs., expl.) human wisdom, philosophical reason (*rhetorean logōn kai deinotēta sophismatōn*, Chrys.), set off by the *figmenta oratoria*; they wish whatever is said to be proved from natural principles; and whatever cannot be proved or comprehended by reason, as a mystery of faith, they would explode. Thus each wishes and calls for that on which his heart is set, which he has been accustomed to, and therefore demands. But, says the apostle, (so *Grot.* supplies,) we bring not reasonings, but testimony, concerning a thing seen, though contrary to the secular expectations of Jews, and insipid to the Greeks, as bringing forward nothing from the principles of things, their causes, or the nature of the soul; the elements of their moral philosophy.' *Bloomf.*

V. 24. 'To the converted Jews his mission is confirmed by miraculous evidence, and the accomplishment of prophecies far more important than any event which their carnal brethren expect; and the believing Gentile finds it infinitely fuller of Divine wisdom and goodness, to a lost world, than any system of philosophy that was ever invented.' *Doddr.*

V. 26—31. The persons who had been converted to Christianity, and then sent forth to preach the Gospel, were a living demonstration of what the apostle inculcated. This the Corinthians might see for themselves. The persons whom God had employed in preaching the Gospel, seem especially intended; and the words, 'are called,' which seem to favor the other interpretation, [that which applies it to common Christians,] are not in the original. *Ps.* 8:2. *Mat.* 11:25, 26. 21:14—16. 2 *Cor.* 4:7. *P. O.* 7—12. Why then should the Corinthians so value these endowments in their teachers, when God had evidently poured contempt on them?—Even that distinction, in which alone they might glory, was not in any respect of themselves. By the gratuitous choice and regenerating grace of God, through faith they, sinners of the Gentiles, were 'in Christ Jesus,' who, by his appointment and free mercy, was 'made,' or become, to all believers the whole of salvation.—'They who say, that Christ is made our Righteousness by his righteousness imputed to us,



28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are ;

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption :

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

CHAP. II.

He declareth that his preaching, though it bring not excellency of speech, or of human wisdom : yet consisteth in the power of God : and so far excelleth the wisdom of this world, and human sense, as that the natural man cannot understand it.

AND I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

1 Ro. 3:27. 23 n Ep. 1:7.
2 Co. 5:17. 1 Is. 45:24. Je. 23: o Je. 9:23,24.
Ep. 1:3,10. 5, 6. Ro. 4:25. a ver. 4,13.
k Ep. 1:17. Col. m Ja. 17:19.

weak, base things of the world, men of mean birth, of low rank, of no liberal education, He hath chosen to be the preachers of the gospel, and planters of the church. (2.) Few of distinguished rank and character were called to be Christians. As the preachers were poor and mean, so generally were the converts. The first Christians, both among Jews and Greeks, were men of mean furniture as to their mental improvements, and very mean rank and condition as to their outward estate : yet what glorious discoveries are there of divine wisdom in the whole

scheme of the Gospel, and in this particular circumstance of its success !

IV. How admirably all is fitted,
1. To beat down the pride and vanity of men. God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise ; men of no learning, to confound the most learned : the weak things of the world, to confound the mighty ; men of mean rank and circumstances, to confound and prevail against all the power and authority of earthly kings : and base things, and things which are despised, things which men have in the lowest esteem, or in the utmost contempt, to pour contempt and disgrace on all they value and have in veneration : and things which are not, to bring to nought, to abolish things that are. It is common for the Jews to speak of the Gentiles under this character, as things that are not. See the apocryphal Esther, 14:11. and 2 Esdras 6:56, 57. Paul seems to have this common language of the Jews in his view, when he calls Abraham the father of us all, before Him whom he believed, God, who calleth those things that are not, as though they were, Rom. 4:17. The Gospel is fitted to bring down the pride of both Jews and Greeks, to shame the boasted science and learning of the Greeks, and to take down that constitution on which the Jews valued themselves, and despised all the world besides ; that no flesh should glory in his presence, v. 29. that there might be no pretence for boasting. Divine wisdom alone had the contrivance of the method of redemption ; divine grace alone revealed it, and made it known. It lay, in both respects, out of human reach. And the doctrine and discovery prevailed, in spite of all the opposition it met with from human art or authority : so effectually did God veil the glory and disgrace the pride of man in all.

2. To glorify God. There is great power and glory in the substance and life of Christianity. Though the ministers were poor

and unlearned, and the converts generally of the meanest rank, yet the hand of the Lord went along with the preachers, and was mighty in the hearts of the hearers : and Jesus Christ was made both to ministers and Christians what was truly great and honorable. All we have, we have from God as the Fountain, and in and through Christ as the Channel of conveyance. He is made of God to us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, v. 30. all we need, or can desire. We are foolishness, ignorant and blind in the things of God ; and He is made Wisdom to us. We are guilty, obnoxious to justice ; and He is made Righteousness, our great Atonement and Sacrifice. We are depraved and corrupt ; and He is made Sanctification, the Spring of our spiritual life ; from Him, the Head, it is communicated to all the members of his mystical body by his Holy Spirit. We are in bonds, and He is made Redemption to us, our Savior and Deliverer. Observe, Where Christ is made Righteousness to any soul, He is also made Sanctification. He never discharges from the guilt of sin, without delivering from the power of it ; and He is made Righteousness and Sanctification, that He may in the end be made complete Redemption, and free the soul from the very being of sin, and loose the body from the bonds of the grave : and what is designed in all, is, that all flesh may glory in the Lord, v. 31. Observe, It is the will of God, that all our glorying should be in the Lord : and our salvation being only through Christ, it is thereby effectually provided it should be so. Man is humbled, and God glorified and exalted, by the whole scheme.

CHAP. II. V. 1—5. In this passage the apostle pursues his design, and reminds the Corinthians how he acted when he first preached the Gospel among them.

I. He determined to know nothing among

PRACT. OBS. The true 'church of God' comprises all those, in every place, who are 'sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints,' who call on Him, as 'God manifest in the flesh,' for all the blessings of salvation ; and who acknowledge and obey Him as their Lord, and the Lord of all saints, of all men, and of all creatures ; and it includes no other persons. — But ministers, with a mixture of authority and affection, should remind their flocks, that an account must be given of all their advantages at the coming of Christ, and call on them daily to wait and prepare for that event. — How striking is the contrast between the language of the apostle in these vs. and that of many modern divines ! The name of the Lord Jesus Christ was to him the sweetest melody, or 'as ointment poured forth ;' Cant. 1:3. they fear a too frequent, or too honorable mention of Him ! and [too often avoid] enlarging on his dignity and condescension, his love and atoning sufferings, his character and offices, his righteousness and salvation. 2:I, 2.—Satan has always endeavored to stir up strife among Christians, as one of his grand devices against the Gospel ; we should, therefore, use all our influence to prevail with our brethren, by the name, and for the honor of our common Lord, to avoid contests of every kind, and as much as possible to 'speak the same thing, and to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment ;' and we should persevere in endeavoring and praying for this most desirable harmony, and for 'the meekness of wisdom,' that we may know how to counteract the pestilent endeavors of the fire-brands of the church, without giving them any handle or plausible pretence against us.—All attempts, to make the real Gospel palatable to worldly men, must be unsuccessful ; it always was, and always will be, 'foolishness'

to such as are in the road to destruction ; and the only way to render it inoffensive, is to leave out, or but slightly touch on, the offensive parts of it ; and this is too commonly done, when preachers study to embellish their doctrine and recommend themselves, by 'the wisdom of words, or the excellency of speech.' But the true minister of Christ is no 'man-pleaser ;' he will, with 'great plainness of speech,' deliver his whole message, however it may be derided or reviled ; that by it, as a sure touchstone, men may learn their real state and character. — Such persons [learned scribes, wise philosophers, and the eager 'disputers of this world'], are, indeed, commonly found among the despisers or opposers of the doctrine of Christ crucified ; but what have they ever done towards rendering the world wise and holy ? Or what have they to propose so excellent, as to merit a preference to that Gospel which they reject, or even to bear a comparison with it ? Undeniable facts evince the folly of this wisdom ; and show, that amidst all the displays of the 'eternal power and Godhead,' with which we are surrounded, human reason, sagacity, and learning [without revelation] know Him not, but uniformly lead men to idolatry, impiety, or infidelity ; and on the other hand, 'it hath pleased God,' from age to age, by 'the foolishness of preaching,' (the despised doctrine of salvation by faith in a crucified Savior, God in human nature, 'purchasing the church with his own blood,' delivered with unadorned simplicity,) to save multitudes, even all that believe, from ignorance, delusion, and vice ; and to make them meet for his heavenly kingdom.

SCOTT.

\* The judicious minister will judge for himself, how far this precept is modified by the example of Christ, the apostles, and even Paul. Comp. Mat. 7:6. Ju. 15:12. 1 Cor. 3:2, &c. As the language of the hearer, so his state of mind, is to be considered. P.O. ch. 3. Ed.

have the same reason to say also, that He is made our Wisdom, by his wisdom imputed to us, &c.' Whitby. There might be some weight in this objection, if this were the only passage of Scripture, by which those who hold 'imputed righteousness' prove their doctrine ; if there were any other passages in the sacred oracles, which even seem to countenance the notion of imputed wisdom, or sanctification, or redemption ; and if the nature of the case were not essentially different. Another may pay my debt, and allow me to receive the wages which he has earned, or the reward to which his services entitle him ; thus his payment and his labor may be set down to my account, or imputed to me for my adequate advantage ; but who can have wisdom, health, or liberty, by imputation ? Rom. 3:4.

SCOTT.

'Imputation is taught, (1.) Of sin, to Christ, 2 Cor. 5:21. (2.) Of righteousness, to believers, Phil. 3:9. 2 Cor. 5:21. Gal. 2:21.' MAND. on Rom.

(26.) 'On the fact, that almost all the Christians were of the poorer and laboring classes, Grot. has the following beautiful remark, "Not that the Gospel rejects persons of any sort ; but that the less burdened more easily tread the narrow and steep path." Mat. 5:3. 13:23. Calling.] Klesis : it includes the assent and acceptance ; so in v. 27. called, i. e. 'placed in a state of salvation,' according to the genius of Heb. phraseology. See Schl.'

BLOOMF.

(27, 28.) 'Who is there, almost, that measures wisdom by simplicity, strength by suffering, dignity by lowliness ? Who is there that counts it first to be last, something to be nothing, and reckons himself to be of great command in that he is a servant ? Yet God, when He meant to

subdue the world and hell at once, part of that to salvation, and this wholly to perdition, made choice of no other weapons or auxiliaries than these, whether to save or to destroy. It had been a small mastery to Him to have drawn out his legions into array, and flanked them with his thunder ; therefore, He sent Foolishness to confute Wisdom, Weakness to bind Strength, Despisedness to vanquish Pride. And this is the great mystery of the Gospel, made good in Christ Himself, who came not to be ministered to, but to minister, and must be fulfilled in all his ministers, till his second coming.'

MILTON.

(30.) 'In these difficult words we must attend to the Heb. and Hellenistic idiom. There is, throughout the sentence, a metonymy of the effect for the cause ; and we have also the abstract for the concrete. The sense, then, is : "who was made by God, the means of wisdom (the true and only wisdom, worthy the name, being imparted to us ; since by Him and his doctrine alone are we enabled to contemplate God and his arcana, which even the most acute human inquiries could never have imagined." "The Cause of our justification, and the Author and promoter of our sanctification, both by imparting pure doctrine, by the example of his own holy life, and especially by procuring for us the assistance of the Holy Spirit." So the Gr. comtrs. and best moderns, and the Rabbins.'

BLOOMF.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. When the apostle came, as a Jewish stranger, among the polite, speculating, and licentious Corinthians ; he did not attempt to catch their attention, by affected elegance or sublimity of language, for it was his sole object, to declare 'the testimony of



2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save <sup>b</sup> Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with <sup>c</sup> enticing words of <sup>d</sup> man's wisdom, but in demonstration <sup>e</sup> of the Spirit and of power:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them <sup>f</sup> that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to <sup>g</sup> nought:

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden <sup>h</sup> wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for <sup>i</sup> had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But, as it is written, <sup>k</sup> Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

b Ga. 6:14. f or, be. i Ep. 3:5,9.  
c or, persuasible. g Phil. 3:15. j Lu. 23:34.  
d 2 Pe. 1:16. h Ps. 33:10. k Is. 64:4.  
e 1 Th. 1:5.

them but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified; to make a show of no other knowledge than this; to preach nothing, to discover the knowledge of nothing, but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. Christ, in his Person and offices, is the Sum and Substance of the Gospel, and ought to be the great Subject of a gospel-minister's preaching.

God, concerning the only way of salvation from eternal misery, and of obtaining eternal life; and a message of such immense importance, would not admit of these worthless embellishments. This [Christ and Him crucified] was the *centre* and *substance* of his preaching: but it is evident, that he did not confine himself wholly to this one topic, so as to exclude other parts of the revealed truth and will of God. For we are sure, from his own writings, that he preached man's relation to God, as his Creator, Benefactor, and Governor; the glorious perfections and the holy law of God; the future judgment and eternal state of righteous retributions; the lost estate of man, regeneration, repentance, conversion, the necessity of personal holiness, attention to relative duties; and in short 'the whole counsel of God,' as the great circumference to that circle, of which 'Christ crucified' is the centre, in which all the lines meet. (1) *Declaring.*] The apostle came as a messenger, simply to deliver a message, even 'the sure testimony of God,' without alteration, omission, decoration, or addition; the whole of what he was sent to deliver, nothing more, and in all simplicity.—'What extraordinary claims are advanced,—what pretensions made in this ch. 1.—How pointed is it on the subject of inspiration! If the sacred writers were in any degree true men, they were then fully inspired in all which they taught concerning religion. The miracles which they wrought, prove them true men, whatever their pretensions might be, and their own words show what these pretensions were.'

(1.) *Excellency*, i. e. sublimity of doctrine, and of wisdom.] This excellency of wisdom was *creditation*, especially philosophical; thought at Corinth, the only true wisdom. *Ros.*, who obs., that Paul 'abstained from using the stores of knowledge he undoubtedly possessed, because, (3:1) they were tyros (*sarkikoi*), and could not comprehend higher doctrines.' 'To preach and commemorate the whole history of Jesus Christ, his origin, birth, life, doctrine, and especially his death, and the important doctrines connected with it. Comp. 15:1—4. This is always the sense of the formula. Thus to preach Christ, is of yet more comprehensive signification.'

V. 3—5. 'By the demonstration of the Spirit, many expositors understand exclusively the miracles, by which the Holy Spirit powerfully demonstrated the truth of the Gospel; of the prophecies which were fulfilled in those things, which the apostles preached concerning Jesus and his salvation; but these proofs, however conclusive, without the internal operation of the Holy Spirit, as the Author of divine life in regeneration, would not have produced true faith; and it is unreasonable to confine the language to those operations, which were peculiar to one age, and to exclude such as are alike necessary, and alike to be depended on, in every age. 1 Thess. 1:5—3. 2:13—16. The annexed reason, however, puts it beyond all reasonable doubt, that the latter were principally intended; for the apostle would use no other arts of persuasion, than that plain and faithful address to the hearts and consciences of men, which the Spirit of God always makes use of in convincing them of sin, and in powerfully demonstrating the truth and preciousness of the Gospel to their souls; because he would not have their 'faith to

II. The manner wherein he preached Christ, is here also observable. 1. Negatively, v. 4. He did not affect to appear a fine orator, or a deep philosopher; did not set himself to captivate the ear by fine turns and eloquent expressions; nor please and entertain the fancy with lofty flights of sublime notions. Divine wisdom needed not to be set off with such human ornaments. 2. Positively, v. 1. He published a divine revelation, and gave in sufficient vouchers for the authority of it, both by its consonancy to ancient predictions, and by present miraculous operations; and there he left the matter: yet his speech and preaching were in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, v. 3, 4. His enemies in the church of Corinth spake very contemptuously of him, 2 Cor. 10:10. Possibly, he had a little body, and a low voice; but though he had not so good an elocution as some, it is plain he was no mean speaker: for the men of Lystra looked on him to be Mercury, the heathen god of eloquence, Acts 14:12. Nor did he want courage or resolution to go through his work; he was in nothing terrified by his adversaries. Yet he was no boaster. He did not proudly vaunt himself, like his opposers. He acted in his office with much modesty, concern, and care, lest he should mismanage in his trust. None know the fear and trembling of faithful ministers, who are jealous over souls with a godly jealousy: and a deep sense of their own weakness is the occasion of this fear and trembling. But though Paul managed with this modesty and concern, yet he spake with authority, in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power. He laid down the doctrine as the Spirit delivered it; and left the Spirit, by his external operation in signs and miracles, and his internal influences on the hearts of men, to demonstrate the truth of it, and procure its reception.

III. The end for which he preached Christ crucified in this manner, v. 5. that they might not be drawn by human motives, or overcome by mere human arguments, lest it should be said, that either rhetoric or logic

had made them Christians. But when nothing but Christ crucified was plainly preached, the success must be entirely attributed to a divine power accompanying the Word: that God might appear and be glorified in all.

V. 6—16. In this part of the ch. the apostle shows them, that though he had not come to them with any of the boasted knowledge and literature of the Jews or Greeks, yet he had communicated to them a treasure of the truest and the highest wisdom, v. 6. especially to such as were well instructed in Christianity, and had come to maturity in the things of God: not indeed the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, but the wisdom of God in a mystery: v. 6, 7. not worldly wisdom, but divine; not such as the men of this world could have discovered, nor such as worldly men, under the conduct of pride, and passion, and appetite, and worldly interest, and destitute of the Spirit of God, can receive. How different is the judgment of God from that of the world! The wisdom He teaches is of a quite different kind from what passes under that notion in the world. It is what God had a long time kept to Himself, and concealed from the world, and the depth of which, now it is revealed, none but Himself can fathom. It is the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, though now made manifest to the saints, Col. 1:26. hid, in a manner, entirely from the heathen world, and made mysterious to the Jews, by being wrapped up in dark types and distant prophecies, but revealed and made known to us by the Spirit of God. Now concerning this wisdom, observe,

I. The rise and original of it, v. 7. It was ordained of God; He had determined long ago to reveal and make it known, nay, from eternity; and that to our glory, the glory of us, either us apostles, or us Christians. It was a great honor put on the apostles, to be intrusted with the revelation of this wisdom. It was a great and honorable privilege for Christians, to have this glorious wisdom discovered to them. And the wisdom of God

stand on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.' 1:17—19. 2 Cor. 4:7. Now that faith, which is produced by outward miracles, and wholly rests on them, is no more saving, or to be depended on, than that which is the effect of logical reasonings or eloquent persuasions. Acts 8:9—24. but the faith, which is the effect of the inward and powerful teaching and 'demonstration of the Spirit,' rests on the power of God, and is supported by it; and will endure through all trials even to the end. Sc.

(3.) 'Ros. tr. "I carried myself among you, as weak, (unlearned, or timid,) and very modest;" phobō and tromō, must mean modesty and bashfulness, he says; yet Chrys. and the Gr. comtrs. explain them otherwise. Storr refers weakness to Paul's imbecility of body, 2 Cor. 10:10, i. e. a thin, weak voice, and a hesitation in pronunciation. Yet it may also refer to the extreme smallness of stature, stooping, &c. which are ascribed to the apostle; and so Schoett. Indeed, the word here, and 2 Cor. 10:10. not improbably, refer to the same infirmities or disadvantages as the thorn in the flesh, 2 Cor. 12:7. Then in weakness will refer to the fear justly excited by his persecutors, and the en phobō kai tromō to his modesty and bashfulness. After all, however, I grant that there is much to be said in defence of other interpretations, and it is very difficult to determine exactly Paul's meaning.'

(4.) *Enticing.*] Persuasive, persuading. Ed. V. 6—9. It was 'the wisdom of God in a mystery,' even in the mysterious design of glorifying his holy name and all his perfections, in the redemption of sinners, by the incarnation, righteousness, atoning sacrifice, and mediation of his co-equal Son. Rom. 16:25—27. Eph. 3:1—12. 1 Tim. 3:16. (7) *Ordained. Predestinated*] Rom. 8:28—31. See on Acts 4:28. 'It signifies little to bring such expressions down to any period of time. If it be granted, that they intend anything, previous to the existence of those to whom they refer, the same difficulties will still lie in the way; nor is it possible to avoid them.' Doddr.—(9) *Eye hath not seen.*] Not from the LXX, nor an exact tr. from the Heb.; but it gives the general sense of the v. Is. 64:4. Scott.

(6.) *Perfect.*] *Teleiois*: auditors far advanced in spiritual knowledge, 3:1. Heb. 5:14. 6:1. So the most eminent modern comtrs. In 1 Chr. 25:8. Sept. the learners are opposed to the teleiois, and the Vulg. tr. the former *indoctos*, the latter *doctos*. *Ros.* thinks Christians generally are meant, as opposed to heathens and Jews; and adduces the following words in proof.

(7.) *Ordained.*] 'From everlasting, had planned and purposed to reveal. *Theoph.* says the term is employed to show the love of God: since those are especially supposed to love us, who have been for a long time making preparations to benefit us. *Glory. Dozan*: to be taken metaphorically in the sense of *salvation, happiness, &c.* So *Theod.*, *Whit.*, *Doddr.*'

(8.) *Princes.*] 'The Jewish rulers, so most comtrs. *Lord of glory.*] Hebraistic, for *glorious Lord*. Ps. 24:9.'

(9.) 'The quot. is selected from several places, and accommodated. *Prepared.*] [Note, v. 7.] "Held in reserve:" love, here, includes worship and obey. "If ye love Me, keep my commandments." Id.



10 But <sup>1</sup> God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep <sup>m</sup> things of God.

11 For what <sup>n</sup> man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even <sup>o</sup> so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not <sup>p</sup> the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that <sup>q</sup> we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, <sup>r</sup> not <sup>s</sup> in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

l Jn. 16:13. o Ro. 11:33,34. r 1 Co. 1:17.  
m Ro. 11:33. p Ro. 8:15. s Mat. 13:11, &c.  
n Pr. 14:10. q 1 Jn. 5:20. Ro. 8:5,7.

discovered in the Gospel, prepares for our everlasting glory and happiness in the world to come. The counsels of God concerning our redemption are dated from eternity, and designed for the glory and happiness of the saints. And what deep wisdom was in these counsels! The wisdom of God is both *employed* and *displayed* for the honor of his saints; employed from eternity, and displayed in time, to make them glorious both here and hereafter, in time and to eternity. What honor!

II. The *ignorance* of the great men of the world about it, v. 8. the principal men in authority and power, or in wisdom and learning. The Roman governor, and the guides and rulers of the Jewish church and nation, seem chiefly meant. Observe, Jesus Christ is the *Lord of glory*; a title much too great for any creature to bear: and *therefore* was He hated, because not known. Had his crucifixion known Him, known who and what He was, they would have withheld their impious hands, and not *have taken and slain* Him. This He pleaded with his Father for their pardon, Lu. 23:34. There are things which people would not do, if they knew the wisdom of God in the great work of redemption. They act as they do, because they are blind or heedless. They know not [will not know] the truth, or attend to it.

III. It is such wisdom as could not have

been discovered *without a revelation*; according to what Isaiah says, ch. 64:4. as the LXX. It was a testimony of love to God in the Jewish believers, to live in expectation of the accomplishment of evangelical promises. Waiting on God is an evidence of love to Him, Is. 25:9. Observe, *There are things which God hath prepared for them that love Him*, and wait for Him, things in a future life, 2 Tim. 1:10. But the apostle speaks here of the subject matter of the divine revelation under the Gospel. These are such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard. Observe, The great truths of the Gospel are things lying out of the sphere of human discovery, but by the light of revelation. And therefore we must take them as they lie in the Scriptures, and as God has been pleased to reveal them.

IV. We here see by whom this wisdom is discovered to us, v. 10. The Scripture is given by *inspiration of God*, 2 Pet. 1:21. Here is a proof of the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures. Paul wrote what he taught; and what he taught was revealed of God by his Spirit, v. 11. A double argument is drawn from these words, in proof of the divinity of the Holy Ghost.

1 *Omniscience* is attributed to Him; *He searches all things, even the deep things of God*. He has exact knowledge of all things, and enters into the very depths of God, penetrates into his most secret counsels. Now, who can have such a thorough knowledge of God, but God?

2. This allusion seems to imply, that the Holy Spirit is as much in God, as a man's mind is in himself. Now the mind of the man is plainly essential to him. He cannot be without his mind. Nor can God be without his Spirit. He is as much and as intimately one with God, as the man's mind is with the man. The man knows his own mind, because his mind is one with himself. The Spirit of God knows the things of God, because He is one with God. And as no man can come at the knowledge of what is in another man's mind, till he communicates and reveals it; so neither can we know the secret counsels and purposes of God, till they are made known to us by his Holy Spirit. And it was by this Spirit that the apostles had received the *wisdom of God in a mystery*, which they spake, v. 12. not the spirit which is in the *wise men of the world*, v. 6. nor in the *rulers of the world*, v. 8. but the *Spirit which is of God*, proceedeth from God. We have what we deliver in the name of God, by inspiration from Him; and it is by his gracious illumination and influence, that *we know the things freely given to us of God*, unto salvation, i. e. the great privileges of the Gospel, which are the free gift of God, distributions

of mere and rich grace.' Though these things are given us, and the revelation of this gift be made to us, we cannot know them to any saving purpose, till we have the Spirit.

V. We see here in what *manner* this wisdom was taught or communicated, v. 13. the Spirit of God not only gave the knowledge of these things, but gave them utterance. The truths of God need no garnishing by human skill or eloquence, but look best in the words which the Holy Ghost teaches. *Comparing spiritual things with spiritual*, one part of revelation with another; the Gospel, the N. T. with the types and prophecies of the Old: if the principles of human art and science are to be made a test of revelation, we shall certainly judge amiss concerning it, and the things contained in it. Or, *adapting spiritual things to spiritual*; speaking of spiritual matters, matters of revelation, and the spiritual life, in language that is proper and plain. The language of the Spirit of God is the most proper to convey his meaning.

VI. How this wisdom is received.

1. Not by the *natural man*, v. 14. the *animal man*. Either, (1.) The man under the power of corruption, and never yet illuminated by the Spirit of God, such as Jude calls *sensual, not having the Spirit*, v. 19. Not that the natural faculty of discerning is lost, but evil inclinations and wicked principles render the man unwilling to enter into the mind of God, in the spiritual matters of his kingdom, and yield to their force and power. Or, (2.) The *natural man*, i. e. the *wise man of the world*, ch. 1:19, 20. the *wise man after the flesh*, or *according to the flesh*, v. 26. one who hath the *wisdom of the world*, *man's wisdom*, ch. 2:4—6. a man, as *some of the ancients*, that would learn all truth by his own ratiocinations, receive nothing by faith, nor own any need of supernatural assistance. This was very much the character of the pretenders to philosophy, and the Grecian learning and wisdom, in that day. Such a man receives *not the things of the Spirit of God*. Revelation is not with him a principle of science; he looks on it as delirium and dotage, the extravagant thought of some deluded dreamer. It is no way to wisdom among the famous masters of the world; and for that reason he can have no knowledge of things revealed, *because they are only spiritually discerned*, or made known by the revelation of the Spirit, which is a principle of science or knowledge which he will not admit.

2. *But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged*, or discerned, of no man, v. 15. Either, (1.) He who is sanctified, and made *spiritually-minded*, Rom. 8:6. judgeth *all things*, or *discerneth*

V. 10—13. This should be specially noted as a most decisive testimony both to the Deity and personality of the Holy Spirit. 12:4—11. John 14:15—17, 25, 26. 15:26, 27. 16:3—11. Acts 5:1—11, v. 3, 4, 9. 13:1—5. v. 2, 4.—The apostle here undoubtedly speaks of himself as divinely inspired, both in what he preached, and in what he wrote. 1 Pet. 1:10—12, v. 12.—Probably Silvanus and Timothy also had *immediate* revelations from God. Others, who preach the same grand truths, have them only by *mediate* revelation; and the doctrine of all uninspired preachers must be assayed by that of the apostles. Mat. 16:19. Sc. (10.) *Searcheth.*] 'The Gr. denotes such profound research as leads to thorough knowledge.' So *Theod.*

(13.) *Comparing.*] 'Explaining; so Pelag., Sedul., and most recent comrs.'

V. 14—16 The term [*natural*] here used, has occasioned much dispute; but, as it is derived from a word, which sometimes, at least, signifies the rational soul; it may be supposed to have reference to the powers of his mind, as well as to his inferior inclinations.—It is opposed to the *regenerate* man, and to the *glorified*, i. e. the perfectly regenerated man. A man that hath only natural abilities and perfections, *Leigh.* One that has not the Spirit of God.—The apostle's argument absolutely requires, that by 'the natural man' we understand the unregenerate man, however sagacious, learned, or abstracted from sensual indulgences: for he opposes him to the *spiritual* man; and the pride of carnal reasoning is, at least, as opposite to spirituality, as the most grovelling sensuality can be. Gal. 5:19—23. No man, as naturally born into the world, and not supernaturally born again of the Spirit, 'can see the kingdom of God,' or receive, in faith and love, the spiritual mysteries of redemption, by the cross of Christ. John 3:3—3. 14:15—17. To all unregenerate men, these things will, in one way or other, appear '*foolishness*,' uninteresting, unnecessary, inconsistent, or

absurd; and doubtless proud reasoners have scoffed at them, more than ever mere sensualists did. 1:20—25. No ingenuity, address, or reasoning of the preacher can prevent this effect; no application of the man's own mind, except in humble dependence on the teaching of the Holy Spirit, can enable him to perceive the real nature and glory of them. 'For they are spiritually discerned,' i. e. by the illuminating and sanctifying work of the Spirit of God on the mind; by which a spiritual capacity is produced, which discerns, admires, loves, and delights in the divine excellency of heavenly things. When this change has taken place, and a man's spiritual senses have been matured by growth and exercise, he may be called 'a spiritual man;' and he perceives the spiritual glory and excellency of every truth and precept in the Word of God; he distinguishes one object from another by a spiritual taste, or a kind of contemporaneous judgment, and so he becomes a competent judge in these matters. Yet his views, principles, and motives do not fall under the judgment of any other men; none are competent to decide on the propriety of his conduct, as they are strangers to those views and discoveries, which direct his determinations. Acts 16:1—3. P. O. 1—12. For 'who hath known the mind of the Lord,' or can be capable of 'instructing him,' who is inspired by the Holy Spirit? As therefore the apostle, and other inspired persons, were made acquainted with 'the mind of Christ,' by whom the Father reveals Himself to men: none of those who presumed to judge them could be competent to decide, either on their doctrine, or their manner of communicating it. They were, in the very order of things, above such instructors or censurers, who could not possibly understand the principles on which they acted. M. and M. R. In a measure, all 'spiritual' men 'have the mind of Christ,' and unregenerate men are incompetent judges of their conduct; yet this is in everything to be tried by the Word of God; and nothing must be justified or excused, which does not accord with that rule, when properly



15 But he <sup>t</sup> that is spiritual <sup>u</sup> judgeth all things, yet he himself <sup>v</sup> is judged of no man.

16 For <sup>w</sup> who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he <sup>x</sup> may instruct him? But we have <sup>y</sup> the mind of Christ.

CHAP. III.

<sup>2</sup> Milk is fit for children. <sup>3</sup> Strife and division, arguments of a fleshly mind. <sup>7</sup> He that planteth, and he that watereth, is nothing. <sup>9</sup> The ministers are God's fellow-workmen. <sup>11</sup> Christ, the only foundation. <sup>16</sup> Men, the temples of God, which <sup>17</sup> must be kept holy. <sup>19</sup> The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

AND I, brethren, could not speak unto you as <sup>a</sup> unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, <sup>b</sup> even as unto babes <sup>c</sup> in Christ.

<sup>2</sup> I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto <sup>e</sup> ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

<sup>3</sup> For ye are yet carnal: for <sup>d</sup> whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and <sup>e</sup> divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk <sup>f</sup> as men?

t Pr. 28:5.	x shall.	c Jn. 16:12.
u or, discerneth.	y Jn. 17:8.	d Ja. 3:16.
v or, discerned.	a c. 2:14, 15.	e or, factions.
w Is. 40:13.	b He. 5:12, 13.	f according to man.
Je. 23:18.	l Pe. 2:2.	

all things; he is capable of judging about matters of human wisdom, and has also a relish and savor of divine truths; the sanctified mind discerns the real beauties of ho-

liness: but by the refinement of its faculties, they do not lose their power of discerning and judging about common and natural things. The spiritual man may judge of all things, natural and supernatural, human and divine, the deductions of reason, and the discoveries of revelation. But he himself is judged or discerned of NO MAN. God's saints are his hidden ones, Ps. 83: 3. Col. 3: 3. The carnal man knows no more of a spiritual man, than he does of other spiritual things. He is a stranger to the principles, and pleasures, and actings, of the divine life. The spiritual man does not lie open to his observation. Or, (2.) He that is spiritual, has had divine revelations made to him, receives them as such, and founds his faith and religion on them; he can judge both of common things and things divine; he can discern what is, and what is not, the doctrine of the Gospel, and of salvation; he does not lose the power of reasoning, nor renounce the principles of it, by founding his faith and religion on revelation. But he himself is judged of no man; can be judged, so as to be confuted, by no man; nor can any man who is not spiritual, not under a divine afflatus himself, (see ch. 14: 37.) or not founding his faith on a divine revelation, discern or judge whether what he speaks be true, or divine, or not. In short, he who finds his knowledge on principles of science, and the mere light of reason, can never be a judge of the truth or falsehood of what is received by revelation. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him, v. 16. the spiritual man? Who

can enter so far into the mind of God, as to instruct him who has the Spirit of God, and is under his inspiration? But, adds the apostle, we have the mind of Christ: and the mind of Christ is the mind of God. He is God, and the principal Messenger and Prophet of God; the apostles were empowered by his Spirit to make known his mind to us; and in the Holy Scriptures, the mind of Christ, and the mind of God in Christ, are fully revealed to us. This is the great privilege of Christians.

CHAP. III. V. 1-4. I. Paul blames the Corinthians for their weakness and non-proficiency, v. 1. So far from forming their maxims and measures on the foot of divine revelation, and entering into the spirit of the Gospel, it was but too evident, they were much under the command of carnal and corrupt affections. They had received some of the first principles of Christianity, but were grown up to no maturity of understanding in them, or of faith and holiness: yet they were very proud of their wisdom and knowledge. It is but too common for persons of very moderate knowledge and understanding to have a great measure of self-conceit. The apostle assigns their little proficiency in the knowledge of Christianity, as a reason why he had communicated no more of the deep things of it to them, v. 2. Note, A faithful minister must consult the capacities of his hearers, and teach them as they can bear: yet babes grow to be men; and babes in Christ should endeavor to become men in Christ. It is expected their advances

PRACT. OBS. How surprising, that this most honored servant of Christ, should be constrained to justify his divinely excellent and useful preaching, even to the very persons, who had been converted by it! But this surprise should be connected with admiration of the divine wisdom, in taking occasion from that circumstance, to give the church most valuable instructions, concerning the best method of 'declaring the testimony of God' to sinners.—If this arduous service, made even this great apostle to fear and tremble, through conscious weakness; what reason have we to be humble and diffident, when called to declare the same testimony to mankind! 2 Cor. 2:14-17. How should we fear disgracing this honorable ministry, by our own folly or sin! At what a distance should we keep from all ambition and self-confidence! How carefully should we remember, that all 'our sufficiency is of God' alone! The more deeply we are convinced, that no arguments or eloquence of man can, by their own efficacy, produce saving faith; the greater care we shall take to speak in a plain, serious, and scriptural manner; and in imitation of those preachers of old, whose word was attended with

'demonstration of the Spirit and of power;' depending singly on his effectual operation to bring our hearers to believe, to the salvation of their souls.—No man truly understands or properly values divine revelation, except that divine Spirit, who revealed them to the apostles, removes the veil from his heart, and enables him to perceive their real excellency. (Notes and P. O. 2 Cor. 3:7-18.) On this great Teacher we must simply depend, while we seek to know 'the things that are freely given by God' to his people, and to obtain the assurance that we belong to that favored company.—Whoever teaches, or what language soever is employed, 'the natural man' will either oppose, despise, or pervert 'the things of the Spirit of God;' he cannot cordially receive or rightly understand them; they will remain foolishness to him, because he is destitute of spiritual discernment. On the other hand, he who is 'born of God;' however destitute of genius and learning, will become spiritual, and capable of discerning the harmony and glory of divine truth; will experience its sanctifying effects in his heart, and produce correspondent fruits in his life.

explained. But the inspired apostles were employed, to state that 'mind of Christ,' by which men's principles and actions must be judged, both at present, and at the day of judgment; and, in this respect, they could not be liable to be judged by any man.—Some, indeed, explain the last v. as an inquiry, whether any man had so known the mind of the Lord, as to be competent to give Him any counsel or instruction. Rom. 11:33-35. But the context rather fixes the meaning to the preceding interpretation; and the apostle intended to expose the absurdity of a 'natural' man presuming to instruct 'a spiritual man,' in respect of 'spiritual things!' or of an ordinary Christian, or teacher, presuming to censure or dictate to an inspired apostle, as he thus declared himself to be! It is probable he had in mind, but he does not expressly quote, Is. 40:12-17.

(says Par.) from defect of light and corruption of heart. For, as Aristotle says, wickedness perverts the judgment, and makes men err with respect to practical principles; so that no one can be wise and judicious who is not good.

(14.) Natural.] 'Psychikos: who follows only the impulses of nature, common to the brutes; who considers only objects which strike the senses, and the things of this life. For psychē is that sort of instinct, which men have in common with the brutes, to follow which, is equivalent to following concupiscence. [Rather their "innate, impulsive faculties, objective and intellectual, as they exist before "regeneration."] Thus in Jude, 19. the psychikoi and the pneuma echontes are distinguished. And in Jos. 1, 2. God is said to have instilled into Adam, pneuma and psychēn. The psychikoi, therefore, are those who are led merely by sensual, [and other natural, (as at end of Rom. 7.)] impulses, and do not follow, as becomes rational [and holy] beings, right [inspired] reason; and, especially, do not weigh the truth and authority of religion, [full of the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit,] neither attend to the representations of others, nor use the opportunity of learning [or receive, realize, and appropriate it]; neither examine what [it] is offered to them for, nor make trial of what they have heard, so as to understand its value; but rashly reject what they perceive to be contrary to their own opinions, Ja. 3:15. Men of this kind (says Noesselt) do not, hence, admit (dechousi [receive]) the more perfect doctrine of revelation, but reject and account it foolishness. So Chrys., and Theoph. who takes psychichos for phusikos, and aptly illustrates thus: the eyes, though the most beautiful and useful of the members, yet, without light, cannot see. So the psychē cannot discern, unless enlightened by the H. S. So Theod. See also Calv., De Dieu, Grot., Salmasius, Wets., Doddr. Cappell takes psychē to answer to the Heb. nephsh, the anima common to all men, from which proceed the motions and affections, [note, end of Rom. 7.] common to all, and naturally corrupt [ed]. The pneuma is the Heb. ruch, the H. S., or the mind, reformed and regenerated by its influences. And so Vittr. and Schoett.'

(15.) All things.] I. e. which pertain to the case. Ep. (16.) 'This part of the epistle is very artificially conducted. Paul is now aiming at the great point of establishing his authority, which had been suspected, amongst them; yet he does not directly propose, but obliquely insinuate arguments against such suspicions; arguments which might possess their minds, before they were aware of what he intended to effect by them.'

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1-3. Many of the Corinthians had been seduced into a mean opinion of the apostle's ministry, because he had not fully instructed them in those abstruse subjects, on which some of their teachers had particularly insisted, and about which they plausibly speculated: he therefore here assigns the reason of his conduct in this respect. The simplest truths of the Gospel, respecting the sinfulness of man, and the rich mercy of God as shown in redemption by the blood of Emmanuel; with regeneration, faith in Christ, the necessity and nature of holiness; the influences and fruits of the Spirit; the day of judgment, and eternal happiness and misery; delivered in the simplest, plainest language, suited them far better, than those deeper mysteries, which led to mere speculation, and which afforded the teacher a fairer opportunity of showing his knowledge, ingenuity, and capacity.—It is evident, that by carnal, and as men, the apostle does not here intend the prevalence of sensual appetites, but that of malignant passions; not the propensities of the animal, but those of the fallen spirit; and this may confirm the interpretation given of this, and similar words, in other places. (Rom. 8:1-13. Gal. 5:19-26.)—As 'spiritual' is opposed to 'carnal,' it must relate exclusively to the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit; and not at all to miraculous endowments. The Corinthians were enriched with the latter, but some of them seemed altogether destitute of the former, and the generality of them were but 'babes in Christ.' (1) Carnal.] 3, 4. 2 Cor. 1:12. See on Rom. 7:14. The apostle considered the Romans capable of receiving the simpler parts of 'the things of the Spirit of God;' which 'the natural man cannot receive.' (2:14.) 'Carnal,' in this place cannot mean more than 'natural;' and a man may be 'carnal' in some respects, and yet not altogether destitute of what is 'spiritual.' [Comp. note, end of Rom. 7.]

(14.) Receiveth.] 'Admit, hear, follow.' BL. Realize, appropriate? Ed. Know.] 'Fully understand and appreciate their excellence, both

(1.) 'What follows closely coheres with 2:13.' (3.) Carnal.] Indulging, exclusively, 'all those affections which do not wholly tend to the honor of God, and the welfare of man, but are merely directed to our own gratification?' (Grot.) and flow not from the life of God in the soul of man, by the Spirit of grace.



4 For while one saith, I <sup>am</sup> of Paul; and another, I <sup>am</sup> of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even <sup>as</sup> the Lord gave to every man?

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God <sup>gave</sup> the increase.

7 So then, neither <sup>is</sup> he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man <sup>shall</sup> receive his own reward, according to his own labor.

9 For we are laborers together <sup>with</sup> God: ye are God's <sup>husbandry</sup>, ye are God's <sup>building</sup>.

10 According <sup>to</sup> the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is <sup>laid</sup>, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it <sup>shall</sup> be revealed by fire: and the <sup>fire</sup> shall try every man's work, of what sort it is.

g c. 1:12.                    Ro. 22:12.                    p Is. 28:16. Mat. 16:18. Ep. 2:20.  
h Ro. 12:3,6.                l 2 Co. 6:1.                    2 Ti. 2:19.  
                                  m or, tillage.  
i Pe. 4:11.                    n He. 3:6. 1 Pe. 2:5.                    q is.  
l c. 15:10.                    o Ro. 12:3.                    r Zec. 13:9. 1 Pe. 12:9-11.  
j Jn. 15:5. 2 Co.                    1:7. 4:12.  
k Ps. 62:12.

in knowledge should be in proportion to their means and opportunities, and their time of professing religion; that they may be able to bear discourses of the mysteries of our religion, and not always rest in plain things. It was a reproach to the Corinthians, that they had so long sat under the ministry of Paul, and had made no more improvement. Christians are utterly to blame, who do not endeavor to grow in grace and knowledge.

II. They had mutual emulations, and quarrels, and factions among them, on account of their ministers, v. 4. These were proofs of their being carnal; that fleshly interests and affections too much swayed them. Contentions and quarrels about religion are sad evidences of remaining carnality. True religion makes men peaceable. Factious spirits act on human principles,

not on principles of true religion; are guided by their own pride and passions, not by the rules of Christianity; *Do ye not walk as men?* It is to be lamented, that many who should walk as Christians, i. e. above the common rate of men, do indeed live and act too much like other men.

V. 5-10. The apostle instructs them how to cure this.

I. By reminding them, that the ministers about whom they contended, were *but ministers*, v. 5. mere instruments, used by the God of all grace. Observe, All the gifts and powers that even apostles discovered and exerted in the work of the ministry, were from God. They were intended to manifest their mission and doctrine to be divine. Both were useful, one for one purpose, the other for a different. Paul was fitted for *planting*, Apollos for *watering*; but *God gave the increase*. The success of the ministry must be derived from the divine blessing, v. 7. Even apostolical ministers are nothing of themselves, can do nothing with efficacy and success. The best qualified and most faithful ministers, have a just sense of their own insufficiency, and are very desirous that God should have all the glory of their success.

II. By representing to them the unanimity of Christ's ministers, v. 8. how they are employed by one Master, intrusted with the same revelation, busied in one work, and engaged in one design; having their different gifts from one and the same Spirit, for the very same purposes. All the faithful ministers of Christ, heartily concur in the great design of honoring God and saving souls, by promoting true Christianity in the world. All such may expect a glorious recompense of their fidelity, and in proportion to it; *Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor*. They that are most faithful, shall have the greatest reward; and glorious work it is, in which all faithful ministers are employed. *They are laborers with God, co-workers, fellow-laborers*, v. 9. not indeed in the same order and degree, but in subordination to Him, working together with God, in promoting the purposes of his glory, and the salvation of precious souls; *'Ye are God's husbandry, God's building*. We work under Him, and with Him, and for Him.' He had employed the former metaphor before, and now he goes on to the other of a building. Paul here calls himself a *wise master-builder*; a character doubly reflecting honor on him. It was honorable, to be a master-builder in the edifice of God; but it added to his character, to be a wise one. But he gives himself such a character, not to gratify his own pride, but to magnify divine grace. It is no crime in a Christian, but much to his commendation, to notice the good that is in him, to the praise of divine grace. Spiritual pride is abominable, but to notice the favors of God, to promote our gratitude to Him, and to speak of them to his honor, is but a proper expression of the duty and regard we

owe Him. It was Paul that *laid the foundation* of a church among them. He had *begotten them through the Gospel*, ch. 4:15. Whatever instructors they had besides, *they had not many fathers!* nor would he be robbed of his own honor and respect. Faithful ministers may and ought to have a concern for their own reputation. Their usefulness depends much on it; *But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon*. This is a proper caution; there may be very indifferent building on a good foundation, and great care should be used, not only to lay a sure and right foundation, but to erect a regular building upon it. Ministers of Christ should take great care that they do not build their own fancies or false reasonings on the foundation of divine revelation. What they preach should be the plain doctrine of their Master, or what is perfectly agreeable with it.

V. 11-15. Here the apostle informs us what foundation he had laid at the bottom of all his labors among them,—*even Jesus Christ, the chief Corner-stone*, Eph. 2:20. On this foundation all the faithful ministers of Christ build. On this Rock, all Christians found their hopes. They that build their hopes of heaven on any other foundation, build on the sand. *Other foundation can no man lay, beside what is laid,—even Jesus Christ*. The doctrine of our Savior, and his mediation, is the principal doctrine of Christianity. Leave out this, and you lay waste all our comforts, and leave no foundation for our hopes as sinners. It is in Christ *only that God is reconciling a sinful world to Himself*, 2 Cor. 5:19. But of those that hold the foundation, and embrace the general doctrine of Christ's being the Mediator between God and man, there are two sorts.

I. Some build on this foundation *gold, silver, and precious stones*, v. 12. They are those who receive and propagate the pure truths of the Gospel; who hold nothing but the *truth as it is in Jesus*, and preach nothing else.

II. Others *build wood, hay, and stubble*, on this foundation; i. e. though they adhere to the foundation, they depart from the mind of Christ in many particulars; substitute their own fancies and inventions in the room of his doctrines and institutions. There is a time coming, when a discovery will be made of what men have built on this foundation; *Every man's work shall be made manifest*; shall be laid open to view, his own, and that of others. We may mistake as to ourselves and others; but that day will show us ourselves, and show us our actions in the true light, without covering or disguise; *For the day shall declare it*, every man's work, *because it shall be revealed by fire*, v. 13.; the last day, the great day of trial; see ch. 4:5. Though some understand it of the time when the Jewish nation was destroyed, and their constitution thereby abolished; when the superstructure, judaizing teachers would have raised on the Christian foundation, was manifested to be no better than hay and

V. 4-9. The apostle cautiously forbore for the present to mention the false teachers at Corinth, who had done the mischief. SCOTT.

(5.) 'Even as the Lord hath given to each of them his share of spiritual gifts and evangelical success.' BLOOMF.

(3.) 'It is labor to which the reward is promised, not success of labor, which is not in any minister's power.' ID.

V. 10-15. Thus far the apostle proceeded on the supposition, that the laborers were skilful and faithful; but he meant to lead the attention of the Corinthians to some who were not so. He knew that no man could lay any other foundation of a spiritual temple, for the glory of God, or for the sinner's hope of salvation, than what he had laid in his preaching, and which God had laid in his purpose, and by the Gospel; namely, the Person, mediatorial office, righteousness, atonement, intercession, and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Is. 28:16. Mat. 16:18. Rom. 10:1-4. Eph. 2:19-22. 1 Pet. 2:4-6. If a man laid any other foundation than this, he could not be considered as one of 'the fellow-laborers of God.' (9) The apostle did not here put the supposition, that this was the case with any of their teachers. Yet, even on this Foundation, very different materials might be builded. The extreme absurdity of the papists, in producing this passage, in support of their doctrine of purgatory, is very obvious; but it is to be feared, that the zealous abettors of that doctrine, and many others of a similar nature, will be found to build wholly without a foundation. Mat. 7:24-27. SCOTT.

(10.) 'The best comtrs., ancient and modern, are agreed, that by *charis* [grace] Paul means the office of Apostleship among the Gentiles.' BLOOMF.

(12.) *Gilded beams*, and columns, and *maivse silver* and *gold ornaments*, and *precious stones*, as marble, &c. formed parts of ancient edifices. Many slight and temporary buildings, for various agricultural and other purposes, are in use in the E.; *'hay, wood, and stubble*, alludes to the materials of such.' *Wooden clamps* were used with the *costly stones* of Egyptian architecture, *straw* or *stubble* helped bind the vast walls and structures of Babylon, and 'fill up the interstices of stones of even the most stupendous size;' wooden beams upon courses of stone were also used in Solomon's temple, and wooden rafters in Jewish and Persian palaces [note, Est. 1:2-6.]; but the apostle's allusion is different, though perhaps suggested by these facts. *Doddr.* seems to have well hit his meaning. 'If any man build, I say, upon this foundation, let him look to the materials and nature of his work; whether he raise a stately and magnificent temple upon it, adorned, as it were, like the house of God at Jerusalem, with *gold* and *silver*, (and) large, beautiful, and *costly stones*; (or) a mean hovel, consisting of nothing better than planks of *wood*, roughly put together, and thatched with *hay* (and) *stubble*; i. e. let him look to it, whether he teach the substantial, vital truths which do indeed belong to Christianity, and which it was intended to support and illustrate; or set himself to propagate vain subtleties



14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God: for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

21 Therefore let no man glory in men: for all things are yours;

zec. 3:2. Jude u or, destroy. x Ps. 94:11. 23. Pr. 26:12. y Je. 9:23,24. t 2 Co. 6:16. w Job 5:13.

stubble, that would not bear the trial. But however this be, in that day,

1. Some men's works will *abide the trial*; will be found standard. It will appear, that they not only held the foundation, but that they built regularly and well upon it, with proper materials, and in due form and order. And such a builder shall not, cannot fail of a reward. He will have praise and honor in that day, and eternal recompense after it. Fidelity in the ministers of Christ will meet with full and ample reward in a future life. And, Lord, how great! how much exceeding their deserts!

2. There are others, whose works shall be burnt, v. 15. whose corrupt opinions and doctrines, or vain inventions and usages in the worship of God, shall be discovered, disowned, and rejected, in that day; shall be first manifested to be corrupt, and then disapproved of God and rejected. *He whose work shall be burnt, will suffer loss.* If he has built, on the right foundation, wood, and hay, and stubble, he will suffer loss. His weakness and corruption will be the lessening of his glory, though he may in the general have been an honest and an upright Christian: this part of his work turning no way to his advantage, though *himself may be saved.* Those who hold the foundation of Christianity, though they build hay, wood, and stubble upon it, may be saved. This may help

to enlarge our charity. He shall be saved, yet so as by fire, saved out of the fire, snatched out of that flame which will consume his work. It intimates, that it will be difficult for those that corrupt and deprave Christianity, to be saved. On this passage, the papists found their doctrine of *purgatory*, which is certainly hay and stubble: a doctrine never originally fetched from Scripture, but invented in barbarous ages, to feed the avarice and ambition of the clergy, at the cost of such as would rather part with their money than their lusts, for the salvation of their souls. It can have no countenance from this text; for, (1.) This is plainly meant of a figurative fire, not of a real one: for what real fire can consume religious rites or doctrines? (2.) This fire is to *try men's works, of what sort they are*; but purgatory-fire is not for trial, not to bring men's actions to the test, but to punish for them. They are supposed to be venial sins, not satisfied for in this life, for which satisfaction must be made by suffering the fire of purgatory. (3.) This fire is to *try every man's works*, those of Paul and Apollos, as well as those of others. Now, no papists will have the front to say, apostles must have passed through purgatory-fires.

V. 16, 17. Here the apostle resumes his argument and exhortation, founding it on his former allusion, *Ye are God's building*, v. 9. It looks, from other parts of the epistle, where the apostle argues to the same purpose, see ch. 6: 13—20. as if the false teachers among the Corinthians were not only loose livers, but taught licentious doctrines, and, what was particularly fitted to the taste of this lewd city, on the head of fornication. Such doctrine was not to be reckoned among *hay and stubble*; that would be consumed, while the person who laid them on the foundation escaped the burning; for it tended to corrupt, to pollute, and destroy the church, which was a building erected for God, and consecrated to Him, and therefore should be kept pure and holy. Those who spread principles of this sort, would provoke God to destroy them. It may be understood also as an argument against their discord, and factious strifes; division being the way to destruction. But what I have been mentioning seems the proper meaning; *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* It may be understood of the church of Corinth collectively, or of every single believer among them; Christian churches are temples of God. He dwells among them by his Holy Spirit, Eph. 2: 22. Every Christian is a living temple of the living God. God dwelt in the Jewish temple, and Christ by his Spirit dwells in all true believers. The temple was devoted and consecrated to God, and set apart from every common to a holy use, to the immediate service of God. So all Christians are

separate from common uses, and set apart for God and his service. They are sacred to Him,—a very good argument this, against all fleshly lusts, and all doctrines that give countenance to them. Christians are holy by profession, and should be pure and clean, both in heart [body] and conversation. We should heartily abhor, and carefully avoid, what will defile God's temple, and prostitute what ought to be sacred to Him.

V. 18—20. Here he prescribes humility, and a modest opinion of themselves, for the remedy of the irregularities in the church of Corinth, the divisions and contests among them, v. 18. We are in great danger of deceiving ourselves, when we have too high an opinion of human wisdom and arts. But *he who seems to be wise, must become a fool, that he may be wise.* He must be sensible of his own ignorance, and lament it; distrust his own understanding, and *not lean on it.* Self-flattery is the very next step to self-deceit. The way to true wisdom, is, to sink our opinion of our own to a due level, and be willing to be taught of God. The person who resigns his own understanding, that he may follow the instruction of God, is in the way to true and everlasting wisdom. *The meek will He guide in judgment, the meek will He teach his way*, Ps. 25: 9. He that has a low opinion of his own knowledge and powers, may be informed and improved by revelation: but the proud, conceited man, will undertake to correct even divine wisdom itself, and prefer his own shallow reasonings to the revelations of infallible truth and wisdom. The wisdom which worldly men esteem, (policy, philosophy, oratory,) is *foolishness with God*: in a way of comparison. There can be no more comparison between *his wisdom and ours*, than between his power and being and ours. And *He knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain*, v. 20. that they are vanity, Ps. 94: 11. God has a perfect knowledge of the thoughts of men, the deepest thoughts of the wisest men, their most secret counsels and purposes, Heb. 4: 13. And He knows them to be vanity. The thoughts of the wisest men in the world have a great mixture of vanity, of weakness and folly, in them; and before God their wisest and best thoughts are very vanity, compared, I mean, with his thoughts of things. And should not all this teach us modesty, diffidence in ourselves, and a deference to the wisdom of God; make us thankful for his revelations, and willing to be taught of God, and not be led away, by glorious pretences to human wisdom and skill, from the simplicity of Christ, or a regard to his heavenly doctrine?

V. 21—23. Here the apostle founds an exhortation against over-valuing their teachers, on what he had just said, and on the consideration that they had an equal interest in all their ministers, v. 21. Mankind are

and conceits on the one hand, or legal rites and Jewish traditions on the other; which, though they do not absolutely destroy the foundation, disgrace it, as a mean edifice would do a grand and extensive foundation, build with great pomp and solemnity.

(15.) *Suffer loss.*] The Gr. is a law term; i. e. be mulcted, in forfeit of the reward of his labor.

BLOOMF.  
V. 16, 17. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit constitutes 'the temple of God'; this is express testimony to his Deity. 'They are said by the apostle to defile the temple of God, who corrupted the purity of the Gospel by carnal eloquence; and who rent the church by factions.' Beza.—'The like words used, (6:16—19.) by way of dehortation from fornication, and (2 Cor. 6:16.) from communion with heathen, in their idolatrous rites and heathen practices; and by way of inducement to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit;" (2 Cor. 7:1.) more naturally incline us to refer these vs. to the corrupting of the temple of God, by uncleanness and fornication, or by idolatrous practices; both which the Corinthians did.' Whitby. It does not, however, appear, that there is any necessity of confining the interpretation to this, or the other kind of defilement; and in proportion as the declaration is made general, it becomes more and more important. The verb rendered 'destroy,' is the same with that before translated 'defile.'

SCOTT.  
(16.) Bloomf. thinks, 'what is here said, is not to be understood of individuals, but of the whole community of Christians, at least at Corinth; and Paul uses an O. T. mode of speaking, where God is said to dwell among the Jews, and they are said to be the temple and habitation of God. Lev. 26:11, 12. Ez. 37:27. Philo and the Rabbins use the metaphor. So Rabbi Aschek, on Hag. 2. remarks, that the Israelitish

people are said to be the temple of God.' He acknowledges, however, that the Holy Spirit exerting its pleasure in that community, it may be applied in that metaphorical sense to its individuals; but why is it not actually and really true of the regenerate? 6:19. John 14:17. Rom. 8: 9—11.

(17.) *Which temple ye are.*] This Doddr. rightly applies, both to the body of the Corinthian church, and to its individuals.

BLOOMF.  
V. 18—23. 'The Corinthians were induced to eat things offered to idols, in the idol-temples, by men pretending to great knowledge. . . (8: 1, 2.) They also introduced among them the doctrine of the lawfulness of fornication. (5:1.) . . . These teachers seem to have been the Nicolaitans, who received their doctrine from the philosophers.' Whitby. Rev. 2:14—16. — However this may be, the persons more immediately concerned in the preceding warning, were in danger of despising it, especially coming from one whom they disregarded, as far beneath them in knowledge and wisdom.—(19) *He taketh, &c.*] Not from the LXX, but the Heb. (Job 5:13.) (20) *The Lord knoweth, &c.*] It is here read 'wise men'; both the Heb. and LXX have only men, Ps. 94:11.

SCOTT.  
(18.) 'All human philosophy, repugnant to the Gospel, is deceit.' GROT. 'If any of you thinks himself wise, let him not scruple to be a fool, in the opinion of this age, that he may be really wise. So most recent commentators.'

BLOOMF.  
(19.) *Wisdom.*] 'Sophia: the wisdom of men who rest on their own intellectual powers, without a reference to God [Christ]: a wisdom which has no more effect in procuring salvation than folly.'

ID.  
(21.) *Glory in man.*] 'As was common among the Jews, who either followed Hillel or Samuel; and also among the Greeks, as the Pytha-



22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;

23 And ye<sup>z</sup> are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

#### CHAP. IV.

<sup>1</sup> In what account the ministers ought to be had. <sup>7</sup> We have nothing which we have not received. <sup>9</sup> The apostles spectacles to the world, angels, and men, <sup>13</sup> the filth and ofscouring of the world: <sup>15</sup> yet our fathers in Christ, <sup>16</sup> whom we ought to follow.

LET a man so account of us, as of the ministers<sup>a</sup> of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover, it is required in<sup>b</sup> stewards, that a man be<sup>c</sup> found faithful.

3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's<sup>e</sup> judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self.

4 For I know nothing by myself; <sup>d</sup> yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

<sup>z</sup> Ro. 14:8.    <sup>b</sup> Lu. 12:42. Tit.    <sup>c</sup> day.  
<sup>a</sup> 2 Co. 6:4.    <sup>1-7</sup> 1 Pe. 4:10.    <sup>d</sup> Ps. 143:2.

very apt to make the mercies of God cross their intentions. The ministry is a very useful and very gracious institution, and faithful ministers are a great blessing to any people; yet the folly and weakness of people may do much mischief by what is in itself a blessing. They may fall into factions, side with particular ministers, and set them at their head, glory in their leaders, and be carried by them they know not whither. The only way to avoid this mischief, is, to have a modest opinion of ourselves, a due sense of the common weakness of human understanding, and an entire deference to the wisdom of God speaking in his Word. Ministers are not to be set up in competition with one another.

On this occasion also, he gives an inventory of the church's possessions, the spiritual riches of a true believer; '*All is yours*; ministers of all ranks, ordinary and extraordinary. [All their gifts are for your advantage. You do not exist for the sake of teachers, but they for the sake of you.] Nay,

PRACT. OBS. Ministers should suit their instruction to the state and wants of their hearers, and teach them such things, as more immediately tend to their edification; rather than insist continually on those subjects which are agreeable to their own inclinations, or those of any party.—Men may have much doctrinal knowledge, and yet be mere novices in the life of faith and experience; nay, their promptitude to speculations, and their acuteness in them, may prove them to be in a great degree 'carnal,' and very imperfectly grounded even in the first principles of experimental and practical religion. Thus many professed Christians, yea preachers, show themselves to be 'yet carnal,' by their vain-glorious emulations, their eagerness for controversy, their selfish, fiery zeal, their disposition to prefer and exalt themselves, and to despise and revile others; and their apparent delight in disturbing the peace of the church. It is an universal rule, that these evils proportionably prove,

the world itself is yours.' Not that saints are proprietors of the world, but it stands for their sake; they have as much of it as Infinite Wisdom sees to be fit for them, and all with the divine blessing. '*Life is yours*, that you may have season and opportunity to prepare for the life of heaven; and *death is yours*, that you may go to the possession of it. *Things present* are yours, for your support on the road; *things to come* are yours, to enrich and regale you for ever at your journey's end.' But it must be remembered, at the same time, *that we are Christ's*, the subjects of his kingdom, his property. All things are ours, on no other foot than our being Christ's. Out of Him, we are without just title or claim to anything that is good. *And Christ is God's*. He is the Christ of God; anointed of God, and commissioned by Him, to bear the office of a Mediator, and to act therein for the purposes of his glory. All things are the believer's, that Christ might have honor in his great undertaking, and God in all might have the glory. God in Christ reconciling a sinful world to Himself, and shedding abroad the riches of his grace on a reconciled world, is the sun and substance of the Gospel.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—6. I. The apostle challenges the respect due to him on account of his character and office, in which many among them had at least very much failed, v. 1. though possibly others might have valued him too highly, by setting him up as the head of a party, and professing to be his disciples. In our opinion of ministers, as well as all other things, we should be careful to avoid extremes. Apostles themselves were, 1. Not to be over-valued, for they were ministers, not masters; stewards, not lords. It is a very great abuse of their power, and highly criminal in common ministers, to lord it over their fellow-servants, and challenge authority over their faith or practice. For even apostles were but servants of Christ, and had no authority to propagate their own fancies, but to spread *Christian faith*. 2. Apostles were not to be undervalued: for though ministers, they were ministers of Christ. The character and dignity of their Master put an honor on them; and so of common ministers, if faithful. Though but stewards, they are not stewards of the com-

mon things of the world, but of divine mysteries; and,

II. He sets forth the duty of an approved steward, v. 2. Stewards in Christ's family must appoint what He hath appointed; not set their fellow-servants to work for themselves; not require anything from them without their Master's warrant; not feed them with the chaff of their own inventions, instead of the wholesome food of Christian doctrine and truth: they must teach what *He hath commanded*, and not the doctrines and commandments of men: they must be true to the interest of their Lord, and consult his honor. Note, The ministers of Christ should make it their hearty and continual endeavor, to approve themselves trustworthy; and when they have the testimony of a good conscience, and the approbation of their Master, they must slight the opinions and censures of their fellow-servants, v. 3. Indeed, reputation and esteem among men are a good step towards usefulness in the ministry; and Paul's whole argument, on this head, shows he had a just concern for his own reputation. But he that would make it his chief endeavor *to please men*, would hardly approve himself a faithful servant of Christ, Gal. 1:10. He must look upon it as a very little thing (if his Lord approves him) what judgment men form of him. It is a comfort they are not to be our final judges. Nay, we are not thus to judge ourselves; '*Yea, I judge not myself. For though I know nothing by myself*, cannot charge myself with unfaithfulness, *yet am I not thereby justified*, this will not clear me of the charge; but *He that judgeth me is the Lord*. By his sentence I must abide. Such I am as He shall find and judge me to be.' Nothing will prove us safe and happy, but the acceptance and approbation of our sovereign Judge, 2 Cor. 10:18.

III. The apostle hence takes occasion to caution the Corinthians against censoriousness,—forward and severe judging of others, v. 5. judging out of season, and judging at an adventure. He is not to be understood, of judging by persons in authority, within the verge of their office, nor of private judging concerning facts that are notorious; but of judging persons' future state, or the secret springs and principles of their actions, or about facts doubtful in themselves. To judge in these cases, and give decisive sentence, is

that the carnal mind is prominent and prevalent.—It is peculiarly incumbent on ministers, in all their studies, pursuits, sermons, publications, and conversation, to recollect, that their 'work must be tried by fire;' to anticipate the sentiments, which the day of judgment will inevitably obtrude on them, concerning their present occupations; and to reflect on the irreparable loss of spending their time of service to no purpose, or perniciously; to consider the tendency of their undertaking; to compare them all with the Word of God; and to 'judge themselves that they may not be judged of the Lord.' For if shame and sorrow could enter heaven; surely the minister, whose work shall be burned, yet 'he himself saved as through fire,' would be overwhelmed with these distressing feelings.—And surely he is deceived, who deems himself the temple of the Holy Spirit, and yet is unconcerned, or but little concerned, about personal holiness, or about the purity and peace of the church! Sc.

goreans, Platonists, Aristotelians, Epicureans.' Grot. 'Here, I think it also insinuated, the Corinths. had no reason to boast in the false teacher, who spoiled the temple of God, by building wicked men into it.' MACKN.

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1, 2. Lest the Corinthians should conclude, from what the apostle had said, that little respect or affection was due to ministers; he here showed them, in what estimation they ought to hold them, and by what measure they ought to regulate their regard to them.—Some, by 'the mysteries of God,' understand also the administration of the sacraments, which were commonly called 'mysteries,' by the ancient fathers; but, though this is a part of the minister's work; yet the external ordinances are not called 'mysteries' in Scripture; and this name, afterwards given them, helped to lead men to form a wrong judgment concerning them, which has, in every age, produced, and still does produce, most mischievous effects; by leading men to confound the sign of godliness with the thing signified, and with the power of godliness. 'That which this day is generally called a sacrifice, is the sign of the true sacrifice. If the sacraments had not a certain similitude of those things of which they are sacraments, they would be no sacraments at all; now it is for the similitude or resemblance, that they often bear the name of the things themselves.' Augustine. Thus baptism was called *regeneration*, and the Lord's supper, a sacrifice; till the things signified were lost sight of, and the sign alone regarded, and idolized. And alas! it is so still, not only among papists, but, to a very great degree, in the Protestant, Lutheran, and reformed churches, with their rulers and teachers.

(1—6) 'These vs. belong to ch. 3.' KRAUSE, ROS., BL. Stewards.] [263]

'*Oikonomos*: properly the administrator or manager of domestic affairs (*pignoriarius*), and thus came to mean administrator in general. A stronger and more definite term than the preceding, as suggesting a principal part of their ministerial duty; distributing, (so *Theoph.*) "to whom, when, and as is fit." BLOOMF.

V. 3—5. The apostle counted it 'a very small matter,' compared with the acceptance of his gracious Lord, what judgment the Corinthians, or any man, formed of him; whether they supposed him to be faithful or not; or whether they were offended with him for his faithfulness, and despised him because he had not 'come with excellency of speech or of wisdom.' Indeed, he did not rely on his own judgment concerning himself, because he was aware of the deceitfulness of the human heart; for though he was not indeed conscious of any unfaithfulness or self-seeking in his ministry; yet this was not sufficient to justify him before God, who often saw that evil in the heart, which pride and self-flattery hid from the man himself. He therefore sought to the Lord to judge him, and so waited for that day when he must appear before his tribunal. Knowing, however, that many were disposed to think unfavorably of him, through the artifices of their seducers, he exhorted them not to judge matters of this importance before the time; but to leave them, till the Lord should come to judgment, when characters and actions would appear in another light, than they did at present. Rom. 14:10—12. SCOTT.

(3.) Judgment.] 'Lit. day: by a Hebraism used to denote a day of judgment, and simply judgment. So the Lat. *dicere diem*.' BL.

(4.) 'For though I am not aware of having done anything wrong in



5 Therefore judge \* nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who 'both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes: that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

7 For who <sup>s</sup> maketh thee to differ from another? and what <sup>b</sup> hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

8 Now ye are full, now ye are <sup>l</sup>rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

9 For I think that God hath set forth us <sup>j</sup> the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we <sup>k</sup> are made a <sup>l</sup> spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

e Mat. 7:1. h Ja. 1:17. apostles.  
f Ro. 2:16. i Re. 3:17. k He. 10:33.  
Re. 20:12. j or, the last l theatre.  
g distinguisheth thee.

to assume the seat of God, and challenge his prerogative. How bold a sinner is the forward and severe censurer! But there is One who will judge him, and those he censures, without *prejudice, passion, or partiality*. And there is a time coming, when men cannot fail of judging right concerning themselves and others, by following his judgment. This should make them now cautious of judging others, and careful in judging themselves. The Lord Jesus Christ will manifest the counsels of the heart, of all hearts; so must have the knowledge of them. This is a divine prerogative, Jer. 17: 10. yet it is what our Savior challenges to Himself in a very peculiar manner, Rev. 2: 23. We should be very careful how we censure others, when we have to do with a Judge from whom we cannot conceal ourselves: and when He comes to judge, *every man*, who deserves it, *shall have praise of God*. Though none of God's servants can deserve anything from Him, though there be much that is blamable even in their best services, yet shall their fidelity be commended and crowned by Him; and should they be condemned, reproached,

the ministry committed to me; yet it does not follow that I am entirely free from blame. My only judge, or He alone that hath a right to judge me, is the Lord.

(5.) *Judge nothing, &c.*] Applied universally, how much wisdom is concentrated in this admonition! How much more *content*, under the allotments of Providence to ourselves and others, would living by it produce! Ed. *Praise*.] *Epainos*: from *aid*, I hear, to be *spoken of*: it is here used in the reference to this its primary sense, any one's *character, what he is thought of*, whether for good or evil; and also, by an hyppallage, what is *said or pronounced* upon his actions. In.

V. 6, 7. It is evident, that the apostle is here more immediately speaking of natural abilities and spiritual gifts; and not of regenerating and efficacious grace. Yet, if we all are, by nature, entirely depraved; if we must be born again, and new created; if it 'is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure,' and if 'by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God;' the apostle's reasoning is at least as conclusive, against all kinds and degrees of self-preference on account of our religious attainments, and all glorying in ourselves and other men, as against that which he was directly opposing. 7:25—23. 15:9—11.

(6.) *In a figure*.] 'Lit. the Gr. means, to change the *schēma* or habit, which implies one thing in seeming to say another. "I have brought forward this in my own person, and that of Apollos, as if what was said of others whom I, out of delicacy, forbear to mention, were applicable to us." "That you may compare, (*Wetst.* understands,) with our example, the arrogance of the pseudo apostles." [So *Macknight*.] *Wise above what is written*.] *Viz.*, in *Scripture*, in which are so many admonitions and exhortations to *humility*. So *gegraptai* is often used.

or vilified, by their fellow-servants, He will roll away all such unjust censures and reproaches, and show them in their own amiable light. Christians may well be patient under unjust censures, when they know such a day as this is coming, especially when they have their consciences testifying to their integrity.

IV. The apostle here lets us into the reason why he had used his own name and that of Apollos, in this discourse of his. He had done it *in a figure*, and for their sakes, that hereby he might avoid what would provoke, and so procure his advice the greater regard. Ministers should use prudence; and the advice the apostle would inculcate, was, *that they might learn not to think of men above what is written, nor be puffed up for one against another*, v. 6. above what he had been writing. Apostles were not to be esteemed other than *planters or waterers in God's husbandry*, than *master-builders in his building*, than *stewards of his mysteries*, and *servants of Christ*. And common ministers cannot bear these characters in the same sense that apostles did. *We must call no man master on earth; one is our Master, even Christ*, Mat. 23: 8, 10. We must not think of them above what is written. The Word of God is the best rule by which to judge of men. And again, judging rightly of men, and not more highly than is fit, is one way to prevent quarrels and contentions in the churches. Our commendation of our own taste and judgment commonly goes along with our unreasonable applause, and always with a factious adherence to one teacher, in opposition to others that may be equally faithful and well qualified. We shall not be puffed up for one against another, if we remember that they are all instruments employed by God in his husbandry and building, and endowed by Him with their various talents and qualifications.

V. 7—13. Here the apostle improves the foregoing hint to a caution against pride and self-conceit, and sets forth the temptations the Corinthians had to despise him, from the difference of their circumstances.

I. He cautions them by this consideration, that all the distinction made among them was owing to God, v. 7. His discourse is to the ministers, who set themselves at the head of these factions, and did but too much encourage and abet the people in those feuds. What had they to glory in, when all their peculiar gifts were from God? We have no reason to be proud of our *attainments, enjoyments, or performances*; all that we have, or are, or do, that is good, is owing to the free and rich grace of God. Boasting is for ever excluded. We can properly call nothing our own. It is foolish in us, therefore, and injurious to God, to boast; they who receive all, should be proud of nothing, Ps. 115: 1. Due

attention to our obligations to divine grace, would cure us of arrogance and self-conceit.

II. He presses the duty of humility by a very smart irony, v. 8. There is a very elegant gradation from sufficiency to wealth, and from thence to royalty; to intimate how much the Corinthians were elated by the abundance of their wisdom and spiritual gifts; which was a humor that prevailed among them, while the apostle was away from them, and made them forget what an interest he had in all. '*Ye have reigned as kings*,' says the apostle, 'that is, in your own conceit; and *I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you*. I wish ye had as much of the true glory of a Christian church on you, as you arrogate to yourselves. I should come in then for a share of the honor; *I should reign with you*; I should not be overlooked by you as now I am, but valued and regarded as a minister of Christ, and a very useful instrument among you.' Those do not commonly know themselves best, who think best of themselves. The Corinthians might have reigned, and the apostle with them, if they had not been blown up with an imaginary royalty. Pride is a great prejudice to our improvement. He is stopped from growing wiser or better, who thinks himself at the height.

III. He comes to set forth his own circumstances, and those of the other apostles, and compares them with theirs.

1. Paul and his fellow-apostles were exposed to great hardships, v. 9. Never were any men in this world so hunted and worried. They carried their lives in their hands. An allusion is made to some of the bloody spectacles in the *Roman amphitheatres* [see at end of ch.]; where men were exposed to fight wild beasts, or to cut one another to pieces, to make diversion for the populace; where the victor did not escape with his life, though he should destroy his adversary, but was only reserved for another combat, and must be devoured or cut in pieces at last. So that such wretched criminals (for they were ordinarily condemned persons that were thus exposed) might very properly be called, *persons devoted or appointed to death*. They are said to be *set forth last*, [being the last appearance for that day, *Whitby*.] Because the meridian *gladiators*, those who combated one another in the after part of the day, were most exposed, being obliged to fight naked. So that (as Seneca says, *epist.* 7.) this was perfect butchery; and those exposed to beasts in the morning, were treated mercifully, in comparison of these. The general meaning is, that the apostles were exposed to continual danger of death, and that of the worst kinds, in the faithful discharge of their office. God had set them forth, brought them into view, as the Roman emperors brought their combat-

Thus most ancient and modern comtrs. This however has been thought harsh. Some confine it to what is written in *this epistle*. So Crell, Just., Vorst., Menoch. and Semler, Elsn., Heum., Wolf, Doddr., Mackn., and most recent interpreters; the ancient fathers and Gr. comtrs. appear favorable to it, and, on the whole, it seems best founded. Bl.

(3.) 'A bitter and indignant sarcasm; directed chiefly (we may suppose) against the conceited teachers, Paul's adversaries; q. d. "I see, ye are like persons who are satiated at a feast; ye think ye have all, and need no more teaching or knowledge." *Are rich . . . reign*.] By these expressions, the apostle merely places the same idea in different lights, by varying the metaphor *thrice*. There is a *climax*, too. The *first* metaphor is taken from persons *filled with food*, so as neither to need nor desire more. The *second*, from persons so *rich*, as to have no want of, nor desire for more. The *third*, and highest degree of the climax, is derived from one who, from being a private person, is raised to the *throne*, and, having therefore attained the highest step in the ladder, has nothing further to wish. So the Gr. comtrs., many eminent modern, and almost all recent interpreters. *Have reigned*.] This being in the Aorist (for the present) as the Gr. for *are rich*, should also be tr. in the present, *ye reign like princes*. Strange, some eminent comtrs., as Grot., Whit., Locke, Ros., should adopt so absurd a sense as the *physical* one; and *Doddr.* goes so far, as to make it a reference to Christians' being "kings and priests, a royal priesthood!" Calv., Light., Tiron., Menoch., and Krause, have seen the true sense. "I wish from my heart that ye were so abundant in all spiritual improvements: for then I might partake of your prosperity, in the credit and honor which I should enjoy, from having converted and taught you; since the fame of the pupil tends to the honor of the teacher. In.

V. 9—13. *Perikatharma* signifies the cart, into which the filth of the



10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honorable, but we are despised.

11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place;

12 And labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

13 Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the earth, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day.

14 I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.

15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

16 Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.

m Ro. 8:35. o Mat. 5:44. p La. 3:45.  
n Ac. 20:34. Ac. 7:60. q 1 Th. 2:11.

ants into the arena, the place of show. The apostles were shown, to manifest the power of divine grace, to confirm the truth of their mission and doctrine, and to propagate religion in the world; ends worthy of God; noble views, fit to animate them to the combat. A show; we are brought into the theatre, brought out to the public view of the world. Angels and men are witnesses to our persecutions, sufferings, patience, and magnanimity. How contentedly could they be exposed, both to sufferings and scorn, for the honor of their Master! So should we.

2. He compares his own case with that of the Corinthians, v. 10. We are fools for Christ's sake; such in common account, and we are well content to be so accounted; so that the wisdom of God, and the honor of the Gospel, be by this mean secured and displayed. 'But ye are wise in Christ: have the fame of being wise and learned Christians, and not a little value yourselves on it. We are under disgrace for delivering the plain truths of the Gospel, and in as plain a

manner: ye are in reputation for your eloquence and human wisdom, which among many make you pass for wise men in Christ. We are weak, but ye are strong. We are suffering for Christ's sake,' (so being weak plainly signifies, 2 Cor. 12:10.) 'when ye are in easy and flourishing circumstances.' Or else, 'We pass for persons of but mean endowments, very striplings in Christianity; but ye look on yourselves, and are looked upon by others, as men, as those of a much more advanced growth, and confirmed strength.' The Corinthians may think themselves, and be esteemed by others, as wiser and stronger men in Christ than the apostles themselves. But Oh! how gross the mistake!

IV. He enters into some particularities of their sufferings; Even to this present hour; i. e. after all the service and suffering we have had among you and other churches, v. 11, 12, 13. They were forced to labor with their own hands, to get subsistence, and had so much, and so much greater, business to mind, that they could not attend enough to this, to get a comfortable livelihood, but were exposed to hunger, thirst, and nakedness; many times wanted meat, and drink, and clothes. They were driven about the world, without having any fixed abode, any stated habitation. Poor circumstances, indeed; yet no poorer than his, who had not where to lay his head, Luke 9:58. But, O glorious charity and devotion, that would carry them through all these hardships! How ardently did they love God, how vehemently did they thirst for the salvation of souls! They thought they had a rich amends for all the outward good things they wanted, if they might but serve Christ, and save souls. Nay, though they were made the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things. They were treated as men not fit to live, perikatharmata. It is reasonably thought by the critics, that an allusion is here made to a common custom of many heathen nations, to offer men in sacrifice, in a time of pestilence, or other like grievous calamity. These were ordinarily the vilest of men, persons of the lowest rank and worst character. Thus, in the first ages, Christians were counted the source of all public calamities, and were sacrificed to the people's rage, if not to appease their angry deities. And apostles could not meet with better usage. They suffered, in their persons and characters, as the very worst and vilest men; as the most proper to make such a sacrifice: or else as the very dirt of the world, that was to be swept away: nay, as the off-scouring of all things, the dross, the flings of all things. They were the common-sewer into which all the reproaches of the world were to be poured. To be the off-scouring of anything, is bad; but what is it to be the off-

scouring of all things? How much did the apostles resemble their Master, and fill up that which was behind of his afflictions, for his body's sake, which is the church? Col. 1:24.

V. We have here the apostles' behavior under all; and the return they made for this mal-treatment, v. 12, 13. They returned blessings for reproaches, and entreaties and kind exhortations for the rudest slanders and defamation; and were patient under the sharpest persecutions. The disciples of Christ, and especially his ministers, should hold fast their integrity, and keep a good conscience, whatever opposition or hardships they meet with from the world: follow the example, and fulfil the will and precepts, of their Lord.

V. 14—16. Here Paul challenges their regard to him as their father. He tells them, 1. That what he had written was not for their reproach, but admonition, v. 14. In reproving, we should have a tender regard to the reputation, as well as reformation, of the sinner. Reproofs that expose, commonly do but exasperate; when those that kindly and affectionately warn, are likely to reform. To expose to open shame, is but the way to render shameless. 2. He shows them on what foundation he claimed paternal relation to them, and calls them his sons, v. 15. Whatever other teachers they had, he was their spiritual father: the instrument of their new birth, therefore claimed the relation and felt the bowels of a father to them. There commonly is, and always ought to be, an endeared affection between faithful ministers and those they beteg in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. They should love like parents and children. 3. We have here the special advice he urges on them, v. 16. This he elsewhere explains and limits, ch. 11:1. 'Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ. Follow me as far as I follow Christ. Be my disciples, as far as I manifest myself to be a faithful minister and disciple of Christ, and no farther. Ministers should so live, that their people may take pattern from them, and live after their [Christlike] copy, as is the people's duty. They should guide them by their lives as well as their lips; go before them in the way to heaven, and not content themselves with pointing it out.

V. 17—21. 1. Here, he tells them of his having sent Timothy to them, v. 17. to remind them of his ways in Christ, to refresh their memory as to his preaching and practice, what he taught, and how he lived among them. He also lets them know, that his teaching was the same everywhere, and in every church. He had not one doctrine for one place and people, and another for a different one. He kept close to his instructions. What he received of the Lord, that he delivered, ch. 11:23. This was the gospel-

sweepings of the streets and markets is thrown; and vile, contemptible persons are called so figuratively. Demosthenes calls Æschines Katharma.—Peripsēma is well rendered 'off-scouring.' Leigh. Scott.

(9.) Spectacle.] Theatron: lit. theatre; a cut is given at end of ch.

of an amphitheatre (i. e. double-theatre) of Pompeii, now seen as it was overwhelmed, in A. D. 79, a few years after this of Paul was written. In these were the spectacles, described by Henry above. Bl. takes Theatron, here, for theama, a sight or gazing-stock, epithanations, for men condemned to death, and last for lowest; and thinks the irony (discontinued at 'and I would,' &c. v. 8. and resumed at 'for we are made,' as some, understand it) suddenly passes, at 'for we are made,' to the 'serious and literal, though the idea, contained in these words, was suggested by the preceding metaphor.' See Bl. Note, end of ch. The cut (from a painting in Pompeii) shows a gladiator, 16 times victor, now wounded in the breast, lowering his arms as vanquished, and holding up his finger to ask his life of the people. Behind, his conqueror waits, to give him his 'death-blow,' or his life, as the gay people decree!



(10.) 'Here Paul resumes the irony, to "but we are, &c.'" Bl. Ros. obs., that 'these teachers probably abstained from inculcating the doctrine of the death and crucifixion of Christ, lest they should stumble the Jews and enlightened heathens; and of this management prided themselves, imputing folly to Paul, for exposing the Christian religion to ridicule by needless disclosures.' See Bl. Fools.] 'Paul still carries on the allusion to the public spectacles among the [cruel] Romans, where they were wont to hiss, hoot, mock, and variously insult the poor victims.' Dr. A. Clarke.

(11.) Naked.] 'In want of necessary clothing; so Basil uses the Gr.' Bl. 'Surely one cannot imagine any more glorious triumph of the truth, than what it gained in these circumstances, when Paul, with an impediment in his speech, and a personage rather contemptible than graceful, appeared in a mean, [travel-worn,] and sometimes tattered dress, before persons of the highest rank, and yet commanded such attention, and made such impressions.' DODDR. Bl. (after Theoph.) makes perikatharmata and peripsēma to mean nearly the same, i. e. the dirt or filth proceeding from anything on being scoured about.

V. 15. Instructors.] Paidagogos: lit. the grave, elderly personage who conducted children to and from school, and who superintended their behavior out of school hours. See Pignor. Afterwards it came to designate the informant, the instructor, or teacher.

V. 16. Followers, &c.] 'Rather, imitate me; in modesty, so some; preserve unity by imitating me, rather than the false teachers, so others; but it seems simply his intention, to deduce from his spiritual paternity the inference, that they should be imitators of him, just as parents and teachers are, to their children, the exemplar by which they are to model their character. It extends to every branch of Christian doctrine and duty; so Theophylact.'



18 Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you.

19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will; and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

20 For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

21 What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?

CHAP. V.

<sup>1</sup> The incestuous person is cause rather of shame unto them, than of rejoicing. <sup>7</sup> The old leaven is to be purged out. <sup>10</sup> Heinous offenders are to be shunned and avoided.

IT is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that a one should have his father's wife.

r Ja. 4:15. t Ro. 14:17. a De. 27:20.  
s Ga. 2:6. u 2 Co. 13:10.

revelation, which was the equal concern of all men, and did not vary from itself. Note, The truth of Christ is one and invariable. What one apostle taught, every one taught. Christians may mistake and differ, but Christ and Christian truth are the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, Heb. 13:8. To render their regard to Timothy the greater, he gives them his character. He was his beloved son, a spiritual child of his, as well as themselves. But he adds, 'He is faithful in the Lord; trustworthy, as one that feared

the Lord, faithful in the particular office he has now received of the Lord, the particular errand on which he comes; not only from me, but from Christ. He knows what I have taught, and what my conversation has been in all places, and ye may depend on it, he will make a faithful report.'

2. He rebukes their vanity who imagined he would not come to them, by letting them know this was his purpose, though he had sent Timothy. But he adds, if the Lord will. It seems, as to the common events of life, apostles were not under inspiration. For had the apostle certainly known the mind of God in this matter, he had not expressed himself with this uncertainty. But he sets a good example to us in it. All our purposes must be formed with a dependence on Providence, and a reserve for the overruling purposes of God, James 4:15.

3. He lets them know what would follow on his coming to them, v. 19. He would bring the great pretenders among them to a trial, know what they were; not by their rhetoric or philosophy, but by the authority and efficacy of what they taught, whether they could confirm it by miraculous operations, and whether it was accompanied with divine influences, and saving effects on the minds of men. For, adds he, the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. It is not set up, nor propagated, nor established, in the hearts of men, by plausible reasonings, or florid discourses, but by the power of the Holy Spirit, in miraculous operations at first, and the powerful influence of divine truth on the minds and manners of men.

4. He puts it to their choice, how he should come among them, v. 21. i. e. according as they were, they would find him.

If they continued perverse among themselves, and with him, it would be necessary to come with a rod; i. e. to exert his apostolical power in chastising them, by making some examples, and inflicting some discises and corporal punishments, or by other censures for their faults. But this is far from being desirable, if it may be prevented. Therefore the apostle adds, that it was in their own option whether he should come with a rod, or in a quite different disposition and manner: or in love and the spirit of meekness. As much as if he had said, 'Take warning, cease your unchristian feuds, rectify the abuses among you, and return to your duty, and ye shall find me as gentle and benign as ye can wish. It is a happy temper in a minister, to have the spirit of love and meekness predominant, and yet to maintain his just authority.'

CHAP. V. V. 1-6. 1. The apostle now lets them know what was the common report concerning them, that one of their community was guilty of fornication, v. 1. It was told in all places, to their dishonor, and the reproach of Christians. The heinous sins of professed Christians are quickly noted and noised abroad. We should walk circumspectly, for many eyes are upon us, and many mouths will be opened against us if we fall into any scandalous practice. This was not a common instance of fornication, that a man should have his father's wife; either marry her while his father was alive, or keep her as his concubine, either when he was dead, or while he was alive. In either of these cases, his criminal conversation with her might be called fornication; but had his father been dead, and he, after

PRACT. OBS. The ministers of Christ ought, by all means, to be as deeply sensible of the importance of their trust, as of the dignity of their office; that, as active and self-denying laborers, as well as 'stewards of the mysteries of God,' they may be 'faithful' to Him and to his church; that they may disregard their own interest, indulgence, and reputation, and willingly endure reproach and suffering, for the honor of their Lord, and the salvation of souls.—Christians also should learn to value ministers, not, so much, in proportion to the brilliancy of their gifts, or their rank and station in the church, as their integrity and disinterested faithfulness; and those persons certainly offend the Lord, who slight such as are true to their trust; as they also do, who tempt them to be unfaithful, by flatteries, bribes, frowns, censures, or contempt. Indeed, it ought to be 'the smallest matter' with us, to be judged of men, or blamed for that which God approves, even by those whom we must love; yet it requires a superior strength of faith and grace to be so totally indifferent to the opinion of others, as not to be [improper-

ly] influenced by it; and many are thus tempted to waver, or warp from the constancy of their testimony. Acts 20:18-28. P. O. 13-31.—If, in some respects, we are distinguished from our brethren, yet our responsibility increases with our talents; and it is seldom, that our faithfulness and diligence increase proportionably.—Fallen man is most apt to count himself full, rich, and honorable, when he is most blind, poor, and naked; and many professors of the Gospel, like glow-worms in the dark, shine most, as to their own opinion of themselves, when their real character is most obscure and doubtful.—They, whom God has most honored, have always been proportionably despised, hated, and abused by men; and their sufferings, even unto death, have made them an interesting spectacle to all the intelligent creation.—The consideration that so many eyes are upon us, when struggling with difficulties, or conflicting with temptation, should [help to] animate us to unconquerable constancy and patience; that holy angels and saints may rejoice, and that evil spirits and wicked men may be disappointed and confounded. Sc.

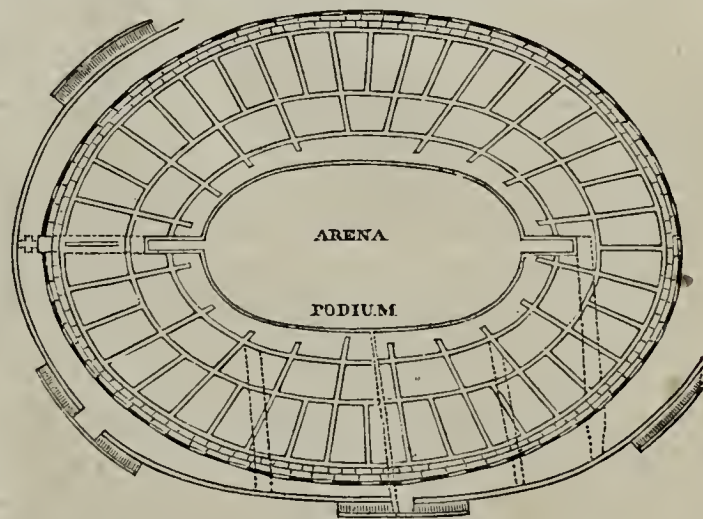
V. 18, 19. 'He had been delayed, and now some fancied he would not dare to encounter so formidable an opposition as he would there find. (But they are mistaken:) for (by God's permission) I will quickly come unto you.' He then subjoins a sentence which cannot, I think, in nerve and vigor, or dignity, and composed confidence, be easily paralleled, even in Demosthenes himself? BLOOMF.

V. 19. Know.] 'Prove, put to proof. Power.] *Dunamis*: efficacy of the Holy Spirit, as shown both in miracles and in irresistible power of preaching, as well as unerring soundness of doctrine.' Id.

V. 20. 'The words refer only to teachers. Semler, perversely, rather than ignorantly, confounds the present times and the primitive ages.' Id.

V. 21. Rod.] 'Not death or blindness, as in the cases of Ananias, Sapphira, Elymas;—very rare, and here unsuitable punishments, but punishment in general, the schoolmaster's prerogative, referring to ecclesiastical chastisements and censures of every kind. The Jewish church "castigate first with words (says R. Eljahu), then with the rod, because it is written, Deut. 21:18. [they shall chastise him.] But if he goes on, in his fault, they give him up to stoning.'" In.

Concluding Note. V. 9, 10. 'Amphitheatres were at first temporary, and of wood; the first of stone was by Augustus. The largest was the Coliseum (whose ruins remain), begun by Vespasian, and finished by Titus; it held 87,000. The place where the gladiators (captives, slaves, or hired) fought, called arena, was covered with sand or sawdust, to prevent slipping, and absorb the blood. The part next to it was called podium, where the senators sat, and the ambassadors of foreign nations; here was the emperor's place, elevated like a pulpit or tribunal, and canopied; likewise of him who exhibited the games, and of the vestal virgins. The podium projected over the wall which surrounded the arena, and was raised 12 to 15 feet above it; and secured by a breastwork or parapet, against the irruption of wild beasts: the arena was, besides, surrounded with an iron rail, and a canal. The equites sat in 14 rows, behind the senators, and both on cushioned seats. The rest of the people sat behind, on the bare stones; their seats were called popularia. The entrances to these seats were called vomitoria; the ascending aisles, *scalae* or *scalaria*; the ranges of seats, between two passages, a *cuneus*, i. e. wedge. Particular places were sometimes granted as an honor. The *designatores* assigned every one his proper place. The highest seats Augustus assigned the women. Secret tubes sprinkled perfumes on the spectators, and poles fixed in holes, in the top of the outer walls, sustained the covering drawn over when it rained. When the wind was too high for these, they used broad-brimmed hats, or caps, and umbrellas. Nigh the amphitheatre was the *spoliarium*, to which the killed, or mortally wounded, were dragged out by a hook. On the day of exhibition, the gladiators were led along the arena in procession [set forth, v. 9], then matched in pairs, and their swords examined by the exhibitor. They preceded with wooden swords, &c., flourishing their arms (*contantes*) ['beating the air,' 9:26.] with great dexterity: on a trumpet signal they assumed their proper arms. When one was wounded, the people cried, *habet*, 'he has got it;' he lowered his arms in sign of being vanquished: but his fate depended on the pleasure of the people, who, if they wished him to be saved, pressed down their thumbs; if to be slain, turned them up, and



he received the death-wound with fortitude. Sometimes he was rescued by the entrance of the emperor, or the will of the editor (exhibitor). The spectators expressed the same eagerness by betting on the combatants, as at the circus. Before the year U. C. 693, the people staid all day at the fights, afterwards they had an intermission at dinner. Gladiatorial combats were at first performed as part of funerals; then given by magistrates, to entertain the people, chiefly at the Saturnalia and feasts of Minerva. Incredible numbers were thus destroyed: for instance, when Trajan triumphed over the Dacians, these shows lasted 123 days, 11,000 were killed, and 10,000 gladiators fought. These men were kept and maintained in schools, by persons called *lanista*, who purchased and trained them, and plentifully fed them on strong food. Adam.

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1-5. Have his father's wife.] Lived with his mother-in-law as his wife, probably while his father was still living! —But if the Corinthians in general had been in a truly Christian frame of mind, they would have 'mourned over' such an enormity; and humbled themselves before God, with earnest prayers, intreating Him to remove all obstacles, that he who had done this nefarious deed might be



2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather <sup>b</sup> mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.

3 For I verily, as absent <sup>c</sup> in body, but present in spirit, have <sup>d</sup> judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed;

4 In the name <sup>e</sup> of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power <sup>f</sup> of our Lord Jesus Christ,

5 To deliver <sup>g</sup> such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that <sup>h</sup> the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

<sup>b</sup> 2 Co. 7:7.

<sup>e</sup> 2 Co. 2:9,10.

<sup>g</sup> 1 Ti. 1:20.

<sup>c</sup> Col. 2:5.

<sup>f</sup> Mat. 16:19.

<sup>h</sup> c. 11:32.

<sup>d</sup> or, determined.

<sup>g</sup> Jn. 20:23.

his deace, married her, it had been incest still, but neither fornication nor adultery in the strictest sense. But to marry her, or keep her as a concubine, while his father was alive, though he had repudiated her, or she had deserted him, whether she were his own mother or not, was incestuous fornication; when a woman had caused her daughter to be put away, and was married to her husband; *Incredible wickedness!* says the orator (Cicero pro Cluent.); *such I never heard of in all my life besides.* Not that there were no such instances of incestuous commerce, or marriages, among the heathens: but, whenever they happened, they gave a shock to every man of virtue and probity among them. Yet such a horrible wickedness was committed by one in the church of Corinth, and, as is probable, a leader of one of the factions among them; a principal man. The best churches are liable to very great corruptions.

2. He greatly blames their conduct here-

separated from their company.—*Present in spirit*—having the whole affair clearly before his mind, perhaps by a supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit.—Probably, the apostle expected, that this solemn sentence of excommunication would be attended by some miraculous infliction of pain and disease, to the wasting, or even the death, of his body, 11:29—34. 2 Cor. 2:5—11. 1 Tim. 1:18—20. yet, by 'delivering him over to Satan,' he seems to intend his expulsion from the visible kingdom of Christ into that of the devil; and not that Satan would inflict the correction which might follow. No doubt evil spirits are able and willing to disorder the body, or distract the mind, or destroy life, if God permit; yet it is far more reasonable to think, that God, by miracle, directly inflicted the disease, than that He merely permitted Satan to do it. It should, however, be noted, that when supernatural visitations do not accompany ecclesiastical censures, no temporal pains and penalties, of whatever sort, ought to be annexed to them. Unwarranted severities in this respect have made way for the disuse, or relaxation, of salutary discipline, throughout a great part of the Christian church; the extensively injurious effects of which can never be enough lamented, or, indeed, fully conceived by those who have not deeply considered the subject.—(2) 'Jews and Christians, when any one was to be cut off from the church, as a dead member, did it with fasting and humiliation, to show their sympathy with him, and sorrow for the scandal on the society.' *Whitby*.

*Scott*.

(1.) *Fornication.* 'The Gr. means any illicit, venereal connexion.' *Bloomf. Named.* Almost all [connexions] that Christians regard as forbidden, were by the Greeks and Romans admitted to be unlawful; see the proof in the philological comtrs. The few instances of allowed incest recorded (some 3 or 4), are chiefly of royal personages, whose high station afforded license of every kind, and that when private morals were at the lowest ebb. That the Persians married their mothers, is too incredible a story, on higher authority than that of *Sext. Emp.* So of Maimonides' assertion, that *proselytes*, being accounted to have lost kindred, could marry mothers and sisters. *Procopius'* remark, that, 'with the Varni it was permitted to marry a step-mother,' is of precarious authority, nor does the apostle speak of *barbarians*. Whether it were customary with the Egyptians (except among royal personages) is not certain. The general ignorance of Tacitus, (and our limited information,) as to the Jews' customs then, should prevent us from pressing on the sense of his remark, that 'what we call incest is allowed among the Jews.' Nor can it be proved, there was a *community of all women* in any society, whence the licentious doctrines reproved, could have crept into the church. For these reasons, and others, *Bl.* thinks, that *onomazesthai, named*, (which he will not tr. with *Pearce, &c.*, reported, nor, with *Ros., &c.*, scarce found, nor cancel it, as others, though hundreds of MSS, the Syr. and other vers., and the Gr. fathers and comtrs. have it!) is a slip of the apostle, writing in Hellenistic Greek, for *nomizesthai, i. e. obtains, is approved by law and custom*: used by the best writers in this meaning.

'It is not credible that the Corinthian congregation would have endured, that one of their body should live with a *harlot*, especially his mother-in-law. But, because this illicit connexion had been palliated by the

upon; they were puffed up, v. 2. they gloried; (1.) Perhaps on account of this very scandalous person. He might be a man of great eloquence, of deep science, and for this reason very greatly esteemed, and followed, and cried up, by many among them. They were proud that they had such a leader. Pride and self-esteem often lie at the bottom of our immoderate esteem of others; and this makes us blind to their faults as to our own. The proud man either wholly overlooks or artfully disguises his faults, or endeavors to transform his blemishes into beauties. Those of the Corinthians that were admirers of the incestuous person's gifts, could overlook or extenuate his horrid practices. Or else, (2.) It may intimate, that some of the opposite party were puffed up. They were proud of their own standing, and trampled over him that fell. Probably, this was one effect of the divisions among them. The opposite party made their advantage of this scandalous lapse, and were glad of the opportunity. It is a sad consequence of divisions among Christians, that it makes them apt to rejoice in iniquity. The sins of others should be our sorrow. Nay, churches should mourn for the scandalous behavior of particular members, and, if they are incorrigible, should remove them.

3. The apostle's direction. He would have this scandalous sinner excommunicated, and delivered to Satan, v. 3—5. He had, by revelation, and the miraculous gift of discerning vouchsafed him by the Spirit, as perfect a knowledge of the case, as if he were present, and had come to the determination, not without special authority from the Holy Spirit. He says this, to let them know, that though he was at a distance, he did not pass an unrighteous sentence, nor judge without having as full cognizance of the case, as if he had been on the spot. Those who would appear righteous judges to the world, will take care to inform them, that they do not pass sentence without full proof

and evidence. He had judged that he should be delivered to Satan, v. 5. and this was to be done in the name of Christ, with the power of Christ, and in a full assembly, where the apostle would be also present in spirit, or by his spiritual gift of discerning at a distance. Some think this is to be understood of a mere ordinary excommunication, and that delivering him to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, is only meant of disowning him, and casting him out of the church, that by this mean he might be brought to repentance, and his flesh might be mortified. Christ and Satan divide the world: and they that live in sin, when they profess relation to Christ, belong to another master, and by excommunication should be delivered up to him; and this in the name of Christ. Church-censures are Christ's ordinances, and should be dispensed in his name. It was to be done also when they were gathered together, in full assembly. The more public, the more solemn; and the more solemn, the more likely to have a good effect on the offended. Church-censures on notorious and incorrigible sinners, should be past with great solemnity. They who sin in this manner, are to be rebuked before all, that all may fear, 1 Tim. 5:20. Others think the apostle is not to be understood of mere excommunication, but of a miraculous power or authority they had of delivering a scandalous sinner into the power of Satan, to have bodily diseases inflicted, and to be tormented by him with bodily pains, which is the meaning of the destruction of the flesh; probably this was a mixed case. It was an extraordinary instance: and the church was to proceed against him by just censure; the apostle, when they did so, put forth an act of extraordinary power, and gave him up to Satan; not for his destruction, but for his deliverance; at least, for the destruction of the flesh, that the soul might be saved. The great end of church-censures is the good of those who fall under them; their

name of matrimony, therefore they might connive at it, especially if there were any who were the man's zealous friends, and endeavored to soften the baseness of the thing. *Crell.* The Gentile law might forbid, but, unless aided by public opinion, could not prevent such marriages. The person, here, is supposed to have been rich and powerful, and so would not want such friends; and there might be some who undertook, upon principle, to defend such a connexion.' *Bl.* How much harder is it now, among Christians, in these days of sectarian rivalry, to excommunicate a rich than a poor offender! And why? Can any society, 'ours,' or another, be effectually 'built up,' when this is the case? *Ed.*

(2.) *Mourned.* 'Following the custom of the Jewish synagogue (*Grot.*), excommunication was, for some ages, accompanied with solemn mourning, in the church. See *Vitr.* "Mourning is put for excommunication, by metonymy of the adjunct, because, says *Origen*, the church, when about to exclude any one from its communion, put on the mourning dress, and mourned him as dead." *Grot.*'

*Bloomf.*

(3.) "I then, as absent indeed, in person, but present in heart, mind, thought, affections," viz. in solicitude and care. I have decided, do hereby decide and determine. This is not a sentence of excommunication, but an intimation, that, if not wanting in duty, they will use this apostolical authority, to take the necessary measures for excluding the noxious member. Then are suggested the steps to be taken. So.] I. e. openly, impudently, perseveringly.' *Id.*

(4.) 'That ye (being assembled together, and I being spiritually, mentally, virtually, present with you, by the signification of this my opinion) do, in the name, and in behalf, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and withal acting by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver the person so described, &c. The Greek fathers and comtrs., also *Grot.*, *Newc.*, *Pearce*, *Crell.*, *Locke*, *Hardy*, *Whit.*, *Ros.*, *Mackn.*, *Pyle*, *Schl.*, *Jaspis*, *Malthy*, and other eminent comtrs., rightly, (I think, on the whole,) recognise in the passage a formal excommunication, (comprehended in give him over to Satan,) and also, a punishment of the flesh, which is evidently implied, by "for the destruction of the flesh." That the apostles had the power, and were authorized to punish notorious offenders with death and disease, in a supernatural manner, few will deny. (See *John* 20:23. *Acts* 13:11. *1 Cor.* 11:21.) And if so, may we not (asks *Mackn.*) believe, that . . . the power was now exerted? especially as it was to be done, not by their own authority, but by the power of our Lord, and of the Spirit who inspired Paul to give the command. A sudden disease, immediately consequent on the act of excommunication, would show the reality of the apostle's power and mission, and awe all reflecting persons.' *Bloomf.*: who thinks, with *Rosenm.*, that 'Paul affirms, he would strike the offender with a dreadful disease, in the midst of them, while assembled together, so that they would be obliged, on account of this disease, to carry him forth from their assembly, whom they would not expel for his crime.'

*Ed.*

V. 6—8. Some expositors confidently maintain, that the incestuous person was one of the teachers who opposed the apostle; or the opposing teacher, supposing Paul had a single false teacher in mind. But in 2 Cor., where he directs them to comfort the incestuous person, as brought to deep repentance, and as in danger of being 'swallowed up



6 Your glorying <sup>i</sup> is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven <sup>j</sup> leaveneth the whole lump?

7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our <sup>k</sup> passover is <sup>l</sup> sacrificed for us:

8 Therefore let us keep <sup>m</sup> the <sup>n</sup> feast, not with old leaven, neither with the <sup>o</sup> leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened <sup>p</sup> bread of sincerity and truth.

9 I wrote unto you in an epistle <sup>q</sup> not to company with fornicators:

10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if <sup>r</sup> any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are <sup>s</sup> without? do not ye judge them that are within?

13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away <sup>t</sup> from among yourselves that wicked person.

i Ja. 4:16. m or, holy day. q Ro. 16:17.  
j Lu. 13:20. n Ex. 13:6. 2 Ju. 10.  
k Is. 53:7. l Pe. o Mat. 16:6,12. r Ma. 4:11.  
1:19. Re. 5:6,12. p Ep. 5:11. s Mat. 18:17.  
l or, slain. 2 Th. 3:14.

spiritual and eternal good, v. 5. Yet it is not merely a regard to their benefit, that is to be had, in proceeding against them.

4. He hints the danger of contagion from this example, v. 6. The bad example of a man in rank and reputation is very mischievous; spreads the contagion far and wide. It did so, probably, in this very church and ease: see 2 Cor. 12:21. They could not

be ignorant of this. The experience of the whole world was for it. Concern for their purity and preservation should engage Christian churches to remove gross and scandalous sinners.

V. 7, 8. Here the apostle exhorts them to purity, by purging out the old leaven. In which observe,

1. The advice itself; addressed either, (1.) To the church in general: and so, purging out the old leaven, that they might be a new lump, refers to the putting away from themselves that wicked person, v. 13. Or, (2.) To each particular member of the church. And so it implies, that they should purge themselves from all impurity of heart and life, especially from this kind of wickedness, to which the Corinthians were addicted to a proverb. Note, Christians should be careful to keep themselves clean, as well as purge polluted members out of their society. They were also to purge themselves from malice and wickedness; all ill-will and mischievous subtlety. It is not improbable, that this was intended as a check to some who gloried in the scandalous behavior of the offender, both out of pride and pique. Christians should be particularly careful to keep free from malice and mischief. Love is the very essence and life of the Christian religion; the fairest image of God, for God is Love, 1 John 4:16. therefore it is no wonder if it be the greatest beauty and ornament of a Christian. But malice is murder in its principles, 1 John 3:15. and partakes of the spirit of him who was a murderer from the beginning, John 8:44.

2. The reason with which this advice is enforced, v. 7. This is the great doctrine of the Gospel. The Jews, after they had killed the passover, kept the feast of unleavened bread. So must we; not for seven days only, but all our days. We should die with our Savior to sin; be planted into the likeness of his death, by mortifying sin; and into the likeness of his resurrection, by rising again to newness of life, and that internal and external. We must have new hearts, and lead new lives. The whole life of a Christian must be a feast of unleavened bread. His common conversation and his religious performances must be holy. And the more there is of sincerity in our own profession, the less shall we censure that of

others. Note, on the whole, The sacrifice of our Redeemer is the strongest argument, with a gracious heart, for purity and sincerity.

V. 9—13. He advises them to shun the company and converse of scandalous professors.

1. The advice itself, v. 9. Some think this was an epistle written to them before, which is lost; and some, that it is to be understood of this very epistle, that he had written this advice before he had full information of their whole case, but thought it needful now to be more particular. And therefore on this occasion he tells them, that if any man, called a brother, any one professing Christianity, and being a member of a Christian church, were a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, that they should not keep company with him, not so much as eat with such an one, that they might shame him, and bring him to repentance. Note, Christians are to avoid the familiar conversation of fellow-Christians that are notoriously wicked, and under just censure for their flagitious practices. Such disgrace the Christian name.

2. He limits this advice. He does not forbid Christians the like commerce with scandalously wicked heathens. He does not forbid them eating or conversing with the fornicators of this world, &c. They know no better. They profess no better. The gods they serve, and the worship they render to many of them, countenance such wickedness. 'You must needs go out of the world, if you will have no conversation with such men. Christians may and ought to testify more respect to loose worldlings than to loose Christians. This seems a paradox.

3. The reason is here assigned. It is impossible the one should be avoided. Christians must have gone out of the world, to avoid the company of loose heathens. Besides, while they are minding their duty, and doing their proper business, God can and will preserve them from contagion; they carry an antidote against the infection of their bad example, and are naturally on the guard. But the dread of sin wears off by familiar converse with wicked Christians. Our own safety and preservation are a reason of this difference. And then, heathens

authority of their Lord; and to deliver over into the visible kingdom of Satan, all who evidently disgrace their profession; and that those, who have such discipline among them, should uniformly exercise it with exact impartiality, not respecting persons, and with due solemnity and tender compassion to the souls of offenders. But alas! it hath been so generally perverted by men's carnal passions, or rendered inefficient by family connexions, secular motives, and party influence, and an undue regard to the rich above the poor; that a more complete revival of pure and spiritual religion seems necessary, before it can produce its full effect. Far more, however, might be done in most places than now is; if fear of man, respect of persons, and carnal policy, did not deter those concerned, from decidedly acting according to their judgment. SCOTT.

virtue and holiness of life;" or "to be as willingly occupied in these, as in keeping feasts on holy days." LOESNER.

Sincerity.] 'Purity that will bear the closest examination, like that of an article examined by the full light of the sun.' BLOOMF.

V. 9. Epistle.] Probably, some previous epistle, which has not been preserved. And why should we suppose, that all his letters, any more than all his sermons, must be preserved as a part of the sacred volume? John 21:24, 25. Col. 4:15, 16. Can it be thought probable, on reflection, that this zealous apostle, so admirably qualified to give epistolary instruction, who lay so long in prison, and was, in various ways, so much kept at a distance from his friends and children [in the Lord], should, in his whole ministry, write no more letters, than are now extant? SC.

(9.) 'I accede to the minority, (though numerous, viz. the Gr. commentators, most Latin, also Glass, Tirin, Est., Vorst., Ham., Wolf, most Dutch divines, Fabricius, Gothofred, Olcarius, Lardner, Pyle, Hardy, Mackn., Bps. Tomline and Middleton, and Mr. Slade,) that τῷ [tr. a] is for ταυτῷ [this]; as in kindred passages, at Rom. 16:2. 2 Thes. 3:4. Col. 4:66. 1 Thes. 5:27. And many other examples of this idiom are adduced by Glass and Mackn. Egrapsa, "I have (already, or just) written to you," namely, at vs. 2 and 7 of this ch. That egrapsa may have this signification, none can doubt who know the force of the Aorist; and so it occurs in 9:15. 1 John 2:12, 14.' BL., whom see.

V. 10. This world.] 'A periphrasis of Gentile or non-Christian; John 15:19. 17:14.' How forcible the argument of this verse against monasticism! See Bloomf.

V. 11. 'To eat at the same table, is the lowest sort of connexion, or intercourse.' GROTIUS.

V. 12. Do not ye.] 'Is it not your exclusive concern to.' BLOOMF.

PRACT. OBS. How grievous is it, that those crimes should sometimes be notoriously committed by professors of the Gospel, which heathens would be ashamed of! 'Woe be to the world because of offences!' And 'woe be to them by whom the offences come!' yea, to those also by whom they are connived at! Mat. 18:7-9. When a man has wisdom, zeal, and love, he can have but one judgment in cases of this kind; and if he possess authority or influence, he will use it, whether present or absent, in exciting those who are more immediately concerned, to prefer the honor of the Gospel to every personal or party interest; to venture all consequences in bearing testimony against scandalous crimes; and to separate from among them those who have done such deeds.—It is indeed highly desirable, that all the ministers and churches of Christ were enabled to exercise this salutary discipline, in the name and by the

of overmuch sorrow; he speaks of 'false apostles, ministers of Satan, transformed into the ministers of righteousness,' in a manner which wholly subverts this supposition. 2 Cor. 2:5—11. 7:12. 11:13—15. — 'Lewdness is the old leaven to be purged out; because the Corinthians were infamous for it, to a proverb.' WHITBY. SCOTT.

(6.) 'Ye have no cause for boasting, while such foul sins are committed among you.' BL., Bp. Hall, Ros., &c. ED.

(7.) Passover.] 'Pascha: by meton. for the paschal lamb. The learned, able, and judicious Abp. Magee, excellently treats this passage, in his invaluable work on the atonement. He satisfactorily proves, (Ill. No. 35,) that the passover was a sacrifice, as possessing all its essential characteristics.' BLOOMF. 'It was a corban, or offering, brought to the tabernacle, or temple, De. 16:2, 5, 6. 2 Chr. 35:5, 6. 10, 11, 2. The paschal lamb was slain in the temple; its blood was poured out, sprinkled, and offered at the altar by the priests, in like manner as the blood of the victims usually slain in sacrifice, as appears from Ex. 23:18. 34:25. 2 Chr. 30:15, 16. 35:11. And in this sprinkling of the blood consisted, as we are told by the Jewish doctors, the very essence of a sacrifice. See Cudworth's "True Notion of the Lord's Supper." Ch. 11:3. The fat and entrails were burnt upon the altar, as may be collected from the passages above referred to, as also from the declaration of the Jewish doctors, the descriptions of the Paschal Sacrifice in the Misna of the Talmud, and the testimony of the Karaites, who are known to reject all the Talmudical traditions, not founded on Scripture.' MAGEE.

(8.) Feast.] 'The Gr. *heortazein*, properly, to celebrate a feast, is applied to denote worship in general; and because the celebration of feasts involves the idea of rejoicing, the word also signifies, "to be occupied, with great delight, in the worship of God, and endeavor after



## CHAP. VI.

<sup>1</sup> The Corinthians must not vex their brethren, in going to law with them: <sup>6</sup> especially under infidels. <sup>9</sup> The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>15</sup> Our bodies are the members of Christ, <sup>19</sup> and temples of the Holy Ghost. <sup>16, 17</sup> They must not therefore be defiled.

**DARE** any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

**2** Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

**3** Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

**4** If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

**5** I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?

**6** But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

**7** Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

**8** Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

a Da. 7:22. Mat. 19:23. Jude 14. 15. Re. 20:4. b Pr. 20:22. Mat. 5:39,40. Ro.12:17,19. 1 Th. 5: c 1 Th. 4:6.

were such as Christians had nothing to do, to judge and censure, and avoid upon a censure past; for they are without, v. 12. and must be left to God's judgment, v. 13. But as to members of the church, they are within, are professedly bound by the laws and rules of Christianity, and not only liable to the judgment of God, but to the censures of those who are set over them, and the fellow-members of the same body, when they transgress those rules. Every Christian is bound to judge them unfit for communion and familiar converse. They are to be punished, by having this mark of disgrace put on them, that they may be ashamed, and, if possible, reclaimed thereby: and the more, because the sins of such much more dishonor God, than the sins of the openly wicked and profane can do. The church therefore is obliged to clear herself from all confederacy with them, or connivance at

them, and to bear testimony against their wicked practices.

**4.** He applies the argument to the case before him, v. 13. 'Cast him out of your fellowship, and avoid his conversation.'

CHAP. VI. V. 1—8. In the ch. before, he had directed them to punish heinous sins among themselves, by church-censures. Here, he directs them to determine controversies one with another by church-counsel and advice. Concerning which, observe,

**I.** The fault he blames; going to law. Not but that the law is good, if a man uses it lawfully. But, 1. Brother went to law with brother, v. 6. one member of the church with another. The bonds of fraternal love were broken through. Christians should not contend with one another, for they are brethren. This, duly attended to, would prevent lawsuits, and put an end to quarrels and litigations. 2. They brought the matter before the heathen magistrates, v. 1. and did not compose it among themselves, Christians, and saints, at least in profession. This tended much to the reproach of Christianity. Therefore, says the apostle, 'Dare any of you, having a controversy with another, go to law, implead him, bring the matter to a hearing before the unjust?' 3. Here is at least an intimation that they went to law for trivial matters; things of little value. For the apostle blames them, that they did not take wrong rather than go to law, v. 7. which must be understood of matters not very important. In matters of great damage to ourselves or families, we may use lawful means to right ourselves; but in matters of small consequence, it is better to put up with the wrong. Christians should be of a forgiving temper. And it is more for their ease and honor, to suffer small injuries and inconveniences, than seem to be contentious.

**II.** He lays before them the aggravations of their fault, v. 2, 3. It was a dishonor to their Christian character, a forgetting of their real dignity, as saints, for them to carry little matters, about the things of life, before heathen magistrates. When they were to judge the world, nay, to judge angels, it is unaccountable they could not determine little controversies among one another. By judging the world and angels, some think, is to be understood, their being assessors to Christ in the great judgment-day; it being said of our Savior's disciples, that they should at that day sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, Mat. 19:28. And elsewhere we read of our Lord's coming with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment on all, &c. Jude 14, 15. He will come to judgment with all his saints, 1 Thes. 3:13. They themselves are indeed to be judged, see Mat. 25:31—41. but they may first be acquitted, and then advanced to the bench, to approve and applaud the righte-

ous judgment of Christ both on men and angels. In no other sense can they be judges. Others understand this judging of the world to be meant, when the empire should become Christian. But it does not appear that the Corinthians had knowledge of this; and if they had, in what sense could Christian emperors be said to judge angels? Others understand it, of their condemning the world by their faith and practice, and casting out evil angels by miraculous power, which was not confined to the first ages, or to the apostles. The first sense seems most natural; and at the same time, gives most force to the argument. Must you, about the affairs of this life, set them to judge, who are of no esteem in the church? Some read, and perhaps most properly, v. 4. heathen magistrates, the things that are not, ch. 1:28. 'Must they be called in to judge in your controversies, of whom you ought to entertain so low an opinion? is not this shameful?' v. 5. Some, who read it as our translators, make it an ironical speech; 'If you have such controversies depending, set them to judge, who are of least esteem among yourselves. Refer the matters in variance to any, rather than go to law about them before heathen judges. Bear and forbear, and the men of meanest skill among you may end your quarrels. I speak it to your shame,' v. 5. It is a shame, that little quarrels should grow to such a head among Christians, that they cannot be determined by arbitration of the brethren.

**III.** He puts them on a method to remedy this fault. And this twofold. 1. By referring it to some to make it up, v. 5. Christians should never engage in lawsuits, till all other remedies are tried in vain. Prudent Christians should prevent, if possible, their disputes, and not courts of judicature decide them, especially in matters of no great importance. 2. By suffering wrong, rather than taking this method to right themselves; It is utterly a fault among you, to go to law in this matter: it is a fault of one side always, to go to law, except in a case where the title is indeed dubious, and there is a friendly agreement of both parties to refer it to the judgment of those learned in the law, to decide it. And this is referring it, rather than contending about it, which is the thing the apostle here seems chiefly to condemn. A Christian should rather put up with a little injury, than tease himself, and provoke others, by a litigious contest. But the apostle tells them, they were so far from bearing injuries, that they actually did wrong, and defrauded, and that their brethren. It is utterly a fault, to wrong and defraud any; but it is an aggravation of this fault, to defraud our Christian brethren. The ties of mutual love ought to be stronger between them than between others. And love worketh no ill to his neighbor, Rom. 13:10.

NOTES. CHAP. VI. V. 1—6. The Jews were allowed to settle matters of property among themselves, according to their own law; and Christians would perhaps have been permitted to exercise the same kind of authority over their own company; yet voluntary reference to arbitration seems rather to be intended. Whitby reads the clause interrogatively; 'Do ye set them to judge, who are despised in the church?' That is, the heathen magistrates. But did the church avowedly despise those very magistrates, whom the apostles commanded them to honor and obey? Mr. Locke understands it of private persons not appointed to the magistracy; yet it does not appear, that the original word was ever used in that sense. But may not the apostle refer to the vainglory and self-wisdom of the leading persons at Corinth; who would, by necessary consequence, despise such as were inferior to themselves, in knowledge, utterance, and spiritual gifts, in proportion as they exalted themselves? Yet the meanest real and experienced Christians, whom they proudly 'set at nought,' were competent to decide such causes, as they brought before the heathen magistrates; nay, far more competent than their despisers.

(1.) Dare.] 'Can any one bring himself to. Unjust.] I. e. unbelievers, as opposed to the saints. So the best contrs. (Thus the non-Christians are sometimes included under the term hamartoloi.) They were generally atikoî, unjust, though many of them were by no means such, but (especially in their judicial capacity) of approved integrity. See Mackn. and bp. Pearce. It is too hypothetical to assert (as Grot.) that the Romans granted to the Christians, as to the Jews, to hold courts among themselves. Besides, private arbitrators are meant.' Bl.

(3.) Judge angels.] 'The Gr. contrs. and fathers, and nearly all

the Latin, also Semler, take krinousin, or judge; (as often) for kata-krinousin, condemn; and explain: "will afford matter for their condemnation (namely, by the comparison);" "shall be the means of increasing their condemnation." Comp. Mat. 12:41, 42, 29.' See also Bl. for three other interpretations. He paraphrases, 'If you have shown such judgment as to appreciate the Christian faith, and such integrity and probity as it enjoins, and thereby will put to shame, and condemn by comparison, those of greater talents, learning, and acquisitions, are you unfit to exercise judicial and arbitrary functions on petty matters?' En.

(4, 5.) 'Even the least esteemed, &c. i. e. if ye have not wise and prudent men, I make the supposition to shame you, or if they be otherwise occupied. The Jews indeed had a petty court of 3 referees, not formally appointed by the Sanhedrim, but as private, lay arbitrators, in property cases; and to this Lightf. and Locke (but it seems too hypothetical) think there is allusion.' Bl. As splitting sects trust one another less than they do religionists of totally opposite sentiments, members of this divided church would prefer to refer quarrels to heathens, rather than trust to one of a different party! See Storr and Ros. Id.

V. 9—11. Note, 5:9—13. The apostle here plainly declares his doubts, concerning the real conversion of some professed Christians at Corinth, seeing their conduct was so contrary to the precepts of God's Word. The arrangement of the expressions in v. 11. shows, that no argument can be drawn merely from that circumstance, in respect of controverted points of doctrine. 'The apostle begins with those vices, with which a rich and luxurious city abounded, seriously warning them, that repentance and forgiveness, justification and sanctifica-



9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.

14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid!

16 What! know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.\*

d Ga. 5:19-21. f He. 10:22. i 1 Th. 4:3,7. Ep. 5:4,5. He. g He. 2:11. m Ro. 12:1. 12:14, 13. 13:4. h Ro. 8:30. n Ep. 5:23. Re. 22:15. i or, profitable. o Ro. 6:5 8. e Ep. 2:1,2. 5:8. j c 9:27. p Ep. 5:30. Col. 3:7. Tit. k Mat. 15:17,20. q Ge. 2:24. 3:3-6. Ro. 14:17. Mat. 19:5.

V. 9-11. Here he takes occasion to warn them against many heinous evils, to which they had been formerly addicted.

1. He puts it to them as a plain truth, of which they could not be ignorant, that such sinners should not inherit the kingdom of God, v. 9. shall not be owned as true members of his church on earth, nor admitted as glorious members of the church in heaven. He specifies several sorts of sins against the 1st and 2d commandments, as idolaters; the 7th, as adulterers, fornicators, effeminate, and sodomites; the 8th, as thieves and extortioners, that by force or fraud wrong their neighbors; and the 9th as revilers; and the 10th, as covetous and drunkards, as those who are in a fair way to break all the rest. Those who know anything of religion, must know that heaven could never be intended for these.

2. Yet he warns them against deceiving themselves; Be not deceived. Those who cannot but know the fore-mentioned truth,

arc but too apt not to attend to it. Men are very much inclined to flatter themselves, that God is such an one as themselves; and that they may live in sin, and yet die in Christ; may lead the life of the devil's children, and yet go to heaven with the children of God. But this is all a gross cheat.

3. He puts them in mind what a change the Gospel and grace of God had made in them, v. 11. Such were some of you,—such things, so the Greek; very monsters rather than men. Some that are eminently good after their conversion, have been as remarkably wicked before. But you are not what you were. Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of Christ, and by the Spirit of our God. The wickedness of men before conversion is no bar to their regeneration, and reconciliation to God. The blood of Christ, and the washing of regeneration, can purge away all guilt and defilement. Our justification is owing to the merit of Christ; our sanctification, to the operation of the Spirit: but both go together. None are cleansed from the guilt of sin, and reconciled to God through Christ, but those who are also sanctified by his Spirit. All who are made righteous in the sight of God, are made holy by the grace of God.

V. 12-20. The 12th and former part of the 13th v. seem to relate to that early dispute among Christians, about the distinction of meats, and yet to be prefatory to the caution that follows against fornication. The connexion seems plain enough, if we attend to the famous determination of the apostles, Acts 15. where the prohibition of certain foods was joined with that of fornication. Now some among the Corinthians seem to have imagined, that they were as much at liberty in the point of fornication as of meats, especially because it was not a sin condemned by the laws of their country. They were ready to say, even in the case of fornication, All things are lawful for me. This pernicious conceit Paul here sets himself to oppose: and Christians should consider what was fit, considering their profession, character, relations, and hopes. All things are lawful for me, says he, but I will not be brought into the power of any, v. 12. Even in lawful things he would not be subject to the impositions of an usurped authority: so far was he from apprehending, that, in the things of God, it was lawful for any power on earth to impose its own sentiments. Note, There is a liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, in which we must stand fast. But surely he would never carry this liberty so far, as to put himself into the power of any bodily appetite. Though all meats were supposed lawful, he would not become a glutton or a drunkard; much less would he abuse the maxim of lawful liberty, to countenance the sin of fornication, which, though it might be allowed by the Corinthian laws, was a trespass on the law of nature, and utterly unbecoming a Christian. He would not abuse this maxim about eating and drinking, to encourage any intemperance, or indulge a carnal appetite, v. 13. though the belly was made to receive food, and food ordained to fill the belly, yet, if it be not convenient for me, and much more if it be

inconvenient, and likely to enslave me, if I am in any danger of being subjected to my appetite, I will abstain. But God shall destroy both it and them; at least, as to their mutual relation; a time is coming, when the human body will need no farther recruits of food. Some of the ancients understand it, of abolishing the belly as well as the food; and that though the same body will be raised at the great day, yet not with all the same members; some being utterly unnecessary in a future state, as the digestive organs for instance, when the man is never to hunger, nor thirst, nor eat, nor drink more. But whether this be true or no, a time is coming, when the need and use of food shall be abolished. The expectation we have of being without bodily appetites in a future life, is a very good argument against being under their power in the present life. This seems to me the sense of the apostle's argument; and that this passage is plainly to be connected with his caution against fornication, though some make it a part of the former argument against litigious lawsuits, especially before heathen magistrates, and the enemies to true religion. These suppose, that the apostle argues, that though it may be lawful to claim our rights, yet it is not always expedient; and it is utterly unfit for Christians to put themselves into the power of infidel judges, lawyers, and solicitors, on these accounts. But this connexion seems not so natural, as the transition to his arguments against fornication, v. 13. Meats and the belly are for one another: not so, fornication and the body. The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord.

This is the First argument he uses against this sin; it is making things to cross their intention and use. The body is not for fornication; it was never formed for any such purpose, but for the Lord, for the service and honor of God; to be an instrument of righteousness to holiness, Rom. 6:19. and therefore never of uncleanness; a member of Christ, and therefore not of a harlot, v. 15. And the Lord is for the body, i. e. as some, Christ is to be Lord of the body, to have the property in it, and dominion over it, having assumed a body, and been made to partake of our nature, that He might be Head of his church, and Head over all things, Heb. 2:5, 18. or, as some, thus, He is for its resurrection and glorification, according to what follows, v. 14. Which is a

Second argument against this sin, the honor intended to be put on our bodies, v. 14. Phil. 3:21. It is an honor done to the body, that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead; and it will be an honor to our bodies, that they will be raised. Let us not make those bodies vile by sin, which, if kept pure, shall, notwithstanding their present vileness, be made like to Christ's glorious body. The hopes of a resurrection to glory, should restrain Christians from dishonoring their bodies by fleshly lusts.

A Third argument is the honor already put on them, v. 15. If the soul be united to Christ by faith, the whole man is become a member of his mystical body, the body as well as the soul. How honorable is this to the Christian! It is good to know in what

tion, are joined by an indissoluble bond.\* Beza.—(9, 11)—Inherit, &c.] 'The kingdom of God,' or 'of heaven,' is 'entered into,' when we truly believe, Mat. 3:2. John 3:3-5. i. e. the kingdom of grace in this life; and all the true subjects of this kingdom, will inherit 'the kingdom of glory' in another world, and they alone.

SCOTT. (7.) 'There is upon the whole, though there may be exceptions, a diminution, defect, [littleness?] &c.' Grot. thinks the Gr., tr. take wrong, relates to general and personal insult and injury; and the other word to injury in property.

BLOOMF. (9.) 'Simple fornication was by the heathens scarcely accounted a sin, and as to participation in idol feasts (here meant by idolatry) some might and did think it no sin; therefore Paul begins, Be not deceived. Effeminate.] Catamites, also called by the Latins molles. The Syr. and some moderns, improperly, understand self-pollution.' Id. (10.) 'Drunkards, brawlers, blackguards, and ruffians.' Id.

V. 12-17. It is surprising, that expositors should so generally speak of judaizing teachers, as the authors of the divisions at Corinth: when

their philosophizing disposition, and their erroneous notions of Christian liberty, plainly show them to have been speculating, Gentile converts, who ran into the opposite extreme, and introduced a specious system of antinomianism. A Christian should habituate all his natural inclinations to subjection; and not allow them, by unrestricted indulgence, even in lawful things, to obtain such a power over him, that he cannot refrain when it is requisite he should. 9:24-27. (12) Not expedient.] 'Not profitable.' The word importeth such a kind of profit, as redoundeth to community;—as when a great many bring every one his stock, and lay them together, and make a common bank for all Collatitium. Leigh. Sc. (12.) Brought under.] 'Referring specially to sensuality in eating and drinking, by which he, who yields to such temptations, loses that power over himself which was committed to him by God, and becomes the basest of slaves. [Comp. at end of Rom. 7.]'

BLOOMF. (13.) God is for the body.] Having constituted it with exquisite contrivances for pleasure, and to assist us in the pursuit of happiness, through obedience to his natural laws. This is one opposite sense. Ed.



17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one <sup>1</sup>spirit.

18 Flee <sup>2</sup>fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

19 What! know ye not that your <sup>3</sup>body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not <sup>4</sup>your own?

20 For ye are bought <sup>5</sup>with a price: therefore glorify <sup>6</sup>God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

### CHAP. VII.

<sup>2</sup> He treateth of marriage, 4 shewing it to be a remedy against fornication: 10 and that the bond thereof ought not lightly to be dissolved. 18, 20 Every man must be content with his vocation. 25 Virginity wherefore to be embraced. 35 And for what respects we may either marry, or abstain from marrying.

**N**OW concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: *It is good for a man not to touch a woman.*

r Jn. 17:21—23. 7:24—27. v Ac. 20:28. 1 Pe. Ep. 4:4. t 2 Co. 6:16. l:13,19. Re. 5:9. a Pr. 6:25—32. u Ro. 14:7,8. w 1 Pe. 2:9.

honorable relations we stand, that we may endeavor to become them. *But now*, says the apostle, *shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid*. Or *take away* the members of Christ? Were not this a gross abuse, and the most notorious injury? Is it not dishonoring Christ, and dishonoring ourselves, to the very last degree? The thought is to be abhorred. God forbid, v. 16, 17. Nothing can stand in greater opposition to the honorable relations and alliances of a Christian man, than this sin. He is joined to the Lord in union with Christ, and made partaker by faith of his Spirit. One spirit lives, and breathes, and moves, in the *head* and *members*. Christ and his faithful disciples are one, Jn. 17:21, 22. *But he that is joined to a harlot is one body, for two shall be one flesh*, by carnal conjunction, which was ordained of God only to be in a married state. Now shall

**PRACT. OBS.** The high privileges and glorious prospects of believers should suggest arguments to them against sin, and for the practice of every duty; that so, a just sense of the dignity gratuitously bestowed on them, so worthless in themselves, may render them superior to the debasing allurements of vice, and the love of worldly vanities.—It must be a shame to any religious company, if there is no man among them so wise and faithful, that his brethren dare trust him to determine their secular differences. Much deliberation, counsel, prayer, and endeavor for accommodation should precede, before a man *'dare'* to enter on so perilous and disgraceful a business [as a lawsuit]. But alas! many, who are zealous for evangelical doctrines, not only refuse to bear and forgive injuries, but they *'do wrong, and defraud, and that their brethren!'* Whether such men act in direct opposition to their consciences, or are misled by false principles, they should be reminded, that *'the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God;'* for no one, continuing an adulterer, a

one in so close a union with Christ as to be one spirit with Him, yet be so united to a harlot as to become one flesh with her? And can a greater indignity be offered to Him or ourselves? The sin of fornication is a great injury in a Christian to his Head and Lord, and a great reproach and blot on his profession. No wonder the apostle should say, *'Flee fornication, v. 18. avoid it, keep out of the reach of temptations to it, of provoking objects. Direct the eyes and mind to other things and thoughts.'* *Other vices may be conquered in fight, this only by flight:* so speak many of the fathers.

A *Fourth* argument is, that it is a sin against our own bodies, v. 18. every sin, i. e. every other sin, every external act of sin besides, is without the body. It is not so much an abuse of the body as of somewhat else, as *wine* by the *drunkard*, *food* by the *glutton*, &c. Nor does it give the power of the body to another person. Nor does it so much tend to the reproach of the body, and to render it vile. This sin is in a peculiar manner styled *uncleanness, pollution*; because no sin has so much external turpitude in it, especially in a Christian. He sins against his own body; he defiles it, he degrades it, making it one with the body of that vile creature with whom he sins. He casts vile reproach on what his Redeemer has dignified to the last degree, by taking it into union with Himself. We should not make our present vile bodies more vile, by sinning against them. The

*Fifth* argument against this sin, is, that the bodies of Christians are *the temples of the Holy Ghost which is in them, and which they have of God, v. 19.* He that is joined to Christ, is one Spirit. He is yielded up to Him, is consecrated thereby, and set apart for his use, and is hereupon possessed, and occupied, and inhabited, by his Holy Spirit. This is the proper notion of a temple,—a place where God dwells, and sacred to his use, by his own claim, and his creature's surrender. Such temples real Christians are of the Holy Ghost. Must He not therefore be God? But the inference is plain, that hence we are not our own. We are yielded up to God, and possessed by and for God; nay, and this in virtue of a purchase made of us; *Ye are bought with a price.* In short, our bodies were made for

God, they were purchased for Him. If we are Christians indeed, they are yielded to Him, and He inhabits and occupies them by his Spirit: so that our bodies are not our own, but his. And shall we desecrate his temple, defile it, prostitute it, and offer it up to the use and service of a harlot? Horrid sacrilege! This is robbing God in the worst sense. Note, The temple of the Holy Ghost must be kept holy. Our bodies must be kept as his whose they are, and fit for his use and residence.

*Lastly*, The apostle argues from the obligation we are under to *glorify God both with our body and spirit, which are his, v. 20.* He made both, bought both, therefore both belong to Him, and should be used and employed for Him; therefore should not be defiled, alienated from Him, and prostituted by us. No, they must be kept as *vessels fitted for our Master's use.* We must look upon our whole selves as holy to the Lord, and must use our bodies as property which belongs to Him, and is sacred to his use and service. We are to honor *Him with our bodies and spirits, which are his*; and therefore, surely, must abstain from fornication; and not only from the outward act, but from the *adultery of the heart*, as our Lord calls it, Mat. 5:28. Body and spirit are to be kept clean, that God may be honored by both. But God is dishonored, when either is defiled by so beastly a sin. Therefore *flee fornication*, nay, and every sin. Use your bodies for the glory and service of their Lord and Master. Note, We are not proprietors of ourselves, nor have power over ourselves, and therefore should not use ourselves according to our own pleasure, but according to his will, and for his glory, *whose we are, and whom we should serve*, Acts 27:23.

**CHAP. VII. V. 1—9.** The apostle comes now, as a faithful and skilful *casuist*, to answer some cases of conscience which the Corinthians had proposed to him, v. 1. In the former ch. he warns them to avoid *fornication*; here he gives some directions about *marriage*, the remedy God had appointed for it.

1. It was good in that juncture of time, at least, to abstain from marriage altogether, v. 1. by good, here, not understanding what is so conformable to the mind and will of God, as if to do otherwise were sin; an

fornicator, or licentious, a dishonest, covetous, fraudulent, drunken, or malicious man, can have either title to the holy habitation of God and his saints, or meetness for it. Satan takes advantage of men's ignorance, pride, and lusts, to drive them from one extreme to another. Thus, when they are led to renounce superstitious scruples, they run into inexpedient or even unlawful indulgences. But *'the wisdom from above,'* teaches a man to guard against mistakes on each side; to abstain from *'lawful'* things when *'inexpedient,'* when unprofitable or injurious to himself or others; and to exert an authority over his own inclinations, that he may not be *'brought under the power of any'* of them. This is a difficult lesson, but of the highest importance; and if we consider, how soon all animal pleasures, and our present life, will terminate, the reflection may teach us moderation in the most innocent gratifications, and arm us against temptations to such as are unlawful, or unreasonable, or immoderate. SCOTT.

(17.) *'There is a beauty and propriety in this elegantly antithetical passage, not inferior to the finest examples of it to be found in the best Gr. writers;'* so the scholarly Bloomfield. Ep.

V. 13—20. As fornication was so inconsistent with Christian holiness; and as the temptation of the Corinthians to it, from former bad habits, the example of their neighbors, and abundant opportunities, would be very many, they ought to *'flee from it,'* as from an enemy whom they dared not to face; they should shun all incentives to it, and reject every thought of it, or solicitation to it, at once, and with prompt decision. 1 *Tim.* 6:11,12. 2 *Tim.* 2:20—22.—For it might further be observed, that other sins in general have their chief effect on the mind, rather than on the body, and commonly injure others more *immediately* than the man himself; but lewd persons not only sin against God, their neighbors, and their own souls, but against their own bodies also; dishonoring and abusing them to the basest purposes, and bringing on them the most painful, loathsome, and destructive diseases. Thus they, as it were, take their bodies, and, by an act of cruelty to themselves, and gradual suicide, present them for sacrifices to the filthiest demons. The case is the same, in some degree, in other kinds of sensual excess; but far more in respect of this vice than any other; as every one must know, who is acquainted with the horrible effects of lewdness in populous cities; and with the very great multitudes who are annually cut off, in early life, and in the most deplorable manner imaginable, by the various diseases, with which it has pleased God to show his abhorrence of it. (*P. O. Prov.* 2:10—22. 5:1—14. 6:16—35.)—The language of this [276]

ch. is remarkable: *'God,'* the Father, will *'raise the bodies of believers by his own power.'* 14. *Jn.* 5:24—29. *Phil.* 3:20,21. Their bodies are members of Christ, and for Him, as He for them; his *property*, to be devoted to Him, having been *'bought with the price'* of his blood. And they are also *'the temples of the Holy Ghost,'* and thus his property, so that they are not their own, but God's, to glorify Him. [Note, end of Mal.] Does not all this demonstrate, that Paul considered the God, to whom Christians especially belonged, as subsisting in three divine persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to each of whom he shows their peculiar relation? This accords with the form of baptism and benediction. *Mat.* 28:19,20. 2 *Cor.* 13:14.—*'The question, "Know ye not this?"* is repeated six times in this one ch.; which may seem to carry with it a just reproach to the Corinthians, who had got a new and better instructor than himself, in whom they so much gloried? *Locke.* [*Macknight* dwells at large on this idea.] SCOTT.

(18.) *Every*, hyperbolic, for most, as *all* is often put for many; or rather, fornication, *beyond all others*, sinneth against, injureth the body; and what more true! Alas! that this sin should have got to such a height in the world as it has. See Dr. *Gall*, and late *'Reports.'* Ep.

**NOTES.** CHAP. VII. V. 1—5. It is evident, that those who retained their regard to the apostle's authority at Corinth, had written to him, desiring his decision of several questions, which had been started among them; and he here proceeded to answer their inquiries, especially respecting marriage. While some of them pleaded for the lawfulness of fornication, others seem to have imbibed the sentiments of the Pytha-



2 Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

3 Let the <sup>a</sup> husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.

4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.

5 Defraud ye not one the other, except it be <sup>b</sup> with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that <sup>c</sup> Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

6 But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.

7 For I would that all men were even as I myself. But <sup>d</sup> every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

8 I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.

9 But if they cannot contain, let <sup>e</sup> them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

<sup>a</sup> Ex. 21:10. <sup>b</sup> Joel 2:16. <sup>d</sup> Mat. 19:11,12.  
<sup>c</sup> 1 Pe. 3:7. <sup>e</sup> 1 Th. 3:5. <sup>e</sup> 1 Ti. 5:14.

extreme into which many of the ancients run, in favor of celibacy and virginity; but good, i. e. either, abstracting from circumstances, there are many things in which the state of celibacy has the advantage above

gorgans, or other philosophers, and to have deemed marriage itself inconsistent with Christian purity, or at least unfavorable to intellectual improvement. On the other hand, the Pharisees generally taught, that it was sinful for a man to live unmarried beyond his 20th year; but at the same time, they laid down many frivolous and superstitious rules, concerning the conduct of married persons. This (v. 5.) places the husband and the wife entirely on the same ground; and as much forbids him to take another woman, as it does her to cohabit with another man; so that it is absolutely decisive against polygamy. Mat. 19:7—9. Mk. 10:2—12. Her own.] 4:7. John 1:42. 5:18.—In strictness, I have no right to call that *my own*, which I enjoy in common with others. Acts 4:32. Gr. . . . No woman can call any man "her own husband," . . . whom she has in common with other women. . . . In the N. T. we have always "her own husband," never his own wife, . . . which is the more remarkable, as no such expression occurs in the Sept. . . . For, during that dispensation, . . . things were on a different footing. Campbell.—The words, tr. 'his own wife,' are *hēn heautou gunaika*. There was not the same reason for the explicit strong restriction, on that side, which is contained in the word tr. 'own.' Jn. 5:17. SCOTT.

(1.) 'There were perhaps some among the *Jewish Christians*, who too much extolled matrimony and its necessity. For, to this day, the Jews hold the opinion, that he who, at the age of 20 years, without being prevented by natural defect, or profound study of the law, has not entered into wedlock, sins against the divine precept. See *Iken*. But even among the *philosophers*, it had been a question often agitated, whether wise men ought to marry. Lycurgus, Thales, Antiphanes, Socrates, &c. opposed; Musonius, Hierocles, Menander, Metellus Num. maintained, on the other hand, that the procreation and education of children, was a *debt* due the public: [and with reason, for if only the sensual and animalized had children, there would be an end to liberty, law, and moral progress.] See *Grot.*, and *Ros. Good.* *Kalon*: some interpret it *honorable*, a thing illustrious and excellent, a sense chiefly supported by the Roman Catholic comtrs. The most eminent interpreters, more rightly, assign the sense, *expedient, convenient, useful*; which may include the notion of *melius*. Or, perhaps, Paul answers the question with reference to the words thereof, "is it lawful not to have to do with the sex?" to which he answers, *kalon esti*, "it is not only lawful, but expedient. Comp. v. 26, 28, 32, sq. and 35, which show it to be the counsel of a friend, not general, but especial, for the times. *Man.* *Anthropos*, Mat. 19:3. includes both sexes. So *Beza, Casaub., Drus.* BLOOMF.

(2.) '*Heautou* and *idion* are synonymous terms, and indicate *propriety*; which involves the reciprocal duty of *fidelity*: and by the terms *gunaika* and *andra* are excluded, and forbidden, polygamy and concubinage.' Id.

(3.) '*Benevolence*.] 'Sexual kindness, a delicate euphemism.' BL., who wishes comtrs. had limited the apostle's modesty in this and similar points. Id.

(4.) '*Power*.' 'I. e. of abstaining from the conjugal embrace.' Id.

(5.) '*By consent* (says *Grot.*) the abstinence might be perpetual; for *volenti non fit injuria*. And that such abstinence was practised by the early Christians, is plain from the ecclesiastical writers. Yet it appears, the apostle did not think this expedient in the case of the Co-

the marriage-state; or else at this juncture, by reason of the distresses of the Christian church, it would be a convenience for Christians to keep themselves single, provided they have the gift of continency, and can keep themselves chaste. The expression also may carry in it an intimation, that Christians must avoid all occasions of this sin, and flee all fleshly lusts, and incentives to them; must neither look on, nor touch, a woman, so as to provoke lustful inclinations. Yet,

II. He informs them that marriage, and the comforts and satisfactions of that state, are by divine wisdom prescribed for preventing, v. 2. *fornications*, all sorts of lawless lust. To avoid these, *Let every man*, says he, *and every woman* marry, and confine themselves to their own mates. And when married, let each render the other *due benevolence*, v. 3. consider the disposition and exigency of each other, and render conjugal duty. For, as the apostle argues, v. 4. in the married state neither person has power over their own body, but has delivered it into the power of the other: the wife hers into the power of the husband, the husband his into the power of the wife. *Polygamy*, as well as *adultery*, must be a breach of marriage-covenants, and a violation of the partner's rights. And therefore they should not defraud one another of the use of their bodies, nor any other of the comforts of the conjugal state, appointed of God for keeping *the vessel in sanctification and honor*, and preventing the lusts of uncleanness; except it be *with mutual consent*, v. 5. and *for a time* only, while they employ themselves in some extraordinary duties of religion, or give themselves to fasting and prayer. Seasons of deep humiliation require abstinence from lawful pleasures. But this separation between husband and wife must not be for a continuance, lest they expose themselves to Satan's temptations, by reason of their incontinence, or

inability to contain. If persons abstain from lawful enjoyments, they may be ensnared into unlawful ones. The remedies God hath provided against sinful inclinations, are certainly best.

III. The apostle limits what he had said about *every man's having his own wife*, &c. v. 2. *I speak this by permission, not of command*. He did not lay it as an injunction on every man, to marry, without exception. Any man might marry. No law of God prohibited the thing. But, on the other hand, no law bound a man to marry, so that he sinned if he did not; I mean, unless his circumstances required it for preventing the *lust of uncleanness*. It was a thing in which men, by the laws of God, were in a great measure left at liberty. Therefore Paul did not bind every man to marry, though every man had an allowance. No, he *could wish all men were as himself*, v. 7. i. e. single, and capable of living continently in that state. But it did not answer the intentions of Divine Providence as well, for all men to have as much command of appetite as Paul had. Natural constitutions vary; and where there may not be much difference in the constitution, different degrees of grace are vouchsafed, which may give some a greater victory over natural inclination than others. The gifts of God, both in nature and grace, are variously distributed. Paul could wish all men were as himself, but *all men cannot receive such a saying, save them to whom it is given*, Mat. 19: 11.

IV. He sums up his sense on this head, v. 9, 10. *I say therefore* to those in a state of virginity or widowhood, *It is good for them if they abide even as I*. Many conveniences, especially at this juncture, in a single state, render it preferable to a married one. *But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn*. This is God's remedy for lust. And marriage, with all its inconveniences, is much better than to burn

rinthians, since he adds the injunction, that this be done "for a season (only)." It was practised by the Jews, in preparation for solemn festivals, and at other times when they wished to devote themselves to religious duties, on which occasions fasting, too, was usually enjoined. The different schools of the Rabbins recommended various periods of it; the Schammæi, a fortnight; the Hillehiani, a week. Nor was this custom unknown to the heathens; see *Hets.*, &c., as at the unusual feast of Ceres, for nine days. *To fasting, &c.*] These words (omitted in six mss. and some other MSS., and several fathers) were rejected by Mill and Bengel, Krause and Griesb. but I think on insufficient grounds. *Incontinency.* *Akrasia*: infirmity; i. e. by means of your not being able to contain yourselves. *Aristotle* calls those *akrateis* who do not remain constant in a good resolution, but succumb to the allurements of vice. *Grot.* BLOOMF.

V. 6—9. The apostle stated the things, which have been considered, as what were *allowable*; but not as giving an absolute commandment. Men might use their own discretion about marrying; and married persons, concerning their conduct in that state; provided they did not needlessly thwart each other's inclinations, do injustice to one another, or throw any temptation in their own or each other's way. Some think Paul was a widower, but this is uncertain. We cannot suppose he wished marriage to cease among Christians; but only that every one might be enabled calmly to use his prudence in that respect, without being necessitated to marry, when otherwise it would not have been advisable. But the apostle knew, that his experience, in this matter, was not a rule for other men; as his superiority to the animal inclinations was a special gift of God, which He gave to one and not to another, as He saw good; and that in different proportions. [See end of Rom. 7. Men are born with the elementary faculties of the intellect, sentiments, and propensities, in a definite proportion to each other. This can be very much altered, however, by education: careful then should we be of our own and children's habits. Ed.] 4:6,7. Mat. 19:10—12, v. 12.—'This whole passage is framed against those, who condemn second marriages, when the first has been dissolved by death.' *Beza.* 1 *Tim.* 3:2. 5:9—15. SCOTT.

(6.) *Permission.*] '*Suggnōmēn*: nearly equivalent to *gnōmē, monition*, say *Beza, Grot., Ham., Beng., Mackn., Ros., and Schl.* "I am not commanding, but persuading." *Grot.* 'In Scripture, says *Burke*, "we must sort out what is intended for example, what only as narrative, what to be understood literally, what figuratively, where one precept is to be controlled and modified by another; what is used directly, and what only as an argument *ad hominem*, what is temporary, and what of perpetual obligation; what appropriated to one state, and to one set, and what the general duty of all Christians.'" BLOOMF.

(7.) '*As myself.*' 'I. e. "could as easily bear the severities of a single life, in present circumstances, and exercise as resolute a command over their natural desires." For it would be a most flagrant absurdity, to suppose Paul wished marriage might entirely cease. It shows, therefore, how unfair and improper it is, in various cases, to strain the apostle's words to the utmost rigor, as if he perpetually used the most critical exactness; but, indeed, ch. 9:22. is so full an instance to the contrary, that it is not necessary to multiply remarks of this kind.' DODDRIDGE.



10 And unto the married I command, *yet* not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from *her* husband :

11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband : and let not the husband put away *his* wife.

12 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord : If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.

13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband : else were your children unclean ; but <sup>h</sup> now are they holy.

15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases : but God hath called <sup>i</sup> us <sup>j</sup> to peace.

16 For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save <sup>k</sup> thy husband ? or <sup>l</sup> how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save <sup>m</sup> thy wife ?

f Mal. 2:14—16. h Mal. 2:15,16. } in.  
Mat. 19:6,9. i Ro. 12:13. 14:19. k 1 Pe. 3:1,2.  
g Ezr. 10:11, &c. He. 12:14. l what.

with impure and lustful desires. *Marriage is honorable in all* ; but it is a duty to them who cannot contain, nor conquer those inclinations.

V. 10—16. In this paragraph, the apostle gives direction in a case which must have been very frequent in that age, especially among the Jewish converts ; I mean, whether they were to live with heathen relatives in a married state. Moses' law permitted divorce ; and there was a famous instance in the Jewish state, when the people were obliged to put away their idolatrous wives, Ezra 10:3. This might move the scruple in many minds. And,

I. In general, he tells them, that marriage, by Christ's command, *is for life* ; and therefore those who are married must not think of separation, v. 10, 11. *This I command*, says the apostle ; *yet not I, but the Lord*. Not that he commanded anything on his own authority. Whatever he commanded, was the Lord's command ; dictated by his Spirit,

and enjoined by his authority. But his meaning is, that the Lord Himself, with his own mouth, had forbidden such separations, Mat. 5:32. 19:9. Mk. 10:11. Lu. 16:18. They must not separate for any other cause than what Christ allows. And therefore the apostle advises, that if any woman had been separated, either by a voluntary act of her own, or by an act of her husband, she should continue unmarried, and seek reconciliation with her husband, that they might cohabit again.

11. He brings the general advice home to the case of such as had an unbelieving mate, v. 12. the Lord had not so expressly spoken to this case as to the former of divorce. It does not mean, that the apostle spake without authority from the Lord, or decided this case by his own wisdom, without the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. He closes this subject with a declaration to the contrary, v. 40. I think, *also, that I have the Spirit of God*. But having thus prefaced his advice, we may attend,

1. To the *advice* itself ; which is, that if an unbelieving husband or wife were pleased to dwell with a Christian relative, the other should not separate, v. 12, 13. The Christian calling did not dissolve the marriage covenant, but bind it the faster, by bringing it back to the original institution, limiting it to two persons, and binding them together for life. But though a believing wife or husband should not separate from an unbelieving, yet, if the unbelieving desert the believer, and no means can reconcile to a cohabitation, in such a case, *a brother or sister is not in bondage*, v. 15. not tied up to the unreasonable humor, and bound servilely to follow or cleave to the malicious deserter ; or not bound to live unmarried, after all proper means for reconciliation have been tried ; at least, if the deserter contract another marriage, or be guilty of adultery ; which was a very easy supposition, because a very common instance among the heathen inhabitants of Corinth. In such a case, the deserted person must be free to marry again, and it is granted on all hands. And some think, that such a malicious desertion is as much a dissolution of the marriage-covenant, as death itself. For how is it possible, that *the two shall be one flesh*, when the one is maliciously bent to part from, or put away, the other ? Indeed, the deserter seems still bound by the matrimonial contract ; and therefore the apostle says, v. 11. *If the woman depart from her husband*, on account of his infidelity, *let her remain unmarried*. But the deserted party seems to be left more at liberty (I mean, supposing all the proper means have been used to reclaim the deserter, and other circumstances make it necessary) to marry another person. It does not seem reasonable that they should be still bound, when it

is rendered impossible to perform conjugal duties, or enjoy conjugal comforts, through the mere fault of their mate : in such a case marriage would be a state of servitude indeed. But whatever liberty be indulged Christians in such a case as this, they are not allowed, for the mere infidelity of a husband or wife, to separate ; but, if the unbeliever be willing, they should continue in the relation, and cohabit as those who are thus related. This is the apostle's general direction.

2. We have here the *reasons* of this advice ; (1.) Because the relation or state is sanctified by the holiness of either party, v. 14. The apostle tells them, that, though they were yoked with unbelievers, yet, if themselves were holy, marriage was to them a holy state, and marriage-comforts, even with an unbelieving relative, were sanctified enjoyments. If one of the relatives were become holy, nothing of the duties or lawful comforts of the married state could defile them, and render them displeasing to God, though the other were a heathen. He is sanctified for the wife's sake. She is sanctified for the husband's sake. Both are one flesh. He is to be reputed clean, who is one flesh with her that is holy, and *in like manner if the terms are exchanged* ; *Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy*, v. 14. that is, they would be heathen, out of the pale of the church and covenant of God. They would not be of the holy seed, as the Jews are called, Is. 6:13. but *common and unclean*, in the same sense as heathens in general were styled in the apostle's vision, Acts 10:28. This way of speaking is according to the dialect of the Jews ; among whom a child, begot by parents yet heathens, was said to be begotten *out of holiness* ; and a child begotten by parents made proselytes, is said to be begotten *within the holy inclosure*. Thus Christians are called commonly *saints* ; such they are by profession, separated to be a peculiar people of God, and as such distinguished from the world ; and therefore the children born to Christians, though married to unbelievers, are not to be reckoned as part of the world, but of the church, a *holy*, not a *common and unclean seed*. What a comfort is this, where both relatives are believers !

(2.) Another reason is, that *God hath called Christians to peace*, v. 15. The Christian religion obliges us to act peaceably in all relations, natural and civil. We are bound, *as much as in us lies, to live peaceably with all men*, Rom. 12:18. and therefore surely to promote the peace and comfort of our nearest relatives, those with whom we are one flesh, nay, though they should be infidels.

(3.) A third reason is, that it is possible for the believing relative to be an instrument

V. 10—14. This exposition [the same as in *Henry*] of the Scripture before us, has indeed been much controverted ; and some have explained 'holy,' or 'unclean,' to mean *legitimate*, or *illegitimate* ; but in all the places, where these words are found in Scripture, there is not one which will admit of this sense. No doubt, the children of the heathen, who were lawfully married, were as *legitimate* as those of Christians ; yet they were never said to be 'holy.' Something more must be meant, by the believer 'sanctifying' the unbelieving party, than merely legalizing their marriage ; for that would have been valid and lawful, if both had been unbelievers ; and the children would not *really* be more 'holy,' in respect of their nature, if one parent was a believer, than if both were unbelievers. But as the word 'unclean' is frequently used in a relative sense, denoting *unfit to be admitted to God's ordinances*, and 'holy' the contrary ; as in this sense the male children of the Jews were 'holy,' and so partakers of circumcision ; while those of the Gentiles, and even such as had one idolatrous parent, were 'unclean,' and excluded from circumcision ; I cannot but conclude, after long attention to the subject, that the baptism of the infant-offspring of Christians, is here evidently referred to, as at that time customary in the churches ; and that the Corinthians knew, that this was not objected to, when only one parent was a Christian.—Hence then the argument for infant baptism runs thus : If the holy seed among the Jews was therefore to be circumcised, and to be made *federally* holy, by receiving the sign of the covenant, and being admitted into the number of God's holy people ; because they were born in sanctity, or were *seminally* holy ; for, "the root being holy, so are the branches also ;" then, by like reason, the holy seed of Christians ought to be admitted to baptism, and receive the sign of the Christian covenant, "the laver of regeneration ;" and so be entered into the

society of the Christian church. *Whitby. Ex. 19:6. Deut. 7:6—8. Ezra 9:1, 2. Mal. 2:10—16. Rom. 11:16—21.* 'It would be proving a thing by itself, . . . to argue, that the converse of the parents was lawful, because the children were not bastards ; whereas all, who thought the converse of the parents *unlawful*, must of course think that the children were *illegitimate*.' *Doddr.*

(10.) 'Not so much I, as the Lord. Mat. 5:32. 19:3—10. Moses *did not*, the Greeks and Romans *did* permit the wife to separate from the husband.' *Bloomf.*

(12.) *The rest.* 'I. e. marriage, where but one party is Christian : of such Christ did not speak, nor could He without anticipating the designs of the Deity.' *Id.*

(14.) 'The one is so sanctified by the other, that their matrimonial converse is as lawful as if they were both of the same faith.' [So, substantially, *Crell., Scater, Camer., Beza, Calv., most Dutch comtrs., Whit., Wolf, Beng.*] 'Nothing can be more obvious than that the word *holy*, signifies persons who might be permitted to partake of the distinguishing rites of God's people. *Comp. Ex. 19:6. Deut. 7:6. 14:2. 26:19. 33:3. Ezra 9:2. with Is. 35:8. 3:1. Acts 10:23, &c.*' *Doddr.*

V. 15, 16.—Total and perpetual desertion, when accompanied by evident *adultery* in the deserting party, undoubtedly sets the other party at full liberty, according to the *scriptural* rule ; for deserting a husband or wife to live with another man or woman, or in any way *evidently* adulterous, must as much dissolve the marriage, as a divorce explicitly given on account of adultery ; and there is no restriction, in any part of the Holy Scriptures, laid on divorced persons, to inhibit them from marrying, though very many, imposed by human laws, are often spoken of, as if *scriptural* injunctions. *Mat. 19:1—9.* *Scott.*



17 But as God hath distributed to every man, as <sup>m</sup> the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And <sup>n</sup> so ordain I in all churches.

18 <sup>o</sup> Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? <sup>p</sup> let him not be circumcised.

19 Circumcision <sup>q</sup> is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping <sup>r</sup> of the commandments of God.

20 Let every man abide <sup>s</sup> in the same calling wherein he was called.

21 Art thou called *being* a servant? care <sup>t</sup> not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use *it* rather.

22 For he that is called in the Lord, *being* a servant, is <sup>u</sup> the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, *being* free, is <sup>v</sup> Christ's servant.

23 Ye are bought <sup>w</sup> with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

24 Brethren, let <sup>x</sup> every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.

[Practical Observations.]

m ver. 20—24.	q Jn. 15:14.	u <i>made free</i> .
n c. 4:17. 2 Co.	r 1 Jn. 2:3.	v Ps. 116:16.
11:23	r Pr. 27:8.	1 Pe. 2:16.
o Ac. 15:1, &c.	s Ille. 13:5.	w c. 6:20. 1 Pe.
Gal. 5:2, &c.	t Jn. 8:33.	1:13, 19.
p Ga. 5:6. 6:15.	Ro. 6:13, 22.	x ver. 17, 20.

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—24. That which is good in itself, may not always be best for a man, when every circumstance is weighed; and when all the variety of inward evils and outward temptations, connected with it, are duly considered; so that those things, which are good for one, must not so much as be recommended to another; because he is incapable of overcoming the difficulties and temptations to which they expose him. To prevent the fatal effects of unchastity, and of the strong propensity of most men to it, it is generally 'expedient,' and always allowable, that 'every man should have his own wife, and every woman her own husband.' All restrictions of this allowance, uniformly tend to licentiousness; and no tongue can express the mischiefs, which arise from covetousness, licentious, and constrained celibacy.—Every part of the conduct of married persons also ought to be so regulated, as to render them agreeable to each other, and satisfied in the relation. For, not only adultery and polygamy are inconsistent with the duties of this relation, and with the mutual property of married persons in each other, but also, whatever is disobliging, and tends to weaken the attachment, and to open the way for either of them to look with greater satisfaction on another object.—Everything in the Christian's conduct should be regulated, in subserviency to his communion with God.—Those who, like the apostle, are enabled to live with *purity* and *contentment* in an unmarried state, should copy his example, by laying themselves out with double diligence to glorify God, and to be useful to mankind; they should also imitate his prudence and candor, in not pre-

V. 17—24. The preceding subject led the apostle to digress to a more general topic. Thus, if a Jew or circumcised proselyte had been converted, let him not deny his circumcision; or refuse that regard to the ceremonial law, which might tend to conciliate his unbelieving brethren: but let not the uncircumcised convert submit to that abrogated ordinance, or at all take that yoke upon him. It is obvious, the apostle is not here speaking of the way of justification, but of the conduct of justified believers. Gal. 5:1—6. 6:15, 16. The three particulars, which here, and in the texts referred to, the apostle selects, in this connexion, should not be considered as existing separately. For he who is 'a new creature,' possesses 'faith which worketh by love,' and this love constrains him to 'keep the commandments of God.' Jn. 14:15—21. 2 Cor. 5:13—17. The Gospel would teach a man how to behave in any condition, and patiently to bear its inconveniences. Every man, therefore, ought contentedly to 'abide with God,' by constantly performing the duties of that situation, in which he was converted to the faith of Christ.—Ministers were, at that time, entirely taken from among the converts to Christ in every church, most of whom had doubtless been previously employed in other occupations; and seminaries for educating men for this service were not then known; it is therefore evident, that the apostle did not mean to forbid that change of employment, when it could be made advisedly, and on good grounds, as well as from proper motives; and in other respects his general rule might admit of some exceptions.—'They should not change, on a presumption, that Christianity gave them a new and peculiar liberty so to do,' Locke.—The context favors the supposition, that those changes, which some might be induced to make, from an erroneous judgment, in respect of their liberty or duty as Christians, were the primary object, that the apostle had in view; yet his *general* language seems to imply, that he meant to extend the rule to various other cases.—Dr. Whitby and some others explain the words, 'Ye are bought with a price,' of those slaves, who had been charitably ransomed at the expense of their fellow Christians. But their fellow Christians obtained no property in them, by thus ransoming them, as Christ does by ransoming us; the advice is general, and not limited to these persons: and it is far more obvious to suppose, that the apostle used this expression in the same sense, in which he had before employed it. 6:12.—20.—(24) *Abide with God, &c.* 'Neither deserting his master on pre-

of the other's salvation, v. 16. It is the plain duty of those in so near a relation, to endeavor the salvation of their souls to whom they are related. 'Do not separate. There is other duty now called for. Stay, and labor heartily the conversion of thy relative. Endeavor to save a soul. Who knows but this may be the event? It is not impossible. And though there be no great probability, saving a soul is so good and glorious a service, that the bare possibility should put one on exerting one's self.' Mere possibility of success should be a sufficient motive with us to use our diligent endeavors for saving the souls of our relations. 'What know I, but I may save his soul?' should move me to attempt it.'

V. 17—24. Here he advises them to continue in the state and condition in which Christianity found them, and they became converts to it.

I. He lays down this rule in general,—as *God hath distributed to every one*. Our states and circumstances in this world are distributions of Divine Providence. And again, *As the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk*. Whatever his circumstances and condition were when he was converted to Christianity, let him abide therein, and suit his conversation to it; the rules of Christianity reach every condition, and this is the duty every Christian. The apostle adds, that this was a general rule, to be observed at all times and in all places,—*So ordain I in all churches*.

II. He specifies particular cases; as, I. That of *circumcision*. It matters not whether a man be a Jew or Gentile, *circumcised* or

*uncircumcised*. For, as the apostle goes on, *circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God, v. 19*. In point of acceptance with God, it is neither here nor there whether men be circumcised or not. It is practical religion, sincere obedience to the commands of God, on which the Gospel lays stress. External observances, without internal piety, are as nothing. Therefore let every man abide *in the calling*, the state, *wherein he was called, v. 20*. 2. That of *servitude* and *freedom*. It was common in that age of the world, for many to be in a state of slavery, bought and sold for money, and so the property of those who purchased them. 'Now,' says the apostle, '*art thou called, being a servant? Care not for it*. Be not over-solicitous about it. It is not inconsistent with thy duty, profession, or hopes, as a Christian. Yet, if thou mayest be made free, use it rather,' v. 21. There are many conveniences in a state of freedom, above that of servitude: a man has more power over himself, and more command of his time, and is not under the control of another lord; and therefore, liberty is the more eligible state. But men's outward condition does not let nor further their acceptance with God. For he that is called, *being a servant, is the Lord's freeman, as he that is called, being free, is the Lord's servant*. Though he be not discharged from his master's service, he is freed from the dominion and vassalage of sin. Though he be not enslaved to Christ, yet he is bound to yield himself up wholly to his pleasure and service; and yet that service is *perfect freedom*. Our comfort and happiness depend on

scribing his own conduct to others, as obligatory on them in this respect; or despising those who are not endued with the same gift; remembering that, in this also, God has 'made them to differ.' In counselling our brethren also we should use caution; lest by exciting a man to grasp at advantages, which are out of his reach, we should cast him into circumstances of insuperable temptation; urge him to that which is contrary to his duty; and dissuade him from what is best for him, and indeed incumbent on him; for, in such matters, no man is competent to judge for another, but every one must determine for himself; or rather, he should seek counsel from God how he ought to act.—It is the express commandment of God, that married persons should not separate from each other, if it can possibly be avoided; and that such as have separated, should endeavor to be reconciled, or else live single. It is also his will, that husbands and wives should be careful to please each other in lawful things, though it leave them less time for religious exercises, than they enjoyed in a single state. Even if a believer has been married to an unbeliever, either before conversion, or by inattention to the rule of the sacred Word; the cross of that incongruous union must be patiently endured, and the duties of the relation cheerfully performed; that by kindness, by a good example, and by fervent prayers, the unbelieving party may be won over, and the immortal soul saved.—In every state and relation, we should remember, that God has 'called us to peace;' and that everything should be done to promote domestic and social harmony, as far as truth and holiness will permit. SCOTT.

tenue of being God's servant, nor doing anything against the laws of God, in obedience to his master.' Whitby. It may be added; 'But serving God by faithfully, diligently, and meekly serving his master, in all things lawful.'

(18.) *Let him not become uncircumcised.* 'The Gr. refers to certain means ordinarily taken to remove the marks of circumcision.' See BL.

(21.) *Care not, &c.* 'The sense is not clear. Chrys. and all the Gr. comtrs. understand, "You need care so little, that if even you can gain your freedom, prefer your servitude, as a greater trial of Christian patience" [! so a religion of despotism counsels, contrary to the precept, 'Do not evil that good may come,' and to the prayer, 'Lead us not into temptation!'] By what right can any man imbrute *God's image*, which Christ atoned for, to a mindless, will-less, soul-less, right-less *chattel*? Yet] so Camer., Schmidt, Starck, Estius, De Dieu, and the Syr. And this sense, they think, is confirmed by the following consolatory words: "For he," &c. It is also ably defended by *De Dieu* and Wolf. But there is a certain harshness about it to which necessity alone would reconcile me. What is detrimental to human happiness, cannot be promotive of virtue. The true int. seems that of Beza, Grot., Ham., and most recent comtrs. "Do not feel a too great trouble (and so *Theoph.*, *mē thoroubou*) on that account, as if it could materially [of itself] affect your acceptance with God, and salvation; and as if that were a condition unworthy of a Christian." *Theod.* para.: "Grace knows no distinctions of freedom or servitude; therefore bear it patiently." *Grot.* adds: "And, above all, let it not drive you to seek your freedom by unjustifiable means." And he remarks, that a misunderstanding of the nature of Christian liberty, had made many Christian slaves not only murmur at their situation, but seek to throw off all bondage.' BL. 'In washing his disciples' feet, remember, O slave! Christ showed us his contempt for all earthly greatness, and threw honor over the most servile lot.' 'The condition of slaves in Greece was little inferior to that of the lower orders of *freemen*. *Eurip.* Ion. 854. They were allowed to possess property in Euripides' time. *Stob.* Tit. 81. BL. O just (yet merciful) God! enlighten the slave and his master, in these U. S., at once and always to do thy will!

(23.) 'The admonition is *general*; so the best comtrs., ancient and



25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

26 I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress; I say, that *it is* good for a man so to be.

27 Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

28 But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.

29 But this I say, brethren, the time *is* short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;

30 And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not:

31 And they that use this world, as not abusing *it*: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

32 But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:

y ver. 6, 10, 40. d 1 Pe. 4:7. 1 Jn. 2:17.  
z 1 Ti. 1:12. 2 Pe. 3:8, 9. f 1 Ti. 5:5.  
a or, necessity. e Ps. 39:6. Ja. 4: g of the Lord, as  
b ver. 1, 8. 14. 1 Pe. 4:7. ver. 34.  
c He. 13:4.

what we are to Christ, not what we are in the world. He who is a slave, may yet be a Christian freeman; he who is a freeman, may yet be Christ's servant. Not that he must quit the service of his master, or not take all proper measures to please him; (this were to contradict the whole scope of the apostle's discourse;) but he must not be so the servant of men, but that Christ's will must be obeyed, and regarded, more than his master's. He has paid a much dearer purchase for him, and has a much fuller property in him. He is to be served and obeyed without limitation or reserve. The servants of Christ should be at the absolute command of no other master beside Himself, should serve no man, any further than is consistent with their duty to Him. Though some understand this passage, of persons being brought out of slavery by the bounty and charity of fellow Christians; and read the passage thus, *Have you been redeemed out of slavery with a price? Do not again become enslaved*; just as before he had advised, that, if in slavery they had any prospect of being made free, they should choose it rather. This

modern. This, and 6:20. plainly allude to the redemption, by the blood of Christ, from that servitude to sin which brings with it ignorance, superstition, and evil habits of every kind. Bl. *Become not servants (or slaves) of men.* Ham., Knatchbull, &c. Salmasius, Wolf, Dodd., understand it in the natural sense; and truly no man can of right give up his body, soul, conscience, mind, will, in slavery to any other will than God's. Pisc., Vorst., Beza, Grot., Calv., and most of the more recent comtrs., think the *false teachers* specially referred to; and the Corinthians are forbidden to subject their consciences to such dogmatical directors. The fathers, and ancient comtrs., take the words in a metaphorical sense: as do Lightf., Par., &c., and Bl., whom see. Ed.

V. 25—28. The apostle here resumes his former subject, with a special reference to those who had never been married; for he seems to use the word, rendered 'virgins,' in this latitude, including both unmarried men and women. 'Here Estius takes care to add, that the apostle must be understood only . . . of virgins who were not under a vow of continence; . . . And on 28. . . Both which exceptions, seeing Paul, assisted by the Holy Spirit, thought not fit to add, we may presume that he knew nothing of that matter.'—Whitby.

(25.) *Virgins.* 'Single persons of either sex. So the best comtrs.' Bl. 'I have no special precept common to all, either in the old law, or in the gospel of Christ.' Mackn. 'I have no commandment of the Lord

meaning the words will bear, but the other seems the more natural. See ch. 6:20.

III. He sums up his advice, v. 24. This is to be understood of the state wherein a man is converted to Christianity. No man should make his faith or religion, an argument to break through any natural or civil obligations. He should quietly and comfortably abide in the condition in which he is; and this he may well do, when he may abide therein with God. The special presence and favor of God are not limited to any outward condition or performance. He may enjoy it, who is circumcised, or bound, as well as he who is free. In this respect, *there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free*, Col. 3:11. The favor of God is not bound.

V. 25—35. The apostle here resumes his discourse, and gives directions to virgins how to act. Notice,

I. The manner wherein he introduces them, v. 25. I have, says he, 'no express and universal law, delivered by the Lord Himself, concerning celibacy; but I give my judgment, as one who hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful, in the apostleship.' Faithfulness in the ministry is owing to the grace and mercy of Christ. It is what Paul was ready to acknowledge upon all occasions, ch. 15:10. And it is a great mercy they obtain from God, who prove faithful in the ministry of his Word, either ordinary or extraordinary.

II. The determination he gives; which, considering the present distress, was, that a state of celibacy was preferable; *It is good for a man so to be, i. e. to be single.* I suppose, says the apostle, or it is my opinion. It is worded with modesty, but delivered, notwithstanding, with apostolical authority. It is not the mere opinion of a private man, but the very determination of the Spirit of God in an apostle, though thus spoken. And it was thus delivered, to give it the more weight. Those that were prejudiced against the apostle, might have rejected this advice, had it been given with a more authoritative air. Being then continually liable to be tossed and hurried by persecution; he did not think it so advisable for them that were single, to change conditions. The married state would bring more care and cumber along with it, v. 33, 34. and would therefore make persecution more terrible, and render them less able to bear it. Christians, in regulating their conduct, should not barely consider what is lawful in itself, but what may be expedient for them.

III. Notwithstanding he thus determines, he is very careful to satisfy them that he does not condemn marriage in the gross, or declare it unlawful. Therefore, though he says, 'If thou art in a single state, do not hastily change conditions;' yet he adds, 'If thou art married, do not seek to be unmarried, but do the duties of the married relation.' He adds, therefore, further, 'Marrying is not in itself a sin, but marrying at this time is likely to bring inconvenience,

and add to the calamities of the times; therefore he thought it advisable and expedient, that such as could contain, should refrain from it; but he would not lay celibacy on them as a yoke, or, by seeming to urge it too far, draw them into any snare; therefore he says, *But I spare you.* How opposite in this the papist casuists are to the apostle Paul! They forbid many to marry, and entangle them with vows of celibacy, whether they can bear the yoke or no.

IV. He takes this occasion to give general rules to all Christians, to carry themselves with a holy indifferency toward the world, and everything in it. 1. *As to relations*; They that had wives, must not set their hearts too much on the comforts of the relation: they must be as though they had none. This advice must be carried into every other relation. Those that have children, should be as though they had none. They that were their comfort now, may prove their greatest cross. And soon may the flower of all comforts be cut down. 2. *As to afflictions*; They that weep, must not be dejected too much with any afflictions, nor indulge in the sorrow of the world; but keep up a holy joy in God, in the midst of trouble, so that even in sorrow the heart may be joyful, and the end of grief be gladness. And if we can but get to heaven at last, *all tears shall be wiped from our eyes.* The prospect of it, now, should make us moderate our sorrows, and refrain our tears. 3. *As to worldly enjoyments*; They that rejoice should not take too great a complacency in any of their comforts. Here is not their rest, nor are these things their portion; therefore their hearts should not be set on them, nor should they place their solace or satisfaction in them. 4. *As to worldly traffic and employment*; They that buy, that prosper in trade, increase in wealth, and purchase estates, should hold these possessions as though they held them not. It is but setting their hearts on that which is not, Prov. 23:5. to do otherwise. Luke 14:18, 19. They are most likely to run so as to obtain the prize, who ease their minds of all foreign cares and cumberance. 5. *As to all worldly concerns, v. 31.* The world may be used, but must not be abused. It is abused when not used to honor God and do good to men: when, instead of being a servant, it is made our master, our idol, and has that room in our affections, which should be reserved for God. We must keep the world as much as may be out of our hearts, that we may not abuse it when we have it in our hands.

The apostle enforces these advices with two reasons; (1.) *The time is short, v. 29.* We have but a short season to possess and enjoy worldly things; it is contracted, reduced, will soon be gone. Therefore set not your hearts on worldly enjoyments. Possess what you must shortly leave, without suffering yourselves to be possessed by it. Why should your hearts be much set on what you must quickly resign? (2.) *The fashion of this world passeth away, v. 31.* the habit, figure, appearance of the world, passeth away.

to urge. So Grot., Pisc., Selater, Par., Cajetan, Justin, Whit., the Gr. fathers and comtrs.' But, says Bl., there seems no reason, however, to suppose, with Whit., that the latter cl. asserts a divine inspiration. Ed. (26.) *Suppose.* 'As far as my opinion goes. THEOPH. The Gr. seldom, if ever, denotes in Scr. an absolute authority or decree, but a matter of opinion, or private judgment, Mat. 5:17. 10:34. 20:10. Lu. 2:44. 1 Tim. 6:5, &c.; not, however, that any doubt is implied in the truth or wisdom of that judgment.' SLADE. *Distress.* 'Some persecutions that had just begun (so the best comtrs.), including, I think, the peculiar difficulties of a religion so much at variance with the customs of the world. Man.] *Anthropos: person.*

V. 29—31. The spirit of a pilgrim, and traveller, ought in all cases to be maintained. SCOTT.

(31.) *Fashion.* 'Schēma: a metaphor from the drama, where the expression, *paragein to schēma tēs skēnēs* was used of shifting the scenes. [Note, Ac. 19:29.]'

V. 32—35. By the preceding counsel, the apostle intended to preserve believers from perplexing cares and anxieties, especially in that unsettled state of the church. This counsel of the apostle was far from warranting or persuading them to shut themselves up in convents, and thus to put the lighted candle under a bushel; on the contrary, it instructed them to 'let their light shine before men,' by an uninterrupted series of



33 But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please *his* wife.

34 There is difference *also* between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married <sup>b</sup> careth for the things of the world, how she may please *her* husband.

35 And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

36 But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of *her* age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.

37 Nevertheless, he that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well.

38 So <sup>i</sup> then, he that giveth *her* in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth *her* not in marriage doeth better.

39 The wife <sup>j</sup> is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only <sup>k</sup> in the Lord.

40 But she is happier if she so abide, after <sup>l</sup> my judgment: and I think <sup>m</sup> also that I have the Spirit of God.

h Lu. 10.40—42. i ver. 28. j Ro. 7:2. k 2 Co. 6:14. l ver. 25. m 2 Pe. 3:15, 16.

It is daily changing countenance, is in a continual flux, is not so much a world, as the appearance of one. All is show, a transient show, and will be quickly gone. How proper and powerful an argument is this to enforce the former advice!

V. He presses his general advice, by warning them against the embarrassment of worldly cares, *v. 3*. Indeed, to be careless is a fault; a wise concern about worldly in-

terests is a duty; but to be care-full, full of care, to have an anxious and perplexing care about them, is a sin. It is the wisdom of a Christian, so to order his outward affairs, and choose such a condition in life, as to be without distracting cares, that he may attend on the Lord [i. e. his duties] with a mind at leisure and disengaged. This is the general maxim by which the apostle would have Christians govern themselves. In the application of it, Christian prudence must direct. That condition of life is best for every man, which is best for his soul, and keeps him most clear of the cares and snares of the world. By this maxim, the apostle solves the case put to him by the Corinthians, whether it were advisable to marry? Ordinarily, the less care we have about the world, the more freedom we have for the service of God. Now the married state, at that time, (if not at all times,) did bring most worldly care along with it, *v. 32, 33, 34*. Not but the married person may be holy, both in body and spirit too. Celibacy is not, in itself, a state of greater purity and sanctity than marriage; but the unmarried would be able to make religion more their business at that juncture, because they would have less distraction from worldly cares. At that season, therefore, the apostle advises, that those who were single should abstain from marriage, if they were under no necessity to change conditions. And where the same reason is plain at other times, the rule is as plain, and as fit to be observed. And the very same rule must determine persons for marriage, where there is the same reason; i. e. if, in the unmarried state, persons are likely to be more distracted in the service of God, than if they were married; which is a case supposable in many respects. That condition of life should be chosen by the Christian, in which it is most likely he shall have the best helps, and the least hindrances, in the service of God, and the affairs of his own [and others'] salvation.

V. 36—38. In this passage, the apostle is commonly supposed to give advice about the disposal of children, in marriage, on the principle of his former determination. In this view, the general meaning is plain. It was in that age, especially among the Jews, reckoned a disgrace for a woman to remain unmarried, past a certain number of years: 'Now,' says the apostle, 'if any man thinks he behaves unhand-somely toward his daughter, and that it is not for her credit to remain unmarried, when she is of full age, and that, on this principle, it is needful to dispose of her in marriage, he may use his pleasure. It is no sin in him, to dispose of her to a

suitable mate. But if a man has determined in himself to keep her a virgin, and stands to this determination, and is under no necessity to dispose of her in marriage, but is at liberty, with her consent, to pursue his purpose, he does well in keeping her a virgin. In short, he that giveth her in marriage, does well; but he that keeps her single, if she can be easy and innocent in such a state, does what is better; i. e. more convenient for her in the present state of things, if not at all times and seasons. Note, Children should be at the disposal of their parents, and not dispose of themselves in marriage. Yet note again, Parents should consult their children's inclinations, both to marriage in general, and to the person in particular, and not reckon they have uncontrollable power to do with them, and dictate to them, as they please. Thirdly, It is our duty not only to consider what is lawful, but in many cases, at least, what is fit to be done, before we do it.

But I think the apostle is here continuing his former discourse, and advising unmarried persons, who are at their own disposal, what to do; the man's virgin being meant of his virginity. *To keep his virgin, v. 37*, seems to be rather meant of preserving his own virginity, than keeping his daughter a virgin; though it be altogether uncommon to use the word in this sense. Several other reasons may be seen in Locke and Whitby. And it was a common matter of reproach, both among Jews and civilized heathens, for a man to continue single beyond such a term of years, though all did not agree in limiting the single life to the same term. The general meaning of the apostle is the same, that it was no sin to marry, if a man thought there was a necessity on him, to avoid popular reproach, much less to avoid the hurrying fervors of lust. But he that was in his own power, stood firm in his purpose, and found himself under no necessity to marry, would, at that season, and in the circumstances of Christians at that time, at least, make a choice every way most for his own conveniency, ease, and advantage, as to his spiritual concerns. And it is highly expedient, if not a duty, for Christians to be guided by such a consideration.

V. 39, 40. The whole is here closed up with advice to widows; *As long as the husband liveth, the wife is bound by the law*; confined to one husband, and bound to continue and cohabit with him. Note, Death only can annul the bond of marriage. *But the husband being dead, she is at liberty to marry whom she will*. It is certain, from this passage, that second marriages are not unlawful; for then

PRACT. OBS. V. 25—40. Those who have obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful, and who have most studied the Word of God, and human nature, will be the most candid and cautious in giving their judgment, or passing their censures; for whatever may be good in respect of present difficulties or peculiar circumstances, they know that marriage is honorable, and fornication is abominable, in all persons and circumstances. They will therefore be careful not to speak, as if marriage were sinful in any; and they will be peculiarly cautious not to throw a snare on those that pay deference to their judgment.—Great discretion is also needful for parents and guardians, in their conduct respecting young persons; that they do not, by laying down rules and making determinations, according to *their own views* of what is most for their interest, lead them into dangerous temptations; for it may be 'doing well,' to permit young persons to marry, if their attachments or inclinations lead that way; when otherwise it would be 'doing better' to prevent them; as even apparent imprudence, and its troubles, are better than sin and its deplorable consequences. How absurd then

most vows of celibacy and perpetual virginity be! especially in young persons, who are as yet incapable of forming a judgment for future years; and are probably induced to do it, by the plans of others concerning them, and those plans often formed from secular motives, and what is thought the most desirable way of settling the different branches of the family. The general consequence of them will be, either the violation of their vows; or a life spent amidst temptation and mental defilement; or still worse. This was man's policy. How different from the wisdom of God, even in this *ch.*; which contains in it more in favor of a single life, than all the rest of the Scripture taken together does!—Believers, when under no other restriction, should be sure, in contracting marriage, to remember the limitation made by the apostle, 'only in the Lord.' What miseries have many endured through the reanant of their lives, and what bad consequences have they entailed on their families, by transgressing it, on one vain pretence or other! Let every one then beware in time, that they may not rashly take a step, which they may have cause deeply to bewail to the end of life. Sc.

active services, for the glory of God and the benefit of the world. *Mat. 5:14—16*. Yet he only gave them this *counsel* for their profit; and would not by any means 'cast a snare on them,' by persuading those to a single life, who had not a sufficient command over their own passions. He did not mean that this was required of them, but that in some cases it would be comely, and enable them to wait upon God in his ordinances and commandments, without having their thoughts or affections divided and distracted by other cares or attachments. Scott.

(34) 'The apostle considers marriage solely as to its *carcs*.' Bl.

(35) *Snare*.] *Brochon*: rope-snare, lasso, of ancient warfare. Ep.

V. 36—38. Hitherto the apostle's meaning has been evident; but these *vs.* are not without difficulty. Some explain them of a man's resolutely continuing in a single state; supposing the 'necessity' mentioned, to be matter of personal consciousness, and not anything arising from the conduct of another; but such a construction of the original is,

by their own allowance, without example. Others would refer them to the ease of a man, who had betrothed a virgin, and was in doubt whether he should complete the marriage; but 'to marry' is not the same as 'to give in marriage.' It seems therefore most obvious to explain the passage of a parcat, or guardian, who had the charge of a virgin. Scott.

(36.) 'The disgrace which, according to eastern opinion, celibacy involved, extended from the virgin to her father. Ecclesiasticus 42:9.' *Sec Grot.* 'There is no authority for *tr. parthenon* "virginity;" [as is proposed by Henry;] besides that it is at variance with the context. Pass, &c.] If she be past a marriageable age.' Bl.

V. 39, 40. The language employed in several places of this *ch.*, has led most expositors to conclude, that the apostle did not write by inspiration, in the particulars referred to; and doubtless these intimations, thus understood, would rather prove, than invalidate, his immediate inspiration in other parts of his writings. 2 S. 7:1—4. Yet there seem



## CHAP. VIII.

1 To abstain from meats offered to idols. 8, 9 We must not abuse our Christian liberty, to the offence of our brethren: 11 but must bridle our knowledge with charity.

**N**OW as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have <sup>b</sup> knowledge. <sup>c</sup> Knowledge puffeth up, but <sup>d</sup> charity edifieth.

2 And <sup>e</sup> if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

3 But if any man love God, the same is known <sup>f</sup> of him.

4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol <sup>g</sup> is nothing in the world, and that *there is none other* <sup>h</sup> God but one.

5 For though there be that are <sup>i</sup> called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,)

a Ac. 15:10,19. e Ro. 11:25. Ga. g Is. 41:24.  
b Ro. 14:14,22. f 1 Ti. 6:3,4. h De. 4:39.  
c Is. 47:19. i Na. 1:7. 2 Ti. Is. 44:8,24.  
d c. 13. 2:19. i Jn. 10:34,35.

the widow could not be at liberty to marry whom she pleased, nor to marry a second time at all. But in our choice of relations, and change of conditions, we should always have an eye to God. Marriages are then only likely to have God's blessing, when they are made *in the Lord*; when persons are guided by the fear of God, and the laws of God, and act in dependence on the providence of God, in the change and choice of a mate; when they can look up to God, and sincerely seek his direction, and humbly hope for his blessing on their conduct. *But she is happier, says the apostle, if she so abide, i. e. continue a widow, in my judgment; and I think I have the Spirit of God, v. 40.* At this juncture, at least, if not ordinarily, it will be much more for the peace and quiet of such, and give them less hindrance in the service of God, to continue unmarried. And this, he tells them, was by inspiration of the Spirit. Change of condition in marriage is so important a matter, that it ought not to be made but on due deliberation, after careful consideration of circumstances, and on very probable grounds, at least, that it will be a change to advantage in our spiritual concerns.

no sufficient ground for the distinction; sometimes he spoke by way of 'permission,' concerning what was *allowable*; sometimes by way of 'counsel,' concerning what was *advisable*; and at other times 'by commandment,' concerning what was absolutely *binding on their consciences*. But, in all this, he might be, and doubtless was, guided by the Spirit of inspiration; some things being expressly forbidden; others as expressly commanded; others allowed, as far as expedient or beneficial.

*Concluding Note.* V. 40. 'It is the almost universal opinion of comtr., that the term, *doko echein* [I think I have], is an emphatic *meiosis*, expressive of full persuasion and certainty. (*Theod.* even tr. 'These are not my words, but proceed from the grace of the H. S., whose organ I am.') So *Grot.*, *Sc.*, *Beza*, *Wolf*, *Whit.*, *Pyle*, *Doddr.*, and *Mack.*, who adduce several examples of this sense, both from the scriptural and classical writers. But I assent to *Stade*, that "the sense of *doko* does not, in any of these instances, so clearly denote a certainty, as to make them matter of indisputable authority." But even if it were so (observes he), there is yet a question, whether the context leads us to the same interpretation of it here: and, notwithstanding the great weight of opinion in favor of this sense, it is proper to consider what may be urged against it. The words *kata ten emen gnomen* [tr. "according to my opinion"], do not suggest any idea of absolute, infallible assurance (but the contrary? *Ed.*); and if Paul had wished his decision to rest upon such ground, by an appeal to the certain operation of the Spirit, it appears unlikely that he would have expressed it by the ambiguous phrase, *doko echein*. Paul, indeed, though he had no doubt of his determinations and directions being conformable to the will of God, yet might not be called unequivocally to declare that he was speaking from immediate inspiration. The whole subject, indeed, appears to be treated rather in the language of private judgment, than of divine authority; see especially v. 6, 10, 23, 35, and notes. The present cl. may be tr.: "and I trust that I also (or, even I) have the spirit of God." I entirely agree with this judicious commentator, on the general force of the expression, which seems to have been similarly understood by *Theoph.*, our venerable *Eng. Trs.*, also *Han.* and *Ros.* Indeed the phrase, *kata ten emen gnomen*, "ought to have prevented any misapprehension of the apostle's meaning, since it is," as *Pa'*, truly remarks, "a formula of one modestly interpreting his judgment concerning a thing;" of which philological commentators give several examples.' BLOOMF.

NOTES. CHAP. VIII. V. 1. 'Tillotson, Pearce, Wets., Sanr., Markl., Noess., Ros., Krause, and most recent intrpr., consider the words "we know we all have knowledge," as an extract from the letter of the Corinthians, to which Paul answers in the following words: "Knowledge," &c. And so again at v. 4-6. "we know that—by Him," to which P. answers: "Howbeit," &c. And again at v. 8. "But meat—the worse," to which P. answers "But take heed," &c. And so also [282]

CHAP. VIII. V. 1-3. The apostle comes here to the case of things that had been offered to idols, concerning which some had sought satisfaction. For better understanding, it must be observed, that it was a custom among the heathens, to make feasts on their sacrifices; and not only to eat themselves, but invite their friends to partake with them. These were usually kept in the temple, where the sacrifice was offered, v. 10. and if anything were left when the feast ended, it was usual to carry away a portion to their friends; what remained, after all, belonging to the priest, who sometimes sold it in the markets. See *ch. 10:25*. Nay, feasts, as *Athenæus* informs us, were always accounted, among the heathen, sacred and religious things, so that they were wont to sacrifice before all their feasts; and it was accounted a very profane thing among them, to eat at their private tables any meat, whereof they had not first sacrificed on such occasions.

In this circumstance of things, while Christians lived among idolaters, and had occasion to eat at their tables, what should they do, if anything that had been sacrificed should be set before them? What, if they should be invited to feast with them in their temples? It seems some of the Corinthians were got into an opinion, that even this might be done, because they knew an idol was nothing in the world, v. 4. The apostle seems here to argue on supposition of their being right in this thought, against their abuse of their liberty, to the prejudice of others; but plainly condemns such liberty in *ch. 10*. He introduces his discourse with some remarks about knowledge, that seem to carry in them a censure of such pretences to knowledge as I have mentioned; *We know*, says he, *that we all have knowledge*, v. 1. as if he had said, We who abstain, know as much as you of the vanity of idols, and that they are nothing; but we know too, that the liberty you take is very culpable, and that even lawful liberty must be used with charity, and not to the prejudice of weaker brethren. *Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth*, v. 1. Note, The preference of charity to conceited knowledge. True love, and tender regard to our brethren, will put us on consulting their interest, and acting, as may be for their edification. Observe, There is no more common evidence of ignorance than a conceit of knowledge, v. 2. He that knows most, best understands his own ignorance, and the imperfection of

human knowledge. It is one thing to know truth, and another to know it as we ought; so as duly to improve our knowledge. Much may be known, when nothing is known to any good purpose; when neither ourselves nor others are the better for our knowledge. *But*, adds the apostle, *if any man love God, the same is known of God*. If any man love God, and is thereby influenced to love his neighbor, the same is known of God; i. e. as some understand it, is made by Him to know, is taught of God; or, as others, shall be approved of God; He will accept him, and have pleasure in him. The charitable person is most likely to have God's favor. They who love God, and for his sake love their brethren, are likely to be beloved of God: and how much better is it, to be approved of God, than to have a vain opinion of ourselves!

V. 4-6. In this passage, he shows the vanity of idols; the form of expression in the original, is elliptical, but the meaning in the general is, that heathen idols have no divinity in them; therefore in the O. T. they are commonly called *lies and vanities, or lying vanities*. They are mere imaginary gods, many of them no better than imaginary beings; they have no power to pollute the creatures of God, and thereby render them unfit to be eaten by a child or servant of God, 1 Tim. 4:3.

*And there is no other God but one.* Note, The unity of the Godhead is a fundamental principle in Christianity, and in all right religion; for there is no other God but one. Others may be called gods, but they are falsely thus called. The heathens had many such, some in heaven, and some on earth; celestial deities, and terrestrial ones, men made into gods, to mediate for men with the former, and deputed by them to preside over earthly affairs; in Scripture commonly called *Baalim*. But all their divinity and mediation were imaginary. For, 1. *To us there is but one God*, says the apostle; not one God to govern one part of mankind, or one rank and order of men, and another to govern another. One God that made all, and therefore has power over all. All things are of Him, and we, and all things else, are for Him. Called the *Father*, here, not in contradistinction to the other persons of the sacred Trinity, and to exclude them from the Godhead, but in contradistinction to all creatures that were made by God, and whose formation is attributed to each of these three in other places of Scripture, and not appro-

(adds *Markland*) 6:12,15. 7:1. 10:23. But the ancient comtr. do not countenance this hypothesis, which seems too bold, leads to more difficulties than it removes, and is not necessary. *BL. Knowledge.* 'That all idols were *exceedingly vain*, and which they carefully concealed from the middle and lower ranks of mankind.' MACKN.

(2.) Any who conceitedly pretends *thoroughly* to know a science, or doctrine, or rests in his knowledge without putting it in practice, has advanced but little in true moral or physical knowledge, each step onward of which must be attended with humility and a compassion of ignorance; for those who think they have nothing to learn, learn nothing; and God's revealed and natural laws both favor, v. 3. and reward this modest, obedient, fruitful state of mind, with progressive knowledge and happiness. See *Jn. 7:17*. ED.

V. 4-6. The Lord Jesus cannot here be spoken of, in respect of his original nature, as if inferior to the Father, any more than in those texts, which more directly speak of his mediatorial Person, character, office, and authority. *Jn. 14:27,28*. The One God, even the Father, signifies the Godhead, as the sole object of all religious worship; and the Lord Jesus Christ denotes the Person of Emmanuel, 'God manifest in the flesh,' One with the Father, and One with us, the appointed Mediator, and Lord of all; through whom we come to the Father, and through whom the Father communicates all blessings to us, by the operations of the Holy Spirit. So that this passage proves, that Christ the Mediator is the Object of our worship, as One with the Father and the Spirit, in the unity of the Godhead; and as opposed to all others to whom divine adoration was rendered, or by whom it was claimed; or to whom it has since been abundantly and idolatrously rendered by professed Christians. *Col. 2:18-20*. 'For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father.' *Communion Service*. None essentially holy, no creature the object of worship, as Mediator, none else exalted, with the Holy Ghost, in the glory of 'God the Father,' except Jesus Christ. *John 5:24-29. Phil. 2:9-11*. This, at the Reformation, was a noble protest against the worship of saints and angels, as mediators, by the papists. The Gentiles generally acknowledged one Supreme Deity; but they surrounded him with such a group of inferior gods and demigods that he seemed lost, or neglected in the crowd. Thus it has been in



6 But to us <sup>1</sup> there is but one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we <sup>k</sup> in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom <sup>1</sup> are all things, and we by him.

7 Howbeit *there is* not in every man that knowledge: for some, with conscience of the idol unto this hour, eat *it* as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

8 But meat <sup>m</sup> commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat, <sup>n</sup> are we the better; neither if we eat not, <sup>o</sup> are we the worse.

9 But take heed, lest by any means this <sup>p</sup> liberty <sup>q</sup> of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be <sup>r</sup> emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

12 But <sup>s</sup> when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

<sup>j</sup> Mal. 2:10. <sup>k</sup> Ep. 4.6. <sup>l</sup> Jn. 1:3. <sup>m</sup> Ro. 14:17. <sup>n</sup> or, have we the more. <sup>o</sup> or, have we the less. <sup>p</sup> or, power. <sup>q</sup> Ro. 14:13, 20. <sup>r</sup> Ga. 5:13. <sup>s</sup> edified. <sup>t</sup> Mat. 25:40, 45.

riated to the Father alone. God the Father, as the first Person in the Godhead, stands here for the Deity, which yet comprehends all three. 2. There is to us but one Lord, one Mediator between God and men, even

corrupted Christian church, in respect of 'the One living and true God,' and the 'One Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.' Though acknowledged in words, they have been and are so surrounded by angels and saints, as mediators and objects of religious worship, that the peculiar honor both of the Father, and of Christ 'the Head,' has been and still is given almost entirely to creatures.

(5.) *Heaven, &c.*] 'An allusion to the heathen classification of gods into *celestial* and *terrestrial*.' MACKN. 'In *heaven*, the sun, moon, and stars, on *earth* deified mortals.' Bloomf. 'Many by heathen custom were called *kurioti, domini, baalim* [lords]. In Syria, there were as many as of regions, nay, of cities, almost.' Ros. 'The title first of demigods, then of tutelary deities, was at length given to *men*, as Hercules, &c. and at last to kings, princes, and nobles.' BL. But this is little more than a theory, note, end of Jer. 46.

V. 7—13. Christians, who were matured in knowledge and judgment, knew indeed that an idol was the senseless representative of a nominal deity, which had no existence. But not every professed Christian, no, nor every true believer, had 'that knowledge;' so that some of them, even to that time, ventured to eat of the idol sacrifices, who retained a superstitious regard to the supposed invisible object of worship. They had an impression on their minds, through an association of ideas not easily dissolved, that they were joining in an idolatrous sacrifice; and thus 'their consciences being weak were defiled.' They [who had knowledge] ought therefore to be far more cautious and circumspect, in using what they considered as their liberty and privilege; and not to act in such a self-confident and imprudent manner, as tended to seduce those into sin, who were weak and unconfirmed in the faith. The word tr. 'emboldened,' is lit. 'edified;' (Marg.) and thus the apostle intimated, that, instead of edifying their weaker brethren, 'in their most holy faith,' by their example and endeavors, they were confirming them in the superstitious regard, which in some degree they still retained for idols; and even inducing them to join in those idolatrous rites, by which the worshippers had 'fellowship with devils.' Thus their knowledge, of which they made so ostentatious a display, directly tended to the ruin of 'those for whom Christ died;' and, whatever might be the event, through the special grace of God preventing the fatal consequence, yet, by thus giving a wound, mortal in its nature, to a member of Christ's mystical body, they committed a very heinous sin against the Savior Himself; which would not pass without severe rebukes.—The word 'weak' often means *sick or diseased*; and some learned men explain these vs. not of a *doubting* conscience, but of an *erroneous* conscience; i. e. not of one, who ate, though he *doubted* the lawfulness of so doing; but of one, who *erroneously* thought he might lawfully partake of the sacrifices, with some degree of regard to the idol, and in expectation of some advantage to himself or family. Rom. 14:19—23. And, indeed, considering the inveterate habits of such as had been brought up, and perhaps grown old in idolatry, and likewise the corrupt state of the Corinthian church, it is not unlikely, that some professed Christians retained a hankering after their former usages; especially, as feasting with their neighbors and relations, on these occasions, would in part exempt them from reproach and persecution. The apostle, however, by 'a weak brother,' seems particularly to mean the man with a *doubting* conscience; not him with the *erroneous* one, at least, not ex-

Jesus Christ. Not many mediators, as the heathen imagined, but one only, by whom all things were created, and do consist, and to whom all our hope and happiness are owing. The Man Christ Jesus; but a Man in personal union with the Divine Word, or God the Son. This very Man hath God made both Lord and Christ, Acts 2:36. It is the great privilege of us Christians, that we know the true God, and true Mediator between God and man: *the true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent*, John 17:3.

V. 7—13. The apostle, having granted, and indeed confirmed, the opinion of some among the Corinthians, that idols were nothing, proceeds now to show them, that their inference from this assumption was not just, namely, That therefore they might go into the idol-temple, and eat of the sacrifices, and feast there with their heathen neighbors. And here he,

1. Informs them, that every Christian man at that time, was not so fully convinced and persuaded that an idol was nothing, v. 7. Though they were converts to Christianity, and professed the true religion, they were not perfectly cured of the old leaven, but retained an unaccountable respect for the idols they had worshipped before: and so *their conscience being weak, was defiled*; they contracted guilt; they ate out of respect to the idol, with an imagination that it had something divine in it, and so committed idolatry: whereas the design of the Gospel was, to turn men from dumb idols to the living God. This seems to be the sense of the place; though some understand it of weak Christians defiling themselves, by eating what was offered to an idol, with an apprehension, that thereby it became unclean, and made *them* so in a moral sense, who should eat it; every one not having a knowledge that the idol was nothing, and therefore that it could not render what was offered to it, in this sense, unclean. We should

be careful to do nothing that may occasion weak Christians to defile their consciences.

II. He tells them, that mere eating or drinking had nothing in them virtuous or criminal, nothing that could make them better or worse, pleasing or displeasing to God, v. 8. It looks as if some of the Corinthians made a merit of their eating what had been offered to idols, and that in their very temples too, v. 10. because it plainly showed that they thought the idols nothing. But eating or drinking are in themselves actions indifferent. Flesh offered to idols, may in itself be as proper for food as any other; and the bare eating, or forbearing to eat, has no virtue in it. It is a gross mistake, to think that distinction of food will make any distinction between men in God's account.

III. He cautions them against abusing the liberty they thought they had in this matter. For that they mistook it, and had no allowance to sit at meat in the idol's temple, seems plain from ch. 10:20, &c. But he argues here, that even on supposition they had such power, they must be cautious how they use it; it might be a *stumbling-block to the weak*, v. 9. it might occasion their falling into idolatrous actions, perhaps their falling off from Christianity, and revolting again to heathenism. Such an occasion of falling they should be careful not to lay before their weak brethren, whatever liberty or power they themselves had.

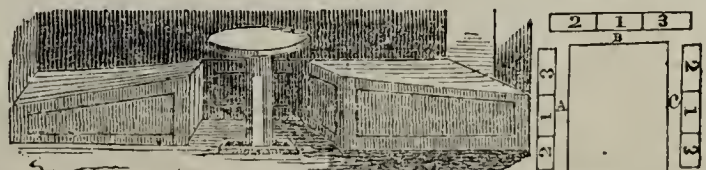
This caution he backs with two considerations; 1. The danger that might accrue to weak brethren, even those weak brethren for whom Christ died, v. 11. Those whom Christ hath redeemed with his most precious blood, should be very precious and dear to us. That man has very little of the spirit of a Redeemer, who had rather his brother should perish, than himself be abridged, in any respect, of his liberty. 2. The hurt done to them, Christ takes as done to Himself,

clusively.—(3) *The better.*] Dr. Whitby, after endeavoring to refute the argument, which some drew from these vs. against conformity to the ceremonies of the church of England, because they doubted the lawfulness of so doing, makes the following important remark: 'Nevertheless, this seemeth to press hard on them, who believe that the schism of such weak persons, will finally tend to their ruin, and render them exiles from the flock of Christ; and yet, for things indifferent, will, in this dreadful sense, cause their weak brother to offend;... since this they do for that, "which commends them not to God," which doing they "are not the better, or omitting they are not the worse." (8) For if schism and idolatry be equally damning sins, and equally "cause my brother to offend," and him to perish for whom "Christ died;" we are equally to take heed in both cases, lest our power to do the thing indifferent, become "a stumbling-block to the weak," or the erroneous in their judgment of these things. For let men imagine what other difference they please in the case, while the sad issue or event is in general the same, to wit, the perishing of my brother, and my power to have abstained from that, which through his erroneous conscience gave occasion to it, is the same, I fear the guilt will be the same.' This cannot easily be answered, by those who think non-conformity a fatal schism, and yet require things allowedly indifferent as terms of conformity. Rom. 14:13—18. v. 14.

(7.) *Conscience.*] 'But some in the consciousness, or secret opinion (so the word Eccl. 10:20. 1 Cor. 10:28, 29. 2 Cor. 4:2. 5:11) of the idol, as being something (i. e. a real being, or a representation of one), even yet eat of the food, as if of food offered to some really existing demon; and their perception of right and wrong being weak, and ill-informed, their conscience is defiled, and they feel self-condemned.' BL. See *Waylout*, on *injuring conscience*. How careful, on the other hand, should teachers be, not to make that matter of conscience which is not, as did the Pharisees, Mat. 23:4. Comp. Rom. 14:23.

(8.) 'But why occasion this inconvenience? The great God does not so much esteem a man for being, or disapprove of him for not being, superior to such little scruples; but the tenderness of his conscience, together with the zeal and charity of his heart, are the grand qualities He regards.'

(9, 10.) *Liberty.*] Licenc. See BL. *Sit at meat.*] *Katakimenon*; a word appropriated to the *reclining* at meals, common, as some other customs, to the Greeks with the Orientals. The cut is of a *trictinium*, disclosed among the ruins of the Grecian colony of Pompeii, buried



about this time by the ashes of Vesuvius. A is the highest seat at table, B the second, C the third. The middle of each seat is the most honorable. See figures. *Temple.*] *Eivoleion*: comp. the *Romesseion*, cut, 1 K. 7:2.



18 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

## CHAP. IX.

1 He sheweth his liberty, 7 and that the minister ought to live by the Gospel: 15 yet that himself hath of his own accord abstained, 18 to be either chargeable unto them, 22 or offensive unto any, in matters indifferent. 24 Our life is like unto a race.

AM I not an apostle? am I not free? have not I seen a Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work<sup>b</sup> in the Lord?

2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

3 Mine answer to them that do examine me is this;

4 Have we not power to eat and to drink?

5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a<sup>c</sup> wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

t c. 9:22. a Ac. 9:3,17. b c. 4:15. c or, woman.

v. 12. Injuries done to Christians, are injuries to Christ; especially to weak Christians; and, most of all, involving them in guilt; wounding their conscience, is wounding Him. He has a particular care of the lambs and flock, Is. 40:11. Strong Christians should be very careful to avoid what will offend weak ones, or lay a stumbling-block in their way.

PRACT. OBS. Satan as effectually injures some men's souls, by tempting them to be proud of their intellectual powers, as he does those of others, by alluring them to the grossest sensualities. Without holy affections and divine love, all human knowledge is worthless, and far beneath the attainments of apostate angels; but sanctifying affections, and humble, grateful love, are not only evidences of the Lord's merciful acceptance, but are important steps to a 'good understanding in the way of godliness.' The proud speculator is probably at the top of his attainments: but the loving disciple, though comparatively ignorant, shall daily be edified and make progress in heavenly wisdom; so that he shall be abundantly enriched from the fulness of Christ.—If our evidence of conversion is clear and decisive, and our views distinct and satisfactory, let us bless God for the consolation; but let us not suppose that this measure of knowledge and assurance is vouchsafed to all believers, or that we are 'better' in ourselves, or more beloved of God, than our weaker brethren, the younger children of the same family. Let us beware of self-preference on any pretence, and vainglory, and self-indulgence; and of despising those who are disquieted by needless scruples; who, though less comfortable, may perhaps serve God more conscientiously and humbly than we do. Rom. 14:2—12. Such Christians

(13.) 'Paul does not say, if my brother take reasonable cause of offence, but if he take offence any how; and not only, I will not eat idolothya [idol-offerings], but no meat at all; and not for a day or two, but, for all my life; and not merely that I may not destroy, but not even scandalize.'

NOTES. CHAP. IX. V. 1—3. Some expositors think, that the apostle here began a new subject; and entered on a formal vindication of his conduct among the Corinthians; but he appears rather to have digressed a little from his main subject, in order to illustrate it by his own example, and in different ways; and accordingly he resumed and concluded it in the next ch. 2:7—13. 10:15—33.—He had before declared his readiness to deny himself 'the eating of flesh for ever,' rather than 'stumble his weak brother;' and he here proceeded to show what he had actually done in this respect, to promote the Gospel. But in order to state this clearly, it was necessary to prove his apostolical office, and that he had a right to a maintenance and other privileges in that character. The Lord, by employing his ministry for their conversion, had affixed his own seal to Paul's apostolical commission. For He certainly would not thus have attested a direct imposture. So that they were the last persons, who ought to have made a doubt of this; being themselves the seal and demonstration of it. Jn. 6:22—27. 2 Cor. 3:1—3. This therefore might serve as a brief but sufficient answer to those, who examined him concerning the credentials of his commission.—(3) Mine answer, &c.] 'Namely, what is said in the preceding v. . . therefore this is improperly by some joined to the next v. . . He adds this by the way, as if he had said, So far should you be from doubting of my apostleship, that I am used to answer those, who call that in question, by declaring what the Lord hath by me done among you.' Beza.

(1.) Free.] 'He speaks of apostolical liberty. Lightf. Seen Jesus.] Alluding to the supernatural vision, Acts 9:22. and often elsewhere, as Ae. 18:9. 24:10. He means to say, he is thus an eyewitness, which formed a material part of the apostolical character. So Lu. 1:2. 1 Cor. 15:18. Comp. Mt. 13:15. He had, too, seen Christ, not in his humiliation, but in his glory. 2 Cor. 12:1, &c.] BLOOMF.

(2.) Seal.] 'Sphragis; it meant, properly, the impression made by a seal; which, being affixed to writings, is a proof and evidence of their an-

IV. He enforces all with his own example, v. 13. He had such a value for the soul of his brother, that he would willingly deny himself in a matter of liberty, and forbear any particular food, which he might have lawfully eaten, and might like to eat, rather than lay a stumbling-block in a weak brother's way, and occasion him to sin, by following his example, without being clear in his mind whether it were lawful or no. We should be very tender of doing anything that may be an occasion of stumbling to others; though it may be innocent in itself. When it is certainly foreseen, that my doing what I may forbear, will occasion a fellow-Christian to do what he ought to forbear, I shall offend, scandalize, or lay a stumbling-block in his way; which to do is a sin, however lawful the thing itself be, which is done. And if we must be so careful not to occasion other men's sins, how careful should we be to avoid sin ourselves. If we must not endanger other men's souls, how much should we be concerned not to destroy our own.

CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. Blessed Paul, in the work of his ministry, not only met with opposition from those without, but discouragement from those within. It is no strange or new thing, for a minister to meet with very unkind returns for great good-will to a people, and diligent and successful services among them. Some among the Corinthians questioned, if they did not disown, his apostolical character. To their cavils he here answers, and in such a manner as to set forth himself as a remarkable example of that self-denial, for the good of others, which he had been recommending in the former chapter.

as 'have knowledge,' should also beware of abusing their liberty, and of approaching to the verge, or 'appearance, of evil,' lest by any means 'this liberty of theirs' should prove 'an occasion of stumbling others, and so of guilt to themselves. For, should a weak believer see one, who is repented to have knowledge, sitting at some of those feasts, or in some of those places of public concourse, for which many plead; (about ns plausibly as the Corinthians did in behalf of eating in the idol's temple;) might he not be tempted to do the same, though contrary to the convictions of his own conscience? And thus, through this man's proud knowledge, and carnal self-indulgence, would the soul of a weak believer 'for whom Christ died,' be endangered, and his conscience wounded; nay, many who were hopefully inquiring after salvation, may be, and doubtless are turned aside and utterly perish. How can men thus 'sin against their brethren,' and violate the law of love, without deeply offending Christ, and endangering their own souls also? What evidence can they have of being true Christians, seeing they act in a manner, which is directly contrary to the spirit of the apostle, who would 'have eaten no flesh to the end of life, rather than cause his weak brother to offend;' and to the mind of Him, who shed his precious blood, and poured out his dying prayers, for his misguided murderers? SCOTT.

thority. So that it comes, in the end, to signify, generally, a demonstration; as Plato, 135, cited by Krause.' BL. Cuts, Dan. 6:17. Ed. (3.) Evamine.] 'Anakrinousin: a forensic term, used on purpose to hint the arrogance of those who questioned his divine mission.' BL.

V. 4, 5. The words 'a sister, a wife' are so determinate, that they leave no doubt, that several of the apostles were married, and took their wives with them to those places, where they more stately resided. To render them 'a sister, a woman,' as some do, would form an unmeaning tautology, or rather one calculated to mislead the reader; for, 'a sister' must be a woman; and the latter word would be wholly redundant, if it were not intended to show in what relation she was supposed to stand; namely, that of 'a wife,' according to the general acceptation of the word. 'This declares in effect, that Peter continued to live with his wife after he became an apostle; and also that Peter had no rights as an apostle, which were not common to Paul. A remark utterly subversive of popery, if traced to its obvious consequences.' Doddr.—'Clemens of Alexandria not only saith, that he that marrieth hath the apostles as examples, and that Peter carried his wife with him till his martyrdom, but confutes the encaies of matrimony from these words. . . Adding, that they carried about their wives, not as wives, but as sisters, to minister to those who were mistresses of families, that so the doctrine of the Lord might, without any apprehension, or evil suspicions, enter into the apartments of the women.' Whitby. ['Thus they were made serviceable to the conversion or catechetical instruction of females, to whom, according to the accustomed forms both of Grecian and Oriental society, the apostles would have little opportunity of seeing. Vid. Suicer.' BL. Modern missionaries judiciously take wives with them. Er.] The former part of this quotation [from Clem. Alex.] shows what the records or traditions of the church in the second century were; the latter is a proof how soon antichristian notions about marriage began to prevail. SCOTT.

(1.) Power.] 'I. e. right; it was originally granted to the apostles by Christ, Mk. 10:7. The Jews (see Ros.) permitted their teachers to receive a provision from all who were able and willing to supply it. Krause too observes, it was the custom of all nations of antiquity, that the publicly constituted teachers of religion should be supported by the contributions of those whom they instructed.' BLOOMF.



6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we <sup>d</sup> power to forbear working?

7 Who goeth a warfare <sup>e</sup> any time at his own charges? who planteth <sup>f</sup> a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth <sup>g</sup> a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

9 For it is written <sup>h</sup> in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

10 Or saith he <sup>i</sup> altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, <sup>j</sup> this is written: that he <sup>k</sup> that plougheth should plough in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

11 If <sup>l</sup> we have sown unto you spiritual things, <sup>m</sup> is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

12 If others be partakers of <sup>n</sup> this power over you, <sup>o</sup> are not we rather? Nevertheless <sup>p</sup> we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

13 Do ye not know, that they which minister about holy things <sup>q</sup> live of the things of the temple? and they <sup>r</sup> which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

14 Even so hath the Lord <sup>s</sup> ordained, that they <sup>t</sup> which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

15 But I <sup>u</sup> have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for <sup>v</sup> it were better for me to die than that any man should make my glorying void.

d 2 Th. 3:8,9. e 1 Ti. 1:18. f De. 20:6. Pr. 27:18. g 1 Pe. 5:2. h De. 25:4. i Ti. 5:18. j Ro. 15:27. k 2 Co. 11:7-9, 12:14. l or, feed. m Nu. 18:8, &c. De. 18:1. n Lu. 10:7. o Ga. 6:6. p Ac. 20:34. q 2 Co. 11:10.

maintenance for his wife, nay, and his children too, if he had any, from the churches, without laboring with his own hands to procure it, v. 6.

II. He proceeds, by several arguments, to prove his claim. 1. From the common practice and expectations of mankind. Those who addict and give themselves up to any way of business in the world, expect to live out of it, soldiers, husbandmen, and shepherds, v. 7. It is very natural, and very reasonable, for ministers to expect a livelihood out of their labors. 2. He argues it out of the Jewish law, v. 8. Is this merely a dictate of common reason, and according to common usage only? No, it is also consonant to the old law. God had therein ordered, that the ox should not be muzzled, or hindered from eating, while he was preparing the corn for man's use, and treading it out of the ear. But this law was not chiefly given out of God's regard to oxen, or concern for them, but to teach mankind, that all due encouragement should be given to them who are employed by us, or laboring for our good; that the laborers should taste of the fruit of their labors, v. 10. The law saith this about oxen for our sakes. They that lay themselves out to do our souls good, should not have their mouths muzzled, but have food provided for them. 3. He argues from common equity, v. 11. What they had sown was much better than they expected to reap. Those who enjoy spiritual benefits by the ministry of the Word, should not grudge a maintenance to such as are employed in this work. If they have received a real benefit, one would think they could not grudge them this. What, get so much good by them, and yet grudge to do so little good to them! Is this grateful or equitable? 4. He argues from the maintenance they afforded others, v. 12. You allow others this maintenance, and confess their claim just; but who has so just a claim as I from the church of Corinth? 'Nevertheless,' says the apostle, 'we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ.' We have not insisted on our right, but have rather been in straits, to serve the interests of the Gospel, and promote the salvation of souls. He denied himself, for fear of giving offence; yet claims his right, lest his self-denial should prove prejudicial to the ministry. Note, He is likely to plead most effectually for the rights of others, who

shows a generous disregard to his own. It is plain, in this case, that justice, and not self-love is the principle by which he is acted.

5. He argues from the old Jewish establishment, v. 13. 'And if the Jewish priesthood was maintained out of the holy things that were then offered, shall not Christ's ministers have a maintenance out of their ministry?' 6. He asserts it to be the institution of Christ, v. 14. It is the people's duty to maintain their minister, by Christ's appointment, though it be not a duty bound on every minister to call for or accept it. He may waive his right, as Paul did, without being a sinner; but they transgress an appointment of Christ, who deny or withhold it.

V. 15-18. He had, notwithstanding, waived his privilege, and lays down his reason.

I. He tells them he had neglected to claim his right in times past, v. 15. He neither ate nor drank himself at their cost, nor led about a wife to be maintained by them, nor forbore working to maintain himself. From others he received a maintenance, but not from them, for some special reasons. Nor did he write this, to make his claim now; He asserts his right, yet does not claim his due; but denies himself for their sakes, and the Gospel.

II. He assigns the reason of his exercising this self-denial. He would not have his glorying made void, v. 15. This glorying implied nothing of boasting, or self-conceit, or catching at applause, but a high degree of satisfaction and comfort. It was a singular pleasure to him to preach the Gospel without making it burdensome; and he was resolved, that among them he would not lose this satisfaction. His advantages for promoting the Gospel were his glory, and he valued them above his rights, or his very life; Better for him to die than to have it justly said, he preferred his wages to his work. It is the glory of a minister, to prefer the success of his ministry to his interest, and deny himself, that he may serve Christ and save souls. Not that in so doing he does more than he ought; he is still acting within the bounds of the law of charity. But he acts on truly noble principles, he brings much honor to God in so doing; and those that honor Him He will honor. It is what God will approve and commend; what a man may value himself for, and take comfort in, though he cannot make a merit of it before God.

V. 6. The apostle further inquired, whether he 'and Barnabas' alone were excluded from the right of being supported, without earning their bread by labor. These two eminently useful servants of Christ were called to the apostolical office, after the ascension of Christ; and went forth together 'to preach among the Gentiles.' Acts 13:14. The circumstances in which they found themselves, probably, led them to adopt the method of subsisting by their own manual labor, in order to promote the Gospel; and they both persevered in it after they separated. Acts 15:36-41. But the other apostles, beginning their ministry among the Jews, who had been used to support their teachers, were generally maintained by them without working; and were supplied when they journeyed to other places, where churches had not been planted. Thus Paul and Barnabas, by not requiring a support, seemed to have lost their right to one; and were generally left to labor, and struggle with difficulties and necessities, for want of adequate assistance.—This view of these vs. renders their connexion with the foregoing ch. very clear. The apostle was preparing to show the Corinthians; how he waived the exercise of his liberty, in order to do good; that they might see, as in a glass, the impropriety of their selfish exercise of their liberty, 'in eating the things offered unto idols.' 13-18. 3:7-13. Acts 12:1-6. 20:32-35. 2 Cor. 11:1-6. 12:11-15. SEOTT.

V. 7-12. Had the Corinthians objected, as some suppose, that Paul, by not receiving a maintenance, seemed to allow that he was not an apostle; it would have been needless for him formally to prove himself entitled to it; but this was absolutely necessary, if he meant tacitly to instruct them by his example, to give up the self-indulgent exercise of their Christian liberty, or privilege, from love to their brethren. 1-3. 8:7-13.—Chrysostom and Theophylact observe, that he saith not, Who goeth to warfare, and is not rich? Who plants a vineyard, and heaps not up gold of the fruits of it? Who feeds a flock, and makes not a merchandise of the sheep? Teaching us, that the spiritual pastor should be content with little, and seek only what is necessary, not what is superfluous. Whitby.—If then other pastors, and even the false teachers at Corinth, had been allowed to partake of this privilege, or authority over them, much more was this due to the apostle and his helpers, who first preached the Gospel among them. Nevertheless, they had not availed themselves of this undoubted right; but had chosen to endure unceasing labor, pinching want, and every extremity, 'lest they should give any hindrance to the Gospel of Christ,' and prevent its suc-

cess. Yet after all, the Corinthians would not abridge themselves of the indulgence of a luxurious meal, out of love to their weaker brethren! This is evidently the contrast intended; and a most striking contrast it was.—(9) Thou shalt not muzzle, &c.] Exactly from LXX.—(8) As a man.] See on 3:3.—'This phrase in the N. T. doth always signify, to speak, and act, and live, after the manner of a mere natural man, not acting by the guidance of divine wisdom, or not assisted by the Holy Spirit.' Whitby.

(7.) Charges.] Roman soldiers received rations, clothing, and money, so much per month. See Adam. At first it was disgraceful with the Greeks to receive military pay, but after Pericles introduced it, it became the custom of the commonwealth. Even whole troops of Grecians, too, served foreign states for pay. See Potter. The Egyptians (the model-nation of antiquity) maintained their soldiers at the public expense, note, Ez. 30: end. Milk.] So the shepherds of the E., of Ethiopia, and of modern Greece are paid; see Bush. Ep.

(8-10.) Muzzle.] Note, Deut. 25:4. The precept is still generally observed in the E. The ancients had 4 kinds of threshing. See Schoett. 'Doth God by this [precept] mean (only) to consult for the good of oxen (and not of men also)?' Bl. Rather, 'Doth God take care of oxen only?' (Mackn.) yea, much more doth He care for men. 'Altogether.] 'Rather, especially; i. e. may not men learn much from this example? Should.] Ought to. . . And he that reapeth ought to partake of (the fruits of) his hope. Paul means to say, If this be true of men, i. e. of all who labor for the good of others, it is still more so of ministers of the Gospel.' Bl. Ep.

V. 13-18. The O. T. is replete in every part with instructions to us at this day, though no one thinks of obeying the ceremonial law.—Probably, he [Paul] had witnessed some things in the disposition of the Corinthian Christians, which first induced him to decline receiving any support from them. What had passed since he left them still more confirmed him in his purpose; he thought himself unkindly used by them, and in this way only would he show them his sense of their misconduct. 2 Cor. 11:7-12. 12:11-21. He knew that the false teachers wanted an occasion against him; but this disinterestedness gave him an advantage over them; and it was very important that his example should be contrasted with their conduct, which could not otherwise so properly have been done. For he had been called to this ministry in so singular a manner, that 'a necessity was laid upon him,' and he could not decline



16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel.

17 For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.

18 What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge; that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

[Practical Observations.]

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

r Je. 1:17. 20:9. u Ac. 16:3. 2 Co. 11:29.  
s Col. 1:25. 21:23-26. x c. 10:33.  
t Ro. 1:14. v c. 7:22. y Ro. 11:14.  
Ga. 5:13. w Ro. 15:1.

III. He shows that this self-denial was more honorable in itself, and yielded him much more content and comfort, than his preaching did, v. 16. It is my charge, my business, the work for which I am constitu-

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-18. When the Lord hears the prayers of his ministers, and blesses their labors in the conversion of sinners, He sets his seal to their commission. This should satisfy conscientious ministers in respect to their own call to the work, and be deemed a sufficient proof to others, especially to those converted by them; though no occasional usefulness will prove an unholy man to be a real Christian, or a self-confident boaster to be a 'faithful steward of the mysteries of God.'—Though ministers may see good, in some circumstances, to labor for their bread, they have an undoubted right to a decent maintenance for themselves and families; nor ought they, who reap the spiritual benefit of the minister's labors, to yield a proportion of their temporal goods, as if it were an *alms*, or a great favor conferred on him. How should it be expected that men will give up the prospect of lucrative employments, and creditable professions, to engage in this warfare; if they cannot do it in hope of living by their profession? How can they face the dangers and endure the hardships of ploughing up the fallow ground, by preaching to the ignorant, careless, and profligate, if pinching want be their only prospect, however diligent and successful they may be? Or how can they minister to the comfort and edification of

the service, or execute it unfaithfully, without incurring the heaviest condemnation. If indeed he had, without an express command, (having previously embraced the Gospel,) deliberately and willingly engaged in the work of the ministry, from love to Christ and to the souls of sinners, and zeal for the glory of God, he might have been assured of a gracious and abundant recompense. But, as he was so wonderfully arrested, when violently persecuting the church, and entrusted with a dispensation, or *stewardship*, without any previous choice or willingness; a line of conduct of a peculiar nature was requisite for him, in order to show that he was not actuated by slavish fear, or mercenary principles. Acts 9:1-22. For, if this had been the case, where would have been his reward? Mat. 6:1-5, 16-18. Or, how could he, in his peculiar circumstances, distinguish himself from mercenary teachers, and thus have ground of glorying, through the grace of God, in this distinction? Or how might he possess the assurance of a gracious reward? Truly, by preaching the Gospel freely, without putting his hearers to any expense; and by enduring poverty, hunger, and labor, rather than make an inexpedient and improper use of his liberty and privilege, as an apostle of Christ. Thus he evidenced, that he acted from the genuine principles of zeal and love, and so enjoyed much comfort and assurance of hope in his own soul.—Let it here be carefully noted, that for ministers of religion to insist on their due, and use their liberty, when this hinders their usefulness, is to 'abuse their power in the Gospel.' 7:29-31. SCOTT.

(13.) Temple.] He does not say, live of the offerers, but of the temple; that neither the receivers should be ashamed, as being supported by men, nor the givers elated.

(15.) My boasting.] Better, 'that whercof I may well be proud.' BL.

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ted an apostle, ch. 1:17. a duty expressly bound on me, not in any degree a matter of liberty. Those who are set apart to the office of the ministry, have it in charge to preach the Gospel. Woe be to them, if they do not. From this none is excepted. But it is not given in charge to all, or any preacher of the Gospel, to do his work *gratis*, to preach, and have no maintenance out of it. When he renounces his right for the sake of the Gospel, and the souls of men, he waives his privilege and right; he does more than his charge and office in general, and at all times, obliges him to. Woe be to him, if he do not preach the Gospel; but it may sometimes be his duty to insist on his maintenance for so doing; and whenever he forbears to claim it, he parts with his right; though a man be bound to do so sometimes, by the general duties of love to God, and charity to men. It is a high attainment in religion, to renounce our own rights for the good of others; God will peculiarly recompense it. For,

IV. He informs us, that doing our duty with a willing mind, will meet with a gracious recompense from God, v. 17. Indeed, it is willing service only that is capable of reward from God. It is not the bare doing any duty, but the doing it heartily, willingly, and cheerfully, that God has promised to reward. They must preach willingly, who would be accepted of God in this duty. But whether the duty of the office be done willingly, or with reluctance; whether the heart be in it, or averse from it; all in office have a trust and charge from God, for which they must be accountable. Ministers have a dispensation of the Gospel, or *stewardship*, Luke 16:7. committed to them. Note, Christ's willing servants shall not fail of a recompense, and that proportioned to their fidelity, zeal, and diligence; and his slothful and unwilling servants shall all be called to an account. And how sad an account!

V. The apostle sums up the argument, by laying before them the encouraging hope he had of a large recompense for his remark-

able self-denial, v. 18. What is it I expect a recompense from God for? That when I preach the Gospel, I may make it without charge, that I abuse not my power in the Gospel. Or, not so to claim my rights, as to make them destroy the great intentions and ends of my office, but renounce them for the sake of those. It is an abuse of power, to employ it against the very ends for which it is given. And the apostle would never use his power, or privilege of being maintained by his ministry, so as to frustrate the ends of it, but would willingly and cheerfully deny himself for the honor of Christ, and the interest of souls. That minister who follows his example, may have cheerful expectations of a recompense.

V. 19-23. The apostle takes occasion, from what he had before discoursed, to mention some instances of his self-denial, and parting with his liberty for the benefit of others.

1. He asserts his liberty, v. 19. He was free-born, a citizen of Rome, in bondage to none, nor depended on any for his subsistence; [free also to assert and claim his right as an apostle;] yet he made himself a servant to all.

2. He specifies some particulars wherein he made himself a servant to all. He accommodated himself to all sorts of people. In innocent things he could comply with people's usages, or humors, for their advantage. He would transgress no laws of Christ, to please or humor any man; but he would accommodate himself to all men, where he might do it lawfully, to gain some. He was the apostle of the Gentiles, and so, one would have thought, might have excused himself from complying with the Jews; yet, to do them good, and win them over to Christ, he did, in innocent things, conform to some of their usages and laws. And though he might, by virtue of that character, have challenged authority over the Gentiles, yet he accommodated himself, as much as he innocently might, to their prejudices and ways of thinking. Doing good was the study and business of his life; and, so that he might

believers, when they are burdened with debts, destitute of necessaries, surrounded by indigent families, compelled to place their children in unsuitable situations, or driven themselves into other employments for bread? How can they but suspect, that their hearers are deceiving themselves, in professing to love Christ and the Gospel, while they enjoy plenty, and lay up for their children, yet leave their pastors to wear out their lives in distressing poverty?—On the other hand, it behooves ministers to be as disinterested as possible.—But if they, to whom a dispensation is given to preach the Gospel, and who act according to it, have no ground of glorying, because 'necessity is laid upon them, and woe is to them if they do not,' what will be the case of those, who willingly assume this office, and seek a designation to it, and then bestow no pains to preach the Gospel, or to preach at all; but only aim to appropriate to themselves, and to secure to their children, relatives, or dependents, as much as possible of those funds, which were established for the maintenance of such as 'labor in the Word and doctrine?' Woe! woe! to such 'idol-shepherds,' to such hireling priests; yea, to all who encourage and reward their unfaithfulness! Is. 56:9-12. Zech. 11:15-17. Mal. 1:9-11. SCOTT.

(16.) Necessity.] I. e. if I would avoid the penalty of disobedience. SCLATER.

(17.) 'Ekōn [tr. willingly] refers to his preaching gratuitously; and akōn [tr. against my will] to doing it for recompense.' See BL. Ed.

(18.) Reward.] I. c. cause of reward. See BL. Id.

V. 19-23. The preceding instance was not the only one, in which the apostle thus denied himself. Though he 'was free' from every obligation to comply with other men's inclinations, or to conform to their customs; yet he had voluntarily become as 'a slave to all men,' or to men of every nation, rank, or religious opinion; by renouncing all personal considerations, and bearing with their prejudices, mistakes, and infirmities, as far as he could consistently with his duty; in order that he might win over the more to the faith of Christ.—Nothing could be more suited to shame those whom he addressed, out of a selfish use of their liberty, than this statement of his own principles and conduct; or more strongly mark the surprising change which had taken place in him, since the time, when, by cruel persecution, he aimed to make all the Christians everywhere conform to his own sentiments and practice, in the great concerns of religion. SCOTT.

(20.) 'It is the part of a musician to put his instrument in tune, and of a wise and well instructed man to accommodate himself to every mind.' Demophilus. BL. See Prof. Park, on the 'mode of exhibiting the Truth,' Bib. Repos., No. 23. Ed.

(21, 22.) Without law.] I. e. not observing the Mosaic ceremonies. Weak.] Theoph. observes, Paul sometimes kept out of sight doctrines at which he thought his hearers might stumble. BL., whom see. Still, he could 'withstand' any 'to the face,' if needful. Id.



23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

z Ph. 2:16. 3:14. 2 Ti. 2:5. 1:12. 1 Pe. 5:4.  
1 Ti. 6:12. a 2 Ti. 4:8. Ja. Re. 2:10. 3:11.

reach this end, he did not stand on privileges and punctilios.

He was willing to make the best even of the weak, v. 22. He did not despise nor judge them, but became as one of them, forbore to use his liberty for their sake, and was careful to lay no stumbling-block in their way. He denied himself for their sakes, that he might insinuate into their affections, and gain their souls. In short, he became all things to all men, that he might by all means, all lawful means, gain some. He would not sin against God, to save the soul of his neighbor, but he would very cheerfully and readily deny himself. The rights of God he could not give up, but he might resign his own, and he very often did it for the good of others.

3. He assigns his reason, v. 23. This I do for the Gospel's sake, and that I might be partaker thereof with you; i. e. for the honor of Christ, whose the Gospel is, and for the salvation of souls, for which it was designed, and that he and they might communicate in the privileges of it, or partake together of them. For these ends did he thus condescend to deny himself as to his liberty, and accommodate himself to the capacities and usages of those with whom he had to do, where he lawfully might. Note, A heart warmed with zeal for God, and breathing after the salvation of men, will not plead and insist on rights and privileges

in bar to this design. They manifestly abuse their power in the Gospel, who employ it not to edification, but destruction, and therefore breathe nothing of its spirit.

V. 24—27. In these vs. the apostle hints at the great encouragement he had thus to act. He had a glorious prize, an incorruptible crown, in view. On this head, he compares himself to the racers and combatants in the Isthmian games, an allusion well known to the Corinthians, because they were celebrated in their neighborhood, v. 24. 'All run, at your games, but one only gets the race, and wins the crown.' And here he,

I. Excites them to their duty; 'So run, that ye may obtain.' It is quite otherwise in the Christian race than in your races; only one wins the prize in them, but in that you may all run, so as to obtain. You have great encouragement, therefore, to persist constantly, diligently, and vigorously, in your course. You cannot fail, if you run well. I make it my endeavor thus to run; so do you. No man ever more heartily pursued the prize in your Isthmian races, than I do after the recompense of the reward; so do you, as you see me go before you.' It is the duty of Christians to follow their ministers closely in the chase of eternal glory, and the honor and duty of ministers to lead them in the way.

II. He directs them in their course, by setting more fully to view his own example, still carrying on the allusion. 1. They that run in their games, were kept to a set diet, v. 25. 'The fighters and wrestlers in your exercises do not indulge themselves, but restrain themselves from the food they might eat, and so from the liberties they use on other occasions. And should not Christians much more abridge themselves of their liberty, for so glorious an end as winning the race, and obtaining the prize set before them? They used a very spare diet, and coarse food, and denied themselves much, to prepare for their race and combat; so do I; so should you, after my example. It is hard if, for the heavenly crown, you cannot abstain from heathen sacrifices.' 2. They were not only temperate, but inured themselves to hardships. They who fought with one another in these exercises, prepared

themselves by beating the air, as the apostle calls it, or by throwing out their arms, and thereby inuring themselves, beforehand, to deal about their blows in close combat, or brandish them by way of flourish. There is no room for any such exercise in the Christian warfare. Christians are ever in close combat; and for this reason they must never flag or faint in it. They must fight, not as those that beat the air, but must strive against their enemies, with all their might. One enemy the apostle here mentions, i. e. the body; by which we are to understand, fleshly appetites and inclinations. These the apostle set himself to curb and conquer, and in this the Corinthians were bound to imitate him. They who would aright pursue the interests of their souls, must keep under their bodies. They must combat hard with fleshly lusts, till they have subdued them; and not indulge a wanton appetite, and long for heathenish sacrifices, or eat them, to please their flesh, at the hazard of their brethren's souls. The body must be made to serve the mind, not suffered to lord over it.

III. The apostle presses this advice on the Corinthians, by proper arguments drawn from the same contenders. 1. They take pains, and undergo all those hardships, to obtain a corruptible crown, v. 25. but we an incorruptible. They who conquered in these games, were crowned only with the withering leaves or boughs of trees, of olive, hays, or laurel. But Christians have an incorruptible crown in view, a crown of glory that never fadeth away, an inheritance incorruptible, reserved in heaven for them. And would they yet suffer themselves to be outdone by these racers or wrestlers? 2. The racers in these games run at uncertainty; only one receives the prize, v. 24. so every racer is at a great uncertainty whether he shall win it or no. But every Christian racer may be sure of the prize, if he run within the lines, and keep to the path of duty prescribed, which, some think, is the meaning of running not as uncertainly, v. 26. And shall not then Christians be much more exact and vigorous? 3. He sets before himself and them the danger of yielding to fleshly inclinations, and pampering the body, and its lusts and appetites, v. 27. Lest by

(23, 24.) 'Of the 5 agōnes, viz. boxing, running, wrestling, leaping, and quoiting, Paul here alludes to the first two.' BL. See a description of the Grecian games at end of ch. Race.] Stadion. Prize.] Brabeion, as adjudged by the brabeutai: note, end of ch. Ed.

V. 24—27. This did not imply, that the apostle doubted of his acceptance, or perseverance; but it showed the Corinthians the nature of his assurance, and forcibly cautioned them not to rest in such hopes, as were consistent with indiscriminate self-indulgence, even in things lawful. He had abundant occasions and methods of thus 'keeping under his body, and bringing it into subjection,' without using the tortures, ansterities, and flagellations of the papists; while he willingly endured hunger, thirst, fatigue, and imprisonment, in preaching the Gospel; and was frequently 'in watchings, fastings,' and prayers, as well as habitually temperate in all things. 2 Cor. 6:3—10, 11:21—27.—The apostle seems designedly to contrast the continence and temperance of the heathen combatants, for a fading crown, with the luxurious self-indulgence of the Corinthian Christians, whom no motives, either taken from the good of their brethren, their own spiritual advantage, or the honor of the Gospel, could induce to deny themselves the gratification of a sensual feast.—'The body' seems here to be meant literally.—The depraved nature, 'the body of sin and death,' must be crucified as a malefactor; Rom. 6:5—7, 7:22—25, 8:12, 13, Gal. 5:22—26. but 'the body,' or animal frame, the exquisite workmanship of the great Creator, needs only, by wholesome and sometimes sharp discipline, to be brought under, and kept under, as a well educated child. The unsuccessful racers, or pugilists, in the public games, at most, were only exposed to some transient disgrace, while their other comforts remained to them; but in the Christian conflict, there is no alternative between the incorruptible crown, and everlasting shame and misery.

SCOTT.

(25.) Corruptible, i. e. fading crown.] 'That gained at the Olympian games was of olive; at the Pythian, of laurel; at the Nemean, of parsley; at the Isthmian, of pine leaves, then of dry and withered, not fresh parsley, afterwards of pine again.'

POTTER.

(26, 27.) Uncertainly.] 'For, at uncertainty, as if the result were doubtful, the victory dimly seen and dubious. So Theod., Vulg., Beza, Luther, Ham., Wells, Elsn., Wolf, Kypke, Hardy, Ros., Schl., Kr., St., &c. Elsn. quotes Lucian, and Kr., Xen., and compares Gal. 2:2. The [full] phrase [epi to aiēlō] is frequent in the best Gr. writers. Beating the air.] Either in private exercise, or as a prelude to the contest, or in the contest, missing their aim, which last Paul seems to mean. See Faber, Kyōke.' BL. He would fight with himself, his body, his animal or lower propensities, 'not striking one empty, or useless blow.' Ed. Keep under.] 'Lit. strike under the eye, or gills; fibbing, I think pugilists call

it. Now as this kind of hitting is especially punishing (to use another technical term) to the adversary, and daunts and subdues him, so the Gr. came at length to mean treat with severity and harshness; subdue any one's spirit; so here it denotes repress and subdue evil inclinations, and bring the disposition under the dominion of virtue and religion. The agonistical metaphor concludes at the words "subjection." BL. 'This passage, in which the strong and continued exertions necessary for restraining fleshly appetites are described, being plainly metaphorical, the papists have erred in interpreting it literally, and in founding on the lit. sense their fastings and scourgings, and bodily penances, whose influence, it is well known, is to nourish [gloom and] superstition, and to make the pretended penitent careless of real holiness; but by no means to weaken his animal passions, or to correct his vicious conduct.'

MACKNIGHT.

Concluding Note. Grecian Public Games. V. 26, 27. 'So I box, as not beating the air, alludes to the exercise with the gauntlet, used by the athletes, for the purpose of acquiring agility and dexterity in boxing: also to the skiamachia [shadow-battle], or mock-battle, which was a prelude to the true battle. Virg. Æn. 5.—Heb. 12:4, alludes to the difference between this propugna and the real battle. Preached.] Keruzas: heralded, proclaimed as keruz: who, at the opening of the games, publicly proclaimed the names of the combatants, and the combat in which they were to engage, agreeably to a register kept for the purpose, by the judges, who were called Hellanodicks. When their names were published, the combatants appeared, and were examined, whether they were free men, and Grecians, and of unspotted character. Then the crier, commanding silence, laid his hand on the head of the combatant, and led him in that manner along the stadium, demanding with a loud voice, of all the assembly, "Is there one who can accuse this man of any crime? Is he a robber, or a slave, or wicked and depraved in his life and manners?" Note, 1:31. Then the combatants were led to the altar of Jupiter, and there, with their relations, swore they would not be guilty of any fraud, or action, tending to the breach of the laws of the sacred games. And, to excite the ardor of the combatants, the crowns, the rewards of victory, and palm branches, lay, during the contest, full in their view, on a tripod, or table, placed in the stadium. But P. Faber conjectures, from Chrys., that the victors in the morning, did not receive their [of course faded, v. 25.] crown, till noon, when the spectators were dismissed for refreshment: and victors of the afternoon, not till evening, and some think Heb. 11:40, alludes to this; [2 Tim. 4:8, certainly seems to.] For the crowns were given with much ceremony, the victors being summoned by proclamation to the tribunal of the hellanodicks, who examined their conduct in the combat. Then a herald, taking the chaplets from the tripod, placed them on the head of such of the conquerors as were approved: and putting into their hands the palms, led them through the stadium, preceded by a trumpeter, who proclaimed, with a loud voice, their names, the names of their fathers, and of their countries, and specified their combat. As they passed along, they were saluted with the acclamations of the spectators, who showered herbs and flowers upon them. Thus Paul was the herald in the combat for immortality, as being one of the chief of those employed by Christ to introduce, into the stadium, such as contended for the incorruptible crown. He called them to the combat; declared its kind; proclaimed the qualifications for it, and its laws. Withal, he encouraged the combatants, by placing the crowns and palms full in their view.



27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.

b Ro. 8:13.

any means I myself should be a cast-away, rejected, disapproved, one to whom the judgement of the race will not decree the crown. The allusion to the games runs through the whole sentence. Note, A preacher of salvation may yet miss it. He may show others the way to heaven, and never get thither

himself. A holy fear of himself was necessary to preserve the fidelity of an apostle; and how much more necessary is it to our preservation? Holy fear of ourselves, and not presumptuous confidence, is the best security against apostasy from God, and final rejection by Him.

PRACT. OBS. V. 19-27. A mind freed from narrow bigotry, enlarged by comprehensive views of the grand object of the Gospel, and taught to keep the great end of doing good continually in view, will know when to waive minute discussions, to connive at less dangerous prejudices, and to venture down towards the ground of other men, in order to argue with them on their own principles, and to bring them to saving views of the Gospel. But while a man postpones, or subordinates, every other thing to this grand object, as far as coexists with important truth and duty, that he may gain the more, to share with him in the great blessings of salvation; and while, on the other hand, he will not give place for a moment, where essential truth or the salvation of souls are at stake; he must expect to be deemed a time-server by bigots; inconsistent by the ignorant; a bigot by the unprincipled; and unsound, weak, or unfaithful by the self-conceited. 2:14-16. Indeed, we should always watch against extremes. If we have to do with those

who are superstitious, or self-righteous; while we insist on the necessity of good works, and connive at their mere external forms; we must be very careful to warn them against relying on their own performances, and decided in leading them to trust in Christ alone. If we have to do with those, who seem to be 'without law,' and would endeavor to show them, that true religion requires of us no injurious or useless observances; we must still remember, that we are 'not without law to God, but under the law to Christ;' and we must not countenance or connive at their loose principles or practices, and, in condescending to the weak and injudicious, we must not tolerate those errors or faults, which may either injure them, or disgrace the Gospel. But a simple heart, a single eye, and an habitual reliance on God for heavenly wisdom, will carry a man through such services, and past such dangers, as cannot be directed or guarded against by any rules. SCOTT.

If the judges found that a combatant had disobeyed the laws of the combat in the least particular, he was cast, the term for which was *ekkrinesthai*, 11:31. He was denied the crown, and sometimes beaten out of the stadium with disgrace. Such, whether cast before or after the combat, were *adokimoi*, not approved [i.e. cast-away]. See West's *Philo.*

There were, says Potter, 'four public games esteemed sacred, viz. the Olympian, Pythian, Nemean, Isthmian, as instituted in honor of divinities, begun and ended with sacrifices, and held in high esteem by all Greece. Vast numbers flocked to them, and their victors, especially the Olympic, were universally honored, nay, almost adored, as having attained to the utmost felicity human nature is capable of: an Olympic victory, says Cic., was not much less honorable than a triumph at Rome. His family, and even city, shared the victor's honor. Solon's laws gave every successful Athenian 100 drachms, if at the Isthmian, and 500 if at the Olympian games. Afterwards, the latter had their maintenance in the *prytaneum*, or public hall of Athens.

No person not of respectable family and connexions could be a competitor, no servant, slave, thief, or of corrupt morals; and to prevent such from entering the lists at the Olympic games, the *kerax* or herald, proclaimed in the theatre, as the combatant was brought forth, "Who can accuse this man?" Dr. A. C. Those appointed to see that all was performed according to custom, decide controversies among the antagonists, and adjudge the prizes, were called *agonarchai*, *brabeutai*, [alluded to in v. 25.] *rabbouchoi*, &c. A public herald proclaimed the victor's name, to whom, in most places, a palm branch was presented, to be carried in their hands [an emblem, says *Plut.*, of the insuppressible vigor of their mind and body]: hence *palman dare* [lit. to give the palm], to yield the victory. [Victors (says *Adam*) received for life an annual stipend from the public.]

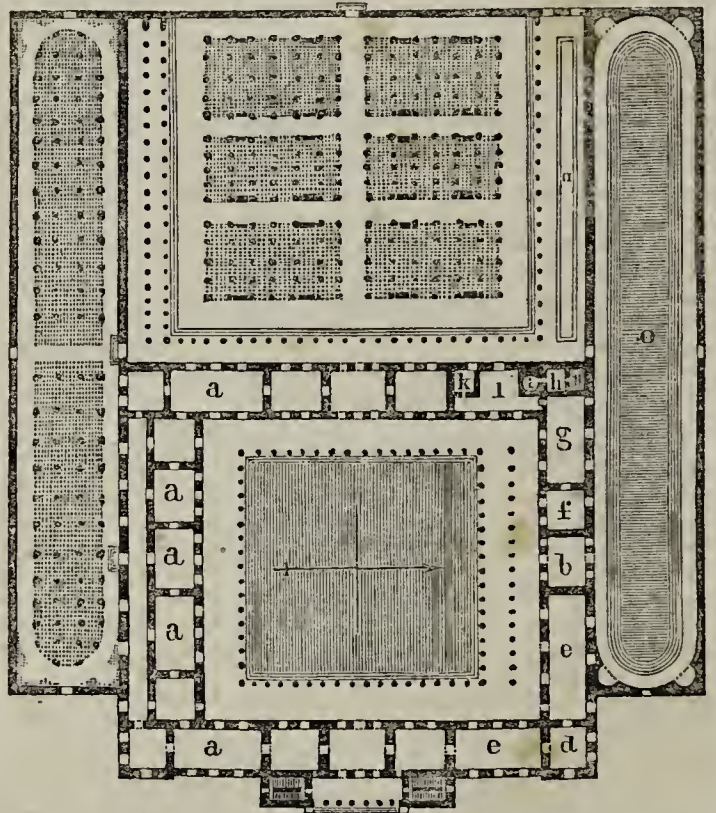
Exercises. The principal were, 1. *Running*, so useful in attacking or escaping an enemy, and in great esteem amongst all ancient people; so much so with the Grecians, that they used means to burn or parch their spleen, believing this would render them swifter. *Homer* calls swiftness one of the most excellent endowments of man, and comp. 1 K. 1:23. The course was called *stadium*, [v. 24.] as being that measure, viz. 125 paces in length; when enlarged it was called *dolichos*, which *Suidas* makes 24 stadia, others 12; it seems to have been variable. Sometimes they ran back again [keeping within the *white line*, which marked out the path or compass in which they ran. Dr. A. C., which some think alluded to in v. 26]. Sometimes they ran in armor. 2. *Leaping*, sometimes with weights (usually oval with holes) on the head or shoulders, or in the hands. 3. *Darting*, or throwing a javelin, rod, or other large instrument, from the hand, by the help of a thong tied to its middle: sometimes an arrow, or little javelin, from a bow or sling. 4. *Quitting*, i. e. tossing a *discus*, of stone, brass, or iron, square, oblong, or oval, by the help of a thong through a hole in its middle. 5. *Boxing*: at first without, in later times, with their hands and arms defended by leather thongs, wound round, called *cestus*, first to the wrists, afterwards to the elbow, and even shoulder. In time, these were loaded with lead and iron to enforce a blow. Combatants in this used all means to make themselves fat and fleshy, the better to endure blows. 6. *Wrestling*; brought to an art by *Theseus*. In later ages, all the joints and members were soundly rubbed, fomented and suppled with oil, to prevent strains. He who gave his antagonist three falls, was victor. Sometimes they threw themselves on the ground, and continued the combat by pinching, biting, scratching, and in all manner of ways annoying, till one, (often the stronger,) was forced to yield, which he confessed by lifting a finger, till which the victory was not adjudged. The *pagkraton* thus combined wrestling and boxing. 7. *Horse-races*, either with single horses, or with two, on one of which they rode, and, at the goal, leaped on the other. Or with 2, 3, 4, &c., horses or mules, abreast, in a *chariot*. Afterwards only the two middle horses were attached to the pole, the rest being governed by the reins. The principal skill was in turning the *nussai* or goals, to fall in which, incurred danger and disgrace. 8. Music, poetry, extempore and other compositions, and various arts. [At the Olympic games, for instance, *Herodotus* read his matchless histories, and roused to emulation the youthful *Thucydides*, his listener.]

Gymnasium: first used in Lacedaemonia, afterwards common in all parts of Greece, imitated and very much augmented and improved at Rome. They were a knot of capacious buildings, holding many thousands at once, having room for philosophers, rhetoricians, and the professors of all other sciences, to read their lectures; and wrestlers, dancers, and all others that would, to exercise at the same time, without the least disturbance or interruption. Their principal parts (see cut) were, 1. *Stoai*, the porticos, full of *exedrai*, and side buildings furnished with seats, and fit for study or discourse; and here, probably, the scholars used to meet. 2. The *ephebeion*, where the ephēbi, or youths, exercised; or met and agreed on rules of exercise, &c. 3. The undressing room. 4. *Elaiothesion*, where wrestlers, or those who had bathed, anointed. [The Roman athletes used a glutinous ointment called *ceroma*: and wore drawers in wrestling, &c.] 5. *Konisterion*, where the dust with which the anointed were sprinkled, was kept. 6. *Palaistra*, (sometimes put for the whole gymnasium,) where the *pentathlon*, or 5 kinds of exercise, were performed: its bottom was covered with dust or gravel. Another room was also thus prepared. 7. *Sphaisterion*, for divers exercises, especially the ball. 8. Spaces between the wall and porticos, for light, and the *Peristation*, or piazza, a large square, for walking, leaping, discus playing, &c. 9. *Xystoi*, covered for wrestlers in bad weather, and *Xysta*, walks, open at top, for summer recreation, and in mild winter weather. 10. Baths, of different temperatures. The Greeks, in ancient times, used the bath rarely, except after great toil; afterwards, more commonly. 11. The *stadium*, for exercises: built with steps for spectators. 12. The stove, &c. Potter.

The cut (of a *Palaestra*, after *Vitruvius*), shows: a, halls for the philosophers; b, Ephebeum, or boy's school; c, Coryceum, or ball play-ground; d, Conisterium, or dust-place; e, Loutron, or cold bath; f, Elaiothesium, or place of oils; g, Frigidarium, or Apolyterium, place of undressing; h, arched hot stove; i, Lacouicum, or dry-stove; k, warm-bath; l, Propnaicum, or place of chimneys; m, ladder, for descending to the furnaces; n, Xyste, or covered place of exercise, for the athletes; o, stadium, 125 paces long. Ed.

The Olympic Games. These, named from the Olympian Jupiter, or the city of Olympia, were of uncertain origin; see *Potter*. They were instituted, says one account, by *Hercules*; but were little noticed till the time of *Iphitus*, contemporary with *Lycurgus*, k. of Sparta, who re-instituted the solemnity about 408 years after the Trojan war, and thus *Solinus* computes the Olympiads. After *Chorachus* (who, so *Phlegon*, lived in the 25th Olympiad after *Iphitus*) they were constantly celebrated, i. e. really in the 408th year of the Trojan war, or, as *Eusebius*, the 406th. They were held at Elis every 5th month, (i. e. the 21 month after 4 years,) beginning on the 11th and ending on the 15th of the lunar month, when the moon was at full. Their care and management belonged sometimes to the *Pisians*, but for the most part to the *Eleans*. First 1, then 12, 8, 9, and lastly 10, superintended, till *Adrian's* time. They sat naked, and under oath, and were called *hellanodice*, but from them there was an appeal to the Olympian senate. Certain officers, subordinated to a president, preserved order. No woman was allowed to be present.

Preparations. Every combatant must spend 10 months, at the public gymnasium at Elis, in preparatory exercises,—the last 30 days in going through the games precisely



as they were to be exhibited. No apology served instead of this, and the combatants must take an oath they had thus practised, and their fathers and brethren must swear not unlawfully to disturb the games. Bribery of an adversary was severely fined. [As to the discipline, temperance, (alluded to in v. 25.) and abstinence required, *Epictetus* (in Dr. A. C.) says to the contender, if he would win, 'you must observe a strict regimen; live on food you dislike; abstain from all delicacies [and, adds *Horace*, from wine and venery]; must exercise yourself at the necessary and prescribed times, both in heat and in cold; drink nothing cooling; take no wine as formerly: in a word, you must put yourself under the directions of a *pauilist*, as you would under those of a physician [comp. the 'training' of English athletes]; and afterwards enter the lists. Here you may get your arm broken, your foot put out of joint, be obliged to swallow mouthfuls of dust, to receive many stripes, and after all be conquered.' So that after all hardships victory was uncertain, (comp. v. 26.) Little pellets, lettered in pairs, one pellet to each athlete, were thrown into a silver urn, and being drawn out, those two who had the same letter, wrestled together, and if there were an odd wrestler (called *ephebdros*, as coming after the rest), he wrestled last of all with him that had the mastery.

The Pythian Games: celebrated (at first every 9, afterwards every 5 years,) near Delphi, of uncertain origin, [see *Potter*,] referred variously to Anphictyon, the Amphictyones, *Agamemnon*, *Diomedes*, and *Apollo*, on overcoming the Python serpent, or tyrant. Tradition says, the demigods were first successful in them; some think it at first only a musical contention, the prize being then of silver or gold, or something of value, afterwards a garland. The amphictyones, the presidents, introduced (in the 4th yr. of the 49th Olympiad) all the Olympian exercises; and ordained, that none but boys should run. They also, it is said, gave these hitherto nameless games the name Pythia, from the Pythian Apollo.

The Nemean Games: named from the village Nemea, where they were held every 3 years. The presidents were elected from Corinth, Argos, and Cleona, and halted in black; the games being a funeral ceremony, in honor of *Opheltes*, whose death was a prelude to the bad success of all the Theban champions.

The Isthmian Games: [to these *Paul* particularly alludes. They were held on the Isthmus of Corinth, which connects the Peloponnesus or Morea with Europe, and between seas which open the commerce of the E. and W.] in honor of *Melicertes*, son of the k. of Thebes; or, as others, of *Neptune*, instituted by *Theseus*; but these 2 seem to be different games, those of *Melicertes* being private, and at night, and religious ceremonies rather. They were observed every 31, or rather 5th year, and held most sacred and inviolable. They were not even discontinued when Corinth was sacked and totally demolished, by the Roman *Mummius*. But the care of them being then committed to the *Sicyonians*, was restored to the Corinthians on the rebuilding of Corinth. Potter.

These notes have been thus extended, as illustrating institutions which had a favorable, governing influence (and the Olympic games lasted a thousand years!) upon ancient civilization: though love of notice, or 'glory,' is not a correct basis for national feeling. 'Whoever considers, on the one hand, to what great self-denial, in articles of food, sleep, and every other sensual indulgence, they, who were to contend in their games, were obliged; and on the other, of how great importance it is, that the youth of the community should be formed to a manly taste and resolute self-government, will undoubtedly see the great national utility of the Games in the institution and support of these games.' *Doddr.* It becomes teachers of youth, especially in a republic like ours, where so much may depend on individual exertion, to consider whether some general system of physical education, public and private, might not assist in accomplishing the high destiny to which God calls our nation. Ed.



## CHAP. X.

1 The sacraments of the Jews 6 are types of ours, 7 and their punishments, 11 examples for us. 14 We must flee from idolatry. 21 We must not make the Lord's table the table of devils: 24 and in things indifferent we must have regard of our brethren.

**M**OREOVER, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under <sup>a</sup> the cloud, and <sup>b</sup> all passed through the sea;

2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

3 And did all eat the same spiritual <sup>c</sup> meat;

4 And did all drink the same spiritual <sup>d</sup> drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that <sup>e</sup> followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

5 But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown <sup>f</sup> in the wilderness.

6 Now these things were <sup>g</sup> our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they <sup>h</sup> also lusted.

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is <sup>i</sup> written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some <sup>j</sup> of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

a Ex. 13:21, 22.	d Ex. 17:6.	17. Jude, 5.
Nu. 9:18-22.	Nu. 20:11.	g the figures.
b Ex. 14:19, 22:29.	e or, went with.	h Nu. 11:4, 33:34.
c Ex. 16:15, 35.	f Nu. 14:29-35.	i Ex. 3:6.
Ne. 9:15, 20.	26:64, 65. He. 3:	j Nu. 25:1-9.
Ps. 78:24, 25.		

CHAP. X. V. 1-5. In order to dissuade the Corinthians from communion with idolaters, and security in any sinful course, he sets before them the example of the Jews, the church under the O. T. They enjoyed great privileges, but having been guilty of heinous provocations, they fell under very grievous punishments. In these vs. he reckons up their privileges, which, in the main, were the same with ours.

NOTES. CHAP. X. V. 1-5. Thus they [the nation of Israel] were initiated, as by baptism, into the true religion, under the instruction of Moses, the type of Christ; by the overshadowing cloud, and by the waters of the sea; and the whole nation, men, women, and children, were acknowledged as the visible church of God; in a manner which resembled that by which all professed Christians were admitted into the church by baptism. Ez. 14:15. Mat. 28:13, 20. This too (those waters, which flowed from the rock, and followed them as a river, through most of their wanderings in the wilderness) might be called 'spiritual drink,' for it typified the sacred influences of the Holy Spirit, as given to believers through Jesus Christ.—Nothing can more clearly show the absurdity of forcing figurative language into a literal meaning, and so grounding doctrines on it, as the papists have done in the monstrous notion of transubstantiation, than this text does. By such a mode of construction we might prove, that the rock was *literally* the person of Christ; and that 'the rock' followed the Israelites in the wilderness! Mat. 26:26-28. Luke 22:19, 20.—(1) *Our fathers.*] The ancestors of the Jewish nation.—(2) *Baptized.*] Certainly not by immersion. Mat. 20:20-23. Mark 7:3, 4. Luke 11:37-40. Acts 2:41. Heb. 9:8-10. (4) *The same, &c.*] 'In fact, the sacraments of the ancients were the same as ours, as they had respect to Christ alone.' *Beza*. Some make their sacraments types of our sacraments, i. e. *shadows of shadows*: but a sacrament is well defined to be 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.' *Jude*, 5-8. *SCOTT*.

(1.) 'Paul having described how he mortified his own lusts, admonishes the Corinthians to the same, not trusting to spiritual gifts, (as some of them did,) for these did not place them beyond danger, but put them under greater obligation to watchfulness.' *Grot.* 'This he adumbrates from Heb. history, in which the wiser Jews recognised a type of the Messiah's times.' *BLOOMF.*

(2.) '*Theoph.*, from *Chrys.*, explains: "They shared with Moses in the shade of the cloud, and passage through the sea; for seeing him first pass, they dared the waters. So, Christ first dying and rising, we also are baptized, imitating death in descending, and resurrection in coming up, [from the water.] They, therefore, were baptized unto Moses, inasmuch as they had him as a leader in the type of baptism, i. e. the being under the cloud, and the passing through the sea." So *Ec.*, *Phot.*, *Greg.*, *Ambr.*, *Est.*, *Tirin.*, *Menoeh.*, and many other Roman Catholic comtrs., also *Grot.*, *Whit.*, and *Locke*. But this is harsh. See other interpretations in *Poole* and *Wolf*. Baptism was a *symbolical rite*, by which any one bound himself to faith and obedience to any teacher of religion, and the baptism itself was a form of initiation and inauguration

1. He prefaces this discourse with a note of regard, v. 1. Judaism was worthy of their study, it was Christianity under a veil, wrapped up in types and dark hints. The Gospel was preached to the Jews, in their legal rites and sacrifices. And the providence of God toward them, and what happened to them, notwithstanding these privileges, may and ought to be warnings to us.

2. He specifies some of their *privileges*. (1.) They were delivered from Egypt, v. 1. They were miraculously conducted through the Red Sea, a proper type of our redemption by Christ, who saves us, by conquering and destroying his enemies and ours. (2.) They were brought under obligation to Moses' law and covenant, as we are by baptism under the Christian law and covenant, v. 2. It was to them a typical baptism. They fed on manna, which was a type of Christ crucified, the Bread which came down from heaven, of which whoso eateth shall live for ever. Their drink, a stream from a Rock which followed them, was Christ, in type and figure. He is the Rock on which the Christian church is built; and of the streams that issue from Him do all believers drink, and are refreshed. Now all these great privileges the Jews had; and one would think this should have saved them; that all who ate of that spiritual meat, and drank of that spiritual drink, should have been holy and acceptable to God. Yet was it otherwise, v. 5. Men may enjoy many and great spiritual privileges in this world, and yet come short of eternal life. Many *who were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and sea*, i. e. had their faith of his divine commission confirmed by these miracles, were yet overthrown in the wilderness, and never saw the promised land. Let none presume on their great privileges, or profession of the truth; these will not secure heavenly happiness, nor prevent judgments here on earth, except the *root of the matter* be in us.

V. 6-14. The apostle, having recited their privileges, proceeds here to an account of their faults and punishments, their sins and plagues, which are left on record, for an example to us; a warning against the like sins, if we would escape the like punishments. We must not do as they did, lest we suffer as they suffered. Several of their sins are specified, as cautions to us; as,

1. We should shun inordinate desires after carnal objects, v. 6. God fed them with manna, but they must have flesh, Num. 11:4. They had food for their supply, but, not content with that, they asked *meat for their lusts*, Ps. 106:14. Carnal desires get head by indulgence, therefore should be observed and checked in their first rise: if once they prevail, and bear sway in us, we know not whither they will carry us. This caution stands first, because carnal appetites indulged are the root and source of much sin, [sec end of Rom. 7.]

2. He warns against *idolatry*, v. 7. The sin of the golden calf is referred to, Ex. 32:6. They first sacrificed to their idol, then feasted on the sacrifices, and then danced before it. The apostle is speaking to the case of the Corinthians, who were tempted to feast on the heathen sacrifices, things offered to idols, though they do not seem to have been under any temptation to sacrifice themselves. Even eating and drinking of the sacrifices before the idol, and as things sacrificed, was idolatry, which, by the example of the Israelites, they should be warned to avoid.

3. He cautions against *fornication*, a sin to which the inhabitants of Corinth were in a peculiar manner addicted. A temple among them dedicated to Venus, i. e. to lust, had above a thousand priestesses belonging to it, all common harlots. How needful was a caution against fornication, to those who lived in so corrupt a city, and had been used to such dissolute manners, especially when they were under temptations to idolatry too! and spiritual whoredom did in many cases lead to bodily prostitution. Most of the gods whom the heathens served, were represented as very patterns of lewdness; and much lewdness was committed in the very worship of many of them. Many of the Jewish writers, and many Christians after them, think that such worship was paid to Baal-Peor; and that fornication was committed with the daughters of Moab, in the worship of that idol, Num. 25. which brought on a plague, that in one day slew 23,000, beside those who fell by the hand of public justice. Note, Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge, in whatever external relation they may stand to Him, and whatever outward privileges He may bestow on them.

into that religion.—They were, by passing under the cloud, and through the sea, as it were baptized, or *initiated into the religion* promulgated by Moses; and thus thoroughly recognised his divine mission, and bound themselves in future to obey his injunctions. And so *Crell.*, and *Hain.*, *Vitr.*, *Wolf*, *Beng.*, *Ros.*, *Semler*, *Kr.*, and *Schl.* *Baptized.*] The material of the cloud and sea, suggested the word. *Crell.* *Cloud.*] By day, and *light* by night. *Pindar*, *A. Gellius*, *Thucyd.*, *Macrobi.*, have similar expressions concerning *Ætna.*

(3, 4.) *Spiritual.*] 'Viz. as bestowed by divine favor, and miraculously. There is an allusion to the Lord's Supper. *Rock.*] Not natural, but spiritual. Christ, attending them with his omnipotent and gracious presence, is represented as the Author and Fountain of the miraculously produced water. *Calv.*, *Wolf*, *Glass.*, and *Ros.*, who thinks the Jews' tradition, that the natural rock followed the Israelites, meant only to express this sentiment. *Le Clerc* says, the Jews of that age took all their comparisons from the O. T. histories, not as considering them prefigurations, but because this was thought a Jewish elegance. And so, *Ros.* thinks, Paul uses this Jewish way; but this idea of *accommodation* must be cautiously resorted to, and in no case are we unnecessarily to entangle ourselves with Rabbinical dogmas, or Jewish fancies.' *Id.*

(5.) *Many.*] 'Rather, *most*, i. e. *nearly all*, (but 2 were excepted.) so the Gr., by a scriptural and classical idiom. *Overthrown.*] *Lit.* *stretched out*, or *strewed dead* on the face of the desert, [as still happens in the Mecca pilgrimage.] It is an awful type of the eternal perdition of the wicked, as, in fact, is suggested by the words following.' *Id.*

V. 6-10. The apostle, in applying his subject, next observed, that these events were intended to be instructive examples to the Christian church, or figurative representations of God's dealings with his professed worshippers, in all ages; that, by the fatal consequences of Israel's disobedience and rebellion, others might be deterred from allowing an evil concupiscence after sinful or unexpedient indulgences. 9:24-27. *Num.* 11:4-9, 31-34. *Ps.* 78:17-31. 106:15. Some expositors suppose that the word, rendered 'to play,' signifies *to commit fornication*; but the Israelites are not, on that occasion, charged with this crime, or any other of the same nature; and a jovial, festive religion, without gross and scandalous immorality, is peculiarly congenial to human nature, as circumstanced in this world. For regard to character and worldly interest, and some remaining feeling in the conscience, restrain very large numbers of unconverted persons, from direct licentiousness; especially where the Word of God is so far known, as to render those crimes shameful, and uneasy to the conscience, which the Gentiles



9 Neither let us tempt <sup>k</sup> Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of <sup>l</sup> serpents.

10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also <sup>m</sup> murmured, and were destroyed of the <sup>n</sup> destroyer.

11 Now all these things happened unto them for <sup>o</sup> ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

12 Wherefore <sup>p</sup> let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

13 There hath no temptation taken you but <sup>q</sup> such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

15 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

k Ex. 17:2, 7.	o or, <i>types</i> .	r Da. 3:17.
l Nu. 21:6.	p Pr. 28:14.	2 Pe. 2:9.
m Nu. 14:2, 29.	Ro. 11:20.	s Ja. 5:11.
u 2 Sa. 24:16.	q or, <i>moderate</i> .	t 1 Jn. 5:21.

Let us fear the sins of Israel, if we would shun their plagues.

4. He warns us against *tempting Christ*, v. 9. or provoking Him to jealousy, v. 22. He was with the church in the wilderness; the Angel of the covenant, who went before them. But He was greatly grieved and provoked by them many ways; *They spake against Him and Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?* For which reason God sent fiery serpents among them, Num. 21:5, 6, by which many of them were stung mortally. And it is but just to fear, that such as tempt Christ under the present dispensation, will be left by Him in the power of the old serpent.

5. He warns against *murmuring*; *Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer*, v. 10. by a destroying angel, and executioner of divine vengeance. They quarrelled with God, and murmured against Moses, when any difficulties pressed them. They were very apt to fly in the face of their leaders; were for

displacing them, and going back to Egypt, under the conduct of others of their own choosing. Similar seems to have been the case of the Corinthians; they murmured against Paul and in him against Christ, and seem to have set up other teachers, who would indulge and soothe them in their inclinations, and particularly in a revolt to idolatry. Such conduct was very provoking to God, and likely to bring on them swift destruction, as on the Israelites, Num. 14:37. Murmuring against divine disposals and commands, is a sin that greatly provokes, especially when it grows to such a head as to issue in apostasy, and a revolt from God and his good ways.

(1.) The apostle subjoins to these particular cautions a more general one, v. 11. Not only the laws and ordinances of the Jews, but the providences of God toward them, were *typical*. Their sins against God, and backslidings from Him, were typical of the infidelity of many under the Gospel. God's judgments on them were types of spiritual judgments now. Their exclusion from the earthly Canaan typified the exclusion of many under the Gospel out of the heavenly Canaan, for their unbelief. Their history was written, to be a standing monitor to the church, even under the last and most perfect dispensation. Nothing in Scripture is written in vain. God had wise and gracious purposes towards us in leaving the Jewish history on record; and it is our wisdom and duty to receive instruction from it. On this hint the apostle grounds a caution, v. 12. He that thinks he stands, should not be confident and secure, but on his guard. Others have fallen, and so may we. And then we are most likely to fall, when we are most confident of our own strength, and thereupon most apt to be secure, and off our guard. Distrust of himself, putting him at once on vigilance and dependence on God, is the Christian's best security against all sin. God has not promised to keep us from falling, if we do not look to ourselves: *his* protection supposes our own care and caution.

(2.) But to this word of *caution* he adds a word of *comfort*, v. 13. Though it is displeasing to God for us to *presume*, it is not pleasing to Him for us to *despair*. We must fear and take heed, yet not be terrified and amazed; for either our trials will be proportioned to our strength, or strength shall be supplied in proportion to our temptations. Every *place*, condition, relation, employ-

ment, and enjoyment, abounds with snares; yet what comfort may we fetch from such a passage! For, [1.] '*No temptation*,' says the apostle, '*hath yet taken you, but such as is common to man*, what is human; i. e. such as you may expect from men of such principles as *heathens*, and such power; or else, such as is common to mankind in the present state; or else, such as the spirit and resolution of mere men may bear you through.' [2.] *God is faithful*. Though Satan be a deceiver, God is true. Men may be false, and the world false; but God is faithful, and our strength and security are in Him. [3.] He is wise as well as faithful, and will proportion our burden to our strength. *He will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able*. He knows what we can bear; and He will, in his wise providence, either proportion our temptations to our strength, or make us able to grapple with them. We need not perplex ourselves with the difficulties in our way, when God will take care that they shall not be too great for us to encounter; especially, [4.] When He will make them to issue well. *He will make a way to escape*, either the trial itself, however great, or at least the mischief of it.

(3.) And on this argument he grounds another caution against idolatry; *Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry*. It is out of tender affection that he presses this advice. Idolatry is the most heinous injury and affront to the true God. God will succor, therefore be not guilty of any idolatrous compliances. We have all the encouragement in the world to flee sin, and prove faithful to God. We cannot fall by a temptation, if we cleave fast to Him.

V. 15—22. The apostle urges the general caution against idolatry, in the particular case of eating the heathen sacrifices, *as such*, and out of any religious respect to the idol.

1. He prefaces his argument with an appeal to their own reason and judgment, v. 15. It is no dishonor to an inspired teacher, nor disadvantage to his argument, to appeal for the truth of it to the reason and consciences of his hearers. It comes on them with the greater force, when it comes with this conviction.

2. He lays down his argument from the Lord's supper, v. 16. *a feast on the sacrificed body and blood of the Lord*. And to eat of the feast, is to partake of the sacrifice, and so to be *his* guests, to whom the sacrifice was offered, and this in token of friendship

practised, without shame or remorse. (9) *Tempt Christ*, &c.] This language of the apostle fully confirms the point, that all the appearances recorded in the O. T., were made by 'the only begotten Son, in the form of God,' and adored as 'JEHOVAH, the God of Israel.' Gen. 48:15, 16. Ex. 3:2, 4. 23:20—23. Is. 63:9. Acts 7:37—43. Heb. 11:24—26.—*The destroyer*.] Many writers suppose, that an evil angel is meant by 'the destroyer;' but this is not probable; for holy angels are continually represented as employed by the Lord, in executing vengeance on his enemies.

(7.) *Play*.] 'The Gr. has here a general notion (as in *Herod.*) 9:11. 1 Chr. 15:29. 3 Esdr. 5:3. which includes leaping, dancing, singing, and all other kinds of festal sport, not excluding lasciviousness; since, probably, like most oriental dances, these were very indecent.—Idolatry, connected as it was with gluttony, and inebriety, necessarily led [by exciting a proximate propensity] to fornication, v. 8.'

(8.) *Tempt*.] 'The Gr. properly means, to make trial of any one's ability, also patience. They did it by demanding signs (*Theoph.*); by impatience for Gospel benefits and rewards (*Chrys.*); impatience under adversity, and despair of divine assistance (*Kr.*); adhering to their vices, to see if God would support Paul's authority or not (*Ros.*); asking greater spiritual gifts and supernatural favors, while not duly using what they had, (as others.) The opinion of *Chrys.* and *Kr.* (and *Schoett.*, nearly) seems best.'

(10.) *Destroyer*.] '*Olothreutos*: the destroying angel, death; so often mentioned in the O. T. The Jews, says *Lightf.*, call bad angels *destroyers*, good angels *ministrators*, and ascribe uncommon deaths to the angel of death, Samael. *Ros.* and *Kr.* think it said "of the plague mentioned, by personification, as the figure is applied to lightning also." A very exceptionable notion. The principle, indeed, is too often introduced by recent commentators, and forms part of a *system*, by which the truth is so *diluted*, *lowered*, and *explained away* by critical and grammatical *hocus-pocus*, that little or nothing stable remains.' Id.

V. 11, 12. The apostle further observed, that those things, which seemed so severe in respect of Israel, were merciful in the object; being intended as 'examples' to others, warning them to restrain their appetites and passions, and to exercise holy caution and humble fear. 6—10. Especially they 'were written for the admonition' of Christians, 'on

whom the completion of the ages was come;' who had the substance of the ancient shadows, and the accomplishment of all the prophecies; who enjoyed those advantages, which were the end and perfection of the old dispensation; and who lived under the light of the last and most complete revelation, which was to be vouchsafed to the world. Rom. 10:1—4. 15:4—7. Heb. 11:39, 40. 1 Jn. 2:18, 19. It therefore was proper, that every man, who supposed himself to stand secure in the favor of God, and strong in the faith of the Gospel, without being troubled by weak and superstitious scruples, should 'take heed that he did not fall' away from his self-confident profession, and at last lie under the righteous condemnation of God, having only 'the form of godliness;' or lest he should, (like Peter, when through self-confidence he neglected to watch and pray,) fall into grievous sin, and thus wound his conscience, expose himself to severe rebukes, disgrace his profession, and injure or ruin the souls of others. 8:1—3. Prov. 11:2. Mat. 26:30—35, 69—75. Rom. 11:16—21.

(11.) *End*, &c.] 'I. e. the last of the Jewish ages. *The last age*, Pearce tr. How long to last Paul says not. An allusion to the Jewish computation, that the world was to last 6000 years; dividing it into 3 periods; the Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Evangelical, (or Messianic,) dispensation, (after which, no new law or revelation would be made,) called *the last days*, *the last times*, (Ac. 2:17. 2 Tim. 3:1. Heb. 1:2. 1 Pet. 1:5, 20.) and *the fulness of time*, or *times*, in Gal. 4:4. Eph. 1:10. *Lightf.*, and *Schoett.*, Crell., Grot., Olcar., Wolf, J. Cappell, Par., Locke, Whit., Pearce, and *Ros.*, satisfactorily establish this sense.'

V. 13. This cannot mean, that all believers should be rendered victorious over every particular temptation; because in that case they must all be kept from actual sin, which is contrary to fact and Scripture; yet it must imply, that no concurrence of circumstances should ever cast them into such temptation, as would render the commission of sin absolutely unavoidable; and that nothing should ever occasion their final apostasy and condemnation. Jn. 10:26—31. Rom. 8:32—39.—*A way to escape*.] 'A metaphor, taken from them, who, being surrounded by thieves, are in danger on every side.' *Pareus*, in *Leigh*.

V. 14—17. 'The apostle calls it 'the cup of blessing,' because when we have it in our hand, we praise and bless, with admiration of his ineffable gift, Him who shed his blood for us; and not only shed his



16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we, *being* many, are one bread, *and* one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.

18 Behold Israel after <sup>a</sup>the flesh: <sup>v</sup>are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

19 What say I then? that the idol <sup>v</sup>is any thing? or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

20 But *I say*, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to <sup>x</sup>devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup <sup>v</sup>of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

22 Do we <sup>v</sup>provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

23 All <sup>a</sup>things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

24 Let <sup>b</sup>no man seek his own, but every man another's *wealth*.

u Ro. 4:1,12. v c. 9:13. w c. 8:4. x Le.17:7. De.32. 17. Ps. 106:37. y De. 32:33. z De. 32:21. Job 2:4,21. 9:4. Ez. 22:14. a c. 6:12. b Phil. 2:4,21.

with Him. Thus to partake of the Lord's table, is to profess ourselves his guests, and covenant people. This is the very purpose and intention of this symbolical eating and drinking; it is holding communion with God, and partaking of those privileges, and professing ourselves under those obligations, which result from the death and sacrifice of Christ; and this in conjunction with all true Christians, with whom we have communion also in this ordinance. *Because the bread is one, we, being many, are one body, for we are made partakers of one bread, or loaf, v. 17.* which I think is thus more truly rendered; 'By partaking of one broken loaf, the emblem of our Savior's broken body, who is the only true Bread that came down from heaven, we coalesce into one body, become members of Him and one another.' Those who truly partake by faith, have this communion with Christ, and one another: and those who eat the outward elements, make profession of having this communion of belonging to God, and the blessed frater-

blood, but has made us all partakers of it.' *Ambrose*.—These words, 'the bread which we break,' the 'loaf, or bread, is one,' and we all partake of one loaf, and therefore are one body, show how grossly the church of Rome has varied from Christ's institution, in distributing to the communicants, severally, an unbroken wafer; so that they are neither partakers of *one loaf*, or bread, or of 'bread broken.'" *Whit. Sc.* (17.) 'Eating together in a religious manner, has been in almost all ancient nations a token of friendship.' *DODDR.*

V. 18—22. Perhaps some might suppose, that the *name* was not essential, and that God was worshipped in these rites, though under another title; (as modern speculators have asserted, that *Jehovah*, or *Jupiter*, are virtually the same; and that the Supreme Being is worshipped, with equal acceptance, 'in every age and every clime;') but the apostle assured them, that these sacrifices were not presented to God, but to the determined enemies of God and man; and he would, on no account, have his beloved fellow Christians join themselves with demons and their worshippers. Indeed, they could not render the ordinances of Christ consistent with these abominable rites; and if they attempted it, they would provoke the Lord to jealousy, by this familiarity with his detested rivals; as if they were 'stronger than He,' and could defend themselves against his judgments: even as a woman, though not guilty of gross adultery, must excite the suspicion and indignation of her husband, if she associated familiarly with the man, of whom he entertained a peculiar jealousy. *Ex. 20:5.* The apostle joined himself in these inquiries, to show how greatly he abhorred such a conduct, and how he should dread the consequences of being seduced into it. (20,21) *Devils.* *Lev. 17:1—7, v. 7. Deut. 32:17. 1 Tim. 4:1—5.*—Some writers contend, that this simply means intermediate beings, superior to man, but inferior to God. But are holy angels here included?

nity of his people and worshippers. This is the true meaning of this holy rite.

3. He confirms this from the Jewish worship and customs, *v. 18.* Those who were admitted to eat of the offerings, were esteemed to partake of the sacrifice itself, as made for them, and to be sanctified thereby; and therefore sure to worship God, and be in alliance or covenant with Him, even the God of Israel, to whom the sacrifice was made: this was a symbol or token of holding communion with Him.

4. He applies this to the argument against feasting with idolaters on their sacrifices, and to prove them that do so, idolaters. This he does, (1.) By following the principle on which they would argue it to be lawful, namely, that an idol was nothing, *v. 19.* They indeed seemed to argue, that, because an idol was nothing, what was offered was no sacrifice, but common and ordinary food, of which they might therefore eat with as little scruple. Now the apostle allows the food was not changed, as to its nature; was as fit to be eaten as common food, where it was set before any who knew not of its having been offered to an idol. But, (2.) He proves, that eating it, as a part of a heathen sacrifice, was, [1.] A partaking with them in their idolatry, *v. 20.* *It was having fellowship with devils;* because what the Gentiles sacrificed, they sacrificed to devils. And to feast with them on these sacrifices, was to partake in the sacrifice, and therefore to worship the god to whom it was made, and have fellowship or communion with him: just as he who eats the Lord's supper, is supposed to partake in the Christian sacrifice; or as they who ate the Jewish sacrifices, did partake of what was offered on their altar. [2.] It was a virtual renouncing of Christianity, *v. 21.* To partake of this Christian feast, was to have communion with Christ; to partake of the feasts made out of honor to the heathen idols, and made of things sacrificed to them, was to have communion with devils. Now this was to compound contraries; it was by no means consistent. And what a manifest self-contradiction must that man's conduct be, that would partake of the Lord's table, and yet partake of the table of demons! God and Mammon can never be served together, nor fellowship be at once had with Christ and Satan. This may also intimate, that such as indulge themselves in gluttony or drunkenness, and by so doing make their own table the table of devils, or keep up fellowship with Satan by a course of known and wilful wickedness, cannot partake truly of the cup and table of the Lord. How much reason have we to look to it, that every sin and idol be renounced by us, when we eat and drink at the Lord's table.

5. He warns them, on the whole, against

such idolatry, by signifying to them that God is a jealous God, *v. 22.* Very probably many of the Corinthians made light of being at these heathen feasts, and thought there was no harm in it. But the apostle bids them beware, assuring them that God cannot endure a rival in matters of worship, and that it is dangerous.

V. 23—33. The apostle shows in what instances, notwithstanding, Christians might lawfully eat what had been sacrificed to idols. But,

1. He cautions against abusing our liberty in lawful things. That may be lawful, which is not expedient, will not edify. A Christian must not barely consider what is lawful, but what is expedient, and for the use of edification. A private Christian should do so even in his private conduct. *He must not seek his own only, but his neighbor's wealth, [i. e. weal.]* He must be concerned not to hurt his neighbor, nay, to promote his welfare; and must consider how to act, so that he may help others, and not hinder them, in their holiness, comfort, or salvation. They who allow themselves in everything not plainly sinful in itself, will often run into what is evil by accident, and do much mischief to others. Circumstances may make that a sin, which in itself is none. The welfare of others, as well as our own convenience, must be consulted in many things we do, if we would do them well.

2. He tells them, that what was sold in the shambles, they might eat without asking questions. The priest's share of heathen sacrifices was thus frequently offered to sale, after it had been offered in the temple. Now the apostle tells them, they need not be so scrupulous as to ask the butcher in the market, whether the meat he sold had been offered to an idol. It was there sold as common food, and as such might be bought and used; *for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, v. 26.* and the fruit and products of the earth were designed by Him, the great Proprietor, for the use and subsistence of mankind, and more especially of his own children and servants, *1 Tim. 4:4. To the pure all things are pure, Tit. 1:15.* Though it is sinful to use any food in an idolatrous manner, it is no sin, after such abuse, to apply it, in a holy manner, to its common use.

3. He adds, that, if invited by any heathen acquaintance to a feast, they might go, and eat what was set before them, without asking questions, *v. 27.* nay, though they knew things sacrificed to idols were served up at such entertainments, as well as sold in the shambles. Christianity does by no means bind us up from the common offices of humanity, or allow us an uncourteous behavior to any of our own kind, however they may differ from us in religious sentiments or

Certainly not. Then fallen angels, or wicked spirits, must exclusively be intended; and the worship of the idolaters, though not rendered to 'the devil,' in the exact scriptural meaning of the word, which distinguishes between 'the devil, and his angels,' *Mat. 25:41.* was rendered to evil spirits, not perhaps by express intention, (though the character and conduct ascribed to the objects of the pagan worship, renders even this doubtful,) yet eventually; evil spirits were substituted in the place of God, and received the glory due to Him.—The Scripture knows nothing of demons, in a good sense; whatever heathen writers did, or learned modern divines now do. *Acts 17:18—25.* *SCOTT.*

(20.) 'Christians present at heathen sacrificial feasts, were considered by other heathens, as persons favorable to their idolatrous religions; as those, who were present at the sacred feasts of the Christians, thereby declared publicly that they belonged to the society of Christians.' See *Bl.* To say 'but the idol is nothing,' Paul shows to be a mere quibble. 'The cup of demons, alludes to the cup poured out at the heathen libations to the gods, and drunk at the sacrificial feasts; for, says *Mede*, the heathen thought, the supreme and celestial deities were to be worshipped with a pure mind, accompanied with hymns, and praises; the demons with sacrifices. To drink of this libation-wine was strictly forbidden by the Jewish Rabbins, and considered as apostasy.' *Bl. Ed.*

V. 23. 'Paul now returns to what he had treated of at ch. 8. "All things," I repeat, (from 6:12.) "are permitted to me." Expedient, says *Chrys.*, refers to his own destruction, edify, to stumbling a brother. We should not consider our own gratification at all, when it injures the spiritual good of our neighbor, and in all cases prefer that to our own.' *Bloomf.* A wider good is always to be preferred to a simply selfish one; the evident good most; the will of the All-knowing, and All-good, will thus be our supreme motive.



25 Whatsoever <sup>e</sup> is sold in the shambles, *that* eat, asking no question for conscience' sake :

26 For <sup>d</sup> the earth *is* the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

27 If any of them that believe not bid you *to a feast*, and ye be disposed to go ; whatsoever <sup>e</sup> is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience' sake.

28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat <sup>f</sup> not, for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience' sake : for <sup>g</sup> the earth *is* the Lord's, and the fulness thereof :

29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other : for why is my liberty judged of another *man's* conscience ?

30 For if I by <sup>h</sup> grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give <sup>i</sup> thanks ?

31 Whether <sup>j</sup> therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

32 Give <sup>k</sup> none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the <sup>l</sup> Gentiles, nor to the church of God :

33 Even as I please all *men* in all *things*, not seeking mine own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Ti. 4:4. <sup>g</sup> ver. 26. <sup>l</sup> 1 Pe. 4:11.  
<sup>d</sup> De. 10:14. Ps. <sup>h</sup> or, *thanksgiv-* <sup>k</sup> Ro. 14:13.  
<sup>f</sup> 1. 50:12. <sup>ing.</sup> <sup>2</sup> Co. 6:3.  
<sup>g</sup> Lu. 10:7. <sup>l</sup> Ro. 14:6. <sup>l</sup> *Griceke.*  
<sup>f</sup> c. 8:10,12. <sup>j</sup> 1 Co. 3:17.

practices. And when Christians were invited to feast with infidels, they were not to ask needless questions about the food set before them, but eat without scruple. Anything fit to be eaten, that was set before them at a common entertainment, they might lawfully eat. It is to be understood of civil feasting, not religious; for these last, among the heathens, were feasts on their sacrifices, which he had condemned before, as a participation in their idolatrous worship. At

PRACT. OBS. Men may seem to be converted; they may give a specious account of convictions, terrors, and comforts, in regular succession, and make a credible profession of faith; they may be admitted members of the visible church, where the strictest discipline is exercised, and stately hear the most faithful instruction; they may be greatly distinguished by external privileges and gifts; they may be baptized, in any form, and receive the 'spiritual meat,' and 'drink' of the Lord's supper, in the purest societies; and yet, not 'feeding on Christ Himself in their hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.' God will not be well pleased with them, but they will die short of Canaan, and perish with the multitude of the ungodly. Heb. 3:14-19. 4:1,2.—So vain are all, even the most scriptural outward signs, or sacramental pledges of salvation, without that 'inward and spiritual grace,' which is signified by them!—In these quiet times, we have 'no temptation' to resist, 'but such as is common to man;' and if we cannot now stand our ground against the world, the flesh, and the devil, what should we do in the fiery trial of persecution?—Whether the world smiles or frowns, it is a

V. 25. *Shambles.*] 'Neither regularly built shops, nor booths, but only stalls, set out in a certain part of the forum. The priests sometimes sold idolment in the market. Nay, (so *Theoph.*) some poor or mean persons, also, used sometimes to salt it and lay it up for private use.' Bl. *Questions.*] 'The Jews vexed themselves with innumerable scruples in their entertainments, as to the food, the company, the mode of eating; whether the fruits and condiments of the table were rightly titled, sacred or profane, clean or unclean; whether the meat was of an idol-offering, or torn, or strangled, or improperly slaughtered. All which the Gospel abolished.'

V. 26. 'As the earth is the Lord's, nothing is naturally impure, but only so in the opinion of any one.'

V. 28. Some versions and manuscripts omit the concluding clause; but there appears to me a peculiar beauty in the repetition, and it is entirely in the apostle's manner.—(26, 28) *The earth, &c.*] From the LXX, who well tr. the Heb. Ps. 24:1.

(28.) 'But if any one present, (v. 32.) say to you, this dish is made of flesh sacrificed to an idol, insinuating that he considers your eating of that dish, as a joining in the worship of the idol, do not eat of it, on account of not offending him who showed it, and of conscience. For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. Now when I say conscience, I do not mean thine own conscience; for thou knowest that the eating of such a dish, is not a worshipping of the idol; but the conscience of the other, who views it in that light.'

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a common feast they might expect common food; and they needed not to move scruples in their own minds, whether what was set before them was otherwise or no. Note, Though Christians should be very careful to know and understand their duty, yet they should not, by needless inquiries, perplex themselves.

4. Yet even at such an entertainment, he adds, if any should say it was a thing that had been offered to idols, they should refrain; *Eat not, for his sake that showed it, and for conscience-sake.* Whether it were the master of the feast, or any of the guests; whether it were spoken in the hearing of all, or whispered in the ear; they should refrain, for his sake who suggested this to them, whether he were an infidel, or an infirm Christian; and for conscience-sake, out of regard to conscience, that they might show a regard to it in themselves, and keep up a regard to it in others. This he backs with the same reason as the former; *for the earth is the Lord's.* There is food enough provided by our common Lord, of which we may eat without scruple. Note, The same doctrine may be variously improved, as here; and again, Christians should be very cautious of doing what may thus prejudice the conscience of others, and weaken its authority with them, which is by all means to be kept up.

5. He urges them to refrain, where they will give offence, while yet he allows it lawful to eat what was set before them as common food, though it had been offered in sacrifice. 'Another man's conscience is no measure to our conduct. What he thinks unlawful, is not therefore made unlawful to me, but may be a matter of liberty still; and as long as I own God as the Giver of my food, and render Him thanks for it, it is very unjust to reproach me for using it.' This must be understood abstracted from the scandal given, by eating in the circumstance mentioned: though some understand it to mean, 'Why should I, by using the liberty I have, give occasion to those who are scandalized, to speak evil of me?' According to that advice of the apostle, Rom. 14:16. *Let not your good be evil spoken of.* Christians should take care not to use their liberty to the hurt of others, nor their own reproach.

6. The apostle takes occasion, from this

discourse, to lay down a general rule for Christians' conduct, and apply it to this particular case, v. 31, 32. namely; that in eating and drinking, and in all we do, we should aim at the glory of God, at pleasing and honoring Him. This is the fundamental principle of practical godliness. The great end of all practical religion must direct us, where particular and express rules are wanting. Nothing must be done against the glory of God, and the good of our neighbors, connected with it. Nay, the tendency of our behavior to the common good, and the credit of our holy religion, should give direction to it. And therefore nothing should be done by us, to offend any, *whether Jew, or Gentile, or the church, v. 32.* The Jews should not be unnecessarily grieved or prejudiced, who have such abhorrence of idols, that they reckon everything offered to them thereby defiled, and that it will pollute and render culpable all who partake of it; nor should heathens be countenanced in their idolatry, by any behavior of ours, which they may construe as homage or honor done to their idols; nor young converts from Gentilism take any encouragement from our conduct, to retain any veneration for the heathen gods and worship, which they have renounced: nor should we do anything that might be a mean to pervert any members of the church from their Christian profession or practice. Our own humor and appetite must not determine our practice, but the honor of God, and the good and edification of the church. We should not so much consult our own pleasure and interest, as the advancement of the kingdom of God among men. A Christian should be a man devoted to God, and of a public spirit.

7. He presses all on them by his own example, v. 33. A preacher may press his advice home with boldness and authority, when he can enforce it with his own example. He is most likely to promote a public spirit in others, who can give evidence of it in himself. And it is highly commendable in a minister to neglect his own advantages, that he may promote the salvation of his hearers. This shows that he has a spirit suitable to his function. It is a station for public usefulness, and can never be faithfully discharged by a man of a narrow spirit and selfish principles.

dangerous enemy; but if we are believers, we shall be enabled to overcome it, with all its terrors and fascinations; Jn. 16:31-33. 1 Jn. 2:15-17. 5:4,5. nor will our faithful God, who 'keepeth his covenant and mercy to them that fear Him, suffer us to be tempted above what we are able.'—In all cases, we should 'flee from temptation,' and every occasion of sin; and not foolishly or ostentatiously parley with it.—If we would be deemed wise and prudent, let us show our wisdom by a circumspect conduct, and not by curious speculations.—Nor let Christians venture into those places, and join in those sacrifices to 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,' 1 Jn. 2:15-17. which are of no ill repute even in this favored land. Let us not be amused and imposed on with 'vain words,' about the innocence of this or the other worldly pleasure; these apologies are seldom grounded in truth; but if they were, are such indulgences 'expedient?' Do they tend to edification? Do they consist with charity? Might not the time and money be better employed? Does not the example grieve or mislead others? SCOTT.

'Perhaps thou wilt reply, But why is my liberty ruled by another's conscience. Besides, if, by the free gift of God, to whom the earth belongs, I be allowed to partake of all kinds of food, why am I spoken of as an evil doer, for eating that meat for which I give thanks to God?'

In answer, I say, for this very reason, that ye are allowed to partake of all kinds of food, whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, ye are bound to do all to the glory of God, by doing it agreeably to his will. By your meat, therefore, be ye no occasion of sin, neither to the unbelieving Jews, by lessening their abhorrence of idols, nor to the unbelieving Greeks, by confirming them in their idolatry, nor to the church of God, by making the ignorant think you idolaters. Even as I endeavor to please all men in all things innocent, not seeking my own advantage only, but that of the many also, that, by rendering myself acceptable to them, I may promote their salvation, to the great glory of God.'

MACKNIGHT. This reasoning may, doubtless, with great propriety, be applied to using the products of slave-labor.

V. 29-33. We may explain the passage, as the objection of the Corinthians to the apostle's directions; but it may be understood also as his inquiry: Why should they so incautiously use their liberty, as to give cause for its being condemned, in the consciences of other men? Or why should they so use those good gifts of God, which they received with thanksgiving, as to give cause for slander or offence? Rom. 14:18-18. SCOTT.



CHAP. XI.

1 He reproveth them, because in holy assemblies 4 their men prayed with their heads covered, and 6 women with their heads uncovered, 17 and because generally their meetings were not for the better, but for the worse, as, 21 namely, in profaning with their own feasts the Lord's supper. 23 Lastly, he calleth them to the first institution thereof.

**B**E ye followers <sup>a</sup> of me, even as I also *am* of Christ.

2 Now I praise you, brethren, that <sup>b</sup> ye remember me in all things, and keep <sup>c</sup> the <sup>d</sup> ordinances, as I delivered *them* unto you.

3 But I would have you know, that the head <sup>e</sup> of every man is Christ; <sup>f</sup> and the head of the woman *is* the man; <sup>g</sup> and the head of Christ *is* God.

4 Every man praying or prophesying, having *his* head covered, dishonoureth his head.

5 But every woman <sup>h</sup> that prayeth or prophesieth with *her* head uncovered, dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be <sup>i</sup> shorn; but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

7 For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head, forasmuch as he is the <sup>j</sup> image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

8 For <sup>k</sup> the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man;

9 Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.

10 For this cause ought the woman to have <sup>l</sup> power on *her* head, because of the angels.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—16. Paul, having answered the cases put to him, proceeds in this ch. to the redress of grievances. The first v. is put, by those who divided the epistle into chs., as a preface to the rest of the epistle, but seems to have been a more proper close to the last ch., in which he had enforced the cautions he had given against the abuse of liberty, by his own example, v. 1. and the way of speaking, in v. 2. looks like a transition to another subject. But whether it more properly belongs to this, or the last ch. it is plain from it, that Paul not only preached such doctrine as they ought to believe, but led such a life as they ought to imitate. Ministers are likely to preach most to the purpose, when they can press their hearers to follow their example. Christ's pattern is a copy without a blot; so is no man's else. We should follow no leader farther than he follows Christ. He passes next to reprehend and reform an indecency of which the women were more especially guilty.

1. He begins with a commendation of what was praiseworthy in them, v. 2. and the body of the church might, in the main, have continued to observe the ordinances and institutions of Christ, as received of the apostle, though in some things they deviated from, and corrupted them. When we reprove, it is very prudent and fit also to commend; it will show the reproof is not from ill-will, and a humor of censuring and finding fault; and therefore procure more regard.

2. He lays a foundation for his further reprehension, by asserting the superiority of the man over the woman, v. 3. Christ, in his mediatorial character and glorified humanity, is at the head of mankind. He is not only first of the kind, but Lord and Sovereign: so the man is the head of the two sexes; not indeed with such dominion as Christ has over the kind, or God has over the Man Christ Jesus, but yet a superiority and headship; and the woman should be in subjection, and not assume or usurp the man's place. This is the situation in which God has placed her; and for that reason she should have a mind suited to her rank, and not do anything that looks like an affectation of changing places. Somewhat

like this the women of the church of Corinth seem to have been guilty of, who were under inspiration, and prayed and prophesied even in their assemblies, v. 5. It is indeed an apostolical canon, that the women *should keep silence in the churches*, ch. 14:34. 1 Tim. 2:12. which some understand without limitation, and seems very well to agree with the connexion of the apostle's discourse, ch. 14. but others with a limitation, in case of inspiration. Or, though a woman might not preach even by inspiration, (because teaching is the business of a superior,) yet she might pray, or utter hymns by inspiration, even in the public assembly. She did not show any affectation of superiority over the man by such acts of public worship. It is plain, the apostle does not in this place prohibit the thing, but the manner of doing it. And yet he might utterly disallow the thing, and lay an unlimited restraint on the woman, in another part of the epistle. These things are not contradictory. It is to his present purpose to reprehend the manner wherein the women prayed and prophesied in the church, without determining, in this place, whether they did well or ill in so doing. Note, The manner of doing a thing enters into the morality of it. We must not only be concerned to do good, but that it be well done.

3. The thing he reprehends, is, the woman's praying or prophesying uncovered, or the man's doing either covered, v. 4, 5. To understand this, it must be observed, that it was a signification either of shame or subjection, for persons to be veiled or covered, in the Eastern countries, contrary to the custom of ours, where the being bare-headed betokens subjection, and being covered, superiority and dominion. And this will help us the better to understand,

4. The reasons of his reprehension. (1.) *The man that prays or prophesies with his head covered, dishonoureth his Head*, i. e. Christ, the Head of every man, v. 3. by appearing in a habit unsuitable to the rank in which God has placed him. We should even in our dress and habit, avoid everything that may dishonor Christ. *The woman, on the other hand, who prays or prophesies with the head uncovered, dishonoureth her head*, i. e. the man, v. 3. She appears in the dress of her

a Ep. 5:1. 3:1,5,6. k Ge. 2:18,22,23.  
l Th 1:6. g Ju. 14:23. l i. e. a covering,  
b c. 4:17. c. 15:27,28. i i. e. in sign that she  
c Lu. 1:6. h Ac. 21:9. is under the  
d tradition. i Nu. 5:18. power of her  
e Ep. 5:23. De. 21:12. husband. Ge.  
f Ge. 3:16. 1 Pe. j Ge. 5:1. 24:65.

NOTES. CHAP. XI. V. 1. This v. is most evidently connected with the conclusion of the preceding ch.; it referred to what the apostle had written concerning his own conduct, in ch. 9. and it concludes the subject which began in ch. 8.

(1.) 'Lest he might seem to extol his own example, Paul refers it to Christ.' ROSENM.

V. 2—16. The apostle here entered on another subject; and began to discuss several particulars respecting the public assemblies of the Christians at Corinth; which, with some digressions, he continued to the end of ch. 14. Several women had been endued with the Spirit of prophecy, which enabled them, by immediate inspiration, to offer prayers for the congregation, or to give instructions, or even to predict future events; for it is not at all reasonable to suppose, that a woman could be said to 'prophesy,' merely by being present when another prophesied. Ex. 15:20, 21. Judg. 4:4. 5:1. 1 S. 2:1—10. 2 K. 22:14. Luke 2:35—38. Acts 2:14—21. 21:7—14, vv. 8, 9. This seems to have been the only case, in which women were allowed to speak in public, and in this respect some abuses had crept in, 14:34, 35. 1 Tim. 2:11—14.—Some think these prophetesses had their hair dishevelled, after the manner of the Pythian priestesses of Apollo; if so, it would be an additional reason for the apostle thus strenuously to oppose them [in this thing].—Many conjectures have been formed concerning the meaning of the following expression, 'because of the angels;' but, probably, the apostle referred to the presence of holy angels, who had witnessed the creation of man as spectators, or were even in some respects joint worshippers with believers, in their public assemblies; which therefore ought to be regulated with the most exact propriety, that these heavenly worshippers might not witness anything unbecoming so holy an occasion. Job 38:4—7. SCOTT.

(2.) Remember.] Lit. mind. They had asked his directions. ED.

(4.) Head.] 'I. e. master, chief: so the classics. In v. 3. however, God is said to be the Head, as being the cause of Christ, say the Gr. fathers and comtrs.' Bloomf. The expression, like that of 'Father and Son,' is used in accommodation to the inexplicable relation which the Divine and human bear to each other in Emmanuel. *The head of the woman, &c.*] See on v. 11. ID.

(5.) Propheying.] Bloomf. thinks this cannot certainly mean *teach and preach*, as the apostle expressly forbids this to women, 14:34, 35. He suggests that they might be permitted to improvise, or to pronounce certain poetical praises, like Luke 1:67. 'where the very term is used. Schl. Comp. 1 K. 18:29. 1 S. 10:5, 6. and Philo, describing Moses' canticle at the Red Sea, as "propheteia, from enthusiasm;" and in Esth. 6:12.' Dishonoureth.] For a man to be covered, seems to have been esteemed a mark of a kind of servitude; for a woman to be uncovered in

public, was, and still is, accounted in the E. a disgraceful impropriety, and one mark of a prostitute. For a woman to be *shorn*, was accounted, so antiquaries and philologists prove, the greatest dishonor and disfigurement to a female; 'hence it was only adopted as a sign of extreme grief (see Deut. 21:12.), or imposed as a mark of infamy and disgrace on adulteresses and harlots. See Wets. and Kyp. Ros. suspects it was usual in Greece, for the women to be unveiled in the temples; and thinks some, through hatred of Judaism, wished to introduce this in the Corinthian church. Selden says, a neglect of being veiled in public was a lawful cause of divorce with the Jews: and from the earliest antiquity, Gen. 24:65. The Greeks thought it (so Wets. proves, says Bl.) a flagrant impropriety. Schoett. says, Lightf. proves, that, in Jewish worship, the men had their heads covered, (mitres and caps were part of the Mosaic institution,) and the women theirs uncovered; and adds, what is brought forward, of veiling the head in worship, refers to the Romans, not the Greeks. See Bloomf. ED.

(7.) Man, invested by God with authority over the whole creation, may be considered as the *image* (and so Diog. and Lucian express it) or type of God, and as it were, a ray from his brightness (Gr. *doxa*, glory, Heb. *kebol*), just as viceroys and rulers are sometimes metaphorically said to be images of their sovereign. So Plut., &c. For, says Rosenn., 'man is placed in the highest rank of this world, and in respect to woman, as a kind of secondary god.' [Comp. Gen. 5:1. 2:23. and Ex. 4:16. where Moses is to be to Aaron, in a certain sense, *instead of God*. ID.

(10.) Power.] 'The veil married women wore on their heads, in token of subjection to their husbands, Gen. 24:65. (called *radid*, says Goodwin, from *radad*, subjection), and thus the dress which indicated she considered herself subject; and Chardin [see Bush] says, married women in Persia wear for this a peculiar habit.' 'A sign of subjection would not be called *power*, *exousia*; therefore some think it a female ornament of braids, set with jewels, see Wolf; others a *veil*, but denoting the superiority of the married over the maiden, her inferior in *dignity* among the Jews, also in the E. and in Europe, which her name, *domina*, *mistress*, [Mrs.] indeed implies. Thus the Sept. calls Sarah's veil, Gen. 20:16. *the honor of her face*. Comp. Virg. *Aen.* 7. 814. Bp. Middleton refers to the power or license the veil gave the wearer to appear in public.' Bl.—Angels.] 'Neither (see Bl.) young ministers, [comp. Rev. 1:20.] lest female beauty should ensnare them, still less, lest it ensnare celestial spirits, (which some wildly ground on Gen. 6:2.) [nor bishops or doctors of the church; some think unbecoming would have indicated want of respect to such.] *Whit.* understands, evil angels, referring to Eve's punishment, Gen. 3:16.; others, *spies*, [the most favorite idea for the last half cent.] sent by the heathens to observe and report any



11 Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

12 For as the woman *is* of the man, even so *is* the man also by the woman: but all things of God.

13 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?

15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.

16 But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

17 Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

m Ro. 11:36. p c. 1:11,12. 2 Pe. 2:1,2.  
n or, veil. q or, schisms. s or, sects.  
o 1 Ti. 6:4. r Mat. 18:7. t Lu. 2:35.

superior, and throws off the token of her subjection. She might, with equal decency, cut her hair short, or cut it close, the common dress of the man in that age. This would be a manifest affectation of that superiority which God had conferred on the other sex. And this was properly the fault of these prophetesses in the church of Corinth. The sexes should not affect to change places. The order in which Divine Wisdom has placed persons and things, is best and fittest: to endeavor to amend it, is to destroy all order, and introduce confusion. Women should keep to the rank God has chosen for them, and not dishonor their head; for this, in the result, is to dishonor God. (2.) Another reason against this conduct was, that the man is the image and glory of God, the representative of that glorious

scandals in the Christian assemblies: [and such we know were sometimes sent. (Tertull.) The word here, *aggelos*, however, is only used, says Bl., of incorporeal spirits] and, indeed, their presence in religious assemblies, [to which also Bl. refers the text, in accordance with the Jewish opinion, of ministering spirits attendant in the house of God, and symbols of his presence,] is favored by Eccles. 5:16. [Tobit 22:15.] and the figures of *cherubim* in the tabernacle and temple. Doddr. Ep.

(11.) Man and woman are expletives of each other; and, in general, man has the guiding or reflective faculties in greater proportion, woman the affective; man more wisdom, woman more love, perhaps. Some women are, indeed, better fitted to rule than some men, yet it is the exception, both in mind and body: but when the views and feelings of the parties are as they always should be, neither will desire or even think to *domineer*, for the will is identical, as it were, even (it is the apostle's own comparison, v. 3.) as Christ's and God's will are the same. Would that the holiness, the profound purpose of marriage, were better understood!

(14, 15.) *Long hair.* Note, 1 Pet. 3:3. and Vol. III. p. 303, note (40) and cut (35). The modern orientals carry this idea of the apostle so far, that the men shave all the head but a scalp-lock, young women wear it hanging even to the ground, and for a young man to wear the hair long, is infamous. See Bush. on vs. 10 and 15. Both the Jews (see Lightf. &c.) and the Greeks (see Wets.) thought long hair indecorous, and cut it short. The Sarmatians (as their descendants) and Lacedæmonians, wore it long. 'Perhaps it was always prevalent in the cold N.' See Bl. 'The hair of women naturally grows to greater length than that of men.'

(16.) *Seems, &c.* Thinks good to dispute this, I have only to say, we have no such custom here; or, we apostles have no such custom as this; nor in any other of the churches planted by myself, or the other apostles. So Doddr.

V. 17—22. 'It seems evident from hence, that *heresy* is something worse than the *schism* above-mentioned.' Doddr.—It is almost unaccountable that a Christian church, in a short time after this eminent apostle had left them, should run into so abominable a profanation of this sacred institution. But the public feasts of the Greeks were frequently conducted in this manner, which appears to us as inconsistent

dominion and headship which God has over the world. It is the man who is set at the head of this lower creation, and therein bears the resemblance of God. The woman, on the other hand, is the glory of the man, v. 7. she is his representative. Not but she has dominion over the inferior creatures, as she is a partaker of human nature, and so far is God's representative too, but it is at second-hand. She is the image of God, inasmuch as she is the image of the man, v. 8. The man was first made, and made head of the creation here below, and therein the image of the divine dominion; and the woman was made out of the man, and shone with a reflection of his glory, being made superior to the other creatures here below, but in subjection to her husband, and deriving that honor from him out of whom she was made. (3.) The woman was made for the man, to be his help-meet, and not the man for the woman. She was naturally, therefore, made subject to him, because made for him, for his use, and help, and comfort. And she who was intended to be always in subjection to the man, should do nothing, in Christian assemblies, that looks like an affectation of equality. (4.) She ought to have power on her head, because of the angels. Power, i. e. a veil, the token, not of her having power or superiority, but being under the power of her husband, subjected to him, and inferior to the other sex. Rebekah, when she met Isaac, and was delivering herself into his possession, put on her veil, in token of her subjection, Gen. 24:50. Thus would the apostle have the women appear in Christian assemblies, even though they spake there by inspiration, because of the angels, i. e. say some, because of the evil angels; others, because of the good angels. Jews and Christians have had an opinion, that these ministering spirits are many of them present in their assemblies. Their presence should restrain Christians from all indecencies in the worship of God. We should learn from all, so to behave in the public assemblies of divine worship, as to express a reverence for God, and a content and satisfaction with that rank in which He has placed us.

5. He thinks fit to guard his argument with a caution, lest the inference be carried too far, v. 11, 12. The man and the woman were made for one another, and made to be a mutual comfort and blessing, not one a slave, and the other a tyrant. Both were to be one flesh, Gen. 2:24. and this for the

propagation of a race of mankind. As the woman was first formed out of the man, the man is ever since propagated [glorious privilege] by the woman, v. 12. all by the divine wisdom and power of the First Cause so ordaining it. The authority and subjection should be no greater, than are suitable to two in such near relation and close union to each other. As it is the will of God that the woman know her place, so it is his will also, that the man abuse not his power.

6. He enforces his argument from the natural covering provided for the woman, v. 13—15. 'Judge in yourselves, consult your own reason, hearken to what nature suggests; Is it comely for a woman to pray to God uncovered? Should there not be a distinction kept up between the sexes, in wearing their hair, since nature has made one?' It should be our concern, especially in Christian and religious assemblies, to make no breach on the rules of natural decency.

7. He sums up all, by referring them who were contentious, to the usages and customs of the churches, v. 10. He does not silence the contentious by mere authority, but lets them know, that they would appear to the world as very odd and singular, in their humor, if they would quarrel for a custom to which all the churches of Christ were at that time utter strangers, or against a custom in which they all concurred, and that on the ground of natural decency.

V. 17—22. Here the apostle sharply rebukes them for much greater disorders than the former, in their partaking of the Lord's supper, which was commonly done in the first ages, as the ancients tell us, with a love-feast annexed. It is plain, from the beginning of the ch. that he was glad to commend as far as he could. But such scandalous disorders, in so sacred an institution, called for sharp reprehension. They quite turned the institution against itself. The ordinances of Christ, if they do not make us better, will be very apt to make us worse; if they do not melt and mend, they will harden. Corruptions will be confirmed in us, if the proper means do not cure them.

1. He tells them, that, on coming together, they fell into divisions, schisms. There may be schism, where there is no separation of communion. Uncharitableness, alienation of affection, especially if it grows up to discord, and feuds, and contentions, constitute schism. Christians may separate from each other's communion, and yet be charitable one towards another; they may continue in

with civility as with piety. The self-conceited Corinthian teachers carried their notions of Christian liberty to an excess, almost inconceivable at present; they not only joined in the idolatrous feasts of their neighbors, but they introduced the customs of them into the church, and so, perverted this sacred feast; and to show the folly of man's wisdom, they were left thus to disgrace themselves more than any other church, because they thought themselves wiser than others. 4:9—13.—It is also wonderful that the apostle should express so favorable an opinion of the professed Christians at Corinth in general, notwithstanding these gross abuses; and we should thence learn caution in condemning whole religious societies, because of those evils, which perhaps but few fully approve, though numbers are seduced to connive at them.—'The Judaizing converts thought themselves obliged to drink plentifully at their festivals; four large cups of wine, saith Lightf., at the paschal supper; and to be quite drunk, saith Buxtorf, at the feast of Purim.' Whitby. Esth. 9:21—32. If such sentiments were publicly avowed, at the time when the apostle wrote, our astonishment at the facts advanced may be abated; but our abhorrence should be proportionably increased.—'Though the Corinthians had written to Paul, requesting his . . . directions in several points; . . . yet they had not said one syllable about the enormities which had crept in amongst them, and in the blame of which they all shared: . . . his information, concerning these irregularities, had come to him from other quarters. (1:11, 12. 5:1, 2.)' Paley. Scott.

(18, 19. Divisions.) Schismata, synonymous, says Bl., with *haireseis*, heresies, v. 19. But there seems a distinction, which Milton thus draws: 'Sects may be in a true church as well as in a false, when men follow the doctrine too much for the teacher's sake, whom they think almost infallible; and this becomes, through infirmity, implicit faith; and the name *sectary* pertains to such a disciple.—Schism is a rent or division in the church, when it comes to the separating of congregations, and may also happen to a true church as well as to a false; yet in the true needs not tend to the breaking of communion, if they can agree in the right administration of that wherein they communicate, keeping their other opinions to themselves, not being destructive to faith. . . —Heresy is in the will and choice, professedly against Scripture; error is against the will, in misunderstanding the Scripture, after all sincere endeavors to understand it rightly. Hence it was said well, by one of the ancients,



20 When ye come together therefore into one place, <sup>u</sup> *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper.

21 For in eating, every one taketh before *other* his own supper : and one is hungry, and <sup>v</sup> another is drunken.

22 What ! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in ? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that <sup>w</sup> have not ? What shall I say to you ? shall I praise you in this ? I praise *you* not.

23 For <sup>x</sup> I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, <sup>y</sup> the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread :

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body, which is broken for you : this do <sup>z</sup> in remembrance of me.

<sup>u</sup> or, ye cannot eat. Jude 12. y Mat. 26:26.  
<sup>v</sup> 2 Pe. 2:13. <sup>w</sup> are poor. x c. 15:3. <sup>z</sup> or, for a.

the same communion, and yet be uncharitable. This last is schism, rather than the former. The apostle had heard a report of the Corinthians' divisions, and he tells them he had too much reason to believe it. For, adds he, there must be heresies also ; not only quarrels, but factions, and perhaps such corrupt opinions as strike at the foundation of Christianity, and all sound religion. Not that men are necessitated to be guilty

of them ; but the event is certain, and God permits them, that they who are approved, may be set to view, and appear faithful by their constant adherence to the truths and ways of God, notwithstanding the temptations of seducers. Note, The wisdom of God can make the wickedness and errors of others a foil to the piety and integrity of the saints. 2. He charges them not only with discord and division, but with scandalous disorder, *v. 21*. Heathens used to drink plentifully at their feasts on their sacrifices. Many of the wealthier Corinthians, seem to have taken the same liberty at the Lord's table, or at least at their *love-feasts*. They would not stay for one another ; the rich despised the poor, and ate and drank up the provisions themselves brought, before the poor were allowed to partake ; thus some wanted, while others had more than enough ; and a divine ordinance, which should have been a bond of mutual amity and affection, was made an instrument of discord and disunion. The poor were deprived of the food prepared for them, and the rich turned a feast of charity into a debauch ! Thus to eat the outward elements, was not to eat Christ's body. There is a careless and irregular eating of the Lord's supper, which is as none at all ; it will but increase guilt. It was a contempt of God's house, or of the church, *v. 22*. thus to come to the Lord's table, to feast, cabal, and quarrel, and keep the poor from their share. Religious feasts should be attended religiously, and it is a heinous evil, and [a sin] severely to be censured, for Christians to treat their fellow-Christians with contempt and insolence, but especially at the Lord's table. This is doing what they can to pour contempt on divine ordinances. Let us carefully look to it, that

nothing in our behavior at the Lord's table have this appearance.

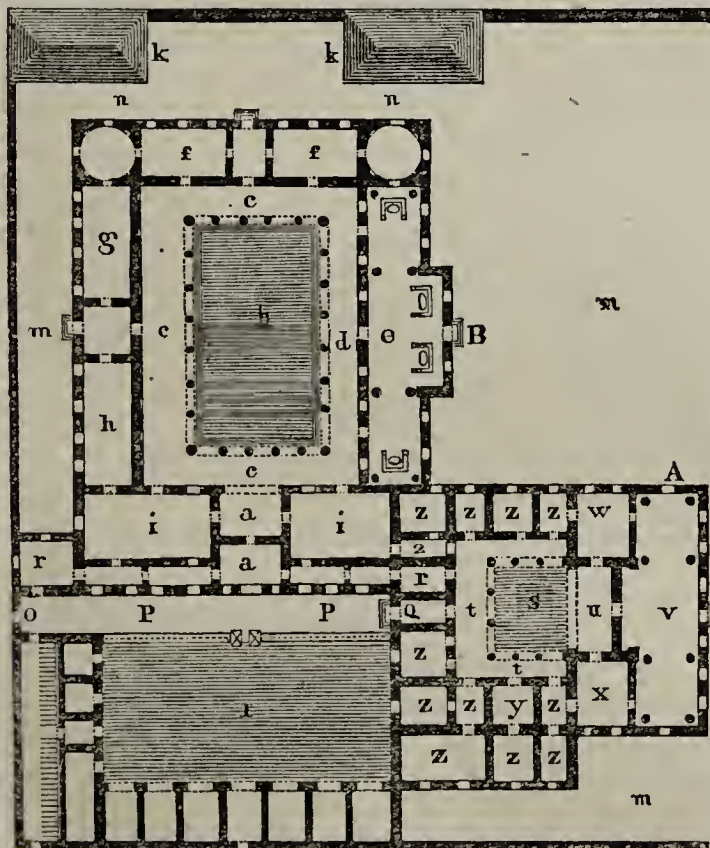
V. 23—34. To rectify these gross corruptions and irregularities, the apostle sets the sacred institution here to view. This should be the rule in the reformation of all abuses.

I. He tells us how he came by the knowledge of it, *v. 23*. He was not among the apostles at the first institution of it, but he had the knowledge of it by revelation from Christ : and what he had received, he communicated, without varying from the truth a tittle, without adding or diminishing.

II. He gives us a more particular account of the institution, than we meet with elsewhere ; an account, 1. Of the Author ; our Lord Jesus Christ. The King of the church only has power to institute sacraments. 2. The time of the institution, *the very night wherein He was betrayed* ; just as He was entering on his sufferings, which are therein to be commemorated. 3. The institution itself ; our Savior took bread, and when He had given thanks, or *blessed*, as Mat. 26:26. *He brake, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body, broken for you ; this do in remembrance of Me. And in like manner He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood ; this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me, v. 24, 25*. In which observe,

(1.) The materials of this sacrament ; both, [1.] As to the visible signs, bread and the cup, the former called *bread* many times over in this passage, even after what the papists call *consecration*, yea, called *bread*, though it be at the same time said to be *the body of the Lord* ; a plain argument that the apostle knew nothing of their monstrous and absurd doctrine of transubstantiation. The latter is as plainly a part of this institution

“err I may, but a heretic I will not be.” .. It is a human frailty to err, and no man is infallible here on earth. But so long as all [sects] profess to set the Word of God only before them as the rule of faith and obedience, and use all diligence and sincerity of heart, by reading, by learning, by study, by prayer, for illumination of the Holy Spirit, to understand the rule and obey it, they have done what man can do. God will assuredly pardon them, as He did the friends of Job. Milton, of True Rel., Heresy, Schism, Toleration. Prose Works, Boston, 1826. Ed.



Plan of a Greek House, after Vitruvius. B, husband's apartments ; A, wife's do ; o, entry, or first gate, on the S., and on the public street (from which the whole edifice is isolated by a dead wall, running all round) ; p, alley, called *iter* by Vitruvius ; q, second, or interior gate ; r, porter's lodges (comp. Acts 12:13, 14.) ; s, peristyle ; t, portico ; u, vestibule ; v, working halls ; w, bedchamber, or *Thalamus* ; x, visit-chamber, or *Amphithalamus* ; y, eating-room ; z, rooms for attendants, domestics, &c. ; 2, communication between the husband's and wife's apartments ; a, vestibules ; b, grand peristyle (columned court) ; c, portico ; d, Rhodian portico ; e, festival hall (with 4 sets of tables, cut, 8:10.) ; f, librarians ; g, picture-gallery ; h, eating-hall ; i, audience and conversation-hall ; k, lodges for guests ; l, stables and yard ; m, garden.

(21.) It was an ancient Grecian custom, at the feasts of Plutus, and of Peace, for the rich and poor to partake in common, each person bringing his own provision, and throwing it into the common mess. Common meals, in imitation of those of our Lord and the apostles, were (it seems) instituted after divine service, on the Lord's day, and either preceded (which seems most probable) or (as others say) followed the eucharist. Bl. In these *agapæ*, founded to promote a feeling of Christian equality, what each one contributed ceased to be his own, but selfishness frustrated the end of them. Drunken.] *Drink to satiety.* Bloomf. Ed.

(22.) Houses to eat and drink in.] By their conduct the rich would put to shame those who, if they must contend with poverty, ought to be left to bear their want at home, and not to be shamed with it abroad, and insulted (for, as *Juv.* says, the hardest part of poverty is ridicule) by so rude a comparison with the abundance enjoyed by their richer brethren, especially at a meal intended to put all on the same footing. Bl. The cut, of a Grecian house, shows the luxury to which the apostle alludes : and may serve to illustrate the manners of that age. Great wealth is not favorable to gospel-feelings, yet all seek it with avidity ! 'Seldom,' says *Bickersteth*, 'do Christians gain a large measure of riches or dominion, of science or learning, without suffering in their best interests ; and rather need our prayers, than congratulations.'

V. 23—28. This account of the institution of the Lord's supper entirely coincides with that which has been considered, and fully confirms the interpretation given of it. It was of great importance, that it should be here repeated and enforced, that the obligation of the institution, to the end of the world, might be fully ascertained. The words, 'which is broken for you,' are here added, to those recorded by Matthew and Mark ; and substituted for 'which is given for you,' in Luke's gospel. Mark 14:22—25. Luke 22:19, 20. Notes, Mat. 26:26—29. The body of Christ, as 'broken,' in his sufferings and death, is represented by the bread broken ; but an *unbroken* wafer does not represent this most material circumstance.—It is also here added, that as 'oft as they drank of the cup,' they ought to do it 'in remembrance of' Christ ; in order that the frequent recollection of his love, his sufferings, and their obligations to Him, might have a proper effect on their hearts and lives. Whenever they attended on this sacred service, they would 'show the Lord's death,' i. e. profess their faith in it, and declare its end and efficacy ; till He should come to judgment. To evade this decisive declaration, by saying, till the time when Christ should come, by his spiritual illumination on the mind, to take men off from carnal ordinances, is a striking instance of perverse ingenuity, used in defence of rooted prejudices.—This [its being required that every man should examine himself in order to attend on this ordinance] expressly shows it to be every Christian's duty to attend on this sacrament ; and that both the bread and the wine should be administered to all without exception. Indeed, in one place, it is in the original, 'shall eat this bread, or drink this cup, &c.' (27) ; and the needless variation in our version has caused some cavils of the papists ; yet the v. would as readily prove, that the wine alone, as that the bread alone should be received ; but, in fact, it only shows, that both bread and wine should be received, in a serious, believing, and reverential manner.—Much has been written, by some expositors, concerning the love-feasts, supposed to have accompanied the administration of the Lord's supper in primitive times, as having given occasion to the disorders, which the apostle here reproves ; but it is not certain, that he at all refers to them ; and indeed, it is not certain, or very probable, that they were at this time in use. 2 Pet. 2:12—14. Jude 11—13. Scott.



25 After the same manner also *he took* the eup, when he had supped, saying, This eup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, <sup>a</sup>ye do shew the Lord's death till he <sup>b</sup>come.

27 Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, <sup>c</sup>unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine <sup>d</sup> himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh <sup>e</sup>damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

31 For <sup>f</sup>if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we <sup>g</sup>are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

r or, *show ye.* d 2 Co. 13:5. f Ps. 32:5.  
b Re. 22:20. 1 Jn. 3:20, 21. 1 Jn. 1:9.  
c Jn. 6:63, 64. e *judgment.* g Ps. 94:12, 13.  
c. 10:21. Ro. 13:2. He. 12:5—11.

as words can make it. Matthew tells us, our Lord bid them *all* drink of it, *ch.* 26:27. as if he would, by this expression, lay in a caveat against the papists' depriving the laity of the cup. Bread and the cup are both made use of, because it is a holy *feast*. Nor is it here, or anywhere, made necessary, that any particular liquor should be in the cup. In one evangelist, indeed, it is plain wine was the liquor used by our Savior, though it was, perhaps, mingled with water, according to the Jewish custom; see Lightfoot on Mat. 26. But this by no means renders it unlawful to have a sacrament, where

persons cannot come at wine.\* In every place of Scripture in which we have an account of this part of the institution, it is always expressed by a figure. The eup is put for what was in it, without once specifying what the liquor was, in the words of the institution. [2.] The things signified by these outward signs; they are Christ's *body* and *blood*, his body broken, his blood shed, together with all the benefits which flow from his death and sacrifice; *it is the New Testament in his blood*. His blood is the seal and sanction of all the privileges of the new covenant; and worthy receivers take it as such, at this holy ordinance. They have the New Testament, and their own title to all the blessings of the new covenant, confirmed to them by his blood.

(2.) The manner in which the materials are to be used; our Savior's actions, which are, taking the bread and cup, giving thanks, breaking the bread, and giving about both the one and the other; the actions of the communicants, which were, to take the bread and eat, to take the cup and drink, and both in remembrance of Christ. But the external acts are not the whole, or the principal part, of what is to be done at this holy ordinance; each has a significancy. Our Savior, having undertaken to make an offering of Himself to God, and procure, by his death, the remission of sins, with all other gospel-benefits, for true believers, did, at the institution, deliver his body and blood, with all the benefits procured by his death, to his disciples; and continues to do the same, every time the ordinance is administered to true believers. This is here exhibited, or set forth, as the food of souls. And as food, though ever so wholesome or rich, will yield no nourishment without being eaten, here the communicants are to take and eat, or to receive Christ and feed on Him, his grace and benefits, and by faith convert them into nourishment to their souls. They are to take Him as their Lord and Life, yield themselves up to Him, and live on Him. *He is our Life*, Col. 3:4.

(3.) The ends of this institution. [1.] It was appointed to be done in *remembrance of*

\* The common red wine of the Levant was probably used, and if any other liquid be substituted, a red colored liquid suggests itself as most impressive, for obvious reasons. Rev. Mr. Schaeffer, Missionary to Turkey, in a learned article in the Bib. Repos., for Oct., 1836, mentions the arguments known to him in favor of our Lord's having used must, sryup, and water in the institution of the Eucharist; and states the reasons which induce him to maintain, that common fermented wine was used. The question does not seem to admit of certainty. Ed.

Christ, to keep fresh in our minds an ancient favor, his dying for us, as well as to remember an absent friend, even Christ interceding for us, in virtue of his death, at God's right hand. [2.] It was to *show forth Christ's death*, to declare and publish it. It is not barely in remembrance of Christ; of what He has done and suffered, that this ordinance was instituted; but to commemorate, to celebrate, his glorious condescension and grace in our redemption. We declare his death to be our life, the spring of all our comforts and hopes. And we glory in such a declaration; we show forth his death, and spread it before God, as our accepted sacrifice and ransom. We set it in view of our own faith, for our own comfort and quickening: and we own, before the world, by this very service, that we are the disciples of Christ, who trust in Him alone for salvation, and acceptance with God.

It is moreover hinted here, concerning this ordinance, 1st. That it should be frequent; *as often as ye eat this bread*, &c. The ancient churches celebrated this ordinance every Lord's day, if not every day when they assembled for worship. 2dly. That it must be perpetual. It is to be celebrated *till the Lord shall come*, the second time. This is our warrant for keeping this feast. It was our Lord's will that we should thus celebrate the memorials of his death and passion, till He come and put an end to the present state of things, and his own mediatorial administration, by passing the final sentence. The Lord's supper is not a temporary, but a standing and perpetual, ordinance.

III. He lays before the Corinthians the danger of *receiving unworthily*; of prostituting this institution as they did, and using it to the purposes of feasting and fiction, with intentions opposite to its designs, or a temper of mind altogether unsuitable to it; or keeping up the covenant with sin and death, while professedly renewing and confirming their covenant with God. 1. Such contract great guilt, *guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*, v. 27. of violating this sacred institution; of despising his body and blood. 2. They run a great hazard, v. 29. They are likely to bring down punishment, liable to damnation, to spiritual judgments, and eternal misery. But fearful [i. e. over-cautious] believers should not be discouraged from attending at this holy ordinance, by the sound of these words, as if they bound on

(23.) *Received.*] Bloomf. shows, this can mean *nothing else* than by revelation from Christ, 15:3. Gal. 1:11, 12. 2 Cor. 12:1. 'This epistle seems to have been written before any of the gospels; and it seems to be intimated, Gal. 1:17, &c., that when Paul wrote it, he had seen none of the apostles. It is very remarkable this institution should make a part of that immediate revelation with which Christ honored him; and it affords a strong argument for its perpetuity. For had others of the apostles (as Barclay presumes to insinuate) mistaken what passed at the last passover, and founded the observation of the eucharist on that mistake, surely Christ would rather have corrected this error in his new revelation to Paul, than have administered such an occasion of confirming Christians in it.' Doddr. See some admirable remarks on this v. in *Macknight*. Ed.

(24.) *This is.*] 'I. e. signifies: comp. Mat. 26:26. Gen. 41:26, 27. Ez. 37:11. Dan. 2:38. 4:19. Mat. 13:37—39. John 15:1—5. 1 Cor. 10:4. Gen. 17:10. Ex. 12:11.' KRAUSE.

(25.) *As often as, &c.*] 'The popish interpretation of this (see *Slade*) is such, as none but persons utterly ignorant of the force of the expression would ever think of, and none but those who were determined to prevent it, would ever have devised.' BLOOMF. ED.

(26.) *Shew.*] Both celebrate and commemorate. See *Bl.* ED.  
(27.) *And drink.*] 'Gr. ε, put for kai, an idiom frequent in the O. T., as Gen. 3:22. So popular use in most languages. Some MSS. read kai; but that seems from *correction*. [But see Dr. A. C., 11: end.] So A. D. several vers. 100; but such are questionable evidence, since trs. are not bound to render *idioms* lit. See *Whit.* The Romanists' argument, (like theirs in v. 25.) proves too much; for if either *cup* or *bread* were "whole Christ" by itself, it would authorize the separate use of the cup (which they never presume upon) as well as of the bread. Of.] Respecting, i. e. guilty of profaning the symbols. So also Casaub., Light., (perhaps Grot.) Locke, Whit., and most recent commentators. Compare James 2:10.' BLOOMF. ED.

V. 29—34. The scruples and consequent neglect of numbers, who seem in other things to obey Christ, have no ground in this passage, except in the apparent harshness of our tr., in which the word that signifies 'judgment,' is ren. *damnation*; and this commonly means eternal punishment. Indeed, the conscious unworthiness, and lamented infirmities of those, who desire to express their gratitude for redeeming love,

are widely different from the profanations of these Corinthians, who yet were not at all supposed to have sinned beyond the hope of pardon; and generally they, who deem themselves most *unworthy*, are least likely to receive 'unworthily;' which is commonly the sin of the careless, or proud, and self-sufficient.—It is manifest, that the *custom*, which some scrupulously adhere to, as a matter of conscience, often to the injury of their health, of receiving the Lord's supper *fasting*, has not the smallest ground in Scripture, and is, in fact, a mere superstition; as is the still much more common *notion*, that irreverence, or even involuntary defects and mistakes, in this sacrament, are far more heinous and perilous, than in other acts of worship; or even in administering or receiving baptism.—It should also be observed, that the apostle does not speak of *worthy* or *unworthy* participants; but of eating and drinking *unworthily*. Not the character of the person, but the manner of receiving the Lord's supper, forms his direct subject.—'We do not presume to come to this thy table, trusting in our own righteousness; but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table.' *Communion service*. The self-righteous must then receive *most unworthily*, because he proudly thinks himself *worthy*; and that man comes in the most *worthy* manner, who approaches in deep humility, profound reverence, simple dependence on the mercy of God, through the atoning blood of Christ, and lively gratitude for favors so entirely undeserved. SCOTT.

(30.) *Sickly, &c.*] 'Similar judgments were exercised on Christians for other heinous offences. 1 Cor. 5:5. 1 Tim. 1:20. 1 John 5:16. James 5:14, 15. Admitting (what seems not very probable) that after accounts of the sickness and death of those who had profaned the sacrament, *all fables*, will not prove such judgments were not exercised under a dispensation so altogether *extraordinary* as that of the apostolic age.' BLOOMF. ED.

(32.) *Chastened.*] As children, so the Greek literally; not capriciously. ED.

(33.) 'Again he adverts to the insult and rejection the poor had sustained, at the Azapa and Lord's supper. "Receive each other with hospitality, and treat each other as you treat private guests." *Rosenm., Mackn.* This, of course, implies, that there shall be a perfect community between the rich and poor, and it is a very delicate way of inculcating the injunction.' Bloomf. ED.



34 And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto <sup>b</sup>condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

CHAP. XII.

<sup>1</sup> Spiritual gifts <sup>4</sup> are divers, <sup>7</sup> yet all to profit withal. <sup>8</sup> And to that end are diversely bestowed: <sup>12</sup> that by the like proportion, as the members of a natural body tend all to the <sup>16</sup> mutual decency, <sup>22</sup> service, and <sup>26</sup> succor of the same body; <sup>27</sup> so we should do one for another, to make up the mystical body of Christ.

**N**OW concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

<sup>2</sup> Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb <sup>a</sup>idols, even as ye were led.

<sup>3</sup> Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man <sup>b</sup>speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus <sup>c</sup>accursed: and <sup>d</sup>that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

<sup>h</sup> judgment. <sup>b</sup> Ma. 9:39. <sup>c</sup> or, anathema. <sup>a</sup> 1 Th. 1:9. <sup>1</sup> Ju. 4:2,3. <sup>d</sup> Mat. 16:17.

themselves the sentence of damnation, by coming to the table of the Lord unprepared; the Holy Spirit never indited this passage of Scripture to deter serious Christians from their duty, though the devil has often made this advantage of it, and robbed them of their choicest comforts. The Corinthians came to the Lord's table as to a common feast, not discerning the Lord's body, not making a difference or distinction between that and common food; nay, they used much more indecency at this sacred feast, than they would at a civil one. This was very sinful in them, and very displeasing to God, and brought down his judgments on them;

**PRACT. OBS.** We ought to imitate no man, any further than he imitates Christ, whose example alone is absolutely perfect; nor should we desire that others should follow us, except as we are enabled to follow our Lord and Master. —In order to know our duty in various particulars, we should accurately study our relations to God, and to each other, in society, and in the church. —Even nature, and the common sense of mankind, require that men and women should preserve a due distinction in their apparel, behavior, and appearance; and the contrary to this is contemptible and odious. The particulars by which this distinction shall be expressed, are greatly determined by custom; but, however fashions may vary, an effeminate man, and a masculine woman, will always be disgusting and disgraceful. —Not only should our sense of the Lord's special presence, influence our conduct in this manner; but even that of the holy angels, who, in our assemblies, must witness many things unworthy of the sacred service, and which ought carefully to be avoided. Alas! how often do animosities and personal or party-contentions divide religious societies, and corrupt the apparently united worship! Indeed, in the present state of human nature, such 'schisms' and 'heresies' cannot altogether be avoided; but, while we adore the wisdom of God in overruling these evils for the manifestation of those who are approved by Him, we must by no means palliate the guilt of such persons, who thus divide and distract the church. The Lord, indeed, can take occasion from the most aggravated profanations, to establish regulations the most beneficial, of which this ch. gives us a striking specimen; but that display of his wisdom and goodness is far from

(34.) *At home.* 'Mr. Amiran and Mr. Cradock think this a prohibition of love-feasts; but I think it evident from antiquity, they were retained in the church long after, though dubious whether they prevailed so soon.' Doddr.

**NOTES.** CHAP. XII. V. 1—3. The Corinthians were favored with a rich abundance of miraculous gifts, by the power of the Holy Spirit, which they exercised principally in their public assemblies; and, as they were divided into parties, it seems that they vied with each other, in the display of these endowments. (Notes, 14.) This gave rise to vainglory, envy, corrupt emulation, and repinings, which were equally opposite to piety and charity. To remedy these grievous evils, the apostle began his observations on the subject, by reminding them of what they had been a short time before. Gal. 4:8—11. Eph. 2:11—13. These [their idols] were dumb idols, notwithstanding all that was boasted concerning their oracles; and therefore could not confer on their deluded votaries those gifts of tongues, and that utterance, which the converts to Christianity had now received, and which must be ascribed exclusively to the sovereign grace and power of God. It was therefore proper for them to understand, that all such gifts were confined within the limits of the Christian church. The context leads us to suppose the apostle meant, that this confession, [that Jesus is Lord,] from the mouth even of a nominal Christian, being made under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, (as wicked Balaam prophesied,) was 'a spiritual gift,' which might benefit others, though it should prove of no use to the possessor. The expression, 'say, that Jesus is the Lord,' more obviously signifies the profession of the true doctrine concerning Christ, than the exercise of saving faith in Him, especially in a discourse concerning 'spiritual gifts;' or, as some tr., 'spiritual men,' or men possessing spiritual gifts, such as are afterwards enumerated, (3—10) to qualify them for public stations

some were punished with sickness, and some with the sleep of death. Note, A careless and irreverent receiving of the Lord's supper may bring temporal punishments. Yet the connexion seems to imply, that even those who were thus punished, were in a state of favor with God, at least many of them, v. 32. divine chastening is a sign of divine love, Heb. 12:6. It is kindness to use the rod, to prevent the child's ruin, and better to bear trouble in this world, than to be miserable to eternity. God punishes his people now, to prevent their eternal woe.

IV. He points out the duty of those who would come to the Lord's table. 1. In general, v. 28. Let a man consider the sacred intention of this holy ordinance, its nature and use; and compare his own views in attending on it, and his disposition of mind for it; and when he has approved himself to his own conscience in the sight of God, then let him attend. Such self-examination is necessary to a right attendance at this holy ordinance. 2. The duty of those who were yet unpunished for their profanation of this ordinance, v. 31. If we would thoroughly search and explore ourselves, and condemn and correct what we find amiss, we should prevent divine judgments. We must not judge others, lest we be judged, Mat. 7:1. but we must judge ourselves, to prevent our being judged and condemned by God. We may be critical as to ourselves, but should be very candid in judging of others.

V. He closes all with a caution against all the irregularities of which they were guilty, v. 33, 34. Our holy duties, through our own abuse, may prove matter of condemnation. A sad, but serious truth! Oh! let all look to it, that they do not come together at any time to God's worship, and all the while provoke Him, and bring down vengeance on themselves.

What else was amiss in this matter, he tells them he would rectify, when he came to them.

CHAP. XII. V. 1—11. The apostle comes now to treat of spiritual gifts, which abounded in the church of Corinth, but were greatly abused. Now concerning these spiritual gifts, i. e. the extraordinary powers they had received from the Spirit,

1. He would not have them ignorant, either of their original or use. They came from God, and were to be used for Him. Right information is of great use to all religious practice.

2. He puts them in mind of the sad state out of which they had been recovered, v. 2. If they well understood that, they could not but know, that all true spiritual gifts were from God. Now observe,

(1.) Their former character; they were Gentiles, not God's peculiar people, but of the nations whom He had in a manner abandoned. The Jews were, before, his chosen people; to them the knowledge and worship of the true God were in a manner confined, and the rest of the world were in a manner without God, Eph. 2:12. Such Gentiles were the body of the Corinthians, before their conversion to Christianity. What a change was here! Note, It is of great use to the Christian, to think what once he was; *Ye were Gentiles.*

(2.) The conduct they were under; carried away to these dumb idols, even as ye were led. They were hurried on to the grossest idolatry, the worship even of stocks and stones, through the force of a vain imagination, and the fraud of their priests, practising on their ignorance: for whatever were the sentiments of their philosophers, this was the practice of the herd. Miserable abjectness of mind! And those who despised

excusing the criminals, or exempting them from punishment. Rom. 3:5—8. We should rejoice, that we are under no temptation to pervert the Lord's supper to an intemperate revel; but we may seriously inquire, whether profanations, equally flagrant and expressive of contempt, are not common among us. How often do custom and ostentation lead sinners of superior rank to exhibit their petty distinctions, even in attending on this sacrament, which especially requires our most humble gratitude! How often is it made the support of Pharisaical pride, or the cloak with which hypocrites cover dishonesty, or secret licentiousness! We must most strenuously and decidedly protest against them; and pray earnestly and constantly to God, to incline those who have authority, to use, with impartial decision, proper and effectual methods of terminating such scandalous practices; doing all we can in the mean time, in our several places, to counteract and prevent them; without fearing reproach or persecution.—A penitent heart, a simple reliance on God's free mercy by faith in Christ, according to 'the new covenant in his blood;' a thankful recollection of his sufferings and of his love; a desire 'to show his death,' to profess our obligations to Him, and to give up ourselves to his service, in doing good to his people, and to all men for his sake, constitute the proper preparation for acceptably communicating. All, who aim, and pray to be enabled to come in this frame of heart and mind, are bound in gratitude, and by their professed subjection to Christ, to 'show the Lord's death till He come.' There should, however, be an habitual self-examination; and a more particular one, at those times, when we have opportunity. SCOTT.

in the church (28). Many have 'prophesied in the name of Christ,' as well as preached and defended his truth, who were 'workers of iniquity;' yet, as far as they avowed 'that Jesus was the Lord,' they spake by the Holy Spirit. 13:1—3. Mat. 7:21—23. 1 John 4:1—3.—The contrast between saying 'Jesus is an accursed thing,' and 'Jesus is the Lord,' is very cinphatical. SCOTT.

(2.) *Dumb.* 'Aphōna, voiceless: used, say Grot., Drns., and Kr., like kōpha, at Heb. 2:18. to denote that they are mere stocks and stones.' The cut, of a betulium, borne in a chariot, is a Sidonian coin; showing an idol, not only dumb, but shapeless, as were many of their betulia; sacred stones, perhaps aërolites. Notes, Gen. 28:18. Ac. 19:35. The inscription of the cut appears to be, 'imago of sacred Sidon.'—Eiko \* hagianas \* \* \* Sid.—But Bl., as Mosheim, Le Clerc, &c., thinks there is allusion to the craft of priests and politicians, which made idols utter oracles, and return answers. Ed.

(3.) *I give, &c.* 'I give you this rule to distinguish.' Bl. *Accursed.* Comtrs. think there is allusion to 'Jews who pretended to the Holy Ghost, and yet spoke against Jesus, and denied the Holy Ghost was ever given to the Gentiles.' Ac. 10:45. Also, 'to the Jewish exorcists, and heathen priests and priestesses, who in their enthusiastic fits reviled Jesus.' Comp. 1 Ju. 4:2. In.



4 Now there are diversities <sup>o</sup> of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 And there are differences of <sup>t</sup> administrations, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities <sup>s</sup> of operations; but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit <sup>b</sup> withal.

8 For to one is given, by the Spirit, the word of <sup>j</sup> wisdom; to another the word of <sup>k</sup> knowledge, by the same Spirit;

9 To another faith, <sup>l</sup> by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of <sup>m</sup> healing, by the same Spirit;

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of <sup>n</sup> spirits; to another *divers* kinds of <sup>o</sup> tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11 But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing <sup>p</sup> to every man severally as he will.

e He. 2:4.            t Is. 11:2,3.            Ja. 5:14.  
 f or, ministries.    l c. 2:6,7.            n 1 Jn. 4:1.  
 g Ro. 12:6, &c.     k c. 13:2.            o Ac. 2:4,7-11.  
 h Ep. 4:7.            l Ep. 2:8.            p ver. 6.  
                           m Ma. 16:18.

these gross conceptions of the vulgar, yet countenanced them by their practice. O dismal state of Gentilism! Could the Spirit of God be among such stupid idolaters, or they be influenced by it? How did the prince of this world triumph in the blindness of mankind! How thick a mist had he cast over their minds!

3. He shows them how they might discern those gifts that were from the Spirit of God, true spiritual gifts. Many Jews, exorcists and magicians, went about, pretending to work wonders by the Spirit of God, (Light-foot's *Horæ in loc.*) and many among the Gentiles pretended to inspiration. Now the apostle tells them, none could act under the influence, or by the power of the Spirit of God, who disowned and blasphemed Christ: for the Spirit of God bore uncontrollable witness to Christ, by prophecy, miracles, his resurrection from the dead, the success of his doctrine among men, and its effect on them; and could never so far contradict it-

V. 4-11. All these endowments the Holy Spirit freely bestowed, in that measure and diversity which He saw good, and to be conducive to the common advantage of the church; so that no one had any ground of glorying over others, or of repining, as if forgotten in this distribution. —There is indeed much difficulty, at present, in determining precisely what the apostle meant by each of the terms here used, which doubtless were readily understood at the time when the gifts spoken of were exercised; but the sense which appeared most probable has been chosen; and great exactness on such a subject is not at all necessary. —All these *worketh* that one and the self-same Spirit; dividing to every one severally as He will (11); compared with, 'It is the same God, which worketh all in all,' suggests a conclusive proof of the Personality, Sovereignty, and Deity of the Holy Spirit. Eph. 1:9-12, v. 9, 11. Sc.

(4, &c.) On this passage see the able note of Bl. *Gifts.* [*Charismata*: all the gifts of free grace imparted by the H. S. *Administrations.*] *Diakonai*: meant (and so *Theoph.* and *Phot.*) to suggest, that these endowments carried with them the obligation to labor for the spiritual good of others. *Diversities of operations.*] This expression need cause no perplexity; though the recent comtrs., solely regarding the use of this term and its cognate words in the *classical* writers, take it to mean simply *works* and *operations*. But its true force was distinctly seen by the ancient comtrs., especially *Theod.*; thus 'he again calls *gifts, energies*, as energized by the divine nature.' And so *Locke*. The *energmata* [tr. operations] undoubtedly alludes to the *inward impulse of the Spirit*. —Those learned persons [most German theologians since *Eich.*] too often forget, [as in their view of this passage,] that the dispensation of the Gospel was, in the time of the apostles, altogether *extraordinary*, *supernatural*, and *miraculous*, as indeed we might reasonably expect, that a system meant to work such a mighty, moral regeneration would be. Bl. Ep.

(3.) 'It is not surprising that we are ignorant of the proper meaning of these words, (8-10) now we have lost the things.' PARÆUS.

(9.) 'Faith, as an extraordinary gift, in this connexion, must in the general signify, a firm persuasion of being called out by God, at any particular time, to perform some miracle, and accordingly going about it without any suspicion of fear, in confident dependence on a correspon-

self, as to declare Him accursed. And, on the other hand, *no man could say Jesus was the Lord*, (i. e. live by this faith, and work miracles to prove it,) *but it must be by the Holy Ghost*. To own this truth before men, and maintain it to death, and live under the influence of it, could not be done without the sanctification of the Holy Ghost. No man can call Christ *Lord*, with a believing subjection to Him, and dependence on Him, unless that faith be wrought by the Holy Ghost. No evil spirit would lend assistance, if it were in his power, to spread a doctrine and religion so ruinous to the devil's kingdom. The substance of what the apostle asserts and argues here, is, that, whatever pretences there were to inspiration or miracles, among those who were enemies to Christianity, they could not be from the Spirit of God; for no man could believe this with his heart, or prove with a miracle that Jesus was Christ, but by the Holy Ghost. So that the extraordinary operations and powers among them did all proceed from the Spirit of God. He adds,

4. These spiritual gifts, though proceeding from the same Spirit, are yet of various kinds. A free cause may produce variety of effects; the same giver bestow various gifts, v. 4. *diversities of gifts*, such as revelations, tongues, prophecy, interpretations of tongues. There are *differences of administrations*, or different offices, and officers to discharge them, different ordinaances and institutions, see v. 28-30. also *diversities of operations*, or miraculous powers, v. 10. as here, *but it is the same God which worketh all in all*: gifts, administrations, and operations, however different they may be in themselves, in this they agree; all are from God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Spring and Origin of all spiritual blessings and bequests. And several of the kinds are here specified, v. 8-10. Several persons had their several gifts, some one, some another. To one was given the *word of wisdom*, i. e. say some, a knowledge of the mysteries of the Gospel, and ability to explain them; an exact understanding of the design, nature, and doctrines, of the Christian religion. Others say, an uttering of grave sentences, like Solomon's proverbs. Some confine this word of wisdom to the revelations made to and by the apostles. *To another, the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit*; i. e. say some, the knowledge of mysteries, ch. 2:13. wrapped up in the prophecies, types, and histories of the O.T.: say others, a skill and readiness to give

advice and counsel in perplexed cases. *To another, faith, by the same Spirit*; i. e. the faith of miracles, or a faith in the divino power and promise, whereby they were enabled to work miracles; or, an extraordinary impulse from above, whereby they were enabled to trust God in any emergency, and go on in the way of their duty, and own and profess the truths of Christ, whatever were the difficulty or danger. *To another, the gift of healing, by the same Spirit*; i. e. healing the sick, either by the laying on of hands, or anointing with oil, or with a bare word. *To another, the working of miracles*, the efficacies of powers; such as raising the dead, restoring the blind to sight, giving speech to the dumb, hearing to the deaf, and the use of limbs to the lame. *To another, prophecy*, i. e. ability to foretell future events; which is the more usual sense of prophecy; or to explain Scripture by a peculiar gift of the Spirit. See ch. 14:24. *To another, the discerning of spirits*; power to distinguish between true and false prophets, or to discern the real and internal qualifications of any person for an office, or to discover the inward workings of the mind by the Holy Ghost, as Peter did those of Ananias, Acts 5:3. *To another, divers kinds of tongues*, or ability to speak languages by inspiration. *To another, the interpretation of tongues*, or ability to render foreign languages readily and properly into their own. With such variety of spiritual gifts were the first ministers and churches blessed.

5. The end for which these gifts were bestowed, v. 7. They were not distributed for the mere honor and advantage of those who had them, but for the benefit of the church, to edify the body, and spread and advance the Gospel. Whatever gifts God confers on any man, He confers them, that he may do good with them, whether they be common or spiritual; and the more he profits others with them, the more abundantly will they turn to his account in the end, Philip. 4:17. Spiritual gifts are bestowed, only that men may with them profit the church, and promote Christianity.

6. The measure and proportion in which they are given, v. 8. It is according to the sovereign pleasure of the Donor. What more free than a gift? And shall not the Spirit of God do what He will with his own? May He not give to what persons He pleases, and in what proportion He pleases; one gift to one man, and another to another; to one more, and another fewer, as He thinks fit? Is He not the best Judge how his own

dent divine interposition? DODDR. 'Such a faith as would make them equal to any extraordinary exertion which circumstances might require, whether of teaching, of enduring persecution, of ejecting demons, or any other.' *Slade*. Mat. 17:20, 21. Mk. 11:22. 1 Cor. 13:2. Ja. 5:15.' BL.

(10.) 'Power of the more extraordinary miracles: so *Whit.*, "doing things beyond the course of nature, and wrought by an immediate Divine hand; such as supplying a defective member, or raising the dead; also curing diseases by a shadow passing over the patient." Some, as *Doddr.*, confine it to dispossessing demons.' ID.

'Such [v. 8-10.] were the supernatural gifts with which the first preachers and ministers of the Gospel were endowed; and by which they effectually and speedily established the Gospel in the most populous provinces of the Roman empire. But these gifts were equally necessary for the upholding of the church. For the greatest part of the first believers, having been originally heathens, were utterly destitute of all spiritual ideas, and had but very imperfect notions of morality; many of them being men of low birth, their minds were not much cultivated by education. Few of them were acquainted with the sacred books of the Jews. And with respect to the writings of the apostles and evangelists, they were not published till a considerable time after numerous churches were planted in many countries of Asia and Europe. In these circumstances, the knowledge of the Gospel which the brethren derived from the few preachings of the inspired teachers, which they had an opportunity to hear, could not, at the beginning, be either accurate or extensive. And, therefore, to remedy that defect, the converts from idolatry were forced into churches, and appointed to assemble together, for their mutual instruction, and for the joint worship of God. And lest, through ignorance or prejudice, they might have misled one another, the spiritual gifts were bestowed on a number of them, to fit them for presiding in the public worship. Others of them had an inspiration which qualified them for speaking to the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the rest. Others were fitted to lead the devotion of the congregation, by an inspiration which furnished them with prayers and hymns for public use. Others, by the gift of interpreting foreign tongues, translated, into the common languages, such parts of the writings of Moses and the prophets, as were read in their public meetings; as also the



12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so <sup>q</sup> also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all <sup>r</sup> baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or <sup>s</sup> Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to <sup>t</sup> drink into one Spirit.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

18 But now hath God set <sup>u</sup> the members every one of them in the body as <sup>v</sup> it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay much more, those <sup>w</sup> members of the body which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23 And those *members* of the body which we think to be less honorable, upon these we <sup>x</sup> bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that *part* which lacked:

25 That there should be no <sup>y</sup> schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

[Practical Observations.]

q ver. 27. u ver. 28. 9:14,15.  
r Jn. 1:16. Ep. 4:5. v Ro. 12:3. ver. 11. x or, put on.  
s Greeks. w Ec. 4:9—12. y or, division.  
t Jn. 7:37—39.

purposes shall be served, and his own donatives bestowed? The Holy Ghost is a Divine Person. He works divine effects, and divides divine gifts, as He will, by his own power, and according to his own pleasure, without dependence or control.

V. 12—26. The apostle here makes out the truth of what was above asserted, and puts the gifted men among the Corinthians in mind of their duty, by comparing the church of Christ to a human body.

I. One body may have many members, and the many members of the same body make but one body, v. 12. *and the body is not one member only, but many.* So also is Christ, that is, Christ mystical, as divines commonly speak, Christ and his church, as head and members, yet but one body, all the members baptized into the same body, and made to drink of the same Spirit, v. 13. Jews and Gentiles, bond or free: the Spirit's operation, signified by the outward administration, called therefore *the washing of regeneration*, Tit. 3: 5. makes us members; and by communion at the other ordinance we are sustained, not merely by drinking the wine, but by drinking into one Spirit. The outward administration is a mean appointed of God for our participation in this great benefit; but it is baptism by the Spirit, it is internal renovation, and drinking into one Spirit, partaking of his sanctifying influence from time to time, that makes us true members of Christ's body, and maintains our union with Him.

II. Each member has its particular form, place, and use. 1. The meanest member, though less useful, makes a part of the body, v. 15, 16. So every member of the body mystical, though it cannot have the same place and office, yet is as much a member, the meanest as the noblest, and as truly regarded by Him. All his members are dear to Him. 2. There must be a distinction of members in the body, v. 17, 19. *They are many members*, and for that reason must have distinction among them, *and yet are but one body*, v. 20. One member of a body is not a body; this is made up of many; and among these many there must be a distinction; difference of situation, shape, use,

&c. So in the body of Christ; its members must have different uses, and therefore have different powers, and be in different places, some having one gift, and others a different one. So it is for the beauty and good appearance of the church, that there should be diversity of gifts and offices in it. 3. The disposal of members to a natural body, and their situation, are as God pleases, v. 18.

We may plainly perceive the divine wisdom in the distribution of the members; but it was made according to the counsel of his will; He distinguished and distributed them as He pleased. So also in the members of Christ's body: they are chosen out to such stations, and endued with such gifts, as God pleased. He who is sovereign Lord of all, disposes his favors and gifts as He will. And who should gainsay his pleasure? 4. All the members of the body are, in some respect, useful and necessary to each other; nay, those members of the body *which seem to be more feeble* (the bowels, &c.) *are necessary*, v. 21, 22. God has so fitted and tempered them together, that they are all necessary and useful, and none redundant, but each serves some good purpose or other. Nor is there a member of the body of Christ but may and ought to be useful to his fellow-members, and at some times, and in some cases, is needful to them. Those who excel in any gift, cannot say they have no need of them, who in that gift are their inferiors, while perhaps, in other gifts, they exceed them. Nay, the lowest members of all have their use, and the highest cannot do well without them. 5. Such is the man's concern for his whole body, that *on the less honorable members more abundant honor is bestowed, and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.* Those parts which are not fit, like the rest, to be exposed to view, which are either deformed or shameful, we most carefully clothe and cover; whereas the comely parts have no such need. The wisdom of Providence has so contrived and tempered things, that the more abundant regard and honor should be paid to that which most wanted it, v. 24. So should the members of Christ's body behave toward their fellow-members: instead of despising them, or reproaching them, for their infirmities, they should endeavor to cover and conceal them, and put the best face on them they can. 6. Divine wisdom has contrived and ordered things in this manner, that the members of the body should not be schismatics, divided from each other, and acting on separate interests, but well affected to each other; tenderly concerned for each other, having a fellow-feeling of each other's griefs,

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—27. Acute speculators are often most ignorant of practical subjects; those who are most elated with the gifts bestowed on them, are commonly most forgetful of the Giver, and the proper use of them; and 'spiritual gifts' have frequently been the support of spiritual pride.—There have been many who advanced a claim to inspiration, or extraordinary illumination of one kind or other; and there still are those who advance such claims; but appearances of this kind must be counterfeit in all, who refuse the Lord Jesus those honors, which He demanded to Himself. Even a capacity of speaking in a proper and scriptural manner, on any topic of religion, will not profit a man; except he have grace, humbly and simply to improve his talent, for the edification of others, without seeking, as he is more exposed to temptation, his own glory or emolument. We have therefore little cause to envy those, who are eminent in abilities and popularity, to covet these dangerous distinctions, to glory in any measure of them bestowed on us, or to despise such as are destitute of them. Numbers have thus been ruined: being lifted up in pride, they have come short of that salvation, which they preached to others; or they have been betrayed into such evils, as have caused them to terminate their days in disgrace and distress. And the few, who have not been apparently injured, by eminency in gifts and popularity, have generally had more to relate concerning 'thorns in the flesh, and messengers of Satan to buffet them,' than their less gifted and admired brethren had any conception of. We ought most earnestly to inquire, as our grand concern, whether we have been 'baptized into the body of Christ,' by his regenerating grace; and whether we are 'drinking into his Spirit,' by receiving daily from his

fulness. We should also watch against pride, ambition, envy, discontent, selfishness, contempt of others; and thus seek the good of the church, of those in our own sphere of action, and of every individual, by properly improving our talents, and performing the duty of our station. If situated in the lowest place, we should not disdain its services as beneath us; if advanced to a higher station, we should not imagine, that we do not stand in need of the prayers and help of our feeblest and most obscure brethren; for these are essential to the perfection of the whole. Nay, we should guard and take care of the weak and feeble believer; even as the God of nature has, with exquisite skill and kindness, defended those parts of the body, which, though essential to life and health, might otherwise easily be wounded and destroyed; and cover with affectionate attention the infirmities and uncomeliness of those, whom we have reason to regard as real believers, and who are exposed to disgrace and contempt; that so 'the more abundant honor may be given to that part which lacked; seeing the more honorable of our brethren have no need of such particular assistance and support from us. Our kind Creator hath effectually provided, that there should be 'no schism in our natural body; but He has for wise reasons seen good to make trial of the members of the mystical body of Christ, in this respect; and through the remainder of error and sin in real Christians, through the intrusion of hypocrites, and the artifices of the enemy, many disgraceful and lamentable divisions still prevail; which we should pray against, and endeavor to heal, to the utmost of our power, and with persevering earnestness.

SCOTT.

epistles of the apostles, and the gospels, after they were published. These gifts continued in the church till the knowledge of the Gospel became so general among the disciples, that the church could uphold itself by the exertion of the natural faculties of its members. Eph. 4:13. MACKN.

V. 13. *Drink into one Spirit.*] Doubtless he alluded to the wine used in the Lord's supper; as before to baptism. 10:14—22. SCOTT.

V. 15—26. From the preceding illustration, the Corinthians might see the folly and perniciousness of their cumulations, covetings, and murmurs. The very idea, of every member coveting to be the most honored part, is associated with that of the destruction of the body; which necessarily consists of many different members, so formed and placed, as to become one regular whole.

SCOTT.



27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members <sup>2</sup> in particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, first, <sup>a</sup> apostles; secondarily, <sup>b</sup> prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that <sup>c</sup> miracles; then gifts of <sup>d</sup> healings, <sup>e</sup> helps, <sup>f</sup> governments, <sup>g</sup> diversities of <sup>h</sup> tongues.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all <sup>i</sup> workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

31 But covet <sup>j</sup> earnestly the best <sup>k</sup> gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

CHAP. XIII.

1 All gifts, 2, 3 how excellent soever, are nothing worth without charity. 4 The praises thereof, and 13 prelation before hope and faith.

THOUGH I speak with the tongues of men and of <sup>a</sup> angels, and have not <sup>b</sup> charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

z Ep. 5:30. a Lu. 6:13. b Ac. 13:1. c ver. 10. d ver. 9. e Nu. 11:17. f He. 13:17,24. g or, kinds. h Ac. 2:3-11. i or, powers. j c. 14:39. k Mat. 5:6. Lu. 10:42. a 2 Co. 12:4. b 1 Pe. 4:8.

and a communion in each other's pleasures and joys, v. 25, 26. God has tempered the members of the body natural in the manner mentioned, that there might be no schism in the body, v. 25. no rupture or disunion among the members, nor so much as the least mutual disregard. This should be avoided also in the spiritual body of Christ. There should be no schism in this body, but the members should be closely united by the strongest bonds of love. All decays of this affection are the seeds of schism. Where Christians grow cold towards each other, they will be careless and unconcerned for each other. And this mutual disregard is a schism begun. The members of the natural body are made to have a care and concern for each other, to prevent a schism in it. So should it be in Christ's body; the members should sympathize with each other. As in the natural body, the pain of the one part afflicts the whole, the ease and pleasure of one part affects the whole; so should Christians reckon themselves honored in the honors of their fellow-Christians, and should suffer in

their sufferings. Note, Christian sympathy is a great branch of Christian duty. So far from slighting our brethren's sufferings, we should suffer with them; so far from envying their honors, we should rejoice with them, and reckon ourselves honored by them.

V. 27-31. Here the apostle sums up the argument, and applies this similitude to the church of Christ. Concerning which, observe, 1. The relation wherein Christians stand to Christ, and one another. The church, or whole collective body of Christians in all ages, is his body, v. 27. and members in particular, or particular members. Each stands related to the body as a part of it, and all have a common relation to one another, dependence on one another, and should have a mutual care and concern. Note, Mutual indifference, and much more contempt, and hatred, and envy, and strife, are very unnatural in Christians. It is like the members of the same body being destitute of all concern for one another, or quarrelling with each other. This is the apostle's scope in this argument. He endeavors in it to suppress the proud, vaunting, and contentious spirit, that had prevailed among the Corinthians, by reason of their spiritual gifts. 2. The variety of offices instituted by Christ, and gifts or favors dispensed by Him, v. 28. First, Apostles, the chief ministers entrusted with all the powers necessary to found a church, and make an entire revelation of God's will. Secondarily; Prophets, or persons enabled by inspiration to prophesy, interpret Scripture, or write by inspiration, as the evangelists did. Thirdly, Teachers, those who labor in word and doctrine, whether with pastoral charge, or without it. After that, miracles, or miracle-workers. Then gifts of healing, or those who had power to heal diseases. Helps, or such as had compassion on the sick and weak, and ministered to them. Governments, or such as had the disposal of the charitable contributions of the church, and dealt them out to the poor. Diversities of tongues, or such as could speak divers languages. Concerning all which observe,

(1.) The plenteous variety of these gifts and offices. What a multitude! (2.) Their order. They are here placed in their proper ranks; those of most value first. What holds the last and lowest rank, is, diversity of tongues. And yet it is manifest, from ch. 14. that the Corinthians valued themselves exceedingly on this gift. How proper a method it is to beat down pride, to let persons know the true value of what they pride

themselves in! Men but too commonly value themselves most on what is least worth: and it is of great use to bring them to a sober mind, by letting them know how very greatly they mistake. (3.) The several distribution of these gifts, not all to one, nor to every one alike. All members and officers had not the same rank in the church, nor the same endowments, v. 29, 30. This were to make the church a monster; all one, as if the body were all ear or all eye. We must be content with our own rank and share, if they be lower and less than those of others. We must not be conceited of ourselves, and despise others, if we are in the higher rank, and have greater gifts. Every member of the body is to preserve its own rank, and do its own office; and all are to minister to one another, and promote the good of the body in general, without envying, or despising, or neglecting, or ill-using, any one particular member. How blessed a constitution were the Christian church, if all the members did their duty!

He closes this ch. with an advice, (as the generality read it,) and a hint. Grace is therefore to be preferred before gifts; and of gifts, those are to be preferred, which are of greatest use; and true charity is greatly to be preferred to the most glorious gifts. To have the heart glow with mutual love, is vastly better than to glare with the most pompous titles, offices, or powers.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1-3. Here the apostle shows, what more excellent way he meant in the close of the former ch., i. e. charity, or, as it is commonly elsewhere rendered, love: not what is meant by charity, in our common use of the word, which most understand of almsgiving, but love, in its fullest and most extensive meaning; true love to God and man; a benevolent disposition of mind towards our fellow-Christians, growing out of sincere and fervent devotion to God. This living principle of all duty and obedience is the more excellent way of which the apostle speaks; preferable to all gifts. Nay, without this, the most glorious gifts are nothing, of no account to us, of no esteem in the sight of God. He specifies,

1. The gift of tongues, v. 1. Could a man speak all the languages on earth, with the greatest propriety, elegance, or fluency; could he talk like an angel, and yet be without charity, it would be all empty noise, mere unharmonious and useless sound, that would neither profit nor delight. It is not talking freely, nor finely, nor learnedly, of

PRACT. OBS. V. 27-31. In proportion as the members of Christ have not the same care of others as of themselves, very injurious consequences will manifestly ensue. [Indeed, most quarrels among Christians are about precedences. H.] If all filled up their several places in entire and equal love, there could be no envyings, jealousies, murmurs, vainglory, self-seeking, or disregard of others, any more than there is in heaven. (Note, Mat. 6:10.) We should, in that case, every one reciprocally care for all the rest; we should sympathize with the afflicted, tempted, distressed, or fallen believer, and help him as we could; we should feel ourselves sharers in the disgrace and reproach of the poor

and needy; deem ourselves honored and prospered, in the reputation, success, and usefulness of our more distinguished brethren; and rejoice in the consolation of such as were glad in the Lord. The meanest Christian would not then repine, or envy the most exalted, but rejoice and bless God on his account; the most eminent would not disregard the meanest, but would peculiarly endeavor to encourage and help him. Thus the good of the whole, and of every part, would be the uniform object of all, in every station, without any exception; and with the subordination of all personal interests and satisfactions to this superior end. SCOTT.

V. 28. Prophets.] These seem to have united with prescience, and prediction of future events, interpretation of prophecies. See Warb.—Teachers.] *Didaskaloi*: only, it would seem, of the plain and fundamental truths of Christianity. By most they are thought to be those elsewhere called *poimenes* [pastors], appointed to have a settled pastoral office over certain congregations, (see Eph. 4:11.) including, as some, not only presbyters, but bishops. Though it is more probable they had the exercising of ecclesiastical discipline. *Miracles, healing.*] Persons who possessed the powers, v. 9, 10. *Helps.*] *Antilepseis*, i. e. helpers in the offices they discharged; thought to denote those afterwards called deacons, whose office it was, to superintend the care of the poor, the sick and strangers, the widows and orphans, and to administer the effects of the dead. By *Lightf., Locke, &c.* these "helps," are supposed to have been the *vicars or deputies of the apostles*, appointed to baptize, catechise, &c. Probably both these offices were united. *Governments.*] *Kuberneseis*: *managers*: on the exact nature of this office, contrs. are not agreed. *Vitr., Mosh., Mackn., Horsley*, think it corresponds to the *discerning of spirits*, before mentioned; and the *antilepseis* to the *interpretation of foreign languages*. *Chrys.*, and all the Gr. intrs., consider both as importing the *same thing*. These functionaries were, I imagine, so called, with reference to the *two* different parts of their office; the "helps," superintending the care of the poor, the sick, and strangers; the "governments," the burial of the dead, and the *administration and execution* of their effects, including the care of widows and orphans. BLOOMF.

Gifts.	Offices.
1. The word of wisdom . . . . .	Apostles.
2. The word of knowledge . . . . .	Prophets, i. e. Expounders of the O. T.
3. Faith . . . . .	Teachers of Christianity.
4. Miracles . . . . .	Workers of Miracles.
5. Healing . . . . .	Healers.
6. Prophecies or Predictions . . . . .	Helps; such as Mark, Tychicus, Onesimus, &c.
7. Discerning of Spirits . . . . .	Governments.
8. Tongues . . . . .	Gifted with tongues in various ways.
9. Interpretation of tongues . . . . .	

V. 31. The Christians at Corinth, indeed, 'coveted earnestly,' or were envious of the best gifts, or such as were deemed most splendid and honorable; but the apostle was about to show them a more excellent way, even that of *love*; which would influence them to be content with the gifts already conferred, and to be principally zealous in making an useful improvement of them. Our tr., indeed, renders the cl. as an exhortation; but it may with equal exactness be tr., 'Ye do covet earnestly,' &c. and so imply a reprehension of the corrupt emulation of the Corinthians; and this certainly coincides far better with the argument of the apostle. For *exhorting* them to 'covet the best gifts,' or those that were most valued, which the Holy Spirit distributed us He saw good, would have sanctioned that ambitious temper, which he evidently aimed to repress. SCOTT.

NOTES, CHAP. XIII. V. 1-3. The more effectually to expose the radical error of the Corinthians, in overvaluing spiritual gifts, and seeking their own credit in the use of them, without due regard to the bene-



2 And though I have *the gift of prophecy*, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove <sup>d</sup> mountains, and have not charity, I am <sup>e</sup> nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth <sup>h</sup> long, and is kind: charity <sup>i</sup> envieth not; charity <sup>j</sup> vaunteth not itself, is not puffed <sup>k</sup> up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not <sup>l</sup> her own, is not <sup>m</sup> easily provoked, thinketh no evil:

c c. 14:1. g Mat. 7:22,23. j or, is not rash.  
d Mat. 17:20. Ja. 2:14. k Col. 2:18.  
e Mat. 21:19. h Pr. 10:12. l c. 10:24.  
f Mat. 6:1,2. i Ja. 3:16. m Pr. 14:17.

the things of God, that will save ourselves, or profit others, if we are destitute of holy love. It is the charitable heart, not the voluble tongue, that is acceptable with God. The apostle specifies first this gift, because hereupon the Corinthians seemed chiefly to value themselves, and despise their brethren.

2. Prophecy, and the understanding of mysteries, and all knowledge. This, without charity, is as nothing, v. 2. Had a man ever so clear an understanding of the prophecies and types under the old dispensation, ever so accurate a knowledge of the doctrines of Christianity, nay, and this by inspiration of the Spirit of God, without charity all this would stand him in no stead. A clear and deep head is of no signification, without a benevolent and charitable heart.

3. Miraculous faith, the faith of miracles, or the faith by which persons were enabled to work miracles; the most wonder-working faith, to which nothing is in a manner impossible, is itself nothing without charity. Moving mountains is a great achievement in the account of men; but one dram of charity is, in God's account, of much greater worth than all the faith of this sort in the world. They may do many wondrous works in Christ's name, whom yet He will disown, and bid depart from Him, as workers of iniquity, Mat. 7:22. Saving faith is ever in conjunction with charity, but the faith of miracles may be without it.

4. The outward works of charity, v. 3. Should all a man has be laid out in this manner, if he had no charity, it would profit nothing. The external act of giving alms may proceed from a very ill principle. Vainglorious ostentation, or a proud conceit of merit, may put a man to a large expense this way, who has no true love to God or men. Note, If we leave charity out of religion, the most costly services will be of no

avail to us. If we give away all we have, while we withhold the heart from God, it will not profit.

5. Even sufferings, and those of the most grievous kind, v. 3. Should we sacrifice our lives for the faith of the Gospel, and be burnt to death in maintenance of its truth, this will stand us in no stead without charity, unless we are animated to these sufferings by a principle of true devotion to God, and sincere love to his church and people, and good-will to mankind. It is possible, that the very same principle [nay, fanaticism, obstinacy, party zeal, vainglory, or obstinate attachment to one's own system, and other selfish motives] may have worked up some to resolution enough to die for their religion, who never heartily believed and embraced it. But vindicating religion, at the cost of our lives, will profit nothing, if we feel not the power of it: and true charity is the very heart and spirit of religion. If we feel none of its sacred heat in our hearts, it will profit nothing, though we be burnt to ashes for the truth. How strange a way of recommending themselves to God are they in, who hope to do it by burning others, by murdering, and massacring, and tormenting their fellow-Christians, or by any injurious usage of them! *My soul, enter not thou into their secrets.* If I cannot hope to recommend myself to God by giving mine own body to be burnt while I have no charity, I will never hope to do it by burning or maltreating others, in open defiance to all charity.

V. 4—7. The apostle gives us in these vs. some of the properties and effects of charity, both to describe and commend it, that we may know whether we have this grace, and that, if we have not, we may fall in love with what is so exceedingly amiable, and rest not till we have obtained it. It is an excellent grace, and has a world of good properties belonging to it. As,

1. *It is long-suffering.* It can endure evil, and injury, and provocation, without being filled with resentment, indignation, or revenge. It will put up with many slights and neglects from the person it loves, and wait long, to see the kindly effects of such patience on him.

2. *It is kind;* is benign, bountiful, courteous and obliging; seeks to be useful, and not only seizes on opportunities of doing good, but searches for them. Under these two generals all the particulars of the character may be reduced.

3. Charity suppresses envy; is not grieved at the good of others, neither at their gifts, nor at their good qualities, their honors, or their estates. If we love our neighbor, his welfare, bliss, and satisfaction will be an addition to ours, instead of impairing or lessening it. This is the proper effect of kindness and benevolence: envy is the effect of ill-will. The mind which is bent on doing good to all, can never wish ill to any.

4. Charity subdues pride and vainglory; *is not puffed up;* is not bloated with self-conceit, nor arrogant; not insolent, apt to despise others, or trample on them, or treat them with contempt and scorn. Those who are animated with a principle of true brotherly love, will in honor prefer one another, Rom. 12:10. They will *do nothing out of a spirit of contention, or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind will esteem others better than themselves,* Phil. 2:3. True love will give us an esteem of our brethren, and raise our value for them; and this will limit our self-esteem, and prevent the tumors of self-conceit and arrogance, [helping us to look up rather than down.] The Gr. for *vaunteth itself,* hears other significations; nor is the proper meaning, as I can find, settled; but in every sense and meaning, true charity stands in opposition to it. The Syriac renders it, *does not raise tumults* and disturbances. Charity calms the angry passions, instead of raising them. Others render it, *It does not act insidiously with any,* or seek to insnare them, or tease them with needless importunities and addresses. Some understand it of dissembling and flattery, when a fair face is put on, and fine words said, [with a selfish end,] without any regard to truth, or intention of good. Charity abhors such falsehood and flattery. Nothing is commonly more pernicious, [than this mode of selfishness,] nor more apt to cross the purposes of true love and good-will.

5. Charity is careful not to pass the bounds of decency; *it beareth not unseemly,* does nothing indecorous, nothing that in the common account of men is base or vile; behaves towards all men, as becomes their rank and ours; is not for breaking order, confounding ranks, bringing all men [down] to a level; but for keeping up the distinction God had made between men, and acting decently in its own station, and minding its own business, without taking on it to mend, or censure, or despise, the conduct of others. Charity would do nothing that misbecomes it.

6. Charity is an utter enemy to selfishness; *seeketh not its own;* does not inordinately desire or seek its own praise, honor, profit, or pleasure. Indeed, self-love, in some degree, is natural to all men, and a reasonable love of self is by our Savior made the measure of our love to others, that charity which is here described, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* The apostle does not mean, that charity destroys all regard to self; he does not mean, that the charitable man should never challenge what is his own, but utterly neglect himself and all his interests. Charity must then root up that principle which is wrought into our nature. But charity never seeks its own to the hurt of others, or with the neglect of others. It many times neglects its own for the sake of others; prefers their welfare, and satisfaction, and advantage, to its own; and it ever prefers the weal of the public, of the commu-

fit of their brethren, the apostle, in this ch., declares the most eminent of these gifts to be comparatively nothing, and 'love' to be everything. 2:3—5. 12:27—31. 14:1—5. 2 Cor. 10:7—11.—He meant to show, in the strongest instances imaginable, that nothing could prove a man a true believer, who had not love. Some of the cases he states cannot be supposed to have ever existed.—*Charity.*] Rather, *love,* as the original truly means; 'charity' has now a more confined sense, but 'must here be taken in the noblest sense, for such a love to the whole church, and the whole world, as arises from principles of true piety, and ultimately centres in God.'—*Love,* which most directly transforms us into the image of God, and which shall continue to exert its influence, when faith is superseded by sight, and hope by enjoyment; when in his light we shall see light, and when, amidst the fullest communications of his love, we shall for ever love Him and each other, with ardors which the best hearts, in their best moments on earth, can neither attain nor conceive.' *Doddr.*

SCOTT.

(1.) 'It would be difficult to find a finer passage than this in the writings of Demosthenes himself. *Tongue of angels.*] A beautiful hyperbole: so we may spare dispute what this language was. The Jews even thought some of their rabbins had attained the *knowledge* of it, and supposed it a key to all mysteries.' *Bl. Am become.*] Rather, as a sounding brass, a long-drawn, monotonous trumpet, and a noisy cymbal, (cut, 1 Chr. 15:16, &c., and note, Eccl. end.) which has little sense, 'expression,' or variety of sound. See *Bloomf.* and *Locke.*

ED.

(3.) 'Paul gives an *example* of two of the most remarkable and

striking of those *external marks of religion,* in its two principal parts, *love towards God, and love towards man;* and thus to show that if ever *these,* being defective therein, are of no worth, it must *a fortiori* be true of *others.*—*To feed.*] It was at that time considered the highest charity to dole out food at one's gate, which the Gr. here refers to.' *BLOOMF.*

V. 4—7. The effects of 'love,' here enumerated, show that the apostle *primarily* intended those exercises of that holy affection, which respect mankind. Yet it is equally evident, that no natural benevolence, which subsists in an unbeliever's heart, can at all answer to the description which he has given. Indeed he evidently meant that love, which is 'the fruit of the Spirit' in the believer's heart, and by which especially 'faith worketh.' *Gal. 5:1—6, v. 6, 22—26, v. 22. 1 Pet. 1:22. 1 John 3:13—15. 4:7, 8.* The humble penitent, obtaining pardon and peace by faith in Christ, finds his self-confidence and his attachment to the world deprived of dominion, and greatly weakened; he is also taught to love the perfections, the holiness, and the cause of God; the person, truth, and precepts of Christ, and his image in his people; to love his neighbors, and even his enemies, after the example of Christ, and in obedience to his commands; and he now desires, that they should all be happy, and that God should be glorified in their salvation. This love, therefore, includes all parties, nations, and characters, in its expansive exercise; though still capable of more particular attachments. It regards both the temporal and eternal interests of mankind, and the external comfort, as well as spiritual advantage, of believers; and, in subordination to the love of God, it seeks to promote the benefit of mankind, and the



6 Rejoiceth <sup>a</sup> not in iniquity, but rejoiceth <sup>o</sup> in the truth;

7 Beareth <sup>p</sup> all things, believeth <sup>q</sup> all things, hopeth <sup>r</sup> all things, endureth <sup>s</sup> all things.

[Practical Observations.]

8 Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in <sup>t</sup> part, and we prophesy in part;

n Ro. 1:32. q Ps. 119:66. s Joh 13:15.  
o or, with. r Ro. 8:24. t c. 8:2.  
p Ro. 15:1.

nity, whether civil or ecclesiastical, to its private advantage. [For] it would not advance, or aggrandize, or enrich, or gratify itself, at the cost and damage of the public.

7. It tempers and restrains the passions; *is not easily provoked,—exasperated.* It corrects a sharpness of temper, sweetens and softens the mind, so that it does not suddenly conceive, nor long continue, a vehement passion. Charity will never be angry without a cause, and will endeavor to confine the passions within proper limits, that they do not exceed the measure that is just, either in degree or duration. Anger cannot rest in the bosom where love reigns. It is hard to be angry with those we love, but very easy to drop our resentments, and be reconciled.

8. Charity *thinks no evil*; cherishes no malice, nor gives way to revenge, so some. It is not soon, nor long angry; is never mischievous, nor inclined to revenge; does not suspect evil of others,—*it does not* (so the Gr.) *reason out* evil, charge guilt on them by inference and *innuendo*, when nothing of this sort appears open. True love is not apt to be jealous and suspicious; it will hide faults that appear, instead of hunting and raking out those that lie concealed; it will never indulge suspicion without proofs, but rather will incline to darken and disbelieve evidence against the person it affects. It will hardly give into an ill opinion of another, and will do it with regret and reluctance when the evidence cannot be resisted; hence it will never be forward to suspect ill, and

reason itself into a bad opinion on mere appearances, or give way to suspicion without any. It will not make the worst construction of things, but put the best face that it can on circumstances that have no good appearance.

9. The matter of its joy and pleasure is here suggested: (1.) Negatively; *It rejoiceth not in iniquity*, takes no pleasure in doing injury or hurt to any; nor in the faults and failings of others. The sins of others are rather the grief of a charitable spirit, than its sport or delight; it is the very height of malice, to take pleasure in the misery of a fellow-creature. (2.) Affirmatively; *It rejoiceth in the truth*, [all truth,] is glad of the success of the Gospel, commonly called *the truth*, by way of emphasis, in the N. T.; and rejoices to see men moulded into an evangelical temper by it, and made good, do well, and approve themselves men of probity and integrity.

10. *It beareth all things, it endureth all things.* Some read the first, *covers all things.* So the original also signifies, 1 Pet. 4:8. Charity will draw a veil over the faults of others, as far as it can in consistence with duty. Thus we do by our own faults, and thus charity would teach us to do by the faults of others; and be faithful to God and to others. Or, *it beareth all things*; will pass by and put up with injuries, without indulging anger, or cherishing revenge; will be patient on provocation, and long patient, holds firm, though much shocked, and borne hard upon; sustains all manner of injury and ill usage, and bears up under it, and perseveres in this firmness. What a fortitude and firmness fervent love will give the mind! What cannot a lover endure for the beloved, and for his sake! How many slights and injuries will he put up with! How many hazards will he run, and how many difficulties encounter!

11. Charity believes and hopes well of others; *believeth all things, hopeth all things.* Indeed, charity does by no means destroy prudence, and, out of mere simplicity and silliness, believe every word, Prov. 14:17. Wisdom may dwell with love, and charity be cautious. But it is apt to believe well of all, to entertain a good opinion of them when there is no appearance to the contrary; nay, to believe well when there may be some

dark appearances, if the evidence of ill be not clear. All charity is full of candor, will judge well, and believe well, as far as it can with any reason; and will rather stretch its faith beyond appearances for the support of a kind opinion; but it will go into a bad one with the utmost reluctance, and fence against it as much as it fairly and honestly can. And when, in spite of inclination, it cannot believe well of others, it will yet hope well, and continue to hope as long as there is any ground for it. How well-natured and amiable a thing is Christian charity! How lovely a mind is that which is tintured throughout with such benevolence, and has it diffused over its whole frame! Happy the man who has this heavenly fire glowing in his heart, flowing out of his mouth, and diffusing its warmth over all with whom he has to do! How lovely a thing would Christianity appear to the world, if those who profess it were more actuated and animated by this divine principle, and paid a due regard to a command on which its blessed Author laid a chief stress! *A new commandment give I to you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* Jn. 13:34. *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, v. 35.* Blessed Jesus! let thy professed disciples be distinguished and marked out by this characteristic!

V. 8—13. Here the apostle goes on to commend charity, and show how much preferable it is to the gifts on which the Corinthians were so apt to pride themselves, to the utter neglect, and almost extinction, of charity. This he makes out,

1. From its longer continuance and duration; *Charity never faileth*; is permanent, perpetual, lasting as eternity; whereas the extraordinary gifts on which the Corinthians valued themselves, were only to edify the church on earth, and that not during its whole continuance in this world; but in heaven would be all superseded, which yet is the very seat and element of love. *Prophecy must fail*, i. e. either the prediction of things to come, (which is its most common sense,) or the interpretation of Scripture by immediate inspiration. *Tongues will cease*, i. e. the miraculous power of speaking languages without learning them. There will be but one language in heaven. And *knowledge will*

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—7. How are *they* deluded, who expect acceptance and reward, for those good works, which are as scanty in their degree, as they are corrupt and selfish in their principle! And how are even true Christians often fascinated, to overrate ostentatious eloquence, gifts, and abilities, and to undervalue honest, simple, and unadorned love, which seeks only to do them good!—But where does this heavenly love reside, which the apostle so warmly panegyrtizes? Is she returned to heaven, being wearied out with our contentions and selfishness on earth? Or does she dwell in some obscure retreat, at a distance from the disputes of the world, and of the church? Certainly she is but seldom seen among us; she has but few votaries and little influence; and is treated with strange neglect almost everywhere. Alas! numbers, who might be supposed 'to be somewhat,' if we only looked at their talents, knowledge, and zeal; appear to be 'nothing,' or very little, if 'love' be the touchstone of their characters.—Indeed, this ch. may be considered as an answer to all the *wrangling* pamphlets of angry disputers about religious truth, of different names and sentiments. Many of these seem incapable of long-suffering, or kindness, to any but their own party; so that envy, boasting, railing, ridicule, slander, and acrimony, are the prominent features of the portrait, which they exhibit to the view of the public! In the most unseemly manner, they sound their own praises; vent their own resentments; expose and triumph over their opponents;

peace and prosperity of the church, as its grand objects. This love is the unequivocal evidence of regeneration; and it is a better touchstone of men's professed faith in Christ, than even the love of God; because its effects may more easily be examined and ascertained, and there is less danger of false affections in it. 1 John 3:16, 17. 4:20, 21. It was also that part of the Christian temper, in which the Corinthians were peculiarly defective; the apostle therefore selected this subject, to show them how low an estimate ought to be made of their religion, and so to abate their high opinion of themselves.—We must further observe, that he described 'love,' as a man would *gald*, by enumerating its properties, in the abstract. Wherever it subsisted, it had those properties, whether its quantity were small or great; and by this a man might estimate his own attainments in real religion. Some love might exist, where great remains of selfish passions obstructed its exercise; as a little gold may be mixed with a large alloy of base metal; but it would then become less conspicuous, and the man's state more doubtful.—It is obvious to every attentive reader, that, in this beautiful description of the properties and effects of love, the apostle meant to show the Corinthians, that their conduct had, in most particulars, been an entire contrast to it. Gal. 5:13—18. James 3:13—18.—He seems also, without intend-

forget all decent regard to superiors; and turn religious investigation into a vainglorious, selfish, if not scurrilous, contest for victory! It is evident, that many of this character are 'easily provoked,' and hardly pacified; that they think evil of others, and rejoice in detecting the faults and follies of those who differ from them. In short, the attentive observer will perceive that every part of the apostle's definition of love forms a complete contrast to the conduct of great numbers, who, in different ages, have had numerous admirers for their zeal and ability, in contending for the sentiments or forms of their own sect or party.—But alas! we need far more 'love' than is generally possessed, to animadvert on such abuses, without being betrayed into a measure of imitation. Let us then rather inquire, whether this divine love inhabit and influence our hearts? .. If some sparks of this heavenly flame have been kindled in our hearts, we know there is much of a contrary nature, to counteract its efficacy. Here then is a call for watchfulness, diligence, and prayer; that our 'love may abound yet more and more, in knowledge, and in all judgment;' and that our selfish nature may be more entirely subdued and mortified. Phil. 1:9—11, v. 9. 1 Thes. 4:9—11. 2 Thes. 1:3, 4. 1 Pet. 1:22, 23. Hence we shall also see still more our need of the cleansing blood of Christ; and shall learn to walk humbly before God, and to bear with others; as conscious that we need the patient forbearance both of the Lord and of our brethren. SCOTT.

ing it, to have delineated his own character, as a successful imitator of the Lord Jesus, the perfect pattern of this holy love. (Note, 11:1.) Love, as exercised by Christians, not the love of God to man, must be meant; and the admired accommodation of it to the latter by some eloquent writers, leads the reader away from the intended instruction of the passage, however excellent in other respects. SCOTT.

(4.) *Vaunteth.* 'Rather, act precipitately, inconsiderately, rashly, thoughtlessly. See *Wets.* It was peculiarly the temper, as now, of the Greeks, especially the northern. See *Thucyd.* 1, 7. "They are fond of novelty, eager, hotheaded, never easy, nor permit others to be," &c. also ch. 3. Comp. Eccl. 6:2. Prov. 19:2.' BLOOMF.

(5.) *Unseemly.* 'The Cynics, it is well known, were fond of setting at naught all the common ideas of decency. Some Corinthians set at naught, from a vain affectation of superior knowledge, censures about idol meats, &c. *Thinketh no evil.* Rather, does not, as it were, enter it in a note-book, in order to bear it in mind, as matter of reproach or vengeance. See *Schl.*, and so *Gr.* and *Theoph.*, Wolf, Ros., Mede, Homib., Olcarins.' ID.

(6.) *The truth.* 'Rather, true, sincere, and real virtue.' ID.  
V. 8. *Fail.* These gifts seem to have ceased soon after this. ED.



10 But "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see through a "glass, "darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13 And now abideth "faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

#### CHAP. XIV.

1 Prophecy is commended, 2, 3, 4 and preferred before speaking with tongues, 6 by a comparison drawn from musical instruments. 12 Both must be referred to edification, 22 as to their true and proper end. 26 The true use of each is taught, 29 and the abuse taxed. 34 Women are forbidden to speak in the church.

**F**OLLOW after charity, and desire spiritual "gifts; but rather that ye may prophesy.

u 1 Jn. 3:2. x or, in a riddle. 1 Pe. 1:21.  
v or, reasoned. y He. 10:35, 39. a Ep. 1:3.  
w 2 Co. 3:18.

vanish away; knowledge to be had out of the common way; (see *ch.* 14: 6.) a knowledge of mysteries supernaturally communicated. Such knowledge was to vanish away. Some, indeed, understand it of common knowledge, acquired by instruction, taught and learnt. But it is plain, the apostle is here setting the grace of charity in opposition to supernatural gifts. And it is more valuable, because more durable; it shall last, when they shall be no more; it shall enter into heaven, where they will have no place, because they will be of no use; though, in a sense, even our common knowledge may be said to cease in heaven, by reason of the improvement that will then be made in it. The light of a candle is perfectly obscured by the sun shining in its strength.

2. He hints, that these gifts are adapted only to a state of imperfection, *v.* 9. Our best knowledge, and our greatest abilities, are at present, like our condition, narrow and temporary. Even the knowledge they had by inspiration was but in part. How little a portion of God, and the unseen world, was

**PRACT. OBS.** V. 8—13. If love, as before described, is planted in our hearts, though as an exotic in an unfriendly soil and climate, it will 'never fail,' but certainly grow up to maturity; and it will flourish abundantly, when prophecies shall cease, when human science and eloquence shall vanish away; and when even our highest attainments in divine knowledge, in this present world, will appear like the lisplings, the imaginations, and the reasonings of a little child.—But, if that feeble, indistinct view which we obtain by faith, when looking in the mirror of the sacred Word, be so delightful, as we have sometimes found it; with what raptures shall we 'see face to face,' and 'know even as we are known!' Let us then 'put away the childish things,' which amused us in an un-

V. 12. *Glass.*] *Esoptrou*: some of those transparent substances which the ancients used in their windows, such as thin plates of horn, transparent stone, and the like, through which they saw indeed the objects without, but obscurely. Windows were often formed of the *lapis specularis* mentioned by *Pliny*, which was very pellucid, and admitted of being split into thin *crustæ*, though some were much more obscure than others. See *Wets.* It is still used in S. America.' *BL.* 'Oriental houses had windows of curtains or marble trellis-work, in winter of oiled paper. The Romans used the *lapis specularis*, which seems to have been thin leaves of talc, the rich used them of agate and marble, in their baths. Fragments of glass plates have been found at *Pompeii*; but the first certain information of the use of glass for windows, is in the 4th cent., A. D.' *Enc. Am.* Nor can *mirrors* be meant, as these also do not show things *obscurely.* *ED.*

V. 13. Faith cordially and practically receives the 'sure testimony of God,' concerning invisible things, appropriates his instruction, and thus welcomes his salvation, by looking to the divine Redeemer, and relying on Him, and the promises of God in Him. *Jn.* 3:27—36, *vv.* 35, 36, *Heb.* 11:1, 2, 1 *Jn.* 5:9—12. — Hope, with longing and patient waiting, expects the promised blessings, as to be perfected in eternal life; and thus it is the 'anchor of the soul,' keeping it steadfast in obedience, and patient waiting, amidst every kind of opposition and discouragement. *Heb.* 6:16—20. 1 *Jn.* 3:1—3. And love to God, and to mankind for his sake, as before described, is the active principle of all those willing services, in which the Christian does good to others, according to the will of God. 'These three abide,' and must abide, as essential to godliness, under every dispensation, and in every age; whatever other changes take place; but 'the greatest of these is

heard even by apostles and inspired men! How much short do others come of them! But these gifts were fitted to the present imperfect state of the church, valuable in themselves, but not to be compared with charity, because they were to vanish with the imperfections of the church, nay, and long before, whereas charity was to last for ever.

3. He takes occasion hence, to show how much better it will be with the church hereafter, than it can be here. A state of perfection is in view, *v.* 10. When the end is once attained, the means will of course be abolished. There will be no need of tongues, and prophecy, and inspired knowledge, in a future life, because then the church will be in a state of perfection, complete both in knowledge and holiness. The difference between these two states is here pointed at in two particulars; (1.) The present state is a state of childhood, the future that of manhood, *v.* 11. Such is the difference between earth and heaven. What narrow views, what confused and indistinct notions of things, have children, in comparison of grown men! And how naturally do men, when reason is ripened and matured, despise and relinquish their infant thoughts, put them away, reject them, esteem them as nothing! Thus shall we think of our most valued gifts and acquisitions in this world, when we come to heaven. (2.) Things are all dark and confused now, in comparison of what they will be hereafter, *v.* 12. Now we can only discern things at a great distance, as through a telescope, and that involved in clouds and obscurity; but hereafter the things to be known will be near and obvious, open to our eyes; and our knowledge will be free from all obscurity and error. 1 *Jn.* 3:2. We shall know how we are known, entering into all the mysteries of divine love and grace. O glorious change! To pass from darkness to light, from clouds to the clear sunshine of our Savior's face, and in God's own light to see light! *Ps.* 36:9. It is the light of heaven only, that will remove all clouds and darkness from the face of God. It is at best but twilight while we are in this world; there it will be perfect and eternal day.

4. To sum up the excellences of charity, he prefers it not only to gifts, but to other graces, to faith and hope, *v.* 13. True grace is much more excellent than any spiritual gifts whatever. And faith, hope, and

love, are the three principal graces, of which charity is the chief, being the end to which the other two are but means. This is the divine nature, the soul's felicity, or it is complacential rest in God, and holy delight in all his saints. And it is everlasting work, when faith and hope shall be no more. Faith fixes on the divine revelation, and assents to that; hope fastens on future felicity, and waits for that; and in heaven, faith will be swallowed up of vision, and hope in fruition. There is no room to believe and hope, when we see and enjoy. But love fastens on the divine perfections themselves, and the divine image on the creatures, and our mutual relation both to God and them. These will all shine forth in the most glorious splendor in another world, and there will love be made perfect; there we shall perfectly love God, because He will appear perfectly amiable for ever, and our hearts will kindle at the sight, and glow with perpetual devotion. And there shall we perfectly love one another, when all the saints meet there, when none but saints are there, and saints made perfect. O blessed state! How much surpassing the best below! O amiable and excellent grace of charity! How much does it exceed the most valuable gift, when it outshines every grace, and is the everlasting consummation of them! When faith and hope are at an end, true charity will burn for ever, with the brightest flame. Note, *They* border most on the heavenly state and perfection, whose hearts are fullest of this divine principle; and burn with the most fervent charity. It is the surest offspring of God, and bears his fairest impression. For God is Love, 1 *Jn.* 4:8, 16. And where God is to be seen as He is, and face to face, there charity is in its greatest height; there, and there only, will it be perfected.

**CHAP. XIV. V. 1—5.** The apostle, in the foregoing *ch.*, had himself preferred, and advised the Corinthians to prefer, Christian charity to all spiritual gifts. Here he teaches them, among spiritual gifts, which they should prefer, and by what rules they should make comparison. He begins,

I. With an exhortation to charity, *v.* 1. The original, for *follow after*, here, when spoken of a thing, signifies a singular concern to obtain it; and is commonly taken in a good and laudable sense. It is an ex-

converted state; for so we now clearly see them to have been; let us learn to value things according to their intrinsic worth; and not, as children, admire all that glitters, whether it be gold or tinsel; let us cease from our childish pursuits about externals and non-essentials; that we may value and seek an increase of faith, hope, and love from the Giver of all good gifts; and while we contend, that 'faith alone justifies' the sinner, by forming his relation to the Savior; and that hope only can support the soul, amidst all the trials of life and death; let us remember, that love is still greater than these most needful graces, being the evidence of our title to eternal life, the meetness for that holy and unspeakable felicity, and the blessed earnest and beginning of it. *SCOTT.*

love.' Not that love can do the office of faith, in justifying the sinner, or do anything towards it; any more than the eye can perform the function of the ear; nor can this 'love' be found in any man, who is not partaker of faith and hope. But faith and hope are the means, or the intermediate nets of the mind, by which a proud, selfish, carnal, condemned criminal, is brought to love a reconciled God, and to love men in general, and Christians in particular, for his sake. Faith and hope are only requisite for us, as sinners, in this imperfect state; but perfect love will flourish for ever, as the business, element, joy, and glory of heaven itself; uniting God and all holy creatures in the most perfect harmony and felicity, without the least alloy of any contrary principle, through all the ages of eternity. *Mk.* 12:23—34. *Rom.* 13:8—10. *Gal.* 5:1—6, 22—26. 1 *Jn.* 4:7—12. *Sc.*

(13.) 'Faith, Hope, and Charity, these three together exist in the present scene only; but in the future world, Faith and Hope will be done away, and therefore the greatest of these is Charity.' *Bl.* But in the heavenly state is there not a continued exercise of *faith* and confidence in the continuance of God's power, goodness, &c.; and we cannot conceive of happiness in which there shall not be a pleasing anticipation or hope of its increase and continuance. *ED.*

**NOTES.** **CHAP. XIV. V. 1—5.** By 'the gift of prophesying,' the apostle seems to have intended, an immediate communication from the Spirit of God, concerning the meaning of the Holy Scriptures, or some point of doctrine or practice, in which the church or individuals wanted instruction at the time. This was a gift bestowed on several, by which they became occasional or extraordinary teachers in the church; and it appears to have been generally accompanied by the power of predicting future events, when circumstances required it. 1 *Thes.* 5:16—22, *v.* 20.



2 For he that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue, <sup>b</sup> speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for <sup>c</sup> no man <sup>d</sup> understandeth *him*; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men *to* edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

4 He that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

5 I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater *is* he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive <sup>e</sup> edifying.

6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by <sup>f</sup> revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?

7 And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the <sup>g</sup> sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?

8 For if the trumpet <sup>h</sup> give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words <sup>i</sup> easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them *is* without signification.

11 Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a <sup>j</sup> barbarian; and he that speaketh *shall be* a barbarian unto me.

12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of <sup>k</sup> spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue, pray that he may interpret.

b Ac. 10:46. f ver. 26. t significant.  
c Ac. 22:9. g or, hears. } Ro. 1:14.  
d hears. h Nu. 10:9. k spirits.

It seems, that, for a person who spake with tongues to be also endued with the gift, of interpreting his discourse into the language understood by his hearers, that so the church might be edified by what he spake, was not generally the case. Or perhaps, to counterpoise a gift, which was so much calculated to elate the possessors, he might be left incapable of giving utterance, with propriety, perspicuity, or promptitude, suited to a public assembly, even in his native tongue, to those divine truths which he spake fluently in another language, under the influence of the Holy Spirit; and another man might be miraculously enabled to understand, and interpret into the language of the audience, what was thus spoken, who yet himself might be unable to speak fluently, in the language which he interpreted. Even in ordinary cases, *clearly understanding* a language, and being able to *speak fluently* in it, are very distinct attainments.—'Why was the gift of tongues conferred? That the mysteries of God might be openly made known to more people and nations. Then surely, prophecy, to which the gift of tongues was intended to be subservient, must be of superior excellency.' *Beza*. 'This, therefore, was a great abuse of this gift, that when they had a mystery revealed to them, they did not utter it in a language understood by the assembly, but only by themselves; and so they did not edify the church by it, though it was given, as all the other gifts were, for edification. (12:7.)' *Whitby*.—(1) *Follow after*.] *Pursue love*. *Heb.* 12:14. 'The word *diokete* properly signifies, to pursue with an eagerness, like that with which hunters follow their game. And it may be intended to intimate, how *hard* it is to obtain, and preserve, a truly benevolent spirit in the main series of life; considering on the one hand the many provocations we are like to meet with, and on the other, the force of self-love, which will, in so many instances, be ready to break in upon it.' *Doddridge*. SCOTT.

(1.) 'Yet seek after and studiously cultivate . . . but chiefly.' *B.*  
V. 6—12. 'At this day, among the papists, they are used, in their sermons, always to quote the sacred Scriptures in Latin, without ad-

hortation to get this excellent disposition of charity on any terms, whatever pains or prayers it may cost.

II. He directs them which spiritual gift to prefer, from a principle of charity; '*Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy, or chiefly that you may prophesy*. While they made charity their chief scope, they might be zealous of spiritual gifts, but especially of prophesying, i. e. of interpreting Scripture. This preference would most plainly discover that they were indeed on such pursuit, and intent upon it.

III. He assigns the reasons of this preference. And it is remarkable here, that he only compares prophesying with speaking with tongues, the gift on which the Corinthians principally valued themselves. This was more ostentatious than the plain interpretation of Scripture; more fit to gratify pride, but less fit to pursue the purposes of Christian charity; it would not equally edify, or do good to, the souls of men. For,

1. He that spake with tongues, must wholly speak between God and himself; none of his own countrymen could understand him, v. 2. Note, What cannot be understood, can never edify; but he that prophesies, speaks to the advantage of his hearers; they may profit by his gift. Interpretation of Scripture will be for their edification; they may be exhorted and comforted by it, v. 3. And indeed these two must go together. Duty is the proper way to comfort; and they that would be comforted, must bear being exhorted.

2. He that speaks with tongues, may edify himself, v. 4. so every minister should do; and he that is most edified himself, is in the disposition and fitness to do good to others; but he that speaks with tongues, or language unknown, can only edify himself; others can reap no benefit from his speech. Whereas the end of speaking in the church is to edify the church, v. 4. to which prophesying, or interpreting Scripture by inspiration, or otherwise, is immediately adapted. Such is prophesying, or preaching, and interpreting Scripture, compared with speaking in an unknown tongue.

Indeed, no gift is to be despised, but the best are to be preferred. *I could wish*, says the apostle, *that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied*, v. 5. Every gift of God is a favor from God, and may be improved for his glory, and as such is to be valued and thankfully received; but then those are to be most valued, that are most useful, v. 5. Benevolence makes a man truly great. *It is more blessed to give than to receive*. And it is true magnanimity to study and seek to be useful to others, rather than to raise their admiration, and draw their es-

teem. Such a man has a large soul, copious and diffused, in proportion to his benevolence, and bent of mind for public good. Greater is he who interprets Scripture to edify the church, than he who speaks tongues to recommend himself. And what other end he who spake with tongues could have, unless he interpreted what he spake, is not easy to see. Note, That makes most for the honor of a minister, which is most for the church's edification, not that which shows his gifts to most advantage. He acts in a narrow sphere, while he aims at himself; but his spirit and character increase in proportion to his usefulness, I mean his own intention and endeavors to be useful.

V. 6—14. In this paragraph he goes on to show, how vain a thing that ostentation of speaking unknown and unintelligible language must be. It was altogether unedifying and unprofitable, v. 6. Unintelligible language is like piping or harping, without distinction of sounds; it gives no more direction how a man should order his conversation, than a pipe with but one stop, or a harp with but one string, can direct a dancer how he should order his steps, v. 7. Or, it is like a trumpet giving an *uncertain sound*, a sound not manifest; either not the proper sound for the purpose, or not distinct enough to be discerned from every other sound. To speak words that have no signification to those who hear them, is to leave them ignorant of what is spoken; it is speaking to the air, v. 9. He compares the speaking in an unknown tongue to the gibberish of barbarians, v. 10. Whatever proper signification the words of any language may have in themselves, and to those who understand them, they are perfect gibberish to men of another language, who understand them not, v. 11.

The apostle, having thus established his point, in the next two vs. applies it; 1. By advising them to be chiefly desirous of those gifts that were most for the church's edification, v. 12. This is the great rule he gives; which, 2. He applies to the matter in hand, that, if they did speak a foreign language, they should beg of God the gift of interpreting it, v. 13. That these were different gifts, see *ch.* 12:10. Let him therefore pray for the gift of interpreting what he speaks in an unknown tongue; or rather covet, and ask of God, the gift of interpreting, than of speaking in a language that needs interpretation; this being most for the church's benefit, and therefore among the gifts that excel, v. 12. They should perform all religious exercises in their assemblies so, that all might join in them, and profit by them. 3. He enforces this advice with a proper reason, that, if he prayed in an unknown tongue, his spirit might pray, i. e. a

ding a tr. in the vulgar tongue; nor do they use any other method in the singing, and prayers.' *Beza*. SCOTT.

(6.) *Revelation, &c.*] *Doddr.* and *Locke* despair of the true sense. *Mackn.* paraphrases, 'revelation peculiar to an apostle; or by the word of knowledge, the gift of a superior prophet; or by prophecy, the inspiration proper to an inferior prophet; or by doctrine, the inspiration proper to an ordinary pastor.' This *Bloomf.* rather prefers to others, objecting, however, to 'peculiar,' 'superior,' and 'inferior,' as groundless. He suggests the omission of the particle *ē* ('or') after *speak*, (which is supported by several MSS., the Syr., and some Lat. verss., Theoph., and Phot.) and proposes, 'Unless I shall speak distinctly, and with an interpretation of what I say, whether that speech be in the way of [knowledge] *gnōsis* (12:3.), [prophecy] *prophēteia* (12:10.), [doctrine] *didaskē*. (12:28.)'

(7.) *And even*.] 'So the Vulg., and there is not a more manifest mistake in their whole tr. than our Eng. trs. have here made: *homōs* (it should be read without the accent) means *likewise*, as the Gr. contrs. tr. [see *Bl.*] *Distinction*.] Not melody, or harmony, but *intonation* is alluded to.' BLOOMF.

(8.) 'The ancients used wind instruments not merely to direct the steps in marching, but also (and especially the trumpet) to signify to the soldiers what they were to do, whether to advance, or retreat, take to arms, or go to quarters; in fact to do all that is now done by the trumpets, flutes, drums. There were even names for the different tunes (*Polyen.* 518.) When, however, these signals became known to the enemies, great advantage was sometimes thereby obtained. *Herod.* 78. Sometimes, however, a counter-stratagem was employed, and with even greater effect. (*Polyen.*) That the trumpeter did sometimes give an uncertain sound, see *Polyb.* and *Liv.* — *Battle*.] i. e. any of the evolutions of war.' ID.

V. 13—19. Had the apostle lived about the era of the Reformation,



14 For if I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my spirit prayeth; but my understanding is unfruitful.

15 What is it then? I will pray with the *spirit*, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing <sup>m</sup> with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding <sup>n</sup> also.

16 Else, when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that oocupieth the room of the unlearned, say Amen, at thy giving of <sup>o</sup> thanks? seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest.

17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.

18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all:

19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue.

20 Brethren, be not <sup>p</sup> children in understanding: howbeit in malice be <sup>q</sup> ye children, but in understanding be <sup>r</sup> men.

21 In the law 'it is written, *With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.*

22 Wherefore tongues are for a <sup>v</sup> sign, not to them <sup>w</sup> that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

l Jn. 4:24.	2 Pe. 3:18.	a Ps. 119:99.
m Ep. 5:19.	q Pa. 131:2. Mat.	t Jn. 10:34.
Col. 3:16.	18:3. Ro. 16:19.	u Is. 28:11, 12.
n Ps. 47:7.	1 Pe. 2:2.	v Ma. 16:17.
o c. 11:24.	r perfect, or, of	Ac. 2:6, &c.
p Ep. 4:14, 15.	a ripe age.	w t Ti. 1:9.
He. 6:1-3.		

spiritual gift might be exercised in prayer, or his own mind might be devoutly engaged, but his understanding would be unfruitful, v. 14. i. e. the sense and meaning of his words would be unfruitful; he would not be understood, nor therefore would others join in his devotions. It should be the concern of such

as pray in public, to pray intelligibly, not in a foreign language, nor in a language above the level of the audience. Language that is most obvious and easy to be understood, is the most proper for devotions, and other religious exercises.

V. 15-20. The apostle here sums up the argument hitherto, and,

I. Directs them how they should sing and pray in public, v. 15. He does not forbid their praying or singing under a divine *afflatus*, or when they were inspired for this purpose, or had such a spiritual gift communicated to them; but he would have them perform both, so as to be understood by others, that others might join with them. Public worship should be performed so as to be understood.

II. He enforces the argument with several reasons:

1. That otherwise *the unlearned* could not join in the worship, for they did not understand it, v. 16. He who occupies the place of the unlearned, i. e. as the ancients interpret it, the body of the people, who, in most Christian assemblies, are illiterate, how should they declare their consent and concurrence? i. e. say Amen, So be it. *God grant the thing we have requested!* All should say Amen, inwardly; and it is not improper to do it audibly, as the ancient Christians did. See Just. Mart. *apol. 2. near the end.* Now, how should the people say Amen to what they did not understand? Note, There can be no concurrence in those prayers that are not understood. The intention of public devotions is, therefore, entirely destroyed, if they be performed in an unknown tongue. He who performs, may pray well, and give thanks well, but not in that time and place, because others are not, cannot be, edified, v. 17. by what they understand not.

2. He alleges his own example, to make the greater impression. Concerning which, observe, (1.) He did not come behind any of them in this spiritual gift, v. 18. It was not envy at their better furniture, that made Paul depreciate what they so highly valued; such a spirit of envy is too common in the world. But he took care to guard against this misconstruction of his purpose, by letting them know, there was more ground for them to envy him on this head, than for him to envy them. Note, When we beat down men's unreasonable value for themselves, or any of their possessions or attainments, we should let them see, if possible, that this

does not proceed from an envious and grudging spirit, else we miss our aim. So Paul did. He spake more languages than they all. Yet, (2.) He had rather *speak five words with understanding*, i. e. so as to be understood, and instruct and edify others, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue, v. 19. A truly Christian minister will value himself much more on doing the least spiritual good to men's souls, than on procuring the greatest applause and commendation to himself. This is true grandeur and nobleness of spirit; it is acting up to his character; it is approving himself the servant of Christ, and not a vassal to his own pride and vanity.

3. He adds a plain intimation, that the fondness they discovered for this gift, was but too clear an indication of the immaturity of their judgment, v. 20. Children are apt to be struck with novelty, and strange appearances. Do not you act like them; show a riper judgment, and act a more manly part; be like children in nothing but an innocent and inoffensive disposition. A double rebuke is couched in this passage, both of their pride on account of their gifts, and their arrogance and haughtiness towards each other, and the contests and quarrels proceeding from them. Note, Christians should be harmless and inoffensive as children, but should have wisdom and knowledge ripe and mature. They should not be unskilful in the word of righteousness, Heb. 5: 13. though unskilful in all the arts of mischief.

V. 21-25. In this passage, pursuing the argument, he reasons from other topics; as,

1. Tongues, as the Corinthians used them, were rather a token of judgment from God, than mercy to any people, v. 21. Is. 28:11. Comp. Deut. 28:46, 49. To both these places, it is thought, the apostle refers. Both are delivered by way of threatening, and one is supposed to interpret the other. The meaning in this view, is, that it is an evidence that a people are abandoned of God, when He gives them up to this sort of instruction, to the discipline of those who speak in another language. And should Christians covet to be in such a state, or bring the churches into it? Yet thus did the Corinthian preachers in effect, who would always deliver their inspirations in an unknown tongue.

2. Tongues were rather a sign to unbelievers than to believers, v. 22. The gift

and written expressly against the church of Rome, he could not more emphatically have exposed the absurdity, and wickedness, of worshipping God, and performing all public services in Latin, of which the common people understand not one word. No wonder the rulers of that church lock up the Scriptures, also, in an *unknown* tongue, seeing they must otherwise bear too evident a testimony against them. — (15) *With the understanding.* That is, say most commentators, so as to be understood. This, indeed, is implied, and principally intended; yet an example of such an use of the words cannot easily be adduced. But might not the apostle mean, that they, who spoke publicly in a language not understood by the auditors, however fervent their affections, or excellent their gifts might be, seemed to act like men without understanding, or who made no use of their understanding, seeing no man, however irrational and enthusiastical, could act more evidently against the plain dictates of sober reason and sound judgment?—Does not the apostle's argument about prayer, without any preconceived form, fully show, that if any one prayed, or gave thanks, in a language understood by the congregation, the people might, if nothing else prevented, cordially say Amen to his words? And does not this remark sufficiently answer many common objections and arguments against prayer of this kind? It, however, by no means decides, whether that, or a liturgy, as to public worship, is most conducive to general edification, in the present state of the church. [See B. Jenks's 'Liberty of Prayer.']

(14.) *Spirit . . . understanding.* *Pneuma . . . nous*: 'my mind prayeth, (I understand what I am praying,) but my meaning (the meaning of my words) does not profit another, who understands not that foreign language.' *Ros., Bl.* Perhaps here is an intimation of what is now clearly seen by philosophers, viz. the distinction between what is technically called 'the sentiments,' or 'affective faculties,' and 'the intellectual,' or 'perceptive and reflective faculties,'—at least, teachers, moral, political, social, and religious, and parental, would do well to bear in mind, that feeling without intelligence, confidence instead of conviction, blind impulse instead of reasoning knowledge, is not only a cause of bigotry, intolerance, and persecution in religion, as well as censoriousness, and tyranny in domestic life, but, in our state of national half-education, allows the ruinous triumphs of uncharitableness, sectarianism, party-zcal, and mobs, over brotherly forbearance, piety, national happiness, truth, and law. And how, in God's worship, can a blind, impulsive sentiment,

excited by external solemnities and pomps, the tones of an organ, or the vagaries of imagination, be more acceptable to the Pure Intelligence, than the unguided, unreasoning devotions of the idolater and fanatic, or the necessary actions of a brute?

(15.) The best to be done is, to ask of God, in prayer, to be enabled to pray with the Spirit, &c., and to pray with meaning. See *Bl. and Mackn.—Sing.* [*Psalm*: here, as in Rom. 15:19. Eph. 5:19. and elsewhere, *psallein* signifies, to celebrate the divine praises in verse; (see Jas. 5:13. where *proseuchetai* and *psalleto*, are, as here, antithetical;) whether always in a regular hymn, is not clear. I conceive it was, in general, only a composition, in such poetic numbers as would admit of being adapted to music, though I imagine it was often only recited. This, indeed, would especially appear from the passage of Ja. We may also collect from the term *psallein*, here employed (especially in comparison with its use in other parts of the SS.), and also *eulogēsēs* [bless], just after, that the subject of the speeches of those who had the gift of tongues, was usually prayers to, and praises of God, either in *hymns*, or in that sort of style, half prose and half poetry, so characteristic of the genius of oriental writing.]

(16.) *Unlearned.* Note, Acts 4:13. 'It also denotes hearers, in distinction from teachers, and the supernaturally gifted.' *Mackn.* Ed.

(18.) 'Paul had this great variety of languages given him by inspiration, that he might be able immediately to preach the Gospel to all nations, without spending the time in learning their languages. But it was a knowledge for common use, enabling him to deliver the doctrines of the Gospel clearly and properly; and not such a knowledge of these languages as prevented him, in speaking and writing, from mixing foreign idioms with them, especially the idioms of his mother tongue. An attention to such trifles was below the grandeur and importance of the work in which he was engaged, and tended to no solid use; these foreign idioms being often more expressive and emphatical than the correspondent classical phrases.'

V. 20-25. These repeated intimations of the ignorance and childish conduct of the Corinthians, who were evidently in no small degree disposed to self-wisdom, are well worthy of notice. 4:8.—(21) *With men, &c.* Not taken from the Sept., from which it varies as much as any words can differ from others, where the general meaning is similar. It far more accords to the Heb.; and may be considered as taken from it;



23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those that are unlearned*, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

27 If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.

28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.

29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

30 If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

x Ac. 2:13. y Is. 45:14. zec. 8:23. z ver. 6. a ver. 40. b ver. 39. 1 Th. 5:19, 20. c Job 32:11. d 1 Jn. 4:1. e tumult, or, unquietness. f c. 11:16. g 1 Ti. 2:11, 12. h Ep. 5:22. Tit. 2:5. 1 Pe. 3:1. i Ge. 3:15. Nu. 30:3-12. Est. 1:20.

of tongues was necessary to spread Christianity, and gather churches; it was proper and intended to convince unbelievers of that doctrine which Christians had already embraced; but prophesying, and interpreting Scripture in their own language, were most for the edification of such as did already believe: so that speaking with tongues in Christian assemblies was altogether out of time and place; neither one nor the other was proper for it.

3. The credit and reputation of their assemblies among unbelievers, required them to prefer prophesying before speaking with tongues. For, (1.) If, when assembled for Christian worship, all employed should talk unintelligible language, and infidels should drop in, they would conclude them to be no better than a parcel of wild fanatics. Who in their right senses could carry on religious worship in such a manner? Or what sort of religion is that which leaves out sense and understanding? Note, Christian religion is a sober and reasonable thing in itself, and should not, by the ministers of it, be made to look wild or senseless. But, on the other hand, (2.) If instead of speaking with tongues, those who minister plainly interpret Scripture, or preach, in language intelligible and proper, the great truths and rules of the Gospel, a heathen or unlearned person, coming in, would probably be convinced, and become a convert to Christianity, v. 24, 25. Scripture-truth, plainly and duly taught, has a marvellous aptness to awaken the conscience, and touch the heart. Religious exercises in Christian assemblies should be such as are fit to edify the faithful, and convince, affect, and convert unbelievers. The ministry was not instituted to make ostentation of gifts and parts, but to save souls.

V. 26—33.1. He blames them for the confusion they introduced into the assembly, by ostentation of their gifts, v. 26. i. e. either, 'You are apt to confound the several parts of worship; and while one has a psalm to utter by inspiration, another has a doctrine, or revelation;' or else, 'You are apt to be confused in the same branch of worship, many of you having psalms or doctrines to propose at the same time, without staying for one another. Is not this perfect uproar? Can this be edifying? And yet, all religious exercises in public assemblies should be done to edifying.'

2. He corrects their faults, and lays down some regulations for their future conduct. As, (1.) To speaking in an unknown tongue, he orders, that no more than two or three should do it at one meeting, and this not altogether, nor come at all, unless there were some one to interpret, v. 27, 28. some other beside himself, who spake; for to speak in an unknown tongue, what himself was afterward to interpret, could only be for ostentation. If therefore there were none to interpret, he was to be silent, and only exercise his gift between God and himself, v. 28. i. e. (as I think,) in private, at home; for all who are present at public worship, should join in it, and not be at their private devotions in public assemblies. (2.) As to prophesying, he orders, [1.] That two or three only should speak at one meeting, v. 20. and this successively, not all at once; and the other should examine and judge what he delivered, i. e. discern and determine concerning it, whether it were of divine inspiration or not. There might be false prophets, mere pretenders; and the true prophets were to judge of these, and discern and discover who

was divinely inspired, and by such inspiration interpreted Scripture, and taught the church, and who was not; what was of divine inspiration, and what was not. This seems to be the meaning of this rule. [2.] He orders, that, if any assistant prophet had a revelation, while another was prophesying, the other should hold his peace, v. 30. before the inspired assistant uttered his revelation. Indeed, it is by many understood, that the former speaker should immediately hold his peace. But this seems unnatural, and not so well to agree with the context. Nor is it more agreeable to the context, and the reason annexed, v. 31. *That all might prophesy, one by one*, or one after another; which could not be, where any one was interrupted and silenced before he had done prophesying; but might easily be, if he, who was afterward inspired, forbore to deliver his new revelation, till the former prophet had finished what he had to say. And to confirm this sense, the apostle quickly adds, *The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets*, v. 33. i. e. the spiritual gifts they have, leave them still possessed of their reason, and capable of using their own judgment in the exercise of them. The man inspired by the Spirit of God, may still act the man, and observe the rules of natural order and decency in delivering his revelations. His spiritual gift is thus far subject to his pleasure, and to be managed by his discretion.

3. The apostle gives the reasons of these regulations. As, (1.) That they would be for the church's benefit, their instruction and consolation, v. 31. The instruction, edification, and comfort, of the church, is that for which God instituted the ministry. And surely ministers should, as much as possible, fit their ministrations to these purposes. (2.) He tells them, *God is not the God of confusion, but of peace and good order*, v. 33. therefore divine inspirations should by no means break through all rules of common decency; which yet would be unavoidable, if several inspired men should all at once utter what was suggested to them by the Spirit of God, and not wait to take their turns. The honor of God requires, that things should be so managed in Christian assemblies, as not to transgress the rules of natural decency, and no unlovely or dishonorable notion of God be formed in the minds of observers. (3.) He adds, that things were thus orderly managed in all the other churches, v. 33. which was a manifest proof that the church of Corinth might observe the same regulations. And it would be perfectly scandalous for them, who exceeded most churches in spiritual gifts, to be more disorderly than any in their exercise.

V. 34, 35. Here the apostle, 1. Enjoins silence on their women in public assemblies, and to such a degree, that they must not ask questions for their own information in the church, but ask their husbands at home, v. 34. 1 Tim. 2:11, 12. See on ch. 11:5. They are not permitted to speak in the church, neither in praying nor

'only what is said of God, in the third person, in the Heb., is here expressed in the first person, with the addition of, *and I will suppose*.' RAN-

dolph. SCOTT.

(21.) 'The apostle gives the substance of the sense; at all events, it is a very happy accommodation.' BLOOMER.

(24.) 'He is convicted by all (the preachers) of sin and iniquity, and error, in the opinions he had formed of the Christian doctrine. *Judged*. *Anakrinetai*: a favorite term, which must (as Schl. admits) involve a notion of condemnation, and is added to strengthen the sense. And v. 25. is a popular description of the workings of an awakened conscience in a heathen hearer.' ID.

V. 26. 'What, then, is to be done (to avoid these evils, and promote the good in view? Why, this). Each (I will suppose) hath some gift or other; whether he hath a psalm, whether he hath, &c. (Well, be it so, so that all he done unto edification.) Keep that in view. Let everything be done unto edification. *Psalm*.] Perhaps an extemporaneous and inspired composition in poetic numbers (comp. on v. 15.), adapted, or suitable to music. *Psalm*, compares the hymn of Simeon and Hannah, Moses, and Maria, [Miriam,] his sister, another of Moses, and that of Deborah, Hannah, (wife of Elkanah,) and that Is. 5.' ID.

V. 28. *If there, &c.*] It might happen that some person should speak

pret it into his own native tongue, neither he nor any present could render what he had spoken into the language of the auditory; as distinct from both the language in which he spake, and from his native language. SCOTT.

V. 30. *Hold his peace*.] 'Come to a conclusion: and so not prevent, by his undue prolixity, more valuable and edifying remarks which might occur to another [temporary] *prophētēs*.—*Revealed*.] *Apokaluptein* is almost always used in the N. T. (as here) of supernatural revelation.' BLOOMER.

V. 34, 35. To reconcile these vs. with 11:2—16. it seems most natural to suppose, that some of the Corinthian women were used to speak publicly, when not under any immediate or extraordinary impulse of the Holy Spirit; and perhaps they interrupted the other speakers, by inquiries or objections, according to the disputations spirit which prevailed. The apostle, therefore, laid it down as a general rule, (to which the foregoing case was the only exception,) that women must not be allowed to speak in the public congregation, or to assume the office of teachers, or disputants; for this by no means consisted with that subjection to their husbands, which the law of God inculcated. SCOTT.

(34, 35.) 'The Gr. here for *women* (*gunaikes*) properly signifies *wives*, matrons; as appears from v. 35. That *virgins* should speak, the apostle did not (I conceive) contemplate the possibility; and, indeed, con-



35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

J. c. 4.7. k 2 Co. 10:7. 1 Jn. 4:6. 1 ver. 26, 33.

prophesying. The connexion seems plainly to include the last, in the limited sense in which it is taken in this ch., i. e. for preaching, or interpreting Scripture by inspiration. And indeed, for a woman to prophesy in this sense, were to teach, which does not so

well befit her state of subjection. But praying, and uttering hymns inspired, were not teaching. And seeing there were women who had spiritual gifts of this sort in that age of the church, see Acts, 12:9. and might be under this impulse in the assembly, must they altogether suppress it? Or why should they have this gift, if it must never be publicly exercised? For these reasons, some think, that these general prohibitions are only to be understood in common cases; but that on extraordinary occasions, when women were under a divine *afflatus*, and known to be so, they might have liberty of speech. Note, As it is the woman's duty to learn in subjection, it is the man's duty to keep up his superiority, by being able to instruct her: if it be her duty to ask her husband at home, it is his concern and duty to endeavor at least to be able to answer her inquiries; if it be a shame for her to speak in the church, where she should be silent, it is a shame for him to be silent when he should speak, and not be able to give an answer, when she asks him at home.

2. We have here the reason of this injunction,—God's law and commandment, v. 34. Woman is placed in subordination to the man; and it is a shame for her to do anything that looks like an affectation of

changing ranks: so the apostle concludes, she should not speak in the church, in the assembly. Shame is the mind's uneasy reflection on having done an indecent thing. And what more indecent, than for a woman to quit her rank, renounce the subordination of her sex, or do what, in common account, had such aspect and appearance? Note, Our spirit and conduct should be suitable to our rank. The natural distinctions God has made, we should observe. The woman was made subject to the man, and she should keep her station, and be content with it. For this reason, they must be silent in the churches, not set up for teachers; for this is setting up for superiority over the man.

V. 36—40. He closes his argument, 1. With a just rebuke of the Corinthians, for their extravagant pride and self-conceit. Now, says he, to beat down this arrogant humor, 'Did Christianity come out of Corinth; was its original among you? Or, if not, is it now limited and confined to you; are you the only church favored with divine revelations, that you will depart from the decent usages of all other churches; and, to make ostentation of your spiritual gifts, bring confusion into Christian assemblies? How intolerably assuming is this behavior! Pray bethink yourselves.' Note, They must

PRACT. OBS. All our pursuits should spring from 'love,' as the grand motive; and all public ordinances should be conducted in that manner, which most conduces to the edification, exhortation, animation to duty, and consolation under afflictions, of believers; and to the conversion of sinners. Even fervent, spiritual affections must be governed by the sober exercise of the understanding; or else, with the best intentions, men will run into great extravagances, and disgrace the truth which they mean to promote.—While we most reasonably exclaim against prayers and worship in an unknown tongue, and thank God for emancipating us from so absurd an imposition, we should inquire, whether some, who speak in the language of their native country, do not so affect elegant phrases, sonorous words, or words adopted from other languages, and learned discussions, as to render themselves unintelligible to the common people; and, whether this be not quite as irrational, as preaching to Britons in Greek or Latin would be.—But if we speak in plain, simple, and perspicuous language, which even children may understand, (and this does not imply *coarseness* and *vulgarity*;) we may be sure, that the more intelligent part of our audience will be edified, if disposed to receive instruction.—Whether we pour out our prayers, sing the praises of God, or thank Him for his mercies, we should be careful to unite spiritual affections with sober judgment; and they, who lead in social worship, should use such language, as may affect and instruct the meanest fellow-worshipper, and enable him to add his cordial 'Amen' to what is spoken.—Though the conducting of public worship ought to be peculiarly directed to the edification of believers, and of the congregation, yet provision should also be made for those unbelievers, or curious strangers, who may come among us, even as spies, to make remarks; nor should anything be admitted which may *reasonably*

excite their disgust, or *needlessly* confirm their prejudices. This has not been in any measure sufficiently attended to; and many things have been said and done, without warrant from Scripture, nay, contrary to its plain import, and the *gravity* and discretion which it inculcates; and this even by good men, who have sent away occasional hearers riveted in their prejudices against the truth, and disposed to ridicule it in every company; so that the mischief, thus done, is incalculable. But when the Word of God is soberly spoken, with an address both to the understanding and the affections, and with an authoritative application to the conscience, occasional hearers are often unexpectedly impressed; being judged, convinced, and arraigned by what they hear.—When professors of evangelical doctrine, who imagine themselves qualified and called to be teachers, are so full of their subject, that they cannot refrain from speaking, however unadvised or irregular their conduct may be, it is evident that they are more influenced by self-sufficiency and ambition, or by enthusiastic impressions, than by humble zeal and love. For the Spirit of God moves the will and affections, in a manner consistent with the exercise of sober reason and discretion. But if men will remain ignorant of such things, after proper instruction and warning, it is not advisable to be always debating with them.—However valuable miraculous gifts were in the primitive church, we cannot well read this epistle without cheerfully acquiescing in the will of God, as to his withholding them from us. Man's heart is so prone to pride, ostentation, and folly, that even endowments, of this kind, were made occasions of grievous sins and offences! Our vainglory is sufficiently excited by inferior and ordinary gifts or abilities; and this often militates greatly against our usefulness and peace; and requires many painful and distressing remedies, to prevent its more fatal effects. 2 Cor. 12:1—10. SCOTT.

considering Grecian customs, and how studiously unmarried females were secluded, (*Eurip. Phœn.* 8, 8. *Synes.* 105. *D. Thucyd.* 2, 44. *Plut.* 2, 220.) they seldom attended.—The Gr. means, keep silence altogether, not only refraining from *teaching*, but *interrogating*; the former of which is expressly forbidden in this v. and the latter indirectly in the next. *Schoett.* shows, that among the Jews it was strictly forbidden for a woman even to ask questions; says R. Eliezer, "let the words of the law be burnt up, rather than delivered to women;" "women ought to know nothing except the distaff;" see *Bammidbar rabba.* *Schoett.* also shows, (on Lu. 2:46.) that they were *admitted* to the schools of the Rabbins, but only to *hear*, not to propound questions. The Rabbins, too, forbade them to lead in the synagogue-singing. All which was quite agreeable to the customs of the *Greeks* also: see *Grot.* and *Wets.*, the most important of whose citations are *Plaut.* "a silent, is better than a talking woman." *Val. Max.* "what have women to do with the assembly? if our country's custom is kept up, nothing?" *Eurip.—Is not permitted.*] The pret. pass. is here put (by a common idiom, especially in commanding) for the pres. in its indefinite sense. The reading which has this pres. (adopted by *Pearce*, &c.) is a mere gloss.

The words, *it is not permitted to them* (women) *to speak*, are, I think, meant to further explain Paul's meaning in the preceding words, *let them keep silence in the churches* [or *assemblies*]. Many moderns (as *Grot.*, *Locke*, *Doddr.*, and *Benson*) think it wholly forbids women to speak at all in the congregation; and to reconcile this with the seeming permission at 11:5, &c. they suppose them forbidden only when they had no supernatural impulse and divine revelation: [and indeed would it not have been arrogant impiety to forbid their speaking when under a real impulse of this kind? A ghostly domineering over the female conscience, should be avoided. *Ed.*] But (as *Mackn.* justly) "P. had been all along speaking of *inspired teaching and preaching*, and, after directions for the orderly exercise of these gifts, subjoins this order respecting the women: the prohibition, therefore, standing in this connexion, implies, that the Corinthian women were not to pray and prophesy in the church, as teachers, on pretence of being inspired, and unable to restrain the motions of the Spirit. Besides, the reasons mentioned by P., show the prohibition was absolute and general. Christ had not permitted women to speak in the church as teachers of the men; neither had the law of Moses; for it commanded them to be in subjection to the men. He plainly tells them, that whatever inspirations of the Spirit they might be favored with, no inspiration was given them to enable them to teach publicly, or lead the devotion of the church." *Mackn.* further argues, that P. did

not prohibit the women from speaking in the church, in ch. 11. because his sole object there was to correct the abuse of their officiating with the head uncovered, reserving his correction of the other abuse to this place: and so *Whit.* And others think in ch. 11. P. only intended to say *how* they should speak, *if they spoke at all*, but *here* absolutely to *forbid*. But (as *Doddr.*) we can hardly suppose P. would debate and adjust the *circumstances* of doing an unlawful action, and (as *Slade*) "so far expose himself to the danger of being misunderstood, as to condemn the *manner* of doing what *was wrong*, without giving, at the same time, the slightest intimation of its impropriety." Upon the whole (as far as I can presume to pronounce on so nice and intricate a question), the *salvo*, or *exception*, propounded by *Grot.*, *Locke*, &c. seems too refined and limited; and, besides, leaves an opening to other objections and difficulties. And that P. would, at one time, indirectly permit what at another he absolutely forbids, nothing but necessity will induce me to admit. [But comp. 7:9, &c. *Ed.*] Yet here there is none. Our learned countrymen have not enough attended to the sense of *lalein* [tr. *speak*], which in the N. T. almost invariably signifies, not to *speak*, but to *talk*, discourse, and *teach*. See numerous examples in *Schl. Lex.* To reconcile, therefore, the two passages, we have only to suppose, that in the former, he means that sort of prayer and *propheteia* that should not *jeal* the devotions of the congregation. Surely the *proseuchesthai* may there very well denote, only *joining* in prayer; not taking the lead in it; much less are we compelled, with *Slade*, to suppose *inspired* prayer: and *prophētēnesthai* may be understood of the recitation of certain spiritual songs, (whether in reading or extemporaneously,) or the reading of devotional and edifying compositions in prose; on all which I have treated in the note on 11:5. Now *this* would not be any violation of Paul's order, for the woman to be in subordination.

*Slade* would suppose 11:5, &c. to refer to smaller and more *private* assemblies, but that by *sunerchesthe* [tr. *come together*], *public* worship is meant, is plain from what P. proceeds to say of the Agape and the Eucharist. Indeed, there is no instance of the Gr. ever being used in the N. T. of *private* prayer meetings.—The Gr. counts, do not touch on the above difficulties; but they evidently suppose Paul intends absolute silence.—*According to the law*, refers to Gen. 3:16.

V. 36—40. To adduce this text, as a direct argument about any particular external ceremonies, used in divine worship, (which always appear decent and orderly to those who invent, impose, or are attached to them, and the contrary to those who dissent from them,) is doubtless wresting it from its proper meaning. Col. 2:5—7. SCOTT.



## CHAP. XV.

By Christ's resurrection, 12 he proveth the necessity of our resurrection, against all such as deny the resurrection of the body. 21 The fruit, 35 and manner thereof, 51 and of the changing of them that shall be found alive at the last day.

**M**OREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand :

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures ;

a Ga. 1:11.  
b c 1:4—8.  
c 1 Pe 5:12.  
d He. 3:6.

e or, hold fast.  
f by what speech.  
g Ga. 3:4.  
h Ge. 3:15, Ps. 22:

4, &c. Is. 53:1,  
&c. Da. 9:26.  
Zec. 13:7. Lu.  
24:26, 46.

be reprov'd and humbled, whose spiritual pride and self-conceit throw Christian churches and assemblies into confusion ; though such men will hardly bear even the rebukes of an apostle.

2. He lets them know, that what he said to them was the command of God, v. 37. 'If any man think himself a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge, &c. nay, let him be tried by this very rule. If he will not own what I deliver on this head to be the will of Christ, he himself never had the Spirit of Christ. The Spirit of Christ can never contradict itself ; if it speak in me, and in them, it must speak the same things in both. If their revelations contradict mine, they do not come from the same spirit ; either I or they must be false prophets. By this, therefore, you may know them. But if any continue, after all, through prejudice or obstinacy, uncertain or ignorant whether they or I speak by the Spirit of God, they must be left under the power of this ignorance. If their pretences to inspiration can stand in competition with the apostolical character and powers which I have, I have

NOTES. CHAP. XV. V. 1, 2. The Corinthians were tinctured with the Sadducean spirit of Jewish skeptics ; or rather with the philosophizing temper of the Grecians, who derided the doctrine, and denied the possibility, of a resurrection ; some of them also maintaining that virtue was its own reward, and that the expectation of a future recompense was a mean, unworthy motive. So that, certain persons at Corinth began to teach, that there would be no resurrection ; allegorizing, or explaining away, what had been revealed, or declared, to them on that subject. 2 Tim. 2:14—18. It does not however appear, that they denied the immortality of the soul.

SCOTT. (1.) 'In this treatise, 3 questions are solved. I. Whether there is any resurrection of the dead ? v. 1—35. II. With what body will the dead rise again ? v. 35—51. III. What will become of those whom the day of the Lord will find yet alive ? v. 51—end.—That there is a resurrection, P. both proves and illustrates. Now he proves it in two ways. I. by adducing reasons, derived 1st, from Scripture, v. 1—4. 2d, from eyewitnesses, v. 5—12. II. By showing the absurdities which a denial of this resurrection involves ; since thus, 1. Christ Himself would not have risen again, v. 13. 2. He is preached in vain, and in vain is faith reposed in Him, v. 14. 3. The apostles would be false witnesses, v. 15. 4. The faith of the Corinthians would be vain, v. 16, 17. 5. All the faithful who have died in Christ, would be under condemnation, v. 18. 6. Believers in Christ would be the most miserable of all men, v. 19. 7. Baptism for the resurrection of the dead would be vain, v. 29. 8. The apostle and other Christians would suffer so many persecutions to no purpose, v. 30—32.—He illustrates it by parity of reasoning, v. 21, 22.

There is, moreover, inserted, by Prolepsis, an answer to an objection, from some one of the adversaries to the following purport : "If the resurrection of the faithful depends on Christ, it follows that they have already risen." But P. replies, that this conclusion, that the resurrection must have already taken place, is false ; that it only follows, that the faithful shall certainly rise again : for that the divine order, described v. 23—25, requires that Christ should precede, and the rest in their time follow.' Schoett. Bl.

'It is plain, that P. means this as a refutation of the opinions of some at Corinth, who denied the resurrection ; though against whom this refutation is meant, contrs. are not agreed. Some think, they were heathens ; and from Ac. 13:32. we may infer, that the doctrine was by the philosophers accounted as not merely unfounded, but even ridiculous, as involving various absurdities. Others contend, that they were Christians, either Jewish Christians, who had formerly been Essenes, or Sadducees. Nor are there wanting those who think they were Gentile Christians ; which indeed seems more probable. There can, I think, be no doubt, but that P. wrote principally and immediately for Christians, though (as in the case of the Ep. to Rom.) indirectly for heathens, such as might be induced to read and weigh its contents. By Christians,

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lost all my authority and influence ; and the persons who allow of this competition against me, are out of the reach of conviction, and must be left to themselves.' It is just with God, to leave them to the blindness of their own minds, who wilfully shut out the light.

3. He sums up all in two general advices. (1.) That, though they should not despise the gift of tongues, nor altogether disuse it, under the mentioned regulations, yet they should prefer prophesying, (this is, indeed, the scope of the whole argument,) as the more useful gift. (2.) He charges them to let all things be done decently and in order, v. 40. i. e. that they should avoid everything manifestly indecent and disorderly. Such indecencies and disorders, as he had remarked upon, were especially to be shunned. They must do nothing that was manifestly childish, v. 20. or that would give occasion to say they were mad, v. 22. nor must they act so as to breed confusion, v. 33. But they were to do things in order ; and, to do otherwise, was to destroy the end of a Christian ministry, and all assemblies for Christian worship. Every part of divine worship should be carried on in a manly, grave, rational, composed, and orderly manner. God is not to be dishonored, nor his worship disgraced.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—11. In this ch. the apostle treats of that great article of Christianity,—the resurrection of the dead, which some of the Corinthians flatly denied, v. 10. Whether they turned this doctrine into allegory, as did Hymeneus and Philetus, by saying it was already past, 2 Tim. 2:17, 18. and several of the ancient heretics, by making it mean no more than a changing of their course of life ; or whether they rejected it as absurd, on principles of reason and science ; it seems they denied it in the proper sense, and disowned a future state of recompense. Now that heathens and infidels should deny this truth, does not seem so strange ; but that Christians should deny it, is surprising, especially when it is a truth of such importance, and so plainly revealed. It was time for the apostle to confirm them in this truth,

when the staggering of their faith in it was likely to shake their Christianity.

He begins with a summary of the Gospel, what he had preached among them, namely, the death and resurrection of Christ. On this foundation the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is built. Divine truths appear with greatest evidence, when looked upon in their mutual connexion. The foundation may be strengthened, that the superstructure may be secured. Observe,

I. What a stress he lays on the Gospel, v. 1, 2. 1. It was what he constantly preached. He always preached the same Gospel, and taught the same truth. He could appeal to his hearers for this. Truth is, in its own nature, invariable ; and the infallible teachers of divine truth could never be at variance with themselves, or one another. 2. It was what they had received, been convinced of, and believed in their hearts, or at least made profession of doing so with their mouths. It was no strange doctrine, but that very Gospel in which, or by which, they had hitherto stood, and must continue to stand. Note, The doctrine of Christ's death and resurrection is at the foundation of Christianity. 3. It was that alone by which they could hope for salvation, v. 2. These are saving truths ; the crucifixion of our Redeemer, and his conquest over death, are the very source of our spiritual life and hopes.

II. Observe, what this Gospel is, on which the apostle lays such stress ; that doctrine which he had received, and delivered to them ; among the first, the principal ; a doctrine of the first rank, a most necessary truth, That Christ died for our sins, and was buried, and rose again ; or, in other words, that He was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification, Rom. 4:25. was offered in sacrifice for our sins, and rose again, to show that He had procured forgiveness for them, and was accepted of God in this offering. Note, Christ's death and resurrection are the very sum and substance of evangelical truth. Hence we derive our spiritual life now, and here we must found our hopes of everlasting life hereafter.

III. Observe, how this truth is confirmed,

I mean both Jewish and Gentile ones ; and P. (I conceive) wrote, 1st, for the instruction and comfort of sincere believers in the doctrine of the resurrection ; 2dly, to refute those who denied, and confirm those who were wavering in opinion. The second class would (we may suppose) be chiefly composed of those Jewish Christians, who had formerly been Sadducees, or Essenes, and of such Gentile Christians as had been imbued with the opinions of certain philosophical sects, whose tenets were especially adverse to the doctrine in question, particularly the Stoics and others. It is not surprising, that such converts should have proved in this respect backsliders, and have again openly professed, or secretly fostered, their former opinions on the subject in question. This heresy was probably maintained, or favored, by some false teachers at Corinth. For we find by 2 Tim. 2:17, that a very few years afterwards it was supported by Hymeneus, and Philetus, whose error, P. says, "eateth away as doth a gangrene." And we learn from Tertul., and other ecclesiastical historians, that some of the earliest of the heretics, as Marcion, Valentinus, Apelles, and the Gnostics, followed, in this respect, the errors of the Sadducees. These persons, as we may collect from the above passage of Tim., and as we may collect from the ecclesiastical historians, and Chrys. in loc., maintained, that the resurrection promised by Christ, was only to be understood metaphorically, of a resurrection of the soul from the death of sin ; and by thus refining on the doctrine, they explained it entirely away in its natural and most important sense. They made it (says Grot.) to consist, in not attending to the concerns of this life, and, among the rest, matrimony, but in an exclusive devotion to meditation, like the Essenes, who practised celibacy : they accounted this as a new life, compared with which, the former life was death ; they therefore called the one death, and the other resurrection, as appears from 2 Tim. 2:17, 18. Clem. Al., Iren., Tertul. We may observe, however, that the arguments here adduced, only apply to sincere believers in Jesus Christ, and are meant only of the resurrection of the just, and not a resurrection in general : and indeed the error prevalent with Christians, justifies the course of Paul here. In this, he seems to have followed the custom of the Jews, by whom (Jaspis observes) that alone was called the resurrection. And he refers (besides the writings of the Rabbins), to 2 Mac. 12:43. Lu. 2:55. Jn. 6:39, 44, 54. Phil. 3:11.

BLOOMF. Stand.] It appears to have been said from politeness, see Theoph., and, says Bl., amounts to, 'I trust ye stand fast ;' Kr. thinks the metaphor is from the palaestra, and refers to 16:13. Gal. 5:1. Philip. 1:27. 4:1. 1 Th. 3:8. 2 Th. 2:15. Eph. 4:11, 13, 14. But it may be also considered a military one. Thucyd. 3:23. See Bloomf.

Ed. (2.) Saved.] Brought into a state of salvation : see on Mat. 2:23. Unless.] The Gr. has very energetic meaning, q. d. "unless indeed, which I am unwilling to suppose, or contemplate."

BLOOMF. V. 3—11. James (7), probably the son of Alphaeus, who wrote the



4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according <sup>1</sup> to the Scriptures;

5 And that he was seen of <sup>1</sup> Cephas, then of the twelve:

6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

7 After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

8 And last <sup>k</sup> of all he was seen of me also, as of <sup>1</sup> one born out of due time.

9 For I am the least <sup>m</sup> of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not <sup>n</sup> I, but the grace of God which was with me.

11 Therefore, whether *it were* I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how <sup>o</sup> say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13 But if <sup>p</sup> there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen.

i Ps. 16:10. k Ac. 9:17. n Mat. 10:20.  
Ho. 6:2. l or, an abortive. o Ac. 26:8.  
j Lu. 24:34, &c. m Ep. 3:7,8. p 1 Th. 4:14.

1. By O. T. predictions. He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, the scripture-prophecies, and scripture-types. Such prophecies as Ps. 16: 10. Is. 53: 4—6. Deut. 9: 26, 27. Hos. 6: 2. Such scripture-types as Jonah, Mat. 12: 42. as Isaac, who is expressly said, by the apostle, to have been *received from the dead in a figure*, Heb. 11: 19. It greatly confirms our faith of the Gospel, to see how it corresponds with ancient types and prophecies. 2. By the testimony of many eyewitnesses, who saw Christ after He was risen from the dead. He reckons up five several appearances, beside that to himself. He was seen of Cephas, or Peter, then of the twelve, (called so, though Judas was no longer among them, because this was their usual number,) then, in Galilee, Mat. 28: 10. of above 500 brethren at once, many of whom were living when the apostle wrote

epistle; but we have no other account of this appearance of Christ. *Untimely birth.*] *Suet.* says, that there were, in the time of Augustus, an enormous number of senators, . . . and most of them most unworthy of that dignity, having, after the death of Cesar, by favor and bribery, gotten to be elected. These, the multitude proverbially styled *abortives.* Several other appearances of Christ, after his resurrection, have been considered as recorded by the evangelists, but this account mentions circumstances not before stated, and illustrates that important subject.

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BLOOMF.

(3.) *First of all.*] *Especially, imprimis.*  
(5.) *Since the resurrection of Christ is a thing founded in fact, and as facts can be proved by nothing more satisfactorily than by the authority of those who are eyewitnesses of them, therefore P. appeals to several, highly worthy of credit, to whom our Lord showed Himself, and who all, at the peril, nay, even sacrifice of life, bore testimony to the actual resurrection of Christ. And since he is not now taking in hand for the first time to show this, but merely means to recall to their memory what had been before delivered to them, he does not adduce all the witnesses (not, for instance, the women, who were the first witnesses of the resurrection), but only the more important ones. Since, too, the authority both of Peter and James was great among the Corinthians, he does not content himself with appealing to the general testimony of all the apostles, (much less mentions himself,) but urges by name the authority of Peter and James; (*Krause*;) especially as Peter had, after the women's report, been the first to go to the sepulchre. See John 20:3, &c.*

(6.) *500 at once.*] *Whit.* and *Mackn.* think, on the occasion which He appointed with the women, after his resurrection, Mat. 28:10. in consequence of which the 11 went to a mountain; and that probably many other disciples would hear of the appointment, and assemble at

this epistle; after that, of James, singly, and then by all the apostles, when He was taken up into heaven, from mount Olivet, Lu. 24: 50. Comp. Ac. 1: 2, 5—7. Note, How incontrovertably evident was Christ's resurrection from the dead, when so many eyes saw Him at so many several times alive, and when He indulged the weakness of one disciple so far, to put his resurrection-out of doubt! And what reason have we to believe them who were so steady in maintaining this truth, though they hazarded all that was dear to them in this world, by endeavoring to assert and propagate it! Even Paul himself was last of all favored with the sight of Him. It was one of the peculiar offices of an apostle, to be a witness of our Savior's resurrection, Lu. 24: 48. and when Paul was called to the apostolical office, he was made an evidence of this sort: the Lord Jesus appeared to him by the way to Damascus, Acts 9: 17.

Having mentioned this favor, he takes occasion from it to make a humble digression concerning himself. He was highly favored of God, but he always endeavored to keep up a mean opinion of himself, and to express it. So here, by observing, (1.) That he was *one born out of due time*, v. 8. an abortive, a child dead born, and out of time. Paul resembled such a birth, in the suddenness of his new birth, in that he was not matured for the apostolical function, as the others were, who had personal converse with our Lord. He was called to the office when such conversation was not to be had; he was out of time for it. He had not known or followed the Lord, nor been formed in his family, as the others were, for this high and honorable function. This was, in Paul's account, a very humbling circumstance. (2.) By owning himself inferior to the other apostles; *not meet to be called an apostle.* The least, because the last of them; called latest to the office, and not worthy to be called an apostle, to have either the office or the title, because he had been a persecutor of the church of God, v. 9. Indeed, he tells us, elsewhere, that he was *not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles*, 2 Cor. 11: 5. for gifts, graces, service, and sufferings, inferior to none of them. Yet some circumstances in his case made him think more meanly of himself than any of them. A humble spirit, in the midst of high attainments, is a great ornament; it sets good qualities off to much greater advantage. What kept Paul low, in an especial manner, was the remembrance of his former wickedness, his raging and destructive zeal against Christ and his members. How easily God can bring a good out of the greatest evil! When sinners are, by divine grace, turned into saints, He makes the remembrance of their former sins

the same time and place. See also Mat. 26:32. Mk. 16:7. This is not recorded in the gospels. *Bl.*, who shows the probability of this number. *Prid.* and *Doddr.* urge this as a glorious proof of Christ's resurrection. "Had it been otherwise (say they) so many false hearts and tongues could never have acted in concert; nor would they all have kept a secret, which remorse, interest, and perhaps often torture, might urge them to divulge; especially as there had been one traitor among the 12; on account of which, had they been conscious of a fraud, a general suspicion of each others' secrecy must have arisen." *Bl.*

(8.) The comparison is not between an imperfect and dead born embryo, and a mature and live horn child; since P. was, at length, spiritually born; but between a child born before its time, always imperfect, and one that has come to maturity before its birth. Now, such as the former are observed to be usually smaller than others, and inferior in bodily and mental endowments. P. then, calls himself so, as being not an apostle formed and perfected in the way the other apostles were, but, (as *Ec.*) "not moulded from the first in the faith of Christ," and being made an apostle (so *Mackn.*) without the having gone through that previous and regular course of instruction, experience, and preparation, which the other apostles enjoyed, who had attended Jesus, during his ministry on earth. There may be an allusion also to the extraordinary manner in which P. was converted, and brought into the spiritual life and a state of salvation; since in children immaturally born, life is preserved by art and extraordinary care. *Bl.*, whom see.

(10.) Notice Paul's modesty and delicacy. He does not say, "I attained more success than them all," but merely, "I labored more abundantly," &c. And even *that* he lowers by the next words. *Bl.*

V. 12—18. Probably they argued against the possibility or credibility of such an event; [the resurrection of the dead;] and then endeavored to put a figurative construction on the testimony of apostles or prophets

very serviceable, to keep them humble, and diligent, and faithful. (3.) By ascribing all that was valuable in him to divine grace, v. 10. It is God's prerogative to say, *I am that I am*; our privilege to be able to say, 'By God's grace we are what we are.' All that is good in us, is a stream from this fountain. Paul, though conscious of his own diligence, and zeal, and service, so that he could say of himself, *the grace of God was not given him in vain, but he labored more abundantly than they all*, yet thought himself so much more the debtor to divine grace; *not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* Those who have the grace of God, should take care that it be not in vain. They should cherish, exercise, and exert, this heavenly principle. So did Paul, and therefore labored with so much heart, and so much success. And yet the more he labored, and the more good he did, the more humble was he in his opinion of himself, and the more disposed to own and magnify the favor of God toward him, his free and unmerited favor. A humble spirit will be very apt to own and magnify the grace of God: it is commonly a gracious one. Where pride is subdued, there it is reasonable to believe grace reigns.

After this digression, the apostle returns to his argument, and tells them, v. 11. that he not only preached the same Gospel himself, at all times, and in all places, but that all the apostles preached the same. Whether Peter, or Paul, or any other apostle, had converted them to Christianity, all preached the same doctrine, and confirmed it by the same evidence. All agreed in this, that Jesus Christ, and He crucified, and slain, and then rising from the dead, was the very sum and substance of Christianity; and this all true Christians believe. All the apostles agreed in this testimony; all Christians agree in the belief of it; by this faith they live, in this faith they die.

V. 12—19. It seems, some among the Corinthians, as the heathens commonly, thought the resurrection an impossibility. But against this the apostle produces an incontestable fact, i. e. the resurrection of Christ; and goes on to argue against them from the absurdities that must follow from their principle. As,

1. *If there be, can be, no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen*, v. 13. and again, *If the dead rise not*, cannot be raised, or recovered to life, *then is not Christ raised*, v. 16. And yet it was foretold, in ancient prophecies, that He should rise; and it has been proved, by multitudes of eyewitnesses, that He is risen. And will you say, will any among you dare to say, that is not, cannot be, which God long ago said shall be, and is now undoubted matter of fact?



14 And if <sup>a</sup> Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished.

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

[Practical Observations.]

q Ac.17:31. r Ro.4:25. s Jn.16:2. c.4:13. 2 Ti.3:12.

II. This would destroy the principal evidence of Christianity; and so, (1.) Make preaching vain. 'We apostles are all the while deceivers, liars for God, if, in his name, and by power received from Him, we go forth, and publish and assert a thing false in fact, and impossible to be true. And does not this make us the vainest men in the world, and our office and ministry the vain-

est and most useless thing in the world? What end could we propose to ourselves, in undertaking this hard and hazardous service, if we knew our religion stood on no better foundation, nay, if we were not well assured of the contrary?' (2.) This supposition would make the faith of Christians vain, as well as the labors of ministers, v. 16. because it is through his death and sacrifice for sin alone, that forgiveness is to be had. Eph. 1:7. No remission of sins is to be had, but through the shedding of his blood. And, had He remained under the power of death, how should He have delivered us from its power? Or, what evidence could we have had, that through Him we should have justification and eternal life? He must rise for our justification, who was delivered for our sins, or in vain we look for any such benefit by Him. And must not faith in Christ be vain, and of no significance, if He be still among the dead?

III. Another absurdity following from this supposition, is, that *those who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished*. If there be no resurrection, they cannot rise, and therefore are lost, even those who have died in the Christian faith, and for it. It is plain from this, that those among the Corinthians, who denied the resurrection, meant thereby a state of future retribution, and not merely the revival of the flesh: they took death to be the destruction and extinction of the man,

and not merely of the bodily life; for, otherwise, the apostle could not infer the utter loss of those who slept in Jesus, from the supposition they would never rise more, or that they had no hopes in Christ after life; for, they might have hope of happiness for their minds, if these survived their bodies; and this would prevent the limiting of their hopes in Christ to this life only. On supposition there is no resurrection, in your sense, no after-state and life, then dead Christians are quite lost. How vain a thing were our faith and religion, on this supposition! And this,

IV. Would infer, that Christ's ministers and servants were of all men most miserable, as having hope in Him in this life only, v. 19. which is another absurdity that would follow from asserting no resurrection. All who believe in Christ, have hope in Him; all who believe in Him as a Redeemer, hope for redemption and salvation by Him; but if there be no resurrection, or state of future recompense, their hope in Him must be limited to this life; and if all their hopes in Christ lie within the compass of this life, they are in a much worse condition than the rest of mankind, especially at that time, and under those circumstances, in which the apostles wrote; for then they had no countenance or protection from the rulers of the world, but were hated and persecuted by all men. Better be anything than a Christian

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—19. When the faithful minister sees his beloved people drawn aside to embrace dangerous errors, his chief comfort, under the trial, must arise from being able to appeal to them, that the doctrine which he preached was scriptural, and from a full satisfaction, that they who received it, and stand fast in it, will be certainly saved; and that none of them can perish, if they keep in remembrance the instructions he gave them, unless they deceived themselves with a vain, a dead, and inefficient faith. In order that we may possess this comfort, we must be careful to deliver the truths of revelation pure, as we have received them, and in that order, proportion, and connexion in which they stand in the Scriptures; and he who duly attends to these sacred oracles will know assuredly, that the 'death of Christ for our sins,' and his 'resurrection for our justification,' are essential and fundamental doctrines, which must, in all places, and on all occasions, be explicitly and strenuously insisted on.—The most eminent Christians are always the most humble; they continually reflect on the aggravated sins of their unconverted state; especially if they were long or greatly set in opposition to the Gospel. The more evident it is, that God has pardoned them, the less disposed will they be to excuse themselves. In reality, it is a great thing for a man, with propriety, humility, and truth, to say, 'By the grace of God, I am what I am;' the declaration becomes those alone, who are walking under the influence of holy principles, and live a holy life; and is utterly unsuitable to the character of the negligent or formal professor of evangelical truth.—With what varied, subtle devices doth Satan bring in false doctrines, by men of abilities, learning, or eloquence, in a covert and plausible manner, that the simple may suspect no danger! Heretical teachers, often with apparent modesty, question whether we have rightly understood the sacred writers, and whether the doctrine which they oppose be contained in them.

concerning it. This, however, amounted to a denial of Christ's resurrection; for that authenticated fact demonstrated the possibility of the dead being raised; it confirmed all that he had taught about that doctrine; and it was an earnest of the resurrection of all believers; so that, to invalidate the resurrection of Jesus would subvert Christianity itself.

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(12.) 'P. has not expressed the ideas by which the consequent, in this hypothetical proposition, is connected with its antecedent. Christ promised repeatedly, in the most express terms, that He would raise all mankind from the dead, Mat. 8:16, 27. Jn. 5:28, 29. Wherefore, if there is to be no resurrection of the dead, Christ is a deceiver, whom no person, in his right senses, can suppose God to have raised, and to have declared his Son.'

MAEKN.

(15.) 'False witnesses of, i. e. against God, as testifying that He had confirmed the pretensions of an imposter with the highest possible evidence; which were a blasphemy.' MAEKN.

BL. OMP.

(17.) *In your sins.* 'Recent comtrs.\* most manifestly pervert the sense. Some take *hamartia* for *error of opinion*. Others (partly from *Beng.* and *Schoett.*) take the phrase as equivalent to *hamartōlon einai*, i. e. to be a pagan; q. d. "ye are no better off than pagans (as ye were)." And this *Kr.* labors to establish, but to little purpose; it is a gratuitous assumption [see *Bl.*]: nay, there is no instance of *hamartia* in the sense of *heathenism*. They indeed endeavor to prove their point from what they call the contrary expression, *to be in the truth*, i. e. to be a Christian, at Jn. 3:3, 4. But there we have not *to be*, but *to walk*, which quite alters the case. Besides, not a few of the Corinthian converts were Jewish Christians. This interpretation, therefore, must be abandoned, and the common one retained, which is supported by all the ancient comtrs., and the modern ones up to the last half century.—The expression is plainly idiotical, and perhaps Hebraic. Comp. 1 Tim. 2:14. By *sin* is meant the penalty of sin, and the *en [in]* is used for *hypo*, i. e. "subject to, liable to the penalty of sin, and ever liable to punishment, notwithstanding we have repented of our sins." Here there is (as *Chrys.* points out) an evident allusion to the *atonement* made for our sins by the death of Christ. And it is rightly noticed, by *Doddr.* and *Mackn.*, that this observation shows, that "something more than reformation and liberation from the power of sin (which many of the Corinthians no

They inquire, whether a more rational interpretation may not be given to this and the other text! whether the more obvious meaning do not involve absurdity, or even impossibility; whether any, but the weak and illiterate, can credit such mysteries, or absurdities, and whether we had not better adopt a figurative sense, or admit some other reading, or even suppose the sacred writer to be mistaken, than assent to so *incomprehensible*, and therefore *irrational*, a doctrine. If, indeed, they could prove the mysteries, which they oppose, to be *contrary to fact, to intuition, or to demonstration*, their principles might be admitted; but when they apply them to doctrines, which are merely *above reason*, and contrary to their *supposed probabilities*, and *vain reasonings*, they are perfectly inadmissible and irrational; unless man be wiser than his Maker. The dupes, however, of such specious pretences are seldom aware, whither these *rational* improvements of the creed, and of the Scriptures tend; they do not perceive, that, according to them, man's presumptuous reason sits in judgment on the infinite wisdom of God; man's weakness is made the standard of omnipotence; and man's conjecture, the measure of divine revelation. Indeed, this is perfectly consistent with those economical and political sentiments, contended for by some of these oracles of an enlightened age; by which children are set to judge, whether their parents are fit to be honored and obeyed, or not; servants are called on to determine the same concerning their masters, and subjects concerning their rulers; and, in short, not only is all subordination virtually destroyed, but, in every relation, the inferior is constituted the judge of his superior, without any appeal from his arrogant tribunal. . . . To what then must the tenets of those lead, who indeed profess to believe that Christ is risen; yet deny, explain away, or overlook those great doctrines, which He especially rose again to establish and demonstrate?

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doubt had experienced) was necessary for the deliverance of penitents from the punishment of sin, even that *atonement*, the sufficiency of which God attested, by raising our great Surety from the grave." BL.

V. 19. It does not follow, that Christians would, in fact, be more unhappy than other men, if there should, in the event, be no future reward; for even then, their hopes of heaven, and that consolation which is thence derived, would far more than counterbalance their peculiar trials, self-denials, and hardships; [note, Job 34:1. 36:8—14.] but if this hope and consolation were taken from them, they would indeed be more miserable than other men; having lost their relish for those vain pleasures, which alone could be hoped for, and in which other men, with a measure of success, strive to forget their misery, experiencing earnest desires, which must certainly be disappointed, and enduring many peculiar evils, without any peculiar support and consolation.—The fact however is, that Christians have not only the hope of a future felicity, but also the earnestness, the beginnings, and first-fruits of it, in those holy affections towards God, and that 'joy' in Him, 'which a stranger intermeddled not with;' and therefore they are so far from being 'of all men most miserable,' that they of all men enjoy the most solid comfort, amidst their difficulties and trials, and even in the seasons of the sharpest persecutions.—Many of the Corinthians were not aware, what dangerous inferences were fairly deducible from the tenets, to which they had listened, and their false teachers would doubtless disavow them; yet it was proper thus to expose them, that they might be put on their guard, and not patronize opinions pregnant with such mischief to the souls of men, and so destructive of the animating hopes and comforts of all believers.

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(19.) 'In that age, the profession of Christianity was exposed to numerous persecutions, trials, self-denials, and sufferings; more indeed than we can conceive.' BL. For which, see even *Gibbon*, who labors to prove the contrary. Indeed, let any Christian try, even now, to live fully up to Christ's precepts, and he will find what Christ said to his disciples to be still true, 'in this world ye shall have tribulation.' Our own country has produced its *martyrs*, even to the Gospel, and in no country has *persecution*, for honest, yea, gospel-opinion, yet ceased; provided such opinion has been carried out into life. *Miserable.*] But comp. on Job 34:1.

ED.



20 But now is 'Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.

21 For 'since by man *came* death, ' by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But 'every man in his own order; Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming.

24 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom ' to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power.

25 For 'he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

t 1 Pe. 1:3. w Jn. 11:25. z Ps. 2:6-10. 43:  
u Ac. 26:23. x 1 Th. 4:15-17. 3-6. 110:1. Ep.  
Col. 1:18. y Da. 7:14, 27. 1:22. He. 1:13.  
v Ro. 5:12, 17.

on these terms; for in this world they are hated, and hunted, and abused, stripped of all worldly comforts, and exposed to all manner of sufferings: they fare much harder than other men in this life, and yet have no further or better hopes. And is it not absurd, for one who believes in Christ, to admit a principle that involves so absurd an inference?

V. 20—34. The apostle establishes the resurrection of the dead, the holy dead, the dead in Christ.

I. On the resurrection of Christ. 1. Because He is indeed the *First-fruits of them that slept*, v. 20. As He is assuredly risen, so in his resurrection there is as much an earnest given, that the dead in Him shall rise, as there was that the Jewish harvest in general should be accepted, and blessed, by the offering and acceptance of the first-fruits. He is not risen merely for Himself, but as Head of the body of the church; and *those that sleep in Him God will bring with Him*, 1 Thess. 4: 14. Note, Christ's resurrection is a pledge and earnest of ours, if we are true believers in Him: because He is risen, we shall rise. This is the apostle's first argument, in confirmation of the truth; and it is, 2. Illustrated by a parallel between the first and second Adam, v. 21, 22. As through the sin

of the first Adam all men became mortal, because all derived from him the same sinful nature, so, through the merit and resurrection of Christ, shall all who are made to partake of the Spirit, and the spiritual nature, revive, and become immortal. But the meaning is not, that, as all men died in Adam, so all men, without exception, shall be made alive in Christ; for the scope of the apostle's argument restrains the general meaning. Christ rose as the First-fruits; therefore *they that are Christ's*, v. 23. shall rise too. Thus it seemed fit to the Divine Wisdom, that, as the first Adam ruined his posterity by sin, the second Adam should raise his seed to a glorious immortality. Before he leaves the argument, he, 3. Observes, That there will be an order observed in their resurrection. What that precisely will be, we are nowhere told, but in the general only here, that there will be order observed. It is only here said, that the *first-fruits* are supposed to rise first, and afterward all who are Christ's, when He shall come again. Not that Christ's resurrection must in fact go before the resurrection of any of his, but it must be laid as the foundation. See Bp. Patrick on Num. 26: 2. The offering of the first-fruits was what made the lump holy; and the lump was made holy by this offering, though it was not made before the harvest was gathered in, so it were set apart for that end, and duly offered afterward. So Christ's resurrection must, in order of nature, precede that of his saints, though some of these might rise in order of time before Him. It is because He is risen, that they rise.

II. He argues from the continuance of the mediatorial kingdom till all Christ's enemies are destroyed, the last of which is death, v. 24—26. He is risen, and, on his resurrection, was invested with sovereign empire, *had all power in heaven and earth put into his hands*, Mat. 28: 18. *had a name given Him above every name, that every knee might bow to Him, and every tongue confess Him Lord*, Philip. 2: 9—11. And the administration of this kingdom must continue in his hands, till all opposing power, and rule, and authority, be put down, v. 24. *till all enemies are put under his feet*, v. 25. and *till the last enemy is destroyed*, which is death, v. 26. Now, this argument implies in it all these particulars: 1. That our Savior rose from the dead, to have all power put into his

hands, and have and administer a kingdom, as Mediator, Rom. 14: 9. 2. That this mediatorial kingdom is to have an end, at least as far as it is concerned in bringing his people safe to glory, and subduing all his and their enemies, v. 24. 3. That it is not to have an end, till all opposing power be put down, and all enemies brought to his feet, v. 24, 25. 4. That, among other enemies, death must be destroyed, v. 26. or its power over his members be disannulled. Thus far the apostle is express; but he leaves us to make the inference, that therefore the saints must rise; else death and the grave would have power over them; nor would our Savior's kingly power prevail against the last enemy of his people, and annul its power. The saints therefore shall live again, and die no more.

This is the scope of the argument; but the apostle drops several hints, in the course of it, that will be properly noticed; as, (1.) That our Savior, as Man, and Mediator between God and man, has a delegated royalty, a kingdom given, v. 27. As Man, all his authority must be delegated. And though his mediation supposes his divine nature, yet, as Mediator, He does not so explicitly sustain the character of God, but a middle Person between God and man, partaking of both natures, human and divine, as He was to reconcile both parties, God and man; and receiving commission and authority from God the Father, to act in this office. The Father appears, in this whole dispensation, in the majesty, and with the authority, of God: the Son, made Man, appears as the Minister of the Father, though He is God as well as the Father. Nor is this passage to be understood of the eternal dominion over all his creatures, which belongs to Him as God, but of a kingdom committed to Him as Mediator, and God-man, and that chiefly after his resurrection, when, having overcome, He sat down with his Father on his throne, Rev. 3: 21. 'Then was the prediction verified, *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion*, Ps. 2: 6. placed Him on his throne. This is meant by the phrase so frequent in the N. T. of *sitting at the right hand of God*, Mark 14: 19. Rom. 8: 34. Col. 3: 1, &c. *on the right hand of power*, Mk. 16: 62. Lu. 20: 69. *on the right hand of the Majesty on high*, Heb. 1: 3. *on the right hand of the throne of God*, Heb. 32: 2. *on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty*

V. 20—23. The apostle, having established the fact of Christ's resurrection, from that fact shows the certainty of our resurrection, and then, from the important questions in verse 35. he takes occasion to enlarge on the glorious change which shall take place in the bodies of the saints; and, finally, he triumphs over death, by the consideration of a resurrection and a glorious immortality. This is the plan, or method, and the coherence of the parts, in this noble ch. (21) 'For since by man, sin and death entered into the world; so, 'by man,' by One in human nature, 'came the resurrection of the dead;' and as, in consequence of their relation to Adam, all men are born mortal, and at length die; even so, in and by Christ, shall all be made alive. Jn. 11: 20—27. v. 26, 27. Rom. 5: 12—19. All men, without exception, through his undertaking, being placed under a dispensation of mercy, shall be raised from the dead, that their future state may be accordingly determined; yet none will be finally benefited, except those, who are one with Him by faith, and the participation of his life-giving Spirit, and of these the apostle particularly, and almost exclusively, treats in this ch. Jn. 5: 23, 23.—The distinction between the *absolute*, universal, and everlasting kingdom of God, the Governor of all, and the *mediatorial* kingdom of Christ, as instituted for the benefit of fallen man, is everywhere implied in Scripture. The Father, as the Head of the absolute kingdom, ceased not to reign, when the Son was advanced to the mediatorial throne; as that authority was intended to endure only for a season, in order to accomplish certain important ends, to the glory of God in man's salvation. Mat. 28: 19. Jn. 5: 20—30. After the day of judgment, this kingdom will be terminated; Christ, having executed his commission, will cease to reign 'over all worlds,' as Mediator, having publicly 'delivered up the kingdom to God' in the person of 'the Father;' yet He will in human nature retain a peculiar authority over his redeemed people, and, as One with the Father, He will, with Him and the Holy Spirit, reign One 'God over all, blessed for evermore;' nor will He any more cease to reign *in this sense*, when He has given up the mediatorial kingdom, than the Father ceased to reign, when He appointed the Son to that kingdom. For in this passage, as in some others, the person of the Father is mentioned, as filling the throne and appointing the Mediator, in order to distinguish the absolute authority of God, from the delegated authority of the Son in human nature.—He saith not, that "the Father," mentioned, v. 24. but, that "God may be all in all;" and so he seems to lead us to that interpretation of the Godhead, which comprehends Father, Son, and

Holy Ghost. That the Godhead may govern all things immediately by Himself, without the intervention of a Mediator between Him and us, to exact our obedience in his name, and to convey to us his favors and rewards. . . . So that as now Christ, *Theanthropos*, God-man, is "all in all;" Col. 3: 11. because the Father hath put all things into his hands, does all things, and governs all things, by Him; when this economy ceases, the Godhead will be "all in all," as governing and influencing all things by Himself immediately. "That God may be all in all," . . . by a full communication of Himself to, and an intimate union with, all his saints. . . . Though it, (the kingdom of Christ,) shall have no such end as the preceding monarchies had, Luke 1: 32: 33. by giving place to a succeeding kingdom, Dan. 7: 14. but shall be an eternal kingdom, in the same sense in which "He is a Priest for ever," . . . Heb. 7: 17, 24, 25. yet, as that priesthood must needs cease, when the subject of it ceaseth, and He hath none to intercede for, so must his kingly office cease, when all his friends have that eternal life conferred on them, for which this power was committed to Him, and all his "enemies are become his footstool." . . . Though the Godhead could alone enable Him to execute his kingly office, yet was He thus exalted, this power and judgment were conferred on Him, "because He was the Son of man." Jn. 5: 27. He intercedeth still in heaven, by virtue of his blood, all favors are granted to the church through Him, and God will judge the world "by the man Christ Jesus." . . . While He continued on earth, and acted only as a Prophet sent from God, He always owned that He could "do nothing of Himself, but as the Father gave Him commandment, so He did, and so He spake." Jn. 5: 30. 8: 38. 12: 49.—But being exalted to be Lord of all things, He acted as Lord in all things, which relate to his kingly office over his church. . . . The exercise of this authority He shall then lay down, when "all things are subdued to Him;" no other kingdom or dominion being to be exercised in the celestial state, but what is essential to the whole Godhead. And though He shall ever so far reign, as to be still at the right hand of God, in honor, dignity, and beatitude; . . . and though the effects of his kingly power shall continue for ever, his enemies being destroyed, and his saints reigning in bliss for ever; yet the exercise of that kingly power shall then cease, and He, as Man, shall be subject to the Father. . . . As Christ before was "all in all," in reference to his church, and "from his fulness they did all receive;" so now the Godhead may be all in all, and fill all things immediately by Himself. *Whitby*.—No doubt, Christ, as Man, and in his mediatorial kingdom, always was most perfectly subject



26 The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed <sup>is</sup> death.

27 For he <sup>hath</sup> put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under *him*; it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him.

28 And when all things shall be subdued <sup>unto</sup> him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him <sup>that</sup> put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

29 Else what shall they do which <sup>are</sup> baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?

30 And why stand we in <sup>jeopardy</sup> every hour?

a Ho. 13:14, 2Ti. c Phil. 3:21. e Ro. 6:3,4.  
1:10. Re. 20:14. d c. 11:3. f 2 Co. 11:26.  
b Ps. 8:6.

in the heavens, Heb. 8:1. Sitting down in this seat, is taking upon Him the exercise of his mediatorial power and royalty, which was done on his ascension into heaven, Mark 16:19. A recompense, Philip. 2:6—12. On his ascension, He was made Head over all things to the church, and power given Him to govern and protect it against all enemies, and in the end destroy them, and complete the salvation of all who believe in Him. (2.) That this delegated royalty must some time *be delivered up to the Father*, from whom it was received, v. 24. for it is a power received for particular ends and purposes, v. 25, 26. And when these ends shall be obtained, namely, the salvation of his church, and the destruction of his enemies, then will He deliver up the power which He had only for this purpose, though He may continue to reign over his glorified church and body in heaven; and in this sense it may notwithstanding be said, that *He shall reign for ever and ever*, Rev. 11:15. *that He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end*, Lu. 1:33. *that his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away*, Dan. 7:14. See, also, Mic. 4:7. (3.) The Redeemer shall certainly reign till the very last enemy of his people be destroyed, till death itself be abolished, till his saints revive, and recover perfect life, never to be in fear or danger of dying any more. What support should this be to his saints in every hour of distress and temptation! *He is alive, who*

*was dead, and liveth for ever, and doth reign, and will continue to reign, till the redemption of his people be completed, and the utter ruin of their enemies effected. (4.) When this is done, and all things are put under his feet, then shall the Son become subject to Him, that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all, v. 28. The meaning of which I take to be, That then the Man Christ Jesus, who has appeared in so much majesty during the whole administration of this kingdom, shall appear, on the giving it up, to be a subject of the Father. Things are, in Scripture, many times said to be, when they are manifested and made to appear; and this delivering up of the kingdom will make it manifest, that He who appeared in the majesty of the sovereign King, was, during this administration, a subject of God; so it will appear to the divine glory, that God may be all in all, that the accomplishment of our salvation may appear all divine, and God alone have the honor of it. Though the human nature must be employed in the work of our redemption, yet God was all in all in it.*

III. He argues for the resurrection, from the case of those who were baptized for the dead, v. 29. What shall they do, if the dead rise not? What have they done? How vain a thing hath their baptism been! Must they stand by it, or renounce it? why are they baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not? But what is this baptism for the dead? It is necessary to be known, that the apostle's argument may be understood; whether it conclude for the thing in dispute universally, or only against the particular persons who were baptized for the dead. But who shall interpret this very obscure passage, it being not agreed, what is meant by baptism; whether it be to be taken in a proper or figurative sense; and if in a proper sense, whether it be to be understood of Christian baptism, properly so called, or some other ablution. And as little is it agreed, who are the dead, or in what sense the preposition *for* is to be taken. Some, as Whitby, understand the dead, of our Savior Himself. Why are persons baptized in the name of a dead Savior, a Savior who remains among the dead, if the dead rise not? But it is, I believe, an instance perfectly singular, for *'the dead'* (the Gr. is plural) to mean no more than one dead person; it is a signification which the words have nowhere else. And *the baptized*, seem plainly to mean some particular persons, not Christians in general; which

yet must be the signification, if *the dead* be understood of our Savior. Some understand the passage of the martyrs: Why do they suffer martyrdom for their religion? This is sometimes called the baptism of blood by the ancients, and, by our Savior Himself, baptism indefinitely, Mat. 20:22. Lu. 12:50. But in what sense can they that die martyrs for their religion, be said to be baptized, i. e. die martyrs for the dead? Some understand it, of a custom observed, as some of the ancients tell us, among many who professed the Christian name in the first ages, of baptizing some in the name and stead of catechumens dying without baptism. But this savored of such superstition, that, if the custom had prevailed in the church so soon, the apostle would hardly have mentioned it, without signifying a dislike of it. Some understand it, of baptizing over the dead, which was a custom, they tell us, that early obtained; and this, to testify their hope of the resurrection. This sense is pertinent to the apostle's argument, but it appears not that any such practice was in use in the apostle's time. Others understand it, of those who have been baptized for the sake or on occasion, of the martyrs, i. e. the constancy with which they died for their religion. Some were doubtless converted to Christianity, by observing this; and it would have been a vain thing for persons to have become Christians on this motive, if the martyrs, by losing their lives for religion, became utterly extinct, and were to live no more. But the church at Corinth had not, in all probability, suffered much persecution at this time, or seen many instances of martyrdom among them, nor had many converts been made by the constancy and firmness which the martyrs discovered. Not to observe, that *'the dead'* seems to be too general an expression, to mean only the martyred dead. It is as easy an explication of the phrase as any I have met with, and as pertinent to the argument, to suppose *'the dead'* to mean some among the Corinthians, who had been taken off by the hand of God. We read, that *many were sickly among them, and many slept*, ch. 11:38. because of their disorderly behavior at the Lord's table. These executions might terrify some into Christianity; as the miraculous earthquake did the jailer, Ac. 16:29, 30, &c. Persons baptized on such an occasion, might be properly said to be baptized for the dead, i. e. on their account. And *the baptized and the dead* answer to one another; and, on this supposition, the Corinthians could not

to the Godhead, referring all to his honor, and exercising all his authority, 'to the glory of God the Father;' but when the grand designs of that kingdom shall be illustriously completed, in the view of all holy creatures in the universe, and the kingdom delivered up, this shall appear in the most conspicuous manner, and so far to exceed all our conceptions; and the glory of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, will be displayed and adored, in the highest possible degree. 'The resurrection of all that "are Christ's," is to be at this very advent; but how can He "deliver up his kingdom" and yet reign on earth a thousand years? In a word, if all that are his must be raised, at his coming to the final judgment, then none before that coming, and then they must be all raised together, not some a thousand years before the rest.' Whitby. Rev. 20:4—6. (27) *He hath put, &c.* Both in the LXX. and the Heb. the verb is in the second person, 'Thou hast put, &c.' Ps. 8:6, 4—9. Heb. 2:5—13.

(20.) *First.* 'Of them who rose so as never afterwards to die.' Bl. (22.) 'As the death of all mankind came by Adam, so the resurrection of all men came by Christ; the wicked shall be raised by Him *officio Judicis*, by the power of Christ, as their Lord and Judge: the righteous shall be raised *beneficio Mediatoris*, by virtue of their union with Him as their Head.' Valpy, Iren., Morus, Mackn. Id.

(23.) *Order.* 'Tagma: properly, regiment: comtrs. are not agreed whether time (as Theoph., Vorst., Menoch., Tirinus) or merit, or dignity (as Zon, Pisc., Tert., Est., Grot., &c.) be intended. Mackn. tr. "band, or class;" Stade, "assembly." The first seems best, and to include the others; since priority of resurrection would cause separation of class, and imply difference of rank.' Id.

(24.) *Kingdom.* 'Two kingdoms (says Theoph.) are mentioned in the SS., that of creation, and that of adoption. Christ is the King of all nations, Greeks and Jews, by creation, whether they will or no. He reigns over the faithful and holy, who are in willing subjection, by adoption and appropriation. See Ps. 2:8. Mat. 28:18. This kingdom (continues Th.) He delivers to his Father, by achieving and accomplishing the purpose of it. Thus, for instance, if a king commits to his son the management of a war, against nations that have rebelled, when the war is finished, and the nations are again reduced to subjection, then the son is

said to deliver up the war to his father, i. e. show that he has accomplished the work committed to him. The kingdom here (as *Sclater*) is *economicum*, the mediatorial kingdom and government of Christ, and the dispensation of God with men by Christ. See Mackn. *Grot.* illustrates the *delivering up the kingdom to God*, by comparing it with that of the presidents, sent out by the Roman emperors to govern provinces, and, on the expiration of the period of their government, restoring their power into the hands of the sovereign.' Bloomf.

(25.) 'By Oriental custom, the heir apparent, or the next in rank to the monarch, sits at his right hand, and by that, likewise, vanquished enemies were, as it were, triumphed over, in being trampled under foot by their conquerors' Bl. Comp. cuts 7, at end of Jer. and at Ps. 110:1. Ed.

V. 29, 30. The apostle, having shown the order and event of the general resurrection, proceeds to evince still further the importance of a firm belief respecting it.—The expression 'baptized for the dead,' has given occasion to a variety of ingenious conjectures and learned discussions. The following interpretation, however, suggested by Dr. Doddridge, who received it from Sir R. Ellis, appears the true one. The apostle refers to the case of those, who presented themselves for baptism, immediately after the martyrdom of their brethren, or at their funerals; as if fresh soldiers should enlist and press forward to the assault, to supply the places of those who had fallen in battle. This might show the Corinthian speculators, how greatly their notions tended to discourage men from professing the Gospel in times of persecution, and to make them afraid and ashamed to own the cause of Christ. Scott.

(29, 30.) *Baptized for the dead.* 'The phrase seems idiotical, and there is (*popularem more*) an ellipsis of the word "resurrection." Thus the sense will be: "baptized in the confidence and expectation of a resurrection from the dead." Of course are meant, by *dead*, those who die in the Lord, and a resurrection to happiness. Phil. 3:11. *Chrys.* establishes this interpretation beyond all doubt; and so Theoph., Cec., Phot., Theod., Hm., Wets. All the Gr. comtrs. agree, that there is an allusion to the form of baptism, "I believe in the resurrection of the dead," to which is added: "Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?—It is my desire." After which, and other confessions, according to *Chrys.*, the rite is performed.' Bloomf., whom see in full. Ed.



31 I protest by <sup>g</sup> your rejoicing <sup>h</sup> which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I <sup>i</sup> die daily.

32 If <sup>j</sup> after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? Let us <sup>k</sup> eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.

33 Be not deceived: evil <sup>l</sup> communications corrupt good manners.

34 Awake <sup>m</sup> to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I <sup>n</sup> speak *this* to your shame.

35 But some *man* will say, How <sup>o</sup> are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

<sup>g</sup> Some read, *our*. <sup>h</sup> *after*. <sup>m</sup> Ro. 13:11.  
<sup>i</sup> Phi. 3:3. <sup>k</sup> Ec. 2:24. <sup>n</sup> Ep. 5:14.  
<sup>j</sup> Ro. 8:35. <sup>l</sup> Is. 22:13. <sup>o</sup> 1 c. 6:5  
<sup>o</sup> Eze. 37:3.

mistake the apostle's meaning. 'Now,' says he, 'what shall they do, and why were they baptized, if the dead rise not? You have a general persuasion that these men have done right, and acted wisely, and as they ought, on this occasion; but why, if the dead rise not, seeing they may perhaps hasten their death, by provoking a jealous God, and have no hopes beyond it?' But whether this be the meaning, or whatever else be, doubtless the apostle's argument was good, and intelligible to the Corinthians. And his next is as plain to us.

IV. He argues from the absurdity of his own and other Christians' conduct, on this supposition:

1. It would be a foolish thing for them to run so many hazards, v. 30. 'Why do we expose ourselves to continual peril; we Christians, especially we apostles?' Every one knows that it was dangerous being a Christian, and much more a preacher and apostle, at that time. Christianity were a foolish profession, if it proposed no hopes beyond this life, at least in such hazardous times as attended the first profession of it. And is this a character of his religion, fit for a Christian to endure? And must he not fix this character on it, if he gives up his future hopes, and denies the resurrection of the dead? This argument the apostle brings home to himself, v. 31. He was in continual danger of death, and carried his life, as we say, in his hand. And why should he thus expose himself, if he had no hopes after life? He had encountered very great difficulties, and fierce enemies; he had *fought with beasts at Ephesus*, v. 32. and was in danger of being pulled to pieces by a caraged multitude, stirred up by Demetrius,

and the other craftsmen, Acts 19: 28. though some understand this literally, of Paul's being exposed to fight with wild beasts in the amphitheatre, at a Roman show in that city. And Nicephorus tells a formal story to this purport, and of the miraculous complaisance of the lions to him when they came near him. But so remarkable a trial and circumstance of his life, methinks, would not have been passed over by Luke, and much less by himself, when he gives us so large and particular detail of his sufferings, 2 Cor. 11: 24—33. I take it, therefore, that this fighting with beasts is a figurative expression; the beasts intended were men, of a fierce and ferine disposition, and this refers to the passage above cited. 'Now,' says he, 'what advantage have I from such contests, if the dead rise not? And, if I am to perish by death, and expect nothing after it, could anything be more weak?' Was Paul so senseless? Could anything, but the sure hopes of a better life after death, have extinguished the love of life in him to this degree? 'What advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? What can I propose to myself?' It is very lawful and fit for a Christian to propose advantage to himself, by his fidelity to God. Thus did Paul. Thus did our blessed Lord Himself, Heb. 13: 2. And thus we are bid to do after his example, and have our fruit to holiness, that our end may be everlasting life. This is the very end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls, 1 Pet. 1: 9. not only what it will issue in, but what we should aim at.

2. It would be a much wiser thing to take the comforts of this life, v. 32. let us turn epicures. Thus this sentence means in the prophet, Is. 22: 13. Let us even live like beasts, if we must die like them. This passage also plainly implies, as I have hinted above, that those who denied the resurrection among the Corinthians, were perfect Sadducees, who say, *There is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit*, Ac. 23: 8. (i. e. 'Man is all body; there is nothing in him to survive the body, nor will that, when once he is dead, ever revive again;') otherwise, his arguments had no force in them, as I have before said. Nothing but the hopes of better things hereafter can enable a man to forego all the comforts and pleasures here, and embrace poverty, contempt, misery, and death. Thus did the apostles and primitive Christians; but how wretched was their case, and how foolish their conduct, if they deceived themselves, and abused the world with vain and false hopes!

V. He closes with a caution, exhortation, and reproof.

1. A caution against the dangerous conversation of bad men, men of loose lives and principles, v. 33. Possibly, some of those

who said that there was no resurrection of the dead, were men of loose lives, and endeavored to countenance their vicious practices by so corrupt a principle; and had that speech often in their mouths, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die*. Now, the apostle grants, that the talk was to the purpose, if there were no future state. But having confuted their principle, he now warns the Corinthians how dangerous such men's conversation must prove. Bad company and conversation are likely to make bad men. Error and vice are infectious; and if we would avoid the contagion, we must keep clear of those who have taken it, Prov. 13: 20.

2. An exhortation to break off their sins, and rouse themselves, and lead a more holy and righteous life, v. 34. The disbelief of a future state destroys all virtue and piety. But the improvement to be made of the truth is, to cease from sin, and set ourselves to the business of religion, and that in good earnest.

3. Here is a reproof, and a sharp one, to some, at least, among them; *Some of you have not the knowledge of God; I speak this to your shame*. It is, indeed, a shame in Christians, not to have the knowledge of God; for it must be owing to their own sloth, and slight of God, that they are ignorant of Him. Note, also, It must be ignorance of God, that leads men into the disbelief of a resurrection and future life. Those who know God, know that He will not abandon his faithful servants, leave them exposed to such hardships and sufferings, without any recompense or reward. They know He is not unfaithful or unkind, to forget their labor and patience, their faithful services and cheerful sufferings, or let their *labor be in vain*. But I am apt to think, that the expression has a much stronger meaning; that there were atheistical people among them, who hardly owned a God, or one who had any concern with, or took cognizance of human affairs. These were, indeed, a scandal and shame to any Christian church. Note, Real atheism lies at the bottom of men's disbelief of a future state.

V. 35—50. The apostle comes now to answer a plausible and principal objection against the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; concerning which, observe the proposal of the objection, v. 35. The objection is plainly twofold; *How are they raised up?* implying a supposed impossibility in the thing; an opinion that prevailed much among the heathens, and the Sadducees; and it seems, also, among the Corinthians. The other part of the objection is about the quality of their bodies, who shall rise; *With what body will they come?* Will it be with the same body; with like shape,

V. 31—34. The apostle protested, in the most solemn manner, 'by their rejoicing,' or his rejoicing with them, and on their account, as converted by his ministry, (several copies read it, *our* rejoicing,) that he 'died daily;' he was every day exposed to the peril of martyrdom; he expected that violent death continually, and his manifold hardships and sufferings rendered his life a kind of lingering execution. To all this he had nothing to oppose, except the joyful hope and blessed earnestness of future felicity, through his crucified and risen Lord, and the pleasure of bringing others to share the same 'salvation with eternal glory;' yet this, on the principles which he was confuting, must prove a mere delusion. 'Fought with beasts.' Many suppose he referred to the tumult at Ephesus, excited by Demetrius and his workmen, Acts 19: 23—41. but he afterwards, in this epistle, expresses his purpose of continuing at Ephesus till Pentecost; (16: 8) whereas in the history it is said, that 'after the uproar ceased, he . . . departed to go into Macedonia.' Acts 20: 1. Indeed, his whole plan seems to have been deranged in good measure by that tumult. 16: 5—9. 2 Cor. 1: 15—20. Had he, in this short and figurative expression, alluded to that event, in writing to the Corinthians, it must have been as supposing them previously acquainted with it. It is evident, that he wrote from Ephesus, and that he intended to remain there for some time longer. The epistle must therefore have been written before that tumult, and some other of his many hardships at Ephesus must be meant. He had great success, and many adversaries in that city; and it is plain, that only a small part of his sufferings has been particularly recorded. 2 Cor. 11: 21—31.—'If this sense' (the lit. interpretation) 'be not liked, you may interpret, "after the manner of men," according to the intention of men, it being the intention of the men of Asia to deal so with him. Note, also, that cruel and bloody-minded men are often represented under this metaphor of beasts. So Ignatius, when he was carried from Syria to Rome, under a band of sol-

diers, who, saith he, are the worse for the kindness I show them, "From Syria to Rome I fight with beasts." And Herablitus . . . says, "The Ephesians were turned into beasts, because they slew one another." Whitty.—It is evident, that the apostle constantly aimed to bring the Corinthians to a more humble opinion of themselves, and gradually to draw them off from their false teachers. (32) *Let us eat, &c.* From the Sept., which well expresses the Heb. Is. 22: 13, 8—14. Scott.

(31.) *Your rejoicing.* 'My boasting concerning you.' Bl. Est., Mackn., Grot., Kyp., Pearee, Ros., Kr., Jasp. *Daily.* So Livy. 'Daily our city is taken, daily destroyed,' i. e. exposed to be so. See Bl. Ed.

(32.) *Beasts.* Literally, see Bl., who truly remarks, that 'this interpretation is best founded, and liable to fewest difficulties, and immovable as yet.' Id.

(34.) See Bl. 'How is it possible for the different parts of bodies which have been resolved to dust, and the elements apparently annihilated by fire, devoured by beasts, and even men, or become so mingled and converted into the nature of other animals, nay, of trees, plants, &c., how can they, after having been so often shared by different individuals, so many yrs. thus dissipated, be at length, and under an entirely different mode of existence, reunited and coalesce as before into one body? It is plainly impossible (v. 50). To which P. answers, (popularly,) it will be in some measure the same, and in some measure not the same body.' This reclothing of the soul, he, for want of better words, calls a *spiritual, a glorified body*: a certain something, *experience* only will enable us to know. Some suppose the spirit leaves the body the *third day*. 'The Scripture nowhere affirms, that the same numerical body shall be raised. (See Mackn., and Stale;) it teaches, that the dead shall be raised.' Bl. Id.

V. 35—38. (36) *Except it die.* Some modern infidels have maintained, against the apostle, that the seed does not die in vegetation; be-



36 *Thou fool!* that <sup>p</sup> which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die :

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other *grain* :

38 But God <sup>q</sup> giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

39 All flesh is not the same flesh : but *there is one kind of flesh* of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

40 *There* <sup>r</sup> are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial : but the glory of the celestial is one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial is another.

41 *There is one glory* of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars : for *one star differeth from another star in glory.*

42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption ; it is raised in incorruption.

43 It <sup>t</sup> is sown in dishonor ; it is raised in glory : it is sown in weakness ; it is raised in power :

44 It is sown a natural body ; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual <sup>u</sup> body.

45 And so it is written, <sup>v</sup> The first man Adam was made a living soul ; the <sup>w</sup> last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The <sup>x</sup> first man is of the earth, earthy : the second man is the Lord from heaven.

p Jn. 12:24. t Da. 12:3. Mat. v Ge. 2:7.  
q Ge. 1:11,12. 13:43. Phi 3:21. w Jn. 5:21.6:33,40.  
r Ge. 1:16. u Lu. 24:31. x Jn. 3:13,31.  
s Ps. 19:4,5. Jn. 20:19,25.

form, stature, members, and qualities, or various ?' The former objection is that of those who opposed the doctrine, the latter the inquiry of curious doubters.

1. To the first, the apostle answers, by telling them, this was to be brought about by divine power, that very power which they had all observed to do somewhat very like it, year after year, in the death and revival of the corn ; and therefore it was an argument of great weakness and stupidity, to doubt whether the resurrection of the dead might not be effected by the same power, v. 36.

2. He is longer on the second inquiry : (1.) There is a change made in the grain sown. God gives it such a body as He will, and in such way as He will, only so as to distinguish all kinds from each other. Every seed sown has its *proper body*, is constituted of such materials, and figured in such a manner, as are proper to that kind. This is plainly in the divine power, though we no more know how it is done, than we know how a dead man is raised to life again.

(2.) There is a great variety among other bodies, as there is among plants. The true glory of every being consists in its fitness for its rank and state. Earthly bodies are not adapted to the heavenly regions, nor heavenly bodies fitted to the condition of earthly beings. Nay, there is a variety of glory among heavenly bodies themselves, v. 41. All this is to intimate, that the bodies of the dead, when they rise, will be so far changed, that they will be fitted for the heavenly regions ; and that there will be a variety of glories among the bodies of the dead, when they shall be raised, as there is among the sun, and moon, and stars, nay, among the stars themselves. It must be as easy to divine power to raise the dead, and recover their mouldered bodies, as out of the same materials to form so many kinds of flesh and plants, and, for aught we know, celestial bodies as well as terrestrial ones. The sun and stars may, for aught we know, be composed of the same materials as the earth we tread on, though so much refined and changed by the divine skill and power. And can He, out of the same materials, form such various beings, and yet not be able to raise the dead ! Having thus prepared the way, he comes,

(3.) To speak directly to the point, v. 42. And here he specifies some particulars ; as,

[1.] Burying the dead is like sowing them, like committing the seed to the earth, that it may spring out of it again : our bodies, which are sown, are corruptible, will putrefy and moulder to dust ; but when we rise, they will be out of the power of the grave, and never more be liable to corruption. [2.] Ours is at present a vile body, Philip. 3:21. Nothing is more loathsome than a dead body. But, at the resurrection, a glory will be put upon it ; it will be made like the glorious body of our Savior ; it will be purged from all the dregs of earth, and refined into an ethereal substance, and shine out with a splendor resembling his. [3.] It is laid in the earth, a poor, helpless thing, wholly in the power of death, deprived of all vital capacities and powers, of life and strength ; it is utterly unable to move or stir. But when we rise, our bodies will have heavenly life and vigor infused into them ; they shall be hale, firm, durable, lively, and liable no more to any infirmity, weakness, or decay. [4.] *It is sown a natural, or animal body*, a body fitted to the low condition, and sensitive pleasures and enjoyments of this life, which are all gross, in comparison of the heavenly state and enjoyments. But when we rise, it will be quite otherwise ; our body will rise spiritual, purified and refined ; and, though not changed literally into spirit, yet made fit to be perpetual associates of spirits made perfect. And why should it not be as much in the power of God to raise incorruptible, glorious, lively, spiritual bodies, out of the ruins of those vile, corruptible, lifeless, and animal ones, as first to make matter out of nothing, and then, out of the same mass of matter, produce such variety of beings, both in earth and heaven ? *To God all things are possible* ; and this cannot be impossible.

(4.) He illustrates this by a comparison of the first and second Adam : *There is an animal body*, says he, *and there is a spiritual body* ; and then goes into the comparison, in several instances. [1.] As we have our natural, animal body in this world, from the first Adam, we expect our spiritual body from the second. This is implied in the whole comparison. [2.] This is but consonant to the different characters these two persons bear : *The first Adam was made a living soul*, such a being as ourselves, and with a power of propagating such beings as himself, and conveying to them a nature and

cause the *germen* lives, and expands itself, and only the extraneous matter corrupts. But, in fact, the seed, as such, does die : it ceases to be a grain of corn ; though a part of it springs, as it were, into new life, by a process which we can no more fully comprehend, than we can the manner of the resurrection. Even 'a prophet of their own,' Lucretius, the Epicurean atheist, says,—'Whatever change transfers a body into a new class of beings, may be justly called the death of the original substance . . . For what is changed from what it was, . . . that dies.' *Creech*. The body sown is not the same which will exist, when it has sprung up. The identity of the particles of matter, as necessary to the resurrection of the same body, is nowhere mentioned in Scripture ; and this ch. strongly militates against that opinion. God has many other ways of preserving *personal identity*. Exactly the same particles do not constitute our bodies, for two hours together, in any part of our lives ; yet we are the same persons, both in body and soul, from childhood to old age. There is, then, no necessity to clog the doctrine with this difficulty, which furnishes infidels with their most specious objections against it. Many of the philosophers, and afterwards of the heretics, considered the body as the prison and sepulchre of the soul, from which it would, at death, be delivered. Such men, indeed, could not but dislike the doctrine of the resurrection, and be disposed to argue against it ; yet the passage does not refer to objectors of this kind ; at least, there is no proof that it does.

SCOTT.  
V. 39. 'I cannot but think the words of this and the following v. allude to some graduated difference in the treatment both of the righteous and the wicked.' See *Bl.*, and see *Theoph.* ; also *Hardy* and *Schoett*. Ed.

V. 40. 'The Gr. conveys, here again urge the difference, meant to be denoted, in the condition of the righteous and the wicked, and the comparative difference of individuals in both. *Theoph.* says, "glory," as to sinners, must mean *situation*. And *Theod.* appeals to the words of our Lord, "in my Father's house are many mansions" (*Bl.*) ; each individual will go where he belongs, 'to his own place.' *Glory.* Applied to *celestial bodies* (so *Kr.*), both the *lucidus fulgor*, and the external beauty of appearance, and consequent dignity and magnificence ; all which is included in the Heb. *phar* and *kebod*, both tr. in the Sept. by the Gr. word here. As applied to the *terrestrial, doxa* [glory] will denote, in general, all such dignity as results from grandeur and beauty of appearance.' *Bl.*

V. 41. 'Here the great individual difference in the condition both of the

righteous and the wicked (notes v. 39 and 40) in a future state, is also alluded to.'

BLOOMF.  
V. 43. *Weakness.* 'The manifold frailties, [destructibility,] weaknesses, and liabilities to sickness which flesh is heir to. *Strength.* That exemption from *sickness* as well as *death*, which our glorified bodies shall enjoy ; and *Grot.* thinks it may allude to new senses [faculties ?] of which we have now no conception. Upon the whole, however, no clear ideas can we have, [incapable as we are of *comprehending* either matter or spirit,] on the exact difference between our earthly and our glorified bodies. Indeed, no language could have made us comprehend that difference. Let it be sufficient for us, that we are enabled to say, in the words of the divine Psalmist, "When I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it." *Animal body.* A body, to the animation of which the presence of an animal soul is necessary : and a *spiritual body* is one of so fine a contexture, that it will be supported merely by the presence of our rational spirit ; yet, notwithstanding this great difference, the body to be raised will, in a sound sense, be the same with the body that was buried. See *Mackn.*'

Id.  
V. 44. *Natural body.* 'Rather an *animal body*, which is more suitable to the propriety of the Gr., and to the apostle's meaning, who is here showing, that, as we have *animal bodies* now (which we derived from Adam) endowed with an animal life, which, unless supported with a constant supply of food, air, &c. will fail and perish, and, at last, do what we can, will dissolve, and come to an end ; so, at the resurrection, we shall have from Christ, the second Adam, "spiritual bodies," which shall have an essential and natural, inseparable life in them, which shall continue and subsist perpetually of itself, without the help of meat and drink, or air, or any such foreign support ; without decay, or any tendency to a dissolution ; of which our Savior speaking, Lu. 20:35. says, "They who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead," cannot die any more ; for they are equal to the angels, i. e. of an angelical nature and constitution.'

LOCKE.  
V. 45—49. In the history of the creation it was written, that 'the first man, Adam, was made a living soul ;' and his 'natural' or *animal* life had been communicated to all his posterity, but without the spiritual life originally connected with it ; so that, ever since the fall of Adam, all his descendants, by natural generation, are 'dead in sin ;' and the very mind of man had been carnal, as well as his body mortal. But 'the last Adam,' the last Surety, or Covenant-head, of any of the human race,



48 As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy : and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also <sup>v</sup> bear the image of the heavenly.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that <sup>a</sup> flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery : We <sup>a</sup> shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a <sup>b</sup> moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump : for the <sup>c</sup> trumpet shall sound, and the dead <sup>d</sup> shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal <sup>e</sup> must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death <sup>f</sup> is swallowed up in victory.

<sup>v</sup> Ro. 8:29.      <sup>c</sup> Zec. 9:14.      <sup>e</sup> 2 Co. 5:4.  
<sup>z</sup> Jn. 3:3,5.      <sup>Mat.</sup> 24:31.      <sup>1</sup> Jn. 3:2.  
<sup>a</sup> 1 Th. 4:15-17. <sup>d</sup> Jn. 5:25.      <sup>f</sup> Is. 25:3.  
<sup>b</sup> 2 Pe. 3:10.

animal body like his own, but none other, nor better. The *second Adam* is a quickening Spirit; He is the Resurrection and the Life, Jn. 11:25. He hath life in Himself, and quickeneth whom He will, Jn. 5:20, 21. The *first man* was of the earth, made out of the earth, and was earthy; his body was fitted to the region of his abode; but the *second Adam* is the Lord from heaven; He who came down from heaven, and giveth life to the world, Jn. 6:33. He who came down from heaven, and was in heaven at the same time, Jn. 3:13. the Lord of heaven and earth. If the first Adam could communicate to us natural and animal bodies, cannot the second Adam make our bod-

'was a quickening Spirit;' the Author and Source of spiritual and eternal life to all his people, by the supply of his Holy Spirit. Gen. 2:7, 16, 17. 3:6. John 1:4, 5. 5:20-27. 11:20-27. Rom. 5:12-13. 8:1, 2. Nor does this life-giving energy relate only to their souls; for He will also 'quickening,' or make alive, 'their mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in them;' and this is here principally intended. Rom. 8:10, 11. Thus all philosophical objections were shown to have their foundation in ignorance of the 'Scriptures, and of the power of God.' Mat. 22:23-33. (45) *The last Adam.*] 'The second Man,' 47.—As if none of the human race had existed, except Adam and Christ. For all men will at length be considered either as in Adam or in Christ: unbelievers as one with fallen Adam, and in him; all believers as in Christ, and one with Him. Rom. 5:12-21. (45) *Was made, &c.*] From the Sept., which accords to the Heb.; but 'the first man, Adam,' is added by way of explanation. SCOTT.

(45.) 'As P. is speaking here of Christ, after He received his glorified body, he calls Him (after Jn. 5:29.) a vivifying Spirit, because the presence of his Spirit, in his glorified body, is all that is requisite to preserve it alive for ever; and because He will communicate the same power to the spirits of the righteous, with respect to their bodies, after the resurrection.' MACKN. 'Nothing was more common with the Jews, than to urge these very expressions (first and second Adam, &c.) of Adam and the Messiah. See Schoettl.' BLOOMF.

(49.) *Image.*] 'Eikona: used properly of statues, pictures, or other things formed after an archetype, and which represent it.' KYRKE.

V. 50-54. Speaking of the whole multitude of believers, to the end of time, as constituting one family, to which he and the Corinthian Christians belonged, he might say, 'We shall not all sleep,' or die, 'but we shall all be changed.' Yet he elsewhere speaks of himself, as one of those who should be 'raised up by Jesus.' 2 Cor. 4:14. So that there can be no ground for the supposition, which many have formed from his language, that he expected to live till the coming of Christ, which he judged to be very near. The notion also of others, that he alluded to the first resurrection, previous to the millennium, is inconsistent with the language of the passage; for those who have died, or shall die before the millennium, as truly 'sleep in Jesus,' though they should arise immediately, as they do, who shall remain in the state of the dead till the general resurrection. Rev. 20:4-6. The apostle therefore only meant to speak of himself as belonging to that one family, of whom the far greater part would die and be raised again, and all the rest must 'be changed.' The apostle showed the Corinthians a mystery, by informing them of the event that would take place; yet, in respect to the manner in which it would be effected, it still remained mysterious and incom-

prehensible. Thus the mysteries of the Trinity, and of the incarnation of the Lord from heaven, are revealed to us as certainly true; but the manner of them still remains inexplicable. Mat. 13:10, 11. 1 Tim. 3:16. (54) *Death, &c.*] Much nearer to the Heb. than to the LXX. Is. 25:8. SCOTT.

(50.) *Mystery.*] 'Viz., that all must undergo this change, whether living at the last day or not, a thing hitherto unknown, or not as yet revealed.' See Ros. Ed. (52.) *Last.*] See Bl. The last trumpet that will ever sound. *Trumpet.*] Comp. 1 Thess. 4:10. Jn. 5:25. The Greek is often used of the pealing of thunder, so it may here mean, an unusual crash of thunder, &c. or the awful roar of subterraneous convulsions, or the mighty sound produced by the commingling of celestial and terrestrial elements, when Christ and his angels descend to earth, when the heavens and the earth come together, and are changed to new. Comp. Mat. 24:30, 31. Heb. 12:19. 2 Pet. 3:10, 12, 13. 'The best comtrs. (says Bl.) tell us there is here reference to the rites and customs of the Jews, (as we find them in the O. T.) among whom judgments [comp. Zech. 9:14.] were held, and solemn meetings convened, by sound of trumpet. And indeed the use of trumpets for such purposes, (especially the Olympic games,) extended to the Greeks and Romans. At the Corinthian games, the blast of the trumpet gave the signal to start; and we find from Thucyd., that trumpets were used on the more solemn religious occasions. But we need not sink the tremendous and awful circumstance, the Almighty's signal for the end of all things, into mere metaphor; it is cautiously to be avoided.' We.] 'Here, as often, P. uses the figure *metaschematismos*, and speaks not in his own person, but in theirs who should be living on the earth at the last day. And Doddr. rightly refuses the inference, so often drawn from hence, (and unwarily conceded by Grot., and Ros.) that P. expected he should live, till Christ appeared for judgment.' Bloomf. Ed.

V. 51-57. To confirm this change, he here,

I. Tells them a mystery, what had been concealed or unknown till then,—that all the saints should not die, but all would be changed. They that are alive at our Lord's coming, will be caught up into the clouds, without dying, 1 Thess. 4:11. But it is plain, from this passage, that it will not be without changing from corruption to incorruption, and this in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, v. 52. What cannot Almighty power effect? This is the mystery, the thing before unknown, which the apostle here shows the Corinthians; and this he tells them will be at the sound of the last trump; for, as he tells us elsewhere, 1 Thes. 4:16. so here, the trumpet must sound. It is the loud summons of all the living, and all the dead, to come and appear at the tribunal of Christ. At this summons the graves shall

open; the dead saints shall rise in an incorruptible state, v. 52.

II. He assigns the reason of this change, v. 53. How, otherwise, could the man be a fit inhabitant of the incorruptible regions, or be fitted to possess the eternal inheritance? This corruptible body must be made incorruptible, this mortal body must be changed into immortal, that the man may be capable of enjoying the happiness designed for him.

III. He lets us know what will follow on this change of the living and dead in Christ, v. 54. Is. 25:8. *mortality shall be then swallowed up in life*, 2 Cor. 5:4. death perfectly subdued and conquered, and saints for ever delivered from its power; therefore will the saints hereupon sing their *song of triumph*. Then, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, will death be swallowed up, for ever swallowed up, in victory. Christ hinders it from swallowing his saints when they die; but when they are risen again, death shall, as to them, be swallowed up for ever. And, on this destruction of death, will they break out in a song of triumph.

1. They will glory over this great and terrible destroyer, as a vanquished enemy: 'O death, where is thy sting? Where is now thy sting, thy power to hurt? What mischief hast thou done us? We are dead; but, behold, we live again, and shall die no more. We fear no further mischiefs from thee, nor heed thy weapons, but defy thy power, and despise thy wrath. And, O grave, where is thy victory? What is become of it? Where are the spoils and trophies of it? Once we were thy prisoners, but the prison doors are burst open, our shackles are knocked off, and we are for ever released; thy triumphs, grave, are at an end.' In a moment, the power of death, and the conquests and spoils of the grave, are gone; and, as to the saints, the very signs of them will not remain. Where are they?

2. The foundation for this triumph is here intimated, (1.) In the account given whence death had its power to hurt; i. e. from sin, which only puts it into the power of death to hurt and kill. Sin unpardoned, and nothing else, can keep any under his power. And the strength of sin is the law; it is the

prehensible. Thus the mysteries of the Trinity, and of the incarnation of the Lord from heaven, are revealed to us as certainly true; but the manner of them still remains inexplicable. Mat. 13:10, 11. 1 Tim. 3:16. (54) *Death, &c.*] Much nearer to the Heb. than to the LXX. Is. 25:8. SCOTT.

(50.) *Mystery.*] 'Viz., that all must undergo this change, whether living at the last day or not, a thing hitherto unknown, or not as yet revealed.' See Ros. Ed.

(52.) *Last.*] See Bl. The last trumpet that will ever sound. *Trumpet.*] Comp. 1 Thess. 4:10. Jn. 5:25. The Greek is often used of the pealing of thunder, so it may here mean, an unusual crash of thunder, &c. or the awful roar of subterraneous convulsions, or the mighty sound produced by the commingling of celestial and terrestrial elements, when Christ and his angels descend to earth, when the heavens and the earth come together, and are changed to new. Comp. Mat. 24:30, 31. Heb. 12:19. 2 Pet. 3:10, 12, 13. 'The best comtrs. (says Bl.) tell us there is here reference to the rites and customs of the Jews, (as we find them in the O. T.) among whom judgments [comp. Zech. 9:14.] were held, and solemn meetings convened, by sound of trumpet. And indeed the use of trumpets for such purposes, (especially the Olympic games,) extended to the Greeks and Romans. At the Corinthian games, the blast of the trumpet gave the signal to start; and we find from Thucyd., that trumpets were used on the more solemn religious occasions. But we need not sink the tremendous and awful circumstance, the Almighty's signal for the end of all things, into mere metaphor; it is cautiously to be avoided.' We.] 'Here, as often, P. uses the figure *metaschematismos*, and speaks not in his own person, but in theirs who should be living on the earth at the last day. And Doddr. rightly refuses the inference, so often drawn from hence, (and unwarily conceded by Grot., and Ros.) that P. expected he should live, till Christ appeared for judgment.' Bloomf. Ed.

(54.) *In victory.*] 'Eis nikos: equivalent, say the Gr. and many modern comtrs., to *cis telos*, i. e. *cis tēn aiōna*, [to the end, to eternity,] a sense very frequent in the Sept., and so it answers to the Heb. at Is. 25:8, &c. Bp. Marsh completely proves, that *cis telos* may very well be translated, *with triumph, victoriously*: a sense I would give it at Mat. 12:23. [20?] Both senses come to the same thing, as Crell. shows, whose note is a model for annotation on such passages of the N. T. as quote the O. T.' Bloomf. Death can be absorbed, lost, done away with for ever (as the prophet has it) only by changing our mortality to immortality, which is a victory over death, an eternal triumph. See Crell. and Bloomf. The Heb. means for ever, but comes from a word signifying to conquer. Ed.



55 O death, where is thy sting?  
O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin;  
and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which  
giveth us the victory through our  
Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren,  
be ye steadfast, unmovable,  
always abounding in the work of  
the Lord, forasmuch as ye know  
that your labor is not in vain in the  
Lord.

### CHAP. XVI.

He exhorteth them to relieve the want of the brethren at Jerusalem: 10 commendeth Timothy: 13 and, after friendly admonitions, 16 shutteth up his epistle with divers salutations.

NOW concerning the collection  
for the saints, as I have given  
order to the churches of Galatia,  
even so do ye.

g Ho. 13:11.  
h or, h/2.  
i Ro. 6:23.

j Ro. 4:15.  
k Ro. 7:25.  
l Ro. 8:37.

1 Jn. 5:4,5.  
m 2 Pe. 3:14.  
n Ga. 2:10.

divine threatening against the transgressors of the law, the curse there denounced, that gives power to sin. Note, Sin is the parent of death, and gives it all its hurtful power, Rom. 5:12. (2.) In the account given of the victory saints obtain over it through Jesus Christ, v. 57. the curse of the law is removed by our Redeemer's becoming a Curse for us; so that sin is deprived of its strength and sting, through Christ, i. e. by his incarnation, suffering, and death. By dying, He conquered death, and spoiled the grave; and, through faith in Him, believers become sharers in his conquests. They often rejoice beforehand, in the hope of his victory; and, when they rise glorious from the grave, will boldly triumph over death. Note, It is altogether owing to the grace of God in Christ, that sin is pardoned, and death disarmed. It is by the grace of God, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, that we are freely justified, Rom. 3:24. It is no wonder, therefore, (3.) If this triumph of the saints over death should issue in thanksgiving to God, v. 57. The way to sanctify all our joy is, to make it tributary to the

PRACT. OBS. V. 20—53. Blessed be God, we have the most complete and satisfactory proof, that Christ both 'died for our sins,' and rose again for our justification, and as 'the First-fruits' of our resurrection; that, as death entered by man, so might life eternal be introduced by One in our nature.—Should we lose sight of the animating prospect in the preceding vs. set before us; should any one prevail in attempting to argue us out of these our expectations; how must our zeal, diligence, and boldness be enervated, and our rejoicing damped! Let us then fear associating with skeptical, profligate, or ungodly men; let us warn our children, our juniors, our hearers, to shun them; let us 'awake to righteousness, and sin not;' let us not hearken to those, who know not God, in whatever science else they may excel; being assured that this *innocence* will be found shameful, in proportion to the abilities, opportunities, confidence, or profession, of those in whom it is found. If any are still disposed to start objections, or make presumptuous inquiries, when truths are scripturally proposed, let them remember the appellation the apostle, or rather the Holy Spirit, gives to such 'wise men of this world.' For they may thence learn, that man's wisdom consists in becoming 'a little child,' and simply believing his Maker. The works of creation and providence read us daily lectures of humility, as well as teach us to admire the variety of the great Creator's wisdom and goodness.—They, who 'shall be accounted worthy' to obtain felicity in the heavenly state,

V. 55—58. With the glorious prospect before the eyes of his faith and hope, the apostle, in the most beautiful and animated apostrophe, addressed 'death and the grave,' or the *unseen state*, as real persons, the universal and most terrible conquerors and oppressors of the human race.

(55.) *Sting.*] Some think, the allusion is derived from *hunting*. Others refer it to the Jews' representing the angel of death with an up-lifted dart, or spear. But the sacred writers arm him with a *sword*; 1 Chr. 21:15, 16. Gen. 3:24, and *kenyon* [tr. sting] is never used of a sword, but of a goad; as Prov. 2:3. Sir. 33:26. Ac. 9:5. It was properly used, however, of the spear or dart, as many poets, ancient and modern, represent death. But the Gr. comtrs. better derive it from the *sting of serpents*, scorpions, or other venomous monsters, Rev. 9:10. Hos. 13:14. The *sting* of such constitutes their *strength*; taken away, their power to hurt is gone: so it is with death and the grave. *Grave.*] *Hades.*

(56.) *Law.*] *Nomos*: not the Mosaic, particularly, but all law, law in general; and *sin* means, not only *original*, (derived from our first parents,) but *actual* sin. On the acquittal of the righteous at the judgment, [316]

praise of God: this really improves and exalts our satisfaction. And what can be more joyous in itself, than the saints' triumph over death, when they shall rise again? Those who remain under the power of death, can have no heart to praise; but such conquests and triumphs will certainly tune the tongues of the saints to thankfulness and praise; praise for the victory, (it is great and glorious in itself,) and for the means whereby it is obtained; it is given of God through Christ Jesus; not given because we are worthy, but because Christ is so, and has, by dying, obtained this conquest for us. Must not this circumstance endear the victory to us, and heighten our praise to God? How many springs of joy to the saints, and thanksgiving to God, are opened by the death and resurrection, the sufferings and conquests, of our Redeemer! With what acclamations will saints, rising from the dead, applaud Him! How will the heavens of heavens resound his praises for ever! *Thanks be to God*, will be the burden of their song; and angels will join the chorus, and declare their consent with a loud Amen, Hallelujah.

V. 58. In this v. we have the improvement of the whole argument, in an exhortation, enforced by a motive resulting plainly from it.

I. An exhortation, and this threefold. 1. That they should be steadfast,—firm, fixed in the faith of the Gospel, that Gospel which he had preached, and they had received, v. 3,4. and fixed in the faith of the glorious resurrection of the sanctified dead, which, as he had shown, had so near and necessary a connexion with the former. Note, Christians should be steadfast believers of this great article of the resurrection of the dead. It is evidently founded on the death of Christ. *Because He lives, his servants shall live also*, Jn. 14:19. And it is of the last importance; a disbelief of a future life will open a way to all manner of licentiousness, and corrupt men's morals to the last degree. It will be easy and natural from hence to infer, that we may live like beasts, and eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. 2. He exhorts them to be *unmovable*, in their hope and expectation of this great privilege, of being raised incorruptible and immortal. Christians should not be moved away from

will excel in glory all present splendors, far more than the celestial bodies transcend the terrestrial; and yet they shall exceed one another in glory, as 'one star differeth from another;' while Christ, 'the Sun of righteousness,' shall infinitely outshine them all. Here our very souls are *carнал*; there our very bodies will be *spiritual*. And our 'second Adam, the Lord from heaven,' will give new and immortal life, as 'a quickening Spirit,' both to our souls and bodies, that in both, according to our measure, we may bear his image and glorify his name.—Let us seek the full assurance of faith and hope, that we may triumph in the midst of pain, and in the prospect of dissolution.—But 'sin is the sting of death,' and who can disarm that 'king of terrors?' For 'the law is the strength of sin,' and who can answer its demands, endure its curse, or expiate his own transgressions? Hence the terror and the anguish; hence the wretched cleave to life, save when infidelity, despair, and rebellion, induce madness [or] suicide. Hence, death is justly terrible to the unbelieving and impenitent; hence, the needless alarms of the weak and trembling believer. 'Thanks be to God,' that there is deliverance, and victory, for us in Christ Jesus! Rom. 7:22—25. May He give us faith and hope, and increase our faith and hope; that we may not only be safe, but joyful and triumphant! And, having these assurances, let us be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; as knowing that our labor is not in vain in the Lord? 1 Jn. 3:1—3. Sc.

from that time forth, there shall be neither sin nor law, (says Mackn.) with the penalty of death annexed.

(58.) *Abounding.*] Endeavoring continually to make progress. *Theoph.*—*Work of the Lord.*] Doing all the Lord would have us to do, as Christians, including virtue of every kind. So the Gr. comtrs., and Vorst. These *good works*, it seems, many (out of disbelief or distrust of the resurrection) had neglected. *Not in vain.*] I incline to think P. made use of this expression, purposely to hint at that modesty with which all human works should ever be spoken of with reference to any reward. *In, &c.*] I. e. in the sight of God.

NOTES. CHAP. XVI. V. 1, 2. It is evident, that the Corinthians had been previously made acquainted with the apostle's intention, of raising a contribution from the Gentile churches, for the poor Christians in Judea; and, as they were more wealthy than most of their brethren, he did not intimate even a doubt of their liberality in that good work. Some are of opinion, that the sums, thus set apart, were brought to the treasury of the church at the time; but the words do not seem to admit of that interpretation; and if each separately laid by the sum which he purposed to give, the whole would be brought together at once, when

this hope of the Gospel, Col. 1:23. this glorious and blessed hope: they should not renounce or resign their comfortable expectations. Should they part with their hope? Should they suffer it to be shaken? 3. He exhorts them to *abound in the work of the Lord*, and that *always*: they should be diligent and persevering herein, going ever on toward perfection. The most cheerful duty, the greatest diligence, the most constant perseverance, become those who have such glorious hopes. What vigor and resolution what constancy and patience, should those hopes inspire!

11. The motive resulting from the former discourse is, that their *labor shall not be in vain in the Lord*; nay, they know it shall not. They have the best grounds in the world to build upon; they have all the assurance that can rationally be expected: as sure as Christ is risen, they shall rise; and Christ is as surely risen as the Scriptures are true, and the Word of God. Is there any room to doubt a fact so well attested? Note, True Christians have undoubted evidence, that their labor will not be in vain in the Lord; nay, more is implied than is expressed in this phrase. It means that they shall be abundantly rewarded. He will never be found unjust, to forget their labor of love, Heb. 6:10. Nay, He will do exceeding abundantly above what they now ask or think.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—4. In this ch. Paul closes this long epistle with some particular matters of less moment. He begins with directing them about a charitable collection for the Christians in Judea, whose distresses and poverty, at this time, were extraordinary, partly through the general calamities of that nation, and partly through particular sufferings. In this he desired them only to conform to the same rules he had given other churches on the like occasion, v. 1. 2 Cor. 8:13. He mentions his orders to the churches of Galatia, to excite emulation, and stir them up to liberality. The good examples of other Christians and churches should stir in us a holy emulation. The church of Corinth should not be outdone in this service of love by the churches of Galatia, who do not appear to have been enriched with equal spiritual gifts, or worldly wealth.



2 Upon the first <sup>b</sup> day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by *your* letters, them will I send to bring your <sup>d</sup> liberality unto Jerusalem.

4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.

5 Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia.

6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.

7 For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.

b Ac. 20:7. c 2 Co. 8:19. e 2 Co. 1:15,16.  
Re. 1:10. d gift.

1. The manner of the collection, v. 2. Every one should lay by as he could spare, from time to time, and by that method make up a sum for it. It is good to lay up in store for good uses. They who are rich in this world, should be rich in good works, 2 Tim. 6:17, 18. The best way to be so, is, to appropriate of their income, and have a treasury for this purpose; by this mean they will be ready to every good work as the opportunity offers; and many who labor with their own hands for a livelihood, should so work, that they may have to give to him that needeth, Eph. 4:28: Their treasury for good works can never be very large; but the best way in the world for them to get a treasury for this purpose, is, to lay by, from time to time, as they can afford. Some of the Greek fathers rightly observe here, that this advice was given for the sake of the poorer among them. They were to lay by, from week to week, and not bring in to the common treasury, that, by this mean, their contributions might be easy to themselves, and yet grow into a fund for the relief of their brethren. Indeed, all our charity and

benevolence should be free and cheerful, and, for that reason, should be made as easy to ourselves as may be. And what more likely way to make us easy in this matter, than thus to lay by? We may cheerfully give, when we know we can and have been laying by in store, that we may spare.

2. The measure in which they are to lay by, as *God* hath prospered them. All our business and labor are that to us, which *God* is pleased to make them. The diligent hand will not make rich by itself, without the divine blessing, Prov. 10:4, 22. It is *God's* bounty and blessing to which we owe all we have; and whatever we have, is to be used, and employed, and improved, for Him. And what argument more proper to excite us to charity to the people and children of *God*? When *God* blesses and prospers us, we should be ready to relieve and comfort his needy servants; good from Him should stir us up to do good to others, to resemble Him in our beneficence; and therefore the more good we receive from *God*, the more we should do good to others. *God* expects our beneficence to others should hold some proportion to his bounty to us.

3. The time when this is to be done, Lu. 24:1. the Lord's day, when public assemblies were held, and public worship was celebrated, and the Christian institutions and mysteries, (as the ancients called them,) were attended upon; then let every one lay by him. Works of mercy are the genuine fruits of true love to *God*, and therefore are a proper service on his own day. *God's* day is a proper season, on which to lay up for charitable uses, or lay out in them, according as He has prospered us: it is paying tribute for the blessings of the past week, and it is a proper way to procure his blessing on the work of our hands for the next.

4. The disposal of the collections; though the apostle would have everything ready against he came, v. 2. he would leave it much to themselves, as was fit. Paul pretended not to lord it over the purses of his hearers; he would not meddle with their contributions without their consent. He tells them, (1.) They should give letters of credence, and send messengers of their own with their liberality, v. 2. a proper testimony of their respect and brotherly love to their distressed brethren; and it would argue,

too, that they were very hearty in this service. We should not only charitably relieve our poor fellow-Christians, but do it in such a way as will best signify our compassion, and care of them, [and respectful consideration of their feelings.] (2.) He offers to go with their messengers, if they thought proper, v. 4. He would go, rather than the charity of the Corinthians should fail of a due effect. It was no hindrance to his preaching work, but a great furtherance to its success, to show such a tender and benign disposition of mind. Ministers are doing their proper business, when promoting or helping in works of charity.

V. 5—9. In this passage, the apostle notifies and explains his purpose of coming to visit them; concerning which, observe,

1. His purpose; he intended to pass out of Asia, where he now was, see v. 8—19. and to go through Macedonia into Achaia, where Corinth was, and to stay some time with them, and perhaps the winter, v. 5, 6. No wonder Paul was willing to see Corinth, and stay with them as long as the other duties of his office would permit. Though some despised him, and made a faction against him, doubtless many loved him tenderly, and paid him all the respect due to an apostle, and their spiritual father. And is it any wonder he should be willing to visit them, and stay with them! And as to the rest, who now showed disrespect, he might hope to bring them to a better temper, and thereby rectify what was out of order in the church, by staying among them for some time. It is plain he hoped for some good effect, because he says he intended to stay, that they might bring him on his journey, whithersoever he went, v. 6. i. e. furnish him for it, help and encourage him to it. He is to be understood, of being brought forward in his journey after a godly sort, as expressed 3 John v. 6. so that nothing might be wanting to him, as himself speaks, Tit. 3:13.

2. His excuse for not seeing them now; because it would be *only by the way*, v. 7. a transient visit; but another time he could tarry longer.

3. The limitation of this purpose, v. 7. It is to be understood, not of a purpose proceeding from any extraordinary motion or impulse of the Spirit of *God*, but of a com-

necessary, without any trouble in soliciting [petty] contributions. If this [what each contributed] was kept apart by each person, till wanted, so that none knew what others gave, ostentation and corrupt emulation would be far more effectually excluded, than if each brought his contribution to the common stock every week, and so a public account was taken of it. It was especially needful, that this precaution should be taken at Corinth, where ostentation and emulation greatly prevailed; and it is evident, that the apostle intended, as much as possible, to leave every one, in this respect, to determine for himself, before *God*, what he ought to do; that none might give more than he could properly spare, or than he was from proper motives inclined to, either to acquire applause, or to escape censure and contempt.—The argument from this passage for the observance of the first day of the week, as 'the Lord's day,' the Christian Sabbath, is very conclusive; for, unless that were the custom in apostolical churches, why should 'the first day of the week' be mentioned in this connexion? 'On Sunday,' says Justin Martyr, 'all Christians, in the city or country, meet together, because that is the day of our Lord's resurrection; and then we read the writings of the prophets and apostles. This being done, the president makes an oration to the assembly, exhorting them to imitate and do the things which they have heard. then we all join in prayer, and after that we celebrate the sacrament.' *Whitby. In. 20:19—23. Acts 20:7—12, v. 7. Rev. 1:9—11, v. 10.*

(1.) Collection.] 'Or contribution, lit. *gleaning*: the word would thus hint to them, that it was but a slight *gleaning*, and so not burdensome to any individual. *Saints.*] *Hagious*,—simply, Christians. These were (as we learn from other quarters) the Christians in Palestine (and such collections for poor and learned Palestine *Jews* had been in frequent use), who, living among such bitter persecutors as were the *Jews*, were often spoiled of their property, or, at least, were, in many ways, impeded in their endeavors to gain a livelihood. See *Zorn*; and on the *Jews'* mode of distributing alms, see *Fitr., Corpz., &c. Given order.*] The Gr. simply implies,—directed, enjoined, appointed, ordained, by ecclesiastical authority.' BLOOMER.

(2.) 'The *Jews* (so *Grot.*) made collections in the week, and distributed them on the Sabbath. *Whit.* truly observes, that this text evidences that the first day of the week was particularly set apart by the Christians for sacred purposes. So *Just. Mar.*, Apol. 1, 93, 99. ed. Thirlby. *Ign. ad Magnes.* § 9. *Clem. Alex.*, Strom., p. 744, ed. Luet. *Orig.*, contra Cels. 8. p. 392. ed. Spencer.' *Bl. Lay by.*] 'Any one is sooner persuaded to contribute small sums often, than a great deal at once; and thus, too, the excellent moral habit of giving is gained, by benevo-

lence being more often exercised; so that it is for our own good, also, that we still have 'the poor always with us,' it being 'better to give than receive.' 'Every Jew who wished to be of any esteem,' says *Schoettl.*, 'kept a certain purse, or little bag, in which he laid up alms. Bp. Pearce thinks the Christians' layings up were weekly, and the contributions to the common treasury monthly.' *Bl. Ed.*

V. 3, 4. Everything having been previously arranged, the apostle, when he arrived at Corinth, would send with the bounty of the Corinthians such persons as they approved, and would recommend by their letters. Or, joining the words, 'by letters,' with the latter cl., whomsoever they approved, the apostle would send, with letters from himself, to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem; but if it was thought more satisfactory to all concerned, he himself would accompany the messengers 2 Cor. 8:16—24.

(3.) 'Them with letters will I send.' See *Bl.*

(4.) 'If the sum collected be considerable enough, or any other occasion require it, I will accompany them.' JASPER.

V. 5—9. Perhaps he intended to sail from Ephesus to Corinth first; then, after a short stay, to go into Macedonia, and afterwards return to winter there. It is evident, from the concluding salutation, that the apostle wrote this epistle from Ephesus, though the spurious addition at the close dates it from Philippi. It is probable, that the tumult made at Ephesus by Demetrius, hastened the apostle's departure; (*Notes, Acts 19:21—41.*) and his plan seems, in other respects, to have been circumstantially deranged. (2) *Pentecost.*] 'It therefore was the following Pentecost that he hastened to be at Jerusalem. *Acts. 20:16.*' *Whitby.* SCOTT.

(5.) 'He intends to pass through Macedonia in his way to Corinth, and after having left it. The whole sentence is idiotical or popular.—Of this journey Luke makes no mention in Acts, for what is mentioned 20:3. can have no reference thereto. On this question see Est., Lightf., Beza, Grot., &c., who, however, bring nothing to any certainty. Probably there was nothing material to record, it being one merely of ordinary visitation and spiritual confirmation.' BLOOMER.

(6.) *That ye may.*] I. e. 'And ye shall.' See *Bl.*, who, with *Chrys.* and *Ec.*, takes the phraseology to be expressive of persuasive familiarity, —fond and great affection. 'It may be proper to observe, that this sending, and in some degree accompanying forward the teachers of Christianity, was an established custom, in the first ages, and especially when the stay was of any duration.' *Bl. Comp. Bush.* on Ac. 10:23. where it is shown to be still a part of the affectionate manners of the east. *Ed.*



8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.

9 For a great <sup>f</sup> door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are* many <sup>g</sup> adversaries.

10 Now if Timotheus <sup>h</sup> come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh <sup>i</sup> the work of the Lord, as I also *do*.

11 Let no man therefore despise <sup>j</sup> him: but conduct <sup>k</sup> him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.

[Practical Observations.]

12 As touching *our* brother <sup>l</sup> Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.

13 Watch <sup>m</sup> ye, stand <sup>n</sup> fast in the faith, quit you like <sup>o</sup> men, be <sup>p</sup> strong.

f 2 Co. 2:12. i Phi. 2:19-22. m 1 Pe. 5:8.  
Re. 3:3. j 1 Ti. 4:12. n 2 Th. 2:15.  
g Phi. 3:18. k 3 Ja. 6. o c. 14:20.  
h Ac. 19:22. l c. 1:12. p Ep. 6:10.

mon purpose, formed in his own spirit. And concerning all our purposes, it is fit we should say, 'We will execute them, if the Lord permit.' We should say, *If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this and that*, Ja. 4:15. Heathens have concurred in acknowledging this concern of Providence in all our actions and concerns: surely we should readily own it, and seriously attend to it.

4. His purpose expressed, of staying at Ephesus for the present, till Pentecost, v. 8. It is very probable he was, at the time of writing this epistle, in Ephesus, from this passage, compared with v. 19. where he says, *The churches of Asia salute you*. A proper salutation from Ephesus, but hardly had he been at Philippi, in Macedonia, as the subscription to this epistle, in our common copies, has it. '*The churches of Macedonia*' had then been much more proper.

5. The reason for his staying at Ephesus for the present, v. 9. great success among them, and a fair prospect of more. There were many adversaries, because a great

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-11. It is incumbent on ministers to exhort their people to liberal charity, especially towards their brethren in Christ, and to direct them in the best way of collecting and applying their contributions—Those weekly collections, therefore, which are made by several excellent societies, and, blessed be God, are becoming more and more general; in which even poor mechanics and laborers, nay children, by the constant payment of trivial contributions, raise annually large sums for the relief of the sick and destitute, and for aiding the distribution of the Scriptures, and the cause of missions into all regions, cannot be too warmly recommended. Thus habits of the best and most useful kind are formed, which conduce eventually likewise to their own temporal comfort and benefit, while an excellent example is exhibited, and the rich are excited to a proportionable liberality. May such societies be established in all the churches of Christ!—Ministers ought not readily to leave those places, in which 'great and effectual

(9.) Door.] A Hebraism, used by the rabbins. See Schoett. *Effectual*.] Full of employment. 'There was opportunity for effecting great things, and accordingly a celebrated church was founded at Ephesus; and from Eph., it would seem, there was less to correct in this than in other churches written to.' See Bl., Ed. 'Kr. and Ros. think P. adverts to what is mentioned, Ac. 19:1-5, of the disciples of John, of the separating of the Christians from the Jews, v. 9. &c. and of the favor of certain Asiarchs, v. 31. Mackn. obs., that about the time this letter was written, P.'s success was greater than common; for many who used *curious arts*, the arts of magic and divination, were converted, and burned their books, containing the secrets of these arts, Ac. 19:17-20, which so enraged the idolaters at Ephesus, but especially the craftsmen, that they raised the great tumult described in Ac. 19:23-41.' Bl.

V. 10, 11. Probably Timothy returned to Ephesus, before Paul was driven thence.—'We infer that Timothy was not sent with the epistle, for had he been the bearer of the letter, would St. Paul in that letter have said, "If Timothy come?"... If he was with the apostle, when he wrote the letter, could he say... "I look for him with the brethren?"... Timothy was sent forth upon his journey before the letter was written; but he might not reach Corinth till after the letter arrived there. Acts 19:21.' Paley. (11) *With the brethren*.] Either those who had accompanied Timothy into Macedonia, or some whom the apostle expected from Corinth. Scott.

(10.) *Without fear*.] 'Unmolestedly. Grot., &c., refer to the scorn of the wealthy, the contempt of the learned, the perverse opposition of

door, and an effectual, was opened; but great success in the work of the Gospel commonly creates many enemies. The devil opposes those most, and makes them most trouble, who most heartily and successfully set themselves to destroy his kingdom. Some think he alludes, in this passage, to the custom of the Roman circus, and the doors of it, at which the charioteers were to enter, as their antagonists did at the opposite doors. True courage is whetted by opposition; and it is no wonder the Christian courage of the apostle should be animated by the zeal of his adversaries. Success will give life and vigor to a minister, though enemies rage, and blaspheme, and persecute. It is not the opposition of enemies, but the hardness and obstinacy of his hearers, and the backslidings and revolt of professors, that damp a faithful minister, and break his heart.

V. 10-12. In this passage,

1. He recommends Timothy to them, in several particulars. As, (1.) He bids them take care that he should be among them without fear, v. 10. Timothy was sent by the apostle to correct abuses among them; they were all in factions, and, no doubt, mutual strife and hatred ran very high among them; some were very rich, probably, and many very proud, on account both of their wealth and spiritual gifts. It was reasonable, therefore, to think young Timothy might be roughly used; hence the apostle warns them against using him ill. Christians should bear faithful reproof from their ministers, and not terrify and discourage them from doing their duty. (2.) He warns them against despising him, v. 11. He was but a young man, and alone, as Œcumenius observes. Not that he distrusted Timothy, but a caution was but too necessary for the Corinthians. Note, Christians should be very careful not to condemn any, but especially the faithful ministers of Christ. These, whether young or old, are to be had in high esteem for their work's sake. (3.) He tells them they should give him all due encouragement; and, as an evidence of this, they should send him away in friendship, and well prepared for his journey back again to Paul. This, as I have above observed, is the meaning of bringing him on his journey in peace, v. 11. [Comp. on Ac. 10:23.] Faithful ministers are not only to be well

received by a people among whom they may for a season minister, but are to be sent away with due respect.

2. He assigns the reasons why they should behave thus towards Timothy. (1.) He was employed in the same work as Paul, and acted in it by the same authority, v. 10. therefore to vex his spirit, would be to grieve the Holy Spirit; to despise him, would be to despise Him that sent him; not Paul, but Paul's Lord and theirs. (2.) Another reason is implied; as they were to esteem him for his work's sake, so also for Paul's sake, who had sent him to Corinth; not of his own errand, indeed, but to work the work of the Lord, v. 11. Paul might expect from the Corinthians, that a messenger from him, on such an errand, should be regarded, and well treated. 'I and the brethren expect his return, wait for the report he is to make; and therefore do not use him ill, but respect him, regard his message, and let him return in peace.'

3. He informs them of Apollos' purpose to see them. (1.) Though one party among them had declared for Apollos, against Paul, if that passage is to be understood literally, ch. 4:6. yet Paul did not hinder Apollos from going to Corinth in his own absence, nay, he pressed him to go thither. He had no suspicions of Apollos, as if he would lessen Paul's interest and respect among them, to the advancement of his own. Note, Faithful ministers are not apt to entertain jealousies of each other, or suspect self-designs. True charity and brotherly love think no evil. (2.) Apollos could not be prevailed on, for the present, to come, but would at a more convenient season. When Paul's epistle to them, and Timothy's ministry among them, had reduced them to a right temper, he might conclude a visit would be more proper. But as it is, Paul signifies his great regard to the church of Corinth, when they had used him ill, by entreating Apollos to go to them; and Apollos shows his respect to Paul, and his concern to keep up his character and authority, by declining the journey till the Corinthians were in better temper. It is very becoming the ministers of the Gospel, to have and manifest a concern for each other's reputation and usefulness.

V. 13-18. I. The apostle gives some

doors are opened to them,' even though there be many adversaries; nay, this circumstance may often render it more incumbent on them to continue in their post, though dangerous and difficult; that they may establish and encourage the weak or wavering. Neh. 6:10-14. Acts 6:1-6.—It is wonderful, that those who attend on the work of the Lord, in the most faithful manner, should have cause for fear, even among professors of the Gospel, or be in danger of being despised and disquieted by them. Yet the prevalence of party, the influence of corrupt teachers, or the infection of antinomian principles, frequently produce this effect; especially when those who are required to 'reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all authority,' are young, diffident, or deficient in external accomplishments. But senior ministers should use their influence to repress this spirit; that their faithful young brethren may be secured from contempt, enabled to do their work in peace, and receive due kindness from those among whom they labor. Scott.

the schismatics (especially the anti-Pauline faction), and such other impulses as, being a young man, he might experience.' *Worketh, &c.*] 'He is as much a divinely commissioned minister of God, as myself.' Bl.

(11.) *Brethren*.] 'Grot. understands, others who had gone on the journey to Corinth (through Macedonia), with Timothy, namely, (as Mackn.) Erastus, who had been sent with Timothy to Corinth, Ac. 19:22, and Titus, who carried this letter, and another brother, whose name is not mentioned; (see 2 Cor. 12:17, 18.) perhaps, also, some of the Corinthian brethren, whom P. had desired Titus to bring with him to Ephesus, having need of their assistance there.' Ib.

V. 12. *Brethren*.] 'The Latin comrs. are of opinion, that Apollos, displeased with the behavior of the faction, had left them, as incorrigible, and had returned to Ephesus, from whence he had been recommended to the brethren of Achaia, Ac. 18:24, 27. 19:1. But the messengers from Corinth, arriving with a letter to P., full of respect, he answered it by Titus, and requested Apollos to accompany him, in the hope that he might be useful in assisting Titus to settle the disturbances in that church. But Apollos refused to go, knowing the violent temper of the faction.' Mackn. 'Kr. and Ros., regard the opinion as highly probable, but yet not certain. It is, I think, little less than certain. *His will, &c.*] Lit. there was not, upon the whole, to him an inclination to go now. The Latin fathers, as Hilary, and Jerome, have preserved a tradition, that Apollos did afterwards visit the Corinthian church, when the religious differences had been settled.' Ib.

V. 13. *Be strong*.] '*Kratiousthai*: an agonistic metaphor; lit. to



14 Let all your things be done with charity.

15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)

16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboreth.

17 I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.

18 For they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.

19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

20 All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

21 The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand.

q 1 Pe. 4:8. t Phi. 2:30. v Ac. 13:26.  
r Ro. 16:5. u 1 Th. 5:12. w Ro. 16:5,15.  
s He. 13:17.

general advices; as, 1. That they should watch, v. 13. be wakeful and on their guard. This a Christian should always do, and sometimes especially. The Corinthians were in manifest danger on many accounts: their feuds ran high; the irregularities among them were very great; there were deceivers got among them, who endeavored to corrupt their faith in the most important articles,—those, without which the practice of virtue and piety could never subsist. And, surely, in such dangerous circumstances, it was their concern to watch. Note, If a Christian would be secure, he must be on his guard; and the more his danger, the greater vigilance is needful for his security. 2. He advises them to stand fast in the faith, to adhere to the revelation of God, and not give it up for the wisdom of the world, nor suffer it to be corrupted by it; maintaining the faith, even to death; and so abide in it, and feel and yield to its influence. A Christian should be fixed in the faith of the Gospel, and never desert or renounce it. By faith alone, he will be able to keep his ground in an hour of temptation: by faith we stand, 2 Cor. 1:24. and by that we must overcome the world, 1 Jn. 5:4. both when it fawns and when it frowns; when it tempts, and when it terrifies. We must stand, therefore, in the faith of the Gospel, if we would main-

tain our integrity. 3. He advises them to act like men, and be strong; 'Be manly, firm, resolved, in opposition to the bad men who would divide and corrupt you; be not terrified or inveigled by them; but show yourselves men in Christ, by your steadiness, sound judgment, and firm resolution.' Christians should be manly and firm in all their contests with their enemies, in defending their faith, and maintaining their integrity, especially in those points of faith that lie at the foundation of sound and practical religion, such as were attacked among the Corinthians: these must be maintained with solid judgment, and strong resolution. 4. He advises them to do everything in charity, v. 14. When the apostle would have us play the man for our faith and religion, he puts in a caution against playing the devil for it: the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God, Ja. 1:21. Note, Christians should be careful that charity not only reign in their hearts, but shine out in their lives, nay, in their most manly defences of the Gospel. There is a great difference between constancy and cruelty, between Christian firmness and feverish wrath and transport. Christianity never appears to so much advantage, as when the charity of Christians is most conspicuous; when they can bear with their mistaken brethren, and oppose the open enemies of their holy faith, in love; when everything is done in charity; when they behave towards one another, and towards all men, with a spirit of meekness and good-will.

II. He gives some particular directions how they should behave toward some that had been eminently servicable to the cause of Christ among them.

1. He gives us their character. (1.) The household of Stephanas; and their character is, that they were the first-fruits of Achaia; the first converts to Christianity in that region of Greece in which Corinth was. Note, It is an honorable character to any man, to be early a Christian. They had, moreover, addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints; not to the ministry of the Word, properly, but to serving them in other respects, both in their temporal and spiritual concerns. The family of Stephanas seems to have been a family of rank and importance; and it is an honor to such to devote themselves to the service of the saints. (2.) He mentions Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus, as coming to him from the church of Corinth, and supplying the deficiencies of the church toward him, and, by so doing, refreshing his spirits and theirs, v. 17, 18. They gave him a more perfect account of the state of the church than he had had by letter, and he had been made more easy by converse with them. It is a great refreshment to the spirit of a faithful minister, to bear better of a people by wise and good

men of their own body, than by common report; and the greater value he has for those who give him this information, and the more he can depend on their truth, the greater is his joy.

2. On this account of the men, he directs how they should behave toward them; and, (1.) He would have them acknowledged, v. 18. i. e. owned and respected. They deserve it for their good offices. They who discover so good a spirit, cannot easily be overvalued. (2.) He advises, that they should submit themselves to such, and to all who helped with the apostles, and labored, v. 16. This is not to be understood of subjection to proper superiors, but of a voluntary acknowledgment of their worth. They were persons to whom they owed peculiar respect, and whom they should have in veneration. Note, It is a venerable character they bear, who serve the saints, and labor hard to help the success of the Gospel; who countenance and encourage the faithful ministers of Christ, and endeavor to promote their usefulness. Such should be had in honorable esteem.

V. 19—24. The apostle closes his epistle,

I. With salutations to the church of Corinth: first, from those of Asia, from Priscilla and Aquila, (who seem to have been, at this time, inhabitants of Ephesus, Acts 17:26.) with the church in their house, v. 19. and from all the brethren, v. 20. at Ephesus, where, it is highly probable, at least, he then was. Christianity does by no means destroy civility and good manners. Paul could find room, in an epistle treating of very important matters, to send the salutations of friends. Some of these salute them much in the Lord; for Christian salutations are not empty compliments. We read, also, of a church in a private family, v. 19. It is very probable the family itself is called the church in their house. Every Christian family should, in some respects, be a Christian church. To these salutations he subjoins, 1. An advice, that they should greet one another with a holy kiss, v. 20. or with sincere good-will,—a tacit reproof of their feuds and factions. Note, The love of the brethren should be a powerful incentive to mutual love. When the other churches of Christ love us all, we are very culpable, if we do not love one another. 2. He subjoins his own salutation, v. 21. His amanuensis, it is reasonable to think, wrote the rest of his epistle from his mouth; but, at the close, it was fit that himself should sign it, that they might know it to be genuine; therefore it is added, 2 Thess. 3:17. Which is my token in every epistle; the mark of its being genuine; so he wrote in every epistle which he did not wholly pen, as he did that to the Galatians, Gal. 6:11. Note, Those churches to whom apostolical letters were sent, were duly certified of their being authentic and divine.

string up one's nerves, so our word strength, corresponding to *kratos*, comes from the verb to string. And so the Heb. *chzq*, strength, from *chzq*, to string. Thus a strong man is one whose nerves are well strung.

BLOOMF.

V. 14. 'It is deserving of remark, that exhortations to constancy in doctrine are often, as here, followed up with an admonition to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.'

Id.

V. 15. 'Now, I entreat you, brethren, that for as much as ye know that the family of Stephanas is, &c. It seems that all the members of this invaluable family, devoted themselves to the ministering to the wants, and promoting the comfort of all their fellow Christians, whether strangers or countrymen.' Bl. A popular writer remarks, 'When our family communities are perfectly organized, the millennium will have come.' See 'Live and Let Live.' Comp. note, end of Mal. Ed.

V. 16. Submit.] 'Show them all due reverence, deference, and respect.' Grot. Lacking, &c.] 'Gave me by their converse, and friendly offices, that consolation which I might justly have expected from you all, had I enjoyed an opportunity of conversing with you.' DoDD.

V. 17. Fortunatus is mentioned by Clemens Rom. long after, as the bearer of his epistle from Rome to the church at Corinth; but it is not certain or even probable that the same person was intended. SCOTT.

V. 19, 20. Rom. 16:5—16, 21—23.—Aquila and Priscilla had returned to Rome, before the apostle wrote to the Christians in that city. Rom. 16:3, 4. Id.

(19.) 'It is strange, that most moderns, as Ham., Erasm., Beza, Est., Menoch., Grot., Dodd., Whit., and recently Kr., should explain this of "all the Christians in their family." Grot. thinks it may signify, "a

family, consisting wholly of Christian converts," as the jailer's house, Ac. 16:31, 32. and that of Crispus, 18:8. "When it was otherwise, (says Whit.) and the family were not entirely converted, P. alters his style, speaking of 'them of his household,' Rom. 16:10, 11. Phil. 4:22. or 'those that are with them,' Rom. 16:14, 15." But this mode of interpretation is manifestly harsh and improbable. And it is quite gratuitous to add, (as does Dodd.) "for you know their family is happy, in a large number of Christian converts." Far more natural is the sense assigned by Chrys., and all the Gr. comtrs., and, of the moderns, Mede, Wells, Pearce, Slade, and Jaspis, namely, "the congregation that was accustomed to meet for divine worship, at their house:" [for it is not probable the Christians were yet allowed to build churches.] And this sense has the advantage of including the other. See on Rom. 16:5. Bl. (20.) Kiss.] 'Still a usual salutation, even with males in S. Europe. It may be referred to the general Oriental, and especially Jewish custom, thus illustrated by Schoett. "The custom of kissing was so common among the Jews, as to become a salute of daily politeness. This the SS. everywhere show. But the primitive Christians, as often as their assemblies were dismissed, kissed one another, in sign of concord and charity." Rightly, says Grot., was the kiss of peace enjoined on those, who were now in so much danger of being torn asunder by schisms.'

V. 21—24. Some Jewish usages are supposed to be referred to; but the above [as in Henry] is the undoubted meaning of the passage. 'When the Jews lost the power of life and death, they used nevertheless to pronounce an *anathema* on persons, who, according to the Mosaic law, should have been executed; and such a person became an *anathe-*



22 If any man love <sup>x</sup>not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be <sup>y</sup>anathema <sup>z</sup>maranatha.

23 The grace <sup>a</sup>of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¶ The first *epistle* to the Corinthians was written from Philippi by Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and Timotheus.

x Ep. 6:24. y Ga. 1:3,9. z Jude 14, 15. a Ro. 16:20.

II. With a very solemn warning to them, especially their seducers and corrupters, v. 22. We sometimes need words of threatening, that we may fear. Holy fear is a very good friend, both to holy faith and holy living. And how much reason have all Christians to fear falling under this doom! *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maran-atha.* I. Professed Christians will, by contempt of Christ, and revolt from Him, bring on themselves the most dreadful destruction. Some understand

PRACT. OBS. V. 12—24. The zealous servants of Christ are commonly haraonious among themselves, even when their injudicious hearers place them in competition with each other.—Exhortations to vigilance, constancy in duty, steadfastness in the faith, and mutual love, can never be unseasonable. We should also willingly submit to those, who are experienced and mature in the faith of Christ, or who labor to promote that cause, for which the apostles spent and laid down their lives.—Christians, though divided by seas and mountains, and though they disapprove of some things in each other's creed or practice, will yet cordially love and pray for one another. But they, who 'love not the Lord Jesus Christ,' can be Christians only in name, and they must certainly

ma; . . . and to express their faith, that God would in one way or other interpose to add that efficacy to his own sentence, which they could not give it, it is very probable that they might use the word *Maran-atha*, i. e. in Syriac, "The Lord cometh;" and He will put the sentence in execution." *Doddr.*

the words as they lie, in their plain and obvious meaning, for such as are without holy and sincere affection for the Lord Jesus Christ. There are many Christians in name, who do not love Christ Jesus the Lord in sincerity. But can anything be more criminal or provoking? Not love the most glorious Lover in the world! 2. 'Let such a person lie under the heaviest and most dreadful curse. Let him be separated from the people of God, from the favor of God, and delivered up to his final, irrevocable, and inexorable vengeance.' *Maran-atha* is a Syriac phrase, and signifies *The Lord cometh.* That very Lord whom they do not love, to whom they are inwardly and really disaffected, whatever outward profession they make, He is coming to execute judgment. And to be exposed to his wrath, to be divided to his left hand, to be condemned by Him,—how dreadful! If He will destroy, who can save? Those who fall under his condemning sentence, must perish, and that for ever, *Jn. 3:26.*

III. The apostle closes all with his good wishes, and expressions of good-will. I. With his good wishes, v. 23. As much as if he had said, 'Though I warn you against

falling under his displeasure, I heartily wish you an interest in his dearest love, and his eternal favor.' The most solemn warnings are the result of the tenderest affection and the greatest good-will. We may tell our brethren and friends, with great plainness and pathos, that, if they love not the Lord Jesus Christ, they must perish, while we heartily wish the grace of Christ may be with them. Note, also, How much true Christianity enlarges our hearts; it makes us wish those whom we love, the blessings of both worlds; for this is implied in wishing the grace of Christ to be with them. And therefore it is no wonder that he adds, 2. The declaration of his love to them, in Christ Jesus, v. 24. He had dealt very plainly with them, told them of their faults with just severity; but to show that he was not transported with passion, he makes solemn profession of his love to them, nay, to them all in Christ Jesus, i. e. for Christ's sake. We should love all men, and wish them well, and do them what good is in our power; but *they* must have our dearest affection, who are dear to Christ, and lovers of Him. May our love be with all them who are in Christ Jesus! Amen.

abide under an awful curse, which the Lord when He cometh will execute. *P. O. Mat. 25:41—46.* Our obligations to the divine Savior, and our reasons for loving Him, are infinite; yet many, who are called by his name, who profess his truth, nay, who preach his Gospel, are strangers to this holy love, and only seek their own advantage, credit, ease, or pleasure, in their religious performances. Let us then call ourselves to account in this matter, and not be satisfied with any religion, which does not include and express the supreme love of Christ, earnest desires of his salvation, gratitude for his mercies, zeal for his glory, and obedience to his commandments. *SCOTT.*

(22) 'The Jews began with the words *Anathema Maran-atha*, their greater excommunication, whereby they not only excluded sinners from their society, [and the charities of life,] but delivered them up to the divine *Cherem*, or Anathema, i. e. eternal perdition.' *MACKN.*

#### ADDITIONAL NOTE.—CHRISTIAN UNION.

The sectarianism Paul noticed with great grief and displeasure among the primitive Christians, needs now also to be noticed in the churches, who are invited prayerfully to consider the following extract from a

'*Fraternal Appeal to the American Churches, together with a Plan for Catholic Union on Apostolical Principles.*'

'When the sincere and unsophisticated Christian contemplates the image of the church as delineated both in its theory and practice by the Savior and his apostles, he is charmed by the delightful spirit of unity and brotherly love by which it is characterized,—[growing up into Him in all things which is the Head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love.] When he hears the beloved disciple declare "God is love, and they that dwell in love dwell in God;" and again, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love;" and again, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.—If any man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from His, that he who loveth God, love his brother also."—When the Christian listens to such declarations as these, and numerous others of similar import; when, forgetting things as they exist around him, he brings his whole soul under the influence of this love to God and the brethren; he perceives the moral beauty of these sentiments, and finds his heart vibrate in delightful unison with them. But when he awakes from this fascinating dream, and beholds the body of Christ rent into different divisions, separately organized, professing different creeds, denouncing each other as in error, and oftentimes, hating and being hated; his spirit is grieved within him, and he asks, how can these things be among brethren? In the sacred record he looks in vain for the sectarian parties which now constitute all that is seen of the church of the Redeemer; he finds nothing there of Lutherans, of Presbyterians, of Methodists, of Episcopians, of Baptists. But he sees, that when the formation of such parties was attempted at Corinth, Paul deemed it necessary to write them a long letter, and besought them, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to have no divisions among them. The Christian is, therefore, constrained to mourn over the desolations of Zion, and to meet the solemn inquiry, cannot a balm be found for the ulcerous divisions which deface the body of Christ?

'Let us premise, as admitted, that,

a) There must necessarily be *different forms* of worship; and

b) *Different congregations*, as in the apostle's days.

c) That all the several denominations termed orthodox, which are but clusters of such different congregations, are parts of the true, visible church of Christ; because, in the conscientious judgment of all enlightened Christians, they hold the essentials of the gospel-scheme of faith and practice; and secondly, because the Savior Himself has acknowledged them as such by the seal of his grace and Spirit. "When James, Cephas, and John perceived the *grace that was given to me*," says Paul, (Gal. 2:9) "they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship." And where is the bigot, who, at the present day, would claim his to be the only true church, and thus repudiate all others as synagogues of Satan?

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d) These denominations hold dissentient views on some non-essential points; but the pretension, that any one is right in all things, and all others in error so far as they diverge from this one, is highly improbable in itself, is forbidden by Christian humility, by a knowledge of human nature, and by the amount of talent, learning, and piety, in all the several churches: hence some error, in all probability, is an attribute of each sect.

e) Finally, we premise, that ministers and laymen, though pious, are fallible, are sanctified but in part, and liable to temptation from secular motives and feelings, even in things pertaining to the Redeemer's kingdom. Hence, they are all under obligation (and let the reader and writer feel deeply impressed with this), to review their course of thought and action, and ought to be willing, for the glory of their God and Savior, to retrace and amend whatever may be found amiss.

Being, then, all more or less in error, is it right that these diversities should sever the bond of fraternal love, that unity, reading Christ's body into parts? Should not Christians then endeavor to heal these divisions, and promote unity among all whom they profess to regard as disciples of Christ? The will of our Master will become apparent to us while we successively consider,

I. *The Scriptural injunctions.*

II. *The example of the apostles and primitive Christians.*

III. *The consequences which these divisions produce.*

1. 'The church of Corinth had been planted by Paul, watered by Apollos, and blessed by Him, from whom alone can come any genuine increase. In it however there appeared symptoms of the spirit of sectarianism, an attempt to introduce different sects or religious denominations into the church of Christ, ranged under different leaders, such as Paul, Apollos, Peter, Luther, Calvin, Zuingli, or Wesley; and what are the feelings of the noble-minded Paul? "I beseech you," such is his powerful and decided testimony against the spirit of sectarianism, "I beseech you by (the hope you cherish through) the Lord Jesus Christ (by his suffering, his blood), that there be no schisms (*schismata*) or sects among you . . . Is Christ (i. e. the body of Christ) divided? Was Paul (or either of those whose names ye assume, and whom ye wish to place at the side of Christ, as leaders or heads of the church) crucified for you? Or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" (or of Apollos, or of Peter, so that ye were received into *their* church, and not into the church of Christ.) . . .

'The apostle does not even introduce into his argument their points of diversity. . . . The simple facts, that they were baptized into Christ, and into Christ alone, i. e. were members of the church in good standing, and that Christ must not be divided, are the only arguments he deems requisite to prove the impropriety of their divisions, and of their assumption of different names. He would have them Christians and nothing but Christians; not Paulian Christians, nor Apolline, nor Cephaic, nor Lutheran, nor Calvinistic, nor Wesleyan Christians, not because he had any antipathy to Apollos or Peter; but because any such divisions, based on difference of opinions or personal attachments, naturally tended to rend asunder the body of Christ. . . . He therefore distinctly forbids the cutting up of those whom he would acknowledge as Christians at all, into different parties or sects. And this he does even by anticipation, for, in all probability, these parties had not yet fully separated from one another, nor renounced ecclesiastical inter-communication. . . .

(Continued on p. 354.)



AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
SECOND EPISTLE OF  
PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. D. Mayo.)

IN his former epistle, the apostle had signified his intentions of coming to Corinth, as he passed through Macedonia, *ch. 16: 6.* but being providentially hindered for some time, he writes his second epistle to them about a year after the former; and there seem to be these two great urgent occasions: 1. The ease of the incestuous person, who lay under censure, required that with all speed he should be restored and received again into communion. This, therefore, he gives directions about, *ch. 2.* and afterward, *ch. 7.* he declares the satisfaction he had on the intelligence he received of their good behavior in that affair. 2. There was a contribution now making for the poor saints at Jerusalem, which he exhorts the Corinthians to join in, *ch. 8, 9.\**

There are divers other things very observable in this epistle: I. The account the apostle gives of his labors and success in preaching the Gospel in several places, *ch. 2.* II. The comparison he makes between the Old and New Test. dispensation, *ch. 3.* III. The manifold sufferings he and his fellow-laborers met with, and the motives and encouragements for their diligence and patience, *ch. 4, 5.* IV. The caution he gives the Corinthians against mingling themselves with unbelievers, *ch. 6.* V. The way and manner in which he justifies himself and his apostleship from the opprobrious insinuations and accusations of false teachers, who endeavored to ruin his reputation at Corinth, *ch. 10—12.* and throughout the whole epistle. †

Having heard by Titus, that his first epistle had produced very good effects on many of the Corinthians, ‡ Paul wrote this also, in order to prepare the way more completely for his visit to them; and probably sent it immediately by Titus and some others who accompanied him. 2:12, 13. 7:5—7. — These epistles may appear, to some readers, less interesting than several others, because they mainly refer to the peculiar circumstances of the Corinthian church; but, in fact, they are the more instructive on that very account; || as directions and admonitions, suited to many of the more ordinary incidents of life, are communicated by them; which could not have been so advantageously adduced, in a more general discourse on the great doctrines and duties of Christianity.

HENRY.

SCOTT.

\* In it he justified himself from the charge of levity, or worldly policy, in delaying his journey to Corinth; and assigned those reasons for this part of his conduct, which could not have been disclosed with propriety, till the effect of his former epistle had appeared. *Note, 1:15—24.* He also gave directions respecting the restoration of the incestuous person, who had been excommunicated. 2. He then expatiated on his own conduct in the Christian ministry; intermixing many exhortations with the avowal of his motives and fervent affections, in his sacred work. 3:—7. With great address and earnestness, he recommended to them the collections for the poor Christians at Jerusalem, and showed the manifold advantages of such services. 8:9. At length, he more directly, yet evidently with great reluctance, contrasted his own gifts, labors, sufferings, and conduct, with the pretences of their false teachers; and showed himself 'not a whit' inferior to any of the apostles. He then concluded with various admonitions and affectionate good wishes or prayers. 10:—13.

SCOTT.

† The most remarkable circumstance in this epistle, is the confidence of the apostle in the goodness of his cause, and in the power of God to bear him out in it. Opposed, as he then was, by a powerful and sagacious party, whose authority, reputation, and interest were deeply concerned, and who were ready to seize on everything which could discredit him, it is wonderful to hear him so firmly insist on his apostolical authority, and so unreservedly appeal to the miraculous powers, which he had exercised and conferred at Corinth. So far from shrinking from the contest, as afraid of some discovery being made, unfavorable to himself, or to the common cause, he, with great modesty and meekness, indeed, but with equal boldness and decision, expressly declares, that his opposers and despisers were 'the ministers of Satan;' and menaces to inflict on them miraculous judgments, when as many of their deluded hearers had been brought to repentance, and re-established in the faith, as should in a reasonable time be influenced by the use of proper means. It is inconceivable that a stronger internal testimony, not only of integrity, but of divine inspiration, can exist. Had there been anything of imposture among the Christians, it was next to impossible, but such a conduct must have occasioned the disclosure of it.

ID.

‡ To understand this epistle rightly, the reader must recollect, that as Titus spent some time in Corinth, after delivering the apostle's first letter, he had opportunity to make himself acquainted, not only with the state of the sincere part of the church, but with the temper and behavior of the faction. Wherefore, when he gave the apostle an account of the good disposition of the church, he, no doubt, at the same time informed him concerning the faction, that some of them still continued in their opposition to him, and in their attachment to the false teacher; and that that impostor was going on in his evil practices. Farther, Titus, by conversing with the faction, having learned the arguments and objections by which their leaders endeavored to lessen the apostle's authority, together with the scoffing speeches which they used, to bring him into contempt, we may believe that he rehearsed all these matters to him. Being thus made acquainted with the state of the Corinthian church, Paul judged it fit to write to them this second letter. And that it might have the greater weight, he sent it to them by Titus, the bearer of his former epistle. 2 Cor. 8:17, 18.

|| In this second letter, the apostle [with great skill] introduced the arguments, objections, and scoffing speeches, by which the faction were endeavoring to bring him into contempt; and not only confuted them by the most solid reasoning, but even turned them against the false teacher

himself, and against the faction, in such a manner as to render them ridiculous. In short, by the many delicate but pointed ironies with which this epistle abounds, the apostle covered his adversaries with shame, and showed the Corinthians that he excelled in a talent which the Greeks greatly admired.

§ But while Paul thus pointedly derided the faction and its leaders, he bestowed just commendations on the sincere part of the church. . . . And by keeping in mind this fact, that the apostle suits his discourse, now to one, and now to the other, of those opposite characters which composed the Corinthian church, every appearance of inconsistency and contradiction in this epistle will be removed.

MACKNIGHT.

¶ When the apostle sent his first letter to the church at Corinth, he resolved to remain in Ephesus till the following Pentecost, (1 Cor. 16:8.) that Titus, who carried his letter, might have time to return, and bring him an account of the manner in which it was received by the Corinthians. But the riot of Demetrius happening soon after it was sent away, the apostle found it necessary to avoid the fury of the rioters, and of the idolatrous rabble, who were all greatly enraged against him, for having turned so many of the inhabitants of Asia from the established idolatry. Wherefore, leaving Ephesus, he went to Troas, a noted seaport, N. of Ephesus, where travellers, from Europe into Asia, commonly landed. Here he proposed to employ himself in preaching (2 Cor. 2:12.) till Titus should arrive from Corinth. But Titus not coming at the time appointed, Paul began to fear that the Corinthians had used him ill, and had disregarded his letter. These fears so distressed him, that, notwithstanding his preaching at Troas was attended with uncommon success, he left that city, and went forward to Macedonia, expecting to find Titus. But in this he was disappointed. Titus was not in Macedonia when the apostle arrived. He therefore resolved to wait in that country till Titus should come, and inform him how the Corinthians stood affected towards their spiritual father. It seems, he judged it imprudent to visit them till he knew their state. — In Macedonia, Paul had many conflicts with the idolaters, (2 Cor. 7:5) who were greatly enraged against him, as all other idolaters were, for opposing both the objects and rites of their worship. These fightings, joined with his fears for Titus, and his uncertainty concerning the disposition of the Corinthians, exceedingly distressed the apostle at this time. But his meanness was at length happily removed by the arrival of Titus, and the agreeable accounts he brought.

ID.

|| For example, in answering the calumnies by which the faction endeavored to discredit him as an apostle, he was led to mention facts which demonstrate him to have been an apostle, commissioned by Christ, to direct the faith and practice of all the members of the church. Such as his having wrought miracles for converting the Corinthians, and his having imparted to them spiritual gifts after they believed: his having preached the Gospel to them without receiving any reward from them, not even the small reward of maintenance while he preached to them; his having endured innumerable hardships in the long journeys which he undertook, to spread the Gospel, and heavy persecutions in every country, from enemies and opposers, 1 Cor. 4:11, 12. 2 Cor. 4:8. 11:23. His rapture into the third heaven, with a variety of other facts and circumstances respecting himself, which we should not have known, but for the calumnies of the Corinthian faction, and of the Judaizing teachers, who infested the church at Corinth, and other churches, (see Preface to Galatians,) but which, now that they are known, give us the fullest assurance of his apostleship, and add the greatest weight to his writings.

ID.



## CHAP. I.

<sup>9</sup> The apostle encourageth them against troubles, by the comforts and deliverances which God had given him, as in all his afflictions, <sup>8</sup> so particularly in his late danger in Asia. <sup>12</sup> And calling both his own conscience and theirs to witness of his sincere manner of preaching the immutable truth of the Gospel, <sup>15</sup> he excuseth his not coming to them, as proceeding not of lightness, but of his lenity towards them.

**PAUL**, an apostle <sup>a</sup> of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy *our* brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints <sup>b</sup> which are in all Achaia :

2 Grace <sup>c</sup> be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed <sup>d</sup> be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort ;

4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

5 For as the sufferings <sup>e</sup> of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

6 And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for <sup>f</sup> your consolation and salvation, which is <sup>g</sup> effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer : or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation.

7 And our hope of you *is* steadfast, knowing, that as <sup>h</sup> ye are partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye* be also of the consolation.

8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble <sup>i</sup> which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life :

9 But we had the <sup>j</sup> sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust <sup>k</sup> in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead :

10 Who <sup>l</sup> delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver : in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us ;

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. In this introduction, we have,

1. The inscription. Paul, the writer of it, joins Timotheus with himself, dignifying him with the title of *brother*, wherein he shows his humility, and his desire to recommend Timothy, though young, to the esteem of the Corinthians, and give him a reputation among the churches. This epistle was sent to the church of God at Corinth; and not only to them, but also to all the saints in all Achaia, i. e. to all the Christians who lived in the region round about. In Christ Jesus, no distinction is made between the inhabitants of city or country.

2. The salutation, or apostolical benediction, the same as in his former epistle; and therein the apostle desires the two great and comprehensive blessings, grace and peace, for those Corinthians; and both of them from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Procurer and Dispenser of these benefits to fallen man, and is prayed to as God.

V. 3—6. After the foregoing preface, the apostle begins with the narrative of God's goodness to him and his fellow-laborers, in their manifold tribulations; which he speaks of by way of thanksgiving to God, and to advance the divine glory, v. 3—6. and it is fit that, in all things, and in the first place, God be glorified. Observe,

1. The object of the apostle's thanksgiving. (1.) *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* God is the Father of Christ's divine nature by eternal generation; of his human nature by miraculous conception in the womb of the virgin; and of Christ, as God-man, and our Redeemer, by covenant-relation; and in and through Him as Mediator, our God and our Father, Jn. 20: 17. (2.) *The Father of mercies.* There are a multitude of tender mercies in God essentially, and all mercies are from God originally, Mic. 7: 18. (3.) *The God of all comfort; from Him proceedeth the*

COMFORTER, Jn. 15: 26. He giveth the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, v. 20. All our comforts come from God, and our sweetest comforts are in Him.

2. The reasons of the apostle's thanksgivings :

(1.) The benefits he and his companions had received from God, v. 4. In the world they had trouble, but in Christ, peace. The apostles met with many tribulations, but they found comfort in them all, v. 5. because therein Christ sympathized with them. (2.) The advantage others might receive; for God intended that they *should be able to comfort others* in trouble, v. 4. by communicating to them their experiences of the divine goodness and mercy; and the sufferings of good men have a tendency to this good end, v. 6. when they are endued with faith and patience.

V. 7—11. In these vs. the apostle speaks for the encouragement and edification of the Corinthians, and tells them, v. 7. of his persuasion, or steadfast hope, that they should receive benefit by the troubles he and his companions in labor and travel had met with; that their faith should not be weakened, but their consolations increased. In order to this, he tells them,

1. Their sufferings, v. 8. It was convenient for the churches to know, what were the sufferings of their ministers. It is not certain what particular troubles in Asia are here referred to; this, however, is evident, — they were great tribulations; and they thought they should have been killed, or have fainted and expired.

2. In their distress, *They trusted in God*, v. 9. God often brings his people into great straits, that they may apprehend their own *insufficiency* to help themselves, and may be induced to place their trust and hope in his *all-sufficiency*. God's raising the dead is a proof of his almighty power. If we should be brought so low as to *despair even of life*, yet we may then trust in God, who can bring back not only from the *gates*, but from the *jaws* of death.

3. Their deliverance; and this was seasonable and continued. Their hope and trust were not in vain, nor shall any who trust in Him be ashamed. God *had* delivered them, and *did still* deliver them, v. 10. Ac. 26: 22.

4. What use they made of this deliverance, v. 10. *They trusted that God would*

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1—3. *Saints.* All professed Christians, who were to be considered as saints, in the judgment of charity; yet *formalists and hypocrites* could not be included, or conjoined in those descriptions of character, and appropriation of privileges and promises, which cannot possibly belong to any except true Christians. Rom. 1: 1—7. 1 Cor. 1: 1—3. [The term, *hagioi*, (holy, saints,) was employed to designate Christians, ns hinting to them what their solemn engagements oblige them to be; and if some individuals were otherwise, it must be remembered that the apostle is addressing them in a general way. BL.] —(3) *Even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* This style seems to be adopted under the N. T., to distinguish 'the one living and true God,' from all other objects of worship, without excepting the Supreme Being of deists and infidels; as that of 'the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,' had been under the O. T., to distinguish JEHOVAH from Baal, or Jupiter, or other imagined deities. 1 K. 18: 18—21, 36—39. 22: 6. None was the true God, under the O. T., but 'the God of Abraham, &c.' none under the New is the true God, but 'the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

(3.) *Blessed be God, &c.* 'A usual formula of thanksgiving.' Grot. 'It is very observable, that eleven of Paul's thirteen epistles, begin with exclamations of joy, praise, and thanksgiving. As soon as he thought of a Christian church planted in one place or another, there seems to have been a flow of most lively affection accompanying the idea, in which all sensibility of his temporal affliction, or theirs, was swallowed up, and the fulness of his heart must vent itself in such cheerful, exalted, and devout language.' DODDR.

V. 4. *Comforteth.* 'Parakalōn: this sense, which has occurred (at least conjointly) at Acts 16: 40. 20: 12. and several times in the gospels, and which, indeed, is frequent in the N. T. (as 2 Cor. 2: 6. 7: 6. Eph. 6: 22. Col. 4: 8. 2 Thes. 2: 17. 2 Cor. 13: 11.) is supposed to be Hellenistical, as it is never found in the classical writers. It signifies lit. "to bid any one take comfort, by suggesting such motives and reasons for it as are calculated to raise the spirits of the sinking sufferer;" and, from the adjunct, it denotes every sort of comfort, support, and assistance, by which he is revived in spirit, and restored to happiness. Grot observes, that P., not without reason, said this in opposition to those who supposed the afflicted to be objects of God's hatred. Rom. 5: 3. 8: 35. *Theoph.* too, remarks; "he does not say, 'who doth not suffer us to be afflicted,' but 'who comforteth us in affliction.'" For He suffers us to be afflicted, that we, by patience, may obtain the reward.' BL. Comp. on Job 34: 1.

36: 8—14. ED.—'The *parakaloumetha* ['we are comforted'] must not, I think, be understood (with some) of the comfort which the repentance of the incestuous person gave the apostle, after the affliction he had endured on his account; nor, with others, (as Grot.) *merely* of the gifts of the H. S. vouchsafed to him, (though the possession of such would be a source of great consolation,) but also of that spiritual support breathed into his soul by the Great Comforter, the *Paraclete*, sent from God, and who *is* God; or, as DODDR. says, the general consolation arising from the pardon of sin, an interest in God, an assurance that nothing should separate him from Christ, that afflictions should co-operate for his advantage, and that a crown of glory, heightened by these trials, should close the scene.'

V. 5. 'The consolation of which P. speaks, was derived from the presence of Christ with him in his affliction; from a sense of the love of Christ shed abroad in his heart; from the joy which the success of the Gospel gave him; from the assured hope of the reward which was prepared for him; from his knowledge of the influence of his sufferings to encourage others; and from the enlarged views which he had of the government of God, whereby all things are made to work for good to them who love God; so that he was entirely reconciled to his sufferings.'

MACKNIGHT. V. 8—11. Some think that the apostle here referred to his sufferings at Lystra, in Asia Minor, Acts 14: 8—12. but these occurred so many years before, that he would scarcely have thus mentioned them on this occasion. He seems to have written this epistle from Philippi, or at least when he was in Macedonia; Ephesus was the chief city of Asia, according to the sense in which the apostle *always* uses that word; Acts 19: 8—12. and, as he had just before been driven away from Ephesus, by Demetrius, and the tumult excited by him, it is most probable, that he referred to the furious persecutions during that scene of riot and outrage. Acts 19: 23—41.—'It may be said, perhaps, that it does not appear from the history, that any danger threatened Paul's life, in the uproar at Ephesus, so imminent as that, from which in the epistle he represents himself to have been delivered. This matter, it is true, is not stated by the historian in form; but the personal danger of the apostle, we cannot doubt, must have been extreme, when the whole city was filled with confusion; when the populace had seized his companions; when, in the distraction of his mind, he insisted on coming forth amongst them; when the Christians who were about him would not suffer him; when his friends, certain of the chief of Asia, sent to him, desiring that he would not adven-



11 Ye also helping <sup>m</sup> together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons, thanks may be given by many on our behalf.

[Practical Observations.]

12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not <sup>a</sup> with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of <sup>o</sup> God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

13 For we write none other things unto you than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end;

14 As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that <sup>p</sup> we are your rejoicing, even as ye also *are* ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.

15 And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second <sup>q</sup> benefit;

16 And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my <sup>r</sup> way toward Judea.

17 When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according <sup>s</sup> to the flesh, that with me there should be yea, yea, and nay, nay?

m Ro. 15:30. n 1 Co. 2:4, 13. q or, grace.  
Phi. 1:19. o 1 Co. 15:10. r Ac. 21:5.  
Ja. 5:16-18. p Phi. 4:1. s c. 10:2.

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-11. The church of God is his peculiar residence, in which He displays his glory and communicates his grace; He is 'the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort;' nor can we expect too much from his infinite compassion and love, or too highly celebrate the praises of what He has already done for us.—We must, indeed, expect tribulations; they are needful [to moral progress], profitable, and unavoidable, and the afflictions and consolations of ministers, especially, are often intended for the sake of the people, as well as themselves, that, by their own example, experience, counsels, and exhortations, they may promote 'the consolation and salvation of others also.' This should reconcile us to our sorrows and trials, and teach us to seek benefit from them; and it should animate us to more earnest prayer, for proportionable grace and consolation, that we may exhibit an edifying

example under afflictions: for assuredly we shall rejoice in heaven on account of the sharpest sufferings, which have been rendered subservient to our salvation, and that of any of those, whom our gracious Lord owns as his friends, brethren, and near relations.—The Lord, sometimes, permits his children to be driven almost to despair, that they may learn, more simply, to trust in his almighty power and all-sufficient grace. This often occurs in the concerns of their own souls, and they are made to feel, that infinite mercy and omnipotent grace, alone, can preserve them from the most terrible downfalls, nay, even from final ruin. \* P. O. Job 9. In such scenes of conflict and terror, especially, we feel that we need the prayers of our brethren; and we ought thence to learn to pray for all who are tried and tempted, as well as to unite in thanksgivings with such, as have received gracious deliverances. SCORR.

ture himself into the tumult; when, lastly, he was obliged to quit, immediately, the place and the country; and "when the tumult was ceased, to depart into Macedonia." . . . Nothing could be more expressive of the circumstances, in which the history describes him to have been, at the time when the epistle purports to have been written, (than the vs. under consideration.) . . . It is the calm recollection of a mind, emerged from the confusion, of instant danger. It is that devotion and solemnity of thought, which follows a recent deliverance. There is just enough of particularity in the passage, to show that it is to be referred to the tumult at Ephesus. Patey.—In all this he spoke in the plural number, as joining his fellow-laborers with him; but he doubtless meant it with special reference to his own case. SCORR.

(8.) *Trouble.* 'I incline, with Whit. and Mackn., to think it refers to his actual exposure to wild beasts at Ephesus, 15:22.' BL. 'Or some opposition he met with in his journey through Galatia and Phrygia, (Acts 18:23.) of which no particular account has reached us.' DODDR.

(9, 10.) 'By the Hebrews, those are said to be dead who are *quasi mortui*; and those who are liberated are said to be *resuscitati*. Death.] *Thanatos*: here it denotes a *peril of life*.' BLOOMF.

(11, 12.) 'You also co-operating with us, in prayer in our behalf.—One cannot but admire the deep humility, and exquisite modesty evinced in these words, which must, too, have impressed the Christians with a very favorable opinion of Paul. The words following are obscure, by reason of the imperfect construction of the sentence, all which may fairly be attributed to extreme pathos, and perhaps haste. For the whole epistle bears the marks of being far more hastily (and perhaps suddenly) written than any of the rest. By the means of.] *Ek*: here it signifies, "on the part of;" procured "by the prayers of." *Charisma* (tr. gift) seems to signify, the preservation of, or deliverance graciously vouchsafed to, us. *Kauchēsis* [tr. sometimes "rejoicing," sometimes *boasting*, perhaps, and better, *exultation*] may be explained, "a cause of just boasting and rejoicing," "something on which one may reasonably [value] and comfort one's self," i. e. towards men. *Simplicity*, &c.] Not only meaning well on the whole, says Doddr., but declining an over-artful way of prosecuting a good end. *Fleshly wisdom.*] *Theoph.* well explains this: "not in words of stirring eloquence, and twistings of sophistries." For that (he adds) was the usual wisdom on which they prided themselves, but which the apostle rejects. So *Æc.* ID.

deliver to the end, and preserve to his heavenly kingdom. Past experiences are great encouragements to faith and hope, and they lay great obligations to trust in God for time to come. We reproach our experiences, if we distrust God in future straits, who hath delivered us in former troubles. David, even when young, and with but a small stock of experiences, argued after the manner of the apostle here, 1 Sa. 17:37.

5. What was desired of the Corinthians on this account, v. 11. Their help, by social prayer, agreeing and joining together in prayer on their behalf. Note, Our trusting in God must not supersede the use of any proper and appointed means; and prayer is one of those means. If we thus help one another, by our prayers, we may hope for an occasion of giving thanks by many for answer of prayer. And it is our duty, not only to help one another with prayer, but in praise and thanksgiving, and thereby to make suitable returns for benefits.

V. 12-14. The apostle, in these vs., attests their integrity by the sincerity of their conversation. This he does, not in a way of boasting and vainglory, but—as one good reason, the more comfortably to trust in God, Heb. 13:18. and for the necessary vindication of himself from the aspersions of some persons at Corinth, who reproached his person, and questioned his apostleship.

1. He appeals to conscience, with rejoicing, v. 12. The testimony of conscience for us, if that be right, and on good grounds, will be matter of rejoicing, at all times, and in all conditions. It testified concerning their conversation, their constant course and tenor of life, the nature or manner of their conversation, as being in simplicity and godly sincerity, and the principle they acted from in all their conversation, both in the world, and towards these Corinthians; not fleshly wisdom, or carnal politics and worldly views, but the grace of God, a vital, gracious prin-

ciple in their hearts, that cometh from God, and tendeth to God. Then will our conversation be well ordered, when we live and act under the influence and command of such a gracious principle in the heart.

2. He appeals to the knowledge of the Corinthians with hope and confidence, v. 13, 14. It is happy, when ministers and people rejoice in each other here; and this joy will be complete in *that day*, when the great Shepherd of the sheep shall appear.

V. 15-24. The apostle vindicates himself from the imputation of levity and inconstancy, in that he did not hold his purpose of coming to them at Corinth.

1. He avers the sincerity of his intention, v. 15-17. he was so minded, or did really intend, to come to them; not that he, but that they, might receive a second benefit, some further advantage by his ministry. He tells them he had not herein used lightness, v. 17. that, as he aimed not at any secular advantage to himself, so it was, not a rash and inconsiderate resolution that he had taken up, for he had laid his measures thus of passing by them to Macedonia, and coming again to them from Macedonia, in his way to Judea, v. 16. and therefore they might conclude, it was for weighty reasons he had altered his purpose; and that with him there was not yea, yea, and nay, nay, v. 17. Good men should be careful to preserve the reputation of sincerity and constancy; they should not resolve but on mature deliberation, and will not change their resolves but for weighty reasons.

2. He would not have the Corinthians infer, that his Gospel was false or uncertain, or contradictory in itself, or to truth, v. 18, 19. For if it had been so, that he had been fickle in his purposes, or even false in his promises of coming to them, (which he was not justly to be accused of, and so some understand this expression, v. 18. Our word

example under afflictions: for assuredly we shall rejoice in heaven on account of the sharpest sufferings, which have been rendered subservient to our salvation, and that of any of those, whom our gracious Lord owns as his friends, brethren, and near relations.—The Lord, sometimes, permits his children to be driven almost to despair, that they may learn, more simply, to trust in his almighty power and all-sufficient grace. This often occurs in the concerns of their own souls, and they are made to feel, that infinite mercy and omnipotent grace, alone, can preserve them from the most terrible downfalls, nay, even from final ruin. \* P. O. Job 9. In such scenes of conflict and terror, especially, we feel that we need the prayers of our brethren; and we ought thence to learn to pray for all who are tried and tempted, as well as to unite in thanksgivings with such, as have received gracious deliverances. SCORR.

V. 12-14. Though, as a sinner, he could only 'rejoice and glory in Christ Jesus,' 1 Cor. 1:26-31. yet, as a believer, he might rejoice and 'glory' in his inward consciousness of being truly what he professed and appeared to be; and especially in that he had been enabled to exercise his sacred ministry, with 'simplicity' and singleness of heart, aiming at nothing but to glorify God by doing good to men; and in that 'godly sincerity,' that unadulterated integrity, which sprang from the fear and love of God, and approved itself to Him. This had been his habitual conduct, in every part of the world, ever since he had been called to profess and preach the Gospel; but more abundantly in his whole behavior towards the church at Corinth; though they had been the first to suspect him, and accuse him of the contrary, 12:11-21. They had indeed acknowledged him 'in part,' or 'part of them,' to have been the instrument of their conversion, and avowed that they rejoiced and gloried in their relation to him, and in his attention to them; and this was no more than corresponded to his rejoicing, or glorying in them, and on their account; which he trusted would be continued even unto 'the day of the Lord Jesus,' who should come to judge the world. 1 Cor. 15:31-34. SCORR.

V. 15, 16. This shows, he [the apostle] had been only once at Corinth, at this time. 12:14, 15. He had intended to pass by Corinth in his way to Macedonia, and to call as he went, and then afterwards to return, and make a longer abode with them. This must have been his plan, for Corinth was out of his way into Macedonia; nor could it be supposed that he would come near that city, except in order to visit the Christians there. (Note, 1 Cor. 16:5-9.) Probably he had given some other intimation of his purpose to the Corinthians, than that which is contained in the former epistle. He, however, saw reason to alter his plan, and to go into Macedonia by Troas. Acts 20:1-6. ID.

(15.) *Second benefit.* 'Rather, double gratification, viz. that by the first epistle, and that by my presence. And so Phot., that *charin* is for *charan*; as in Philem. 7, and Tob. 7:20. So Wolf, and Schl., whom see for examples; and it is confirmed by v. 24. and 2:1, 2. Yet many moderns tr. gift, benefit; but this, though it may be justified, is not so natural a sense.' BLOOMF.

V. 17-20. The apostle's opponents, at Corinth, seem to have urged his deviation from his first purpose, as a proof that he was an inconstant and unstable man; who altered his conduct and doctrine, as circumstances required, and as suited his present conveniency. But . . . he and



18 But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

20 For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

23 Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that, to spare you, I came not as yet unto Corinth.

t or, preaching. He. 13:8. Re. 3:18.  
u Mat. 5:37. x 2 Th 2:17. z Ep. 1:13,14.  
v Ma. 1:1. Ro. 1:4. 1 Pe. 5:10. 4:30. 2 Ti. 2:19.  
w Ro. 15:8,9. y 1 Ju. 2:20,27. a Ro. 8:9,14-16.

toward you was not yea and nay,) yet it would not follow, that the Gospel preached by him

his fellow-laborers had not said first 'yea,' and then 'nay,' in these grand concerns; but had constantly declared, that all salvation was to be found in Him alone; and that the covenant of grace, and all its engagements, were fully confirmed in Him, to all who were found one with Him by faith, and the participation of his life-giving Spirit. In these doctrines, they had been most explicit and decided; though in various matters of less importance, they had used a prudent, self-denying accommodation; and had been careful not to instruct the people in the deeper mysteries of Christianity, before they were able to bear them. 1 Cor. 3:1-9. SCOTT.

(17.) Yea, &c.] Bloomf. thinks the idiom proverbial for 'one of a headstrong, self-willed spirit, which will either do things, or not do them, as it pleases, without giving any reasons. Such positive persons as say, "what I have written, I have written," &c.' Luther tr. 'but with us is yea yea, and nay is nay,' and refers to Mat. 3:37. See other opinions in Bloomf.

(18.) Theoph. and Ec., after Chrys., rightly observe, that an objection is here anticipated and answered, as: "If what you say be not firm and stable, and you often say yes, and is it found no, may we not fear lest your word, doctrine, and preaching, be found such?" viz. yes, yes, and no, no, i. e. unstable and wavering. To which the apostle answers: "My promising, or purposing to come, was my own, wherefore I attained it not. But my preaching is of God, and what is such cannot deceive," &c. So Beza, Ros., and Storr.

(19.) Silvanus.] i. e. Silas, Acts 15:32. where he is said to be a chief man among the brethren at Jerusalem, and one of the Christian prophets. After the council of Jerusalem, he accompanied Paul in journeys through the Lesser Asia and Greece. He was so much esteemed by the apostle's converts, that Paul inserted his name in the inscriptions of several of his epistles. By him, likewise, the apostle Peter sent his first epistle to the brethren of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 1 Pet. 5:12.

(20.) Nothing can really render the promises of God more certain than they are; but God's giving them to us through Christ, assures us that they are indeed his promises, as in Christ there is such a real evidence of his conversing with men, and as the wonders which God had actually wrought in the incarnation, life, resurrection, and ascension of his Son (facts in themselves much stronger than any of the glorious consequences to follow), tend greatly to confirm our faith, and make it easier for us to believe such illustrious promises as those which are given us, the very greatness of which might otherwise have been an impediment to our faith, and have created a suspicion, not whether God would have performed what He has promised, but whether such promises were really given us. DODD. 'Bp. Middleton tr. For how many soever be the promises of God, in Him (in Christ) is the yea, and in Him the Amen, i. e. whatever God hath promised, He will, through Christ, assuredly fulfil.'

V. 21, 22. Some interpret 'the anointing,' of miraculous powers, and 'the seal,' of the sacraments; but without any satisfactory proof; and it is far more consistent with the tenor of Scripture, to explain 'the anointing,' of such divine communications as belong to Christians in general, and of which none else partake.—Sacraments are but outward seals of the covenant, and neither distinguish believers from others, nor secure salvation to all who partake of them; Rom. 4:9-12, and miraculous powers have been exercised by very wicked men, and have long since ceased in the church; but the renewal of the divine image on the soul, in sanctification, and 'the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit,' form through every age a seal, and earnest, of a far more distinguishing and permanent nature. Rom. 5:3-5. Eph. 1:13, 14. 4:30-32, v. 30. 2 Tim. 2:19. SCOTT.

(21.) Having before said, that God fulfils his promises, Paul now proves it. Theoph. in Bl.

(21, 22.) 'The strong expressions anoint, seal, earnest of the Spirit, merit special attention. The ancient comtrs., dwell much on their import, especially chrisis [anointing], anointing being customary in the inauguration of kings, prophets, and priests. Theoph. thinks it applicable to every baptized person: and, indeed, metaphors of this kind, as applicable to Christians in general, are to be found in the N. T.: yet when we consider that the hēmas [us] can only be meant for himself, and perhaps the other apostles, and the Corinthian Christians, it seems unwarrantable and injudicious to extend it any further. Still less, (in order to make it of universal application,) can it be justifiable to pare down and explain away the solid sense comprehended in these strong terms; as is done by the recent foreign comtrs., particularly Ros., who remarks,

and by others in full agreement with him, was either false or doubtful. For God is true, and the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is true, whom the apostle preached, not yea and nay, but yea, v. 19. nothing but infallible truth. And the promises of God in Christ are not yea and nay, but yea and Amen, v. 20. There is an inviolable constancy, and unquestionable sincerity, and certainty, in all the parts of the Gospel of Christ. If in the promises ministers make, as common men, and about their own affairs, they see cause sometimes to vary from them, yet the promises of the gospel-covenant, which they preach, stand firm and inviolable. Bad men are false; good men are fickle; but God is true, neither fickle nor false.

Having mentioned the stability of the divine promises, he makes a digression, to illustrate this great and sweet truth; for they are the promises of the God of truth, made in Christ Jesus, v. 20. the Amen, the true and faithful Witness: He hath purchased and ratified the covenant of promises, and is the Surety of the covenant, Heb. 7:22. They are confirmed by the Holy Spirit, who establishes, anoints, and seals Christians, and is given as an earnest in their hearts,

v. 21, 22. An earnest secures the promise, and is part of the payment. The illumination of the Spirit is an earnest of everlasting light; the quickening of the Spirit is an earnest of everlasting life; and the comforts of the Spirit are an earnest of everlasting joy. The veracity of God, the mediation of Christ, and the operation of the Spirit, are all engaged, that the promises shall be sure to all the seed, and the accomplishment of them shall be to the glory of God, v. 20. for the glory of his rich and sovereign grace, and never-failing truth and faithfulness.

3. The apostle gives a good reason why he did not come to Corinth, as was expected, v. 23. It was that he might spare them. He assures them this was the true reason, after this very solemn manner; I call God for a record upon my soul; a way of speaking not justifiable where used in trivial matters; but very justifiable here in the apostle, for his necessary vindication, and for the credit and usefulness of his ministry, which was struck at by his opposers. He adds, to prevent mistakes, that he did not pretend to any dominion over their faith, v. 24. Christ only is the Lord of our faith, Heb. 12:2. He reveals to us what we must believe. Paul and

"this inauguration is nothing other than a first instruction in religion." (1 Ju. 2:27.) We are to remember, that to the persons here especially meant, had been vouchsafed many of the extraordinary effusions of the H. S., in various charismata [gifts], recorded and illustrated in 3 chs. of 1 Cor. To them, therefore, the expressions are highly applicable in their full extent, but to no other, unless with qualification, or by accommodation. For, although in Eph. 1:14. we have something like the present use of the Gr., for seal and earnest, as applied to the Ephesians, no instance, I think, can be found of chrisis [to anoint] used of Christians in general, nor, perhaps, of any of its derivatives. For though Ros., &c., appeal to 1 Ju. 2:20, and 27. yet here surely we cannot but recognise another instance of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit imparted in the apostolic age; and, therefore, this will not prove the point in question. I incline to think, then, that by an accommodation of these strong terms, (the first and chief of which, chrisis, is nowhere else used of Christians in general,) the apostle had reference to the supernatural charismata of the Corinthian congregation. Earnest.] Arrhabōn: from árbon, pledge. Gen. 44:22. It denotes that (usually small) part of the agreed price of any article purchased, which was paid down by the purchaser as an engagement, pledge, or security for ratifying the agreement; called by us earnest, or handsel, from the German handgeld.

V. 23, 24. Having thus vindicated his conduct, and doctrine, from the charge of inconsistency, the apostle, in the most solemn manner, called God to witness the truth of what he was about to assert; he desired that He would testify for him, or against him, as He saw the case to be; and he could expect nothing but awful judgments 'on his soul,' if he spake falsely after such an appeal. With this most awful introduction, which is a peculiarly solemn oath, on a highly important occasion, Ex. 20:7. he declared, that he had postponed his visit to Corinth, in order to spare them those censures and miraculous judgments, which he feared would have been unavoidable, if he had gone thither immediately on leaving Ephesus. He had not then received any information what effect his former epistle had produced; he was aware, that time would be required to bring their affairs into a better state, and he thought it more advisable to wait a little longer, that he might at length come, not 'with a rod, but in love and in the spirit of meekness.' 2:1-4. 10:7-11. 12:17-21. 13:1-4. 1 Cor. 4:18-21, v. 21. He did not mean by this to claim any despotic authority in dictating to them, as of himself, what they should believe; or even to insist, in a dogmatical manner, on their receiving every particular which he taught them by the command of Christ. He had not thus usurped dominion, or 'lorded it over them, in respect of the faith,' as the clause may be rendered, but had acted hitherto, and was still disposed to act, with gentleness and forbearance, as a 'helper of their joy' and consolation in Christ, by his instructions, admonitions, and counsels. Mat. 20:24-23. Lu. 22:24-27. Phil. 1:21-26. 1 Pet. 5:1-4. Yet he deemed it necessary, as the servant and representative of Christ, to act with authoritative decision, and even sharpness, against such as perverted the Gospel, and corrupted its doctrines; for 'by faith' believers stood accepted with God, and were enabled to stand steadfast amidst trials and temptations. 5:5-8. Rom. 5:1, 2. 1 Cor. 15:1, 2. Eph. 6:14-17. 1 Pet. 5:8, 9. Those persons, therefore, who perverted the faith, by false doctrines and corrupt practices, were about to take from true Christians that support, by which they stood; to cause them to fall into various evils; to mar their joy, and to do them immense mischief, if not opposed. As 'helpers of their joy,' therefore, the apostle and his friends must take a decided part against these enemies to their holiness and comfort.—The tenet, that we are at first indeed justified by faith, but are preserved in a justified state by works, is diametrically opposite to this apostolical decision. SCOTT.

(23.) 'Ch. 2. ought to commence with this v.' Chrys., Ros., Bl. 'Now I call upon God as a witness against my soul, (if I speak not the truth.)' Schlichting, Bl., &c. 'Nothing but the great importance of Paul's vindicating his character to such a church, would have justified this solemnity of the oath.'

(24.) Have dominion.] Lord it. 'As the term spare, v. 23. might have seemed over-authoritative, or to savor of domineering spirit, this the apostle disclaims. The ancient, and most modern comtrs. understand, "in the faith, ye, upon the whole stand; though, in matters of practice, ye have erred, and do err." Others take it of the religion, and interpret, "ye are still firm in your profession of the religion; only let your faith be consistent." Others, again, and some recent editors, place the words in a parenthesis: which I cannot approve. It seems not enough attended to, that the words relate strictly to what immediately



24 Not for that we have <sup>b</sup> dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy : for by <sup>c</sup> faith ye stand.

## CHAP. II.

<sup>1</sup> Having shewed the reason why he came not to them, <sup>6</sup> he requireth them to forgive and to comfort that excommunicated person, <sup>10</sup> even as himself also upon his true repentance had forgiven him : <sup>12</sup> declaring withal why he departed from Troas to Macedonia, <sup>14</sup> and the happy success which God gave to his preaching in all places.

**B**UT I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in <sup>a</sup> heaviness.

2 For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me ?

3 And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice ; having confidence in you all, that my joy is *the joy* of you all.

4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears ; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love <sup>b</sup> which I have more abundantly unto you.

5 But if <sup>c</sup> any have caused grief, he hath not grieved <sup>d</sup> me, but in part : that I may not overcharge you all.

6 Sufficient to such a man is this <sup>e</sup> punishment, which was *inflicted* <sup>f</sup> of many.

7 So <sup>g</sup> that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive *him*, and comfort *him*, lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm *your* love toward *him*.

9 For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you,

whether ye be obedient <sup>h</sup> in all things.

10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also : for if I forgive *it*, for your sakes *forgave I it* in the <sup>i</sup> person of Christ ;

b 1 Co. 3:5. 21. 13:10. f 1 Co. 5:4,5.  
1 Pe. 5:3. h c. 11:2. 1 Ti. 5:20.  
c Ro. 11:20. e Ga. 5:10. g Ga. 6:1.  
1 Co. 15:1. d Ga. 4:12. h c. 7:15.  
a c. 1:23. 12:20. e or, *censure*. i or, *sight*.

Apollos, and the rest of the apostles, were *but ministers by whom they believed*, 1 Cor. 3:5. and so the *helpers of their joy*, even the joy of faith. For *by faith we stand* firm, and live safely and comfortably. Our strength and ability are *owing* to faith, and our comfort and joy must *flow* from faith.

CHAP. II. V. 1—4. 1. He proceeds in an account of the reason he did not come to Corinth, as was expected ; namely, he was unwilling to grieve, or be grieved by them, v. 1, 2. His desire was, to have a cheerful meeting, and not to have it embittered by any unhappy occasion of disagreeing.

2. He tells them it was to the same intent that he wrote his former epistle, v. 3, 4. and that he had written to them *in confidence* of their doing what was requisite, in order to their benefit and his comfort. The particular thing referred to, as appears by the following vs., was the case of the incestuous person, about whom he had written in the first epistle, ch. 5. Nor was the apostle disappointed in his expectation. He assures them he did not design to grieve them, but to testify his love to them, and that he wrote to them with much *anguish and affliction* in his own heart, and with great affection to them. Even in reproofs, admonitions, and acts of discipline, faithful ministers show their love. Needful censures, and the exercise of church-discipline towards offenders, are a grief to tender-spirited ministers.

V. 5—11. The apostle treats concerning the incestuous person, one principal cause of his writing this epistle.

1. He tells them the crime of that person

had grieved him *in part* ; and that he was grieved also with *a part* of them, who, notwithstanding this scandal had been found among them, were *puffed up, and had not mourned*, 1 Cor. 5:2. However, he was unwilling to lay too heavy a charge on the whole church, especially seeing they had cleared themselves in that matter, by observing the directions he had formerly given them.

2. He tells them, that the punishment which had been inflicted on this offender was sufficient, v. 6. The desired effect was obtained, for the man was humbled, and they had shown the proof of their obedience to his directions.

3. He therefore *directs* them, with all speed, to restore the excommunicated person, or to receive him again to their communion, v. 7, 8. This is expressed several ways ; he beseeches them to *forgive* him, also to *comfort* him, and to *confirm their love* to him ; they should show that their reproofs and censures proceeded from love to his person, as well as hatred to his sin ; and that their design was to reform, not to ruin him. Or thus : If his fall had weakened their love to him, that they could not take that satisfaction in him as formerly ; yet, now that he was recovered by repentance, they must renew and confirm their love to him.

4. He used several weighty arguments to persuade them to do thus ; (1.) The case of the penitent called for this, v. 7. He was so sensible of his fault, and so much afflicted under his punishment, that he was in danger of falling into despair. (2.) They had *showed obedience* to his directions in passing a censure on him, and now he would have them comply with his desire to restore him, v. 9. (3.) He mentions his readiness to concur in the forgiveness, v. 10. And this he would do for *their sakes*, for love to them, and for *Christ's sake*, or in his name, as his apostle ; and in conformity to his doctrine and example, which are so full of kindness and tender mercy toward all them who truly repent. (4.) He gives another weighty reason, v. 11. Not only was there danger lest Satan should get an advantage against the *penitent*, by driving him to despair ; but

PRACT. OBS. V. 12—24. If we would have comfort amidst troubles, reproaches, suspicions, and slanders, we must seek for 'the rejoicing in the testimony of our conscience.' Yet we should not wonder, if we are suspected by those persons to whom, and for those actions in which, we have behaved most conscientiously. Sometimes 'simplicity and godly sincerity' may require that line of conduct, which, to superficial or prejudiced observers, will have a contrary appearance ; and a man may be deemed inconstant, because he will not go the whole length of a party, and coincide with them in their follies, mistakes, and sins. 1 Cor. 2:14—16.—Ministers, and the people who have profited by their labors, ought now to rejoice in each other, as they may expect to do at the last day. Whatever interferes with this reciprocal joy and affection, should be guarded against ; and believers should be very careful, not to grieve, by neglect and unkindness, those faithful friends, to whom, under God, they owe their eternal salvation, and who are concerned for their best welfare, with all the tenderness of affectionate parents.—It is very unjust and uncautious, to ascribe every alteration in a man's purpose or con-

duct, to lightness, instability, duplicity, or carnal policy ; especially when his general character bears another stamp, and when there may be good reasons for the change which has taken place. If we are thus unjustly censured or suspected, we must make our appeal to God ; yet it behooves us to be steady and constant in our conduct and profession, as far as we can, that we may avoid 'the appearance of evil,' [particularly if ministers.]—If the apostle did not exercise 'dominion over the faith' of Christians, we should by no means 'call men master,' or 'father,' or implicitly submit to their decisions and assertions ; nor should we ever attempt 'to lord it,' in this manner, 'over' any part of 'God's heritage,' [male or female.] Sometimes genuine love, and a wise desire of helping the joy of believers, will dictate sharp rebukes and decided censures of those who would deceive and corrupt them. It is, however, best to use more lenient measures, as far as there is a prospect of success ; and to avoid even the appearance of severity, if it can be done consistently with prudence and faithfulness. SCOTT.

precedes ; q. d. "And this joy you are (I trust) qualified to taste ; for (upon the whole) ye have stood, and do stand firm in the faith, in the profession, in the practice of the religion, and are therefore in a state of salvation." Bp. Mid. paraphrases thus : "we have your welfare at heart ; for by your faith alone, that faith which we seek to strengthen in you, can ye attain to salvation." This (he thinks) is a natural and reasonable vindication, not only of the threat already employed, but of any severities to which Paul might afterwards be driven in the discharge of his duty." Bl. Ed.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1—4. The apostle expected he should prevail with them, by his epistles, to exclude such as remained refractory, and also recover many who had been drawn aside ; and then he would be able to go among them, without that 'heaviness' and distress of mind which he must have felt, if constrained to re-establish his authority by censures and punishments. And he was confident they would approve of this plan ; as he would not allow himself to doubt, but that 'his joy was the joy of them all.' The apostle certainly knew that this, admitted of exceptions ; but it was kind and prudent in him, to express his favorable opinion of the church in general ; and to represent the disaffected party to be so small, as not to bear any proportion to his friends and adherents. SCOTT.

(1.) "I determined with myself not again to come to you, so as to give myself and you the pain of censuring irregularities." For all this seems to be included in the words *en lupē* [in heaviness]. BLOOMF.

(2.) 'The simplest, most natural, and least exceptionable interpretation, is that of Grot., Ros., and Jaspis (and, as it seems, Doddr. and Mackn.); though they do not thoroughly establish the sense, and clearly

show how it arises. Ros. expl. thus : "who could make me glad, cause that my stay among you should be pleasant, as is usual among friends ? Both you and I would have been sad. Unless you were made sorrowful by me. And none else. You alone were those who at Corinth could make me glad ; but if you yourselves were sad, this could not be done. For how can a sorrowful person gladden another ?" The sound part of the church would sympathize with the unsound, and so could afford Paul little cordial consolation ; the unsound could not be expected to console him, till their reformation, which he could not stay long enough to prove, and thus his comfort with them could be but small." BLOOMF.

V. 5. 'Now if any of you hath occasioned grief to the rest he hath not so much grieved me, as, in some measure (that I may not bear too hard upon him) all of you. Theoph., from Chrys., acutely remarks, Thus the apostle skilfully brings them all in as partakers in the injury, that he might have them all partakers in the absolution, and thus he be absolved from any charge of inconsistency and mutability.' Id.

V. 6. *Such a man.* *Toioutō* : indefinite, but alluding to the incestuous person. 'Undoubtedly, by a peculiar delicacy, this expression is adopted to supply a rule by which to act in similar cases, when the punishment of offenders has been already severe, and their penitence undoubted. Many.] Here the Gr. must mean all, i. e. all the rest besides the person.' Bl. Ed.

V. 8. *Confirm.* 'The Gr. properly means, to corroborate, to make firm ; and so here the context and the circumstances require the sense, "make him sure of your love," "assure him of it," namely, by some public testimony of it, i. e. the annulment of the act of excommunication ; "make sure that reconciliation." BLOOMF.



11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,

13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.

14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place.

15 For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:

16 To the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

17 For we are not, as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ.

against the churches, also, and the apostles or ministers of Christ, by representing them as too rigid and severe, and so frighten people from coming among them.

In this, as in other things, wisdom is profitable to direct, so to manage according as the case may be, that the ministry may not be blamed for indulging sin on the one hand, or for too great severity toward sinners on the other hand. Satan is a subtle enemy, and uses many stratagems to deceive us; and we should not be ignorant of his devices: he is also a watchful adversary, ready to take all advantages; and we should be very cautious lest we give him any occasion so to do.

V. 12-17. After these directions concerning the excommunicated person, the apostle makes a long digression, to give the Corinthians an account of his travels and labors for the furtherance of the Gospel, and what success he had had therein; declaring at the same time how much he was concerned for them in their affairs; how he had no rest in his spirit, when he found not Titus at Troas, v. 13. as he expected, from whom he hoped to have understood more perfectly how it fared with them. And we find afterward, ch. 7:5-7. that when the apostle was come into Macedonia, he was comforted by the coming of Titus, and the information he gave him concerning them. So that we may look upon all that we read from ch. 2:12. to ch. 7:5. as a kind of parenthesis.

I. Paul's unwearied labor and diligence in his work, v. 12, 13. II. His success, v. 12. He had a great deal to do, wherever he came, and had good success in it; for God

made manifest the savor of his knowledge by him in every place where he came, Acts 16:14. and he speaks of this as a matter of thankfulness to God, and of rejoicing to his soul, v. 14. A believer's triumphs are all in Christ, and true believers have constant cause of triumph in Christ, for they are more than conquerors through Him who hath loved them, Rom. 8:37. III. The comfort he and his companions in labor found, even when the Gospel was not successful to the salvation of some who heard it, v. 15-17. Here observe,

1. The different success of the Gospel, and its different effects on several sorts of persons to whom it is preached; some are saved by it, others perish under it. To some it is a savor of death unto death; [because] it stirs up their corruptions, and exasperates their spirits; they reject it, to their ruin. To others it is a savor of life unto life. To humble and gracious souls the preaching of the Word is most delightful and profitable, and will end in eternal life.

2. The awful impressions this matter made on the apostle, and should also make on us, v. 16. Who is worthy to be employed in such a weighty work; a work of such vast importance, because of so great consequence? Who is able to perform such a difficult work, that requires so much skill and industry? If men did seriously consider what great things depend on the preaching of the Gospel, and how difficult the work of the ministry is, they would be very cautious how they enter upon it, and very careful to perform it well.

Ac. 16:8. n Ca. 1:3. r or, deal deceit-  
k 1 Co. 16:9. o 1 Co. 1:18. fully with. c. 4:2.  
l c. 7:5,6. p Jn 9:39. 1 Pe. 2:7,8. s He. 11:27.  
m Ro. 8:37. q c. 3:5,6. t or, of.

PRACT. OBS. We should always give pain reluctantly, even when it must be done; for, if we are of a truly Christian spirit, we shall share the grief which we occasion. That part of an affectionate minister's work which gives most offence, is often performed by him with great affliction and anguish of heart, and with many tears; and by a kind of painful constraint. So far is he from intending to grieve his beloved people, that he does violence to his own feelings, and ventures their displeasure, from his abundant affection to them; and that he may, even against their will, preserve them, if possible, from the dangers, to which the artifices of deceivers, and their own inexperience, expose them. Ministers of this spirit and character will be careful 'not to overcharge their brethren,' and not to condemn them harshly or indiscriminately. No man, indeed, has a right to exercise dominion over the faith of his brethren; but, as far as ministers act according to the commandments of Christ, they are authorized to expect obedience from the people; and they may sometimes properly make trial of it; yet they should always be ready to express a forgiving disposition. When church-censures, ministerial rebukes, or the reconciliation of offenders, are regulated according to the word of Christ, and as in his presence, they are valid, even as if He were present in person to ratify them.—We should always be upon our guard, 'lest Satan get an advantage against us; [and] should therefore study, by attention to the Scriptures, by careful observation, by watching our own experiences, by conferring with our brethren, and,

above all, by fervent prayer, to get acquainted with 'his devices,' that we may be competent to counteract them. It is perhaps impossible, in this present state, to separate fervent, active zeal from an over-anxious solicitude. If, however, our hearts be right with God, our disquietudes will terminate in thanksgivings, our conflicts in victories and triumphs; and the labors of the faithful minister will be accepted, and graciously rewarded by our God, whether his hearers be saved, or perish.—But how should the consideration of the consequences, which must follow on our preaching, to ourselves and our hearers, make us shrink back, as it were, under the consciousness of unworthiness and insufficiency! especially as so many still adulterate and 'corrupt the Word of God,' to their own ruin, and that of their deluded followers. If this was the case, even while the apostles were living, how is it at present? and what would holy Paul's verdict be in this day, concerning an immense proportion of professed teachers and rulers in the Christian church? May we then inquire how the case is with each of us; may we carefully watch ourselves in this matter; and seek the testimony of our consciences, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, that, 'as of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God, so we may speak in Christ!' May the Lord also send forth very many faithful and able ministers into his church, and stop the mouths of all false teachers; and may every Christian learn to distinguish between genuine shepherds, and all kinds of wolves and foxes in sheep's clothing! Is. 56:9-12. Mat. 7:13-20. SCOTT.

V. 11. Lest, &c.] 'His reception back to the church being put off, the Corinthians being well affected toward him, would become more lax in repelling criminalities.' See Ros. Satan.] 'Who, under pretence of duty, tempts us to pass severe censures, to drive offenders to despair, and to deter unbelievers from receiving the Gospel. Devices.] Here Paul seems to caution against the principles the Novatians afterwards espoused, who, on pretence of establishing discipline, and preserving the purity of the church, would not receive into their communion those who had apostatized in times of persecution, however penitent they might be afterwards,—a rule which anciently occasioned much confusion, and even bloodshed, in the church.' Mackn. Ed.

V. 12, 13. After Paul had been driven from Ephesus, he went to Troas, in his way to Macedonia, intending to remain for a short time in that city, to preach the Gospel, of which a very favorable opportunity presented itself. Acts 20:1-6. But, not meeting Titus there, according to his expectation, and having received no tidings from Corinth, his mind was so discomposed about the affairs of that church, that he could not comfortably continue at Troas. He therefore hastened into Macedonia to meet Titus, which he accordingly did; and his report had determined him to write this second epistle, and then to proceed leisurely, through the churches of Macedonia, before he visited Corinth. SCOTT.

(13.) No rest.] 'Regretting the absence of Titus, which prevented his making the most of the door now opened to them for spreading the Gospel.' So Bl., &c. 'But, however, (effecting what I could without the benefit of his assistance,) I bid the Trojans adieu, and went,' &c. Bl. Ed.

V. 14-17. The happy turn given to the affairs of the Corinthians; and the confidence the apostle entertained of success as to that perplexing business, in which he had been engaged respecting them; and his usefulness in other places, caused him to break forth in 'thanks to God,' amidst all his difficulties and distresses. He had, indeed, sharp conflicts to sustain; but the Lord gave him such multiplied victories, that he went from city to city as a triumphant conqueror, in the cause of Christ. And, as in triumphs, abundance of odors were used, so the name and salvation of Jesus, ('as ointment poured forth,' Cant. 1:3.) was a 'sweet odor,' diffused by him in every place; so that he, and his fellow-laborers, were pleasing and acceptable to God, by their testimony to Christ, and, through his merits, as a sweet-smelling savor, Gen. 8:20-22, v. 22. Eph. 5:1, 2 Phil. 4:14-20, v. 18. As, however, such infinitely important consequences

were connected with the sacred ministry; and as faithfulness alone could render it acceptable and honorable to God, or profitable to men; who, of the human race, could of himself be 'sufficient' for such a service? Or who would dare to engage in it without trembling? 3:4-6. This obliquely hinted at the self-sufficiency of the Corinthian teachers; but they were more immediately intended when he spake of 'many' who sophisticated the Word of God, as dishonest vintners do their wine; when they preserve something of the color and taste, but dilute it, or mix it up with other liquids which weaken it, prevent its efficacy, or even render it poisonous, in order to enhance their profits. Thus, these teachers preserved some important truths in their preaching, to render it more specious; but they corrupted it by human inventions, philosophical conjectures, or antinomian opinions, till it became inefficacious, and even pernicious, to the souls of men. 11:13-15. Col. 2:8, 9. Learned men have differed greatly in opinion, about these corrupters of the Gospel; whether they were judaizing Christians, or Gentile converts, or heretics, as the Gnostics in particular were; but, [perhaps he alludes to them all, and,] beyond all doubt, there were corrupters of the Gospel at that time, of different descriptions, who perverted it in various ways. SCOTT.

(14.) Always.] 'This word need not be pressed. Where Paul was least successful, there was, indeed, always some kind of victory obtained over the kingdom of Satan and sin.' Bl. Triumph.] 'An allusion to the triumphal processions of victorious generals.' Mackn., &c. The verb, in its neuter sense, signifies, to be borne along in triumph. Favor.] Osmè: 'some refer to perfumes, with which the high priest was scented; others, to the union of Christ and the church, under the image of a bride and bridegroom, Cant. 1:3. I rather accede to the opinion of those, who think there is an allusion to the fragrant odors scattered about near the conquerors at a triumph. "And who diffuseth, by us, everywhere, the odor of his divine knowledge;" the grateful and salutiferous influence of the Gospel, every where disseminated.' Bl. See on v. 15, 16. Ed.

(15, 16.) Sweet savor.] Eudôia:—Savor.] Osmè: see on v. 14. 'In triumphs, the streets through which the victorious generals passed, were strewn with flowers. (Ovid.) The people also threw flowers into the triumphal car, as it passed along. This, as all the other customs observed in triumphal processions, was derived from the Greeks, who, in that manner, honored the conquerors at the games, when they entered into their respective cities. Plut. tells us, that, in triumphal processions, the



## CHAP. III.

<sup>1</sup> Lest their false teachers should charge him with vain-glory, he sheweth the faith and graces of the Corinthians to be a sufficient commendation of his ministry. <sup>6</sup> Whereupon entering a comparison between the ministers of the law and of the gospel, <sup>12</sup> he proveth that his ministry is so far the more excellent, as the gospel of life and liberty is more glorious than the law of condemnation.

**D**O we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles<sup>b</sup> of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?

<sup>2</sup> Ye<sup>c</sup> are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

<sup>3</sup> Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of<sup>d</sup> stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.

<sup>4</sup> And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

<sup>5</sup> Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing, as of ourselves; but<sup>e</sup> our sufficiency is of God;

<sup>6</sup> Who also hath made us able<sup>f</sup> ministers of the<sup>g</sup> New Testament;

a c. 5:12. e Je. 31:33. Phi. 2:13.  
b Ac. 18:27. Eze. 11:19. h Ep. 3:7. 1 Th. 1:12.  
c 1 Co. 9:2. f Ju. 15:5. i Mat. 26:28.  
d Ex. 24:12. g 1 Co. 13:10. He. 8:6-10.

<sup>3</sup>. The comfort the apostle had under this serious consideration; (1.) Because faithful ministers shall be accepted of God, whatever their success be, v. 15. in them who are saved, and in them also who perish. God will accept of sincere intentions, and honest endeavors, though with many they are not successful, Is. 49:5. (2.) Because his conscience witnessed to his faithfulness, v. 17. in dispensing the Gospel, as he received it from the Lord, and had no secular turn to serve; his aim was, to approve himself to God, remembering that his eye was always upon him; he therefore spake and acted always as in the sight of God, and therefore in sincerity. What we do in religion, is not of God, does not come from God, will not reach to God, unless done in sincerity, as in the sight of God.

CHAP. III. V. 1-5. 1. The apostle makes an apology for his seeming to commend himself. He thought it convenient to protest his sincerity, because some at Corinth endeavored to blast his reputation; yet he was not desirous of vainglory. And he tells them, that, as to himself and his fellow apostles, (1.) They neither needed nor desired any verbal commendation to them nor letters testimonial from them, as some others did, meaning the false apostles or teachers, v. 1. (2.) The Corinthians, themselves, were their real commendation, and a good testimonial, that God was with them of a truth, v. 2. This was the tes-

timonial they most delighted in, and what was most dear to them,—they were written in their hearts; and this they could appeal to on occasion, for it was, or might be, known and read of all men. Note, Nothing is more delightful to faithful ministers, or more to their commendation, than the success of their ministry, evidenced in the hearts and lives of them among whom they labor.

<sup>2</sup>. The apostle is careful not to assume too much to himself, but to ascribe all the praise to God. (1.) They were the epistle of Christ, v. 3. Christ was the Author of all the good that was in them. His law was written in their hearts, and his love shed abroad there. This was the good hope the apostle had concerning them, v. 4. that their hearts were like the ark of the covenant, containing the tables of the law and the gospel, written with the finger, i. e. by the Spirit, of the living God. (2.) He utterly disclaims the taking any praise to themselves, and ascribes all the glory to God, v. 5. We could never have made such good impressions on your hearts, or on our own; we cannot of ourselves think a good thought, much less raise any good thoughts or affections in other men. All our sufficiency is of God. This is true concerning ministers and all Christians.

V. 6-11. Here the apostle makes a comparison between the O. T. and the New, the law of Moses and the gospel of Jesus Christ; and values himself and his fellow-laborers by this, that they were able ministers of

streets were "full of incense and perfumes." The captives of greatest note followed the triumphal chariot, in chains, and some of them had their lives granted to them; others were put to death immediately after the procession ended. Wherefore, to such, the smell of the flowers, and of the incense with which the procession was accompanied, was a deadly smell, ending in their death. But to those captives who had their lives granted to them, this was a smell of life, a vivifying and refreshing smell, which ended in life to them.—In allusion to the method of a triumph, the apostle represents Christ as a victorious general, riding in a triumphal procession through the world, attended by his apostles, prophets, evangelists, and other ministers of the Gospel, and followed by all the idolatrous nations as his captives. Among these, the preachers of the Gospel diffused the smell of the knowledge of Christ, which, to those who believed on Him, was a vivifying smell, ending in life to them. But, to the unbelievers, the smell of the knowledge of Christ, was a smell of death, ending in death, if they continued in unbelief. Mackn., who, however, us Bl. remarks, carries the allusion (and it is no more) quite too far, especially on v. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Theod. and Theoph. well paraphrase: "We, indeed, bear the sweet odor of Christ's Gospel to all; but all who participate in it, do not experience its salutiferous effects. Thus, to diseased eyes, even the light of heaven is noxious; yet the sun does not bring the injury. And to those in a fever, honey is bitter; yet it is sweet, nevertheless. Vultures, too, it is said, fly from sweet odors of myrrh; yet myrrh is myrrh, though the vultures avoid it. Thus, if some be saved, and others perish, the Gospel retains its own virtue, and we, the preachers of it, remain as we are; and the Gospel retains its odoriferous and salutiferous properties, though some may disbelieve or abuse it, and perish." It is, I think, a misconception of Doddr., to suppose there is here allusion to the different effects of strong perfumes, to cheer some, and to throw others into violent disorders. Bl. Death unto death. I. e. temporal and eternal. Life unto life. The life which now is, and that which is to come. The words, unto death, and unto life, are exegetical, and added to strengthen the sense. The Rabbins say, the law is the aroma of life to those who study it properly; of death to those who do not; an odor of life to Israelites, of death to Gentiles.

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1-3. The Corinthians themselves were his 'epistle of commendation;' it was 'written in their hearts,' (as some read it, perhaps without sufficient authority from manuscripts or copies,) and legible in their lives, so that men, of every nation and language, might read and understand the import of it. Or, he so valued this testimonial, and so loved them, as the seals of his ministry, that he had this epistle, as it were, engraven in his heart. The language here used is remarkable. 'The epistle of Christ, ministered by us.' Christ wrote it, by the apostle, as his amanuensis;—written . . . with the Spirit of the living God.' What the Spirit does, is done by Christ. Rev. 2:6, 7, v. 7.

(1.) 'This is meant to meet an objection, such as, How is this, Paul, thou art magnifying thyself by saying these things? Which he refutes. The interrogation is equivalent to a strong negation.' Bl.; who reads, 'unless (indeed) you will say, we need, as some do;' adopting the reading ei (unless) instead of e (or). Some.] 'The false teachers at Corinth, (so all contrs.) who had originally introduced themselves to notice by commendatory letters, both there and elsewhere. Epistles of commendation.] Epistolai sustatikai: these were much in use in the primitive church, and were derived, as some think, from the tessera hospitalitatis of the Greeks and Romans. [This was a tally, or piece of wood, cut into two parts, of which each party, to the contract of mutual hospitality, kept one. For when the citizen travelled abroad, or visited the country, as there were no proper places of accommodation for travellers, he was obliged to lodge with a friend, whom, in turn, he lodged, when that friend, or foreigner, visited his own town or country. This sworn relation was esteemed by the Romans next to that of parents and clients. Adam.] But it has been proved, that the custom was in use among the

Jews also; as it would be likely to be in every country where letters were known, and personal communication not very frequent. These epistles commendatory were properly letters of introduction, (which is the import of the term,) though they, no doubt, often had recommendatory matter. Some of the finest specimens are from the pens of Cicero and Pliny. Bl.

(2.) 'The epistle here meant by Paul, was plainly the reformed morals, and good conduct of the Corinthian converts, which might be said to be read and known by all men; since the extensive commerce of the Corinthians, carried the inhabitants of that city everywhere, and dispersed everywhere a knowledge of what was there done; and all this would be an epistle commendatory of the apostle; since, as Chrys. and Theoph. say, "the virtue of the pupil adorns his teacher." Now this reformation was indeed not known to all men; but it must have been especially imprinted on the mind of the apostle; and this, therefore, he would bear about with him everywhere, just as the knowledge in question was disseminated everywhere. Thus Plato speaks of knowledge, "written in the soul of the learner." Bloomf.

(3.) 'Ye bear the commands of Christ on your heart, and transcribe them into your practice. This is, as it were, a letter dictated by Christ to me, and by me written on your hearts. So also all the ancient contrs., and Grot., and Ros. The Gr. tr. "manifestly declared," means, (so Ros.) to use any one's ministry in performing anything. In some sense, too, it might be said, they were a letter commendatory of Christ and the Gospel to the heathens.' Bl. Ink.] Notes, end of Jer. 32. and end of Jer. Tables.] Flav: a tablet: cuts a and d, end of Jer.; Ez. 17:1. Pref. to Sam.; and Judg. 5:14. Ed.

V. 4. If the new is so superior to the old covenant, then the ministers of the new are superior to those of the old: this natural conclusion he does not draw out, but neutralizes what might seem boastful, by ascribing all this superiority to God. So Theoph. and Bl. In.

V. 5, 6. 'We are of ourselves unable even to devise, or conceive the mysteries and truths of the Gospel, much less to give them the effect by which the Holy Spirit writes and imprints them on the hearts of men; but our power and sufficiency is (alone) from God. The apostle (obs. Ros.) says, that he could not have discovered this mode of salvation, but that he had his doctrine by divine revelation. And so Grot.' Bloomf.

V. 6. This is commonly understood restrictively, of the legal and evangelical dispensations contrasted with each other, and the context seems to favor this interpretation; yet it is not satisfactory, as proposed in a general manner, for the Mosaic dispensation was not a killing letter to all who were under it; nor is the Gospel, in all cases, attended by the life-giving Spirit. But the Mosaic dispensation derived all its saving efficacy from the Gospel, to which it referred, and, after the publication of Christianity, it became altogether 'a killing letter' to those who cleaved to it. Gal. 4:21-31. 5:1-6. For the Gospel was 'the ministration of the Spirit,' and the only doctrine through which life and salvation were communicated to sinners, as the apostle shows more fully in the next vs. The moral law, indeed, is universally 'found unto death,' to all who remain under it; but the ceremonies and types, together with the prophecies, gave ancient believers a general or indistinct discovery of mercy and grace, through the promised Savior; yet these institutions, to unbelievers, were a mere lifeless form, which left them under the condemnation of the moral law, and even added to it. Rom. 5:20, 21. 7:1-12. But then it was to be remembered, that the Gospel itself, and its ministers, are 'a savor of death unto death' to unbelievers, who often make the same formal use of some evangelical truths, and an attendance on Christian ordinances, which the Jews did of the Mosaic ceremonies, and the traditions of the elders; and in this way and in many others, 'the letter,' even of the N. T., 'kills,' and it only gives life, when accompanied 'by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.' 2:14-17. Rom. 8:1-4.—To understand 'the letter and the spirit,' of a literal and an allegorical interpretation of Scripture, is both foreign to the apostle's argument and also palpably absurd and extremely dangerous. Some parts of



not of the <sup>l</sup> letter, but of the spirit : for the <sup>k</sup> letter killeth, but <sup>l</sup> the spirit <sup>m</sup> giveth life.

7 But if the ministration of death, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses <sup>n</sup> for the glory of his countenance ; which *glory* was to be done away ;

8 How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious ?

9 For if the ministration of condemnation *be* glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

10 For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

11 For <sup>o</sup> if that which is done away *was* glorious, much more that which remaineth *is* glorious.

12 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great <sup>p</sup> plainness of speech :

13 And not as Moses, *which* put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end <sup>q</sup> of that which is abolished :

14 But their minds were <sup>r</sup> blinded ; for until this day remaineth the

same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament : which *veil* is done away in Christ.

j Ro. 2:28,29. m or, quickeneth. p or, boldness.  
k Ro. 4:15. 7:9,10. n Ex. 34:1,9-35. q Ro. 10:4.  
l Jn. 6:63. Ro. 8:2. o Ro. 5:20,21. r Ro. 11:7,8,25.

the New Testament, that God had made them so, v. 6. This he does in answer to the accusations of false teachers, who magnify greatly the law of Moses.

1. He distinguishes between the *letter* and the *spirit*, even of the N. T., v. 6. As able ministers of the N. T., they were ministers not merely of the *letter*, to read the written Word, or to preach the letter of the Gospel only, but of the *Spirit* also ; the Spirit of God did accompany their ministrations. The *letter killeth*, this the letter of the law does, for that is the ministration of death ; and if we rest only in the letter of the Gospel, we shall be never the better for so doing, for even that will be a *savor of death unto death* ; but the *Spirit* of the Gospel, going along with the *ministry* of the Gospel, giveth life spiritual, and life eternal.

2. He shows the difference between the O. T. and the New, and the excellency of the gospel above the law. For, The law was the *ministration of death,—of condemnation*, for that condemned and cursed every one who *continued not in all things written therein, to do them* ; but the gospel is the *ministration of life,—of righteousness* ; therein the righteousness of God by faith is revealed ; this shows us that the just shall live by his faith ; this reveals the grace and mercy of God through Jesus Christ, for the obtaining

of remission of sins, and eternal life. The Gospel therefore so much *exceeds in glory*, that in a manner it eclipses the glory of the legal dispensation, v. 10. Not only did the glory of Moses' face go away, but the glory of Moses' law is done away also ; whereas the gospel shall *remain*, v. 11. to the end of the world, and is always fresh and flourishing, and remains glorious.

V. 12—18. He draws two inferences from what he had said about the O. and N. T. dispensation.

1. Concerning the duty of the ministers of the Gospel, to use great *plainness* or clearness of speech. They ought not, like Moses, to put a veil on their faces, or obscure and darken those things that they should make plain. The gospel is a more clear dispensation than the law ; the things of God are revealed in the N. T., not in types and shadows ; and ministers are much to blame, if they do not set spiritual things, and gospel-truth and grace, in the clearest light possible.

2. Concerning the greater privilege and advantage of those who enjoy the Gospel. For, (1.) Those who lived under the legal dispensation, had *their minds blinded*, v. 14. and there was a *veil on their hearts*, v. 15. especially those who remained in judaism, after the coming of the Messiah, and the publication of his Gospel. Nevertheless, the apostle tells us, a time is coming, when this *veil also shall be taken away*, and when the body of that people—*shall turn to the Lord*, v. 16. Or, when any particular person is converted to God, then the veil of ignorance is taken away ; the blindness of the mind,

Scripture are allegorical, and must be so interpreted ; but surely *laws, doctrines, promises, exhortations, and historical facts*, must be literally understood by all, who do not purposely seek to misunderstand them !

SCOTT.

(6.) *Letter—spirit.* [1. e. not a religion LITERAL, or comprehended in writing, like the decalogue, and the law of Moses, but *spiritual*. This may be understood in a twofold way ; first, in the physical sense, since Christianity was at first promulgated without any Divine Scripture, (Paul speaks of his own times ; afterwards writings were highly necessary, *Ros.*) and solely by the H. S., which also by its miraculous *charismata* [gifts] extended at least up to the period when it became literal as well as spiritual ; and by its ordinary and sanctifying influences, hath ever since enabled true Christians to perform the duties which the Gospel enjoins ; and secondly, in a moral sense, as being raised above the dry forms, and empty shadows of the law ; and aiming at true and substantial excellency. "Now Moses (*obs. Grot.*) brought the writing in two stone tables to the people. The apostle's word was accompanied with more illustrious signs than Moses had given, even with tongues, miraculous healings, raising the dead, nay, and with the power of conferring such gifts on others ; which had been utterly without example." Thus, it is remarked by *Æc.*, that the law promulgated the writings of Moses ; but the preaching of Christ ministered the gifts of the Spirit. And *Theoph.* *obs.*, that the law was, in a certain sense, spiritual, as given by the Spirit, but did not *confer the Spirit*, as did the new covenant : for not only did the apostles teach spiritual and divine doctrines, but by the laying on of hands *gave the Spirit*. It may also (as *Whit. obs.*) be called the covenant of the Spirit, in allusion to Jer. 3:33. where God promises, under the new covenant, to put his laws in the inward parts ; and to write them in the hearts of his people. And to this view *Jaspis confines* it, observing, our religion is called Spirit, for it looks to *internals*, with their effects and advantages, the Mosaic pertaining mostly to *externals*. He then with great taste, as well as truth, observes, "Paul, indeed, uses a more elegant and figurative style, the more he is moved in mind, which is an indication how natural this elegance is to him." *BL.*

*Killeth . . . giveth life.* [There are several ways in which this will hold good. Hence comtrs. differ according to the views they take. Without noticing refinements to which the apostle would not descend, (and which may be seen in the Crit. Sacr., *Poole's Syn.*, *Wolf's Curw.*, &c.), some here recognise a Jewish proverb, expressing the superiority of the *spiritual*, i. e. *mystical*, interpretation of the law over the literal. But (as *Doddr. obs.*) this is a very arbitrary and unwarrantable exposition. By the *letter*, all judicious comtrs. are agreed, is meant the law of Moses, and by the *Spirit*, the gospel, the former of which may be said to *kill*, in a *metaphorical* sense, (and so *Grot.*) as being merely minacious and damatory, threatening death, and leaving to it those who disobeyed ; containing no promises of a future state, even to those who obeyed it, Jn. 6:49. Gal. 3:21. and for those who disobeyed it (as all, from the frailty of human nature must do) there could be no hope. Nay, it not only denounced punishment and death, but often indirectly *occasioned* it, by the multiplicity, the minuteness, and the difficulty of its ceremonial rites ; thus, as the apostle says, "taking occasion from our conenpiscence, it increased sin," and did not confer any strength to perform its injunctions, being destitute of all the assistances of grace. Such is the mode in which the most eminent modern comtrs. explain.

On the contrary, the *Spirit*, namely, that new and spiritual system, the Gospel, *giveth life*, since it not only brings life and immortality to light, but, by the manifestations of the Spirit, *enables* believers to perform its injunctions. See more in *Poole*, and Crit. Sacr. The Gr. is so used at Gal. 3:21. So that the recent foreign comtrs. err, in interpreting the word solely of *offering felicity* ; for there is plainly, in both passages,

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a reference to that *expiatory sacrifice*, by which the vivification is effected. Perhaps, too, Paul meant expressly to contrast the two dispensations, by considering the *tendency* and disposition of each. The chief end and purpose of the *law* was *punishment*, not *reward*. It was extreme in remarking, and severe in punishing the least faults ; whereas, the *chief end* of the *gospel* is, in every sense, *life and happiness*. It deals in forgiveness, and never spurns the penitent and reformed sinner, but washes away his sins. And it may be said to *give life*, as "quickening those who were dead in trespasses and sins," and imparting new life by the sanctifying graces of the H. S. See Eph. 2:1. BLOOMF.

V. 7—11. The Corinthians undervalued the authority of the apostle, as 'the minister of Christ ;' but he here showed them, how far the ministry of the N. T. excelled that of the Old.—From this argument of the apostle, it is generally concluded, that the false teachers at Corinth *judaised* ; but it has before appeared, that their leading errors were of a different nature, though some might be prone to run into that extreme. The apostle, however, seems to have principally intended 'to magnify his office,' and to show, from the example of Moses, that the ministry of the N. T. was honorable, in proportion to the superior glory of that dispensation ; and that he, as immediately entrusted with the important stewardship of the divine mysteries, as an inspired apostle, and as faithful in this service, had a right to demand respect and deference to his authority ; which his opponents, whoever they were, refused him, and instructed their followers to refuse him.

SCOTT.

(7.) *Glory.* [*Doxa* : Heb. *qrn*, rays proceeding from the face. See *Carp.*, and comp. Ac. 6:15. Lu. 9:29. Mat. 17:2.] 'The Rabbins say, the face of Moses shone like the sun, and that Adam before his fall had this celestial light, and all prophets, &c., with whom God had familiar interviews. *Elsner* shows also that the Mahometans ascribed to their prophet, and the Gentiles to their heroes, and philosophers, countess countenances. *Pausanias* relates, that from that of *Æsculapins*, when a child and exposed, proceeded a *refulgence*, whence the shepherd who found him thought it *something divine* ; and *Virg.* relates something similar of *Ascanius* ; and so *Pliny*, *Plut.*, and *Dionys.*, of *Servius Tullius*. To other divine persons, other writers ascribed *rays upon the head*. *Philostr.* relates, that *Apollonius Tyan.* seemed thus *like an angel* ; and *Porphyry* says, of *Plotinus*, that, *while speaking, his mind shone forth, till a lovely light shed itself visibly over his countenance*. And *Marius* speaks of the *light* one *Rufinus* saw *shed around the head of Proclus*. *Lucian* gives such an honor to *Timon*. *Elsner. BL.* thinks their words 'are only strongly figurative ; or were fictions founded on truth, viz. a tradition of what occurred to Moses ;' which, although it be an *easy way*, at least, of accounting for it, is yet unsatisfactory. *Ed. Abolished.*] 'Done away by death, say some ; others, ceasing with youth, a lowering of the sense not to be tolerated. The best opinion seems to be that of the Gr. comtrs., *Beza*, &c., that this was a type of the abrogation of the *glory*, viz. all the *Levitical Law*. At least, Paul seems to hint, that the *Schechinah's* was a transitory, the Gospel's an ever increasing glory, to all eternity.' BLOOMF.

(8.) *Righteousness.* [Rather, *justification*, which the antithetical term, condemnation, absolutely requires, say *Vat.*, *Vorst.*, and the Gr. comtrs.]

Id.

(10. 11.) *Had, &c.* [Was in a manner, or comparatively, inglorious. *Is done, &c.*] Was (to be), or should he done away . . . *is* to remain, &c.]

Id.

V. 13. *Abolished.* [Such an oblique manner of speaking on this subject makes the argument . . . peculiarly striking. It is taken for granted, as a thing certainly known, and quite indisputable, that the Mosaic dispensation was to be abolished.] *Doddr.*

SCOTT.

(13.) *The end.* [1. e. Christ, as v. 14. proves. See *BL.* *Ed.*



15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.

16 Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.

17 Now the Lord 'is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

CHAP. IV.

1 He declareth how he hath used all sincerity and faithful diligence in preaching the Gospel, 7 and how the troubles and persecutions which he daily endured for the same did redound to the praise of God's power, 12 to the benefit of the church, 16 and to the apostle's own eternal glory.

1 THEREFORE, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but, by manifestation of the truth, commending

ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

s Is. 25:7. w Ro. 8:29. a 1 Co. 7:25.  
t 1 Co. 15:45. x Ps. 84:7. b shame.  
u Ro. 8:2. y or, of the Lord c c. 2:17.  
v 1 Co. 13:12. the Spirit.

and the hardness of the heart, are cured. (2.) The condition of those who enjoy and believe the Gospel is much more happy. For, they have liberty, v. 17. freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and from the servitude of corruption; liberty of access to God, and freedom in prayer. They have light; for with open face we behold the glory of the Lord, v. 18. The Israelites saw the glory of God in a cloud, which was dark and dreadful; but Christians see it in a glass, more clearly and comfortably. It was the peculiar privilege of Moses, for God to converse with him face to face, in a friendly manner; but now all true Christians see Him more clearly with open face. He showeth them his glory. This light and liberty are transforming; we are changed into the same image, v. 18. from one degree of glorious grace unto another, till grace here be consummated in glory for ever. How much therefore should Christians prize and improve these privileges! We should not rest contented without an experimental knowledge of the transforming power of the Gos-

pel, by the operation of the Spirit, bringing us into a conformity to the temper and tendency of the glorious Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

CHAP. IV. V. 1-7. The apostle had, in the foregoing ch., been magnifying his office, on account of the excellency or glory of that Gospel about which he [and his brethren] officiated; and now in this ch. his design is, to vindicate their ministry from the accusation of false teachers, who charged them as deceitful workers, or endeavored to prejudice the minds of the people against them on account of their sufferings. 'Seeing we have this ministry, are so much distinguished and dignified, we do not take state on ourselves, nor indulge idleness, but are excited to the better performance of our duty.'

1. Their constancy and perseverance in their work are declared, v. 1. And this their steadfastness was owing to the mercy of God. From the same mercy and grace that they received the apostleship, Rom. 1:5. they received strength to persevere in the work of that office; so it is owing to the mercy and grace of God, if we continue faithful, and persevere in our work with diligence. The best men in the world would faint under their burdens, if they did not receive mercy from God. But that mercy which has helped us out, and helped us on,

PRACT. OBS. Even the appearance of self-commendation is painful to the humble and spiritual Christian. Yet, alas! the prominent appearance of much religious profession is self-confidence, boasting, loquacity, censoriousness, a disputatious temper, bitterness, and clamor, with little strictness in the general conduct! But when professed Christians act consistently, obeying the commands and [closely] copying the example of their Lord, they honor and recommend the Gospel and the preachers of it, and are instrumental in bringing others also to attend on the truth without prejudice. Mat. 5:13-16. Phil. 2:14-18. 1 Pet. 2:12. 3:1-4, 13-16.—Success in this blessed work should inspire our minds with confidence in God. The holy law of God, though excellent and glorious in itself, can be only 'the ministration of death,' and 'condemnation' to fallen man; but justifying righteousness and sanctifying grace come from Jesus Christ alone, and by the ministry of the Gospel. May Christians then learn to value the faithful ministry of the Gospel, and encourage

their 'preachers to use great plainness of speech,' suited to the doctrine with which they are entrusted! and may all preachers study and endeavor after this great plainness and boldness of speech, in all their ministrations, before the rich and powerful, as well as among their poorer brethren!—[Still doth the glorious glass of the Gospel stand full in our view, from which the lustre of the Redeemer's countenance is reflected. Let us daily behold his image there, and contemplate it with an attentive eye, as those who are solicitous that we may wear some of those rays; yea that we may wear them with still increasing lustre; that we may be transformed from glory to glory, and, reflecting those rays, shine as lights in the world. Doddr.] This transformation of the soul, into conformity to Christ, is the proper evidence and test of spiritual illumination, and without a measure of it, all supposed discoveries and revelations are mere delusion and enthusiasm. SCOTT.

V. 16. Turn, &c.] 'These words (as Chrys. obs.) suggest the only remedy for this mental blindness and stupidity, and the only mode of restoration. They may be thus tr. "But when they shall turn to the Lord (and then only) the veil will be removed." It.] Shall Israel, from v. 13. and which is referred to at v. 14. By Lord, is meant the Lord Jesus, the true Messiah.'

BLOOMP.

V. 17, 18. The preceding argument shows, that the Lord Jesus 'is that Spirit,' or animating soul, which gives life to the letter of the Scriptures, and to believers. (6) Without Him, doctrines, promises, ordinances, and commandments, are a mere lifeless body of religion; the power and life of all and of every part must wholly be derived from their relation to his person, mediation, and grace; and, without faith in Him and grace from Him, all knowledge, ordinances, or external obedience, constitute only a 'form of godliness.' In both respects He is, as it were, the soul which animates the body, and gives activity, energy, and value to every part of it. This union with Christ is effected by the indwelling of his 'Holy Spirit;' and where this divine Agent, 'proceeding from the Father and the Son,' and One with the Father and the Son, inhabits the heart, 'there is liberty.' He gives freedom from sin and Satan, from condemnation and slavish principles, from the love of the world and the fear of men; He renders the will free from the bondage of corrupt passions; He enables the believer to find liberty in willing obedience, and in spiritually worshipping God. Ps. 51:12, 13. Rom. 8:1, 2, 14-17. 2 Tim. 1:6-8. Some expositors explain the 'open,' or 'unveiled' face, to mean the face of Christ, rendering the words, 'We all, in an unveiled face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord &c.' The glory of God in the face of Christ is certainly the object contemplated. The veil on the face of Moses implied, that this glory was but obscurely shown by his ministration; but the veil, by the 'ministration of righteousness and of the Spirit,' is removed, so that the glory of God in the face of Christ is unveiled, and all they, from whose hearts the veil of prejudice, pride, unbelief, and worldly lusts, is taken away, see it clearly and distinctly. If the 'unveiled face' be understood of the beholders this latter 'veil' is meant, and the contrast is between them and the unbelieving Jews; but if it be understood of Christ, then the contrast is between the obscure ministration of Moses, and the clear and full ministration of the apostles. As believers, they beheld this glory; and through their doctrine, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, all Christians did and still do behold it.—The holiness of God, as comprising all his moral perfections, is his 'glory,' and the renewal of our souls, from those sinful propensities which are our shame, to increasing degrees of conformity to the divine holiness, is transformation 'from glory to glory,' till perfected in heaven. SCOTT.

(17.) 'Now the Lord signifies the covenant of the Spirit, (i. e. accompanied with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,) of which we are the ministers. And where the Spirit, the inspiration of the Lord is, as it is with us, there, &c.'

MACKN.

(18.) Glass.] Katoptron: a mirror of highly burnished metal. So Xen., Eurip., Aesch., &c. [ant. Is. 3:17: 21. fig. 5. Comp. the cuts of classic antiquities, from Montfaucon.] A substance of this sort reflected images with great distinctness and brilliancy. So Plut., Philostr., Procop., Eurip. Thus the sense is, undoubtedly, that of clear and dis-



ting knowledge, as is also suggested by the words subjoined: "Beholding the clear and brilliant image of his doctrine, and recognising its glory in its saving efficacy on the hearts of men," and thus having our minds enlightened by it: for (as Parkh. obs.) as the ancient mirrors were made of metal, highly polished, it must necessarily happen, that the person who looked on his image in them, would have his face strongly illuminated by the reflected rays. Changed.] Alluding to the changing of the face of Moses on beholding the Shechinah. From glory to glory.] Implying that the more we behold this brilliant and glorious light, the more do we reflect back its rays, i. e. (casting aside the figure) the more we contemplate the great truths of the Christian religion, the more do our minds become imbued with its spirit. "We go on (to use the words of Ps. 8:7. entirely parallel) from strength to strength" ... Or, (as it is well explained in its true, spiritual import, by Bp. Horne,) we are enabled to proceed from one degree of holiness to another, until we come to the glorified vision of God in heaven itself. BLOOMP.

'Here is one of the most beautiful contrasts that can be imagined. Moses saw the Shechinah, and it rendered his face resplendent, so that he covered it with a veil, the Jews not being able to bear the reflected light; we behold Christ as in the glass of his Word, and (as the reflection of a very luminous object from a mirror, gilds the face on which the reverberated rays fall) our faces shine too; and we veil them not, but diffuse the lustre, which, as we discover more and more of his glories in the Gospel, is continually increasing.'

DODDR.

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1, 2. 'What reason can be assigned why they, who ... preached the Gospel plainly, should write the same things to the same persons obscurely? ... Eph. 3:4. Phil. 3:1. 1 Pet. 1:13, 14. 3:1, 2. — "Whatsoever things were written of old time, were written for our learning;" Rom. 15:4. and surely they who wrote afterwards by the same Spirit, wrote for the same end, that they to whom they wrote might "be wise to that which is good." Rom. 16:19.—And if they wrote for our learning and instruction, to be sure they wrote plainly and clearly, as to them; since otherwise they wrote not so as to instruct and teach, but rather to confound the reader. Seeing, therefore, the great end of writing the Scripture was, to instruct the world in the will and mind of God, and the great things of the Christian faith,—their writings are an effectual mean to obtain it; which yet they cannot be, unless they are plain and clear, as to the great things of religion.' Whitby. This was written against the papists, who discourage the reading of the Scrip-



3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them <sup>d</sup> that are lost :

4 In whom the god <sup>e</sup> of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image <sup>f</sup> of God, should shine unto them.

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

6 For God, who commanded <sup>g</sup> the light to shine out of darkness, <sup>h</sup> hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency <sup>i</sup> of the power may be of God, and not of us.

d 2 Th. 2:10. f Jn. 1:14,18. h it is he who hath.  
e Jn. 12:31,40. g Ge. 1:3. i 1 Co. 2:5.

hitherto, we may rely on to help us even to the end.

2. Their sincerity in their work is avouched, v. 2. in several expressions. The things of dishonesty that will not bear the light, and of which those who practise them should be ashamed, they did not allow, but did renounce and avoid with indignation; they practised no disguise, art, or cunning, had no base and wicked designs, covered with fair and specious pretences of something that was good; but in great simplicity, and with open freedom, preached the Word, as he said before, with great plainness of speech. Some think, the apostle alludes to the deceit which treacherous gamesters use, or that of hucksters in the market, who mix bad wares with good. The apostles acted not like such persons, but manifested the truth to every

man's conscience, declaring nothing but what in their own conscience they believed to be true, and might serve for the conviction of their consciences who heard them, who were to judge for themselves, and to give an account for themselves. And all this they did as in the sight of God, desiring thus to commend themselves to God, and to the consciences of men, by their undisguised sincerity.

3. An objection is obviated, which might be thus formed; 'If it be thus, how then does it come to pass, that the Gospel is hid, and proves ineffectual, as to some who hear it?' To which the apostle answers, by showing that this was not the fault of the Gospel, nor of the preachers thereof. But the true reasons of this were, (1.) They are lost souls, to whom the Gospel is hid, or is ineffectual, v. 3. Christ came to save such. Mat. 18:11. and if the Gospel do not find and save them, they are lost for ever; for there is no other method or mean of salvation. The hiding of the Gospel therefore from souls, is both an evidence and cause of their ruin. (2.) The god of this world hath blinded their minds, v. 4.

4. They are under the influence and power of the devil, here called the god of this world, and elsewhere the prince of this world, because of the great interest he has in this world, the homage paid to him by multitudes, and the great sway that, by divine permission, he bears in the world. As he is the prince of darkness, and ruler of the darkness of this world, so he darkens the understandings of men, by blinding their minds with ignorance, error, and prejudices, that they should not behold the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God. Observe, Christ's design by his Gospel, is, to make a glorious discovery of God to the minds of men; but the devil's design is, to keep men in ignorance; and when he cannot keep the light of the Gospel out of the world, to keep it out of the hearts of men.

4. A proof of their integrity is given, v. 5. They made it their business to preach Christ, and not themselves. Self was not the

matter or the end of the apostles' preaching; their own notions, private opinions, passions and prejudices, nor their own secular interest or glory; but Christ Jesus the Lord, as thus it became them, being Christ's servants. Their business was, to make their Master known as the Messiah, or the Christ of God, as Jesus, the only Savior of men, and as the rightful Lord, and to advance his honor and glory. All the lines of Christian doctrine centre in Christ; and in preaching Christ, we preach all we should preach. 'As to ourselves,' says the apostle, 'we preach, or declare, that we are your servants for Jesus' sake.' This was no compliment, but a real profession of a readiness to do good to their souls, and that for Jesus' sake, not their own, but Christ's, that they might imitate his great example, and advance his glory. Ministers should be servants to the souls of men; yet, at the same time, they must avoid becoming the servants of the humors or the lusts of men; if they should thus seek to please men, they would not be the servants of Christ, Gal. 1:10. And there was good reason,

(1.) Why they should preach Christ. For by gospel-light we have the knowledge of the glory of God, which shines in the face of Jesus Christ, v. 6. As light was the first-born of the first creation, so it is in the new creation; the illumination of the Spirit is his first work on the soul. The grace of God created such a light in the soul, that they who were sometimes darkness, are made light in the Lord, Eph. 5:8.

(2.) Why they should not preach themselves; because they were but earthen vessels; things of little or no worth or value,—an allusion to the lamps Gideon's soldiers carried in earthen pitchers, Judg. 7:16. Ministers of the Gospel are weak and frail, subject to like passions and infirmities as other men, mortal, and soon broken in pieces. And God has so ordered it, that the weaker the vessel, the stronger his power may appear, that the treasure itself should be valued the more.

tures, because they are obscure, lest the common people should learn heresy from them; and on the same ground they rest the claims of the church to infallibility, and the authority of their traditions. But the reasoning is equally conclusive against all those nominal protestants, who suppose that great learning and skill are needful to understand the Scriptures, especially the apostolical epistles; otherwise conclusions may be drawn from them, which they think heretical; and this is a consideration which is become of very great importance, in the strange and anti-christian controversy of late excited, even among protestant ministers and rulers of the church, about the propriety of circulating the Holy Scriptures alone among mankind in general!

(2.) We have (all along) renounced, and do renounce. Deceitfully, &c.] The phrase is synonymous with corrupting, &c., of ch. 3. and denotes corrupting the Word by impure admixtures of Gentile philosophy, or Jewish tradition; or by intermixing any opinions inconsistent with its purity, and introduced for the sake of private interest, or to flatter the passions and prejudices of men. This was a frequent sense of the Greek word here. Thus we say, to play tricks with an article.

V. 3, 4. If then, after all, the gospel, which the apostle preached so plainly, were 'hidden,' or 'covered with a veil,' as the Mosaic law had been; if its truth, nature, and glory, were concealed from any who heard it; those persons were evidently as yet in a lost estate, and in the most imminent danger of final perdition; and the veil must be on their hearts, through the prevalence of pride, prejudice, and ungodly lusts. Note, 3:12-16. For Satan, 'the god of this world,' &c.—It is astonishing, that many of the ancient Christian writers understood the true God to be meant, by 'the God of this world.'—This shows, that the authority of the fathers, as expositors of Scripture, is not implicitly to be depended on; and that the concessions of the first reformers in this respect greatly embarrassed their cause, in arguing against the papists.

(3.) 'Hid or obscure to them that are lost, i. e. reprobate, the true sense of the Gr. Grot. renders: "those who deserve to perish; who foster their vices, and will not see the truth, which condemns those vices." And this comes to the same thing. The early modern paraphrasts include the inference which necessarily results from hence; namely: "it is not ours nor the Gospel's fault, if they perish; and it is no proof of obscurity, or want of evidence, that they cannot perceive it."

(4.) 'By this world is meant the wicked part of it, the mere worldlings. In Satan, as the author and continual promoter of sin, sinners are, as it were, bound to yield obedience, John 12:31. 14:30, &c.' 1p.

V. 5, 6. The apostle seems especially to have adverted to his own extraordinary conversion; yet he evidently meant to include the change wrought in the minds and hearts of all other faithful ministers and true believers; which is similar in its nature and effects, and effected by the same divine power, though not attended by the same miraculous circumstances.—(v) Face.] 'The apostle continually alludes to the face of Moses, which was not uncovered, (that the Image of God might be clear,)

but covered.' Beza. The face of Moses gave a feeble and transient reflection of the glory of God, which was covered with a veil: but the face of Christ, the Image of God, displays it fully and permanently to those who are divinely illuminated. 3:7-16.—'The light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ' (4), and 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God' (6), are spoken of as the same; for 'Christ and the Father are One.'

(5.) Paul had before said, "we walk not in craftiness," after which he inserted something concerning unbelievers, how they are veiled. Now then, he says: "We do not act in a tricky manner, or practise these arts, because we do not preach ourselves, as do the false teachers." For they persuaded their disciples to name themselves after them. Preach.] The Greek signifies, to act not merely as a herald, but also as an ambassador: and so the noun is used, 1 Tim. 2:7. 2 Tim. 1:11. 2 Pet. 2:5. The sense seems to be: We do not act in this business as principals, (we are rather servants to you therein, v. 6.) nor despatch as if it were a business of our own: we merely act as ambassadors and procurators on the part of another, namely, Jesus Christ. And so Grot. Doddridge's sense, "we do not make ourselves the end of our preaching," may be included.

V. 7. Eph. 3:8. Col. 2:1-4. Even the apostles and most eminent evangelists were sinners, by nature and practice; their bodies were frail and mortal, as those of other men; nor were their minds less susceptible of fear, sorrow, anxiety, and disquietude, than those of their brethren and neighbors. Acts 14:11-18, v. 15. Jam. 5:16-18. They were also conscious of many defects and impediments; and destitute of those accomplishments which the world generally admires; they had no wealth or authority; they made no show of superior genius, learning, or eloquence; nor were they delivered from the effects of indwelling sin. So far, therefore, from being such illustrious persons as to attract general admiration, they were treated as 'the filth of the world;' 8-12. 1 Cor. 4:9-13, and while their infirmities often rendered them less acceptable even to the churches, their stripes and imprisonments increased the contempt with which the proud and self-wise beheld them. This was appointed by God for most important purposes: [especially that fewer corrupt motives might influence in professed conversion;] and his power be glorified.

(7.) Earthen vessels.] 'Nothing could more aptly designate the human body. The Gr. for earthen properly signifies testaceous, as being from ostrakon, a shell; afterwards a piece of baked earth. The Platonists (says Grot.) made two bodies of a man; one the "vehicle of the soul;" the other the palpabile, or the grosser, carnal part, which we touch; and that they call the ostrakon, from its standing in the same relation to us as the shell to the fish. The Gr. for vessel, skeuos, (like the Heb. kly, 1 S. 21:6, &c.,) means a vessel or a utensil. In both these views it is here considered: the former, inasmuch as it is the depository of the soul; the latter, as being the organ, or utensil, or tool by which the human mind acts. So the Greek philosophers used it; and the Latin, vas, a vessel. Excellency of the power.] Elegantly put for exceeding great power—might evidently appear to be.'



8 We are troubled<sup>1</sup> on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but<sup>2</sup> not in despair:

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; east down, but not destroyed;

10 Always bearing<sup>1</sup> about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that<sup>2</sup> the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live are<sup>2</sup> always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then<sup>2</sup> death worketh in us, but life in you.

13 We having the same<sup>2</sup> spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

14 Knowing<sup>2</sup> that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

15 For<sup>2</sup> all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace<sup>2</sup> might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God.

16 For which cause<sup>2</sup> we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward<sup>2</sup> man is renewed day by day.

17 For<sup>2</sup> our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

V. 8—18. In these vs. he gives an account of their courage and patience under all their sufferings. Where observe,

I. How their sufferings, and patience under them, are declared, v. 8—12. Note, Whatever condition the children of God may be in, in this world, they have a yet not, or a 'but not' to comfort themselves with; their case sometimes is bad, yea, very bad, but not so bad as it might be. The apostle speaks of their sufferings as constant, and as a counterpart of the sufferings of Christ, v. 10. Christ's sufferings were, after a sort, acted over in theirs; thus did they bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus in their body, setting before the world [the example of suffering for goodness' sake] the great example of a suffering Christ, that the life of Jesus might also be made manifest, that people might see the power of Christ's resurrection, and the efficacy of grace in and from the living Jesus, manifested in and toward them, who did yet live, though they were always delivered to death, v. 11. and though death worked in them, v. 12. they being exposed to death, and ready to be swallowed up by death continually. Thus great were the sufferings of the apostles, that, in comparison with them, other Christians were, even at that time, in prosperous circumstances. Death worketh in us; but life in you, v. 12.

II. What kept them from sinking and fainting under their sufferings, v. 13—18.

1. Faith, v. 13. that faith which is of the operation of the Spirit; the same faith by which the saints of old did and suffered such great things. Note, Faith is a sovereign cordial in troublous times; and as we receive help and encouragement from the good words and examples of others, so we should be careful to give others a good example.

2. Hope of the resurrection, v. 14. See I Cor. 15. The hope of the resurrection will encourage us in a suffering day, and set us above the fear of death; for what reason has a good Christian to fear death, that dies in hope of a joyful resurrection?

3. The consideration of the glory of God

and the benefit of the church, by means of their sufferings, v. 15. ch. 1: 6. and this did redound to God's glory. For when the church is edified, then God is glorified; and we may well afford to bear sufferings patiently and cheerfully, when we see others are the better for them,—instructed, edified, confirmed, and comforted. The sufferings of Christ's ministers, as well as their preaching and conversation, are intended for the good of the church, and the glory of God.

4. The thoughts of the advantage their souls would reap by the sufferings of their bodies, v. 16. We have every one of us an outward and an inward man, a body and a soul. If the outward man perish, there is no remedy, it must and will be so, it was made to perish. It is our happiness, if the decays of the outward man contribute to the renewing of the inward man; but the best of men have need of further renewing of the inward man, even day by day; and as in wicked men things grow every day worse and worse, so in godly men they grow better and better.

5. The prospect of eternal life and happiness was a mighty support and comfort. (1.) The apostle and his fellow-sufferers saw their afflictions working toward heaven, and that there they would end at last, v. 17. whereupon, they found their afflictions to be light, and the glory of heaven to be a far more exceeding weight. That which sense was ready to pronounce heavy and long, grievous and tedious, faith perceived to be light and short, but for a moment. On the other hand, the worth and weight of the crown of glory, as they are exceedingly great in themselves, so they are esteemed to be by the believing soul,—they far exceed all his expressions and thought; and it will be a special support, in our sufferings, when we can perceive them appointed as the way, and preparing us for the enjoyment of the future glory. (2.) Their faith enabled them to make this right judgment of things, v. 18. It is by faith that we see God, who is invisible, Heb. 11: 27. and by that we look to an unseen heaven and hell, and faith is the evidence of things not

j c. 7:5. k or, not altogether without help or means. l Ga. 6:17. m 2 Ti. 2:11,12. n 1 Co. 15:31,49. o c. 13:9. p 2 Pe. 1:1. q Ps 116:10. r c. 5:1—4. s 1 Co. 3:21,22. t c. 8:19. u 1 Co. 15:53. v Ro. 7:22. w Ro. 8:13,34.

V. 8. 'The true key to this [energetic and noble] passage (which may seem a digression, though very pertinent to the apostle's purpose) is this, that he aims at recovering the affections of these Corinthians, which were much alienated from him; for this purpose he freely opens his heart towards them, and tenderly represents the many and grievous pressures and hardships to which love to souls, and to theirs among the rest, exposed him.' DODD. 'The allusions are military.' BLOOMF.

V. 10. 'Bearing about everywhere, i. e. constantly sustaining and enduring' (for that is all the Gr. means) 'mortal perils to the body, as well as excessive perturbations of mind;' all which Jesus suffered even unto death itself.' BL. 'Only a general comparison is intended;' Paul, however, had, as is supposed, by most comtrs., suffered death at Lystra, Acts 14:19. and actually died at last, a martyr, at Rome. Life . . . manifest.' 'The argument is popular.' BL. 'It being a certain demonstration that Christ is risen, and still lives, that we, who persuade others to believe this, are enabled to do such mighty wonders in his name, and patiently and constantly to suffer such fiery trials by his grace.' WHITEBY.

V. 11. 'This v. is entirely explanatory of the preceding.' BLOOMF.

V. 12. Death. 'To be here taken in the sense, peril of death.' 'The preaching of the Gospel exposes us to death; but unto you it brings eternal life.' So most comtrs.; and Ros. and Valpy think it the simplest interpretation. Something more profound, however, seems intended. Ros. explains, 'Wherefore, the fruit of (our) death is seen in us, but of (our) life in you. Hence, when we are tossed with perils of death, that is rather our disadvantage; but when we are freed from them, that is your advantage.' Juspis thus; 'These perils of my life tend to your consolation, that you, by my example, may learn that God sneers the wretched; and that I, delivered from these dangers, can still profit and teach you. Therefore they strengthen your faith in God.' The true, seems that of Chrys.: 'that in us the Gospel takes effect by producing trials and tribulations; but in you (thereby) it takes its effect by life, i. e. a comparative freedom from those perils and tribulations which fall to our lot.' BL. How fitly might our pilgrim fathers say this to us, their favored descendants! Ep.

V. 13—18. The apostle and his fellow-sufferers persevered in their ministry, because they were actuated by 'the same spirit of faith,' which the psalmist had expressed; when, amidst imminent dangers and distressing difficulties, he had declared his confidence, that God, according to his promise, would deliver him out of them all. Ps. 116:10, 11.—The words here used are far more emphatical, than any tr. of them can well be made. There is a repetition of the word hyperbole; by which is generally meant, a person's exceeding the limits of exact truth, in any animated description or narration; but in the subject on which the apostle spoke, the boldest figures of speech must come short of the mark. If a man proceeded from one apparent hyperbole to another, and accumulated the most energetic terms as much as possible, he could not fully express the superlative excellency of that glory, honor, and immortality, in which the believer's sufferings would assuredly terminate. Compared with it, all temporal afflictions were levity itself, 'a momentary light-

ness of affliction;' and earthly prosperity mere vanity and emptiness. This glory was substantial, weighty, durable, exceeding description and imagination; and human language must labor in vain to convey any suitable ideas of it. It would even have been an insupportable 'weight' to them, until their bodies and souls were prepared by Omnipotence to sustain it. It was a 'weight of glory,' a fulness of God, a measure of knowledge, holiness, dignity, and felicity, in his favor and presence, and according to his glorious excellency and beauty; adequate to whatever they should be made capable of possessing and enjoying; and all this would be unchangeable and eternal [in progress].—'What an influence Paul's Hebrew had on his Greek, is everywhere visible. Cabad, in Hebrew, signifies to be heavy, and to be glorious. . . . Paul, in the Greek, joins them, and says, "weight of glory." Locke.—That the writers of the N. T. frequently hebraize, so to speak, is manifest; but whether this might not, in some cases, be intentional, may be questioned. Even the copious Greek, as found in the most admired pagan writers, could not have expressed, in full energy, many of the apostle's exalted conceptions, without some of those sublime allusions and metaphors, which are found only in the Hebrew scriptures, or in the N. T. exclusively. SCOTT.

'Let us admire the beauty of the position, and see how the good is set against the evil, like two scales differently filled. Here is a feather against lead,—a grain of sand against the universe,—a moment against eternity. Oh, how the scale that contains this world's light trouble kicks the beam, when set in competition with the glory which shall be revealed in us!' HANNAH MORE.

(13.) 'Since then we have a mind and disposition animated with the same faith: so pneuma [tr. spirit] is used, 1 Cor. 7:19.' BLOOMF.

(16.) Renewed. 'This has nothing to do with the renovation implied by "regeneration," [but rather imports progressive sanctification, which follows the instantaneous act of regeneration. En.] Chrys. rightly explains it, by a holy confidence resulting from former deliverances, and an implicit faith, united with an anticipation of the glory that shall be revealed.' BL. In all which the Holy Spirit co-operates. Ep.

(17.) 'This v. and the next contain a passage, which, in energy and beauty of expression, is little inferior to any one of Demosthenes himself, to whom, indeed, and to Thucydides, in his orations, the style of the apostle, when it rises, as here, to the oratorical, bears no slight resemblance.' BL. 'This is one of the most emphatic passages in all Paul's writings, in which he speaks as much like an orator, as he does as an apostle. The lightness of the trial is expressed by "the lightness of our affliction;" as if he had said, it is even levity itself in such a comparison. On the other hand, the kath' hyperbolēn eis hyperbolēn [from hyperbole to hyperbole], which we render far more exceeding, is infinitely emphatical, and cannot be fully expressed by any tr., [Paul's thoughts overleaping the limits both of grammar and language itself.] It signifies, that all hyperboles fall short of describing that weight of eternal glory, so solid and lasting, that you may pass from hyperbole to hyperbole, and yet, when you have gained the last, are infinitely below it.' In. Blackwall, Dod. tr., Dr. A. Clarke.



18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not <sup>2</sup>seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

## CHAP. V.

<sup>1</sup> That in his assured hope of immortal glory, <sup>9</sup> and in expectation of it, and of the general judgment, he laboreth to keep a good conscience, <sup>12</sup> not that he may herein boast of himself, <sup>14</sup> but as one that, having received life from Christ, endeavoureth to live as a new creature to Christ only, <sup>18</sup> and by his ministry of reconciliation to reconcile others also in Christ to God.

**F**OR we know, that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle <sup>a</sup>were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house <sup>b</sup>not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

<sup>2</sup> For in this we <sup>c</sup>groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

<sup>3</sup> If so be that being clothed we shall not be found <sup>d</sup>naked.

<sup>4</sup> For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality <sup>e</sup>might be swallowed up of life.

<sup>5</sup> Now he that hath wrought <sup>f</sup>us for the self-same thing, *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest <sup>g</sup>of the Spirit.

<sup>x</sup> He. 11:1. <sup>b</sup> 1 Pe. 1:4. <sup>e</sup> 1 Co. 15:53.  
<sup>a</sup> Job 4:19. <sup>c</sup> Ro. 8:23. <sup>f</sup> Is. 29:23. Ep. 2:10.  
<sup>2</sup> Pe. 1:13, 14. <sup>d</sup> Re. 3:18. 16:15. <sup>g</sup> Ep. 1:14.

*seen.* By faith we not only discern these things, and the great difference between the

seen temporal, and the unseen eternal, but take *our aim* at unseen things, and chiefly regard them, and make it our *end and scope*, not to escape *present* evils, and obtain *present* good, both of which are temporal and transitory; but to escape *future* evil, and obtain *future* good things, which, though *unseen*, are real, and certain, and eternal; and faith is *the substance of things hoped for*, as well as the evidence of things not seen, Heb. 11:1.

CHAP. V. V. 1—11. The apostle, in these vs. pursues the argument of the former ch., concerning the grounds of their courage and patience under afflictions. And,

1. He mentions their expectation, and desire, and assurance, of eternal happiness after death, v. 1—5. Observe,

1. The believer's *expectation* of eternal happiness after death, v. 1. He is not only well assured by faith of the truth and reality of the thing itself, that there is another and a happy life after this present life is ended; but he has *good hope through grace* of his interest in that everlasting blessedness of the unseen world. Note, Heaven is, in the eye and hope of a believer, a *house*, or habitation; a dwelling-place, resting-place, hiding place; our *Father's* house, where are many mansions, our everlasting *home*; a house in the *heavens*, in that high and holy place, which as far excels all the palaces of earth, as the heavens are high above the earth; a *building of God*, and therefore worthy of its Author; what God hath prepared for them that love Him: it is *eternal* in the heavens, not like earthly tabernacles, the poor cottages of clay, in which our souls now dwell, that are mouldering and decaying, *whose foundations are in the dust*. Further, This happiness shall be enjoyed immediately

after death; so soon as *our house of this earthly tabernacle is dissolved*.

2. The believer's *earnest desire* after this future blessedness, which is expressed by this word *we groan*; which denotes, (1.) A groaning of *sorrow under a heavy load*; so believers groan under the burden of life; in *this* we groan earnestly, v. 2. in *this tabernacle* we groan, *being burdened*, v. 4. burdened with this body of flesh, the calamities of life, burdened with a body of sin, and many corruptions still remaining and raging. Rom. 7:24. (2.) Groaning with *desire after the happiness of another life*, earnestly desiring *to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven*, v. 2. to obtain a blessed immortality, *that mortality might be swallowed up of life*, v. 4. *that being found clothed, we shall not be naked*, v. 3. that, if it were the will of God, we might not *sleep*, but be changed; for death, considered merely as a separation of soul and body, is not to be desired, [for we may do others and ourselves much good in life,] but dreaded rather; yet, considered as a passage to glory, the believer is *willing rather to die than live, to be absent from the body that he may be present with the Lord*, v. 8. to leave this body, that he may go to Christ, and to put off these rags of mortality, that he may put on the robes of glory. Note, Death will strip us of all the comforts of life, as well as end all our troubles here below. But, (3.) Gracious souls are not found naked in the other world; no, they are clothed with garments of praise, with robes of righteousness and glory, washed white in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. 7:14.

3. The believer's *assurance* of his interest in this future blessedness, on a double account; (1.) From the *experience of the grace*

PRACT. OBS. They are not proper persons for the sacred ministry of 'the N. T.,' who do not expect the salvation of their own souls from the free mercy of God through Jesus Christ. — The Lord puts the treasure of heavenly truth into mean, earthly vessels. He often employs persons of infirm bodies, moderate abilities, or low rank in society, even such as worldly policy would reject and despise; for, whatever instrument be selected, He will make it appear, that the 'excellency of the power,' by which the Gospel is made successful, is of 'God, and not of men.' (P. O. 1 Cor. 2:1—9.) He therefore uses various methods to convince his most useful servants of their own weakness and insufficiency; and sometimes He makes their infirmities visible to others, that they may not give them undue honor and respect. 12:7—10. P. O. 1—10.—In one way or other, both Christians and ministers must be troubled; and sometimes it will be 'on every side.' Yet faith and grace will pre-

serve them.—Nothing can be done in the spiritual warfare in which we are engaged, without the 'same spirit of faith,' which animated the ancient prophets, apostles, and martyrs of Jesus; we shall be timid, hesitating, and wavering in our testimony, unless we can firmly say, 'I believed, and therefore have I spoken.' But when we are fully assured of the truth, importance, and excellency of the Gospel, nothing can durably prevail with us to retract, alter, or conceal the great doctrines which we are called to preach or profess. Yet true religion does not require us to neglect our real interest.—But if the apostle call his *heavy* and *long-continued* trials, 'light affliction, and but for a moment,' what must our trifling difficulties appear in the estimate of faith and grace? How shameful then is it, that we complain or despond under them! What powerful supports and consolations must there be in the hope and earnest of heaven, beyond what we have hitherto experienced! SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1—4. As the apostle spoke of what was to follow immediately on the dissolution of the body by death, he must be supposed to mean the state of the immortal soul, before as well as after the resurrection, for the language is figurative, and must not be confined by too literal an interpretation.—The passage, being expressed in metaphors unusually bold, is indeed rather difficult; yet the above [as in Henry] seems the evident meaning. Nor does it appear, that the apostle intended to express any expectation, that the day of judgment and the general resurrection were at hand; or to determine anything concerning the manner, as to external circumstances, in which the soul subsists, either before or after that solemn season.—The word 'naked,' may allude to Adam and Eve, after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, and lost the robe of innocence; whereas believers, being 'made the righteousness of God in Christ,' will not be thus 'found naked,' in whatever manner they leave this world. Gen. 3:7. Is. 61:10, 11. Gal. 3:26—29. Phil. 3:8—11.

(1.) 'For though our earthly, &c. be to be dissolved.' BLOOMF.  
(3.) 'As the Pythagoreans compared the body to a *tent* (or *hut*), so did the Platonists liken it to a *vestment*. So Paul changes the metaphor here.' BL. '1. The Heb. *ubsh*, signifies *surround with a thing*, or *furnished*. 2. The Jews ascribe to the soul a vestment both in this life and the next. 3. They maintain the pre-existence of both, i. e. affirm that the soul has already a covering, while as yet hidden under the throne of God, and as yet not clothed with a body. 4. This *vestment* is no other than what we call the *image of God*, which was lost by the fall, and is to be restored in the next life. 5. After the fall, Adam and all men are stripped of this, as long as they remain in sin, and then they are said to be *naked*. 6. The good are *clothed* therewith, as soon as the Shechinah begins to dwell in them. 7. When they are clothed therewith, then they are enabled to perform good works, nay, even sometimes to work miracles. 8. Hence it is the duty of every one to preserve this vestment pure, and, as far as lies in him, without spot. 9. In life eternal, this will be a vestment for the soul, or rather an ornament assigned to it for the virtues practised in this world. 10. This celestial vestment they describe as lucid, and radiant, such as on this earth no one can attain. 11. It is *necessary* for the soul to be clothed with this vestment, for, till it is clothed therewith, it cannot behold the majesty of God. And so the apostle himself, 1 Cor. 15:53. says, it is necessary for *this mortal* to *put on immortality*.—Since, therefore, P. speaks both of an *habitation*, and a *vestment*, with which he is to be clothed, it is obvious he means, not a corporeal, but a spiritual vestment, clothed with which he desires to enter the heavenly kingdom.' SCHOETTGEN.

The ancient comtrs. understand, "if indeed it may so be that, after assuming this corruptible body, we shall be not found deprived of glory and acceptance. For all men (say they) will put on the clothing of incorruption, but all will not partake of the divine glory." But the ellipsis required here is too arbitrary: and so of Doddr.'s "naked, and exposed to any evil or inconvenience." To tr. (with others) "be found clothed upon, not naked," destroys the construction. The v. is parenthetical, and expressed with that profound and heartfelt humility which everywhere distinguishes the apostle; yet I assent to the ancients, that it was meant to inculcate a lesson of humility on the Corinthians, and so compares with 1 Cor. 9:27. *Naked.* Gumnoi: some (both of ancients and moderns) infer from this term, (and not without countenance from the context,) that the wicked will be left not only *gumnoi*, as regards the incorruptible body, but even as regards *any body*, at all, i. e. will not be clothed with their former mortal body, and that on the *soul* (which alone then remains) *will be inflicted such punishments as God shall in justice award*. And so I once, too arbitrarily, tr. "(Hoping) if so be that after having put off (our mortal and corruptible body), we may not be found (by the Lord at the day of judgment) naked, and without a body, (as the wicked.)" I now rather assent to the generality of ancient and modern comtrs., (see *Stade*,) who think the term does not necessarily imply, that the unfaithful and rejected will have *no bodies* at all; only that they will be *naked*, as far as regards a heavenly body, that they will not be clothed upon, in Paul's sense. This the preceding words strongly countenance. Hence nothing can be with certainty pronounced on the nature of the resurrection of the wicked; at least, nothing is *here* said with any reference to *them*. Their state must be decided by other passages; yet we may observe, there is no occasion to suppose *their bodies will not be raised*, as well as those of the righteous.' BL., whom see. ED.

(4.) 'For (I repeat) while we are in this hut, or shed, though groaning under the weight of many afflictions, yet our wish is not so much to put off this body, and thereby be rid of these evils, but rather our anxiety is to put on an heavenly garment, even our incorruptible body.' BL. 'That thus the mortal principle may be *absorbed, overcome*, and annihilated by the vivifying and immortal one.' *Chrys.* See BL., also 'Life and Death.' London, 1833. And 'Physical Theory of Another Life.' In V. 5—8. That change of judgment and affections, by which the apostle and his brethren had been 'wrought,' or fashioned, into a fitness for their perilous and suffering employments, and to a willingness to die for Christ's sake, in the assurance of going to enjoy felicity in his favor, was the work of God Himself, and could have been effected by no other agent. Rom. 9:22, 23. Col. 1:9—14.—This is an express testimony to



6 Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord;

7 (For <sup>h</sup> we walk by faith, not by sight;)

8 We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9 Wherefore we <sup>i</sup> labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For <sup>k</sup> we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive <sup>l</sup> the things *done in his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

11 Knowing therefore the terror <sup>m</sup> of the Lord, we persuade men; but <sup>n</sup> we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

12 For <sup>o</sup> we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in <sup>p</sup> appearance, and not in heart.

13 For whether we be beside <sup>q</sup> ourselves, *it is* to God: or whether we be sober, *it is* for your cause.

14 For the love of Christ <sup>r</sup> constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then <sup>s</sup> were all dead:

15 And *that* he died for all, that <sup>t</sup> they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea,

h Ro. 8:24,25.	m He. 10:31.	q c. 11:1,15,17.
i Phi. 1:23.	r Jude 23.	r Ca. 8:6.
j endeavor.	n c. 4:2.	s Ro. 5:15.
k Ro. 14:10.	o c. 3:1.	14:7-9.
l c. 7:3.	p the face.	t 1 Co. 6:19,20.

of God, in preparing and making him meet for this blessedness, v. 5. All who are designed for heaven hereafter, are wrought or prepared for heaven while here. And he that hath wrought us for this, *is* God; because nothing less than a divine power can make a soul partaker of a divine nature. A great deal is to be done to prepare our souls for heaven, and that *preparation of the heart is from the Lord.* (2.) The earnest of the Spirit gave them this assurance; for an earnest

the Deity of the Holy Spirit, by whom we are sanctified.—This is absolutely decisive, concerning the felicity to be enjoyed by the souls of believers when 'absent from the body;' and it also shows that they will possess their happiness in the very place where Jesus displays his glorious presence.—The words 'at home,' (6) seem not well chosen. This world is not the believer's *home*, but the place of sojourning and pilgrimage, and his body is the tabernacle in which he sojourns. SCOTT.

(5.) *Wrought, &c.* 'Created us originally with this view.' BL.  
(7.) *Walk by faith.* 'It implies, in the SS., conjunction with God, and enjoyment of celestial benefits, as opposed to beholding the Deity, united with perfect beatitude.' WOLF.

V. 10. Receive (reward or punishment) for the actions of life. ED.  
V. 11. 'We are already manifest to God, and I trust, I am so (i. e. it is also manifest) to your mind and judgments.' BLOOMF.

V. 12. 'He anticipates (so Schlichting) an objection, such as: Why, then, if your views be so manifest to us, do you again commend yourself to us? To which the answer is: I do it, not for the sake of self-commendation, but I commend myself, in order to afford you matter and cause to glory of me, namely, that you have been converted by a true apostle.' BL. 'It is clear from hence, and ch. 3. that the Corinthians were ready to misrepresent the care Paul took to vindicate himself, as *pride and vainglory*. On the other hand, they would have interpreted his *silence*, as the effect of *guilt and confusion*. He therefore plainly, and very properly, tells them, that he said this in his own necessary defence, and to furnish his friends with an answer to those whose consciences condemned them, while they endeavored to asperse him.' DODDR. *Appearance.* 'Those superficial outward qualities, which raise the ad-

mission is part of payment, and secures the full payment.

II. An inference for the comfort of believers, in this world, v. 6—8.

1. Their present state and condition; they are absent from the Lord, v. 6. pilgrims and strangers in this world; and though God is with us here, by his Spirit, and in his ordinances, yet we are not with Him as we hope to be, v. 7. We have not the vision and fruition of God, as of an object that is present with us, and as we hope for hereafter, when we shall see as we are seen. Faith is for this world, *sight* for the other world; and it is our duty, and will be our interest, to walk by faith, till we come to live by sight.

2. How comfortable and courageous we ought to be in all the troubles of life, and in the hour of death, v. 6. and again, v. 8. We are confident and willing, rather, to be absent from the body. True Christians, if they duly consider the prospect faith gives them of another world, and the good reasons of their hope of blessedness after death, would be comforted under the troubles of life, and supported in the hour of death; they should take courage, when they are encountering the last enemy; and be willing rather to die than live, when it is the will of God that they should put off this tabernacle; it is but being absent from the body, and we shall very soon be present with the Lord; but to die, and be with Christ; but to close our eyes in this world, and open them in a world of glory. Faith will be turned into sight.

III. An inference to excite and quicken himself and others to duty, v. 9—11. Well-grounded hopes of heaven, far from giving the least encouragement to sloth and sinful security, should stir us up to the greatest care and diligence in religion; Wherefore, or because we hope to be present with the Lord, we labor and take pains, v. 9.—We are ambitious, and labor as industriously as the most ambitious men do to obtain what they aim at. Here observe,

1. What it was the apostle was thus ambitious of, *acceptance with God*, v. 9. This [he and his brethren] coveted, as the greatest favor, and the highest honor; it was the top of their ambition.

2. What further quickening motives they had to excite their diligence, from the consideration of the judgment to come, v. 10, 11. There are many things relating to this great matter, that should awe the best of men into the utmost care and diligence in religion; the certainty of this judgment, for we must appear; the universality of it, for we must all appear; the great Judge, before whose judgment-seat we must appear, the Lord Jesus Christ, who Himself will appear in flaming fire; the recompense to be then received, for things done in the body; which will be very particular unto every one; and very just, according to what we have done,

miration of the vulgar, and of which it seems the false teachers boasted; whilst deficient in the qualities of the heart, viz., sincerity, honesty, disinterestedness, benevolence, and [supreme] concern for the glory of God.' MACKN.

V. 13—15. The love which Jesus had manifested towards sinners in the great work of redemption, and to believers in calling them to partake of this inestimable blessing, had excited in their hearts such reciprocal admiring love, and adoring gratitude to Him, as 'constrained them,' and carried them on with invincible energy in every service, by which they could glorify his name or promote his cause; nor could any fears, hopes, affections, or interests stop their progress, when actuated by this most powerful principle. (14) *Constraineth.* 'It possesses us entirely, and as seized on by its influence (*afflatu*) we do all things.' SCOTT.

(13.) 'You say, I am distracted for my present conduct; but this is between God and myself; I am sure you Corinthians ought not to say it; for all my sober thoughts and most painful labors are for you.' LOCKE. See, however, BL.

(14.) *Of.* 'I. e. similar to Christ: since we reason and think that, if One died for (i. e. in the place of) all, as an expiation and atonement for the sins of all,—not merely for the moral benefit of his example, like Socrates, according to recent glosses!' BLOOMF.

(15.) *To themselves.* 'I. e. subservient to their own [simply selfish or] carnal inclinations, as opposed to Christ's plans for their spiritual regeneration.' ED.

V. 16. The apostle and his fellow-laborers, therefore, being under such immense obligations, influenced by such strong motives, and en-

whether good or bad. The apostle calls this awful judgment *the terror of the Lord*, v. 11. and, by the consideration thereof, was excited to persuade men to repent, and live a holy life, that, when Christ shall appear *terribly*, they may appear before Him *comfortably*. And concerning his fidelity and diligence, he comfortably appeals unto God, and the consciences of those he wrote to, v. 11.

V. 12—15. Here observe,

1. The apostle makes an apology for seeming to commend himself and his fellow-laborers, v. 12. and tells them it was not for that, that he had spoken of their fidelity and diligence, nor was he willing to suspect their good opinion of him; but he would put an argument in their mouths, wherewith to answer his accusers, who made vain boastings, and gloried in appearances only; he would give them an occasion to glory on their behalf, or to defend them against the reproaches of their adversaries. And if the people can say the Word has been manifested to their consciences, and been effectual to their conversion and edification, this is the best defence they can make for the *ministry of the Word*, when they are vilified and reproached.

2. He gives good reasons for their great zeal and diligence. Some, it is likely, had reproached him for his zeal and fervor, imputing it all to enthusiasm, as the Roman governor. Acts 26:24. But he tells them, (1.) It was for the glory of God, and the good of the church, that he was thus zealous and industrious, v. 13. If they manifested the greatest ardor and vehemency at some times, and used the greatest calmness in strong reasonings at other times, it was for the best ends; and in both methods they had good reason for what they did. For, (2.) *The love of Christ constrained them*, v. 14. They were under the sweetest and strongest constraints to do what they did. *Our love to Christ* will have this virtue; and *Christ's love to us*, which was manifested in this great instance of his dying for us, will have this effect on us, if it be duly considered and rightly judged of. For observe, how the apostle argues for the reasonableness of love's constraints; and declares, [1.] What we were before, and must have continued to be, had not Christ died for us, v. 14. the deplorable condition of all those whom Christ died for; they were lost and undone, dead and ruined. [2.] Such, then, should live to Him, v. 15. We should not make ourselves, but Christ, the end of our living and actions; and it was one end of Christ's death, to cure us of this *self-love*, and to excite us always to act under the commanding influence of his love.

V. 16—21. In these vs. the apostle mentions two things that are necessary, in order to our living to Christ, both of which are the consequences of Christ's dying for us,—regeneration, and reconciliation.



though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more.

17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; *we* behold, all things are become new.

18 And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us *to* himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 To wit, that God was, in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses *unto* them: and hath *committed* unto us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then we are *ambassadors* for Christ; as though God did beseech *you* by us, we pray *you* in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God.

*u* let him be. *Re.* 21:5. *z* put in us.  
*v* Ju. 3:3. Ga. 6:15. *x* Col. 1:20. *a* Job 33:23. Mal.  
*w* Is. 65:17. *y* Ro. 3:24, 25. *27.* Ep. 6:30.

### I. Regeneration, which consists in,

1. Weanedness from the world, *v.* 16. We do not *own*, or affect, any person or thing in this world for carnal ends and outward advantage; we are enabled, by divine grace, not to mind or regard this world, or the things of the world, but to live above it. Christians must enjoy the comforts of this life, and their relations in this world, with a holy indifferency; *Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet, says the apostle, we know Him no more.* It is questioned whether Paul had seen Christ in the flesh;—but the rest of the apostles had, and

so might some among those he was now writing to. However, he would not have them value themselves on that account; for even the bodily presence of Christ is not to be doted on, but we must live on his spiritual presence. Note, Those who make images of Christ, and use them in their worship, do not take the way God has appointed to strengthen their faith and quicken their affections; for it is the will of God that we should not know Christ any more after the flesh.

2. A thorough change of the heart; *For if any man be in Christ, if any man be a Christian indeed, and will approve himself such, he is, or he must be, a new creature, v.* 17. (Some read it, *Let him be a new creature.*) And so great is the change the grace of God makes in the soul, that, as it follows, *old things are passed away, old thoughts, old principles, and old practices, are passed away; and all these things must become new.* Regenerating grace creates a new world in the soul; all things are new. The renewed man acts from new principles, by new rules, with new ends, and in new company.

II. Reconciliation; here spoken of under a double notion.

1. As an unquestionable privilege, *v.* 18, 19. Reconciliation supposes a quarrel, and sin has broken the friendship between God and man. The heart of the sinner is filled with enmity against God, and God is justly offended with the sinner. Yet, behold, there may be a reconciliation; the offended Majesty of heaven is willing to be reconciled. And observe, (1.) He has appointed the *Mediator of reconciliation*,—Jesus Christ, *v.* 18. By Him God has *reconciled the world to Himself*, put Himself into a capacity of being actually reconciled to offenders, without any wrong or injury to his justice or holiness; and does not *impute* to men their *trespasses*,

but recedes from the rigor of the first covenant, which was broken, and does not insist on the advantage He might justly take against us for the breach of that covenant, but is willing to enter into a new treaty, and into a new covenant of grace, and, according to the tenor thereof, freely to forgive us all our sins, and justify freely by his grace all those who do believe. (2.) He has appointed the *ministry of reconciliation, v.* 18. the Scriptures, which contain the *Word of reconciliation*; and the ministry, which is a *ministry of reconciliation*; ministers are to open and proclaim to sinners the terms of mercy and reconciliation, and persuade them to comply therewith. For,

2. Reconciliation is here spoken of as our indispensable duty, *v.* 20. As God is willing to be reconciled to us, we ought to be *reconciled to God*; and this is the great end and design of the Gospel. Faithful ministers are *Christ's ambassadors*, sent to treat with sinners on peace and reconciliation; they come *in God's name*, with his entreaties, and act in *Christ's stead*, doing the very thing He did on earth, and what, now that He is in heaven, He wills to be done. Wonderful condescension! Though God can be no loser by the quarrel, nor gainer by the peace, yet by his ministers He *beseeches* sinners to lay aside their enmity, and be reconciled to Him, to all his attributes, laws, providences; to believe in the Mediator, accept the atonement, and comply with his Gospel, in all the parts of it, and in the whole design of it. And for our encouragement so to do, the apostle subjoins what should be well known and duly considered by us, *v.* 21. namely, The purity of the Mediator, that *He knew no sin*; the sacrifice He offered, *He was made Sin for us*, not a sinner, but *Sin*, a Sin-offering, a Sacrifice for sin; the end and design of all this, that *we might be made the righteousness*

couraged by such animating hopes, and assurances of assistance, as had been stated, were powerfully impelled to disregard all contrary and interfering objects, that they might show their love to their most gracious Lord and Savior. So that, these principles having been matured in them, they *knew no man after the flesh*; they had no respect to men's persons, because of nation, sect, rank, or personal attachment, when their obedience to Christ was concerned; they could not accommodate their doctrine or conduct to the humors of men, from any worldly principles, or because of outward connexions with them, or obligations to them. Nay, they did not now regard their external relation to Christ Himself, as being of the same nation with Him, or otherwise acquainted with Him. Even such of the apostles and evangelists as had personally known Him, or been nearly related to Him, did in this respect disregard that external tie, when it came in competition with their union with Him as believers, and their obedience to Him as his servants and ministers. They could not warp their doctrine, or deviate from their instructions, to please the Jews, or the nearest relatives of Christ, any more, than out of respect to their own friends, or to the philosophers, or the princes of the Gentiles. *Deut.* 33:9. *Mat.* 12:46—50. *Mk.* 3:31—35. *Lu.* 11:27, 28. *1 Tim.* 5:21, 22.—Many suppose the apostle here referred to the Jewish converts, who were displeased with him for admitting the Gentiles into the church, and being earnest for their conversion, which they deemed a kind of madness (13); but the Christians at Corinth were chiefly Gentile converts, and they do not seem to have been generally disposed to Judaize.

SCOTT.

(16.) The sense of this *v.* is not a little obscure, from brevity of expression, and the Hebraic and mystic nature of the phraseology. And, from the extreme flexibility of the terms, it is easier to devise a tolerable sense, than to ascertain and establish the true one. Most moderns rightly maintain, the words are to be understood of Paul, or at most his brother apostles who had forsaken the errors of Judaism. *After the flesh.* It refers (and so *Grot.*) to those things on which men, nay, even teachers of religion, sometimes pride themselves, namely, external qualifications, as of form, appearance, learning, eloquence, wealth, rank, and all other carnal advantages. Others take it to refer to the opinions of the apostles, &c. before Christ's resurrection, that his kingdom was temporal. *Grot.* and most recent contrs. render, "nay, though we had known Christ in the flesh, had conversed with Him on earth, and enjoyed the benefits of his personal instruction, yet we should now recognise Him no longer as the Jesus we knew, but as the glorified Savior and Judge of men, and the heavenly King." *Ros.* thinks it levelled against teachers at Corinth, who, proud of having had the personal converse of Christ, and perhaps relationship, affected to lord it over others. *1 Cor.* 1:12. *In Christ.* I. e. admitted (by baptism) into the society of Christ and his followers, ingrafted into Christ by the Spirit of Christ, become a Christian.

BLOOMF.

*V.* 17. The judgment, experience, and principles, which the apostle had stated, should not be regarded as peculiar to him or his friends, but as the standard of genuine Christianity; therefore, 'if any man,' whether Jew or Gentile, was 'in Christ,' as a justified believer, he was also 'a new creature,' or a new creation of God. *Rom.* 8:1, 2. *1 Cor.* 1:26—31. *Ps* 51:10. *Gal.* 6:15, 16. *Eph.* 2:4—10. By spiritual illumination, and its invariable effects, a new judgment had been produced, with new inclinations, new affections, and purposes, from which new words and

actions must proceed. *Rev.* 21:1—3. So that the Christian experienced new hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, desires and aversions; he learned to speak a new language, to choose new companions, to act from new motives,—to aim at new objects, and to attend to new employments. Everything was now cast into a new mould, received a new impression, and took a new direction, from the knowledge of God, from faith in Christ and love to Him; from humiliation for sin, and hatred of it, and from the desire of holiness, and the hope of eternal life. *Ez.* 11:17—20. *18:30—32.* *36:25—27.* *Jn.* 3:3—8. *Rom.* 6:3, 4.—The marg. reading, 'Let him be a new creature,' can in no way be made to accord with what follows, 'Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, &c.'

SCOTT.

*V.* 18—21. As the change above described had been wrought by the power, and according to the purpose of God, so it bore on it the stamp of his holy image, and led to a proper state of mind, heart, and conduct towards Him. 'God was in Christ,' (19) 'manifested in the flesh.'—The fullness of the Deity dwelt in and was displayed by the human nature, through the incarnation of the eternal Word and Son of God, as One with the Father; that so, being one with man in human nature, He might 'reconcile the world unto Himself,' by his atonement, mediation, and grace, and that sinners throughout the earth, of every nation and description, might thus be encouraged to hope in his mercy, and taught by his grace to love his holy perfections, law, worship, and service, to which their carnal minds had before been enmity. *Rom.* 5:6—10. 8:5—9. *V.* 21. contains most conclusive arguments, in proof of the vicarious sufferings of Christ, as the satisfactory atonement to divine justice for our sins, of the imputation of his perfect righteousness to believers, as their title to eternal life, and of his real Deity, whose righteousness becomes theirs for justification, by virtue of their union with Him. Perhaps stronger language cannot be used, in declaring these doctrines, by those who most zealously contend for them.—The preposition here used, is tr. 'instead,' in the preceding *v.* 'in Christ's stead,' or instead of Christ. Thus He suffered instead of us. *1 Pet.* 3:18. *Gr.*—The apostle doubtless spoke primarily of himself, and his fellow-laborers, as 'the ambassadors of Christ,' yet, as all faithful ministers are entrusted with the same message, by the same authority, so they too are ambassadors, or envoys and messengers for Christ, though to a smaller number of their fellow-sinners.—Some of the professed Christians at Corinth, were supposed by Paul to be unconverted, and unreconciled to God, and he might have them in view, when he spake of God's beseeching sinners by his ministers. But he was evidently giving an account of his commission and general ministry, through the nations of the earth; wherever he came, he addressed sinners in this pathetic and earnest manner, and while 'he prayed them in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God,' it was as if God Himself had besought them to lay aside their enmity, and accept of his mercy.—The change of the language, 'ambassadors for Christ,' 'God beseeches you, we pray you in Christ's stead, &c.' shows how familiar it was to the apostle to consider his divine Lord and Master, as One with the Father, in Deity and authority. *Made Him to be sin.* *Rom.* 8:3. *Heb.* 10:6, 8. *Hamartia* is often used in the LXX, for 'a sin-offering,' which circumstance is a strong corroboration of the doctrine of reciprocal imputation, as most emphatically stated in this *v.* our sins imputed to the divine Savior, and his righteousness imputed to all true believers.—*Be made.* 'Become.' *Jn.* 1:14. Id.



21 For <sup>b</sup> he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made <sup>c</sup> the righteousness of God in him.

### CHAP. VI.

<sup>1</sup> That he hath approved himself a faithful minister of Christ, both by his exhortations, <sup>3</sup> and by integrity of life, <sup>4</sup> and by patiently enduring all kinds of affliction and disgraces for the Gospel. <sup>10</sup> Of which he speaketh the more boldly among them, because his heart is open to them, <sup>13</sup> and he expecteth the like affection from them again: <sup>14</sup> exhorting to flee the society and pollution of idolaters, as being themselves temples of the living God.

WE then, as workers <sup>a</sup> together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in <sup>b</sup> vain.

2 (For he saith, <sup>c</sup> I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)

3 Giving no <sup>d</sup> offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

4 But in all things <sup>e</sup> approving ourselves as the ministers <sup>f</sup> of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

<sup>b</sup> 1st. 53:6, 9, 12.    <sup>a</sup> c. 5:20.    <sup>d</sup> 1 Co. 10:32.  
<sup>c</sup> Ga. 3:13. 1 Pe. 2:22, 24. 1 Jn. 3:5.    <sup>b</sup> He. 12:15.    <sup>e</sup> commending.  
<sup>c</sup> Ro. 5:19.    <sup>c</sup> Is. 49:8.    <sup>f</sup> 1 Co. 4:1.

**PRACT. OBS.** It is most animating for us to 'know,' amidst our sufferings, temptations, conflicts, and perils of death, that whenever we die we shall enter into the heavens, and be admitted to an unspeakable felicity; and this evidently may be known, with such certainty, as to produce habitual courage and confidence, even in the greatest dangers, and most evident approaches of death, in its most formidable appearances; but our assurance or prevailing hope of this, must be proportioned to the evidence of our conversion.—At present we may 'choose whom we will serve,' and what we will do; but, as we *must* die, so we *must* stand in judgment, and no more choice will be left us than is left to the criminal, whether he will or will not, he tried, condemned, or punished for his crimes. The expectation of this solemn time of righteous retribution should render all men earnest and diligent, in 'working out their own salvation with fear and trembling,' lest any 'should seem to come short of it;' but especially it should excite ministers to be unwearied and faithful in their work; and, knowing what a tremendous day it will be to all the workers of iniquity, they should be the more earnest and affectionate, in their persuasions and warnings.—If earnestness bring on us the charge of being 'beside ourselves,' we need only inquire, whether our conduct be warranted by the Word of God, and spring from a regard to his authority and glory, and whether our most vehement affections and addresses, as well as our more cool and temperate reasonings, are really intended to promote the salvation of souls. If this be the case, we may venture to disregard the contumely; and we should pray for our revilers, that they may indeed 'come to themselves,' and be delivered from that insanity, under which all unbelievers are held.—All partialities, from external relations or connexions, patronage or obligations, hopes or fears, which tempt the minister to waver in his testimony, or the Christian in his obedience, are inconsistent with a proper regard to the Lord Jesus; and, in this sense, we should 'henceforth know no man after the flesh,' whatever claim he may seem to have to our special regard. *Mat.* 10:37—39. *Lu.* 14:25—27.—The justified believer is 'a new

(21.) *Sin.*] <sup>1</sup> i. e. sin-offering. *Ios.* 4:8. *Lev.* 7:2. *Ps.* 40:7. *Ex.* 29:14. *Ham., Whit., Mackn., &c., &c.*, treated Him as a sinner. *Vorst., Schoettg., Bp. Bull.* *Bl. Righteousness, &c.*] 'A very strong phrase, to signify our being accepted of God, and treated as perfectly righteous, when considered as by faith united to Him who was perfectly so.' *Doddr.*

**NOTES.** CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. The word tr. 'grace,' signifies any peculiar, undeserved favor; and when it is used for the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, it implies that this is a special, undeserved favor. The unspeakable love of God to sinners, in the redemption by his Son, and in the appointment of 'the ministry of reconciliation,' and the mercy shown to those, whom He thus 'besought to be reconciled to Him,' would he altogether in vain, to all those who 'neglected so great salvation.' (*Heb.* 2:1—4, v. 3.) The apostle feared, that this had hitherto been the case of some professed Christians at Corinth; and doubtless many such would at length read or hear his epistle; whom therefore, he most earnestly exhorted and entreated, not to render all the advantages set before them ineffectual to themselves, by persisting in unbelief; but that they would, without delay, while the Word of God was faithfully preached to them, embrace the proposals of mercy and grace set before them. For as *Jehovah* had assured the Messiah, according to the revelation made by the prophet, that He had 'heard Him in an acceptable time, and succored Him in a day of salvation,' with a special reference to his intercession for the Gentiles, after his exaltation to the mediatorial throne, (*Is.* 49:7, 8.) so the present season of abundant spiritual advantages might be considered by the Corinthians, as 'an accepted time, and a day of salvation' to all, who sought an interest in the blessings of the Redeemer's kingdom. But those who refused the embassy of peace, or were satisfied with a formal assent, a dead and unholy faith, might expect to be speedily punished as the enemies of Christ.

**SCOTT.** (1.) *Grace.*] 'The gracious offer of salvation, and opportunity thereof, the grace contained in the Gospel, and reconciliation with God, offered through Christ, 5:18—21. Grace of every kind, both ordinary, as in

of God in Him, might be justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Note, As Christ, who knew no sin of his own, was made Sin for us, so we, who have no righteousness of our own, are made the righteousness of God in Him. Our reconciliation to God is only through Jesus Christ, and for the sake of his merit; on Him therefore we must rely, and make mention of his righteousness, and his only.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—10. In these vs. we have the apostle's general errand and exhortation in every place where he came, with the several arguments and methods he used.

1. His errand or exhortation, namely, to comply with the gospel-offers of reconciliation, v. 1. And as it is the duty of the ministers of the Gospel to exhort and persuade their hearers to accept of the grace and mercy offered, so they are honored with this high title, of *co-workers with God*. 1. They must *work*, and *work for God*, and *with God*, yet under Him, as instruments only; however, if faithful, they may hope to find God working *with them*, and their labor will be effectual. 2. Observe the language and way of the spirit of the Gospel; it is not with roughness and severity, but with all mildness and gentleness, to *beseech* and *entreat*, to use exhortations and arguments, in order to prevail with sinners, and overcome

their natural *unwillingness* to be reconciled to God, and to be happy for ever.

11. His arguments and method.

1. The present time is the only proper season to accept of grace and *salvation*. The *morrow* is none of ours; we know not *what* will be on the morrow, nor *where* we shall be; and we should remember that *present* seasons of grace are short and uncertain, and cannot be recalled when past. It is therefore our duty and interest to improve them while we enjoy them, and no less than our salvation depends on our so doing.

2. What caution they used, not to give offence, and hinder the success of their preaching, v. 3. When others are too apt to *take* offence, as the Jews were on the one hand, and the Gentiles on the other, against the apostles, we should be cautious lest we *give* offence; and ministers especially should be careful lest they do anything that may bring *blame* on their ministry, or render that unsuccessful.

3. Their constant aim and endeavor in *all things* to approve themselves faithful, as became the *ministers of God*, v. 4. Ministers of the Gospel should look upon themselves as *God's servants* or ministers, and act in everything suitable to that character. So did the apostle.

(1.) *By much patience in afflictions*, of which he met with many, often in *necessities*, wanting the conveniences, if not the neces-

creature' in a new world; his new relation to Christ, to the church, and to heavenly things, together with his new obligations, interests, pursuits, principles, and satisfactions, have superseded those, which formerly prevailed. Even the same actions are now performed from new motives and in a new manner, from what they before were; his attention to relative and social duties, and his diligence in worldly business, spring from new purposes, and receive a new direction. Nay, when, baffled by temptation, he falls into sin; his grief, his shame, his distress, and remorse, are altogether *new*, and such as before he never had experienced. His heart was then *stone*, now *living flesh*; and sensibilities wholly new arise from this important change.—Every good gift comes from God, and to Him the whole glory belongs. Enmity to God began wholly on man's part; but the reconciliation was entirely devised, revealed, and effected by his offended Sovereign; and the language of our God and Savior, by his ministers, to his feeble but haughty enemies, must appear wonderful beyond conception to the holy inhabitants of heaven; yet the reception with which it often meets, and the contempt and disdain which it excites, must exceedingly increase their astonishment, and it will assuredly satisfy them, concerning the propriety and equity of punishing the irreconcilable haters of God, 'with everlasting destruction from his presence.' Let sinners then hear the voice of God, 'heseeching them to be reconciled;' let the trembling penitent rejoice in the assurance, that his application for 'peace with God will not be rejected.' Let professed Christians examine their supposed interest in Christ, the great Reconciler, by inquiring whether they are become the friends of God, his cause, and his people; let ministers not only 'warn men by the terror of the Lord,' but beseech them by his abundant mercies, to repent and turn unto Him; and let believers consider, whether God can now withhold any good thing from them, or whether they can venture, lose, labor, or suffer too much, for Him who gave his beloved Son for their sins. *13—15. Rom.* 5:7—10. 8:28—31. **SCOTT.**

the case of Christians in general, and *extraordinary*, which was confined to the apostolic age. See the able note of *Whitby*, here, and the masterly *Appendix*, in which he has successfully shown that God, in every succeeding age, has vouchsafed to men, not only the outward dispensations of his Word, to be the ordinary means of their conversion and sanctification, but also some inward assistances and operations of the Holy Spirit. In this he shows, that these assistances may be so explained, as to be no more unintelligible than are *all* the influences of God, on the soul, or the temptations of the devil. *Bl.—In vain.*] 'Without any fruit or benefit to you:' they must improve every gift and influence of the Spirit. *Bl. expl.* not so to act, as to seem to have received grace in vain. Others differently, but the above seems most consonant to the analogy of Scripture. **En.**

(2.) 'The words of the prophet (*Is.* 49:8.) are adduced in their spiritual and mystical sense, such as has always been assigned to them, even by the Jewish interpreters. "Now is (eminently) the accepted time, and the day of salvation; since now it is offered, by those whose divine mission is confirmed by signs and wonders, and mighty deeds." Though, in a certain sense, the present is the only accepted time, or day of salvation, because on the future we cannot calculate. *Heard.*] *Epikousa:* hearkened to, and granted help. This notion of *listening to or granting* the request, seems contained in the *epi*, which is expressed in our phrase, "lend an ear." Thus *hearken* comes from *hear*, and *ken*, (to know or mind.)

V. 3—10. The whole universe, if they had been the proprietors of it, could have afforded them nothing more, as conducive to their real good, than what they actually enjoyed or expected. (*1 Cor.* 3:18—23.) Thus the whole of their temper and conduct, in the varied circumstances through which they passed, combined to show, that their doctrine had a blessed effect on their own souls; and rendered them holy, beneficent, useful, and happy.—The animation, sublimity, pathos, and energy of expression, in this beautiful passage, have been generally and justly admired; and it shows how full the apostle's heart was of holy affections; and how open and communicative, in speaking on these interesting top-



5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings;

6 By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,

7 By the word<sup>i</sup> of truth, by the power<sup>j</sup> of God, by the armor<sup>k</sup> of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

8 By honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as<sup>l</sup> deceivers, and yet true;

9 As<sup>m</sup> unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live: <sup>n</sup> as chastened, and not killed;

10 As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all<sup>o</sup> things.

[Practical Observations.]

11 O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, <sup>p</sup> our heart is enlarged.

g c. 11:23, &c. h or, in visitings to and fro. i c. 4:2. j 1 Co. 2:4. k Ep. 6:11, &c. l Jn. 7:12, 17. m 1 Co. 4:9. n Ps. 118:18. o Ps. 84:11. p Ep. 6:8. Re. 22:12.

saries of life; in distresses, being straitened on every side, hardly knowing what to do; in stripes often, ch. 11:24. in imprisonments, in tumults raised by the Jews and Gentiles against him, in labors, not only in preaching the Gospel, but in travelling for that end, and working with his hands to supply his necessities; in watchings and in fastings, either voluntary on a religious account, or invol-

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—10. It is the peculiar honor of faithful ministers and zealous Christians, most willingly to labor in concert with their Lord, and with each other; but tempters, seducers, false teachers, persecutors, scoffers, and all who oppose or disgrace the cause of God, are fellow-workers of the devil.—To prevent this fatal consequence [failure of salvation], as far as we are able, we should warn, expostulate, persuade, entreat, and exhort men, by all the means which we can devise, to attend [at once] to 'this one thing needful.'—It is peculiarly incumbent on all who preach this great salvation, to 'give no offence in anything,' except by their faithfulness, 'that the ministry be not blamed;' and in all things to approve themselves, as the ministers of God, who are sent to show the descendants of fallen Adam the way of eternal life. 1 Cor. 10:29—33.—But alas! how very few of those, who wear the garb or bear the office of ministers, answer this description [of the apostle]! How very many are the exact reverse of it! How often do even the preachers of the Gospel give such offence, and cause such scandals, by their evident, allowed, and habitual misconduct, that 'the

ics. 'This is certainly one of the sublimest passages ever written.—(10) Making many, &c.] We are continually enriching many with treasures, which they would not part with for all the revenues of kings and princes.' Doddr. Scott.

(3.) 'We are continually exhorting you, we (I say) who give no offence,—who—who, &c.' Paul enters into these particulars, thereby to call upon them for greater attention to his exhortations, and also, that they may in several respects, follow his example: . . . otherwise this long and affecting paragraph might seem to savor of vainglory. Offence.] Endeavoring to throw no stumbling-block (Rom. 14:13.); not intentionally throwing any. Ed.

(4—6.) 'Showing and proving ourselves to be (what [false teachers, or] unbelievers deny) persons to whom is committed a divine legation. Paul, as in similar lists, distributes the particulars in groups: after the general term, denoting endurance of hardships, and trials of every kind, comes the first group, denoting his afflictions, necessities, and pinching adversity, (necessity, dire calamity.) for there seems a climax. The next words advert to actual and direct persecutions; then, "labors," &c., may well refer to his corporal labor at his trade; the watchings to the abridgment of his nocturnal rest, occasioned by the necessity of making up at over hours, and in the night time, for part of the day consumed in his evangelical labors; and the fastings may very well refer to that scanty fare which a trade, followed up with such divided attention, would necessarily occasion. Some ancient comtrs. understand these as the apostle's voluntary sufferings. But this seems an unfounded notion. The interpretation was, I imagine, devised to afford a countenance to monkish austerities.' Bloomf.

(6.) Knowledge.] 'Prudence or skill in right action; so Ros., &c. Others, a firm, stable, unwavering knowledge and persuasion. Grot. tr. a knowledge of the law, literal and mystical. I prefer, with Chrys., "the wisdom that is from above, the only true wisdom." And this tr. is placed beyond a doubt, by Ja. 3:17. Kindness.] By this word is intended an opposition to superciliousness, and starched austerity of manners. By the Holy Ghost.] "The sanctifying graces and aids of the Holy Spirit, to which the apostle ever yielded. Chrys." 'And these amiable dispositions we cultivate in humble dependence on [and by the aid of] the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in our hearts, as a continual principle of that undisssembled love, which we exercise without limitation, not only to friends and benefactors, but to enemies [336]

untary for the sake of religion; but he exercised much patience in all, v. 4, 5. Note, Faithful ministers are often reduced to great difficulties, and stand in need of much patience. Those who would approve themselves to God, must approve themselves faithful in trouble as well as in peace, not only in doing the work of God diligently, but also in bearing the will of God patiently.

(2.) By acting from good principles, v. 6, 7. There is no piety without purity, a care to keep ourselves unspotted from the world; zeal, too, without knowledge, is but madness. Nor must we be easily provoked, but bear hard treatment even from those to whom we kindly endeavor to do good. So Paul acted, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, from the noble principle of unfeigned love, according to the rule of the Word of truth, under the supports and assistances of the power of God, having on the armor of righteousness, a consciousness of universal righteousness and holiness; which is the best defence against the temptations of prosperity on the right hand, and of adversity on the left.

(3.) By a due temper and behavior under all the variety of conditions in this world, v. 8—10. We must expect to meet with many alterations of our circumstances and conditions in this world; and it will be a great evidence of our integrity, if we preserve a right temper of mind, and duly behave ourselves, under them all. It should seem that persons differently represented the apostles; some represented them as the best, and others as the worst, of men; some counted them deceivers, and run them down as such; others as true, preaching the Gospel of truth, and true to the trust reposed in them. Men of the world slighted them, as unknown, men of no figure or account, nor worth no-

ting; yet in all the churches of Christ they were well known, and of great account; they were looked upon as dying, being killed all the day long, and their interest as a dying interest; 'and yet behold,' says the apostle, 'we live, live comfortably, and bear up cheerfully under all our hardships, and go on conquering and to conquer;' and though it was thought they were sorrowful, a company of mopish and melancholy men, always sighing and mourning; yet they were always rejoicing in God, and had the greatest reason to rejoice always. They were despised as poor, on account of their poverty in this world; and yet they made many rich, by preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. They were thought to have nothing, and silver and gold, houses and lands they had none; yet they possessed all things; nothing in this world, but a treasure in heaven, nothing in themselves, but all things in Christ. Such a paradox is a Christian's life, and through such a variety of conditions and reports lies our way to heaven; and we should be careful in all these things to approve ourselves to God.

V. 11—18. He proceeds to address himself more particularly to the Corinthians, and cautions them against mingling with unbelievers. The caution is introduced with a profession, in a very pathetic manner, of the most tender affection to them, v. 11—13. Though the apostle was happy in a great fluency of expressions, yet he seemed to want words how to signify the warm affections he had for these Corinthians. And because his heart was thus enlarged with love to them, therefore he opened his mouth so freely to them in kind admonitions and exhortations; and all he wished in return was, that they would be correspondently affected

ministry is blamed,' and men are fatally prejudiced against the truth! And how common it is for us to be drawn into those improprieties of conduct, which prevent the usefulness of our most earnest exhortations! We should, therefore, continually beseech the Lord to erase every unfavorable impression, which any past misconduct may have made on men's minds, and to prepare us for serving Him more unexceptionably for the future; that we may give up every worldly interest and indulgence, and be willing to labor and suffer in the cause of Christ. We should seek to be made 'fruitful in good works;' to be endued with 'pureness and knowledge;' to be strengthened in the exercise of long-suffering and kindness; to be 'armed with the whole armor of God;' to rejoice in the midst of tribulation; to be far more desirous of making others rich, than of avoiding poverty in our own circumstances; to leave our character and concerns in the Lord's hands; and to count ourselves 'to possess all things,' in his all-sufficient favor, and exceedingly great and precious promises. Phil. 4:10—20. Heb. 13:5, 6. Scott.

and persecutors.' Doddr. 'The words "love unfeigned," however, more naturally connect with the words following. Most recent foreign comtrs. unwarrantably lower the sense.' Bloomf.

(7.) 'Closely connected with that genuine love (not the dissembled and self-interested love of the false teachers), is the next quality, namely, abstaining from any dissimulation, or suppression of the truth; or mixing it with Gentile philosophy, or Jewish tradition, &c. Power, &c.] I. e. of working miracles. And so the ancient fathers and Gr. comtrs. Next Paul seems to advert to human means, namely, simply, the defensive armor of righteousness. The words on the right, &c., allude to the armor of a Grecian hoplite [heavy armed], who, when completely uncased, was said to be amphidexios. [Note and cuts, Jer.: end. The principal part of the armor, the thorax, was of two parts, (one for the back, the other for the breast,) coupled by buttons, &c. at the sides. See Potter.] Paul refutes their slanders by good deeds.' Id.

(8, 9.) Deceivers.] Planol: doubtless it referred to some appellation, which had already been given him, either by the opposite faction at Corinth, or rather by the Jewish priests and heathen philosophers and priests everywhere; those being times when impostors of every kind swarmed, to whom was commonly applied the terms planos and planus. [See Bl. on Mat. 27:63.] In Athenus it is joined with jugglers and merry-andrews. Comp. also the use of the word in Diod., Petron., Cic., Hor. Unknown.] With some we are in great estimation; others do not choose to know us; affect to treat us as obscure nobodies.' Id.

(10.) Having, &c.] 'To be taken in a twofold sense; 1st, Physical, namely, possessing nothing, and yet, in a manner, possessing all things; q. d. all that my converts possess, being at my disposal, viz. for the benefit of others: for he has not self in view in this wealth at all. 2d, Spiritual, namely, though we literally have no property, or possessions, in this life, we in fact have, in the glorious promises of another and a better, what infinitely outweighs all that earth can give. Phil. 4:12. 1 Tim. 6:17. Col. 3:11. Eph. 1:3. Rev. 21:7. These vs. (Doddr. rightly remarks) contain one of the sublimest passages ever written. Indeed, in the long-sustained point and antithesis, I know of none comparable to it, except the contrast between the Lacedemonians and Athenians, in Thucyd.' Id.

V. 11. Mouth.] 'It refers to that impassioned strain of fervid oratory, in the preceding vs., poured forth as from the mouth of a cataract. Thoughts that breathe, easily find vent in words that burn. Enlarged.]



12 Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.

13 Now for a recompense in the same, (I speak as unto *my* children,) be ye also enlarged.

14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

CHAP. VII.

1 He proceedeth in exhorting them to purity of life, 2 and to bear him like affection as he doth to them. 3 Whereof least he might seem to doubt, he declareth what comfort he took in his afflictions, by the report which Titus gave of their godly sorrow, which his former epistle had wrought in them, 13 and of their loving-kindness and obedience towards Titus, answerable to his former boasts of them.

HAVING therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthi-

PRACT. OBS. V. 11—18. Evident uprightness and enlarged love give confidence, in addressing even those who have imbibed prejudices; we shall be far more grieved when they close their minds against our instructions, than when they refuse to communicate to our necessities; and the most desired 'recompense' of 'our labor of love,' will be their readiness to receive the truth from our lips.—It will especially be near the heart of such pastors, to caution their 'beloved children' in the Gospel, not to be 'unequally yoked with unbelievers.' The fatal effects of neglecting the scriptural precept in this matter are most evident. They, whose trial it is to be thus connected, without their wilful fault, may expect peculiar consolations under it; but when believers will thrust themselves into these disadvantageous circumstances, contrary to the express warnings of God's Word, they may expect to feel great and often very durable additional distress; and we are most likely to do good to unbelievers, when we stand aloof from all other intercourse with

them, besides that of duty and compassion. If we be Christians indeed, we are 'the temples of the living God;' [magnificent, glorious thought;] and 'what have we then to do any more with idols?' Let us value our relation to Him, and not profane it; let us admire his condescending promises, of 'dwelling and walking in us' poor sinners, whom He hath reconciled to Himself by Jesus Christ. Let us not touch any gain or indulgence that is spotted with sin. Let us remember, that the world, though called Christian, still 'lieth in wickedness,' and is full of unclean things, which we must abhor. Let us assure ourselves that the Lord will receive all those, who come in his appointed way, and at his call; and that He 'will be a Father unto them,' and take them for his children; and if it be so envied a privilege, to be the son or daughter of some earthly potentate, who can express the dignity and felicity of being 'the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty?' 1 John 3:1—3.

In joy, and other impassioned feelings, the heart really feels as if loosened and enlarged; whereas, in the contrary affections, as sorrow, fear, alarm, &c., the heart seems tightened.

BLOOMF. V. 13, 14. Children.] 'To suggest the ground of the claim, viz. his paternity. Make me, then, v. 14. this return of affection, and as a proof of it, observe my admonitions, especially this, be not a yoke-fellow (so the Gr.) &c. which has a double sense, and delicately includes marriage, (which would bring a Christian into close contact with heathen society,) while condemning all habitual intimacy.' ID.

V. 14—18. The apostle especially entreated his beloved children, not to contract marriages, or form any intimate connexions, with unbelievers, to which carnal motives might induce them.—(16) I will dwell, &c.] With some variation from the LXX, and also from the Heb.; but it gives the general meaning. (Lev. 26:11,12.)—(17) Come out, &c.] The general sense of the passage, but not exactly either from the Heb. or LXX, (Is. 52:11.) SCOTT.

(16.) Ye.] 'I. e. each one of you Christians. 1 Cor. 6:19, 20, &c. Nothing can be more harsh, frigid, and devoid of foundation, than to understand it, of all the Corinthian congregation, taken collectively, and forming a church, as do some recent comtrs. And why this [system of] tortuous interpretation? Is it to get rid of the doctrine of spiritual influences altogether? But as this is impossible, why haggle about a few examples of it, more or less?' BL. Temple of God.] 'There seems a peculiar strength in this interrogation. If God would not endure idols in any part of the land in which He dwelt, how much less would He endure them under his own roof. Dwell, in the most intimate manner, in them.] No words, I know, in our language, can equal the force of the original, I will take up my indwelling in them. This was a promise made to the Jews on their being converted, and consequently refers to their privileges, as members of the Christian church; which shows the propriety of the application. Jer. 31:33. 32:37,33.' DODDR. God hath said.] Doddr. paraphrases, 'Now when we consider the constitution of the Christian church, we cannot possibly imagine that God is less favorably present with it than He was with the Jewish. We may, therefore, hear God calling to us, as to Israel, Come out, &c.' The sense (says BL.) is: 'to employ and apply the words of God to the present case.' And he adds, 'Can anything more strongly prove the divine inspiration of

ness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

q De. 7:2,3. 83. 32:33. Ex. Re. 21:7.  
1 Co. 7:39. 11:21 36:28. 37: a c. 6:17,18.  
r 1 Co. 3:16,17. 26:27, 28. 8:3. 1 Ju. 3:3.  
6:19. Ep. 2:21,22. t Is. 52:11. e.7:1. b Ps. 51:10.  
s Ex. 29:45. Lc. Re. 13:4. E. 56:25,26.  
26:12. Je. 31:1. u Je. 31:9. 1 Ju. 1:7,9.

towards him. It is desirable that there should be a [strong and] mutual good affection between ministers and their people, and this would greatly tend to their mutual comfort and advantage.

The exhortation is, not to mingle themselves with unbelievers, not to be unequally yoked with them, v. 14. Either,

1. In stated relations. It is wrong for good people to join in affinity with the wicked and profane; these will draw different ways, and that will be galling and grievous; and there is more danger that the bad will damage the good, than hope that the good will benefit the bad.

2. In common conversation. We should not yoke ourselves in friendship and acquaintance with wicked men and unbelievers. Though we cannot wholly avoid seeing and hearing, and being with such, yet we should never choose them for our bosom-friends.

3. Much less should we join in religious communion with them; we must not join their idolatrous services, nor concur in their false worship, nor any abominations; we must not confound together the table of the Lord and the table of devils; the house of God and the house of Rimmon. The apostle gives several good reasons against this corrupt mixture.

(1.) It is a very great absurdity, v. 14, 15. as bad as for the Jews to have ploughed with an ox and an ass, or to have sown divers sorts of grain intermixed. What an absurdity to think of joining righteousness and unrighteousness, or mingling light and

darkness, fire and water, together! Yet believers and unbelievers, Christ and Belial, are equally opposite. It is absurd, therefore, to think of enlisting under both; and if the believer has part with an infidel, he does what in him lies to bring Christ and Belial together.

(2.) It is a dishonor to the Christian's profession; v. 16. for Christians are by profession, and should be in reality, the temples of the living God, dedicated to, and employed for, the service of God, who has promised to reside in them, to dwell and walk in them, to stand in a special relation to them, and take a special care of them, that He will be their God, and they shall be his people. Now there can be no agreement between the temple of God and idols.

(3.) There is great danger in communicating with unbelievers and idolaters; danger of being defiled, and of being rejected; therefore the exhortation is, v. 17. to avoid the society of such, and not to touch the unclean thing, lest we are defiled. We must take care not to defile ourselves by converse with those who [persist to] defile themselves with sin; so is the will of God, as we ever hope to be received, and not rejected, by Him.

(4.) It is base ingratitude to God for all the favors He has bestowed on believers, and promised to them, v. 18. God has promised to be a Father to them, and that they shall be his sons and his daughters; and is there a greater honor or happiness? How ungrateful then must it be, if such, who have this dignity and felicity, should degrade and debase themselves by mingling with unbelievers!

CHAP. VII. V. 1—4. These vs. contain a double exhortation.

1. To make a progress in holiness, or to perfect holiness in the fear of God, v. 1. in view of the exceeding great and precious

them, besides that of duty and compassion. If we be Christians indeed, we are 'the temples of the living God;' [magnificent, glorious thought;] and 'what have we then to do any more with idols?' Let us value our relation to Him, and not profane it; let us admire his condescending promises, of 'dwelling and walking in us' poor sinners, whom He hath reconciled to Himself by Jesus Christ. Let us not touch any gain or indulgence that is spotted with sin. Let us remember, that the world, though called Christian, still 'lieth in wickedness,' and is full of unclean things, which we must abhor. Let us assure ourselves that the Lord will receive all those, who come in his appointed way, and at his call; and that He 'will be a Father unto them,' and take them for his children; and if it be so envied a privilege, to be the son or daughter of some earthly potentate, who can express the dignity and felicity of being 'the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty?' 1 John 3:1—3.

SCOTT. the O. T. (even that of the Pentateuch, so much called in question) than such language as this; so decided, and, at the same time, thrown out in a sort of way, which, least of all, induces us to suppose that the N. T. writers meant formally to enjoin such a belief! ED.

(17.) Separate.] 'A separation of counsels and plans, not accompanied with that hatred, in which the Jews always held foreign nations.' ROS. An internal, mental, spiritual, rather than an external non-intercourse alone: for 'this more perfect disposition of mind,' (says ROS.) 'makes us more united to God,' and more fit to be 'received into his especial society, as the Gr. has it.' 'The wiser Jews supposed that, by the prohibition not to touch unclean animals, was also meant abstinence from society with idolaters.' GROT.

(18.) 'Not, it is supposed, found, in so many words, in any one passage of the O. T.; though, by some, referred to Jer. 31:1 or 9. or rather, 2 S. 7:14. Paul meant (I think) to apply that very passage, though, no doubt, he had some similar ones in his mind.' BLOOMF.

NOTES. CHAP. VII. V. 1. This v. is evidently connected with the subject of the former ch. 6:14—18. All sin is 'filthiness' in the judgment of God, because contrary to his holy nature and law. Sensual lusts may be called 'filthiness of the flesh;' while pride, envy, revenge, avarice, idolatry, and all ungodliness may be intended by the 'filthiness of the spirit;' or the former may signify the outward expression of sin by the body in word or deed; the latter, its inward workings in the imagination and affections. It should, however, be noted, that the apostle speaks of 'filthiness of the spirit;' whereas modern theologians often speak as if the body alone were the seat of pollution. Rom. 6:5—9. Gal. 5:16—21.—Perfecting, &c.] 'Still making progress in holiness.' WHITBY. If any were perfect, in the strict sense of the word, the exhortation would not suit them. It would not be properly addressed to a holy angel, or to the 'spirits of just men made perfect.' SCOTT.

(1.) Filthiness, or pollution of the flesh.] I. e. improper desires, resulting in acts; as theft, lying, fraud, drunkenness, gluttony, slander, abusive language, fighting, lasciviousness, idolatry, &c. Of the spirit.] Indulgence of pride, avarice, malice, impure thoughts; complacent meditation on future or past sins; all such (wiltful) ill-regulated thoughts as lead to evil actions: or approval of any of those thoughts which defile a man ED.



2 Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.

3 I speak not *this* to condemn you; for I have said <sup>d</sup> before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.

4 Great *is* my boldness of speech toward you, great <sup>e</sup> *is* my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceedingly joyful <sup>f</sup> in all our tribulation.

5 For when we were come into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without <sup>g</sup> *were* fightings, within *were* fears.

6 Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of <sup>h</sup> Titus;

7 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

8 For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I <sup>i</sup> did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though *it were* but for a season.

9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry <sup>j</sup> after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

c 1 Sa. 12:3,4. e 1 Co. 1:4. c. 1:14. h c. 2:13.  
Ac. 20:33. f Phi. 2:17. i c. 2:4.  
c. 12:17. Col. 1:24. } or, according to  
d c. 6:11,12. g De. 32:25. } God.

promises mentioned in the former ch. The promises of God are strong inducements to sanctification, in both the branches thereof, namely, *dying unto sin*, or mortifying our

lusts and corruptions, of body and of mind; and *living unto righteousness and holiness*. We must endeavor to be holy as God is holy, and perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect, and not be contented without aiming at sinless perfection, though we shall always come short of it, while in this world; and this we must do in the [loving] *fear of God*, which is the root and principle of all religion, and there is no holiness without it.

2. To show a due regard to the ministers of the Gospel; *Receive us*, v. 2. Those who labor in the word and doctrine, should *be had in reputation*, and *be highly esteemed for their work's sake*; and this would be a help to making progress in holiness. If the ministers of the Gospel are thought contemptible because of their office, there is danger lest the Gospel itself be contemned also. The apostle did not think it any disparagement to court the favor of the Corinthians; and though we must flatter none, yet we must be gentle towards all.

(1.) He had done nothing to forfeit their esteem and good-will, and was cautious not to do anything to deserve their ill-will, v. 2. *I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel*, said he to the elders of Ephesus, Acts 20: 33. This is an appeal like that of Samuel, 1 S. 12. *Then* may ministers the more confidently expect esteem and favor from the people, when they can safely appeal to them, that they are guilty of nothing that deserves disesteem or displeasure.

(2.) He did not herein reflect on them for want of affection to him, v. 3, 4. and, to prevent any insinuations against him on account of what he had said, as if he intended to charge them with wronging him, or unjust accusations of him for having wronged them, he assures them again of his great affection to them, inasmuch that he could spend his last breath at Corinth, and *live and die with them*, if his business with other churches, and his work as an apostle, would permit him to do so. And he adds, it was his great affection to them, that made him use such *boldness* or freedom of speech toward them, and caused him to *glory*, or make his boasts of them, in all places, and on all occasions, *being filled with comfort, and exceeding joyful in all [his] tribulations*.

V. 5—11. There seems to be a connexion between ch. 2: 13. and v. 5. of this

ch., and so great was the apostle's affection to the Corinthians, and his concern about their behavior in relation to the incestuous person, that he still had *no rest* till he heard from them. And now he tells them,

1. *How he was distressed*, v. 5. He was troubled when he did not meet with Titus at Troas, ch. 2: 13. and afterwards, when for some time he did not meet with him in Macedonia, because he could not hear what reception he met with at Corinth, or how their affairs went forward. And beside this, they had other troubles, continual opposition, from Jews and Gentiles; and great concern for such as had embraced the Christian faith, lest they should be corrupted or seduced, and give scandal to others, or be scandalized.

2. *How he was comforted*, v. 6, 7. The very coming of Titus, and his company, was some comfort to him; but the good news Titus brought concerning the Corinthians, was matter of greater consolation, especially when he acquainted him with their *earnest desire* to give good satisfaction in the things about which the apostle had written to them; and of their *mourning* for the scandal found among them, and the great grief they had caused to others; and their *fervent mind*, or great affection, toward the apostle, who had dealt so faithfully with them in reproving their faults. And he ascribes all his comfort to God as the Author, even the God of all comfort, v. 6. We should look above and beyond all means and instruments, unto God, as the Author of all the consolation and good we enjoy.

3. How greatly he was rejoiced at their repentance, and its evidences. He was sorry some among them laid to heart very greatly what he said in his former epistle, or that it was needful he should make *them* sorry, whom he had rather have made glad, v. 8. But now he rejoiced, when he found they had *sorrowed to repentance*, v. 9. for now it appeared they had received damage by him in nothing; their sorrow was *but for a season*; it was turned into joy, and that joy was durable. Observe here,

(1.) The antecedent of true repentance is *godly sorrow*, that *worketh* repentance. The offender had great sorrow, and the society was greatly sorrowful, which before was *puffed up*; and this sorrow of theirs was

V. 2—4. The apostle here returned to his more immediate purpose of re-establishing his authority among the Corinthians. 6:11—13. He called on them, to 'receive' him and his brethren as the ambassadors of Christ. There could be no reason for a contrary conduct; as they had 'injured no man,' in his person or connexions; 'corrupted no man,' in his principles or morals; and 'defrauded no man' in regard to his property; or in any respect *coveted* ought belonging to them.—Indeed he was so confident that they would submit to his apostolical authority, that he addressed them with great freedom and boldness, not fearing but they would take it in good part; and he even gloried among his friends concerning their conduct in the late transactions; yea, he was filled with such comfort on that account, as abundantly counterbalanced all his trials.—*We have defrauded.*] See on 2:10. 'The word . . . signifies, to indulge a covetous temper, and make a prey of others by it; and perhaps intimates, that the false teachers, of whom he had so much reason to complain, had done it. (4) *I am exceeding joyful.*] See on Rom. 5: 20.—'It has an inexpressible energy; and is, if I mistake not, a word of the apostle's own making.' Doddr.

(2.) 'A continuation of the metaphorical language at 6:11—13. for the words following, in vs. 14—13. are an independent paragraph, containing the admonition to abstain from heathen society. The sense, therefore, seems to be this: "give us a large place in your affections, and (which is connected therewith) observe these our earnest and affectionate admonitions. We may claim to possess, or retain this place in your affections, for we have injured none of you," &c.—as the false teachers had. *Corrupted.*] Wasted no one's substance by extorting gifts.' Bl.

(3.) 'I say not this to hint my reproach of illiberality to me; but I speak merely to show my claim to a large place in your affections (as ye have in mine); for, as I have said before, &c.' Bl. *Die and live, &c.*] This is thought a proverbial expression, and similar are quoted from *Ath.* and *Hor.*: perhaps Paul had in mind the fraternization oath of the Grecian 'sacred hand,' imitated by individuals, still, in modern Greece, who solemnly swear, to share with and to stand by each other, money for money, blood for blood, life for life. The custom may have been as ancient as the apostle's time. Ed.

(4.) "'Out of the love I bear to you (and which is, I trust, in some degree, mutual), I venture to use this freedom of speech, not from my ill opinion of you, for great is my boasting [exultation] concerning you, but rather for your good, and spiritual improvement.'" The words following seem added by way of climax; q. d. not only do I boast of you to others, but your spiritual progress gives me the greatest private comfort in all my afflictions.' Bl. *Exceeding.*] The fervency of the apostle's tempera-

ment, here induces him to make a word of his own, says Doddr., which *Bloomf.* calls 'very rare, occurring only in Paul.' Ed.

V. 7. 'He draws no invidious distinctions between them, [separately addressing the ill and well affected,] but makes both the eucommiums and the censures common, and in medio, leaving it to the conscience of each to appropriate to himself what belonged to him.' THEOPH.

V. 8. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit did not supersede the exercise of the understanding and faculties, in the sacred writers; and the apostle's excess of concern, about the consequences of his former epistle, seems to have rendered his mind greatly disquieted, as to some expressions in it, lest they should counteract his grand design. If, indeed, he actually 'repented' of having written so sharply, as well as had felt an *after carefulness* about it, as the word implies; this must not be ascribed to the things written, as if they had not been divinely inspired; but to infirmity, as not being fully sanctified, or freed from a propensity to excess of anxiety and solicitude.—A physician, in full confidence that the case requires it, may give a powerful remedy to a sick friend; and yet his anxiety about the event, arising from concurring circumstances, may induce him sometimes to wish he had not given it.—Some, however, render the passage, perhaps more accurately, 'Even if I had repented, I should not now repent.' Rom. 9:1—3. SCOTT.

(3.) 'Wherefore, if I ever did pain your feelings in the epistle (which I wrote to you) I do not (now) repent; though I did repent (during the time after I had sent it off, and before I saw Titus). On the sense of these words it is not necessary to refine minutely or press. For, after making due allowance for the laxity of popular phraseology, it cannot be inferred, because the apostle felt regret, that he had written with undue, or unjust severity. The warm-hearted kindness of his disposition might generate that feeling, though, strictly speaking, it were unwarranted. When, however, he found the good his well-meant rebukes had done, he would abandon all feelings of regret.' Bl. *Repent.*] 'It may also signify a *kind of misgiving* of heart, natural, when the reproof, however necessary, is given to a person one tenderly loves, where the event is dubious, as in this instance it might be.' DODDR.

V. 9—11. Some are of opinion, that the word, rendered 'not to be repented of,' should be referred to 'salvation,' rather than to 'repentance;' in the same sense as it is applied to 'the gifts and calling of God,' in the only place, where the same word occurs in the N. T., signifying its *unchangeableness*; or denoting a salvation, which will infinitely more than compensate all that may be endured in attaining it; and the construction, in the original, seems to favor this opinion.—'The sorrow of the world,' is the certain way to desperation, unless 'God prevent it; as it



10 For godly sorrow <sup>k</sup> worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world <sup>l</sup> worketh death.

11 For behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly <sup>m</sup> sort, what carefulness <sup>n</sup> it wrought in you, yea, *what* clearing <sup>o</sup> of yourselves, yea, *what* <sup>p</sup> indignation, yea, *what* <sup>q</sup> fear, yea, *what* vehement <sup>r</sup> desire, yea, *what* zeal, yea, *what* <sup>s</sup> revenge! In all things ye have approved <sup>t</sup> yourselves to be clear in this matter.

12 Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, *I did it* not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for <sup>u</sup> you in the sight of God might appear unto you.

13 Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed <sup>v</sup> by you all.

14 For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which *I made* before Titus, is found a truth.

15 And his <sup>w</sup> inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with <sup>x</sup> fear and trembling ye received him.

16 I rejoice, therefore, that I

have confidence in you <sup>y</sup> in all things.

k Je. 31:9. p Ep. 4:26. u c. 2:4.  
Eze. 7:16. q He. 4:1. v Ro. 15:32.  
1 Pr. 17:22. r Ps. 42:1, 130:6. w bowels.  
in Is. 66:2. s Re. 3:19. x Phi. 2:12.  
n Tit. 3:8. t Mat. 5:29,30. y 2 Th. 3:4.  
o Ep. 5:11. t Ro. 14:13. Phil. 3:21.

after a *godly manner*, or according to God, (as it is in the original,) according to the will of God, tending to his glory, and wrought by his Spirit, a godly sorrow, because a sorrow for sin, as an offence against God. This sorrow produces repentance and reformation, and will end in salvation; but worldly sorrow *worketh death*; sorrow of worldly men for worldly things, and such a sorrow even for sin as Judas had, will have fatal consequences. Repentance will be attended with salvation. Therefore, True penitents will never repent that they have repented, nor of anything that was conducive thereto. Further, humiliation and godly sorrow are previously necessary in order to repentance, and both are from God, the Giver of all grace.

(2.) The happy fruits and consequences of true repentance are mentioned, v. 11. The Corinthians made it evident their sorrow was a *godly sorrow*, and such as *wrought repentance*, because it wrought in them great *carefulness* about their souls, to avoid sin and please God; also a *clearing of themselves*, by endeavors to put away the accursed thing, and so free themselves from the just imputation of approving the evil that had been done. It wrought *indignation* at sin, at themselves, the tempter and his instruments; it wrought *fear*, an awful fear of God, a cautious fear of sin, and a jealous fear of themselves. It wrought *vehement desire* after a thorough reformation, and reconciliation with God, nay, *zeal*, a mixture of

love and anger, a zeal for duty and against sin. It wrought, lastly, *revenge* against sin and their own folly, by endeavors to make all due satisfaction for injuries done thereby. And thus *in all things had they approved themselves to be clear in that matter*. Not that they were innocent, but penitent, and therefore clear of guilt before God, who would pardon and not punish them; and they ought no longer to be reproved, much less reproached, by men, for what they had truly repented of.

V. 12—16. In these vs. he endeavors to comfort the Corinthians, on whom his admonitions had had so good effect.

1. He had a good design in his former epistle, which might be thought severe, v. 12. It was not chiefly *for his cause that did the wrong*, not only for his benefit, much less merely that he should be punished; nor yet was it only *for his cause that suffered wrong*, namely, the injured father, and that he might have what satisfaction could be given him; but it was also to manifest his great and sincere concern and *care for them*, the whole church, lest that should suffer by letting such a crime, and the scandal thereof, remain among them without due remark and sensibility.

2. He acquaints them with the joy of Titus as well as of himself, on account of their repentance and good behavior, v. 13. and as Titus was comforted while he was with them, so when he remembered his reception among them, expressing their *obedience* to the apostolical directions, and their *fear and trembling* at the reproofs given them, the thoughts of these things inflamed and increased his affections to them, v. 15. Great comfort and joy follow on godly sorrow; here Paul was glad, and Titus glad, and the Corinthians were comforted; and the *penitent* ought to be comforted; and well may

PRACT. OBS. The promises of God should excite and direct us in 'following after holiness.' His grace alone can efficaciously 'purify' us; but it is our duty earnestly to use the means which He has appointed; and, depending on that grace, to search out and cleanse away all 'filthiness of the flesh and spirit,' as abhorred by God and all his people.—If the ambassadors or messengers of Christ would be received in that character [of true piety]; they must be careful 'to wrong no man, to corrupt no man, to defraud no man;' or in any way to manifest a propensity to covetousness; Is. 56:9—12. Jer. 6:13—15. 1 Tim. 3:3. 1 Pet. 5:1—4. and they who reject those ministers of Christ, whose conduct and doctrine are thus uncorrupt, will greatly offend Him that sent them. But we ought not to expect much 'rest to our flesh,' in this evil world; and if inward 'fears' concur with outward opposition, to distress us; we only taste that cup, of which far wiser and better men have drunk more abundantly.—We cannot sufficiently admire the compassion and condescension of our God, in revealing Himself as 'the Comforter of those that are cast down.' He, however, generally works by second causes and instruments; the converse of some pious friend; or a good account of those about whom we are anxious; or the affection of such as we feared were alienated, are often sources of relief and consolation, in which the kindness of the Lord should be acknowledged with much thankfulness.—Through anxiety about the event of his labors, even the faithful minister may be tempted to repent of his best intended and most scriptural endeavors to do good. Thus a man may be much disquieted for having done his duty, and afraid of doing it on another occasion; and this should be carefully watched against with humble, persevering prayer.

Indeed, we should be reluctant to cause sorrow; but we should rejoice in bringing men to that 'godly sorrow, which worketh repentance;' as their grief will be transient, and the benefit eternal.—The loss of an earthly friend, the displeasure of a powerful superior, or other secular misfortunes, excite men's sorrow, and they think they have cause to mourn; how then should they be grieved for having offended their Creator, dishonored his name, incurred his frown, and deserved eternal misery! The objects of worldly sorrow are trivial; its exercise is commonly unavailing; and it tends to death in diverse and most awful ways; we should therefore be peculiarly careful not to indulge it. Unless sin be mourned over [and forsaken], as the cause of men's sufferings, and God be regarded, as the righteous and merciful Author of them; their sorrow under afflictions and calamities leads to increasing enmity, to distraction, despair, and blasphemy. Rev. 16:8—11. We should, therefore, endeavor to turn all our mourning into a religious channel, that we may 'sorrow after a godly sort.' But even sorrow about sin, and our eternal concerns, will be of no use to us, unless it 'worketh repentance;' and even repentance itself may be counterfeited or spurious, and so not be 'unto salvation.' Of all deceptions this is most to be feared; as immense multitudes are quieted without true repentance, by a groundless notion that they have repented, or do repent. But deep humiliation before God, hatred and dread of all sin, attended by faith in the righteousness, atonement, and intercession of Christ, a new heart and a new life, constitute 'repentance unto salvation never to be repented of.' May the Lord bestow it on every one of us! [and proceed to bestow the precious gift on all the millions of our fallen race.] SCOTT.

appears from the horrid examples of Cain, Saul, Ahithophel, and Judas; but the written tears of David give the clearest example of the other kind of sorrow.' Beza.—As v. 11. relates to the conduct of a Christian society in particular circumstances, and probably some of the clauses to one part and some to another of this society; so the several particulars adduced can be applied, only by accommodation, to the repentance of an individual. SCOTT.

(9.) *Now, &c.*] 'A sentiment more delicate than this is not (as far as I remember) to be found in the whole range of classical literature. Chrys. observes, that Paul ascribes the *making sorry* to the epistle, yet does not expressly say, "but I rejoiced that it benefited you;" though that was true; but gives such a delicate turn to the expression, as rather ascribes it to their own good feeling. This remark, indeed, is in the spirit of true criticism, such as it was professed in the school of Longinus, and the other mighty Aristarchi of ancient times.' BLOOMF.

(10.) *Of the world.*] I. e. not connected with our moral progress. ED.

(11.) 'It is a strange error to suppose these vs. to contain [the] seven distinct marks of true repentance, to be found in every sincere penitent, whereas, (as Doddg. obs.) these are not characters of the temper of each, but of different persons, according to the part they respectively acted in the affair in question. And so Mackn. Clear.] Whitby, after Scater, remarks, that true repentance clears us from the guilt, not only in the sight of God, but man; so that it is both uncharitable and unchristian to stigmatize or reproach any man for the sin which we know or believe he hath truly repented of.' BLOOMF.

V. 12. 'Truly (I wrote), not so much (so the Greek) on his account,' &c. ID.

V. 13—16. There was great address in this part of the epistle; and his kind acceptance of what had been done, and the confidence which he expressed in the church, were in general well suited to excite them to a more entire reformation; to withstand the party formed against him; to deliver them from the fascinations of the false teachers; to re-establish the apostle's authority; and to prepare the way for his subsequent exhortations, warnings, expostulations, and direct accusations and denunciations of the principal offenders, and of all who continued impenitent. For they implied, that not the church, as a society, but merely a few corrupt intruders were the subjects of these severe addresses. SCOTT.

(13.) 'His own joy was much increased by the evident satisfaction which Titus felt, at his reception among them. The expressions have great energy, as well as simplicity and beauty.' BLOOMF.

(16.) "'I rejoice that, from the experience I have had of you, I may in everything feel confidence in your ready obedience to all my admonitions or suggestions.'" This forms a very easy and natural transition to the subject he now enters upon, and which forms the second part of the epistle, viz. the contributions.' Bl. 'These he urges, because, (1) The Macedonians had afforded them liberally, 8:1—3. (2) The Corinthians would thus testify their firm faith, 7, 8. (3) They would thus imitate Christ, 9. (4) They had before been liberal, 10. (5) They will thus confirm the authority of the apostle in what he had boasted of them, 9:3—5. (6) The divine blessing would compensate all they bestow, 6—11. (7) Because others would on that account praise God, and intercede with Him in their behalf, v. 12—14.' SCHOETTG. [339]



## CHAP. VIII.

<sup>1</sup> He stirreth them up to a liberal contribution for the poor saints at Jerusalem, by the example of the Macedonians, <sup>7</sup> by commendation of their former forwardness, <sup>9</sup> by the example of Christ, <sup>14</sup> and by the spiritual profit that shall redound to themselves thereby: <sup>16</sup> commending to them the integrity and willingness of Titus, and those other brethren, who, upon his request, exhortation, and commendation, were purposely come to them for this business.

**M**OREOVER, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

<sup>2</sup> How that, in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep <sup>b</sup> poverty abounded unto the riches of their <sup>c</sup> liberality.

<sup>3</sup> For to *their* power, (I bear record,) yea, and beyond *their* power, *they were* willing of themselves;

<sup>4</sup> Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship <sup>d</sup> of the ministering to the saints.

<sup>5</sup> And *this they did*, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

<sup>6</sup> Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same <sup>e</sup> grace also.

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, as ye abound <sup>f</sup> in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, *see* that ye abound in this grace also.

<sup>8</sup> I speak not <sup>g</sup> by commandment; but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.

a c. 9:24. d Ac. 11:29. f 1 Co. 1:5.  
h Ma. 12:44. Ro. 15:25,26. g 1 Co. 7:6.  
e simplicity. e or, gift.

all this joy be on *earth*, when there is joy in *heaven* over one sinner that repenteth.

<sup>3</sup> He concludes this whole matter with expressing his entire confidence in them, v. 14. for he was not disappointed in his expectation concerning them, which he signified to Titus; and he could now, with great joy, declare what confidence he still had in them as to their good behavior, in *all things*, for the time to come. It is a great comfort and joy to a faithful minister, to have to do with a people in whom he can confide, and who, he has reason to hope, will comply with everything he proposes to them, that is for the glory of God, the credit of the Gospel, and their advantage.

NOTES. CHAP. VIII. V. 1—5. The mention the apostle had made of his confidence in the Corinthians, gave him an occasion of again introducing the subject of the collection he was making, for the Christians in Judea, which takes up this and the following ch. Rom. 15:22—29 1 Cor. 16:1, 2. With great delicacy and propriety, he brought this forward, by 'informing' them, as an article of interesting intelligence, concerning the admirable conduct of the churches in Macedonia. The word rendered *grace*, is no doubt sometimes tr. *gift*; but to interpret 'the grace of God towards the churches, &c.' to signify the large subscription for the poor Christians in Judea, as some learned men do, is wholly unprecedented; and the obvious meaning, viz. that their bounty to their poor brethren, was the effect of the abundant grace of God conferred on them, agrees far better with the simple and reasonable language of Scripture on these subjects.

SCOTT. (1.) 'I have to announce to you, brethren, &c. *Grace of God*.] The *cause* is put for the *effect*, says *Grot.*, in order to show, that all that is done by Christians, is owing solely to the goodness of God, who hath remitted so many sins, hath revealed his will so openly, hath, of his own good pleasure, called to Him those that were alienated, and hath confirmed this call by so many miracles. These are the causes why so much more is said of grace in the New, than in the O. T. So Wolf, Doddr., Locke, Hardy, and perhaps rightly. The name denoting these aims may, however, be regarded as a compound appellative; q. d. *God's gift*, i. e. something given for God's sake. And this seems confirmed by the prep. *in*, [tr. *on*] following. The aims were so called, as *Theoph.* suggests, out of delicacy.

BLOOMF. (2.) *Poverty*.] 'The Gr. properly signifies *beggary*, and we also use that term, as the Gr. is here used, comparatively. Probably, the converts were persons chiefly of the lower orders, and the poorer classes.

CHAP. VIII. In this and the following ch. Paul is exhorting and directing the Corinthians about a particular work of charity, — to relieve the necessities of the poor saints at Jerusalem and in Judea. Rom. 15:26. The Christians at Jerusalem, through war, famine, and persecution, were grown poor, many of them fallen into decay, and perhaps most of them were but poor when they first embraced Christianity. Now Paul, though the apostle of the Gentiles, had a tender regard, and kind concern, for those among the Jews who were converted to the Christian faith; and though many of them had not so much affection to the Gentile converts as they ought to have, yet he would have the Gentiles kind to them, and stirred them up to contribute liberally for their relief. On this subject he is very large and copious, and writes very affectingly.

V. 1—6. The apostle takes occasion from the good example of the churches of Macedonia, i. e. of Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and others of Macedonia, to exhort the Corinthians, and the Christians in Achaia, to the good work of charity. And,

1. He acquaints them with their great liberality, called *the grace of God bestowed on the churches*, v. 1. Some tr. *the gift of God given in or by the churches*. He certainly means the charitable gifts of these churches, called *the grace or gifts of God*, either because very large, or rather because their charity to the poor saints did proceed from God as the Author, and was accompanied with true love to God, which also was manifested this way.

2. He commends the charity of the Macedonians, and sets it forth with good advantage. (1.) In but a low condition, and themselves in distress, yet they contributed to the relief of others, v. 2. It was a time of great affliction with them, as may be seen, Acts 16. and 17. (2.) They gave very largely, with *the riches of liberality*, v. 2. i. e. as liberally as if they had been rich; they made a large contribution, all things considered; it was *according to*, yea, *beyond their power*, v. 3. as much, if not more than could well be expected from them. (3.) They were very ready and forward to this good work, *willing of themselves*, v. 3. and so far from needing Paul should press them with arguments, that they *prayed him with much entreaty to receive the gift*, v. 4. It seems Paul was backward to undertake this trust, *he would give himself to the Word and prayer*; or, it may be, he was apprehensive how his enemies might take a handle against him on account of so large a sum deposited in his hands, to suspect or accense him of indiscretion and partiality in the distribution, if not of some injustice. Ministers should be cautious, especially in money-matters, not to give occasion to them who seek occasion

to speak reproachfully! (4.) Their charity was founded in true piety, and this was its great commendation; they performed this good work in a right method; *first they gave themselves to the Lord, and then gave unto us their contributions, by the will of God*, v. 5. i. e. according as it was the will of God they should do, or to be disposed of as the will of God should be, and for his glory. They solemnly, jointly, and unanimously, made a fresh surrender of themselves, and all they had, unto the Lord Jesus Christ. They had done this before, and now do it again on this occasion; sanctifying their contributions to do God honor, by first giving themselves to the Lord. We cannot bestow ourselves better; all we give or bestow for charitable uses, will not be accepted, or turn to our advantage, unless we first give ourselves to the Lord.

He further acquaints them, that Titus was desired to go and make a collection among them, v. 6. and Titus, he knew, would be acceptable. Beside, Titus had already *begun* this work among them, therefore he was desired to *finish* it. It is wisdom, to use proper instruments in a work we desire to do well; and the work of charity will succeed the best, when the most proper [accustomed] persons are employed to ask for it, and dispose of it.

V. 7—15. In these vs. the apostle uses several cogent arguments to stir up to this good work of charity.

1. He urges the consideration of their eminence in other gifts and graces, v. 7. Great address and much holy art are here used by the apostle, when he would persuade the Corinthians to *this* good thing. He commends them for *other* good things that were found in them. Observe, here, what it was the Corinthians abounded in. *Faith*, mentioned first, as the root, Heb. 11:6. next, *utterance*, which is an excellent gift, and redounds much to the glory of God, and the good of the church, particularly when united, as here, with abundance of *knowledge*. They abounded also in *all diligence*. Often, those who have great knowledge and ready utterance are not the most diligent; but these Corinthians were diligent to do, as well as know, and talk well. And further, they had abundant *love to their ministers*; and were not like too many, who, having gifts of their own, are but too apt to slight their ministers, and neglect them. Now to all these good things the apostle desires them to add *this grace* also; to abound in charity to the poor; that, where so much good was found, there should be found yet more good.

Before proceeding to another argument, he takes care to prevent any misapprehensions of his design to impose on them, or to bind heavy burdens on them by his authority; and tells them, v. 8. he did not

*Grot.* thinks they had become poor by confiscation, and by the desertion of the rich converts. But this is little more than mere speculation. Their deep poverty redounded to, tended to, ended in, their rich liberality. *Ros.* expl., their liberality appeared much greater, than could be expected from persons so poor.

BLOOMF. (3.) 'The Gr. words tr. "we would receive," are omitted in very many excellent MSS., almost all the versions, all the Gr. comtrs., and many fathers, and have been rejected by the best critics.' *Bl.*, who tr. 'They asked of us to do them the favor of taking part in the trouble of conveying this collection,' &c. *En.*

(5.) 'This v. is very energetic, and somewhat hyperbolic. The sense seems to be: "They not only gave more than we expected, for the use of the poor, but they gave and devoted themselves first to the Lord, to do his will in every good work, and then to us, to fulfil all our wishes, and observe our admonitions." V. 6. The result of this unexpected success with the Macedonians was, that (fearing lest you should be outstripped by the Macedonians) we desired Titus, &c. V. 7. Now then, as ye,' &c. *Bloomf.*

V. 6—9. If the poor and persecuted Macedonians had exceeded expectation 'in the riches of their liberality,' the prosperous and affluent Christians at Corinth would doubtless fully answer the apostle's hopes of them. When Titus had before been there, he had begun this good work among them, and Paul had therefore desired him to go again and complete it.—By 'the same grace also' most expositors understand the beneficence itself; and, indeed, the word may signify the *free gift* of man, as well as that of God; yet it seems more consonant to the apostle's language, to explain it of the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit on their hearts, [inducing them to act out their Christian principles in giving.] than of the gift itself, or *their act of grace* towards their brethren.



9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was <sup>h</sup> rich, yet for your sakes he became <sup>i</sup> poor, that ye through his poverty might be <sup>j</sup> rich.

10 And herein I give *my* advice : for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be <sup>k</sup> forward a year ago.

11 Now therefore perform <sup>l</sup> the doing of it ; that as *there was* a readiness to will, so *there may be* a performance also out of that which ye have.

12 For if <sup>m</sup> there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not.

13 For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and you burdened :

14 But by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be *a supply* for your want, that there may be equality :

15 As it is written, <sup>n</sup> He that *had gathered* much had nothing over ; and he that *had gathered* little had no lack.

16 But thanks *be* to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

17 For indeed he accepted the <sup>o</sup> exhortation ; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

18 And we have sent with him the <sup>p</sup> brother, whose praise *is* in the gospel throughout all the churches ;

19 And not *that* only, but who was also chosen <sup>q</sup> of the churches to travel with us with this <sup>r</sup> grace, which is administered by us to <sup>s</sup> the glory of the same Lord, and *declaration* of your ready mind :

h Jn. 1:1.	l 1 Ti. 6:19.	Ue.	o ver. 5.
i Lu. 9:53.	13:16.	Jn. 2:15,	p c. 12:13.
j Phi. 2:6,7.	16.	q 1 Co. 16:3,4.	
k Re. 3:13.	m Lu. 21:3.	r or, gift.	
	n Ex. 16:18.	s c. 4:15.	

speak by commandment, or in a way of authority ; I give *my* advice, v. 10. He took occasion, from the forwardness of others, to propose what would be expedient for them,

and would prove the *sincerity of their love*, or be the genuine effect and evidence thereof. A great difference should be made between plain and positive duty, and the improvement of a present opportunity of doing or getting good. Many a thing which is good for us to do, yet cannot be said to be, by express and indispensable commandment, our duty at this or that time.

2. Another argument is taken from the consideration of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, v. 9. The best arguments for Christian duties are those that are taken from the love of Christ, *that constraineth us*. The example of the churches of Macedonia was such as the Corinthians should imitate ; but the example of our Lord Jesus Christ should have much greater influence. This is a good reason why we should be charitable to the poor out of what we have, because we ourselves live on the charity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Another argument from their good purposes, and their forwardness to begin this good work. (1.) It was expedient for them to perform what they purposed, and finish what they had begun, v. 10, 11. What else did their good purposes and good beginnings signify ? Good purposes, indeed, are good things ; they are like buds and blossoms, pleasant to behold, and give hopes of good fruit ; but they are lost, and signify nothing, without performances. So good beginnings are amiable ; but we shall lose the benefit, unless there be perseverance, and we bring forth *fruit to perfection*. Seeing therefore the Corinthians had showed a *readiness to will*, he would have them be careful also in the *performance*, according to their ability. For, (2.) This would be acceptable to God. *This willing mind is accepted*, v. 12. when accompanied with sincere endeavors, according to our ability. But note, here, this Scripture will by no means justify those, who think good meanings, or good purposes, and the profession of a willing mind, are sufficient to save them. It is accepted, indeed, where there is a performance as far as we are able, and when Providence hinders the performance, as in David's case, concerning building a house for the Lord, 2 S. 7. [but not further.]

4. Another argument is taken from the discrimination Divine Providence makes, in the distribution of the things of this world, and the mutability of human affairs, v. 13—15. The force of the arguing seems to be this ; Providence gives to some more of the good things of this world, and to some less, and that with this design ; that those who have a greater abundance, *might supply them who are in want* ; that there might be room

for charity, [and thus the better nature of each be called out.] And each may in turn need. It is the will of God, by our mutual supplying one another, that there should be *some sort of equality* ; not an *absolute* equality, indeed, or such a *levelling* [downwards] as would destroy property, for in such a case there could be no exercise of charity. But as in works of charity there should be an equitable proportion observed, that the burden should not lie too heavy on some, while others are wholly eased, so all should think themselves concerned, to supply those who are in want. This is illustrated by the instance of gathering and distributing *manna* in the wilderness, concerning which—see Ex. 16. it was the duty of all to gather what they could ; which, when gathered, was put into some common receptacle for each family, whence the master of the family distributed to every one as he had occasion ; to some, more than they were able, through age and infirmity, to gather up ; to others, less than they gathered, because they did not need so much ; and thus, *he that had gathered much*, (more than he had occasion for,) had nothing over, when a communication was made to him *that had gathered little*, who by this method had no lack. Such is the condition of men in this world, that we mutually depend on one another, and should help one another ; those who have ever so much of this world, have no more than food and raiment ; and those who have but a little of this world, seldom want those ; nor, indeed, should those who have abundance suffer others to want, but be ready to afford supply.

V. 16—24. The apostle commends the brethren who were sent to them to collect their charity ; and, as it were, gives them letters credential, that, if any should be inquisitive or suspicious concerning them, v. 23. it might be known who they were, and how safely they might be trusted.

1. He commends Titus, and another brother, sent with Titus, who, it is generally thought, was Luke. He is commended, as a man whose ministerial services were well known, v. 18. and approved ; one chosen of the churches, v. 19. and joined with the apostle in his ministration. This was done, most likely, at the motion and request of Paul himself ; for this reason, *that no man might blame him in that abundance which was ministered by him*, v. 20. So cautious was he not to give occasion to any to accuse him of injustice or partiality in this affair, v. 21. Note, all Christians ought to act so prudently as to prevent, as far as possible, all unjust suspicions, and all occasions of scandalous imputations. We live in a cen-

1—5. 1 Cor. 15:3—11. Eph. 3:8. In the judgment of the apostle, *Jesus was rich before He was poor* ; and it was voluntarily and graciously that He became poor for our sakes, &c. But indeed as Man He was born and educated in poverty, He was poor all his life, and 'had not where to lay his head,' and only became rich after his death and resurrection ; therefore if He was no more than man, He certainly was poor before He was rich, not rich before He was poor. *The sincerity.*] Phil. 4:3. 1 Tim. 1:2. Tit. 1:4. 'Genuineness.' Some copies read, 'our love ;' but it was the genuineness of the love professed by the Corinthians, which was made trial of. 1 Pet. 1:6, 7.

(9.) 'The interpretation, that [Christ] was rich in power and in the Holy Ghost, has no force at all ; this might be said of the apostles as well as of Christ ; neither would there be, in this case, any remarkable contrast between *rich* and *poor*, nor anything in the circumstance peculiar to Christ ; since it was usual, at that time, for *all* who were rich in miraculous endowments, to lead a life of poverty. The context furnishes no argument in favor of such an hypothesis : Christ became poor, that the Corinthians might become rich. Now this is addressed to the converts at large, for all were concerned in the apostle's exhortation. In what sense, then, were all the disciples of Christ to be made rich ? not *merely* in spiritual gifts, but also in the eternal "recompense of reward ;" rich in glory, rich in heaven. It is consistent, therefore, to interpret "rich," when applied to Christ, in a similar manner, viz. of the "glory He had with the Father before the world was." Jn. 17:5.] *Stade.* Bl.

V. 10. *To be forward.*] 'The Gr. is difficult, from its Heb. or idiomatic phraseology, and must be understood of free will and zeal, (as v. 11.) "to do" being repeated after it. And so all the ancient and some modern contrs.]

V. 13, 14. 'Rather, "my meaning is not, that they should be relieved by you from distress, so as to occasion distress to yourselves, but that you should give what you can spare. That, at the present time, your abundance may serve for the supply of their want, so that (at another

time) their abundance may be for the supply of your want ; that there may be an equal reciprocity, of giving and receiving, or of good offices, between you." By not attending to the context and to the real sense of *isotes*, [tr. equality,] certain contrs. have assigned to it senses most wild, (as if an equalization of property were meant to be inculcated,) contrary to the context of the apostle, and at variance with the course of things, which must ever subsist in the world. What Paul says, is meant of Judea and Corinth, and not to be extended to the case of *individuals*, except with careful accommodation.'

V. 14. 'So far Christianity seems to require this equality, as that we should not suffer others to lack the necessaries of this present life, while we abound in them.' *Whitby.*—The Christians at Corinth had also been made partakers of the inestimable spiritual blessings of their Jewish brethren, and at their expense ; and it was *equal* or equitable, that they should impart to them, in return, of their carnal things. Rom. 15:22—29. Gal. 6:6—10.—How urgently the apostle pleads in behalf of his poor brethren while he would receive nothing for himself ! 11:7—12. 12:11—15.—(15) *He that had gathered much, &c.*] A tr. of the Heb., not exactly the same as the Sept. Ex. 16:18.

V. 15. 'As the manna gathered was from heaven, and the gift of God, and therefore to be equally distributed, so the riches which men "heap up" and "gather" are also the gift of God, and therefore to be communicated to those that are in need.'

V. 17. *Went*, (and v. 18.) *have sent.*] 'These *past* tenses are meant, with reference to the time when the Corinthians would read the letter he was about to send.'

V. 18—24. *The brother* who was sent with him is generally supposed to have been Luke, 'whose praise was in all the churches,' on account of the Gospel he had written, and for many zealous services in the cause ; yet this is on many accounts uncertain. (22) *Our brother.*] Some think Apollon is meant, but this is not probable, for he wanted no recommendations to the Christians at Corinth ; indeed curiosity rather than edifi-



20 Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us :

21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

22 And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you.

23 Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow-helper concerning you : or our brethren be inquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ.

24 Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

### CHAP. IX.

1 He yieldeth the reason why, though he knew their forwardness, yet he sent Titus and his brethren beforehand. 6 And he proceedeth in stirring them up to a bountiful alms, as being but a kind of sowing of seed, 10 which shall return a great increase to them, 13 and occasion a great sacrifice of thanksgivings unto God.

FOR as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you.

2 For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago ; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

PRACT. OBS. By ascribing all 'good works' to 'the grace of God,' we not only give the glory to Him whose due it is, but we also show men where their strength lies, and enable humble believers to read the Lord's special love to them, in the fruits of their love to Him and to his people. *Lu.* 7:44—50. *1 Jn.* 4:19.—Abundant spiritual joy not only supports the soul under great trials of afflictions, but enlarges the heart, so that joyful Christians do more than could have been conceived in their power, and manifest a still more enlarged good-will.—Remarkable examples of piety and charity should be brought forward, in order to excite others to a holy emulation, especially when the inferiority in outward things, of those who exhibit them, renders it less likely that they should be noticed ; and such instances will commonly be found very efficacious to this end, among those who are partakers of divine grace. 'If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted,' is an universal rule ; the sinner's 'ready mind' to repent, to believe in Christ, to love and obey Him, and to do good to others for his sake, springs from divine grace ; and where this is first produced, the defective attempts of the believer to glorify God, will be accepted and graciously rewarded, though, in

contion, is concerned in determining these questions.—It may here again be observed, that there is not the least reason to doubt, but that the messengers, entrusted with the contributions of the Christians for their Jewish brethren, were chosen by the suffrage of the churches ; how then is it, that so little satisfactory scriptural proof can be adduced, that the spiritual pastors were elected in the same manner ? *Acts* 6:2—6. 14:21—23. *1 Cor.* 16:3, 4. 'It would have been a most ready calumny against Paul, to have said, that he greatly desired the care of these contributions, that he might sacrilegiously convert the consecrated money to his own use, had he not by every mean guarded against it. But who, during these thousand years, and more, has followed this truly apostolical example ?' *Beza.* (17) *Of his own accord.* 'Here we see the sweet harmony there is betwixt the grace of God, and our persuasion and free will.—Titus was moved to this work, by Paul's exhortation, and was also "willing of his own accord," and yet "God," saith the apostle, "put this earnest care into his heart." ' *Whitby.* 'It is God who worketh in us both to will and to do.' Concerning free will, in this sense, we have no controversy.—All men, however their wills are enslaved by their lusts, have free agency. (23) *Messengers.* *Gr. apostoloi.* Christ was the Apostle of the Father, *Heb.* 3:1. the twelve were his apostles, these were 'the apostles of the churches.' SCOTT.

(19.) *Chosen* ] *Cheirotontheis* : elected is its original sense, with allusion to the ancient custom of publicly voting by the extension of the right hand : here denoting appointed, constituted, as *Ac.* 14:23. BL.

(20.) 'Lest any should have a handle for slander or calumny, as if I appropriated any part to my private use.' BL. This may hint to us, that the disbursements of charitable societies and committees should be explained to the public, or brotherhood, as minutely as is practicable, to avoid scandal ; since interested motives are most readily ascribed to such, by the mass, whether as judging from their own selfishness, or as thinking the suspicion indicates shrewdness, and knowledge of the world. And so the accusation is always popular. ED.

(23.) 'If it is necessary to speak of Titus &c. So the ancients supply. Paul seems to have felt, that after having made such honorable mention of Luke and Apollos, he must say something of Titus (whom he before mentions, 7:6. in a way to excite their reverence), and the brethren who were going with him to Jerusalem. Or.] I. e. if our brethren are to be spoken of. *Messengers.* *Apostoloi* : to be taken in its proper

3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf ; that, as I said, ye may be ready :

4 Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.

t Ro. 12:17. Phi. 4:8. 1 Pe. 2:12. u or, he hath. v Phi. 2:25. w c. 7:14. a c. 8:4, &c. b c. 8:24. c blessing. d or, which hath been so much spoken of before.

sorious world, and should cut off occasion from them who seek occasion to speak reproachfully.

2. He commends also another brother joined with the two former, thought to be Apollos. Whoever he was, he had approved himself diligent in many things,—and therefore was fit to be employed in this affair, v. 22.

3. He concludes this point with a general good character of them all, v. 23. as fellow-laborers with him for their welfare ; as the messengers of the churches ; as the glory of Christ, who were to Him for a name and a praise, who brought glory to Christ as instruments, and had obtained honor from Christ to be counted faithful, and employed in his service.

strict justice, according to the perfect and holy law, they merit condemnation.—'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ' was not declared in kind words only ; and they, who truly know and experience the happy effects of his grace, will show their love to Him and his people, by good works, and not merely by a cheap profession ; though a clear character, as well as a pure conscience, is necessary to extensive usefulness. But alas ! we may easily estimate the small degree, in which most of us 'know the grace of Christ,' by considering how small a proportion of our superfluities we retrench, and how little we deny ourselves, submit willingly to privations, forego the prospect of wealth, endure inconveniences, and stoop to men of low estate, from love to his name. Doubtless, this is the proper standard of our spiritual knowledge of Christ. In proportion to our views of his glory, we shall bear his image ; and if this change were more fully effected, we should embrace poverty, endure hardship, and even 'lay down our lives' for the good of his people, when properly called to it, and at last, we should deem all this as nothing, when compared with our obligations to his infinite love. SCOTT.

sense, i. e. simply, one sent out as on any mission, as a legate, to discharge business for others. *The glory of Christ.*] I. e. (by metonymy) instruments for spreading and promoting the glory of Christ, and the Gospel. BLOOMF.

(24.) *Before.*] 'I. e. in the presence of the churches : not only because Titus would proclaim it wherever he went, but because Corinth was in all respects placed in excelso [in a lofty and conspicuous position] ; and, from its perpetual communication with all parts of the civilized world, [note, end of Acts,] the tidings would soon spread to all the churches, i. e. the Gentile churches, planted by Paul.' ED.

NOTES. CHAP. IX. V. 1—5. Beza explains the 'ministering to the saints,' not of the money contributed, but of the office and duty of those persons, who were chosen to take charge of it, and the care of the church at Corinth in selecting them ; the context, however, does not seem to favor this interpretation, at least as exclusive.—The whole transaction, from the first thought and proposal of thus relieving the poor Christians in Judea, to the completion of the design, in the distribution of the money among them, by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, may be included in this general term. 12—15. 8:1—5.—'The apostle calls that "covetousness," which is done sordidly, and as extorted from a covetous person.' *Beza.*—'To give alms out of shame, or to satisfy the importunity of others, rather than out of love and good-will, is a symptom of a covetous temper.' *Whitby.* The word rendered 'bounty,' signifies a blessing ; which may either intimate, that it should be given as an expression of gratitude to God, and as an act of praise and thanksgiving to Him ; or that it should spring from love, and a disposition to bless and do good to their brethren. SCOTT.

(2.) *Achaia.*] Here put for Greece, of which Corinth was then the capital, and this use of the word, says BL., is fully justified. ED.

(5.) *Bounty.*] *Eulogia* : [lit. benediction, thanks :] this may be numbered with the euphemisms which the delicacy of the apostle so often employs, especially in terms denoting alms, (or what we call charity,) for which he substitutes names which spare the feelings of the receiver, and remind the giver that he is exercising a duty toward God. We may comp. this use of *eulogia*, in *1 Cor.* 10:16. and here render it a *thanksgiving*, a gift bestowed on man in grateful thanks to God for his goodness. [And we may remark, in passing, how much oftener the apostle exhorts to good deeds, from motives of love and gratitude to God, as v. 14. than



6 But this *I say*, He <sup>e</sup> which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not <sup>f</sup> grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful <sup>g</sup> giver.

8 And <sup>h</sup> God is able to make all grace abound toward you: that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good work:

9 (As it is written, <sup>i</sup> He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10 Now he <sup>j</sup> that ministereth seed to the sower both ministereth bread for *your* food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits <sup>k</sup> of your righteousness:)

11 Being enriched in every thing to all <sup>l</sup> bountifulness, which <sup>m</sup> causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

12 For the administration of this service not only supplieth <sup>n</sup> the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify <sup>o</sup> God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal distribution unto them, and unto all *men*;

14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding <sup>p</sup> grace of God in you.

<sup>e</sup> Ps. 41:1-3. Pr. 11:24, 25. 19:17. 22:9. Ga. 6:7, 9. f De. 15:7, 8. g Ex. 35:5. Ro. 12:3. h Phil. 4:19. i Ps. 112:9. j Is. 55:10. k Ho. 10:12. l *simplicity*, or, *liberality*. m c. 1:11. 4:15. n c. 8:14. o Mat. 5:16. p c. 8:1.

Christians should consult the reputation of their profession, and endeavor to *adorn the doctrine of God our Savior*.

V. 6-15. I. Proper directions about the right and acceptable manner of bestowing charity; and it is of great concernment, that we do *what is required*, so as is commanded.

1. It should be *bountifully*; and he offers to their consideration, that the harvest usually is proportionable to what is sowed, v. 6.

2. It should be *deliberately*, v. 7. Works of charity, like other good works, should be done with thought and design, with *purpose of heart*, not as by accident, or impertunity of others, and to be repented of afterward. Due deliberation, as to our own circumstances, and those of them we are about to relieve, will be very helpful to direct us how liberal we should be in our contributions for charitable uses.

3. It should be *freely*, be it more or less; *not grudgingly*, or of necessity, but cheerfully, v. 7. Persons sometimes will give merely to satisfy the importunity of those who ask their charity, and what they give is in a manner squeezed or forced from them, and this unwillingness spoils all they do. We ought to give more freely than the modesty of some necessitous persons will allow them to ask: we should not only deal out bread, but *draw out our souls* to the hungry, Is. 58:10. We should give liberally, with an *open hand*, and cheerfully, with an *open countenance*; being glad we have ability, and an opportunity, to be charitable.

II. Good encouragement to do thus.

1. They themselves would be *no losers*, by what they gave in charity. Many, who are ready to think they may want what they give away, should consider that what is given to the poor, in a right manner, is far from being lost; for it will spring up, and bear fruit: the sower shall receive it again with increase, v. 6. For,

(1.) God loveth a cheerful giver, v. 7. and what may not *they* hope to receive, who are the objects of the divine love? May not such a one be sure, that he shall some way or other be a gainer? Nay, are not the love and favor

of God better than all other things, *better than life itself*?

(2.) God is able to make our charity redound to our advantage, v. 8. [It cultivates the most gracious and enduring affections in us.] We have no reason to distrust the *goodness* of God, and, surely, none to question his *power*; He is able to make all *grace* [which grows with exercise] *abound* towards us, and in us; to give a large increase of spiritual and temporal good things. He can make us to have a *sufficiency* in all things; to be content with what we have; to make up what we give; to make us able to give yet more; as it is written, Ps. 112:9. of the charitable man, *He hath dispersed abroad. He hath given to the poor. His righteousness*, i. e. his almsgiving, *endureth for ever*. The honor of it is lasting, the reward of it eternal, and he is still able to live *comfortably* himself, and to give *liberally* to others.

(3.) The apostle puts up a prayer to God in their behalf, that they might be gainers, and not losers, v. 10, 11. to that God who giveth such an increase of the fruits of the earth, that we have not only bread sufficient to eat for one year, but enough to sow again for a future supply; or to God, who giveth us not only a competency for ourselves, but that also wherewith we may supply the wants of others, and so should be as seed to be sown. Works of charity, so far from impoverishing, are the proper means truly to enrich us, or make us truly rich.

2. The poor distressed saints would be *gainers*, and *they* no losers; for this service would *supply their wants*, v. 12.

3. This would redound to the praise and glory of God. Many thanksgivings would be given to God on this account, by the apostle, and by them who were employed in this ministration, v. 11. These would bless God, who made them happy instruments in so good a work, and successful in it: *others*, also, would be thankful; the poor, who were supplied in their wants; and all who wished well to the Gospel would *glorify God for this experiment*, or proof, of *subjection to the Gospel of Christ*, and true love to all *men*, v. 13.

from any more immediately selfish motive, as future rewards, or reciprocity of the same benefits, at a time of our own need, as 2:14, &c. Comp. Col. 3:23.] The clause, with *eulogia* immediately after, I would render: "so that it may be ready (as it ought to be), being thus (as it is) a *thanksgiving*, and not as it were a parsimony, niggardliness, or a niggardly gift, or as something wrung from any one, as no such gift ought to be." Niggardliness is the daughter of avarice."

V. 6-7. God, in his providence, often frowns on the undertakings of him who gives sparingly, and by concurring causes keeps him poor; the evidence of his conversion must thus be rendered proportionably dubious; if he be a real Christian, his consolations will be scanty, according to his penurious conduct towards his brethren; and his final recompense will be proportioned to the small measure of his present fruitfulness. — Two things are excluded by the apostle, namely, *grief* and *necessity*, (Gr.) when, for instance, any person gives indeed, but with a grudging and illiberal mind, or even unwillingly, because he would not be evil spoken of among others; else he would not give at all. *Beza*. S.

(6.) Paul seems to answer some such suggestion as, "Well, then, as the gift is to be voluntary, and only from our superfluity, we may give sparingly;" this the apostle denies. *Soueth*.] Among the Arabs, also, *spargere*, [to scatter, as in sowing,] in the sense of, *to distribute copiously*, is used of alms and benefits; [notes, v. 9. and Ps. 145:16.] Bl.

V. 9. "Thus the saying of Scripture will be made good, He hath dispersed, expended for, given to the poor: *skorpizō* properly signifies to scatter, as in sowing; for the same metaphor seems employed at v. 17. Or rather, as in the Psalm (112:9.) he quotes, there may be an allusion to the oriental custom of scattering money among an assembled multitude of paupers, or others. Prov. 11:24. *Righteousness*.] The best contrs. are agreed, that it signifies beneficium, (as often in the O. T. and in Mat. 6:1. &c.) *Remaineth*.] I. e. in its fruits or consequences for ever, i. e. both in *this world*, from the blessing of Him that was ready to perish, a blessing attendant both on the giver, and his posterity [and that good-will of others which cheerfully helps, nor desires to thwart, his schemes, nor envies his success]; and in the *next world*, in the rewards of heaven. Bl. Others, as *Doddr.* and *Ros.*, (preferably, says Bl.) take the meaning to be, (by a sort of oxymoron,) that 'the sums so distributed will, as it were, remain with him perpetually, inasmuch as, by the blessing of God, he shall never want wherewithal to supply future liberality.' At least, the results of the exercise of benevolence and love to God will be, habits and exercises of those best feelings which will make the benevolent Christian happier now and always. Ep.

V. 10. May be thus lit. tr.: 'May He who supplieth seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply your seed, and increase the productions of your righteousness.' The sense is thus rendered more obvious, but it is not materially altered. — The word rendered 'seed sown,' more properly signifies 'seed for sowing,' i. e. enabling those spoken of to sow plentifully for a future harvest, from the increase of that which they had sown before. Scott.

(10.) 'The sentence is couched in the form of a *pious wish*, but it seems to partake of the *predictive* as well as the *optative*. The predictive may be engrafted on the optative; but not the contrary.' Bl. *He that, &c.*] 'A beautiful periphrasis of God, i. e. the good Being (for so the word *God* means), and taken, as *Theoph.* obs., from Is. 55:10. *Multiply, &c.*] To wish the increase of beneficence in the charitable, is equivalent to wish them an increase of the means, since their benevolent principles [and indulged habits of benevolent feeling and action] will always impel them [more and more strongly] to give in proportion to those means.' BLOOMF.

V. 11. *To all bountifulness*.] I. e. that ye may have the means of exercising the largest and most freehearted liberality. *Thanksgiving*.] 'The apostle here means to show the peculiar benefit of this *charis*, [tr. *grace*,] or *God's gift*, namely, that it not only supplies the necessities of the poor, (and that, from its very nature liberally, for the very idea, v. 6. of a *thank-gift* for *God's sake*, carries with it that of a *bounteous* one,) but also excites and nourishes religion in the hearts of the poor, since they have to thank God, as well as their fellow-creatures, for what the apostle further on calls this *unspeakable gift*.' Bl. Ep.

V. 12-15. This consideration [namely, the happy change in their state and condition, through the influence of the Gospel] caused the apostle to break out in thanks to God, for the unspeakable grace of the Gospel, and the gift of his Son to be the Savior of sinners; by whom idolatrous Gentiles had been thus brought to glorify Him; a foundation had been laid for the mutual love of Jews and Gentiles, as members of one church, and children of one family; and the most effectual motives, encouragements, and example, had been afforded, to excite men to 'love and good works.' 'The admirable charity, by which God is so much glorified, the Gospel receives such credit, others are so much benefited, and you will be so plentifully by God rewarded.' *Whitby*. 'If we understand thus, it will be as remarkable a text as most in the Bible, to show that every good affection, in the human heart, is to be ascribed to a divine influence. . . . But I am ready to think, the apostle's mind, to which the idea of the invaluable gift of Christ was so familiar, rather, by a strong and natural transition, glanced on that.' *Doddr.* Scott.

(13.) *Professed*.] 'Rather, *consentaneous*; since those who were liberal to other Christians, by that very thing publicly *professed their consent with them in the faith*. And so *Beza*, *Sclater*, *Ros.*' Bl. Thus that union, v. 14. of Jew and Gentile Christians, to which the former were so averse, Gal. 2:12. would be exceedingly helped; comp. also Rom. 15:31. where he asks the Roman Christians' prayers, that the Gentile contribution may be received with proper feelings, by the Palestine Christians. See *Mackn.* An admirable method is this of the apostle, to keep bright the links of harmony in the church, prayer and beneficence; and which may be well recommended, for mutual benefit, to the rich and poor of all lands and all times. Ep.

(14.) 'It will also (he says) tend to excite their prayers for you. *Gracc.*] 'The benignity of God [notes, v. 5. 8:1]: the apostle means



15 Thanks <sup>a</sup>be unto God for his unspeakable <sup>r</sup>gift.

## CHAP. X.

Against the false apostles, who disgraced the weakness of his person and bodily presence, he setteth out the spiritual might and authority, with which he is armed against all adversary powers, <sup>7</sup> assuring them that at his coming he will be found as mighty in word, as he is now in writing being absent, <sup>12</sup> and withal taxing them for reaching out themselves beyond their compass, and vaunting themselves into other men's labors.

**N**OW I Paul myself beseech <sup>a</sup>you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who <sup>b</sup>in presence <sup>c</sup>am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you :

2 But I beseech <sup>a</sup>you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith <sup>d</sup>I think to be bold against some, which <sup>e</sup>think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after <sup>t</sup>the flesh ;

q Ja. 1:17. appearance. c. 13:2,10.  
r Jn. 3:16. e vel. 10. e or, reckon.  
a Ro. 12:1. d 1 Co. 4:21. f Ro. 8:13.  
b or, in outward

Note, (1.) True Christianity is a subjection to the Gospel, a yielding ourselves to the commanding influence of its truths and

laws. (2.) We must evidence the sincerity of this subjection, by works of charity. (3.) This will be for the credit of our profession, and to the praise and glory of God. (4.) We should recompense the kindnesses we receive, when not in a capacity of recompensing any other way those who have aided us, by prayer to God for them, v. 14. and as this is the only recompense the poor can make, so it is often greatly for the advantage of the rich.

Lastly, The apostle concludes this whole matter with this doxology, v. 15. Some think, by this unspeakable gift he means the gift of grace bestowed on the churches, in making them able and willing to supply the necessities of the saints, which would be attended with unspeakable benefit both to the givers and receivers. It should seem rather, that he means *Jesus Christ*, who is indeed the *unspeakable Gift of God* unto this world; a gift we have all reason to be very thankful for.

CHAP. X. V. 1—6. The apostle Paul nowhere met with more opposition from false apostles than at Corinth. Let not the ministers of Christ think strange, if they meet with perils, not only from enemies, but from false brethren; for blessed Paul himself, though so blameless and inoffensive, so condescending and useful to all, yet had occasion to vindicate himself against those who envied him, and did all they could to under-

mine him, and lessen his interest and reputation.

1. Observe the mild and humble manner in which he addresses the Corinthians, and how desirous he is that no occasion might be given him to use severity.

1. He addresses himself to them in a very mild and humble manner, v. 1. In the introduction to this epistle, he joined Timothy with himself; but now he speaks only for himself, against whom the false apostles had particularly levelled their reproaches; and mark how he regards the *meekness and gentleness of Christ*, and desires this great example might have the same influence on the Corinthians. When we find ourselves tempted, or inclined to be rough and severe towards anybody, we should think of the meekness and gentleness of Christ, in the days of his flesh, and in all the acts of his grace toward poor souls. How humbly, also, this great apostle speaks of *himself*! We should be sensible of our own infirmities, and think humbly of ourselves, even when men reproach us for them.

2. He is desirous that no occasion might be given to use severity, v. 2. or to exercise his authority against them in general, as he had resolved to do against some who unjustly charged him *as walking according to the flesh*, i. e. regulating his conduct, even in his ministerial actions, according to carnal policy, or with worldly views. This was what he had renounced; this is contrary to the

PRACT. OBS. The duty of 'ministering to the saints,' is so obvious, that it might be deemed superfluous to exhort Christians to it; yet they are so apt to forget their principles and obligations, and the remains of unbelief and carnal self-love war so powerfully against the 'constraining love of Christ,' in their hearts, that it is in general necessary 'to stir up their minds by way of remembrance.'—Many an intended good work has been neglected, or rendered useless, by delay; it is, therefore, proper to exhort men to be prompt in doing what they have shown a willingness to engage in. *Prov. 3:27, 28. Ec. 9:10.* Works of piety and charity should flow spontaneously, as water out of a fountain, from the gratitude and benevolence of a believing heart, and not require exhorting by importunity.—It is spiritual policy for us to spend less on every kind of indulgence, and to lay by less for our families, that we may give more to the needy for Christ's sake; for this will be far the best secured and most productive. Even persons in moderate circumstances may sow much of this seed; if by various little savings and self-denials, they will but study to spare something to relieve their distressed brethren; and this they will do, if 'faith and love abound in their hearts.' With these truths before our eyes, men must be left to 'do as they have purposed in their hearts;' for they who give in a reluctant,

sorrowful, or grudging manner, and 'of necessity,' have little reason to expect the acceptance of God, 'who loveth a cheerful giver.' *Ec. 11:1—6.*—There are a few Christians still to be found 'who scatter, and yet increase,' but there are far more, even among those who are zealous for evangelical doctrines, 'who withhold more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty;' for 'God is able to make all grace to abound' to those, whose hearts are enlarged with kindness to their brethren; and it should be remembered, that He gives us everything far more 'freely,' than we can give alms to the meanest beggar. If He sees it good for us, He can so prosper us, that, having all-sufficiency in all things, 'we may abound unto every good work;' and they, who, from love to Him, 'scatter abroad and give to the poor,' have 'a righteousness that endureth for ever.' He can easily give us enough to use, and enough to disperse; that we may have more, sow more, and reap more; and so, 'increase the fruits of our righteousness;' that, being 'enriched in everything unto all bountifulness,' we may be happy in ourselves, blessings to others, and instruments of promoting his glory. But alas! the faithfulness of our God, in this respect, is little known, even among professed Christians, because so few fairly venture to make the experiment. SCOTT.

to inculcate strongly, that the *chief* thanks are due to God, it being his pleasure that it should be so; which would suggest to the Corinthians the *strongest* [and *best*] motive for contributing to their utmost ability.

## BLOOMF.

NOTES. CHAP. X. V. 1—6 Having concluded other subjects, the apostle here begins to speak more directly against the false teachers, who opposed him at Corinth. 11:13—15. (5) *Casting down, &c.* 'The soul, seeing its fortifications demolished, submits to the Conqueror, and every thought, every reasoning, takes law from Him.—Christ is acknowledged as absolute Master.—The former clause shows, how ready men are to fortify themselves against it, and to raise, as it were, one barrier behind another, to obstruct his entrance into the soul.' *Doddr.* As no outward miracle could effect this change, without new-creating grace, so we may be sure, that the power of God, in regenerating and renewing the heart, was principally, though not exclusively, intended by the apostle; yet many expositors almost wholly confine it to the miracles wrought by Him.—Thus the apostle and his fellow-soldiers waged war against their opposers. By faithful preaching, disinterested labors, patient sufferings, holy lives, and fervent prayers, they sought to change their enemies into friends to them and their divine Master; and thus they prevailed against Satan, to the subversion of his strong-holds and the revolt of his subjects.—(6) *To revenge, &c.* 'The apostle purposed, and was in readiness, by miraculous judgments, to avenge the cause of Christ on those disguised enemies, who persisted in their disobedience, as he had on Elymas and others: *Acts 13:6—12.* but he waited to bring back such as had been deluded by them to their former obedience, and to complete that work of love, before he proceeded to use severer methods.—Many expositors seem to confine the interpretation of these vs. almost entirely to the divine power; by which the apostles were enabled to confound all open opposers, as well as to inflict judgments on those professed Christians, who by their persevering misconduct exposed themselves to the censures of the church. But it appears evident, that 'the Gospel, as the power of God unto salvation,' is primarily intended, and that the conversion of opponents, and the restoring of lapsed Christians to obedience, were the first objects aimed at. But when all proper means had failed, in respect of the latter, then not so much the censures of the church, as miraculous punishments, denounced by apostolical authority, and made effectual by the power of God, were the weapons to which they had recourse. SCOTT.

(1.) Now commences the THIRD part of this epistle, in which Paul vindicates himself against the false teachers, and those that calumniated him. For there had come to the Corinthians certain false teachers (11:13.), from among the Jews (11:22.), who had calumniated the apostle, had invidiously depreciated his gifts, and denied his pre-eminences, and had even accused him of profanity and hypocrisy;

(10:2.) while, on the other hand, they had bestowed on *themselves* the most unqualified praises. To these, therefore, the apostle adverts in what follows, in which he says, (1.) That he had come to the Corinthians, with no other but divine powers, 10:4—7. (2.) That he does not boast, except of the promotion of God's glory, v. 8—13. (3.) That his affection for the Corinthians is greater than that of false teachers, 11:1—15. (4.) And lastly, he compares himself with them, 11:16—21. 12, 13.' SCHUETZ.

'On this portion of the epistle, many modern comtrs. run into strange speculations. From a certain change which may here be observed in the phraseology, some have fancied that it was another epistle, which was in process of time tacked to the first; but there is no appearance of another epistle having commenced, nor have we here any of the introductory matter, observable at the commencement of all the other epistles; and moreover the Gr. particle *de* [the second word of this ch.], which is never proemial, utterly discountenances the notion. As to the slight difference of style, it may easily be accounted for, from the difference of subject, and perhaps from the difference of situation in which it was written. The preceding chs. (I think) bear some marks of haste, and slight incoherency, as if written on the spur of the occasion, in the course of journeying from place to place. The following portion is more elaborate, and was probably written at some fixed place, and with [greater] deliberation. *Base.* As it appears from v. 10. that Paul is here adopting the language of his detractors, both the epithets must be somewhat modified.' BLOOMF.

(2.) *According to the flesh.* 'The sense (comp. 1:17.) seems to be, "to act merely from the dictates of frail and corrupt human nature," such as levity, inconstancy, boasting when absent, and timid when present, and, in a general way, "being guided by personal interests, and carnal and worldly views of ambition, avarice, or sensuality." The phrase, upon the whole, strongly implies the absence of every supernatural endowment, and divine commission, such as Paul claimed; which I conceive to be the full sense of the expression.' ID.

(3—5.) *War.* 'The Gr. (*strateuesthai*) signifies, "to go out on a commissioned warfare," so, by a military allusion, it may denote, "to hold a commission, and exercise an office." "Carnal weapons," refers to those human aids and supports, by which the plans of men are carried into effect, as riches, fame, eloquence, and human policy of every kind. It is God who energizes (says *Theoph.*) and wars, though we wear the armor.' BL. 'All the terms in these two vs. (5, 6.) are military. Allusion is made to a *strongly fortified city*, when the enemy had made his *last stand*; *entrenching* himself about the *walls*; *strengthening* all his *redoubts* and *ramparts*; *raising castles, towers, and various engines* of defence and offence upon the walls; and neglecting nothing that might tend to render his *strong-hold* impregnable! The army of



4 (For the weapons <sup>5</sup> of our <sup>h</sup> warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty <sup>i</sup> through <sup>j</sup> God to the pulling down of <sup>k</sup> strong holds;)

5 Casting down <sup>l</sup> <sup>m</sup> imaginations, and every high <sup>n</sup> thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity <sup>o</sup> every thought to <sup>p</sup> the obedience of Christ;

6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience <sup>q</sup> is fulfilled.

[Practical Observations.]

7 Do ye look on things after the outward <sup>r</sup> appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he *is* Christ's, even so *are* we Christ's.

8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our <sup>s</sup> authority, which the Lord hath given us for <sup>t</sup> edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

g Ep. 6:13. I Th. 5:3. h I Ti. 1:18. i or, to. j c. 13:3,4. k Je. 1:10. l or, reasonings. m I Co. 1:19. n Ps. 18:27. o Mat. 11:29,30. p Ge. 8:21. Mat. 15:19. q c. 7:15. r Ju. 7:24. s c. 13:2,3. t c. 13:8.

spirit and design of the Gospel, and was far from being his aim and design. Hereupon,

II. He asserts the power of his preaching, and to punish offenders.

1. The power of his preaching, v. 3—5. Where observe, (1.) The ministry is a warfare, not *after the flesh*, indeed, but spiritual, with spiritual enemies, and for spiritual purposes.

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—6. They who meet with unjust and ungrateful usage from those, to whom they are laboring to do good, should frequently and intensely meditate, on 'the meekness and gentleness of Christ.' They should then endeavor to go on patiently and quietly, after his example, and to 'overcome evil with good;' and, even when constrained by duty to reprove and correct, or to exercise authority with firmness and decision, they should do it with reluctance, show a desire to avoid the painful necessity, and manifest a loving and forgiving spirit, that all may see how dear 'the meekness and gentleness of Christ' are to them.—Though encompassed with infirmities and temptations, and subject to manifold imperfections, the servants of Christ are engaged in a warfare, which cannot be waged 'after the flesh.' Worldly wisdom, affected eloquence, dissimulation, compulsion, angry disputation, slanders, revilings, and ridicule, are *carnal* weapons; and, however powerful

And though ministers *walk in the flesh*, or live in the body, and, in the common affairs of life, act as other men, [and are imperfect, like other men,] yet, in their work and warfare they must not go by the maxims of the flesh, nor should they design to please the flesh.

(2.) The doctrines of the Gospel, and discipline of the church, are the *weapons* of this warfare, and these are not *carnal*; outward force, therefore, is not the method of the Gospel, but strong persuasions, by the power of truth, and the meekness of wisdom. A good argument this against persecution for conscience-sake: conscience is accountable to God only; and people must be *persuaded* to God and their duty, and not *driven* by force of arms. And so the weapons of our warfare *are mighty*, or very powerful; the evidence of truth is convincing and eogent; this, indeed, is *through God*, or owing to Him, because they are his institutions, and accompanied with his blessing, which makes all opposition to fall before his victorious Gospel. Where we may observe, [1.] The opposition made against the Gospel, by the powers of sin and Satan, in the hearts of men: ignorance, prejudices, beloved lusts, are Satan's *strong-holds* in the souls of some; vain imaginations, carnal reasonings, and high thoughts, or proud conceits, in others: by these the devil endeavors to keep men from faith and obedience to the Gospel, and secures his possession of their hearts as his own house or property. But then observe, [2.] The conquest the Word of God gains. These strong-holds are *pulled down*, by the Gospel, as the means, through the grace and power of God accompanying it as the principal, efficient cause. The conversion of the soul is the conquest of Satan in that soul.

2. The apostle's power to *punish offenders* (and that in an extraordinary manner) is asserted in v. 6. He speaks not of *personal* revenge, but of punishing disobedience to the Gospel, and disorderly walking among church-members, by inflicting church censures. Note, Though the apostle showed meekness and gentleness, yet he would not betray his authority; and therefore intimates, that when he would commend them whose obedience was *fulfilled* or manifested, others would fall under severe censures.

V. 7—11. In these vs. he proceeds to reason the case with the Corinthians, in opposition to those who despised him, judged him, and spake hardly of him. In *outward appearance*, he was mean and despicable with some; but this was a false rule to make a judgment by. It should seem, some boasted mighty things of themselves, and made a fair show; but there are often false appearances: a man may seem to be learned, who has not learned Christ, and appear virtuous, who has not a principle of grace in his heart. However, the apostle asserts two things of himself:

1. His *relation* to Christ, v. 7. It should seem by this, that Paul's adversaries boasted of their relation to Christ, as his ministers and servants. And he reasons thus with them: 'Suppose you do belong to Christ, yet you ought also to allow this to us, that *we also are Christ's*.' Note, It would help to heal the differences among Christians, if they would remember, that how confident soever we may be that we belong to Christ, yet, at the same time, we must allow that they who differ from us may belong to Christ too, and therefore should be treated accordingly. This we may plead for ourselves, against those who judge us and despise us,

ful they may seem to numbers, they will be found useless as straw and stubble in this war; and rather fortify and garrison Satan's strong-holds, than pull them down. For success against the kingdom of darkness must be expected, 'not from might, or power, but from the Spirit of God.' The appointed means, however feeble they appear to unbelief, will be 'mighty through God,' who works by his own appointments, and makes 'his people willing in the day of his power,' and gradually perfects them in obedience, and in the beauties of holiness. Yet while the gracious Savior is ever ready to forgive, and delights in mercy, He is 'in readiness to avenge the disobedience' of the impenitent and unbelieving, especially that of hypocrites and false teachers, who corrupt the church, and dishonor his name; and He will at length 'make them as a fiery oven in the day of his wrath.' SCOTT.

God comes against the place and attacks it; the *strong-holds*, (*ochuro-mata*.) all the *fortified places*, are carried. The *imaginings*, (*logismoi*.) engines, and whatever the *imagination* or *skill* of man could raise, are speedily taken and destroyed. *Every high thing* (*pan hupsōma*), all the *castles and towers*, are *sapped, thrown down, and demolished*; the *walls are battered into breaches*; and the besieging army, carrying everything at the point of the sword, enter the city, storm and take the citadel. Everywhere defeated, the conquered, submit, and are brought *into captivity* (*aichmalōtizantes*), are *led away captives*; and thus the whole government is destroyed. The cut, is of engines in use in that age;



comp. cuts, 2 Chr. 26:14, 15. Is. 29:3, 4. Jer. 32:24. Ez. 4:2. 26:8. Ez.: end. Is. 56:5. Pref. to Sam., and 2 K. 17:6. Ed.

(5.) *Imaginations* . . . *thought*.] Bl. 'cannot, with Ros. Schl., &c., recognise a military metaphor; the former (*logismous*) he refers, 'with Theoph. and Wets., to the syllogisms and rhetorical strophæ, of the false teachers, who were proud of their Gentile learning; the latter (*noōma*) seems used like *logismous*, and to be meant of vain imaginations. *High thing*, is like *strong-hold*, a military metaphor; and as *logismous* refers to *false teachers*, and, perhaps, hostile *Jewish doctors*, so *hupsōma* (*high thing*) may, (as Strigel obs.,) be meant for the heathen philosophers; since the pride of philosophy was the greatest impediment to the reception of the "knowledge of God," against which it raised itself like a rampart, to prevent its entering the heart. *Leading captive*, and not merely conquering.] This seems meant for the learned heathen at Corinth, who found it more difficult to subject their *imagination* and *reason* to the obedience of Christ, than their *actions*. Against this, the pride of human reason has ever rebelled. Thus it has been in every age;

and such is the case at the present day. Of those who reject the Gospel, few are indisposed to admit the excellence of its *moral precepts*, but against any *subjection* of the thoughts or *reason* of men they loudly protest. Bl. *Pride*, the inordinate activity of the blind impulse of self-esteem, cannot, more than the impulse of the blind, religious feelings, be predicated of *reason*. We cannot properly speak of a *proud reason*, more than we can of a *religious reason*; though the intellectual and reflecting faculties may be exercised under the influence of either or all of those sentiments. All superstitious, too, equally claim exemption from the control of reason, and the consequence of this yielding to various blind impulses, instead of truth, is, millions upon millions of fanatic heathen, and a sufficient number of fanatic Christians, to split Christianity into scores of jealous sects. The intellect must decide what is revealed, before the affections be allowed implicitly to embrace and flow forth toward it: *conviction* must accompany faith. Rom. 1:28. Lu. 12:57. We must then be careful how our reason is biassed, taking care to govern our wills (or affections) by what it sees to be God's revelation: for both reason and will go right or wrong together. Ed.

'And thus (v. 5.) we go on in our conquest; for we are continually *casting down* the fallacious and sophistical *reasonings*, by which vain men are endeavoring to expose our doctrine to contempt, and *every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of God* [that we teach, and by our miracles prove to you to be his revelation. Ed.], all the proud imaginations which men have entertained of themselves, with regard to their natural or moral excellences, in consequence of which they neglect the Gospel, and are indeed ready to live without God in the world. And thus we are enabled to *bring every thought*, every proud, haughty notion which men have entertained, *into an humble and willing captivity to the obedience of Christ*, the great Captain of our salvation.' . . . 'The soul, seeing its fortifications demolished, submits to the Conqueror; and then every thought, every reasoning, takes law from Him. Nothing is admitted that contradicts the Gospel; Christ being acknowledged as absolute Master. The former clause shows, how ready men are to fortify themselves against it, and to raise, as it were, one barrier behind another, to obstruct his entrance into the soul. Rom. 15:18, 19.' DODD.

V. 7—11. It is recorded, (I determine not how truly,) that the apostle was of low stature, crooked, and bald; some add, that he had an impediment in his speech, that his voice was shrill and unpleasant, and his delivery ungraceful. 12:7—10. 1 Cor. 2:3—5. Gal. 4:12—16. However this might be, for probably it is not quite correct, his scrupulous rejection of the studied ornaments of the Grecian eloquence, and his plain,



9 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.

10 For *his* letters, <sup>u</sup> say they, *are* weighty and powerful; but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible.

11 Let such an one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *will we be* also in deed when we are present.

12 For <sup>v</sup> we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, <sup>w</sup> are not <sup>x</sup> wise.

13 But we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the <sup>v</sup> rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

14 For we stretch not ourselves beyond *our* measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in *preaching* the gospel of Christ:

15 Not boasting of things without *our* measure, *that is*, of <sup>z</sup> other men's labors; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be <sup>a</sup> enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

16 To preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, and not to boast in another man's <sup>b</sup> line of things made ready to our hand.

17 But <sup>c</sup> he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

that, how weak soever we are, yet, as they are Christ's, so are we: we profess the *same* faith, we walk by the *same* rule, we build on the *same* foundation, and hope for the *same* inheritance.

2. His authority from Christ as an apostle. This he had mentioned before, v. 6. and now he tells them that he might speak of it again, and with some sort of *boasting*, seeing it was a truth, that the *Lord had given it to him*, and it was *more* than his adversaries could justly pretend to. It was certainly what he should *not be ashamed of*, v. 8.

Of which, observe, (1.) The nature of his authority; it was for *edification*, and *not for destruction*. This indeed is the end of all authority, civil and ecclesiastical, and was the end of that extraordinary authority which the apostles had, and of all church discipline.

(2.) The caution with which he speaks of his authority, professing his design was not to *terrify them* with big words, nor by *angry letters*, v. 9. Thus he seems to obviate an objection that might have been formed against him, v. 10. But the apostle declares he did not intend to frighten them who were obedient, nor did he write anything in his letters, that he was not able to make good, by deeds, against the disobedient; and he would have his adversaries *know this*, v. 11. that he would, by the exercise of his apostolical power committed to him, make it appear to have a real efficacy.

V. 12—13. 1. The apostle refuses to justify himself, or to act by such rules as the false apostles did, v. 12. They were pleased, and did pride themselves, in their own attainments, and never considered those who

far exceeded them in gifts and graces, in power and authority; and this made them *laughy and insolent*. The apostle would not be of the number of such vain men: let us resolve that *we will not*.

2. He fixes a better rule for his conduct; namely, *not to boast of things without his measure*, which was the measure God had distributed to him, v. 13. His meaning is, either that he would not boast of more gifts or graces, or power and authority, than God had really bestowed on him; or rather, that he would not act beyond his commission as to persons or things, nor go beyond the line prescribed to him; which he plainly intimates the false apostles did, while they *boasted of other men's labors*.

3. He acted according to this rule, v. 14. particularly in his preaching at Corinth, and in the exercise of his apostolical authority there; he came thither by divine direction, and there converted many to Christianity; therefore, in *boasting* of them as his charge, he acted not contrary to his rule, he boasted not of *other men's labors*, v. 15.

4. He declares his success in observing this rule. His hope was, that their *faith was increased*, and that others *beyond them*, even in the remoter parts of Achaia, would embrace the Gospel also; and in all this he exceeded not his commission, nor acted in *another man's line*.

5. He seems to check himself in this matter, as if afraid of boasting, or taking any praise to himself, therefore he mentions two things which ought to be regarded: (1.) *He that glorieth, should glory in the Lord*, v. 17. Ministers, in particular, must be careful not to glory in their performance, but must give God the glory of their work, and of the success of it. (2.) *Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth*, v. 18. Of all flattery, self-flattery is the worst; and self-applause is seldom better

modest, and unaffected address, would render 'his speech contemptible with many persons at Corinth,' where these decorations were highly valued; though his subjects were ever so judiciously discussed, and his delivery every way suitable to the occasion. Indeed the very meanness of his apparel, [note, 1 Cor. 4:11.] would render his appearance despised by numbers. But he warned such as ventured to speak thus of him, to expect that he would act as decidedly when he arrived at Corinth, as he now wrote; and would show them, that he was able to assume a firmer tone, and act with more authority, and even severity, when he saw occasion; though he preferred 'beseeching them in the meekness and gentleness of Christ.'

(7.) *Outward appearance.*] 'The false teachers, in person, manners, learning, eloquence, the influence of wealth, birth, rank, and all other outward advantages, were greatly superior to Paul. *Is Christ's.*] Some seem to have boasted of being especially Christ's, as having *seen Him with their own eyes*. And to this there seems allusion: and so *Theoph.* Comp. on 1 Cor. 7:3.

(8.) 'Nay, if I should even make greater claims than I have already done to a divine commission, (alluding to that *exousia* given him by the personal revelation of Jesus Christ,) I should not be convicted of falsehood, i. e. feel the shame which accompanies the detection of falsehood.'

(9.) 'It appears from the words following, that these were the very words of the false teachers, upon which the apostle here sarcastically plays.'

(10.) *Weak.*] 'It alludes to some bodily imperfections, most probably to the apostle's very diminutive stature, and ungracious [ungraceful?] air and manner. *Pseudo Lucian* [A. D., 130 to 180?], in his *Philopatris*, gives the following description of him: "corpore erat parvo, contracto, incurvo, tricubitali," i. e. a petty, crooked shriveling, of four feet and a half. There is little doubt, however, but *tricubitali* [4½ ft.] is no more to be taken for the exact measure, than *tribolarius* necessarily signifies of the exact value of 3 oboles. It seems to have been a proverbial exaggeration for one of *very diminutive stature*. Considering, too, the hand which drew this sketch, there can be no doubt that it is *en caricature*. *Speech contemptible.*] Some think, Paul had a very weak, squeaking voice; others, that he had an impediment in his speech. Both, indeed, may be conjoined; or we may suppose a mean address, and a great defect in elocution: and, considering the little power which he possessed of Greek style, and that his phraseology was, no doubt, idiotical, provincial, and *popular*, the expression (especially when considered as the satirical exaggeration of an adversary, and bearing in mind the fastidiousness of the Greeks in such respects) will not seem strange.'

(11.) *Think.*] 'The Gr. is well expl. by *Theoph.*, "know." In.

V. 12—16. 'To the apostles God allotted the charge of converting the world, and endued them with gifts suited to the greatness of the work. To them therefore it belonged, to form their converts into churches, and to appoint rules for their government. . . . The province assigned to the evangelists, and other inferior ministers, was, to assist the apostles, to build on the foundation laid by them, to labor in the Gospel under their direction, and in all things to consider themselves as subordinate to the apostles. According to this view of the matter, the false teacher at

Corinth, who was but at best an inferior minister of the Gospel, had in many things acted out of the bounds in which he ought to have labored.' *Mackn.* *Kanōn* [tr. rule, v. 13.] is the instrument by which builders try their work, whether exactly straight or not. The Scripture is the *canon*, by which all instruction must be tried.

(12.) *By themselves.*] 'And not by the *true* apostles.' BLOOMF.

(13.) 'I will not boast, or seek glory in respect to any parts further than the limits God hath assigned to my evangelical labors. (*Kanōn*, says *Ros.*, after *Morus*, here, is the certain space marked out to a teacher, i. e. his *diocesis*.) And these limits extend so as to reach even to you. Of you, therefore, I may justly boast. In v. 14. he plainly alludes to the right of *pre-occupancy*.' BL., whom see, and also *Ros.* Ed.

(15.) *Enlarged.*] 'Rather, "gain fame and glory by you," namely, as the teacher justly may by the improvement of his pupils. In the use of the Gr. meaning, "to be praised for," "get honor by," there is a sort of Hebraism, as in Ac. 19:17. Phil. 1:20. and sometimes in the O. T. See *Schl.*—According to our rule.] Rather, "within my limits," and according to my just right.'

(16.) 'The result which I hope for, this abundant success of my labors among you, is, to spread the Gospel to the parts beyond you, i. e. chiefly, I incline to think, the rest of the Peloponnesus, beyond the Isthmus, and perhaps Acarnania and Epirus, which had a close connexion with Corinth. *Mackn.*, however, thinks Italy and Spain are meant, observing, that "Paul had already preached in Laconia, Arcadia, and the other countries of Peloponnesus, which composed the Roman province of Achaia, as is plain from the inscription of both his letters to the Corinthians." Yet *Doddr.* denies, that there is "anything to be found in the N. T., of planting churches in these parts of the Peloponnesus." I am certainly not aware of any such.' BL. 'Paul expresses the hope, that in his next visit to the Corinthians, he might "preach the Gospel in the regions beyond them," implying that, in his first visit, he went no farther W. than their city. This first visit was prolonged a year and a half. His second continued only 3 months; and considering how much he probably found to "set in order" in the Corinthian church, how much preaching and conversation he would find necessary, and also the important instructions for disciples abroad, which we know he here committed to writing,—it may be doubted whether he then penetrated any farther into the peninsula.'

Rev. Dr. ANDERSON.  
V. 17, 18. 'If any teacher boast, let him boast of having performed his duty, in the manner the Lord hath appointed.' *Mackn.* Surely this is widely different from 'glorying in the Lord!' *Jer.* 9:23, 24. 1 Cor. 1:26—31, vv. 30, 31.—The apostle was constrained to speak of his own labors and success; but he must remind the Corinthians, that every man who 'gloried,' ought 'to glory in God,' as his portion, and in the Lord Jesus as his whole Salvation, and the Giver of all his hopes, grace, endowments, and usefulness, to whom all the honor of them was due. If a man could not thus 'glory in the Lord,' all other glorying must be vain-glory, and end in shame and misery.—Many expositors suppose, that the *commendation* here mentioned, was given when God enabled a man to work miracles, or exercise spiritual gifts. But many wrought miracles and prophesied, who were 'workers of iniquity.' *Mat.* 7:21—23. 1 Cor. 13:1—3. and it could not be properly said, that 'the Lord commended' them. The evident usefulness of a minister's labors, is a less equivocal



18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but <sup>d</sup> whom the Lord commendeth.

CHAP. XI.

1 Out of his jealousy over the Corinthians, who seemed to make more account of the false apostles than of him, he entereth into a forced commendation of himself, 5 of his equality with the chief apostles, 7 of his preaching the Gospel to them freely, and without any their charge, 13 shewing that he was not inferior to those deceitful workers in any legal prerogative, 23 and in the service of Christ, and in all kind of sufferings for his ministry, far superior.

WOULD to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed <sup>a</sup> bear with me.

2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you <sup>b</sup> to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin <sup>c</sup> to Christ.

3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another <sup>d</sup> gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear <sup>e</sup> with him.

5 For I suppose I <sup>f</sup> was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

6 But though <sup>g</sup> I be rude in speech,

yet not <sup>h</sup> in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest <sup>i</sup> among you in all things.

d Ro. 2:29 a or, ye do b ar. e Ga. 1:7,8 c Ho. 2:19,20. f I Co. 15:10. g I Co. 1:17. h Ep. 3:4. i c. 12:12.

than self-flattery and self-deceit: at the best, self-commendation is no praise; it is oftentimes as foolish and vain as it is proud: therefore, instead of praising or commending ourselves, we should strive to approve ourselves to God, and his approbation will be our best commendation.

CHAP. XI. In this ch. the apostle goes on with his discourse, in opposition to the false apostles, who were very industrious to lessen his interest and reputation among the Corinthians, and had prevailed too much by their insinuations.

V. 1-4. 1. His apology for going about to commend himself. He is loath to do it, v. 1. and calls it folly, because too often it is really no better; in his case it was necessary; yet, seeing others might apprehend it to be folly in him, he desires them to bear with it. Note, It is no pleasure to a good man to speak well of himself, yet in some cases it is lawful, when as here it is for the advantage of others, or for one's own necessary vindication.

2. His reasons for what he did; (1.) To preserve the Corinthians from being corrupted by the insinuations of the false apostles, v. 2, 3. He tells them, he was afraid lest their faith should be weakened by hearkening to such suggestions as tended to lessen their regard to his ministry, by which

they were brought to the Christian faith. He had espoused them to one Husband, converted them to Christianity; and he was desirous to present them as a chaste virgin, pure and spotless, and faithful, not having their minds corrupted with false doctrines, by false teachers; so as Eve was beguiled by the subtilty of the serpent. This godly jealousy in the apostle, was a mixture of love and fear; and faithful ministers cannot but be afraid and concerned for their people, lest they should lose that which they have received, and turn from what they have embraced, especially when deceivers have gone abroad, or have crept in among them.

(2.) To vindicate himself against the false apostles, v. 4. Had they preached another Jesus, or another Spirit, there had been some color of reason to bear with them, or to hearken to them. But seeing there is but one Jesus, one Spirit, one Gospel, that is, or at least that ought to be, preached, and received; what reason could there be why, by the artifices of any adversary, they should be prejudiced against him who first converted them to the faith? It was a just occasion of jealousy, that such persons designed to preach another Jesus, another Spirit, and another Gospel.

V. 5-15. After the foregoing preface, the apostle mentions,

1. His equality with the other apostles, v. 5. The apostleship, as an office, was equal in all the apostles; but the apostles; like other Christians, differed one from another: Paul was indeed eminent; yet he speaks modestly of himself, supposes it only, and humbly owns his personal infirmity, that he had not a graceful delivery. Some think, he was of a very low stature, and his voice proportiona-

PRACT. OBS. V. 7-18. It is peculiarly unsuitable to the character of Christians, though lamentably common, to judge of men, or look on things, after 'the outward appearance;' as if learning, eloquence, affluence, a graceful person and address, or elegant attire, were evidences of a man's holiness and heavenly wisdom, or the seal of Christ to his ministerial character! Or as if the want of such embellishments proved a man not to be an eminent Christian, or an able, faithful minister of the lowly Savior! Even Paul was 'base,' in the judgment of the self-sufficient and accomplished Corinthians; so that Satan's emissaries far excelled him in exterior recommendations. This should teach us, not to judge of gold merely by its glitter, in which itself often exceeds it, but to bring it to the balance and weigh it.—When professors, or preachers of the Gospel, are so confident that they belong to Christ, that they can hardly allow those who do not coincide in their views, or sanction their conduct, to be Christians, and when they treat the most approved characters with supercilious contempt and revilings, their very confidence should excite our suspicions; for it far more accords to that of 'the deceitful workers' at Corinth, than to that of Paul and his fellow-laborers, which was modest, humble, and candid. Some men appear to be en-

tirely out of their element, when they are not boasting of themselves, and menacing divine judgments on all who oppose them, as if they would terrify every one into silence and submission. But we should humbly 'compare ourselves' with the Word of God, and the example of prophets and apostles, and 'measure ourselves by the rule' of our duty, the obligations conferred on us, and the work assigned us; we should be diligent, and 'study, yea, be ambitious to be quiet, and mind our own business,' though in an obscure situation, and thankful for success, according to the measure and rule which God has distributed to us, whether called to preach the Gospel, or to serve Christ in any other way, without intermeddling with other men's labors, or boasting in services performed by them. We ought likewise to hope for the increase of the faith and grace, even of those who have most failed in their duty to us, to be zealous and bold, in a humble, patient, prudent, loving, and self-denying manner, and rather to be desirous of doing abundant good, than of acquiring great reputation; and, instead of commending ourselves, or seeking the praise of men, let us desire and aspire after 'that honor, which cometh from God only.'

testimony; yet the final account, the 'Well done, good and faithful servant,' and 'the rejoicing in the testimony of conscience' in the mean while, seem especially intended. 1:12-14. 5:9-12. Mat. 25:19-23. I Cor. 3:10-15. 4:3-5.

(17.) 'The apostle concludes with a most weighty dict, which would be especially valuable to all such as were in the ministry, (for whom it is evidently meant) but which is also introduced, (very judiciously,) in order to lessen the feeling of disgust, which is apt to rise on hearing any one excessively commend himself.'

(18.) Approved.] 'Dokimos: accepted: a metaphor, taken from coins, which are approved by the prince, and accepted by the subject, and pass current.'

NOTES. CHAP. XI. V. 1-6. Indeed, if any man could possibly have preached 'another Jesus,' a more gracious and precious Savior than Paul had declared to them, or could have conferred on them 'another Spirit,' whose gifts and influences were more excellent than those, which the Holy Spirit, through Paul's ministry, had bestowed on them, or if 'another' and more suitable 'Gospel' had been preached, than that which they had embraced, there might have been some reason for their bearing with the new teachers, or even preferring them. Yet, even in that case, it would have become them, to have borne with the infirmities of their first instructor in Christianity. But the contrary was manifest. He had indeed appeared among them 'rude in speech,' and as a person of ordinary education, ignorant of the rules of eloquence, and careless respecting them; (this might be the case, though his discourses were replete with natural pathos, and sound argument;) yet he had shown himself competent in knowledge, to instruct his hearers in every part of Christianity.—Paul's declaration, that he 'was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles,' when carried to its consequences, is totally subversive of the enormous, baseless fabric of popery, which rests entirely (as distinguished from the rest of the professed Christian church) on the vain imagination, that Peter was supreme over all the apostles, and that the pope, or the Roman church, or both, inherit, in some unaccountable manner, and by some unknown title, that supremacy.—Many expositors suppose, that the expressions, used by the apostle in respect of his espousing the believers at Corinth to Christ, are taken from Grecian customs, but the language of the O. T. seems referred to. Ps. 45:9-17. Cant. 1:2. Is. 54:5-10. 62:1-5. Ez. 16:9-14. Hos. 2:19-20. John 3:

27-36, v. 29. Others conclude, that one false teacher, and he a Jew, was the author of the disturbances at Corinth. But the false teachers, 13-15. seem to have corrupted the Gospel rather with heathenism, than Judaism. 1 Cor. 5: 6: 8: 10:19-31. 11:17-34.

(1.) 'As v. 17. of the preceding ch. was intended to deprecate the to phortikon, or indignation, which arises at hearing self-praise, so is the present v., where it was the more necessary, since he had to subjoin more of such praise; though this praise was compulsory, and for their good. The words may be rendered: would that ye could bear with me a little in my folly (of boasting). Now do bear with me!'

(2.) For, &c.] 'Rather, I ardently love you with a divine affection; i. e. not through any human motive, but solely for the sake of God. This metaphor suggested to the apostle's mind the comparison which follows, of which the imagery and cast is Jewish and Oriental, and therefore not very distinct to our western conceptions. I have espoused.] The question is, whether by the Gr. *hērmōsamēn*, the apostle alludes to the *harmōstai*, those friends who made and procured the marriage for the bridegroom. So the Gr. contrs., our Eng. trs., and Wets., Raph., Eisner, and Wolf; and in this sense the word often occurs in the classical writers, also in Prov. 19:14. See also Rom 7:4. Or, whether Paul has an allusion to persons who, like the *harmōsunoi*, among the Lacedæmonians, formed the lives and manners of virgins, making them virtuous and discreet, and so prepared them for marriage. It should seem better not to press on the nuptial allusion in the term. If there be any metaphorical allusion in *hērmōsamēn*, it may be not so much to the *harmōsunoi*, as to the offices of guardian and preceptor.' BL. Comp. note, i p. 231, Vol. III.

(5.) '(No, you can pretend to no such thing; they have not found you another and better Savior, more ample endowments of the Holy Spirit, nor have promulgated better doctrines than those ye have received from me; nor can any others, for I account myself to be nothing inferior to the first apostles. Theoph. remarks on the modesty of the expression, which is not directly affirmative. By the "chief apostles," the ancient contrs. justly conclude, are meant Peter, James, and John. So in Gal. 2:9. they are called the pillars of the church. He had (I think) Peter chiefly in view; since it appears from I Cor. 1:12. and 23:12. that there was a party at Corinth, who were followers of Cephas, i. e. Peter.'



7 Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.

9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

11 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.

12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

16 I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

17 That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were

foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.

J Ac. 13:3. Phil. 1:15, &c. Re. 12:9.  
1 Th. 2:9. n Ga. 2:4. 2 Pe. q 1hi 3:19.  
k Phi. 4:10, 15. 2:1. 1 Ja. 4:1. r c 12:6, 11.  
l this boasting. 1e. 2:2. s or, suffer.  
shall not be o Phi. 3:2. Tit. t 1 Co. 7:12.  
stopped in me. 1:10, 11. u c. 9:4.  
m Ga. 1:7. p Ge. 3:1, 5.

bly small; others, that he might have had some impediment in his speech, perhaps a stammering tongue. However, he was not rude in knowledge; not unacquainted with the best rules of oratory, and art of persuasion, much less ignorant of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, as had been thoroughly manifested among them.

2. His equality with the false apostles in this particular,—the preaching of the Gospel unto them freely, without wages, v. 7—10. He had proved at large, in his former epistle to them, the lawfulness of ministers receiving maintenance from the people, and the duty of the people to give them an honorable maintenance; and here he says, he himself had taken wages of other churches, v. 8. so that he had a right to have asked and received from them: yet he waived his right, and chose rather to abase himself, by working with his hands in the trade of tent-making, to maintain himself, than be burdensome to them, that they might be exalted, or encouraged to receive the Gospel, which they had so cheap; yea, he chose rather to be supplied from Macedonia, than to be chargeable unto them.

He informs them of the reason of this his conduct among them; it was not that he did not love them, v. 11. or was unwilling to receive tokens of their love; but it was to avoid offence, that he might cut off occasion from them that desired occasion. He would not give occasion for any to accuse him of worldly designs in preaching the Gospel, or that he intended to make a trade of it, to enrich himself; and that others who opposed him at Corinth, might not in this respect gain an advantage against him: that wherein they gloried, as to this matter, they might be found even as he, v. 12. It is not improbable, that

the chief of the false teachers, at Corinth, or some among them, were rich, and taught (or deceived) the people gratis, and might accuse the apostle or his fellow-laborers as mercenary men, who received hire or wages, and therefore the apostle kept to his resolution not to be chargeable to any of the Corinthians.

3. The false apostles are charged as deceitful workers, v. 13. and that because they would transform themselves into the likeness of the apostles of Christ, and though they were the ministers of Satan, would seem to be the ministers of righteousness. They would be as industrious and as generous in promoting error, as the apostles were in preaching truth; they would endeavor as much to undermine the kingdom of Christ, as the apostle did to establish it. There were counterfeit prophets, under the O. T., who wore the garb, and learned the language, of the prophets of the Lord. So there were counterfeit apostles under the N. T. who seemed in many respects like the true apostles of Christ. And no marvel; (says the apostle;) hypocrisy is a thing not to be much wondered at in this world, especially when we consider the great influence Satan has on the minds of many, who rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience. As he can turn himself into any shape, and put on almost any form, and look sometimes like an angel of light, in order to promote his kingdom of darkness, so he will teach his ministers and instruments to do the same. But it follows, Their end is according to their works, v. 15. the end will discover them to be deceitful workers, and their work will end in ruin and destruction.

V. 16—21. A further excuse for what he was about to say in his own vindication.

1. He would not have them think he was guilty of folly, in saying what he said to vindicate himself, v. 16. Ordinarily, indeed, it is unbecoming a wise man to be much speaking his own praise; boasting of ourselves is usually not only a sign of a proud mind, but a mark of folly also; however, says the apostle, yet as a fool receive me; if ye do count it folly in me to boast a little, yet give due regard to what I shall say.

V. 7—12. The new teachers at Corinth were distinguished from the apostle, by what they received, as well as what they imparted.—It is generally supposed, that the false teachers affected the praise of preaching the Gospel freely; but the language, which the apostle afterward uses, clearly proves that this was not the case (20). They seem rather to have despised Paul, as degrading himself and as acting inconsistently with the dignity of an apostle, in laboring, and enduring poverty, instead of demanding a maintenance.—As Corinth was a rich city, his long continuance there might have been ascribed to mercenary motives, had he not adopted this plan: 1 Cor. 9:1—23. and as the Christians in Macedonia, though far poorer than the Corinthians, yet in part maintained the apostle when laboring at Corinth, it might in some sense be said, that they were robbed to exalt their more prosperous brethren. (9) I was chargeable.] 12:13, 14.—“I stummed none of them with my complaints,” I importuned none of them to supply my wants? Whit.—He was none of those idle drones, who, by their laziness, do even chill, and benumb, and deaden the charity of well disposed persons. Leish. (10) No man shall stop me of this boasting.] “This boasting shall not be stopped in me.”

(7.) Abasing.] “Humbling, i. e. by laboring with my hands, submitting to a voluntary poverty, and by not claiming the privileges of my equals, thus, as it were, tacitly admitting inferiority. Exalted.] Paul had chiefly in view, herein, the fame and reputation which the church of Corinth sustained among the Christians, from the pre-eminence of the spiritual gifts of its members, and which might fairly be ascribed to the labors of the apostle.”

(8.) Chargeable.] *Katonarkēsa*: did not lie a dead weight; properly, affect any one with torpor, from *narkē*, a fish, possessing that power, and *kata, down*. Thus it merely signifies, to weigh any one down with an overpowering load, like that of the torpeda, or incubus. The word is thought by Jerome to be a *Cilicium*. Id.

(9.) *Theoph.* remarks, that this is as much as to say: “I mention not this in order that I may henceforward receive of you.” There is something, too, very cutting; q. d. “I cannot so far rely on you as to take aught of you.” Id.

(12.) “That wherein they boast, not really act, namely, in teaching gratis, that they may be found to do even as we do, (viz. if they would aim at the reputation we have,) i. e. “to take nothing, which now they are not found to do:” for, (as he proceeds to say; further on,) they shamefully pillaged the converts.” Id.

V. 13—15. It was not to be expected that the persons, to whom Paul referred, would in this respect be found like him; as they were indeed ‘false apostles,’ who in a lying manner pretended to be sent by Christ, in this and other things ‘working deceitfully,’ acting with duplicity, and varnishing over their hypocrisy and selfish intentions, by specious professions; so that their style, manner, and conduct, were an affected imitation of those of the apostles; but their ministry tended to dishonor God, and to deceive souls. 2:14—17. 4:1, 2. Jer. 23:13—27. Ez. 13:1—

16. 2 Pet. 2:1—3. Satan, their master, could disguise himself, and tempt men, in the form of a holy angel, a messenger from the world of light, instead of appearing as the prince of darkness. Mat. 4:3, 4. 16:21—23. Gal. 1:6—10. He can delude men with professions of extraordinary illumination, high affections, evangelical truth, revelations, singular sanctity, deadness to the world, austerity, or sublimity of devotion, and in various other ways; that so he might undermine or disgrace the whole religion of Christ; hurry men into absurdities and extravagances; lead them to neglect the plain rule of the written Word, and change them into enthusiasts, antinomians, or superstitious formalists. It was not, therefore, ‘anything great,’ or difficult, or ‘marvellous,’ that ‘his ministers should be transformed,’ and assume the appearance of ‘the ministers of righteousness,’ that by them this chief deceiver might impose on men to their destruction; for if they appeared openly, as opposers of the Gospel, and patrons of vice and impiety, they could not do near so much mischief; even as depredators succeed best, when disguised like honest men, and reputed to be such. But, whatever their professions might be, and however they might be admired and applauded; yet their end would accord, not to their popularity, confidence, eloquence, or sentiments; but to their works, their conduct in the sight of God, and the effect of their principles among men. Mat. 7:15—20.—The plural number used in these vs., in which the apostle directly speaks out on a subject, to which he had all along covertly referred, does by no means favor the opinion, that one false teacher was exclusively meant, though one might possess greater influence than the others. Scott.

(13.) *Workers.*] *Teachers*: as Mat. 2:37, 38. Phil. 3:2. and Schol. on Aristoph. Bloomf.

V. 16—20. Having thus openly decided against those who persisted in opposing his authority at Corinth, the apostle returned to his subject. He desired, that no one would think him a fool, or a vainglorious man, on account of what he said in his own behalf, when the importance of the occasion peremptorily demanded it of him; yet, if they would form so unfavorable a conclusion, let them at least receive him in that character, while ‘he boasted himself a little,’ for a short time, and as to a few things in which he was really distinguished; for he sought their good, and not his own credit, in what he said. He did not indeed speak on this occasion, according to the general precepts or example of the Lord, or what was proper to be imitated in ordinary cases; nor was it an immediate revelation which he was about to declare; but he followed that ‘same confidence of boasting,’ which their conduct had imposed upon him, and which the example of some among them seemed to authorize, though they would perhaps deem it foolish in him to do it. As, however, many of them, both the deceivers and the deceived, were in this habit of ‘glorying after the flesh,’ ‘he would glory also;’ but on other grounds, and in another manner, in order to counteract the pernicious tendency of their vain confidence.—Well satisfied with their own wisdom, they were accustomed to bear, with a self-complacent joy, the conduct of those who acted foolishly; and had, no doubt, often looked down



18 Seeing \* that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

[Practical Observations.]

21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit, whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.

22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in \* labors more abundant, in \* stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in \* deaths oft.

v Phil. 3:3,4. w 1 Co. 15:10. 2t:11.  
1 Co. 4:10. x Ac. 9:16. z:23. y 1 Co. 15:30-32.

PRAC. OBS. V. 1-20. Ministers of the Gospel may be 'jealous over' the people, with such an affectionate earnestness, as carries them beyond ordinary rules or personal considerations, while they apprehend that their beloved children are in danger of being, by any means, 'corrupted from the simplicity of Christ;' and that conduct, which many censure, may be the effect of pure and holy affections superior to those of other men.—Satan has agents of all descriptions, who are continually and artfully imposing on the unstable and unwary. If then the faithful minister seem over suspicious, and become troublesome by his watchfulness and warnings; his people ought, notwithstanding, to bear with him. And they should not endure those who, without sufficient cause, would alienate them from the instruments of God in their conversion.—Yet so exceedingly injudicious are many professed Christians, that high confidence, and the language of importance and authority, often go further than the most humble, meek, unassuming, and disinterested deportment! The minister, who is content to be poor, to fare hardly, to 'be abased,' or to earn his bread, that he 'may exalt others,' by freely preaching the Gospel to them, is often consigned to neglect, as if guilty of some great offence! While others, who assume a magisterial tone, and exalt themselves, are admitted to that consequence which they assume; provided they have popular [feelings, propensities, and] abilities, whatever their character in other respects may be.—But whatever fair show deceivers may make, they will seldom appear like faithful ministers, in laboring without any hope of worldly advantage or honor, from pure love to Christ and the souls of men. This is a part of the apostolical character and office, which by no means accords to the designs of 'false apostles and deceitful workers.'—The plausibility of deceivers, and the attractive form which they assume, to seduce men 'from the simplicity

on him with this mixture of pity and contempt. 1 Cor. 4:6-13. Yet they had not greatly shown their wisdom, in hearing with the false teachers: for they endured it without complaint, at least without being undeceived, if any one brought them into an abject dependence on him, and enslaved their consciences to his unwarranted impositions, [v. 20.] Doubtless, this refers to facts known to the apostle, in which the violent, litigious, ambitious, selfish temper, of 'the false apostles,' had been evident to all men; yet they were still allowed to retain their influence, through the fascination of their eloquence, and confidence, and the crafty management of their deluded admirers!—*Glory after the flesh.*] This is by most expositors, without any proof, explained of the false teachers glorying in their Jewish extraction, and in circumcision. But the expression, 'after the flesh,' according to the apostle's language, implies everything which an unregenerate man can possess; so that learning, eloquence, and various other distinctions may be meant, whether Jewish extraction and circumcision be included or not. 10:1-6, 17, 18. Is. 40:6-8. 1 Cor. 1:26-31. 3:18-22. Phil. 3:1-7. 1 Pet. 1:23-25.—'If subjection to the Jewish rites had been that, which the apostle was so zealous against, he would have spoken more plainly and warily, as we see in the epistle to the Galatians; and not have touched it only by the bye, slightly, in a doubtful expression. Besides, it is plain, that no such thing was yet attempted openly, only Paul was afraid of it.' Locke. Sc. (16.) *That I.*] 'Gr. that I also, i. e. as well as some other people.'

BLOOMF.

(17.) 'The apostle is not speaking seriously; as both the v. preceding, and that following, are ironical and sarcastical, so is this; and we are to repeat the formula, *be it so*, which is implied, as we have seen, in the v. preceding. Be it so, if you [say, or] think that what I speak, I speak not according to the Lord, or with a view to serve the purpose of his religion, but, &c.' Bl., whom see. Ed.

(19.) 'This is, perhaps, the most sarcastic sentence ever penned by Paul. Yet what he said was as just as it was severe. It was, indeed, folly and sottishness in the extreme, for persons so well informed as were the Corinthians, to bear with the boasting, hypocrisy, and arbitrary conduct of the false teachers.'

BLOOMF.

(20.) 'A slap on the face was the greatest ignominy; and Paul's expression, smite on the face, implies the greatest disgrace. 1 K. 22:24. Mat. 5:39. It therefore seems to denote the most violent, injurious treatment, like that employed by brutal pedagogues toward their pupils, or cruel masters towards their slaves. No doubt, this has reference to the violent means whereby they supported the rites and ceremonies they enjoined, and the severity with which they punished any breach of their

2. He mentions a caution, to prevent the abuse of what he should say, v. 17. He would not have them think, that boasting of ourselves, or glorying in what we have, is a thing commanded by the Lord in general into Christians, nor yet always necessary in our own vindication; Christians should rather humble and abase themselves; yet prudence must direct in what circumstances it is needful to do that which we may do lawfully, even speak of what God has wrought for us, and in us, and by us too.

3. He gives a good reason why they should suffer him to *boast a little*; namely, because they suffered others to do so, who had less reason, v. 18. But he would not glory in those things, carnal privileges, or outward advantages and attainments, though he had as much or more reason than others to do so. But he gloried in his *infirmities*, as he tells them afterward. The Corinthians thought themselves wise, and might think it an instance of wisdom, to bear with the weakness of others, and therefore suffered others to do what might seem folly; therefore the apostle would have them bear with him. Or v. 19. may be ironical, and then the meaning is this, 'Notwithstanding all your wisdom, ye willingly suffer yourselves to be brought into bondage under the Jewish yoke, or suffer others to

tyrannize over you; nay, to devour you, or make a prey of you, and take of you hire for their own advantage, and to exalt themselves above you, and lord it over you; nay, even to smite you on the face, or impose on you to your very faces, v. 20. upbraiding you while they reproach me, as if ye had been very weak in showing regard to me,' v. 21. Seeing this was the case, that the Corinthians, or some among them, could so easily bear all this from the false apostles, it was reasonable for the apostle to desire, and expect, they should bear with what might seem to them an indiscretion in him, seeing the circumstances of the case were such as made it needful, that *whereinsoever any were bold*, he should be bold also, v. 21.

V. 22-33. Here the apostle gives a large account of his own qualifications, labors, and sufferings; (not out of pride or vainglory, but to the honor of God, who had enabled him to do and suffer so much for the cause of Christ;) and wherein he excelled the false apostles, who would lessen his character and usefulness among the Corinthians. Observe,

1. He mentions the privileges of his birth, v. 22. which were equal to any they could pretend to. It should seem from hence, that the false apostles were of the Jewish race, who gave disturbance to the Gentile converts.

of Christ,' should not excite our wonder; for Satan is continually 'transformed into an angel of light,' that, under the most specious pretences, he may fill the earth with infidelity, heresy, and ungodliness; and, under the mask of philosophy, morality, or extraordinary austerity, superstition, enthusiasm, or new revelations, he does far more extensive and permanent mischief, than merely by tempting men to gross enormities.—We have great reason for thankfulness, that the apostle was constrained, though with many retractions, to 'boast himself a little;' for, whatever he might fear, or his enemies might say, his 'confidence in boasting' has thrown such light on his ministry, character, and history, as will be instructive to the church to the end of the world. Doubtless the Holy Spirit guided his pen, though he seemed not to 'speak after the Lord;' for he did not glory in a carnal, a proud, or a false manner, as many do. Had the Corinthians been as wise as they thought themselves, he would have had no occasion to apologize to them for his conduct; for he did not require those indulgences, which they granted to their false teachers.—Indeed, if faithful ministers, who flatter no man, and pay no court to any man's passions, should attempt to treat their people, as some do, who, for their own ends, are in other things more complaisant, it would never be endured. It is astonishing, to see how some men bring their followers into bondage; how 'they devour and take of them;' how they insult and reproach them, as well as others; and yet how all this is borne with, excused, or palliated. For, indeed, their doctrine suits the lives and consciences of their hearers, and their example encourages them to similar conduct towards others. Sometimes it may be necessary to take notice of the reproaches of such men, but we must never imitate their spirit or conduct. SCOTT.

orders. *Devour.*] It may be understood, of those various devices of rapacity which they practised, by wheedling the superstitious out of valuable presents of money or goods, or eating at their tables, and thus *living upon them*, and (to use our common expression) *eating them up.* BL.

V. 21-23. Comrs. generally suppose, that in what follows, he meant to compare himself with the false teacher, or teachers, at Corinth, and infer, that these were Hebrews, and wanted to impose the law on the Gentile converts; of which no trace is found in either epistle. 12:17-21. But I apprehend, that the whole passage will appear far more natural and animated, if we understand it with reference to 'the very chiefest of the true apostles;' and the words, 'whereinsoever any is bold,' obviously lead to this interpretation. 1-6. All the apostles were descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They were neither Hellenists nor proselytes; and Paul was not inferior to them in this respect, though his birth at Tarsus might give some persons occasion to conclude that he was. Phil. 3:1-7. He had declared, that his opposers at Corinth were not 'ministers of Christ,' but of Satan; 13-15. and he could scarcely seem to speak 'foolishly,' in magnifying his office, and declaring that he was more than they; but it had, indeed, this appearance, when he proceeded to show, that in some respects he was more distinguished, as the minister of Christ, than any other person, even among the apostles themselves; not by superior authority, abilities, miraculous powers, zeal, or holiness; but by his more abundant labors and sufferings, in which he evidently far exceeded all other 'ministers of Christ,' on earth. The false apostles had labored comparatively very little; and, instead of suffering for the Gospel, it is very probable that they had risen to eminence, affluence, and authority, by means of it; but by thus showing himself, *in these things*, to be distinguished above all the other apostles, he tacitly pointed out, to the false teachers and their followers, in what true pre-eminence consisted, and by the contrast made it appear, that those things, in which they gloried, were indeed their shame. Mat. 20: 24-23.—(23) *I speak as a fool.*] 'I speak, as one exceeding in folly.' This confirms the above interpretation.—*In prisons, &c.*] 1 Cor. 15:31-34. This occurred before Paul's imprisonment at Jerusalem, Cesarea, and Rome. Acts 22:—23. SCOTT.

(21.) 'I speak this with reference to the reproach cast on me, and to excite you to make a comparison of their conduct with mine in such respects, that you may see how little stupidity they bear to me as an apostle, and that you may determine which party has the better claim to the title of real apostle. They could do no more, eat up, &c. but in these things he confesses he was weak. So some.' Bl., whom see. Ed.

(23.) *Deaths.*] 'I. e. mortal perils, as 1:9, 10.'

BLOOMF.



24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes <sup>z</sup> save one.

25 Thrice <sup>a</sup> was I beaten with rods, once was I <sup>b</sup> stoned, thrice I <sup>c</sup> suffered shipwreck, a <sup>e</sup> night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils <sup>d</sup> by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings <sup>e</sup> often, in <sup>f</sup> hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care <sup>g</sup> of all the churches.

29 Who <sup>h</sup> is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

30 If I must needs glory, I will <sup>i</sup> glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

31 The <sup>j</sup> God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which <sup>k</sup> is blessed for evermore, knoweth <sup>l</sup> that I lie not.

32 In Damasens <sup>m</sup> the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

z De. 25:3. a Ac. 16:22. b Ac. 14:19. c Ac. 27. d Ac. 14:5. e Ac. 20:31. f 1 Co. 4:11. g Ac. 15:36-40. h 1 Co. 9:22. i c. 12:5,9,10. j Ga. 1:3. k Ro. 9:5. l 1 Th. 2:5. m Ac. 9:24,25.

2. He makes mention also of his *apostle-ship*; that he was more than an ordinary minister of Christ, v. 23. God had counted him faithful, and had put him into the ministry: he had been a useful minister of Christ unto them; they had found full proofs of his ministry; *Are they ministers of Christ? I am more so.*

3. He chiefly insists on this, that he had been an extraordinary sufferer for Christ: and this was what he gloried in, or rather he gloried in the grace of God that had enabled him to be more abundant in labors, and to endure very great sufferings, such as stripes above measure, frequent imprisonments, and often the dangers of death, v. 23. Note, When the apostle would prove himself an extraordinary minister, he proves that he had been an extraordinary sufferer. See Deut. 25:3. It was usual with Jews, that they might not exceed, to abate one at least of the number forty. And to have the abatement of one only, was all the favor that ever Paul received from them. The Gentiles were not tied up to that moderation.

Thus he was all his days a constant confessor; perhaps scarcely a year of his life, after his conversion, passed without suffering some hardship or other for his religion; wherever he went, he went in perils; he was exposed to perils of all sorts. He was in peril not only among avowed enemies, but

among them also who called themselves brethren, but were false brethren, v. 26.

Beside all this, he had great weariness and painfulness in his ministerial labors, and these are things that will come into account shortly, and people will be reckoned with for all the care and pains of their ministers concerning them. Paul was a stranger to wealth and plenty, power and pleasure, preferment and ease, v. 27. This was he, who was one of the greatest blessings of the age, used as if he had been the burden of the earth, and the plague of his generation. And yet this is not all; for, as an apostle, the care of all the churches lay on him, v. 28. He mentions this last, as if this lay the heaviest on him, and as if he could better bear all the persecutions of his enemies, than the scandals in the churches he had the oversight of, v. 29. There was not a weak Christian, with whom he did not sympathize; nor any one scandalized, but he was affected therewith. Nor was he ashamed of all this, but, on the contrary, it was what he accounted his honor; and therefore, much against the grain as it was with him to glory, yet, says he, *if I must needs glory, if my adversaries will oblige me to it, in my own necessary vindication, I will glory in these my infirmities, v. 30.* Note, Sufferings for righteousness-sake will, the most of anything, redound to our honor.

In the last two vs. he mentions one particular part of his sufferings out of its place, as if he had forgotten it before, or because the deliverance God wrought for him was most remarkable. This is recorded, Acts 9: 24, 25. This was his first great danger and difficulty, and the rest of his life was of a piece. And it is observable, that, lest it should be thought he spake more than was true, he confirms this narrative with a sol-

PRACT. OBS. V. 21-33. What mere man ever united such and so many grounds 'of glorying,' as this apostle did? How does it fill our minds with astonishment, to meditate on this brief enumeration of his labors, hardships, perils, and sufferings, during a long course of years; of his patience, perseverance, diligence, cheerfulness, and usefulness, in the midst of them; and of his attentive and fervent affection towards all the churches, and every individual believer! Next to the history of Christ Himself, the dangers, persecutions, cruelty, and treachery, which this most excellent and most useful servant of God, everywhere, and from all sorts of persons, met with, and the unkindness even of his own converts, form the severest stricture on the folly and wickedness of mankind, that ever was published.—We may here see what are the chief preferences in the true church of Christ; and we may ask ourselves, *Whether, on such terms, we should be willing to be 'not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.'* In this glass, our utmost diligence and services appear too minute to be noticed, and our difficulties and trials can

V. 24-27. The other apostles had indeed been scourged and imprisoned for Christ's sake; Acts 4:1-3. 5:17-25, 40. yet Paul had endured this pain and disgrace 'more frequently' than they, and had been in danger of death on far more occasions.—(25) *Thrice I suffered shipwreck.* At one time he continued a night and a day in the sea, probably on a part of the wreck, in much suffering and peril. This was previous to his voyage to Rome, when he was again shipwrecked. Acts 27. Indeed, his other sufferings, recorded in the Acts, from chap. 19: to the end, were subsequent to the writing of this epistle; and hence we may perceive, how very many of his trials and sufferings, as well as of his labors, with the success of them, are nowhere recorded, save in the book of God's remembrance.—Thus his life was spent in weariness, pain, and suffering; his incessant labor in preaching the Gospel, conversing with the people from house to house, writing his epistles, earning his bread, and attending to his devotions, frequently forced him to pass whole nights without rest. Yet he still persevered, without fainting, in his 'work of faith and labor of love.' 6:3-10. 1 Cor. 4:9-13.

(21, 25.) *'Vater rightly puts these vs. into a parenthesis.'* BLOOMF. (26.) *'The passage of broad and deep rivers, in their petty boats, was dangerous; and robbers at that time swarmed even in the most thickly inhabited parts of Europe.'* In.

V. 28-31. Beside the things above mentioned, which 'were without,' and mainly related to the apostle's bodily sufferings, his mind was worn down by a multiplicity of affairs, which came upon him daily, with the force of a multitude; by the care of all the churches of the Gentiles, planned by him and others. This lay upon him, filled him with constant solicitude, and employed him perpetually, in forming and executing plans, to promote their peace and prosperity, to counteract the designs of false teachers, and to order all their concerns for the best. Sc.

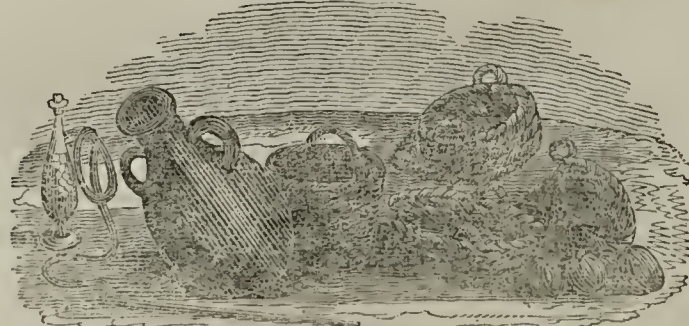
(31.) *'The oath is to confirm the truth of the foregoing statement.'* BLOOMF.

(32.) The Jews, it seems, Acts 9:23. were at the bottom of Aretas' measures, having persuaded him, perhaps, that Paul was a Roman spy. Note, end of Acts. *Aretas.* 'Three distinct kings of this name ruled the Arabs. The first, mentioned 2 Mac. 5:8. the second, by Jos. Ant. 13, 15, 2, 16, 1, 4. The third (that of this v.), was the father-in-law of Herod Antipas; who divorced his wife, A.'s daughter, and had sustained a defeat of his forces. Hence Vitellius was sent by Tiberius (whom Herod had informed by letter of his father-in-law's insolence) to bring the Arab to terms, taking him alive, or fetching his head to Rome. Vitellius delayed a long time on his way; Tiberius dies; Aretas sees himself unexpect-

scarcely be perceived; the prospect may well shame us out of all our boastings and complaints, and lead us to inquire, whether we be really engaged in the spiritual warfare, or are only called the soldiers of Christ. Here we may study patience, fortitude, meekness, and perseverance in well-doing, and confidence in God to protect, deliver, and comfort us, in every possible suffering or danger. Here we may learn to think less of our own ease, interest, indulgence, or reputation, and more of the great concerns of godliness, and to sympathize with the lighter sorrows of our brethren, even when more heavily afflicted ourselves. Here we may look, till poverty, reproach, hunger, thirst, watchings, fastings, cold, nakedness, stripes, and imprisonment, appear honorable, and even special privileges, when sustained in a good cause, and with a constant mind. Here we may learn to be content with food and raiment, thankful for mean and scanty provisions, indifferent about all worldly things, ardently desirous of doing good to others, and animated with the hope of success in this work, notwithstanding our manifold infirmities. SCOTT.

edly freed from imminent danger. Jos. Ant. 13. ch. 5. What Aretas then did, or what measures he adopted, writers do not mention; yet it is not improbable, that, learning Tiberius' death, not to lose so favorable an occasion, he suddenly invaded Syria, and occupied Damascus. It is not agreed whether this "ethnarch" of Aretas [so he is here called], was prefect of the Damascenes, or only of the Jews dwelling in Damascus. It would seem of the Jews; for this word ethnarch is generally used of the prefects of Judea, as is seen in Jos., &c.; the Jews, moreover, had their own ethnarchs in the more noble cities out of Palestine; nor is it proved, that those who were appointed over Damascus, either by the emperors, or the 3 kings of Arabia, were named ethnarchs. Paul calls him the ethnarch of king Aretas, because, we may suppose, he was set over the Jews by Aretas, (the former one being dismissed,) and was to be distinguished from the Roman, or the one appointed by the Romans.' Ros.

V. 33. Basket.] *'Sarganē: from srg, to twist, or braid.' Bl., who thinks*



it 'a large wicker fish-hammer, or rather a sort of very stiff net work, of stout cord, for catching fish;' and refers to *Athen.* In Acts it is called *spuridi*. A cut is given, of strong baskets made of wisps of straw, or grass, &c., still in use in Syria. They would be large enough, as only the feet needed a rest. It is curious, that the monks of Sinai hoist their visitors in a basket into the window of their convent, the door being shut on account of plundering Arabs. 'The expedient was common. By or through an aperture, and so down along the wall.' *Bl.*, whom see. A place, said to be the scene of this, is still shown at Damascus. ED.



## CHAP. XII.

<sup>1</sup> For commending of his apostleship, though he might glory of his wonderful revelations, <sup>9</sup> yet he rather chooseth to glory of his infirmities, <sup>11</sup> blaming them for forcing him to this vain boasting. <sup>14</sup> He promiseth to come to them again: but yet altogether in the affection of a father, <sup>20</sup> although he feareth he shall, to his grief, find many offenders, and public disorders there.

**I**T is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. <sup>a</sup> I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

<sup>2</sup> I knew a man in <sup>b</sup> Christ about <sup>c</sup> fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth,) such an one caught up to the third heaven.

<sup>3</sup> And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth,)

<sup>4</sup> How that he was caught up into <sup>d</sup> paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not <sup>e</sup> lawful for a man to utter.

<sup>5</sup> Of such an one will I glory: yet <sup>f</sup> of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

<sup>6</sup> For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but *now* I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me.

<sup>7</sup> And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn <sup>g</sup> in the flesh, the <sup>h</sup> messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

<sup>8</sup> For this <sup>i</sup> thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

<sup>a</sup> For I will. <sup>e</sup> or, possible. <sup>l</sup> v. 13:16.  
<sup>b</sup> Ro. 16:7. <sup>f</sup> c. 11:30. <sup>i</sup> De. 3:23—27.  
<sup>c</sup> A. D. 46. <sup>g</sup> ver. 9, 10. <sup>l</sup> Ps. 77:2—11.  
<sup>d</sup> Ac. 22:17. <sup>h</sup> Eze. 28:24. <sup>l</sup> La. 3:8.  
<sup>e</sup> Lu. 23:43. <sup>i</sup> Ga. 4:14. <sup>l</sup> Mat. 23:44.  
<sup>f</sup> Re. 2:7. <sup>h</sup> Job 2:7.

NOTES. CHAP. XII. V. 1—6. This language evidently proves, that the apostle most firmly believed the soul to be distinct from the body, and capable of perception, activity, and enjoyment, in a state of separation. <sup>1</sup> *Thess.* 5:23—28, v. 23.—Many approved comtrs. suppose these to have been two distinct visions; that paradise is a different place from 'the third heaven;' that in the latter, he saw Jesus at the right hand of the Father, and in the former, he conversed with departed saints. But, as the happiness of the 'spirits of just men made perfect,' consists in being 'present with the Lord,' there seems to be no scriptural ground for this distinction. <sup>5:5—8.</sup> *Lu.* 23:39—43. *Phil.* 1:21—26. The language is indeed varied, yet only one vision appears to be intended, but in that one vision he doubtless had 'abundance of revelations.'—The vision seems to have been vouchsafed to him, especially for his own support and encouragement, amidst his various labors and sufferings; and, as no revelation of divine truth, needful to be known and believed by Christians, or ministers, was made to him, it was not only impossible, but even unlawful, if it could have been done, to relate what he had heard and seen.—As two distinct words are used, it is most natural to suppose, that they were intended to convey two distinct ideas. SCOTT.

(1.) 'As 11:32, 33. seem a supplement, so do chs. 12: and 13: also seemingly written at a different time; and it treats of things quite of another kind, viz. supernatural gifts and revelations. BLOOMF.

(2.) 'If this epistle was written in the year 52, as we suppose it was, this vision must have fallen out in 44, which was so long after his conversion, as to prove it quite different from the *trance* mentioned, Ac. 9: 9, with which some have confounded it.' *Doddr.* Dr. *Benson* thinks the vision was while praying, Ac. 11:30. 22:17. and intended to encourage him against the difficulties he was to encounter in preaching to the Gentiles. I must here imitate *Doddridge's* modesty, in speaking of the *mode* of what is here related. Due reverence, in such mysterious cases, ought to restrain us from a vain curiosity on such points, as it is not granted to our human faculties fully to comprehend. *Third heaven.*] The Jews, in the apostolic age, divided the heavens into three. 1. The aerial, including the clouds and the atmosphere. 2. The sidereal. 3. The habitation of God, and his angels. The names of these are thus detailed by *Hets.*, from the Rabbins, many of whose passages he quotes, (chiefly from *Schoett.*): 1. Velum. 2. expansum. 3. nubes. 4. habitaculum. 5. habitatio. 6. sedes fixa. 7. Araboth.' *Id.*

(4.) *Paradise.*] 'The place of departed souls, so the ancients, who think this was another vision. So *Grot.*, *Bull.*, *Whit.*, *Doddr.*, *Mackn.*, *Ros.*, *Beza*, *Ham.*, &c., think the same circumstance is meant: it was probably a different part of the same.' *Id.*

(5.) *Such an one.*] 'Rather, *thing*; as is plain from what follows.' *In.*

(6.) 'Here Paul delicately appropriates those high visions and revelations.' *Forbear.*] Since to claim merit for what had not, and could

not fall under the observation of men, would have been too much like the false apostles.'

CHAP. XII. In this ch. the apostle proceeds in maintaining the honor of his apostleship.

V. 1—10. I. He narrates the favors God had shown him, and honor; for doubtless he is the man in Christ, of whom he speaks. Notice.

1. The honor, v. 2. *When* or *how* he was thus caught up, we cannot say, whether during those three days he lay without sight at his conversion, or at some other time afterward; but it was certainly a very extraordinary honor done him. in some sense he was caught up into the *third heaven*, the heaven of the blessed, called *paradise*, v. 4. in allusion to the earthly paradise, also the paradise of God, *Rev.* 2:7. signifying, that by Christ, we are restored to all the joys and honors we lost by sin, yea, to much better. The apostle does not mention what he saw there, but tells us, that he heard unspeakable words, such are the sublimity of the matter, and our unacquaintedness with the language of the upper world: and words it was not lawful to utter, because, in this world, we have a more sure word of prophecy than such visions and revelations, <sup>2</sup> *Pet.* 1:19. This account should check our curious desires after forbidden knowledge, and teach us to improve the revelation God has given us in his Word. Paul, himself, who had been in the third heaven, did not publish to the world what he had heard there, but adhered to the doctrine of Christ: on that foundation the church is built, and on that, we must build our faith and hope.

2. The modest, humble manner in which he mentions it. One would think he should have boasted of his visions, &c.; but no, this was not expedient, v. 1. and he did not mention them till above 14 years after, v. 2. and then only as he was forced to. He speaks of himself in the third person. Again, his humility appears by the check he seems to

put on himself, v. 6. which plainly shows that he delighted not to dwell on this theme. It is an excellent thing to have a lowly spirit, in the midst of high advancements; and those who humble themselves, shall be exalted.

II. His account of the methods God took to keep him humble; and this he speaks of, to balance the account of his visions and revelations. When God's people communicate their experiences, let them always remember to notice what God has done to keep them humble, as well as what He has done to advance them.

1. He was pained with a thorn in the flesh, and buffeted with a messenger of Satan, v. 7. We are much in the dark what this was, whether some great trouble, or some great temptation. However it was, God often brings this good out of evil, that the reproaches of our enemies help to hide pride from us; and this is certain, that what the apostle calls a thorn in his flesh, was for a time very grievous to him: but the thorns Christ wore for us, and with which He was crowned, sanctify and make easy all the thorns in the flesh we may at any time be afflicted with; for He suffered, being tempted, that He might be able to succor them that are tempted.

2. Its design was, to keep the apostle humble, lest he should be exalted above measure, v. 7. If God love us, He will keep us from being exalted above measure; and spiritual burdens are ordered, to cure spiritual pride. This thorn in the flesh is said to be a messenger of Satan; he sent it with ill intentions, to discourage the apostle, (who had been so highly favored of God,) and hinder him in his work. But God designed and overruled it for good, and made it a help.

3. The apostle prayed earnestly to God for the removal of this sore grievance; for prayer is a remedy for every malady; and when afflicted with thorns in the flesh, we should give ourselves to prayer. Therefore we are sometimes tempted, that we may learn to pray. The apostle besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from him, v. 8. Though afflictions are sent for our spiritual benefit, yet we may pray to God for their removal, desiring that they may reach the end for which

not fall under the observation of men, would have been too much like the false apostles.'

V. 7—10. The expressions here employed, have occasioned comtrs. much perplexity; but had it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, that our curiosity should be fully gratified in this respect, He would have led the writer to be more explicit; and the general statement is more suited for edification, than if the particular trial had been specified. *Gen.* 32:25—31. *P. O.* 13—32.—'A thorn,' fixed and rankling in the flesh, would give great and constant pain, and some particular trials of the apostle, which began or were augmented, after this remarkable vision, caused a continual uneasiness to his mind of a similar nature. Probably, these arose from the personal defects, of which he was conscious, which gave his enemies, especially the false apostles, a color for reviling and deriding him. 11:13—15. These things seemed to him likely to obstruct his usefulness, and they continually reminded him of his weakness, and inability to do 'anything as of himself.' Thus they were exceedingly uneasy and mortifying to him, and doubtless they afforded 'Satan and his angels,' an opportunity of tempting him to impatience, and discouraging him in his labors, as well as of exciting carnal men to insult and injure him. This [his beseeching that the thorn might depart] seems to prove, that he did not mean his persecutions, but those infirmities which emboldened his enemies and the false teachers. 10:7—11. *Gal.* 4:12—16. The Lord, however, did not see good to grant his request; as He knew that this sharp trial was needful to keep him humble, and even to illustrate the power of his own grace.—This passage contains a most express example of prayer to Christ, and of confiding and glorying in Him, as the source of grace and power. *Ps.* 146:3. *Jer.* 17:5—8.—'Had 'the thorn in the flesh' consisted of disorders brought on the apostle, by the effect of the visions on his animal frame, he must have known that he was in the body.' 1—6.—He could hardly have rejoiced in the continuance of those gross temptations, of which many of the fathers groundlessly suppose him to speak. *1 Cor.* 7:6—9, v. 7.—The 'messenger also of Satan,' is so involved with 'the thorn in the flesh,' in the narration, in the prayer, and in our Lord's answer, that it must mean, either the source whence his infirmities arose, *Job* 2:6—8. or the inward temptations which accompanied them.—*A messenger of Satan.*] *Mat.* 25:41. *Rev.* 12:7.—Some think, the reproaches and insults of the principal false apostle were exclusively intended. 11:13—15. But as in the case of *Job*, so in that of the apostle, the inward assault of evil spirits combined with the outward trials, to harass and distress him. SCOTT.

(7.) Bl. (whom see) concludes the thorn must have been a nervous disorder of the face, 'from excessive and constant ferment of mind,' like the tic-douloureux perhaps; and thinks the mention of it introduced, to allay the envy and ill-will from hearing of his high privileges. *En.*

(8.) 'Considering [certain quoted] passages of *Eurip.*, *Hor.*, and *Job*,



9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

[Practical Observations.]

11 I am become a fool in glorying: ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

13 For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.

14 Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.

17 Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?

18 I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother: did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?

19 Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.

20 For I fear, lest, when I come,

I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

j ver. 5.  
k 1 Pe. 4:14.  
l c. 11:5.  
in Lu. 17:10.  
1 Co. 3:7.  
Ep. 3:8.

n 1 Co. 9:2.  
o c. 11:9.  
p 1 Co. 10:33.  
1 Th. 2:8.  
q your souls.

r c. 7:2.  
s c. 8:6.  
t c. 5:12.  
u 1 Co. 4:21.  
c. 13:2,19.

they are designed. If an answer be not given to the first prayer, nor to the second, we must still pray, till we receive an answer. Christ Himself prayed to his Father thrice. As troubles are sent, to teach us to pray, so they are continued, to teach us to continue instant in prayer.

4. We have an account of the answer; that, although the trouble was not removed, yet an equivalent should be granted; *grace sufficient*. (1.) God accepts the prayer of faith, yet does not always answer it in the letter; as He sometimes grants in wrath, so He sometimes denies in love. (2.) When God does not remove our troubles and temptations, yet, if He gives us *grace, sufficient* for us, we have no reason to complain. It is a great comfort to us, whatever thorns in the flesh we are pained with, that God's grace is sufficient for us. Grace signifies two things: the *good-will* of God towards us, which is enough to enlighten, enliven, strengthen and comfort us, in all distresses; and the *good work* of God in us, the grace we receive from the fulness that is in Christ our Head; and from Him there shall be communicated that which is suitable, seasonable, and sufficient for his members.

III. The use he makes of this dispensation, v. 9, 10. He gloried in his infirmities, not his sinful infirmities, but his reproaches, necessities, persecutions, and distresses for Christ's sake, v. 10. And the reason was,—They were fair opportunities for Christ to manifest the power and sufficiency of his grace resting upon him, by which he had so much experience of the strength of divine grace, that he could say, *When I am weak, then am I strong*.

V. 11—21. In these vs. he addresses himself to the Corinthians, two ways:

I. He blames them that they had not stood up in his defence as they ought, and so made it the more needful for him to insist so much on his own vindication, v. 11. He tells them further, that they in particular had good reason to speak well of him, as being in nothing behind the very chiefest apostles, because he had given them full proof and evidence of his apostleship, v. 12. Note, I. It is a debt we

owe good men, to stand up in defence of their reputation; and we are under special obligations to those we have received benefit by, especially spiritual benefit, to own them as instruments in God's hand of good to us, and to vindicate them when calumniated. 2. How much soever we are, or ought to be, esteemed by others, we ought always to think humbly of ourselves. See an example of this in this great apostle.

II. He gives a large account of his behavior and kind intentions toward them; in which observe the characters of a faithful minister.

1. He was not willing to be burdensome to them, v. 13, 14. He sought not to enrich himself, but to save their souls: he did not desire to make a property of them to himself, but to gain them over to Christ, whose servant he was. Note, Those who aim at clothing themselves with the fleece of the flock, and take no care of the sheep, are hirelings, and not good shepherds.

2. He would gladly spend and be spent for them, v. 15. he was willing to take pains and to suffer loss for their good.

3. He did not abate in his love to them, notwithstanding their unkindness and ingratitude, v. 15. This is applicable to other relations: if others be wanting in their duty to us, it does not follow therefore that we may neglect ours to them.

4. He was careful not only that he himself should not be burdensome, but that none he employed should. This seems to be the meaning of v. 16—18. If any should object, that though he did not himself burden them, yet that he, being crafty, caught them with guile, that is, sent those among them who pillaged from them, and afterward shared in the profit, 'This was not so,' says he; 'I did not make a gain of you myself, nor by any of them I sent; nor did Titus, nor any others. We walked by the same Spirit, and in the same steps.' Or, this may be read with an interrogation, as utterly disclaiming any guile, in himself and others, toward them.

5. He was a man who did all things for edifying, v. 19. This was his great aim and design, to do good, to lay the foundation well, and then with care and diligence to build the superstructure.

6. He would not shrink from his duty, for fear of displeasing them, though so careful to make himself easy to them. Therefore he was resolved to be faithful in reproofing sin, though he was therein found to be such as they would not, v. 20. The apostle here mentioned several sins too common among professors of religion, and they are very reprobable; and though those who are guilty of these sins, can hardly bear to be reproofed for them, yet faithful ministers must not fear offending the

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—10. When we cannot avoid speaking such things concerning ourselves, as seem to imply boasting, we should use every method of rendering our conduct, in so doing, consistent with modesty and humility.—However painful the process may be, the wise Christian will be thankful to be kept from being 'exalted above measure,' and he will be more ready to speak of his sins and follies, than of his extraordinary discoveries and consolations; for he will not desire, that 'any one should think of him above what he seeth him to be.'—Whatever there is in any man's experience, whether of outward trials, or of inward conflicts and temptations, which serves to counterbalance more encouraging circumstances and events, and mortify pride; he may very properly consider it as a 'thorn in the flesh,' given to him to prevent far worse consequences. And it is especially matter of gratitude,

when this prevention is effected, without his being left to commit actual sin, or to dishonor the Gospel.—We must not conclude that our prayers are rejected, when the desired deliverance is delayed, as God may see those conflicts salutary, which we deem ruinous.—Nor let it be forgotten, that whatever religious instruction or principle leads men to think, that they have any strength in themselves, proportionably renders them weak, in the hour of temptation; while the humbling consciousness, that there is no health, or help, or strength in [or of] us, as connected with a constant reliance on the all-sufficient grace of Christ, and fervent prayer for his effectual assistance, conduces proportionably to make us 'strong in the grace of our Lord,' for service, suffering, conflict, and triumph. SCOTT.

&c., it should seem to have been an ancient maxim with the Israelites, to prefer prayers to God as far as thrice (and no farther) for deliverance from danger. From them it appears to have passed, together with some other Jewish notions, [see Townsend's Sacr. Chron.,] to the Greeks, and so to the Romans.

V. 11. 'Though I am, it seems, a nothing,' as 10:10. ID.

V. 13. 'A finer mixture of sarcasm and irony than any in Demosth.' IN.

V. 14, 15. A more excellent frame of mind can scarcely be conceived, than that which is described in these emphatical words. Rom. 12:17—21.

(14.) Children, &c.] 'An adagial sentence, not to be pressed.' BL.

V. 16. Many preachers and writers, without hesitation, [absurdly, and in some cases, wickedly,] quote this v., as the words of the apostle, giving an account of his own management; and it is to be feared, that it is often used to excuse ['pious,' jesuitical frauds], or commend duplicity, in a variety of ways, by which men allow themselves to impose

on others, by false appearances and pretexts, in order to promote, what they think the cause of truth and of God, [and do evil that good may come.] Rom. 3:5—8. But nothing can be more foreign to the true meaning of the passage, as it stands in the context; for it is undeniably the objection, which the apostle supposed his opposers at Corinth would make, to the account which he had given of his own disinterested conduct. In this, indeed, counts. of every kind are almost unanimous. SC.

(16.) 'He adverts to a possible charge, that his not taking a stipend of them was but a piece of refined policy, the more effectually to attain the same purpose by another.' BLOOMF.

V. 17—21. These last vs. show, to what dreadful excesses the self-sufficient teachers had drawn aside their deluded followers; and that the inebriated person, who had been brought to repentance, was only one of a considerable number, who had committed crimes of a similar nature, and who persisted so obstinately in them, that there was a danger lest they should unite against the apostle's authority, and so constrain him to use great severity. This surely gives us the idea of Gen-



21 *And* lest, when I come again, my God will humble <sup>v</sup> me among you, and *that* I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented <sup>w</sup> of the uncleanness, and <sup>x</sup> fornication, and lasciviousness which they have committed.

CHAP. XIII.

<sup>1</sup> He threateneth severity, and the power of his apostleship against obstinate sinners. <sup>5</sup> And advising them to a trial of their faith, <sup>7</sup> and to a reformation of their sins before his coming, <sup>11</sup> he concludeth his epistle with a general exhortation and prayer.

**T**HIS is the third time I am coming to you. In <sup>a</sup> the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

2 I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them <sup>b</sup> which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare:

3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty <sup>c</sup> in you.

4 For though <sup>d</sup> he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak <sup>e</sup> in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

5 Examine <sup>f</sup> yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own-selves. Know ye not your own-selves, how that Jesus Christ <sup>g</sup> is in you, except ye be <sup>h</sup> reprobates?

6 But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

7 Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.

<sup>v</sup> c. 2:1.      <sup>b</sup> c. 12:21.      <sup>f</sup> 1 Co. 11:28.  
<sup>w</sup> Re. 2:21.    <sup>c</sup> 1 Co. 9:2.      <sup>g</sup> 1 Jn. 3:20, 21.  
<sup>x</sup> 1 Co. 5:1.    <sup>d</sup> Phi. 2:7, 8.    <sup>h</sup> Ro. 8:10.    Ga. 4:19.  
<sup>a</sup> De. 19:15.    <sup>e</sup> 1 Pe. 3:18    <sup>i</sup> 1 Co. 9:27.  
<sup>11e.</sup> 10:28, 29.    <sup>e</sup> or, *with*.      <sup>2</sup> Ti. 3:8.

PRACT. OBS. V. 11—21. They, who do not give proper commendation to such as have faithfully labored for their good, but prefer every new voice to that of their own pastors, often compel them to glory, and then perhaps censure them for it.—It is a great thing for ministers to be warranted in saying, before God and to the people, ‘we seek not yours but you,’ not your property, but your souls. Alas! in what numerous or rather numberless instances must the words be transposed, in order to be true, as the preachers seek only the property, and not the salvation, of their hearers! But the more *disinterested* our labors are, the more *apostolical* they must be allowed to be; and it is generally desirable to avoid being burdensome to our congregations, for far more will ‘forgive us this wrong, than the very appearance of being mercenary.—But how very difficult is it, ‘most gladly to spend and be spent’ for those, who make unkind returns, and who seem to love those least who most love them! We are, alas, soon vanquished in contests of this kind, and may hence infer, how far short we are of the apostle’s measure of grace, who

guilty by sharp reproofs, as they are needful, in public and in private.

7. He was grieved at the thought of finding scandalous sins among them, not duly repented of. This would cause great humiliation and lamenting. (1.) The falls and miscarriages of professors, cannot but be a humbling consideration to a good minister; and God sometimes takes this way, to humble those who might be under temptation to be lifted up; *I fear lest my God will humble me among you.* (2.) If any have not, as yet, grace to mourn and lament their own case, their case is the more lamentable, v. 21. and those who love God, and love them, should mourn for them.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1—6. 1. The apostle here threatens to be severe against obstinate sinners, when he should come to Corinth. Notice, (1.) His caution in censures: he was not hasty in using severity, but gave a first and second admonition. So some understand his words, v. 1. *This is the third time I am coming to you;* referring to his first and second epistles, by which he admonished them, as *if he were present* with them, though in person *he was absent*, v. 2. According to this interpretation, these two epistles are the witnesses he means in v. 1. referring rather to Mat. 18:16. concerning the manner how Christians should deal with offenders before they proceed to extremity, than to the law, Deut. 17:6. 19:5. for the behavior of judges in criminal matters. We should go, or send, to our brother, once and again, to tell him of his fault; as did the apostle to these Corinthians. Others think, he had designed and prepared for his journey to Corinth twice already, but was providentially hindered, and now informs them of his intentions a *third time* to come. (2.) The threatening, *That if (or when) he came again*, (in person,) *he would not spare* obstinate sinners, and such as were impenitent, in their scandalous enormities; but would inflict church-censures on them, which are thought to have been accompanied, in those early times, with visible and extraordinary tokens of divine displeasure. It is God’s gracious method to bear long with sinners, yet He will not bear always; but will come, and will not spare.

2. The apostle assigns a reason why he would be thus severe, namely, for a *proof of*

*Christ speaking in him*, which they sought after, v. 3. The evidence of his apostleship was necessary for the credit, confirmation, and success, of the Gospel he preached; therefore, such as denied that were justly and severely to be censured. The false teachers designed to make the Corinthians call this matter into question, of which yet they had *not weak*, but strong or *mighty* proofs, v. 3. notwithstanding the mean figure he had made in the world, and the contempt some cast on him; even as Christ Himself *was crucified through weakness*, or appeared in his crucifixion as weak and contemptible, *but liveth by the power of God*, or in his resurrection and life manifests his divine power, v. 4. So the apostles, how mean and contemptible soever they appeared to the world, did yet, as instruments, manifest the power of God, and particularly the power of his grace, in converting the world to Christianity. Therefore, as a proof unto those who among the *Corinthians sought a proof of Christ’s speaking* in the apostle, he puts them on proving their Christianity, v. 5. intimating, that if they could prove their own Christianity, this would be a proof of his apostleship; for if they were *in the faith*, if Jesus Christ was *in them*, this was a proof that Christ *spoke in him*, because it was by his ministry they did believe; and it could not be imagined, that a divine power should go along with his ministrations, if he had not his commission from on high. If therefore they could prove themselves *not to be reprobates*, not to be rejected of Christ, *he trusted they should know that he was not a reprobate*, v. 6. not disowned by Christ.

What the apostle here says of the duty of the Corinthians, to *examine themselves*, &c. with the particular view already mentioned, is applicable to the great duty of all who call themselves Christians, to examine themselves concerning their spiritual state. It is a matter in which we may be easily deceived, and wherein a deceit is highly dangerous: we are therefore concerned to *prove our own selves*, to put the question to our own souls, whether Christ be in us, or not; and *Christ is in us, except we be reprobates*: so that either we are true Christians, or great cheats; and what a reproach for a man not to know himself, nor his own mind!

V. 7—10. 1. Here is the apostle’s prayer

yet, long after this, confessed, that ‘he had not already attained.’ *Phil.* 3:12—14. and thus we may be excited to pray for an increase of faith, love, and patience.—No excellency of spirit or conduct can silence calumny; and if we were even as holy as Paul, some would revile us as ‘crafty men, who took others by guile.’ It is well when we can disprove such slanders, and when fellow-laborers ‘walk in the same spirit and steps.’—But how can faithful ministers be expected to prove such as their people desire, when they witness among them those contentions, envies, slanders, whisperings, boastings, and tumults, which not only grieve and humble them, but also disgrace the Gospel? Yet we need not despond on this account, for it was so even in the apostle’s days. But while we observe, that ‘the enemy hath done this,’ we should not forget to add, that it was by means of *antinomian* and self-conceited teachers, and perhaps through our own unwatchfulness, or carnal and undecided conduct.

SCOTT.

titles, who professed Christianity, and corrupted it with heathen speculations and licentiousness, rather than of those, who attempted to impose the law of Moses on the Gentile converts.

SCOTT.

(19.) ‘Excuse ourselves, i. e. out of timidity, or selfishness.’ BL.  
 NOTES. CHAP. XIII. V. 1—4. The language here used to the refractory Corinthians, contains the strongest proof imaginable, that the apostle was conscious, that he spake and acted by divine authority; and that he feared no detection, and was certain that his Lord would put all his opposers to confusion.—(1) *In the mouth*, &c.] ‘This is taken from the Alexandrian copy of the LXX, only a little abridged, which is an exact translation of the Hebrew.’ *Randolph.*

SCOTT.

(1.) *Two witnesses.*] His own admonitory epistles. See *Bl.* Ed.  
 (2.) ‘I have (just) signified, and (hereby) say it beforehand.’ BL.  
 (4.) ‘For though He was crucified through (the) weakness (of that human nature which He took upon Him, and in that appeared to others as weak), yet He liveth (and discovers efficaciously that He doth so) by the power of God (so gloriously attending the invocation of his name, and faith in Him); we also (Gr. and so we also) are (as yet in your apprehension) weak in Him, but we shall (appear to) live by the power of God (exerting itself by us) towards you.’ WHITT. In.

V. 5, 6. Some expositors render the clause, ‘Christ is among you, except. &c.’ but this conveys no definite idea. The apostle could not mean to intimate, that Christ was not at all present in the church at Corinth; for this would have contradicted all the declarations he made con-

cerning them; and the presence of Christ among them could not prove that those individuals whom he warned were true believers, and approved by God; yet this was the precise point which he exhorted them *personally* to examine. (6) *Reprobates.*] ‘Thus the apostle calls, in this place, not those who are divinely elected to eternal life, (for they who still continue in their sins, not being yet effectually called, are not directly to be considered as “vessels of wrath;” nor those who, after their calling, fall into grievous sins,) but such as are not at present approved.’ *Beza.*—It does not appear that either the original word, or our English word ‘reprobates,’ is ever in Scripture used as the opposite to ‘elect,’ or indeed with direct reference to election; and as to *reprobation*, it is, I apprehend, a scriptural *idea*, (for those who are not ‘chosen,’ must be rejected, or passed by,) but not a scriptural *word* in any sense. *10:17, 18. Jer. 6:27—30. 1 Cor. 9:24—27.*

SCOTT.

(5.) *Reprobates.*] *Adokimoi*: it may have here a middle sense, between the primitive one, *not genuine, or adulterated, and reprobate, viz. rejectanei.* Wherever else Paul uses the word, he has intended by it, *corrupt, worthless, good for nothing.* All the ancient comtrs., and the most judicious modern ones, are agreed, that the apostle has reference solely to the corrupt lives of some, and those vices he had charged on them elsewhere, and at 12:21. The context shows, he refers them to the miraculous powers in some, and the total reformation of life in others, as a proof of the divine authority by which he imparted the one and produced the other.

BLOOMF.



8 For<sup>i</sup> we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

9 For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, *even your*<sup>j</sup> perfection.

10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use<sup>k</sup> sharpness, according<sup>l</sup> to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be<sup>m</sup> perfect, be of good comfort, be<sup>n</sup> of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

12 Greet<sup>o</sup> one another with an holy kiss.

13 All the saints salute you.

14 The<sup>p</sup> grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the<sup>q</sup> communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

¶ The second *epistle* to the Corinthians was written from Philippi, a city of Macedonia, by Titus and Lucas.

i Pr. 21:30.	l c. 10:8.	2. 1 Pe. 3:8.
j 1 Th. 3:10.	m ver. 9.	o Ro. 16:16.
He 6:1.	n Ro. 12:16, 15:5.	p Ro. 16:24.
k Tit. 1:13.	Ep. 4:3. Phi. 2:	q Phi. 2:1.

on behalf of the Corinthians, that they might *do no evil*, v. 7. This is the most desirable thing we can ask of God, both for ourselves and our friends, to be kept from sin, that we and they may do no evil; and it is most needful, that we often pray to God for his grace to keep us, because without that we cannot keep ourselves. We are more concerned to pray that we may not *do evil*, than that we may not *suffer evil*.

2. The reasons of this prayer; which have a special reference to their ease, and the subject matter of his writing.

(1.) It was not so much for his own personal reputation, as for the honor of religion, v. 7. Note, The great desire of faithful min-

PRACT. OBS. All rigorous measures should be preceded by long patience and many warnings; when the case will admit of them, and with caution and deliberation, on sure grounds, and with firmness of mind.—Those who will not be convinced by the abundant evidences already afforded, that Christ speaks by his faithful ministers, will at length experience a very awful demonstration of it. We should, therefore, diligently and impartially, 'examine ourselves whether we are in the faith;' 1 Cor. 11:23—23, and, instead of imagining, that it is always *unbelief to doubt of our acceptance*, we should daily bring the whole of our faith, experience, motives, comforts, affections, words, and works, to be assayed by the touchstone of the Scriptures; that we may get well acquainted with ourselves; obtain an assurance that will not shrink from investigation, and possess that 'hope, which maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the

V. 10. '*Rosenm.*, unwarrantably, limits this power to *imprecation* ad terrorem, and excommunication, either temporary or final: whereas, it is clear from various passages of both these epistles, as well as from Acts, that it extended to the actual infliction of disorders, as temporal punishments for sin.' BLOMF.

V. 11. *Be perfect.*] 'i. e. strive after reformation and perfection.' Id.

(Note on Christian Union, Continued from p. 320.)

'The crime which, in the judgment of Paul, merited casting out [of communion], he designates (Ti. 3:10.) by the term *heretical* (*haireticon*), which, in the English language, distinctly refers to one who denies a fundamental doctrine of Christianity. The original word, also, sometimes seems to have this sense; but more frequently it signifies a schismatic, one who makes a division, or forms a sect. . . . Paul wholly repudiates those divisions, grounded on diversity of sentiment, which would render it possible for a brother Christian, when ejected from one portion of the Savior's church, to find admission to another. . . .

The primitive import of the Greek word *hairesis* (heresy) is, *selection, choice*, [note, 1 Cor. 11:19.] Thus it is used by many ancient Greek writers: as the expression of Æschines Socrat. (dial. ii, 3.) appropriately exemplifies: *ei de tis soi didoiē hairetin toutoin, poteron an bouloio*, [i. e. if one should give you your choice of or from them, which would you rather have.] In this sense it is used by the Sept. (Lev. 27:18, 21.) as equivalent to the Heb. *ndbh*, free will, voluntarily. It is also employed to designate a *peculiar kind of discipline, or mode of living*, that has been voluntarily assumed. But its more common signification is *schism, division, sect*. Thus Dion. Hal. (ep. l. ad Anmænum, c. 7.) says, of Aristotle: He was not the leader or head of a school; nor did he form a *sect* (*hairetin*) of his own. It is used by classic writers, to designate the several philosophic sects, the

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isters of the Gospel, is, that the Gospel they preach may be honored, however their persons be vilified. The best way to adorn our holy religion, is, *to do what is honest*, and of good report; to walk as becomes the Gospel.

(2.) Another reason was, that they might be free from all blame and censure when he should come to them, intimated v. 8. If they did not evil, nor act contrary to their profession of the Gospel, the apostle had no power or authority to punish them. He had said before, ch. 10:8. and says here, v. 10. *The power which the Lord has given me, was to edification, not to destruction*. So that, although he had great powers committed to him for the credit and advancement of the Gospel, yet he could not do anything to the disparagement of the truth, or the discouragement of them who obeyed it. '*We are glad,*' says he, v. 9. '*when we are weak, and ye are strong*; i. e. that we have no power to censure those who are strong in faith, and fruitful in good works.' Some understand this passage thus; 'Though we are weak through persecutions and contempt, we bear it patiently, and also joyfully, while we see that ye are strong, ye are prosperous in holiness, and persevering in well doing.' For,

(3.) He desired *their perfection*, v. 9. i. e. that they might be sincere, and aim at perfection; or else he wished them a thorough reformation. He not only desired they might be kept from sin, but also might grow in grace, and holiness; and that all that was amiss among them might be rectified and reformed. This was the great end of his writing this epistle, and that freedom he used with them by *writing these things*, those friendly admonitions and warnings, *being absent, that so, being present, he should not use sharpness*, v. 10. not proceed to the utmost extremity in the exercise of the power given him as an apostle, to [punish] *all disobedience*, ch. 10:6.

V. 11—14. Thus he concludes with,

1. A valediction. (1.) Giving them several good exhortations. [1.] To be *perfect*, or knit together in love, which would tend greatly to their benefit and advantage, as a church, or Christian society. [2.] To be of

Holy Ghost.' Rom. 5:3—5. For except 'Jesus Christ be in us,' by his Spirit, his image, and the governing power of his love, our faith is dead, and we are as yet disapproved by our Judge. While ministers give these warnings, they should also look well to themselves. For nothing can be imagined equally dreadful with the case of those, who have instructed, warned, reproved, and expostulated with others on these infinitely important subjects, and have been eventually successful in their endeavors, if they themselves should be found reprobates, and be finally rejected as hypocrites. May God preserve all of us from this awful doom!—And may we at all times, when these [concluding words of benediction] are on our lips, or spoken in our hearing, so enter into the meaning of them, with fervent affections, and enlarged desires and expectations, that the blessings prayed for by them may be upon us and all our fellow-worshippers, now and for evermore! Amen. SCOTT.

V. 13. 'The remarkable analogy the latter clause bears to each of the two preceding, must naturally lead us to understand, that the Holy Ghost is not here spoken of as a *mere quality*, or agent.' SLADE. BLOMF.

V. 14. This most comprehensive benediction has generally been adopted in the worship of Christians, when about to separate; but alas, it is too evident, that most in our congregations, not to say of the officiating ministers, regard it as a mere form. SCOTT.

Stoics, the Epicureans, the Peripatetics, &c. It occurs 9 times in the N. T., and in the majority of cases it is *tr. sect.*, in the com. vers. In the other cases, it might with equal propriety be rendered in the same way, (2 Pet. 2:1. 1 Cor. 11:9.) as indeed it is by many distinguished translators. In its primitive and most current signification, therefore, the word (*hairesis*) conveys no reproach. It is used to designate the sect of Pharisees (Ac. 15:5. 25:6.), the sect of the Sadducees (5:17.), and the sect of the Nazarenes or Christians, (24:5, 14. 28:22.) In all the passages where it is rendered *sect.*, in the com. vers. it signifies a party of persons who have separated themselves from others professedly pursuing the same end, over whom they profess to have some advantages. Here we have sects substantially corresponding to those of our days; sects based not on geographical lines, but on doctrinal diversities like our own, and yet what does Paul say concerning such sects in the church of Christ? Using the very same word by which he designated the sect of the Pharisees, (in an adjective form,) he declares, *him that is a sectarian man*, (*haireticon anthrōpon*), an originator or supporter of sects in the Christian church, after the first and second admonition, *reject*, exclude from your communion and intercourse; avoid. Here we have the apostle again distinctly condemning the formation of sects in the Christian church, using the very identical term by which the Pharisees and Sadducees are designated in the N. T. and the several sects of their philosophers by classic Greeks. . . . (Continued on p. 377.)



AN EXPOSITION  
OF  
PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

*(Henry's Exposition completed by Mr. Bayes.)*

It is supposed, that the Galatians retained their native language and customs, at the time when the Gospel was first preached among them. Learned men have shown it to be *probable*, that this was during the first progress of Paul and Barnabas through those regions, *Acts 14.* for though Galatia\* is not mentioned, yet 'the regions round about Lycaonia,' may be supposed to include Galatia. But some attempts to fix the date of their conversion to an earlier period, are wholly destitute of scriptural proof, and unsupported by any solid argument.—It is plain, that the Galatians were generally idolatrous Gentiles, before their conversion. The apostle was not able to spend much time among them, because of his multiplied engagements; yet he asserts, in a way which challenges refutation, that he conferred miraculous gifts on them, *3:1—5.* The way in which he opposes the false gospel, [of the judaizing teachers,] shows, that he considered the very life and soul of Christianity to be at stake. Yet his opposition to this self-righteous perversion of Christianity does not, in the smallest degree, lead him to overlook its holy and practical tendency; and, in this respect, the epistle before us forms a striking contrast to the over zealous and vehement earnestness of numbers, for a part of Christianity, while another part of equal importance is overlooked, if not disparaged. Learned men maintain opinions differing [though but by a few years], as to the time when this epistle was written.†

Christianity was very early planted in Galatia by Paul himself, (*Gal. 1:8, 11. 3:1. &c.*) and it appears from the *Acts*, that he visited its churches more than once. Two distinct visits are clearly marked, viz. the first about the year 50, (*Acts 16:6.*) and the second about the year 54 or 55, (*Acts 18:23.*) It is evident this epistle was written *early*, *Gal. 1:6.* and its warmth induced *Tertullian* to think it was written when Paul was himself a neophyte, or novice, in the Christian faith. The genuineness of the epistle was never doubted. It is cited by the apostolic fathers, *Clement of Rome*, *Hermas*, *Ignatius*, and *Polycarp*; and is declared to be authentic by *Irenæus*, *Clement of Alexandria*, *Tertullian*, *Caius*, *Origen*, and by all subsequent writers. It was acknowledged to be genuine by the heretic *Marcion*, who reckoned it the earliest written of all Paul's letters.‡

Unlike the others, this epistle is directed to a country, or province; and it is very probable, that these Galatians were first converted under Paul's ministry; at least he had watered them, as the epistle shows, and also *Acts*. Now when he was with them, they had expressed the greatest esteem and affection, both for his person and ministry; but he had not been long absent, before some judaizing teachers † got in among them, by whose arts and insinuations they were soon drawn into a meaner opinion both of the one and the other. — What these false teachers chiefly aimed at, was, to draw them off from the truth, particularly in the great doctrine of justification, which they grossly perverted, by asserting the necessity of joining the observance of the law of Moses with faith in Christ, in order to it; and the better to accomplish this their design, they did all they could to lessen the character and reputation of the apostle, and to raise up their own on the ruins of his; representing him as one, who, if he was to be owned as an apostle, yet was much inferior to others, and particularly *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, whose followers, it is likely, they pretended to be; and in both these attempts they had but too great success.

This occasioned the epistle; wherein he expresses his great concern, that they had suffered themselves to be so soon turned aside from the faith of the Gospel; vindicates his own character and authority, as an apostle, against the aspersions of his enemies; showing that his mission and doctrine were both divine, and that he was not, on any account, *behind the very chiefest of the apostles*, *2 Cor. 11:5.* He then asserts and maintains the great gospel-doctrine of justification by faith, without the works of the law, and obviates some difficulties that might arise in their minds concerning it; having done this, he exhorts them to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free; cautions them against the abuse of this liberty, gives them several very needful counsels and directions; and then concludes, with giving them the true character of those false teachers, by whom they had been ensnared, and, on the contrary, his own temper and behavior also; in all which, his great scope and design were, to recover those who had been perverted, to settle those who might be wavering, and to confirm such among them as had kept their integrity. §

Some of Paul's epistles are framed in a regular and connected manner. Their full meaning cannot be perceived, unless they are studied as a *whole*. In order to reap the full advantages of this mode of study, particular attention must be given to the *connectives*, or small particles, which have been termed the joints and bands of a discourse. To understand why they are inserted, or what the particular relation or thought is, which they suggest, is absolutely necessary, in order to gain a tolerable acquaintance with such books as the epistles to the Romans, Galatians, or Hebrews.¶

Prof. EDWARDS, 'Notes on Galatians,' 1835.

\* Galatia was a province in the N. part of Asia Minor, having Bithynia and Paphlagonia on the N.; Pontus and Cappadocia on the E.; Lycaonia on the S., and Phrygia on the W. It lay a little N. by W. of Tarsus in Cilicia, and Antioch in Syria. Its S. border was about 190 miles from Tarsus, and 240 from Antioch. It was a fertile province, with a pleasant climate, and distinguished, at various times, for wealth and commerce. About B. C. 250, 3 tribes from the N. of Europe, (2 from Gaul and 1 from Germany,) but perfectly alike in language and manners, conquered the country, which by them was called Galatia or Gallogrecia. They were all, perhaps, of German origin. Their chief was named *Lutarius*. In their new country, they became acquainted with the Greek language, specimens of which, in public documents and inscriptions, yet remain. The Celtic, their original language, however, continued to be spoken for 600 yrs. after their migration. The emigrants preserved their native religion, though they blended with it some of the rites of the ancient inhabitants of the country, among which was the worship of *Cybele*, or the reputed mother of the gods. This goddess was pictured with turrets on her head. She had a famous statue at *Pessinus*, and temples were erected to her honor. The *Corybantes* were her priests, who worshipped her by the sound of drums, tabors, pipes, and cymbals. The principal cities of Galatia were, *Ancyra*, *Tavium*, and *Pessinus*. The Jews were drawn to this province in considerable numbers. A record of the liberties they were permitted to enjoy, was deposited in the temple of *Augustus*, at *Ancyra*, under *Augustus*, 26 B. C. Galatia was reduced to a Roman province, under a propraetor. It has long been under the Turkish government. *Angora*, the ancient *Ancyra*, is on a very elevated plain, and contains from 20,000 to 60,000 inhabitants. The streets are wide, and paved with blocks of granite. Some fine remains of antiquity are preserved. The inhabitants are chiefly Armenians. See *Texier's travels*, 'Notes on Galatians.' Prof. B. B. EDWARDS.

† Weingart supposes, in A. D. 48; Mich. 49; Cappell, 51; Bp. Pearson, 57; Mill, Fabricius, Moldenhauer, &c., 50; Van Til, Doddr., Ld. Barrington,

Benson, Lardner, 53; Beansobre, Ros., Dr. A. C., 52 or 53; and Bp. Tomline, in 52. Theod., Lightf., &c., imagine it written when Paul was in bonds at Rome, but nothing is said in it of bonds, which are often mentioned in letters known to have been written at that time. Besides, it speaks of the *speedy* backsliding of the Galatians, and Paul's first visit to Rome was ten years after their conversion. Horne. Most, indeed, agree, that the apocryphal postscript which dates it from Rome, contains a direct untruth, [for, says Horne, Paul's first journey to Rome was not till 10 years after the conversion of the Galatians.] It was probably written during the apostle's residence at Corinth; [as it intimates but one visit, and his second visit to them was after leaving Corinth;] though some fix the date of it to the time, during which he abode at Antioch, after his first progress through Asia Minor with Barnabas, and after the council at Jerusalem; but before he set off the second time, with Silas and Timothy, when the decrees were delivered to the churches. *Acts 15:30—41. 16:1—5.* The former opinion is, however, more generally maintained; indeed, it is not certain, that the apostle had been in Galatia, before his second progress through Asia Minor; *Acts 16:6—12.* and the objection to the epistle's being written at a later period, arising from the decrees which had been sent by the apostles to the churches, which might, it is thought, have superseded the necessity of it, seems of little weight. The apostles had indeed decided against the ceremonial law being imposed on the Gentile converts; but they had not shown, that the Gentiles, by voluntarily submitting to it, went about to 'establish their own righteousness,' and virtually renounced the Gospel. Scott.

‡ Horne thinks, from *Gal. 5:9—10.* that *only one* judaizing teacher is referred to, and adds, 'from *6:12, 13.* it appears he was a man of immoral character, who acted, not from any [truly] religious views or motives, but from vainglory and fear: that he might conciliate the favor of the Jews, by increasing the number of proselytes, and so escape the persecutions raised by the unbelieving Jews against Paul, and those who adhered to his doctrines.' En.



## CHAP. I.

6 He wondereth that they have so soon left him and the Gospel, 8 and accurseth those that preach any other Gospel than he did. 11 He learned the Gospel not of men, but of God: 13 and sheweth what he was before his calling, 17 and what he did presently after it.

PAUL, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but <sup>a</sup> by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who <sup>b</sup> raised him from the dead,)

2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of <sup>c</sup> Galatia :

3 Grace <sup>d</sup> be to you, and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ,

4 Who gave <sup>e</sup> himself for our sins, that he might deliver us <sup>f</sup> from this present evil <sup>g</sup> world, according <sup>h</sup> to the will of God and our Father:

5 To whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed <sup>i</sup> from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel :

7 Which <sup>j</sup> is not another ; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert <sup>k</sup> the gospel of Christ.

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let <sup>l</sup> him be accursed.

a Ac. 9:6,15. f Jn. 17:14. j 2 Co. 11:4.  
b Ac. 2:24. g 1 Jn. 2:16. k 2 Co. 2:17.  
c Ac. 16:6. 18:23. h Ro. 3:27. l c. 5:10,12.  
d Ro. 17, &c. j c. 5:4,7,8. 1 1 Co. 16:22.  
e Jn. 10:17.

CHAP. I. V. 1—5. In these prefatory vs. observe,

1. From whom this epistle is sent,—from Paul an apostle, and all the brethren with him. (1.) Paul only was the penman. And because some among the Galatians endeavored to lessen his character and authority, he in the very front of it gives a general account, both of his office, and of the manner in which he was called to it; which afterward, in this and the following ch., he enlarges more upon. As to his office, he was an apostle, and to let them see that he did not assume this character without just ground, he acquaints them how he was called to this dignity and office,—that it was *not of men, neither by man*; but by an extraordinary call from heaven; for he was an apostle *by Jesus Christ*, had his instructions and commission immediately from Him, and consequently from *God the Father*, who was one with Him, in respect of his divine nature, and who had appointed Him, as Mediator, to be the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, and as such to authorize others

to this office. He adds, *Who raised Him from the dead*; both to acquaint us, that herein God the Father gave a public testimony to Christ's being his Son, and the promised *Messiah*; and also, that as his call to the apostleship was immediately from Christ, so it was after his resurrection from the dead, and when He was entered on his exalted state; so that he had reason to look upon himself, not only as standing on a level with the other apostles, but as in some sort preferred above them. Thus does the apostle, being constrained to it by his adversaries, magnify his office; which shows that though men should by no means be proud of any authority they possess, yet, at certain times, and on certain occasions, it may be needful to assert it. But, (2.) He joins *all the brethren that were with him*, in the inscription of the epistle, and writes in their name as well as his own; i. e. either the Christians in common of that place where he now was, or such as were employed as ministers of the Gospel; and in doing this, as he shows his own great modesty and humility, and how remote he was from an assuming temper, so he might do it to dispose these churches to a greater regard to what he wrote; since hereby it would appear, that he had their concurrence with him in the doctrine which he had preached, and was now about to confirm, and that it was no other than what was both published and professed by others as well as himself.

2. To whom it is sent,—to the churches of Galatia. It should seem there were several at that time in this country, and that they all were more or less corrupted, through the arts of those seducers who had crept in among them; though, no doubt, there were some among them, who still continued in the faith, and Paul writes not without hope that others might be recovered to it.

3. The apostolical benediction, v. 3. the usual blessing where with he blesses the churches. *Grace* includes God's good-will towards us, and his good work upon us; and *peace* implies all that inward comfort, or outward prosperity, which is really needful for us; they come from *God the Father*, as the Fountain, through *Jesus Christ*, as the Channel of conveyance; but we may observe, first *grace*, and then *peace*, for there can be no true peace without grace. Having mentioned the Lord Jesus Christ, he cannot pass without enlarging on his love, v. 4. one great end of whose sacrifice, was, not only to redeem us from the wrath of God, and the curse of the law, but also to recover us from the corruption that is in the world through lust, and to rescue us from the vicious practices and customs of it, unto which we are naturally enslaved; and possibly also to set us free from the Mosaic constitution, for so *this world* is used, 1 Cor. 2: 6, 8. This present world is an evil world; become so by the sin of man, and is

so on the account of the sin and sorrow with which it abounds, and the many snares and temptations to which we are exposed, as long as we continue in it. But Jesus Christ has died to deliver us from it, not presently to remove his people out of it, but to rescue them from the power of it, and in due time to possess them of another and better world. This, the apostle informs us, He has done *according to the will of God and our Father*; i. e. He acted by the appointment of the Father, as well as with his own free consent; and therefore we have the greatest reason to depend on the efficacy and acceptableness of what He has done and suffered for us; yea, from hence we have encouragement to look upon God as *our Father*, for, being Father of our Lord Jesus, so, in and through Him, He is also the Father of all true believers, John 20: 17.

The apostle, having thus noticed the great love wherewith Christ hath loved us, concludes this preface with a solemn ascription of praise and glory to Him, v. 5. Intimating, that on this account He is justly entitled to our highest esteem and regard. Or, this doxology may be considered as referring both to God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom he had just before been wishing grace and peace. Both are the proper objects of our worship and adoration, and all honor and glory are perpetually due to both, on the account of their own infinite excellences, and also on the account of the blessings we receive from them.

V. 6—9. He comes to the body of the epistle; and begins with a more general reproof of these churches for their unsteadiness in the faith, which he afterward enlarges more upon.

I. His concern at their defection; *I marvel, &c.* It at once filled him with the greatest surprise and sorrow. Their sin and folly were, that they did not hold fast the doctrine of Christianity, as it had been preached to them, but suffered themselves to be removed from the purity and simplicity of it. And several things greatly aggravated their defection; 1. They were removed *from Him that called them*; not only from the apostle, but from *God Himself*; so that herein they had been guilty of a great abuse of his kindness and mercy toward them. 2. They had been *called into the grace of Christ*, i. e. the Gospel, and thereby to partake of the greatest blessings and benefits, such as justification, and reconciliation with God here, and eternal life and happiness hereafter; therefore, in proportion to the greatness of the privilege they enjoyed, such were their sin and folly in deserting it, and suffering themselves to be drawn off from the established way of obtaining these blessings. 3. They were *so soon removed*. i. e. gave over the hope of justification by

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. Ananias baptized Paul, but he neither appointed him to the apostleship, nor instructed him for it.—With him, all the brethren (probably the ministers were intended) who were then with the apostle, joined in this epistle, as testifying the facts, and concurring in the doctrines, contained in it.—Perhaps the apostle meant to distinguish himself from those, who were constituted by the apostles . . . and sent by them to different places, being peculiarly named *evangelists*. Of this kind, were Timothy, Titus, Luke, and other companions of Paul, who were celebrated in his epistles, and the Acts. *Beza*.—The epistle was addressed to 'the churches of Galatia,' but he did not call them 'saints,' perhaps because, as they had departed from the faith in the fundamental article of justification, 'he stood in doubt of them.' 4:17—20.

V. 3—5. *Rom.* 1:5—7. *1 Cor.* 1:3. Some, indeed, interpret the words, which we render 'this present evil world,' of the Mosaic dispensation, . . . but the preceding explanation [that in Henry] is far more extensive and natural; most of the Galatians were Gentiles, before their conversion, and even the ritual law of Moses is never called '*evil*,' in Scripture, much less the whole Mosaic dispensation; so that the interpretation is wholly inadmissible.

V. 6—10. It is remarkable, in how different a manner the apostle addressed the Galatians, than he did the Corinthians. It has been shown, that he used the utmost caution, and the most delicate and consummate management, [skill,] in undermining the influence, and counteracting the delusions, of the false teachers at Corinth. (*Pref.* 1 *Cor.*) but he at once and abruptly attacked the error of the Galatians, in a di-

rect and open manner, without any circumlocution. The Corinthians had indeed 'built wood, hay, stubble,' on 'the good Foundation,' but the Galatians were attempting to lay a wrong foundation. The former 'might be saved as by fire,' notwithstanding errors and abuses, but the latter must perish, unless recovered from their infatuation. *1 Cor.* 3:10—15. In the former case, the errors had been introduced more plausibly, and had diffused their baleful influence more gradually; the tares were so mingled with the wheat, that they could not be plucked up by a rough hand, without the greatest danger, and much caution was requisite, lest Satan should get still further advantages. *Mat.* 13:36—43. *2 Cor.* 2:5—11. But in Galatia, the error was simple and fundamental, it was a virtual renunciation of the Gospel, and destructive in its very nature. The persons, who propagated 'another Gospel,' in Galatia, were as determined enemies to true Christianity, as 'the false apostles,' at Corinth, and more evidently so; but they were not equal to them in ingenuity. *2 Cor.* 11:13—15. The detection of their error, also, lay within a small compass, their example was of a most dangerous tendency, their progress was likely to be very rapid, unless effectually checked, and therefore the apostle opened his subject, in the language of astonishment at the conduct of the Galatians. (10) *Should not be, &c.* 'This is a cutting reproof to all those ministers, who either alter or conceal the doctrines of the Gospel, for fear of displeasing their hearers, or to gain popularity.' *Mackn.*

(7.) *Trouble, &c.* 'Harass your minds with vain doubts, whether the Mosaic law is to be retained in the gospel of Christ.' *Pervert.* 'Not only corrupt, but also overturn.' So *Mackn.*



9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other <sup>m</sup>gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to <sup>n</sup>please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not <sup>o</sup>be the servant of Christ.

11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

12 For <sup>p</sup>I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation <sup>q</sup>of Jesus Christ.

13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church <sup>r</sup>of God, and wasted it;

14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my <sup>s</sup>equals in mine own nation, being <sup>t</sup>more exceedingly zealous of the traditions <sup>u</sup>of my fathers.

15 But when it pleased God, <sup>v</sup>who separated me from my mother's womb, and called *me* by his grace,

16 To reveal <sup>w</sup>his Son in me, that <sup>x</sup>I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and <sup>y</sup>blood:

17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

18 Then <sup>z</sup>after three years I <sup>a</sup>went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James <sup>b</sup>the Lord's brother.

judaising teachers, called *another Gospel*, because it [pretended to] open a different way of justification and salvation from that revealed in the Gospel; namely, by works, and not by faith in Christ; and yet *not another*; not really another Gospel, but the *perverting of the Gospel of Christ*; it intimates, the great folly and sin of those who go about to establish any other way to heaven, than what the Gospel of Christ has revealed.

Thus he endeavors to impress on these Galatians a due sense of their guilt in forsaking the gospel-way of justification; yet at the same time he tempers his reproof with mildness and tenderness, and represents them as rather drawn into it by the arts and industry of *some that troubled them*, than as coming into it of their own accord; hereby he teaches us, that in reproving others, as we should be faithful, so we should also be gentle, and endeavor to restore them in the spirit of meekness, *ch. 6: 1.*

II. His confidence, that the Gospel he had preached to them was the only true Gospel; he was so fully persuaded of this, that he pronounces an anathema on those who pretended to preach any other Gospel, *v. 8.* and, to let them see that it did not proceed from any rashness or intemperate zeal in him, he repeats it again, *v. 9.* This will not justify our thundering out [uninspired] anathemas against those who differ from us in less things. He puts the case; not as if it were possible for an angel from heaven to be the messenger of a lie; but it is expressed so, the more to strengthen what he was about to say. 'If you have any other Gospel preached to you by any other person, under our name, or under color of having it from an angel himself, you must conclude that you are imposed on; and whoever preaches another Gospel, lays himself under a curse, and is in danger of laying you under it too.'

V. 10—24. Paul having more generally, in the preface of this epistle, declared himself to be an *apostle of Christ*, here he comes more directly to support his claim. Some in Galatia were prevailed with to call it in question; they who preached up the ceremonial law, did all they could to lessen his reputation; therefore he here sets himself to prove the *divinity* both of his *mission* and *doctrine*. This he gives sufficient evidence of,

I. From the scope and design of his ministry, which was *not to persuade men, but God*, &c. i. e. in his preaching the Gospel he did not act in obedience to *men*, but *God*, who had called him to this work and office; or his aim therein was to bring persons to the obedience, not of *men*, but of *God*. He did not, in his doctrine, accommodate himself to the humors of persons, either to gain their *affection*, or to avoid their *resentment*; but his great care was to approve himself to *God*. The judaising teachers, by whom these churches were corrupted, had discov-

ered a very different temper; they mixed works with faith, and the law with the gospel, only to please the Jews, whom they were willing to court and keep in with, that they might escape persecution. But Paul would not alter the doctrine of Christ, either to gain their *favor*, or to avoid their *fury*. And he gives this very good reason for it; that, *if he yet pleased men, he should not be the servant of Christ*. He would not needlessly displease any, yet he dares not allow himself to gratify men at the expense of his faithfulness to Christ. Thus, from the sincerity of his aims and intentions in the discharge of his office, he proves that he was truly an apostle of Christ. But if this argument should not be thought sufficient, he goes on to prove his apostleship,

II. From the manner in which he received the Gospel; concerning which he assures them, *v. 11, 12.* that he had it not by *information* from others, but by *revelation* from heaven. Ordinary ministers, as they receive their call to preach the Gospel by the *mediation* of others, so it is by means of the *instruction* and *assistance* of others that they are brought to the knowledge of it. But Paul acquaints them, that he had his *knowledge* of the Gospel, as well as his *authority* to preach it, directly from the Lord Jesus; the Gospel he preached was not *after man*; *he neither received it of man, nor was he taught it by man*, but by immediate inspiration, or revelation from Christ Himself. This he was concerned to make out, to prove himself an apostle; and to this purpose,

1. He tells them what his education was, and what, accordingly, his conversation in time past had been, *v. 13, 14.* Particularly, he acquaints them, that he had been brought up in the Jewish religion, and *had been exceedingly zealous* of such doctrines and customs as had been invented by their fathers, and conveyed down from them; yea, he had been not only a rejecter of the Christian religion, but a persecutor of it, too, even *beyond measure*. This Paul often notices, for the magnifying of that free and rich grace, which had wrought so wonderful a change in him, whereby of so great a sinner he was made a sincere penitent, and from a persecutor was become an apostle. And it was very fit to mention it here; for from hence it would appear, that he was not led to Christianity, as many are, purely by education; and they might reasonably suppose, it must be something very extraordinary, which had made so great a change in him, and brought him not only to profess, but to preach, that doctrine, which he had before so vehemently opposed.

2. In how wonderful a manner he was turned from the error of his ways, brought to the knowledge and faith of Christ, and appointed to the office of an apostle, *v. 15, 16.* This was done in an extraordinary

m De. 4:2.	26:9.	15. Ro. 1:1.
Re. 22:13.	s equal in years.	w 2 Co. 4:6.
n 2 Co. 12:19.	t Ac. 22:3.	x Ac. 9:15.
1 Th. 2:4.	Phi. 3:6.	y 2 Co. 5:16.
o Ja. 4:4.	u Ma. 7:5—13.	z Ac. 9:26.
p 1 Co. 15:1—3.	v Is. 49:1. Je. 1:5.	a or, returned.
q Ep. 3:3.	Ac. 13:2. 22:14.	b Ma. 6:3.
r Ac. 8:1,3. 9:1,2.		

faith in Christ, and fell in with those who taught justification by the works of the law, as many did, who had been bred up in the opinions of the Pharisees, which they mingled with the doctrine of Christ, and so corrupted it; and this, as it was an instance of their weakness, so it was a further aggravation of their guilt. 4. They were removed to *another Gospel*, the doctrine of these

(10.) *Persuade, &c.* 'Many eminent modern comtrs., as Luther, Erasm., Vat., Crell., L'Enfant, &c., tr. *divinè suadeo*, an humane? [do I persuade divinely or humanly?] Theoph. and Chry., think he means to say, he thinks it not worth while to apologize to men for his doctrine, but is careful to approve himself to God in it. With (Ec., Theod., Grot., Ham., Elsner, Wolf, Krebs, Wets., Koppe, Ros., Schl., Borger, &c. I greatly prefer the sense, "Do I seek to conciliate the favor of men or of God." For *if, &c.* For if I had yet (or then) strove to please men, I should not have become a servant of Christ, nor, bidding adieu to friends and fortune, subjected myself to the various miseries, to which the profession of religion has rendered me obnoxious.'

BLOOMER.  
V. 11—14. 'A revelation of the facts and doctrines of Christianity, immediately from Christ Himself, without the assistance of any human teacher, so wonderfully agreeing in all its branches with that which Christ had taught on earth, both before and after his resurrection, was so extraordinary an event, and of so great importance to those whom St. Paul visited, and to whom he wrote, that one cannot wonder he should think proper to assert it in so solemn a manner.' Doddr.—The marked distinction between being 'taught by man,' and 'by the revelation of Jesus Christ,' is a clear proof of our Lord's Deity.—'In this respect, Paul seems to have been, in a measure, superior to the other apostles, whom Christ instructed on earth, after the manner of men.' Beza. (11) *The Gospel which was preached.* 8. This emphatical language cannot well be tr. literally, but it [the Gr.] shows how much the idea of 'glad tidings' possessed the writer's mind and heart. *The Jews' religion.* 'This does not signify the religion taught by Moses, but that which was practised among the Jews at this time, and much of it built on the traditions of the elders.' Doddr.

(14.) *Profited.* 'The Gr. properly signifies to *cut one's way forward*, to advance, to make a proficiency; and here the term, I think, designates both progress in the knowledge of the Jewish literature, and a forwardness in defending the interests of the Jewish religion.' BL.

V. 16—19. (16) *In me.* This may be rendered, 'To me.' The same preposition is used just after, and tr. 'among,' it might be, 'to the heathen.' The apostle, however, speaks of immediate, prophetic revelation, and not of ordinary divine teaching.—'Since we are told, (Acts 9: 19.) that after Saul recovered his sight and strength, he was certain days with the disciples at Damascus, during which he preached Christ in the synagogues; . . . we must admit, that . . . he spent a few days in preaching at Damascus, and then retired into Arabia, . . . to receive further revelations.' Mackn. (19) *James the brother, &c.* Probably, James was the son of Cleopas, or Alphaeus, and Mary the sister of our Lord's mother. 13:55. Mk. 6:3. SCOTT.

(16.) *In me.* The force of this is best seen by the ancient comtrs. Thus Theoph.: "he does not say revealed to me, but *in me*; showing that he had not learned by word only, but by the Spirit." *Flesh and blood.* 'I. e. any man. Mat. 16:17. Is. 4:43.' BL. MACKN.

(17.) *Arabia, &c.* Here see BL., who reconciles Paul and Luke. ED.  
(19.) *The Lord's brother.* 'After a careful examination of what has been written on this obscure point, especially the long and elaborate annotation of Borger, I cannot but acquiesce (as he does) in the opinion of almost all the ancient and most modern comtrs., that this James was a *cousin* of our Lord, and a son of Alphaeus. The arguments stated by Borger, are these: 1st. There is no necessity for taking the Gr. [*adelphos*] of a *brother*. It may be understood of a *near kinsman*. See Schl. 2d. Of James and Josus, who, at Mat. 13:55. are said to be brothers of Jesus,



20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;

22 And was unknown by face unto the churches<sup>d</sup> of Judea which were in Christ:

23 But they had heard<sup>e</sup> only, That he which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

24 And they glorified<sup>f</sup> God in me.

#### CHAP. II.

1 He sheweth when he went up again to Jerusalem, and for what purpose: 3 and that Titus was not circumcised: 11 and that he resisted Peter, and told him the reason, 14 why he and other, being Jews, do believe in Christ to be justified by faith, and not by works: 23 and that they live not in sin, who are so justified.

**T**HEN fourteen years<sup>a</sup> after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles; but<sup>b</sup> privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I<sup>c</sup> should run, or had run, in vain.

c Ac. 9:30. d 1 Th. 2:14. e Ac. 9:13, 26. 1 Ti. 1:13—16. f Ac. 21:19, 20. a Ac. 15:2, &c. b or, severally. c Phil. 2:16.

manner, in pursuance of a divine purpose concerning him, whereby he was appointed to be a Christian and an apostle, before he came into the world, or had done either good or evil. He was called by his grace. All who are savingly converted, are called by the grace of God; but there was something peculiar in the case of Paul, both in the suddenness and in the greatness of the change wrought in him, and also in the manner wherein it was effected, which was not by the mediation of others, as the instruments of it, but by Christ's personal appearance to him, and immediate operation on him,

**PRACT. OBS.** All authority and ability to preach the Gospel must come 'from Jesus Christ, and from God the Father who hath raised Him from the dead.' We ought also to pray for 'grace and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,' in behalf of those, of whom we doubt whether they be true saints.—The consciousness of being rescued and separated from those, who were our companions in sin, made victorious over the fear of men, and the love of the world, enabled to refuse conformity to it, and to live a spiritual and heavenly life on earth, forms the proper evidence of justification in the righteousness of Christ, and through faith in Him; yet numbers, who profess evangelical doctrines, seem to have no inclination to this part of God's salvation. But, as they are not 'delivered from this present evil world,' by the sanctification of the Spirit, it is presumptuous in them to expect exemption from its condemnation by the blood of Jesus.—While we strenuously maintain, that every kind and degree of antinomianism, eventually and powerfully tends to dishonor Christ, and destroy true religion, we must also declare, in the most decided manner, that all dependence on good works, real or supposed, for justification, is still more fatal to the individuals who persist in it, at least after the truth has been fully and repeatedly set before them. No wonder, that the preachers of morality and good works, as the foundation for the sinner's hope of acceptance, or in any degree conducive to his justification, are so evidently unsuccessful in their attempts to make men virtuous.—While we zealously preach and diligently practise 'good works,' for evangelical purposes, let us be even still more careful, if possible, not to put anything which we do, in the place of 'that righteousness of God which is unto and upon all that believe,' and not to advance anything, which may betray others into so fatal a delusion. *Rom. 3:21—26. Phil. 3:8—11.*

'Righteousness by works' is the sum of the doctrine of the devil and of the world from the beginning. *Gen. 3:5. 4:8. . . .* Wherefore I do admonish you, especially such as shall become instructors and guides of consciences, and also every one apart, that ye exercise yourselves con-

whereby it was rendered a more special and extraordinary instance of divine power and favor. He had Christ revealed in him. It will but little avail us to have Christ revealed to us, if He is not also revealed in us. He is brought to the knowledge of Christ and his Gospel by special and immediate revelation; with this design, that he should preach Him among the heathen; not only embrace Him himself, but preach Him to others; so that he was both a Christian and an apostle by revelation.

3. He acquaints them how he behaved himself hereupon, *v. 16.* to the end; being thus called to this work and office, he did not consult men, even at Jerusalem, as though he needed to be approved by them, or to receive instructions or authority from them; but instead of that, he went into Arabia, either as a place of retirement proper for receiving further divine revelations, or in order to preach the Gospel there among the Gentiles; thence he returned again to Damascus, where he had first begun his ministry, and from whence he had with difficulty escaped the rage of his enemies, *Acts 9.* In short, it could not well be pretended that he was indebted to any other, either for his knowledge of the Gospel, or his authority to preach it; but it appeared that both his qualifications for, and his call to, the apostolic office were extraordinary and divine. This account being of importance, to establish his claim to this office, to remove the unjust censures of his adversaries, and to recover the Galatians from the impressions they had received to his prejudice, he confirms it by a solemn oath, *v. 20.* declaring, as in the presence of God, that what he had said was strictly true, and that he had not in the least falsified in what he had related; which, though it will not justify us in solemn appeals to God on every occasion, yet shows that, in matters of weight and moment, this sometimes may not only be lawful, but duty. After this he acquaints them, that he came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; having made this short visit to Peter, he returns to his work again; he had no communication at that time with the churches of Christ in Judea, they had not so much as seen his face; only they had

heard of his remarkable conversion, which the very report of, as it filled them with joy, so it excited them to give glory to God on the account of it.

**CHAP. II.** The apostle, in this ch., continues the relation of his past life and conduct; and, by some further instances of what had passed between him and the other apostles, makes it appear that he was not beholden to them, either for his knowledge of the Gospel, or his authority as an apostle, as his adversaries would insinuate; but, on the contrary, that he was owned and approved even by them, as having an equal commission with them to this office.

**V. 1—10.** It should seem, by Paul's account of himself in this ch., that from the very first preaching and planting of Christianity, there was a difference of apprehension between those Christians who had first been Jews, and those who had first been Gentiles. Many of the former, strove to keep up the reputation of the ceremonial law; while the latter had no regard to this, but took pure Christianity as perfective of natural religion, and resolved to adhere to that. Peter was the apostle of the circumcision; and the ceremonial law, though dead with Christ, yet not being as yet buried, he connived at the respect kept up for it. Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles; and though a Hebrew of the Hebrews, yet he adhered to pure Christianity. Now he tells us what passed between him and the other apostles, and particularly Peter, hereupon, on another journey he took to Jerusalem, *v. 1—11.* And here he acquaints us, with,

**I.** Some circumstances relating to this his journey. 1. The time of it; not till 14 years after the former, mentioned *ch. 1:18.* or, as others choose, from his conversion, or from the death of Christ. And it was some evidence he had no dependence on the other apostles, but an equal authority with them, that he had been so long absent from them, and all the while employed in preaching and propagating pure Christianity, without being called into question by them for it; which they would have done, had he been inferior, and his doctrine disapproved. 2. His companions in it, *Barnabas and Titus.* If the

continually, by study, by reading, by meditation of the Word, and by prayer, that in the time of temptation ye may be able to instruct and comfort both your own consciences and others, and to bring them from the law to grace; from Moses to Christ; from the active and working righteousness, to the passive and received righteousness. . . . When I have this [latter] righteousness reigning in my heart, I descend from heaven, as the rain making fruitful the earth, i. e. I come forth into another kingdom, and I do good works, how and wheresoever occasion is offered; if I be a minister of the Word, I preach, I comfort the broken-hearted, I administer the sacraments; if I be a householder, I govern my house and my family, I bring up my children in the knowledge and fear of God; if I be a magistrate, the charge that is given me from above, I diligently execute; if I be a servant, I do my Master's business faithfully; to conclude, whosoever he be that is assuredly persuaded that Christ is his righteousness, doth not only cheerfully and gladly work well in his vocation, but also submitteth himself through love to the magistrates, and to their laws; yea, though they be severe, sharp, and cruel, and (if necessity do so require) to all manner of burdens, and to all dangers of this present life, because he knoweth that this is the will of God; and that this obedience pleaseth Him.<sup>7</sup>

Ministers should be careful not to receive or preach a carnalized Gospel [nor a Gospel of the lower propensities], and not to rest in human teaching, but to study the written revelation of Jesus Christ, and to pray continually for 'the Spirit of wisdom and revelation' in the knowledge of Him, that they may 'please men' only for their good, and to their edification, and not desire to please them any further.—Though, in ordinary cases, it would be presumptuous for new converts, or young ministers, to disregard the counsels of such as have before been employed in the work of Christ, yet that love to Christ and the souls of men, which renders them superior to lucrative considerations, and ready to endure hardships in order to spread the Gospel, is a good evidence, that the Lord is preparing them for future usefulness. *SCOTT.*

than the apostles. But if this be true, it is clear that James, the brother of our Lord, was James, son of Alphaeus, an apostle of Jesus, and likewise his cousin. That an apostle must be understood, is plain from *2:9.* and is required by *Ac. 9:27, 28.*<sup>7</sup>

**NOTES.** **CHAP. II. V. 1—5.** It appears from the history, that Paul and Barnabas went up from Antioch to carry the alms of the Christians in that city to the elders at Jerusalem. But they had at that time no special business with the apostles, and it is not certain that they saw any of them. *Acts 11:27—30.* The journey, however, here mentioned, most evidently is that recorded by the historian, when they went up on purpose about the very question, which Paul was here debating with the



3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised :

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage :

5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

6 But of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me : God accepteth no man's person : for they who seemed to be somewhat, in conference added nothing to me ;

7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter ;

8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles;)

9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

d Ac. 15:1,24.	h Ac. 10:34.	Ep. 2:20.
e c. 5:1,13.	Ro. 2:11.	k Ro. 1:5. 12:3,6.
f 2 Co. 11:20.	l 1 Th. 2:4.	l Ac. 11:30.
g c. 4:3,9.	1 Ti. 2:7.	Ro. 15:25.
g c. 6:3.	j Mat. 16:13.	

journey here spoken of was the same with that recorded Acts 15. as many think, then we have a plain reason why Barnabas went along with him; for he was chosen by the Christians at Antioch, to be his companion and associate in the affair he went about. But as it does not appear that Titus was put into the same commission with him, so the chief reason of his taking him along with him, seems to have been, to let them at Jerusalem see, that he was neither ashamed nor afraid to own the doctrine he had constantly preached; for though Titus was now become not only a convert to the Christian faith, but a preacher of it too, yet he was by birth a Gentile, and uncircumcised; and therefore, by his making him his companion,

it appeared that his doctrine and practice were of a piece; and that as he had preached the non-necessity of circumcision, and observing the law of Moses, so he was ready to own and converse with those who were uncircumcised. 3. The reason of it; he went up by revelation, not of his own head, much less as being summoned to appear there, but by special order and direction from heaven. It was a privilege this apostle was often favored with, to be under a special divine conduct in his motions and undertakings; and though this is what we have no reason to expect, yet it should teach us, in everything of moment we go about, to endeavor, as far as we are capable, to see our way made plain before us, and to commit ourselves to the guidance of Providence.

II. His behavior while at Jerusalem; such as made it appear that he was not in the least inferior to the other apostles in authority or qualifications.

1. His account of his doctrine and labors; in relation to which, observe both his faithfulness and prudence. He gave a free and fair account of the doctrine he had all along preached among the Gentiles, and was still resolved to preach,—that of pure Christianity, free from all mixtures of Judaism; yet he chooses rather to do it in a more private than in a public way, and to them that were of reputation, i. e. to the apostles themselves, or to the chief among the Jewish Christians, rather than more openly and promiscuously to all; because, when he came to Jerusalem, there were multitudes that believed, and yet continued zealous for the law, Acts 21:20. And the reason of this his caution, was, lest he should run, or had run, in vain; lest he should stir up opposition against him, and thereby either the success of his past labors should be lessened, or his future usefulness be obstructed: for nothing more hinders the progress of the Gospel, than differences of opinion about its doctrines; especially when they occasion quarrels and contentions among professors, as they too usually do. It was enough to his purpose, to have his doctrine owned by those who were of greatest authority, whether it was approved by others or not. This conduct of the apostle may teach all, and especially ministers, how much need they have of prudence, and how careful they should be to use it on all occasions, as far as is consistent with their faithfulness.

2. His firm adherence to the doctrine he had preached. He had Titus with him, who was a Greek, yet he would not suffer him to be circumcised, because he would not betray the doctrine of Christ, as he had preached it to the Gentiles. It does not appear that the apostles at all insisted on this; for though they connived at the use of circumcision among the Jewish converts, they were not for imposing it on the Gen-

tiles. Some others did, whom the apostle here calls false brethren; and concerning whom he informs us, that they were unawares brought in, i. e. into the church, or into their company, and that they came only to see whether Paul would defend that freedom from the ceremonial law, which he had taught as the doctrine of the Gospel, and represented as the privilege of those who embraced the Christian religion. Their design was, to bring them into bondage, which they would have effected, could they have gained their point; for had they prevailed with Paul and the other apostles to circumcise Titus, they would easily have imposed circumcision on other Gentiles, and so have brought them under the bondage of the law of Moses. But Paul, seeing their design, would by no means yield to them; no, not for an hour, not even in this one single instance; and the reason was, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with them; that the Gentile Christians, and particularly the Galatians, might have it preserved to them pure and entire, and not corrupted with the mixtures of Judaism. Circumcision was at that time a thing indifferent, and what in some cases might be complied with without sin; as even Paul himself gave way to it in the case of Timothy, Acts 16:3. But when it is insisted on as necessary, and his consenting to it, though only in a single instance, was likely to be improved as giving countenance to such an imposition, he has too great a concern for the purity and liberty of the Gospel, to submit to it; he would not yield to those who were for the Mosaic rites and ceremonies, but would stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. Which conduct of his may give us occasion to observe, That what under some circumstances may lawfully be complied with, yet when that cannot be done without betraying the truth, or giving up the liberty, of the Gospel, it ought to be refused.

3. His interview with the other apostles, and its result, v. 6—10. He grants they were deservedly in repute, and looked upon by all as pillars of the church, and that on some accounts they might seem to have the advantage of him, in that they had seen Christ in the flesh, which he had not, and were apostles before him, yea even while he continued a persecutor. But yet, whatever they were, this was no prejudice to his being equally an apostle with them; for God does not accept the persons of men on the account of any such outward advantages; and in conference they added nothing to him, told him nothing but what he before knew by revelation, nor could they except against the doctrine he communicated to them; from whence it appeared, that he was not at all inferior to them, but was as much called and qualified to be an apostle, as they themselves were. And they were not only satisfied with his doctrine, but saw a divine power attend-

Galatians. Acts 15:1—11.—Most expositors date this journey 14 years after the apostle's conversion, which scarcely allows sufficient time for all the intervening transactions, and it seems more obvious to compute the years, from the first journey before mentioned. 1:15—24. There is, however, but little certainty in the computation of times, even by the most learned chronologers, as to the date of the apostle's conversion, subsequent history, and the writing of his epistles; and exactness in this respect is comparatively of little importance. SCOTT.

(1.) After the lapse of 14 years.] 'It would seem there is no reason to take the words otherwise than in their plain and obvious sense, as they were understood by the ancient and earlier modern contrs., namely, as calculated from his last journey to Jerusalem. And so Borger; i. e. A. D. 49 will be the year of the visit of this v. If calculated from his conversion, it will be in 52. The best contrs. agree it is the same recorded Acts 15. the circumstances being the same. See Koppe, who remarks, that it is no wonder the apostle makes no mention of the decree of the Jerusalem synod, since he did not wish the Galatians to rest on the authority of any apostle but himself, and also, because his doctrine on the subject of non-observance of the Mosaic law, went much further than that decree.' BLOOMF.

(2.) There were many reasons why Paul should not accept the appointment of the Antiochians, to go up to Jerusalem; see Mich. Paul here tells us he was induced to it by revelation. See Bl., &c. In vain.] 'Lest I should be really thought to labor, or have labored in vain, i. e. erroneously and under mistake: as his calumniators pretended. And so Chrys., Theoph., &c., and Theod.' Bl. Ed.

(3.) 'These words are parenthetical.' Borger, Jaspis. BLOOMF.  
 (4.) Connecting this v. with v. 2. all is made clear. See Bl. Ed.  
 V. 9. Pillars.] A common simile, both oriental and occidental; see



so it was but right they should relieve those who were suffering for the common cause.' BLOOMF.

Wets., &c. Right hands.] In sign of apostolical association. Lev. 6:2. Jer. 50:15. The symbol was in use both in barbarous and civilized nations. Wets., Bl. The cut, from a painting in Herculaneum, in Dr. Harris's Masonic discourses, shows the oath of fellowship in hospitality, and the arrha hospitalis. See his Dissertation, illustrative of Rev. 2:17. Id.

V. 10. 'The Jews' superiority being done away, it might be feared the poor of the parent country would be neglected; and this would have been both detrimental to the welfare of the church, and peculiarly hard. For they bore the chief brunt of the hostility and persecution from Jews to Jewish Christians (even to the stripping them of all their property, and reducing them to beggary); and as the Gentiles might be said to reap the benefit of this strenuous testimony to the truth of the Gospel,



11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

17 But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

m Ac. 15:35. q Ep. 2:3, 12. c. 3:11, 24.  
n Ac. 11:3. r Ac. 13:38, 39. t Ps. 143:2.  
o ver. 5. Ro. 9:20. He. 7:13, 19.  
p 1 Ti. 5:20. s Ro. 5:1. u 1 Jn. 3:9, 10.

ing him, both in preaching it, and in working miracles for the confirmation of it; from which they justly concluded, that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to Paul, as the Gospel of the circumcision was to Peter. Therefore, perceiving the grace given to him; that he was designed to the honor and office of an apostle, as well as themselves; they gave unto him and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, a symbol whereby they acknowledged their equality with them, and agreed that these should go to the heathen, while they continued to preach to the circumcision; as judging it most agreeable to the mind of Christ, and most conducive to the interest of Christianity, so to divide their work. And thus this meeting ended in an entire harmony and agreement; they approved both Paul's doctrine and conduct, they were fully satisfied in him, heartily embraced him as an apostle of Christ, and had nothing further to add, only that they would remember the poor, which of his own accord

he was very forward to do. The Christians of Judca were at that time laboring under great wants and difficulties; and the apostles, out of their compassion to them, and concern for them, recommend their case to Paul, that he should use his interest with the Gentile churches to procure a supply for them. And he very readily falls in with it, whereby he showed his charitable and catholic disposition; how ready he was to own the Jewish converts as brethren, though many of them could scarcely allow the like favor to the converted Gentiles; and that mere difference of opinion was no reason with him, why he should not endeavor to relieve and help them. Herein he has given us an excellent pattern of Christian charity, and has taught us, that we should by no means confine it to those who are just of the same sentiments with us, but be ready to extend it to all whom we have reason to look upon as the disciples of Christ.

V. 11—21. Here, to give the greater weight to what he had already said, and more fully to fortify the Galatians, against the insinuations of the judaizing teachers, Paul acquaints them with another interview he had with Peter at Antioch, v. 11—14. There is no color of reason for supposing that Peter was bishop of Antioch. Had he been, surely Paul would not have withstood him in his own church, as here; but, on the contrary, it is here spoken of as an occasional visit Peter made thither. In their other meeting, Peter and the other apostles had both acknowledged Paul's commission, and approved his doctrine, and they parted very well agreed. But in this Paul finds himself obliged to oppose Peter, for he was to be blamed; a plain evidence that Paul was not inferior to him, and, consequently, of the weakness of the pope's pretence to supremacy and infallibility, as the successor of Peter.

I. Peter's fault. When he came among the Gentile churches, he complied with them, and did eat with them, though they were not circumcised; agreeably to the instructions given in particular to him, Acts 10. when he was warned by the heavenly vision, to call nothing common or unclean. But when there came some Jewish Christians from Jerusalem, he grew more shy of the Gentiles, only to humor them of the circumcision, and for fear of giving them offence, which doubtless was to the great grief and discouragement of the Gentile churches. Then he withdrew, and separated himself. His fault herein had an ill influence on others, for the other Jews also dissembled with him; though before they might be better disposed, yet now, from his example, they took on them to scruple eating with the Gentiles, and pretended they could not in conscience do it, because they were not circumcised. And Barnabas himself, one of the apostles of the Gentiles, was carried away with their dissimulation. Here note, the weakness and inconstancy of the best of men, when left to themselves, and the great force of bad examples, especially

of great and good men, such as are in reputation for wisdom and honor.

II. The rebuke Paul gave him for his fault. Notwithstanding Peter's character, yet, when he observes him thus behaving himself, to the great prejudice both of the truth of the Gospel and the peace of the church, he is not afraid to reprove him for it. Paul adhered resolutely to his principles, when others faltered in theirs. One part of Peter's conduct was a contradiction to the other; for if he, who was a Jew, could himself sometimes dispense with the use of the ceremonial law, and live after the manner of the Gentiles, this showed that he did not look on the observance of it as still necessary, even for the Jews themselves; and therefore, that he could not, consistently with his own practice, impose it on the Gentile Christians. And yet Paul charges him with this, yea, represents him as compelling the Gentiles to live as did the Jews; not by open force and violence, but this was the tendency of what he did; for it was in effect to signify this, that the Gentiles must comply with the Jews, or else not be admitted into Christian communion.

Paul having thus established his character and office, and sufficiently shown that he was not inferior to any of the apostles, nor to Peter himself, from the account of the reproof he gave him, he takes occasion to speak of that great fundamental doctrine of the Gospel,—justification only by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law, (though some think all he says, to the end of the ch., is what he said to Peter at Antioch,) which doctrine condemned Peter for his symbolizing with the Jews. For if it was the principle of his religion, that the gospel is the instrument of our justification, and not the law; then he did very ill in countenancing them who kept up the law, by mixing it with faith in the business of our justification. This was the doctrine Paul had preached among the Galatians, which he still adhered to, and which is the great business of this epistle. Paul acquaints us,

1. With the practice of the Jewish Christians themselves, v. 15. 'We,' says he, 'who are Jews by nature, who have been born and bred in the Jewish religion, and not among the impure Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we ourselves have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law. Why then should we hamper ourselves with the law? What did we believe in Christ for? Was it not, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ? And if it would be wrong in us, who are Jews by nature, to return to the law, and expect justification by it, would it not be much more so to require this of the Gentiles, who were never subject to it, since by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified?' To give the greater weight to this, he adds, v. 17. 'But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found

V. 11—16. The wisdom of God, in permitting the transaction here recorded, is very conspicuous; for it demonstrably proves the pope's pretended infallibility and supremacy, as derived from Peter, (no one can tell in what manner,) to be the most groundless fiction imaginable, and it tends exceedingly to establish the doctrine of justification by faith alone.—This [Peter's conduct] sufficiently proved him to be both fallible and sinful in himself; though he was guided by the Spirit of God to deliver the Gospel to mankind, free from error or corrupt mixture. Mat. 16:18, 19. As, however, he was so evidently blameable, Paul, though probably a much younger man, and called to the apostleship long after Peter, deemed himself bound openly to withstand him. (16) By the works of the law, &c.] The occasion of this declaration was doubtless taken from the ceremonial law; but the argument, as it respects justification, is equally conclusive against all dependence on the works of the moral law, as absolutely inconsistent with the method of justification, according to the Gospel.—This certainly took place some years before the apostle's last journey to Jerusalem, as recorded by Luke; and it is an additional argument, in support of the view before given of Paul's conduct at that juncture. Acts 21:17—23.—The conduct of Peter, on this trying occasion, seems to have been peculiarly excellent.—15) Sinners of the Gentiles.] As distinguished from 'sinners' who were not 'Gentiles,' Lu. 15:1, 2. 'The word in the scripture-phrase signifies, a great and habitual sinner; and because the Gentiles were by the Jewish

mation still esteemed such, and generally were so, therefore the word is used for the Gentiles who knew not God.' Whitby. Scott.

(11.) To the face.] 'Comp. 1 K. 1:23. Ps. 50:21. Hos. 5:5. It implies not doing it in an underhand way, and also not afraid of remonstrating with him, as not conscious of any apostolical inferiority.' Br. Blamed.] 'Though their inspiration secured the apostles from error in doctrine, it did not preserve them from all imprudence and sin in conduct.' Macknight.

(14.) Before all.] 'It being a public affair, affecting many.' Doddr.

(15.) Sinners of the Gentiles.] 'A periphrasis for Gentiles.' Br.

V. 17—21. It is not agreed among expositors, whether the apostle's address to Peter continues to the end of the ch., or where it terminates if it does not; but the doctrine is the same, however this may be decided.—If, then, while the apostles, and their converts from among the Jews, renounced their legal confidence, and sought to be justified by Christ, it should at length be found, that they were yet sinners, unpardoned, unjustified, through the insufficiency of his righteousness and atonement to justify them, or of faith to give them an interest in it, except they returned back to the law, and taught the Gentile converts to judaize, it would follow, that Christ was 'the minister of sin,' and the Gospel, the 'ministration of condemnation,' instead of 'the ministration of the Spirit,' and 'of righteousness.' 1 Cor. 15:12—18. 2 Cor. 3:7—11.—But 'God forbid,' that such things should be spoken of Christ



18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

v Ro. 7:4, 10. 8:2. x c. 5:24. 6:14. z Ju. 10:11.  
w Ro. 6:11, 14. y 1 Th. 5:10. Ep. 5:2.  
2 Co. 5:15. 1 Pe. 4:2. a He. 7:11.

sinner, found giving countenance or indulgence to sin, or rather are accounted sinners of the Gentiles, and such as it is not fit to have communion with, unless we also observe the law of Moses; *Is Christ the minister of sin?* Will it not follow, that He engages us to receive a doctrine that gives liberty to sin, or by which we are so far from being justified, that we remain impure sinners, and unfit to be conversed with? This, he intimates, would be the consequence, but he rejects it with abhorrence. This would be very dishonorable to Christ, and very injurious to them also. 'For,' says he, v. 18. 'if I, or any other, who have taught that the observance of the Mosaic law is not necessary to justification, should now, by word or practice, teach or intimate that it is necessary, I own myself to be still an impure sinner, and to remain under the guilt of sin, notwithstanding my faith in Christ; or I shall be liable to be charged with deceit and

prevarication, and acting inconsistently with myself.' Thus does the apostle argue for the great doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the law, from the principles and practice of the Jewish Christians themselves, and from the consequence that would attend their departure from it; whence it appeared, that Peter and the other Jews were much in the wrong in this.

2. His own judgment and practice.

(1.) *He was dead to the law.* Whatever account others might make of it, yet, for his part, he was dead to it. He knew the moral law denounced a curse against all that continue not in all things written therein, to do them; therefore he was dead as to all hope of justification and salvation that way. And as for the ceremonial law, he also knew that was now superseded by the coming of Christ; therefore, he was thus dead to the law, through the law itself; it discovered itself to be at an end; by considering the law itself, he saw that justification was not to be expected by the works of it, (since none could perform a perfect obedience to it,) and that there was now no further need of the sacrifices and purifications of it, since they were done away in Christ, by his offering up Himself a Sacrifice for us; and therefore the more he looked into it, the more he saw that there was no occasion for keeping up that regard to it, which the Jews pleaded for. But though he was thus dead to the law, yet he does not look upon himself as without law; he was far from thinking himself discharged from his duty to God; on the contrary, he was dead to the law, that he might live unto God. The doctrine of the Gospel, which he had embraced, instead of weakening the bond of duty on him, did but the more strengthen and confirm it; therefore, though he was dead to the law, yet it was only in order to his living a new and better life to God, as Rom. 7:4, 6. such a life as would

be more agreeable and acceptable to God than his observance of the Mosaic law could now be, i. e. a life of faith in Christ, and, under the influence thereof, of holiness and righteousness toward God. Agreeably hereto, he acquaints us,

(2.) That, as he was dead to the law, so he was alive unto God through Jesus Christ, v. 20. And here, in his own person, he gives us an excellent description of the mysterious life of a believer. [1.] He is crucified, and yet lives, Rom. 6:6. he is dead to the world, dead to the law, yet alive to God and Christ; sin is mortified, and grace quickened. [2.] He lives, and yet not he; this is strange, but he lives in the exercise of grace; yet that is not from himself, but from another. Believers see themselves living in a state of dependence. [3.] He is crucified with Christ, yet Christ lives in him; this results from his mystical union with Christ, by means of which he is interested in the death of Christ, so as by virtue of that to die unto sin; and yet interested in the life of Christ, so as by virtue of that to live unto God. [4.] He lives in the flesh, and yet lives by faith; to outward appearance he lives as other people do, his natural life is supported as others' are; yet he has a higher and nobler principle that supports and actuates him, that of faith in Christ, and especially as eyeing the wonders of his love in giving Himself for him; hence it is, that though he lives in the flesh, yet he does not live after the flesh. Note, They who have true faith, live by that faith; and the great thing faith fastens on, is, Christ's loving us, and giving Himself for us. The great evidence of Christ's loving us, is, his giving Himself for us; and this is what we are chiefly concerned to mix faith with, in order to our living to Him.

The apostle concludes this discourse with acquainting us, that by the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, without the works

PRACT. OBS. Whilst we simply depend on God to prosper our labors, we should use every prudent method of obviating misapprehensions, and counteracting the designs of opposers, 'lest, by any means, we should run in vain?' and this may commonly be connected with decided firmness in important cases.—False brethren and teachers are generally 'brought in unawares.' We must expect spies in our congregations, who come on purpose to find something to cavil at, or object to, in order to deprive us of our Christian liberty, by bringing us into bondage to human impositions, or groundless fears, or through extravagant notions of liberty, to keep men in slavery to sin and Satan. We must not 'give place,' in such matters, by way of subjection, in any measure, lest 'the truth of the Gospel' should be obscured or disgraced.—'False brethren' often profess an undue regard to ministers of established reputation, in order to disparage others perhaps of equal ability and faithfulness, whose line of duty requires them to proceed in a somewhat different manner. But the question is not, Who said or who did such and such things? but merely, What was said and done? and, Did it accord to the Word of God, or not?—'The fear of man bringeth a snare' to an extent which few are fully aware of; and we need not wonder to see pious persons ashamed, or afraid, openly to countenance those whom they inwardly favor, or boldly to avow themselves on controverted points, when their opinions are unpopular; for Peter himself, even at an advanced period of his most zealous, bold, and useful ministry, was induced thus to prevaricate. But even a man equal to an apostle, who 'walks not uprightly according to the Gospel,' is to be blamed and con-

and his Gospel! This appears to be the meaning of the v., as it stands connected in the apostle's argument. At first sight, indeed, it may seem rather to relate to the sins, which are found in those who profess to be justified by Christ. These should not be charged on the doctrine, or on the insufficiency of his grace to sanctify them, as if He were 'the minister of sin,' and allowed men to continue in it; or as if there was any need to go back to the law on that account. The former interpretation, however, is most approved, and, indeed, justly, 'Christ is then "the Minister of sin," and not of justification.'—Must it not follow that He is so, if He hath introduced an imperfect dispensation, which will not sufficiently ensure the happiness of those that follow it? Yea, doth He not indeed teach sin, if justification indeed cannot be obtained without the law, in teaching men to renounce all dependence on it, as it is certain by his Gospel He doth? Doddr.—So that the life he then 'lived in the flesh,' surrounded with worldly objects and temptations, was not conducted on carnal principles, or by a regard to external things, but 'by the faith of the Son of God,' as he depended on Him for all things, and aimed to do all according to his will, and in subserviency to his glory. 2 Cor. 5:13—15. 10:1—6. Col. 3:16, 17. And to this he was influenced by the consideration, that this glorious Savior had loved him, when a bitter persecutor, and had given Himself to the death on the cross, as a sacrifice for his sins. So that, while he neglected no acceptable obedience, and declined no self-denying service, yet he attended to all his duties, from such principles, and for such purposes, that 'he did not frustrate,' or set aside 'the grace of God,' by attempting in any measure to justify himself by his works, being fully assured, that if righteousness could have been obtained by any obedience

denied, in this respect, when the matter is evident and important. Christ is the only infallible Head of his church; all pretenders to this title on earth are antichrists, and they who cannot endure to be blamed, or to acknowledge themselves mistaken, are of a very unchristian temper.—Men are seldom aware of the magnitude or fatal consequences of their errors or carnal compliances. This conviction, that 'by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified,' has led us to believe in Christ, and rely on Him, that we 'might be justified by faith' in Him; and while we adhere to this principle, all our most spiritual worship, and devoted, zealous obedience, will be entirely disregarded by us in the grand concern of justification, and be wholly performed from other motives and to other purposes; namely, to show the sincerity of our grateful, adoring love, to 'adorn the Gospel of God our Savior,' to glorify God, and to do what good we can to our brethren and to all men.—And we make 'Christ the Minister of sin,' if we suppose that his righteousness and atonement are insufficient to justify the believer; even as others make Him the 'Minister of sin,' by allowing themselves in disobedience, from a presumptuous confidence of being justified by his righteousness, and saved without being sanctified.—This proposition, 'that if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain,' is the bane of all self-justifying schemes, however refined or ingenious they be; and all who cleave to them would certainly have deemed his language to be enthusiasm, if the apostle had not used it concerning his own experience, and if it had first been spoken by some zealous modern defender of the doctrine of grace against the objections of Pharisees, and the perversions of Antinomians. SCOTT.

of man 'to law,' of whatever kind, consistently with the glory of God, then Christ had died without any necessity, and to no purpose. As, therefore, no Christian could suppose, that so stupendous a plan as that of redemption was formed and executed, without any occasion, it must also be concluded, that righteousness could in no degree be obtained by a sinner, on account of his obedience to any law. This holds equally true of the moral, as of the ceremonial law, and, indeed, of every rule which can be prescribed for the conduct of men in any age or nation. It was of small moment whether men observed the ritual law or not, except as they depended on it; and the concluding part of the apostle's argument related to the moral law, at least equally with the ceremonial.—'I through the law have died by law; so that I must live by God.' (19) —'We all, through breaking law, have died by the curse of law; so that, if we live, we must live by the free gift of God, and not by law.' *Macan.* If this learned and laborious writer had made it intelligible what he meant by 'have died by the curse of the law,' his novel interpretation would have required further notice. But the author owns himself unable to adix any precise meaning to the words used, in this and in several places of his tr. and paraphrase. 'I have died to the law,' is explained by 'I have been crucified with Christ.' SCOTT.

(18.) 'He skillfully retorts and inverts the accusation; for as they had called the non-observance of the law a breach of it, so he calls the observance of the law a transgression.' *Theod.* BLOOMER.

(20.) *Liveth, &c.* 'Christ, his love, life, death, doctrine, example, salvation, glory, is to me, as it were, the vital principle, which animates me to do what I do. I am entirely occupied with the religion of Christ, I spend my whole life in preaching the Christian doctrine.' TITTMANN. [361]



## CHAP. III.

1 He asketh what moved them to leave the faith, and hang upon the law? 6 They that believe are justified, 9 and blessed with Abraham. 10 And this he sheweth by many reasons.

**O** FOOLISH <sup>a</sup> Galatians, who <sup>b</sup> hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you, Received <sup>c</sup> ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or <sup>d</sup> by the hearing of faith?

3 Are ye so foolish? having <sup>e</sup> begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by <sup>f</sup> the flesh?

4 Have ye suffered <sup>g</sup> so many things in <sup>h</sup> vain? if *it be* yet in vain.

5 He therefore that ministereth <sup>i</sup> to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

## [Practical Observations.]

r Mat. 7:26. d Ro. 10:17. g or, great.  
b c. 5:7. e c. 4:9. h 2 Jn. 8.  
c Ep. 1:13. f He. 9:10. i 2 Co. 3:3.

of the law, he avoided two great difficulties, which the contrary opinion was loaded with; he did not frustrate the grace of God, which the doctrine of justification by the works of the law did; so he argues, Rom. 11:6. nor did he frustrate the death of Christ; whereas if righteousness come by the law, then it must follow that Christ is dead in vain; for if we look for salvation by the law of Moses, then we render the death of Christ needless: for to what purpose should He be appointed to die, if we might have been saved without it!

CHAP. III. V. 1—5. The apostle is here dealing with those who, having embraced the faith of Christ, still continued to seek for justification by their own obedience to the moral precepts, as their righteousness before

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—5. The faithful preaching of the Gospel so exhibits 'Christ crucified,' as the great Object of the Christian's faith, hope, and admiring love and gratitude, and so shows the nature, glory, and efficacy of his sufferings, from love to our souls, that He is, as it were, 'evidently set forth before men's eyes,' as dying on the cross for their sins. But how very small a portion of the preaching in Christendom answers this description, or tends thus to excite men's affections towards the gracious Redeemer, needs not be told. Alas! who has infatuated and bewitched men's minds, that they should so generally turn away from this fundamental doctrine, to listen to metaphysical subtleties, fabulous and absurd legends, moral harangues, superstitions observances and forms, or enthusiastical reveries? It is plain, that 'the god of this world,' by various instruments, who reciprocally despise each other, has 'blinded men's eyes, lest the Gospel of the glory of Christ should shine into them,' and lest they should learn to trust in a cruci-

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1—5. The argument might be reduced to a very compendious decision; the apostle only desired to know from them, whether they had received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, by the laying on of the hands of those preachers, who proselyted them to the Jewish law, or from him, who brought them the joyful report of free salvation by faith in Christ? Rom. 10:5—17. This open appeal (5) to the Galatians, who were under the influence of those, who opposed the apostle's authority, is a full demonstration, that these gifts (miraculous powers) were actually communicated to them by his ministry. The abruptness and repetitions of his questions also prove, that his mind was greatly agitated by their misconduct, and show how important he deemed their mistake, and we cannot doubt that he regarded all their profession, and sufferings in consequence of it, to be altogether in vain, in case they persisted in it.—This is of the greatest importance in the argument; for submission to the ceremonial law, though burdensome, would not have been a renunciation of the Gospel, if it had not implied a dependence on their own works, instead of the righteousness and propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, and this dependence must be equally incompatible with the grace of the Gospel, even when the obedience itself is necessary from other motives, and for other purposes.

(1.) Foolish.] Without consideration, and stupid, as to this particular matter: for, otherwise, Themistocles calls them, 'sharp and quick-witted,' as indeed were their ancestors the Galli, who had also a characteristic levity and inconstancy. See Bl. 'Having established his commission, Paul now speaks with full authority.' Bewitched.] 'Ebakane: lit. bewitched, fascinated, or rather, in a metaphorical sense, seduced, deceived: and so used by Plut. It occurs not elsewhere in the N. T. nor, in this sense, in the classics; the Gr. comtrs. derive it from phaos and ka'nein, and it seems they thought the evil was communicated through the eyes; as serpents are said to fascinate birds. "Those are

God, and, whercin that was defective, had recourse to the legal sacrifices and purifications, to make it up. These he first sharply reproves, and then endeavors, by the evidence of truth, to convince.

His reproof is very close and warm; he calls them foolish, v. 1. Yea, he represents them as bewitched, or enchanted, by the arts and snares of their seducing teachers, and so far deluded as to act very unlike themselves. Their fault was, they did not obey the truth, did not adhere to the gospel-way of justification, wherein they had been taught, and which they had professed to embrace. Several things proved and aggravated their folly.

1. Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth as crucified among them; i. e. they had had the doctrine of the cross preached to them, and the sacrament of the Lord's supper administered among them, in both which Christ crucified had been set before them. Now, it was the greatest madness for them who had had acquaintance with such sacred mysteries, and admittance to such great solemnities, not to obey the truth which was thus published to them, and signed and sealed in that ordinance.

2. He appeals to their experiences of the working of the Spirit on their souls, v. 2. he puts them in mind, that, on their becoming Christians, they had received the Spirit, that many of them at least had been made partakers, not only of the sanctifying influences, but of the miraculous gifts, of the Holy Spirit; which were eminent proofs of the truth of the Christian religion, and the several doctrines of it, and especially of this, that justification is by Christ only, not by works of law, one of its peculiar and fundamental principles. To convince them of folly, he desires to know, how they came by these gifts and graces; Was it by the works of the law, i. e. the preaching of the necessity of these in order to justification? This they could not say, for that doctrine had not then been preached to them, nor had they, as Gentiles, any pretence to justification that way. Or, was it by the hearing of faith, i. e. the preaching of the doctrine of faith in Christ, as the only way of justification? This, if

they would say the truth, they were obliged to own, and therefore must be very unreasonable to reject a doctrine, whose good effects they had had such experience of. Note, The Spirit is usually communicated by the ministry of the Gospel. And they are very unwise, who suffer themselves to be turned away from the ministry and doctrine which have been blessed to their spiritual advantage.

3. He calls on them to consider their past and present conduct, and thence to judge whether they were not acting very weakly and unreasonably, v. 3, 4. He tells them, they had embraced the doctrine of the Gospel, by means of which they had received the Spirit, wherein only the true way of justification is revealed; thus they had begun well. But now they were turning to the law, and expected to be advanced to higher degrees of perfection, by adding the observance of it to faith in Christ, in order to their justification, which could end in nothing but their shame and disappointment; hereby they were pulling down, with one hand, what they had built with the other, and undoing what they had hitherto done in Christianity. Yea, he further reminds them, that they had not only embraced the Christian doctrine, but suffered for it, too; therefore their folly would be the more aggravated, if now they should desert it; for in this case all that they had suffered would be in vain; it would appear that they had been foolish in suffering for what they now deserted, and their sufferings would be altogether in vain, and of no advantage to them.

4. He puts them in mind, that they had had ministers among them, particularly himself, who came with a divine seal and commission; and he appeals to them, whether the doctrine preached by them, and confirmed by the miraculous gifts and operations of the Spirit, was that of justification by the works of the law, or by the faith of Christ; they very well knew it was the latter; therefore they must needs be inexcusable in forsaking a doctrine so signally owned and attested, for one that had received no such attestations.

fiend Savior, 'God manifested in the flesh.' 2 Cor. 4:3—6. 1 Tim. 3:16. But we must observe, with equal grief and astonishment, the folly of numbers, who have often heard the Gospel, most faithfully and pathetically preached; and yet have at length been fascinated, by plausible deceivers, to refuse obedience to the truth.—They who have begun to fear God, to seek mercy, to pray, and to renounce sin, under the preaching of the Gospel, must be foolish indeed, if they think to make further proficiency by returning to legal dependences, or resting on external observances. It is most grievous to see those who have gone through sharp convictions, and even endured persecutions, for attending on the Gospel, afterwards turning aside, and giving cause to fear, that they have 'suffered so many things in vain.' Indeed, any affliction endured, without profit derived from it, should be considered as a cause for sorrow and humiliation; and if the Lord loveth us, we may be assured, that further and sharper chastisements will follow.

SCOTT.

properly said to fascinate, who so impose on the human senses, and especially the sight, that the thing appears under some other than its real form.' Hyperius. Koppe derives it from *baskein* (for *phaskein*) equivalent to *kakologein*, to calumniate, envy. Paul (I apprehend) only means it in the sense seduce, deceive, lit. talk you over; as conjurors or mountebanks do.' Bl. As to the reality of witching, or witchcraft, a discussion of it would here be out of place, as Paul does not allude directly to it. Set forth.] 'The Gr. was used to denote things written on tables, and hung up to public view.' Mackn. 'Represented before your minds' eyes (as in a picture) crucified.' Bl. Ed.

(5.) Miracles.] 'All the ancient comtrs. rightly understand this, of the supernatural and miraculous gifts of the apostolic age. Nor do the moderns deny this, except some recent ones, who refer it to Paul's miracles, contrary to the context, which refers to the Spirit, given to and received by the Galatians. So Berger acknowledges. Besides, *energein en* [the Gr. here] never means *patrare inter* [manifest among], either in the N. T. or classics; whereas, though it often occurs in Scripture, yet it is always in the sense of, to work or produce effects in any one, and, almost always, miraculous ones. So Mat. 14:2. Mk. 6:19. 2 Cor. 2:8. 1 Cor. 12:6. 1 Thess. 2:13. 2 Thess. 2:7. And numerous are the passages where *en* following *energein* signifies in, not among. This and other such passages, in which the apostles make mention of miracles, of which those to whom they wrote were witnesses, are calculated powerfully to establish and confirm the divine origin of the Christian religion. (Comp. 2 Cor. 12:12. 1 Thess. 1:5, &c.) But if this be the case, what must we think of the judgment or the intentions of those who (as most recent foreign comtrs.) have the temerity to adopt modes of interpretation, destructive of this glorious evidence of the truth of the Gospel?' Bl. And see Baxter, in Doddr., who illustrates the providence of God, in educing early testimony to the truth. Id.



6 Even as Abraham <sup>1</sup> believed God, and it was <sup>k</sup> accounted to him for righteousness.

7 Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children <sup>l</sup> of Abraham.

8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify <sup>m</sup> the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, <sup>n</sup> In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then <sup>o</sup> they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

10 For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: for it is written, <sup>p</sup> Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, <sup>q</sup> The just shall live by faith.

12 And the law <sup>r</sup> is not of faith: but, <sup>s</sup> The man that doeth them shall live in them.

13 Christ <sup>t</sup> hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, <sup>u</sup> Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That <sup>v</sup> the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise <sup>w</sup> of the Spirit through faith.

j Ge. 15:6. Ac. 3:25. k or, imputed. o c. 4:28. l Jn. 8:39. p De. 27:26. m Ro. 4:11—16. q Hab. 2:4. n Ver. 22. r Ro. 10:5, 6. o Ge. 12:3, 22:18. s Le. 13:5. t 2 Co. 5:21. c. 4:5. u De. 21:23. v Ro. 4:9, 16. w Is. 41:3. Eze. 36:27. Joel 2:23, 29.

V. 6—18. The apostle largely proves the doctrine he had reproved them for rejecting; namely, that of justification by faith without the works of the law.

1. From the example of Abraham's justification, v. 6. an argument he uses, Rom. 4. *Abraham believed God, and that was accounted to him for righteousness*; his faith fastened on the promise of God, and on his believing he was owned and accepted of God as a righteous man; on this account he is represented as the Father of the faithful, *who are the children of Abraham*, v. 7. not according to the flesh, but according to the promise; and, consequently, are justified in the same way he was, by faith. To confirm this, the apostle acquaints us, that the promise made to Abraham, Gen. 12:3. had a reference hereunto, v. 8. The Scripture is said to *foresee*, because He that indited the Scripture, did foresee, that God would justify the heathen world in the way of faith; therefore in Abraham, i. e. in the Seed of Abraham, which is Christ, not the Jews only, but the Gentiles also, should be blessed; not only blessed in the seed of Abraham, but blessed as Abraham was, being justified as he was. This the apostle calls *preaching the Gospel to Abraham*; and from thence infers, v. 9. that *they who are of faith*, i. e. true believers, of what nation soever they are, *are blessed with faithful Abraham*.

2. He shows, that we cannot be justified but by faith fastening on the Gospel, because the law condemns us, v. 10. and Deut. 27:26. The condition of life, by the law, is, perfect, personal, and perpetual, obedience; the language of it is, *Do this, and live*; or, as v. 12. *The man that doeth them shall live in them*; and for every failure herein the law denounces a curse. The curse is wrath revealed, and ruin threatened; a separation unto all evil: and this is in full force, power, and virtue, against all sinners, and therefore against all men, for all have sinned, and if, as transgressors of the law, we are under the curse of it, it must be vain to look for justifi-

fication by it. But yet the apostle acquaints us, how we may escape, and regain the favor of God, namely, through faith in Christ, v. 13. By a strange method Christ hath redeemed us, *being Himself made Sin for us*, and so a Curse for us; laid for the present under that infamous token of the divine displeasure, which the law of Moses had put a particular brand upon, Deut. 21:23. and all, *that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ*; that all who believed on Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, might become heirs of Abraham's blessing, and particularly of that great *promise of the Spirit*, which was peculiarly reserved for the times of the Gospel. Hence it appeared, that it was not by putting themselves under the law, but by faith in Christ, that they became the people of God, and heirs of the promise.

3. To prove that justification is by faith, and not by the works of the law, he alleges the express testimony of the O. T. v. 11. Hab. 2:4. quoted, Rom. 1:17. and Heb. 10:38. The design of it is, to show that they only are *just or righteous*, who do truly *live*, who are freed from death and wrath, and restored into a state of life in the favor of God; and that it is only through faith that persons become righteous, and, as such, obtain life and happiness; that they are accepted of God, and enabled to live to Him now, and are entitled to an eternal life in the enjoyment of Him hereafter. Hence the apostle says, *It is evident that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God*, whatever he may be in the account of others: for *the law is not of faith*; that says nothing concerning faith in the business of justification, nor does it give life to those who believe; but the language of it is, *The man that doeth them, shall live in them*, as Lev. 18:5. It requires perfect obedience as the condition of life, and therefore now can by no means be the rule of our justification: this argument may give us occasion to remark, That justification by faith is no new doctrine, but was established

V. 6—9. (6.) *The Scripture foreseeing, &c.*] What can this mean, unless 'the Scripture' is considered as 'the Word of God,' who foresaw, and thus revealed his determinate purpose and foreknowledge in this particular? *Acts 2:22—25.—In thee, &c.*] Not exactly from either the LXX. or the Heb. Gen. 12:3.

(6.) 'This proof, from Abraham, was calculated to produce the greatest effect on the Jews and Judaizers. See the Rabbins, &c.' *Bl. Accounted.*] *Elogisthē.* 'Imputed: set down to his account as an evidence of his being a righteous person.' *Doddr.* *Righteousness.*] *Dikaiosunē.* 'Abraham gave a double and illustrious proof of faith; 1st. in reposing entire confidence in the promise of God, that he should have offspring in extreme old age. Gen. 15:5, 6. 2dly. in not hesitating to sacrifice the child of his age, and source of his hopes. Gen. 22. Ja. 5:21—23. Hence, the expressions of Paul and James are easily to be reconciled. Paul speaks of the former evidence of Abraham's faith; James, of the latter, inasmuch as this was shown in deeds.' *Bl.*

(7.) 'Know ye therefore, and infer from hence, that as faith was the brightest part of the character of this illustrious patriarch, so all they who (are) of faith, all that have the same principle working in their hearts, and engaging them to receive the gospel-dispensation, the same are, and show themselves by a like disposition to be, the children of Abraham, and may expect to inherit the same blessings with him, as, by embracing the Gospel, they manifest the same principle and temper.' *Doddr.*

(8.) *In thee, &c.*] 'Made up from Gen. 12:3. and 22:18.' *Borger.*

(9.) 'To repress this fear of being *accursed*, if they kept not to the law. Paul shows them that, on the contrary, they shall be *blessed* by leaving it, and coming to the faith, as faithful Abraham was blessed.' *Tregyn.*

V. 10—14. The passage here quoted, follows a variety of curses denounced against transgressors of the moral law, which shows that this was principally referred to. Indeed, the legal dispensation, considered as a covenant of works, was intended; believers were always under the covenant of grace, by faith in the Savior, as promised from the beginning, and prefigured especially by the sacrificing of innocent animals; unbelievers always made the whole law a complex covenant of works, and the nation of Israel was under the Sinai-covenant, in respect of the land of Canaan, and their peculiar privileges. *Ex. 19:5, 20:1.* But after the promulgation of the Gospel, the whole became entirely a covenant of works, even as much as that of Adam. 4:21—31. Under a covenant of this kind, in one form or other, all men continue, as the rational and accountable creatures of God, and, being transgressors of his law, even according to their own obscure notions of it, they are exposed to the curse and wrath of God, and remain under it, unless they believe in Christ. *Rom. 2:12—16.* But as the apostle was arguing with *Judaizers*, he led their attention to the written law itself: which could not confer the blessing, but must denounce the curse on them; for they had not 'confirmed it,' or 'continued' from the beginning of their lives to that day, and would not to the end of life continue, 'in all things written in the law,' so as to perform a perfect obedience to them.—It was therefore evident, at the first glance, that no man could be justified by a law,

which peremptorily demanded an obedience so absolute and perfect, as no mere man ever yet rendered to it. But it was further evident, as God had declared another way of justification and eternal life. *Hab. 2:4. Rom. 1:17. Heb. 10:35—39.*—The apostle evidently supposed the Gentiles to be 'under the curse of the law,' as well as the Jews, but in another sense, else they would not have needed this redemption and justification. (11) *The just, &c.*] Or, 'the just by faith shall live.' This is the more exact tr.; and as 'the righteousness of faith' does not secure men from temporal death, in any form, or at any time, so deliverance from eternal condemnation, and to eternal life in heaven, must be intended.—(13) *Curse of, &c.*] As Christ died, not to deliver us from temporal death, but from 'the wrath to come,' it is manifest, that 'the curse of the law,' whether the law of Moses, or any law under which men are supposed to be, is *eternal damnation*, and not temporal or temporary punishment. Christ, indeed, did not suffer eternal damnation; for, being God as well as man, his *temporary* sufferings constituted an infinite satisfaction to divine justice, and the fullest display of the evil of sin, and the honor of the divine law which can be conceived.—Many expositors, who contend against the imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers, in disputing against Socinians, argue for the *vicarious* sufferings of Christ in our stead. Now what is this but *imputation*? He, though perfectly holy, paid the debt which we sinners had contracted. 'It was exacted, and he became answerable.' We sinners, on believing, are 'made the righteousness of God in Him,' and receive the inheritance which He merited. Thus there is a reciprocal imputation. *Is. 53:4—12. 2 Cor. 5:18—21, v. 21. 1 Pct. 2:18—25, v. 24. 3:17, 18.* Yet, as the imputation of sin did not render the Savior either criminal or polluted, but had its effect merely in his receiving the punishment we deserved, so the imputation of his righteousness does not render us free either from criminality or pollution, but merely entitles us to the reward of his righteousness. We have still the same need of humiliation and repentance, of sanctification, and personal obedience and holiness, without which we have no evidence that we are made the righteousness of God in Him.—'I wonder that Jerome and Erasmus should labor, and seek, for I know not what figure of speech, to show that Christ was not called "accursed." Truly in this is placed all our hope; in this the infinite love of God is manifested; in this is placed our salvation, that our God, properly and without any figure, poured out all his wrath on his own Son, . . . caused Him . . . to be accursed, that He might receive us into favor. Finally, without any figure, "Christ was made a Curse for us," in such a manner, that, unless He had been truly God, He must have remained under the curse for ever, from which for our sakes He emerged. For, indeed, if the obedience of the Son of God be figurative and imaginary, so must our hope of glory be.' *Beza.*—(14) *The Spirit.*] The departure of the Spirit of life and holiness, when Adam sinned, left him spiritually dead, and proved him a condemned criminal; the gift of the Spirit of life and holiness, in Christ Jesus, is the source of spiritual life, and the seal of his justification.—The miraculous or extraordinary gifts of the Spirit cannot, therefore, be *exclusively* meant, yet they are specially referred to. (*Note, 1—5.*) (10) *Cursed is every one, &c.*]



15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's <sup>x</sup> covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

16 Now to <sup>y</sup> Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

17 And this I say, *That* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which <sup>z</sup> was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

18 For if <sup>a</sup> the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

19 Wherefore then *serveth* the law? <sup>b</sup> It was added because of transgressions, till the seed <sup>c</sup> should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels <sup>d</sup> in the hand <sup>e</sup> of a mediator.

20 Now a mediator is not a *mediator* of one, but God <sup>f</sup> is one.

<sup>x</sup> or, testament.    <sup>b</sup> Ro. 5:30.    <sup>e</sup> Ex. 20:19—22.  
<sup>y</sup> Ge. 12:3,7 17:7.    <sup>c</sup> ver. 16.    <sup>f</sup> De. 5:22—31.  
<sup>z</sup> Ex. 12:40,41.    <sup>d</sup> Ac. 7:53.    <sup>f</sup> De. 6:4.  
<sup>a</sup> Ro. 4:14.    <sup>e</sup> He. 2:2.

and taught in the church, long before the times of the Gospel. Yea, it is the only way wherein any sinners ever were, or can be, justified.

4. To this purpose, he urges the stability of the covenant God made with Abraham, which was not vacated or disannulled by the giving of the law to Moses, v. 15. &c. Faith had the precedence of the law, for Abraham was justified by faith. It was a promise that he built upon, and promises are the proper objects of faith. God entered into covenant with Abraham, v. 8. and this covenant was

firm and steady; even men's covenants are so, therefore much more his. When a deed is executed, or articles of agreement are sealed, both parties are bound, and it is too late then to settle things otherwise; therefore it is not to be supposed, that, by the subsequent law, the covenant of God should be vacated. The original word, *diathēkē*, signifies both a covenant and a testament. Now the promise made to Abraham, was rather a testament than a covenant. When a testament is become of force by the death of the testator, it is not capable of being altered; therefore the promise that was given to Abraham, being of the nature of a testament, it remains firm and unalterable. But if it should be said, that a grant or testament may be defeated for want of persons to claim the benefit of it, v. 16. he shows that there is no danger of that in this case. Abraham is dead, and the prophets are dead, but the covenant is made with Abraham *and his seed*. And he gives us a very surprising exposition of that. We should have thought it had been meant only of the people of the Jews. 'Nay,' says the apostle, 'it is in the singular number, and points at a single person,—that *Seed is Christ*.' So that the covenant is still in force; for Christ abideth for ever in his Person, and in his spiritual seed, who are his by faith. And if it be objected, that the law, which was given by Moses, did disannul this covenant, because that insisted so much on works, and there was so little in it of faith, or of the promised Messiah; he answers, that the subsequent law could not disannul the precedent covenant or promise, v. 18. *If the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but, says he, God gave it to Abraham by promise*; and therefore it would be inconsistent with his holiness, wisdom, and faithfulness, by any subsequent act to set aside the promise, and so alter the way of justification, which he had thus established. If the inheritance was given to Abraham by promise, and thereby entailed on his spiritual seed, we may be sure that God would not retract that promise; for He is not a man, that He should repent.

V. 19—29. The apostle, having just before been speaking of the promise made to Abraham, and representing that as the rule of our justification, and not the law, lest they should think he did too much derogate from the law, and render it altogether useless, thence takes occasion to discourse of the design and tendency of it, and to acquaint us for what purpose it was given. It might be asked, 'If that promise was sufficient for salvation, wherefore then serveth the law? Or why did God give the law by Moses?' To this he answers;

I. The law was added because of transgressions, v. 19. not to disannul the promise, and to establish a different way of justification from that settled by the promise; but the Israelites, though chosen to be God's peculiar people, being sinners as well as others, the law was given to *convince* them of their sin, and obnoxiousness to the divine displeasure; *for by the law is the knowledge of sin*, Rom. 3:20. and the law entered, that *sin might abound*, Rom. 5:20. it was also intended to *restrain* them from the commission of sin, to awe their minds, and curb their lusts; yet, at the same time, to *direct* them to the true and only way whereby sin was to be expiated, and pardoned, namely, through the death and sacrifice of Christ, which was the special use for which the law of sacrifices and purifications was given.

The apostle adds, that the law was given for this purpose, *till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made*; i. e. either till Christ should come, the principal Seed referred to, or till the gospel-dispensation should take place, when Jews and Gentiles, without distinction, should, on believing, become the seed of Abraham. But when the Seed was come, and a fuller discovery of divine grace in the promise was made, then the law, as given by Moses, was to cease, Heb. 8:7, 8. And though the law, considered as the law of nature, is always in force, to convince of sin, and to restrain from it; yet we are now no longer under the bondage and terror of that legal covenant. The law, then, was not intended to discover another

Nearly from the LXX, which adds *passi [to all]* to what is found in the Heb., which does not at all alter the meaning. (Note, Deut. 26:26.)—(11) *The just, &c.*] Nearly from the LXX. (Hab. 2:4.—(13) *Cursed is every one, &c.*] This varies considerably from the LXX, but it conveys the exact meaning of the passage. Deut. 21:23. SCOTT.

(10) 'Until the text of the Sept. be regularly formed, we cannot fully ascertain how far the apostle followed or deserted that version.' BL.

(13.) *Redeemed.*] *Exēgorasen*: bought us off; the Gr. signifies lit. to liberate a captive by paying a ransom.' BL. *Us.*] Both Jews and Gentiles. So *Doddr.* and *Mackn.*; whom see. *Law.*] Of Moses, to the Jews, and of that more ancient law of works, under which Adam fell, to both Jews and Gentiles. See *Mackn.*, and also on the words *curse* and *tree*. EN.

V. 15—18. The unbelieving descendants of Jacob, were no more interested in the most valuable promises, than the posterity of Ishmael and Esau were; while all believers, though of Gentile extraction, being one with Christ, were included in the Abrahamic covenant, without any concern in the Mosaic law, or the Sinai-covenant. (18) *Gave it.*] See on *Lu. 7:21*. This word always implies a free gift. SCOTT.

(16.) *Seed.*] 'Most of the recent foreign contrs., as *Noesselt* and *Ros.* venture to assert, that by *seed* is here meant not the *Messiah*, but *Christians in general*: and this in direct contradiction to the apostle himself!' *Bloomf.*, whom see: and also *Beza*, *Whitby*, *Wolf*, *Poole*, &c. ED.

(17.) 430.] 'Paul computes not from the *ratification*, but from the *original institution* of the covenant in Gen. 12:3,4. when Abraham was 75 years old, from which period to the birth of Isaac there were the 25 years, which are required to make up the number 430. And so most of our English interpreters.' BLOOMF.

(18.) *Gave.*] 'Gr. graciously gave.' ID.

V. 19—22. *Ordained, &c.*] 'A Mediator' was not appointed to act merely in behalf of one party, in any covenant, but of two at least; yet only one party in the Abrahamic covenant, was present when the law was given, even God Himself. For the nation of Israel was not the other contracting party in that covenant; unbelievers among them had no share in the principal blessings of it, and all believers in every age and nation were concerned in it, by virtue of their union with 'the Seed,' to whom the promise was made. 25—29. 'Moses might indeed mediate a covenant between God and Israel; but he was not authorized to alter or disannul the Abrahamic covenant, which therefore continued in force with all believers, after the giving of the law, exactly as before. *Ev. 19:5. 20:1.*—This does not imply, that Christ was not present, as *JENOVAN*, and the great Agent in the giving of the law; but only that He acted in his *legislative*, and not in his *mediatorial* character, or as representing the whole body of believers.—21) *Given life.*] See on *Jn. 5:21.*—'There is no place in the N. T., in which it doth not signify, *To receive life which any one had not.*' *Leigh.* The use of this word in this connexion implies, that no law can either rescue the condemned

criminal from that death to which he is doomed, or raise 'the dead in sin' to 'newness of life.'—*All under sin.*] 'All men, and whatever can proceed from man, so that it is more emphatical, than if it had been masculine.' *Bezn.* SCOTT.

(19.) *For transgression.*] '1. To restrain them; and if a man do not sin, simply because a law will punish him, his motive to obedience is fear; he abstains from sin, not willingly, nor from the love of virtue, and can this justify him? 2. To increase transgressions, Rom. 8. i. e. to reveal unto a man his sins, his blindness, his misery, his impiety, ignorance, hatred, and contempt of God, death, hell, the judgment, and deserved wrath of God; and the reverse of justification.' *Luther.* 'Their transgressions not only of the ceremonial, but of the moral precepts, would appear more exceeding sinful and dangerous, in proportion to the perspicuity of those precepts, and the awful solemnity with which they were delivered.' *Doddr.* 'So . . . they might be constrained to have recourse to the covenant with Abraham, in which justification was promised through faith, as it is now promised in the Gospel.' *Mackn.* 'It is here shown, that the law was intended to discover transgressions, and their punishment, that the Scripture had concluded all men under sin, v. 10.' *Whitby.* 'That the Jews might either be preserved from idolatry and other crimes, or convicted of their guilt in them, and so be taught to seek after a more effectual method of obtaining pardon, with an earnestness proportionable to the discovery it made, of the malignity of their guilt.' *Doddr. Added.*] 'To the previous law of nature. Every fresh law may be said to be an addition to the law, or body of law.' *Bloomf. By angels.*] See on *Ac. 7:53.* *BL.* 'That the law was given by the ministrution of angels, is apparent from many passages of the SS., (comp. Ps. 68:17. Acts 7:53. Heb. 2:2.) though the Logos did undoubtedly *preside* among them, and it was *in his name* that the proclamation was made by angels, as his heralds and attendants.' *Doddr. Mediator.*] *Mesitēs*: 'and so the Rabbins, and Philo, frequently call Moses.' BLOOMF.

(20.) 'No passage has so much, and to so little purpose, exercised the ingenuity of contrs.' *Bloomf.* 'Not of one only, for the word *mediator* necessarily comprehendeth two, offender and offended, at variance, of whom the one needeth intercession, the other none. But God offendeth no man, and therefore needeth no mediator; we offend God, and have need of one.—After his digression, Paul, then, in v. 21. returns to his purpose.' *Luther. Mackn.* would thus fill out the apostle's syllogisms. 'The law was given in the hand of a mediator, v. 19. Now a mediator is not employed between parties in friendship, v. 20. Wherefore He who gave this law to the Israelites by angels, in the hand of a mediator, was not in friendship with them. But God is in friendship (is one) with all who are righteous: therefore the Israelites were not righteous.' 'But God is only one party in that covenant made with Abraham, of which we have been speaking, and Abraham and his seed, including all that believe, both Jews and Gentiles, are the other. But as Moses only stood between God and Israel, . . . nothing in the [Mosaic] covenant could af-



21 Is the law then against <sup>g</sup> the promises of God? God forbid: for if <sup>h</sup> there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

22 But the Scripture hath concluded all <sup>i</sup> under sin, that the promise <sup>j</sup> by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

24 Wherefore the law <sup>k</sup> was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

26 For ye are all the children <sup>l</sup> of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For <sup>m</sup> as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

<sup>g</sup> Mat. 5:17.

<sup>h</sup> c. 2:21.

<sup>i</sup> Ro. 3:9,19,23.

<sup>j</sup> Ro. 4:11,12,16.

<sup>k</sup> Col. 2:17.

<sup>l</sup> He. 9:9,10.

<sup>l</sup> Jn. 1:12.

<sup>m</sup> Ro. 3:1,2.

<sup>n</sup> Ro. 6:3.

way of justification, different from that revealed by the promise, but only to lead men to see their need of the promise, by showing them the sinfulness of sin, and to point them to Christ, through whom alone they could be pardoned and justified.

As a further proof that the law was not designed to vacate the promise, the apostle adds, It was given to different persons, and in a different manner from the promise, and therefore for different purposes. The promise was made to Abraham, and all his spiritual seed, including believers of all nations, even of the Gentiles as well as Jews; but the law was given to the Israelites as a peculiar people, and separated from the rest of the world. And whereas the promise was given immediately by God Himself, the law was given by the ministry of angels, and the hand of a mediator. Hence it appeared, that the law could not be designed to set aside the promise; for, v. 20. *A mediator is not a mediator of one, of one party only; but God is one, but one party in the promise or covenant made with Abraham; therefore it is not to be supposed, that, by a transaction which passed only between Him and the nation of the Jews, He should make void a promise which He had long before made to Abraham and all his spiritual seed, whether Jews or Gentiles. This would not have been consistent with his wisdom, or with his truth and faithfulness. Moses was only a mediator between God and the Israelites, not be-*

tween God and the spiritual seed of Abraham; and therefore the law, that was given by him, could not affect the promise made them, much less be subversive of it.

II. The law was given to convince men of the necessity of a Savior. The apostle asks, v. 21. as what some might be ready to object, *Is the law then against the promises of God? Do they really clash and interfere with each other? Or do ye not set the covenant with Abraham, and the law of Moses, at variance with one another?* To this he answers, *God forbid*; he was far from entertaining such a thought, nor could it be inferred from what he had said; that consequence would much rather follow from their doctrine than from his; *for if there had been a law given, that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; and in that case the promise would have been superseded, and rendered useless. But that, in our present state, could not be, for the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, v. 22. or declared that all, both Jew and Gentile, are in a state of guilt, and therefore unable to attain to righteousness and justification by the works of the law. That discovered their wounds, but could not afford them a remedy: it showed they were guilty, because it appointed sacrifices and purifications, which were manifestly insufficient to take away sin; therefore the great design of it was, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe; that, being convinced of their guilt, and the insufficiency of the law to effect a righteousness for them, they might be persuaded to believe on Christ, and so obtain the benefit of the promise.*

III. The law was designed for a schoolmaster, to bring men to Christ, v. 24. In the foregoing v. the apostle acquaints us with the state of the Jews under the Mosaic economy; that before faith came, or before Christ appeared, and the doctrine of justification by faith in Him was more fully discovered, they were kept under the law, obliged, under severe penalties, to a strict observance of the various precepts of it; and at that time they were shut up, held under the terror and discipline of it, as prisoners in a state of confinement: the design of this was, that hereby they might be disposed more readily to embrace the faith which should afterward be revealed, or be persuaded to accept Christ when He came into the world, and to fall in with the better dispensation He was to introduce, whereby they were to be freed from bondage and servitude, and brought into a state of greater light and liberty. Now, in that state, he tells them, *the law was their schoolmaster, to bring them to Christ, that they might be justified by faith.* As it declared the mind and will of God concerning them, and at the same time denounced a curse against them for every failure in their duty, so it was proper to convince them of their lost and undone condition in themselves, and

to let them see the weakness and insufficiency of their own righteousness to recommend them to God. And as it obliged them to a variety of sacrifices, &c. which, though they could not of themselves take away sin, were typical of Christ, and of the great sacrifice He was to offer up for the expiation of it, so it directed them (though in a more dark and obscure manner) to Him, as their only Relief and Refuge. And thus it was their schoolmaster, to instruct and govern them in their state of minority, or, as the word *paidagogos* [child-leader] most properly signifies, their servant, to lead and conduct them to Christ, (as children were wont to be led to school by those servants who had the care of them,) that they might be more fully instructed by Him as their Schoolmaster, in the true way of justification and salvation, which is only by faith in Him, and which He was appointed to give the fullest and clearest discoveries of. But lest it should be said, If the law was of this use and service under the Jewish, why may it not continue to be so under the Christian state too; the apostle adds, v. 25. *that after faith is come, and the gospel-dispensation had taken place, under which Christ, and the way of pardon and life, through faith in Him, are set in the clearest light, we are no longer under a schoolmaster; we have no such need of the law to direct us to Him, as there was then.*

In closing the ch. he acquaints us with our privilege by Christ:

(1.) *That we are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ, v. 26.* And here, observe, [1.] The great privilege real Christians enjoy under the Gospel; *they are the children of God; no longer accounted servants, but sons; not now kept at such a distance, and under such restraints, as the Jews were, but allowed a nearer and freer access to God; yea, admitted into the number, and having a right to all the privileges, of his children.* [2.] How they come to obtain this privilege, and that is, *by faith in Christ Jesus; having accepted Him as their Lord and Savior, and relying on Him alone for justification and salvation, they are hereupon admitted into this happy relation to God, and are entitled to the privileges of it; for, Jn. 1:12. as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.*

And this faith in Christ, whereby they become the children of God, he reminds us, v. 27. was what they professed in baptism; for he adds, *As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.* Having in baptism professed their faith in Him, they were thereby devoted to Him, and had, as it were, put on his livery, and declared themselves to be his servants and disciples; and being thus become the members of Christ, they were through Him owned and accounted as the children of God. Here note, 1st. Baptism is now the rite of admission into the Christian church, as circumcision was into

to let them see the weakness and insufficiency of their own righteousness to recommend them to God. And as it obliged them to a variety of sacrifices, &c. which, though they could not of themselves take away sin, were typical of Christ, and of the great sacrifice He was to offer up for the expiation of it, so it directed them (though in a more dark and obscure manner) to Him, as their only Relief and Refuge. And thus it was their schoolmaster, to instruct and govern them in their state of minority, or, as the word *paidagogos* [child-leader] most properly signifies, their servant, to lead and conduct them to Christ, (as children were wont to be led to school by those servants who had the care of them,) that they might be more fully instructed by Him as their Schoolmaster, in the true way of justification and salvation, which is only by faith in Him, and which He was appointed to give the fullest and clearest discoveries of. But lest it should be said, If the law was of this use and service under the Jewish, why may it not continue to be so under the Christian state too; the apostle adds, v. 25. *that after faith is come, and the gospel-dispensation had taken place, under which Christ, and the way of pardon and life, through faith in Him, are set in the clearest light, we are no longer under a schoolmaster; we have no such need of the law to direct us to Him, as there was then.*

Interpret, 'God is consistent with Himself, and remains the same, i. e. always stands to his promises.'  
(22, 23.) *Concluded.* 'Sin is represented as a jailor, holding the whole human race in duress.' Bloomf. 'This law of faith, or method of justification, came at the fall; it was then established: and till it came, Adam was kept in ward without hope, under the law he had broken. In like manner the Gentiles, under the law of nature, and the Jews, under the law of Moses, were kept in ward as criminals, and had no hope of pardon, but what the law of faith gave them, as made known obscurely in the first promise, Gen. 3:15. and afterwards in the covenant with Abraham.'

V. 23—25. This admits of an obvious accommodation to the believer's experience, and the first use of the moral law, in bringing men to Christ: but the above [as in Henry] is the evident scope of the apostle's argument.—God also fully pardoned the sins of the upright Jews, and freed them from the punishments of the other life; but not by virtue of the blood of bulls and goats, . . . but by virtue of their faith in the Messiah, owned by them to be the Messiah their Righteousness.' Whitby. SCOTT.

(24.) *Schoolmaster.* Paidagogos: 'the servant [often a freed man, sometimes a slave, Bl.] who attended the children of great men to their exercises and to schools; also the servant who taught children their letters, and superintended their behavior. They were generally persons of rigid manners.' Mackn. Bl. conjectures, they also 'superintended the

study of their lessons, and assisted them in preparing for the master (epitropos).' They also attended them at public spectacles. See Bl.

ED.  
V. 26—29. It is generally supposed, that the apostle alludes to the custom of baptized persons putting off their old garments; and putting on new, clean, or white raiment, after they had been baptized; but it is by no means certain, that this custom prevailed at so early a period; at least the sacred writers do not mention it. Indeed the connexion of v. 27. with that which precedes, shows, that 'the faith in Christ,' which was publicly professed in baptism, and not the mere outward administration, (whether the baptized person had faith or not,) was especially intended.—'God now looking on them, there appears nothing but Christ; they are, as it were, covered all over with Him, as a man is with the clothes that he hath put on, and hence, in the next v. it is said, they are all one in Christ Jesus, as if there were but that one person.' Locke. The learned writer indeed connects this high privilege with the profession of the Gospel; but certainly it cannot belong to a hypocritical profession.—'Baptism, under the Gospel, as the rite of initiation, is as effectual for making us the sons of God, as circumcision was under the law.' Mackn. We may also add, 'And no more effectual.' Rom. 2:25—29. 6:3, 4. 1 Cor. 12:12—14. Col. 2:11, 12. Tit. 3:4—7. 1 Pet. 3:21, 22. From the time, when any persons 'believe in their hearts unto righteousness, and with their mouths make confession to salvation,' all other distinctions vanish; they are all members of the mystical body of Christ, and entitled to all its blessings, without any need of the Mosaic law.—The question,



28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

#### CHAP. IV.

1 We were under the law till Christ came, as the heir is under his guardian till he be of age. 5 But Christ freed us from the law: 7 therefore we are servants no longer to it. 14 He remembereth their good will to him, and his to them, 22 and sheweth that we are the sons of Abraham by the freewoman.

NOW I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

n Col. 3:11.

o ver. 7.

p Ro. 8:17.

that of the Jews. Our Lord Jesus appointed it to be so, in the commission He gave to his apostles, Mat. 28:19. and accordingly it was their practice to baptize those whom they had disciplined to the Christian faith; and perhaps the apostle might notice their baptism here, and their becoming the children of God through faith in Christ, professed therein, to obviate a further objection, which the false teachers might be apt to urge in favor of circumcision. They might be ready to say, 'Though it should be allowed that the law, as given at mount Sinai, was abrogated by the coming of Christ, the promised Seed; yet why should circumcision be set aside too, when that was given to Abraham, together with the promise, and long before the giving of the law by Moses?' But this difficulty is sufficiently removed, when the apostle says, *They who are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ*; for from thence it appears, that, under the Gospel,

PRACT. OBS. V. 6—29. We should aim in every good thing to be followers of those, who through faith and patience inherit the promises, and have obtained a good report; and for this end, we ought to study the object, nature, and effects of Abraham's faith. Gen. 22:1—10. P. O. 1—12. Rom. 4. Heb. 6:13—15. 11:8—19. Jam. 2:21—24. Those who partake of his faith, shall surely inherit his blessing, and if we can ascertain that this is our case, we may be sure of sharing all his privileges. But who can, in any other way, escape the curse of the holy law? The sufferings of this 'holy One of God' more loudly warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come, than all the terrors of Sinai, or the curses of the law itself; for how can it be expected, that 'God will spare' any man to whom sin is imputed, seeing 'He spared not his own Son,' when our sins were imputed to Him? (Ps. 32:1, 2. Rom. 4:6—8. 8:32—34, v. 32. 2 Cor. 5:18—21.) Yet, at the same time, Christ, as from the cross, and from the throne of glory, most graciously beseeches sinners to take refuge in Him.—No subsequent transactions, or external alterations, can 'disannul or add to that covenant,' which engages eternal life to every believer. Yet let us not think, that the law was given in vain. The Sinai-covenant, and the ceremonies of the law, have answered their end, and, being fulfilled in Christ, are no more in force; yet are they still replete with instruction to believers; and as the law of Moses was never contrary to the promises of God, to Abraham and his seed; so it would be most absurd to suppose, that the holy, just, and good Law of God, the universal standard of duty, is contrary to the Gospel of Christ, as it is in every way subservient to it, when properly understood and used.—Men in general, even under the Gospel, continue shut up as in a dungeon, as loving their chains; being blinded, intoxi-

baptism comes in the room of circumcision, and that they who by baptism are devoted to Christ, and do sincerely believe in Him, are, to all intents and purposes, as much admitted into the privileges of the Christian state, as the Jews were by circumcision into those of the legal, Phil. 3:3. and therefore there was no reason why the use of that should still be continued. Note, 2dly, in our baptism we put on Christ; therein we profess our discipleship to Him, and are obliged to behave ourselves as his faithful servants; being baptized into Christ, we are baptized into his death, that, as He died and rose again, so, in conformity therunto, we should die unto sin, and walk in newness of life, Rom. 6:3, 4. It would be of great advantage to us, did we oftener remember this.

(2.) That this privilege of being the children of God, and of being by baptism devoted to Christ, is now enjoyed in common by all real Christians. The law, indeed, made a difference between Jew and Greek, giving the Jews, on many accounts, the pre-eminence; but it is not so now; all stand on the same level, and are one in Christ Jesus, are accepted of Him, and become the children of God through faith in Him.

(3.) That, being Christ's, we are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Their judaizing teachers would make them believe that they must be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses, or they could not be saved. 'No,' says the apostle, 'there is no need of that; for, if ye be Christ's, if ye sincerely believe on Him, who is the promised Seed, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, ye thereby become the true seed of Abraham, the father of the faithful, and, as such, are heirs according to the promise, and consequently are entitled to the great blessings and privileges of it.'

Therefore, on the whole, since it appeared that justification was not to be attained by the works of the law, but only by faith in Christ, and that the law of Moses was a temporary institution, given for such purposes as were only subservient to, and not

subversive of, the promise; and that now, under the Gospel, Christians enjoy much greater and better privileges than the Jews did under that dispensation, it must needs follow, that they were very unreasonable and unwise, in hearkening to those, who at once endeavored to deprive them of the truth and liberty of the Gospel.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—7. The apostle, in this ch., is still carrying on the same general design as in the former; and,

I. He acquaints us with the state of the O. T. church: it was like a child under age; the Mosaic economy, which they were under, was what they could not fully understand the meaning of, 2 Cor. 3:13. As that was a dispensation of darkness, so it was of bondage too; for they were tied to a great number of burdensome rites and observances, by which, as by a kind of first rudiments, they were taught and instructed, and kept in a state of subjection, like a child under tutors and governors.

II. He acquaints us with the much happier state of Christians under the gospel-dispensation, v. 4—7. The Person employed to introduce this new dispensation, was no other than the Son of God Himself, the only begotten of the Father; He who was truly God, for our sakes became man; and He who was Lord of all, consented to come into a state of subjection, and to take on Him the form of a servant; and one great end of all this, was, *To redeem them that were under the law*; to save us from that intolerable yoke, and to appoint gospel-ordinances more rational and easy. He had, indeed, something more and greater in his view, for He came to suffer and die for us, that hereby He might redeem us from the wrath of God, and from the curse of the moral law, which, as sinners, we all lay under. But that was one end of it, and then the more servile state of the church was to come to a period, and a better to succeed in the place of it; for He was sent to redeem us, *that we might receive the adop-*

ated, and lulled asleep by Satan, through worldly pleasures, interests, and pursuits. But the awakened sinner discovers his dreadful condition. The more he examines, or labors to escape, the fuller conviction he receives that he cannot effect his own deliverance; then he learns, that the mercy and grace of God form his only hope, and, though his doctrinal knowledge may be scanty, he is 'shut up to the faith, that will shortly be revealed' to him. Eph. 5:8—14. v. 14. The precepts and sanction of the law urge him on to duty, and restrain him from sin, even while they discourage him, and fill him with terrors; and thus, by a kind and beneficial severity, the law is made use of by the convincing Spirit, to show him his need of Christ, and to bring him to rely on his righteousness, propitiation, and mediation, 'that he may be justified by faith.' Then he ceases to be under the tuition of the law, as 'a schoolmaster,' and to be alarmed by its terrors, except as he lives beneath his privileges; yet the precept becomes, by the teaching of the Spirit of Christ, his guide in the delightful path of evangelical obedience, his beloved rule of duty, and his standard of daily self-examination. In this use of it, he learns continually to depend more simply on the Savior, and it puts energy into his prayers, and endears the promises to his soul. Thus sinners 'become the children of God by faith in Christ,' and, being 'baptized into Him,' by the converting grace of the Holy Spirit, they put on Christ, and stand accepted in Him; and all, who thus belong to Him, and are one with Him, are 'the children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise.' Rom. 4:9—17. 11:16—21. But no outward forms or profession can ensure these blessings, for 'if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' Rom. 2:5—9. SCOTT.

concerning the baptism of infants, is not at all affected by the apostle's language in this passage; for the same way of arguing, by which some have attempted to prove, that they ought not to be baptized because incapable of believing, would also prove them incapable of salvation; Mk. 16:14—16. and also prove, that the male infants of Israel ought not to have been circumcised.—The mention of 'male and female,' in this connexion, and here alone, evidently refers to the difference between circumcision, as restricted to the males, and baptism which is administered to females also 1 Cor. 7:10—14. Col. 3:7—11.—Slaves are now the Lord's freemen, and freemen the Lord's servants; and this consideration makes the free humble, and the slave cheerful.' Doddr. 1 Cor. 7:17—24.

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. The heir of an estate, during his minority, is excluded from the possession of it, and even kept in subjection. And this continues till the time 'appointed by his father,' in his will or otherwise, for his coming of age, and being put in possession of the estate. Thus the church was held in a degree of bondage under the Mosaic law, till the coming of Christ; as being in its childhood, and under tuition. These observances are called 'the elements of this world.' They taught the simplest rudiments of religious knowledge, as the alphabet

contains the first principles of science. Heb. 5:11—14. 6:1—3. And the external ceremonies of that dispensation were suited to the ideas of worldly men, and in many things similar to the rites of other nations, rather than the most suitable means of spiritual worship, or adapted to those, who were matured in spiritual judgment and affections. The splendid temple, the priests in their sacred vestments, the multiplied sacrifices and religious festivals, and other things of the same kind, when their typical meaning and use were undiscerned or neglected, were coincident with the gross apprehensions of carnal men concerning God and his worship. Unbelievers had always thus perverted them, and even believers were held in comparative darkness and bondage, by so many external observances. SCOTT.

(2.) Tutors.} *Epitropoi.* Governors.} *Oikonomoi*: if there was a difference, the former are thought to be guardians by law, the latter those appointed by parents. Others think the former synonymous with *paidagogoi*, [persons set over children,] and the latter, to mean those aged servants, to whom was committed, together with the care of the domestic affairs, the superintendance of the education of the children. It is perhaps unnecessary to press on the exact sense of these terms, and their difference. El. Comp. Gen. 24:1. 15:2. ED.



3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world :

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit<sup>b</sup> of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son ; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye<sup>c</sup> again to the weak and beggarly<sup>d</sup> elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage ?

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain.

[Practical Observations.]

12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am ; for I am as ye are : ye have not injured me at all.

a or, rudiments. b Ro. 8:15,17. d or, rudiments.  
Col. 2:8,20. c or, back.

tion of sons ; that we might no longer be accounted and treated as servants, but as sons grown up to maturity, who are allowed greater freedoms, and admitted to larger privileges, than while under tutors and governors. This the course of the apostle's argument leads us to notice, as one thing intended by this expression, though, no

doubt, it may also be understood as signifying that gracious adoption which the Gospel so often speaks of, as the privilege of those who believe in Christ. Israel was God's son, his first-born, Rom. 9:4. But now, under the Gospel, particular believers receive the adoption ; and, as an earnest and evidence of it, they have together therewith the Spirit of adoption, putting them on the duty of prayer, and enabling them in prayer to eye God as a Father, v. 6. And hereupon, the apostle concludes this argument, by adding, v. 7. that now, under the gospel-state, we are no longer under the servitude of the law, but, on our believing in Christ, become the sons of God, are accepted of Him, and adopted by Him ; and, being the sons, are also heirs of God, and entitled to the heavenly inheritance, Rom. 8:17. so that it must needs be the greatest weakness and folly to turn back to the law, and to seek justification by the works of it.

V. 8—11. In these vs. the apostle puts them in mind of what they were before their conversion, and what a blessed change that had made on them ; thence he endeavors to convince them of their great weakness in hearkening to those who would bring them under the bondage of the law of Moses.

1. They were grossly ignorant of the true God, and the way wherein He is to be worshipped ; they were under the worst of slaveries, employed in a great number of superstitious and idolatrous services to those, who, though accounted gods, were yet really no gods, but mere creatures, perhaps of their own making, and therefore utterly unable to hear and help them.

2. Now they had known God ; they were brought to the knowledge of the true God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, whereby they were recovered out of their former ignorance and bondage ; or rather were known of God ; it was not owing to themselves, but to Him ; it was the effect of his free and rich grace toward them, and as such they ought to account it ; therefore hereby they were laid under the greater obligation to adhere to the liberty wherewith He had made them free. All our acquaintance with God begins with

Him ; we know Him, because we are known of Him.

3. Hence he infers the unreasonableness and madness of their suffering themselves to be brought again into a state of bondage ; he speaks of it with surprise and deep concern of mind, that such as they should do so, v. 9. They had the less reason for it, since they had never been under the law of Moses, as the Jews had been ; therefore they were more inexcusable than the Jews themselves, who might be supposed to have some fondness for that which had been of so long standing among them. Besides, what they suffered themselves to be brought into bondage to, were such things as had no power in them to cleanse the soul, or to afford any solid satisfaction to the mind, and were only designed for that state of pupillage under which the church had been, and which was now come to a period ; therefore their weakness and folly were the more aggravated, in submitting to them, and in symbolizing with the Jews in observing their various festivals, here signified by days, and months, and times, and years.

4. Hereupon he expresses his fears. He had been at great pains in preaching the Gospel to them, and endeavoring to confirm them in the faith and liberty of it ; but now they were giving up these, and thereby rendering his labor fruitless and ineffectual, and this could not but deeply affect him. Those will have a great deal to answer for, on whom the faithful ministers of Jesus Christ bestow labor in vain.

V. 12—16. That these Christians might be the more ashamed of their defection from the truth of the Gospel, Paul here reminds them of the great affection they formerly had for him and his ministry, and puts them on considering how very unsuitable their present behavior was to what they then professed.

1. How affectionately he addresses them ; and thus he endeavors to mollify their spirits toward him, that so they might the better receive the admonitions he was giving them ; teaching us, that, in reproving others, we should take care to convince them that our reproofs do not proceed from any private

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—11. While we are or ought to be thankful for the light, liberty, and privileges of the Gospel, we should cheerfully submit to the restraints and corrections of our heavenly Father, in this our state of education for perfect felicity, and patiently wait for the time appointed by Him for our admission to it ; and we ought to delight in the 'easy yoke' of our Redeemer, whose 'service is perfect freedom.' Mat. 11:28—30. May we, by a filial temper and conduct, at all times

evince our adoption ; and may 'the Holy Spirit thus witness with our Spirit, that we are the children and heirs of God.'—Idolatry consists, in 'worshipping what, by nature, is no God ;' surely then the worship of saints and angels is turning again to *heathenism* ; and every scriptural example of worship rendered to Christ, demonstrates, that He is, 'by nature,' 'God over all, blessed for evermore.' SCOTT.

(3.) *Of the world.*] *Kosmou*, material, physical, natural. Ed. 'All not Christians. *Elements of religion*, especially fitted to the capacities of ignorant and uncivilized persons, such as are usually delighted with external ceremonies. Heb. 5:2. 'Col. 2:8, 20.' Bl. 'The Jewish rituals might be called *worldly elements*, not only on account of the relation which they had to *worldly things*, by which they were adapted to the low conceptions of children, who are most affected with sensible objects, and have no taste for spiritual and heavenly things ; but also because the same kind of things had before obtained in the world, and were in use among the heathens, though under the Mosaic law they were directed to a better object and end.—Some refer it to the unfitness of the Israelites, in the infancy of their commonwealth, for receiving a more rational and sublime plan of religion, having been used in Egypt to so many pompous ceremonies.' Doddr. Christian ! Dost thou receive the religion of Christ in Spirit and in truth ? Ed.

V. 4—7. *Made of a woman.*] By his miraculous conception in the womb of the virgin, made, or born, (as some copies read it,) of a woman, and emphatically *her seed*, by receiving his human flesh of her substance. Thus He was also '*made under the law*,' being born of a Jewess, and the reputed Son of a Jew, and circumcised ; that so, being 'under the law,' as a covenant of works, He might, as the Surety of the church, in every way answer its full demand. He was pleased, for between 30 and 40 years, to tabernacle here on earth, in perfect obedience to the whole law ; and at length to give Himself, a spotless sacrifice of infinite value, 'to redeem those, who were under the law,' and its righteous curse or condemnation, from that awful curse. 3:10—14. Sc.

(6.) '*Selden* brings a very pertinent quotation from the Babylonian Gemara, to prove, that it was not allowed to *slaves* [v. 1.] to use the title of *Abba*, in addressing the *master* of a family to which they belonged, or the correspondent title of *Imma*, or *mother*, when speaking to the mistress of it.' Doddr.

V. 8—11. The preceding argument fully proved, that even Jewish converts were redeemed from the yoke of the ceremonial law, as well as from the curse of the covenant of works. How absurd then would it be, for Gentiles to adopt that abrogated system ! In this sense alone could the Galatians be said 'to turn again to the weak and beggarly elements ;' (for they had not before been under the ceremonial law) ; in that, when delivered from idolatry, they were about to substitute the ab-

rogated ceremonial law, in the place of the heathen superstitious, and to bring themselves into bondage to judaizing teachers and pharisaical traditions, after having been emancipated from the pagan priests. (9) *Beggarly, &c.*] 'Thus he calls these rites in themselves, and considered apart from Christ.' Beza. 'Paul calls them "weak and beggarly elements," whereby it should seem, they were empty of all spiritual meaning. I answer, such they were become, indeed, when Christ was once come, . . . when the grace signified in them was brought out into the light, when the inwrapped promises were unfolded and revealed, they were then as empty shells, and like carcasses whose soul was gone. So long as a shell contains a kernel unseen, so long it is full ; when it comes forth to outward view, then the shell is empty. Even so it is with the elements of the law.' Mede.—The best illustration of the absurd conduct, which the apostle ascribes to the Galatians, may be found in the church of Rome, in which the worship of saints and angels succeeded to that of the inferior deities ; the superstitious and often licentious festivals multiplied among them, to those which had been used in pagan Rome. In short, almost every part of the idolatrous worship of pagan Rome, has its counterpart in that of antichristian Rome—this may be clearly perceived by any man, who will take the pains to compare many passages in Virgil, and other Latin and Greek poets, with the rituals of the church of Rome. [See Dr. Middleton's 'Popery Unmasked.' Ed.]

(9.) *Known of, &c.*] 'Brought by God to a knowledge of Him, as 1 Cor. 8:3.' Beza, Schl., &c. 'Recognised as God's own sons, and approved by *spiritual gifts* already imparted to some of them.' Grot., Bl. Weak.] 'As having no sufficient power to cleanse the soul from sin, and justify the sinner in God's sight. *Beggarly*,] or poor, as they could not confer the spiritual riches of the Gospel, pardon, peace, and the assurance of enjoying life and happiness.' Doddr.

(11.) *Affraid.*] 'Some give one reason for this fear, that, as the Sanhedrim regulated the feasts, &c., they would be brought immediately under their power, and so their Christianity be altogether endangered.' In.

V. 12—16. 'The apostle tempers whatever he might seem to have said more sharply than usual, by an admirable, and therefore no doubt a divine management ; so declaring his good-will to the Galatians, that when they read it, unless they were wholly desperate, they could not



13 Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first :

14 And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected : but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

17 They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

18 But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.

19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

20 I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

[Practical Observations.]

e 1 Co. 2:3. h or, what was. i 1 Co. 4:15.  
f 2 Sa. 19:27. i Ro. 10:2. m or, I am per-  
Mal. 2:7. j or, us. pleased for you.  
g Mat. 10:40. k 1 Co. 15:58.

pique or resentment, but from a sincere regard to the honor of God and religion, and their truest welfare; for then they are likely to be most successful, when they appear to be most disinterested.

2. How he magnifies their former affection to him, that hereby they might be the more ashamed of their present behavior toward him. To this purpose, (1.) He puts them in mind of the difficulty he labored under, when he came first among them, v. 13. What his infirmity was, which in the following words he expresses by his temptation in his flesh, (though, no doubt, it was well known to the Galatians,) we have no certain knowledge; some take it to have been the persecutions he suffered; others, to have been something in his person, or manner of speaking, which might render his ministry less acceptable, referring to 2 Cor. 10:10. and to ch. 12:7—9. But, whatever it was, it seems it made no impression on them to his disadvantage. For, (2.) He notices,

PRACT. OBS. V. 12—20. It behooves us, when we think ourselves unkindly treated, to recollect the instances, in which we experienced the candor and affection of our hearers, and when they overlooked those infirmities and defects, if not instances of misconduct, which we feared would have occasioned the rejection of our message. We may also remind them, when they seem about to turn aside, of those tender and sweet seasons, when they welcomed the Gospel as preached by such poor worms; and when their hearts were so full of 'blessedness,' that they scarcely knew how sufficiently to express their gratitude, even to the instruments of their hopes and consolations. Contrasting these happy seasons with that coldness and disaffection, which too frequently follow, without any apparent reason, we may, with efficacy, inquire,

but acknowledge his lenity with tears.' Beza.—Being desirous of considering the Galatians as his brethren in Christ, he affectionately entreated them to 'be as he was,' as cordial in their love to him, as he was in his love to them; or rather, of one mind with him, respecting justification and the Mosaic law; for 'he was as they were,' though he had been 'zealous for the law,' (as they were now become!) yet he now trusted only in Christ, and put no more confidence in the law, than if he had been a Gentile; and he entreated them in this to imitate him.—Doubtless the apostle here spake of 'his thorn in the flesh,' which must therefore have been some perceivable infirmity, that exposed him to inward temptations, and to the contempt of his enemies; and indeed it is absurd to explain this of his persecutions, which were no plausible reason why he should be despised, but the contrary.

SCOTT.

(12.) 'This v. is obscure from its extreme brevity. Morus, Macka., Grot., Wolf, and Whit., think there is here a description of mutual love; since the beloved object is another self. But I assent to Koppe and Berger, that this sense cannot be elicited from the words. The following sense (of the Syr. and Arab., Ham., Starck, Zeltner, Beausobre,

that, notwithstanding his infirmity, they did not despise or reject him on the account of it, but, on the contrary, showed him [the very highest] respect; even as though an angel of God, or Jesus Christ Himself, had preached to them. Yea, so great was their esteem of him, that, if it would have been any advantage to him, they could have plucked out their own eyes, and have given them to him. How uncertain the respects of people, and how easily they are drawn into a contempt of those for whom they once had the greatest esteem and affection! We should therefore labor to be accepted of God, for it is a small thing to be judged of man's judgment, 1 Cor. 4:3.

3. How earnestly he expostulates with them hereupon, v. 15. As if he had said, 'Time was, when you expressed the greatest joy and satisfaction in the glad tidings of the Gospel, and were very forward in pouring out your blessings on me, as the publisher of them; whence is it that you are now so much altered, that you have so little relish of them, or respect for me? You once thought yourselves happy in receiving the Gospel; have you now any reason to think otherwise?' The more to impress on them a just shame of their present conduct, he again asks, v. 16. 'How is it that I, who was heretofore your favorite, am now accounted your enemy? Can you pretend any other reason for it, than that I have told you the truth, endeavored to acquaint you with, and to confirm you in, the truth of the Gospel? And if not, how unreasonable must your disaffection be! It is no uncommon thing for men to account those their enemies, who are really their best friends; and ministers may create enemies to themselves by the faithful discharge of their duty. Yet they must not forbear speaking the truth, for fear of offending others, and drawing their displeasure on them. And lastly, they may be easy in their own minds, when conscious, that, if others are become their enemies, it is only for telling them the truth.'

V. 17, 18. The apostle having, just before, been expostulating with the Galatians about the change of their behavior toward him, he here gives them the character of those false teachers who made it their business to draw them away; which, if they would attend to, they might soon see how little reason they had to hearken to them; he tells them they were designing men, who were aiming to set up themselves, and who, under their specious pretences, were more consulting their own interest than theirs; 'They zealously affect you,' says he; 'they show a mighty respect, and pretend a great deal of affection for you, but not well; not with any good design, for they would exclude

you, to engage your affections to them, draw them off from me, and from the truth, that so they may engross you to themselves.' Observe, It is the usual way of seducers, to insinuate themselves into people's affections, and so draw them into their opinions, and so draw them into their opinions. Whatever pretences such may make, they have usually more regard to their own interest than that of others, and will not stick at ruining the reputation of others, if by that mean they can raise their own. On this occasion the apostle gives us an excellent rule, v. 18. What our tr. renders, in a good thing, some render, to a good man, and so consider the apostle as pointing to himself; this sense, they think, is favored both by the preceding context, and the following, and not only when I am present with you; which may be as if he had said, 'Time was, when ye were zealously affected toward me; ye once took me for a good man, and have now no reason to think otherwise of me; surely then it would become you to show the same regard to me, now I am absent, which ye did when I was present.' But if we adhere to our own tr., the apostle here furnishes us with a very good rule to direct and regulate us in the exercise of our zeal; two things to this purpose he more especially recommends to us; (1.) That it be exercised only on that which is good; And, (2.) That herein it be constant and steady. Happy would it be for the church of Christ, if this rule was better observed among Christians!

V. 19, 20. That the apostle might the better dispose these Christians to bear with him, in the reproofs he was obliged to give them, he here expresses his great affection to them, and very tender concern for their welfare; he still bore the same respect to them he had formerly done; (notwithstanding their fickleness;) nor was he like their false teachers, but his concern was sincere, for their good; he sought not theirs, but them. He assures them he was their friend; nay, had the bowels of a parent toward them. He calls them his children, as he justly might, since he had been the instrument of their conversion; yea, he styles them his little children, which denotes a greater degree of tenderness and affection to them, and possibly, that in their present behavior they showed themselves too like little children, who are easily wrought on by the arts and insinuations of others. He expresses his earnest desire of their welfare and soul-prosperity, by the pangs of a travelling woman; and the great thing he was in so much pain about, and so earnestly desirous of, was, that Christ might be formed in them; that they might become Christians indeed, and be more confirmed and established in the faith of the Gospel. Whence note, I.

'what is become of their blessedness, and whether we be looked on as enemies, because we tell them the truth. Alas! this is often the case, not only with false professors of the Gospel, but even with misguided believers.—At such times, the most affectionate warnings, and scriptural arguments, generally give offence, and increase alienation. This is a most trying situation to the faithful minister. He cannot cease to feel for his deluded children, and to long after them. Though he could bear to lose their affections, he cannot be willing that they should lose their souls; he must remind them, that their zealous affections should be towards more substantial good, than new notions and new teachers, as in the sight of God, and not merely in the presence of their ministers.

SCOTT.

Wells, Doddr., Wets., Ros., Semler, and Schl.) seems least exceptionable. 'Follow my example, who was once zealous for it, in renouncing the law for the gospel, and now live, as do the Gentiles, released from the law.'

BLOOMF.

(15.) The blessedness ye spake of.] Lit. your happiness, blessedness, i. e. which you felt at having such a teacher: the Gr. has no word for 'spake of.' See Doddr., &c.

Ed.

V. 17—20. Exclude, &c.] Yea, they would even 'exclude them,' from the liberty and salvation of Christ, in order to confirm them in a blind attachment to their own doctrine and party. Some copies read, 'they would exclude us.'

SCOTT.

(17.) You.] 'So the most approved critics read.' Bl., who (after the Gr. comtrs., Vulg., Wells, Koppe, and Berger) tr. 'they imitate and copy your zeal, but with dissimulation, with evil intention.' Exclude, i. e. throw you out of that more perfect spiritual state and knowledge ye have entered, that you might go back into their prison-house of sense and foras, and copy them. For spiritual tyranny best serves its purposes by multiplying forms, and articles of faith.

Ed.



21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law ?

22 For it is written, That Abraham had two sons, the one <sup>n</sup> by a bondmaid, the other <sup>o</sup> by a freewoman.

23 But he *who was* of the <sup>p</sup> bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman *was* by promise.

24 Which things are an <sup>q</sup> allegory: for these are the two <sup>r</sup> covenants; the one from the mount <sup>s</sup> Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

25 For this Agar is mount Sinai, in Arabia, and <sup>t</sup> answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

26 But Jerusalem <sup>v</sup> which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

27 For it is written, <sup>w</sup> Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

28 Now <sup>x</sup> we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

29 But as then, he <sup>y</sup> that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so <sup>z</sup> it is now.

30 Nevertheless what saith <sup>a</sup> the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

31 So then, brethren, we are not

children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

n Ge. 16:15.	t De. 33:2.	x Ac. 3:25.
o Ge. 21:1,2.	u ur, is in the	c. 3:29.
p Ro. 9:7,8.	same rank with.	y Ge. 1:9.
q t Co. 10:11.	v He. 12:22.	z Jn. 15:19.
r or, testaments.	Re. 21:2,10.	a Ge. 21:10,12.
s Sina.	w Is. 54:t.	

The very tender affection faithful ministers bear toward those among whom they are employed. 2. The chief thing they long and even travail in birth for, on their account, is, not so much that they may gain their affections, much less make a prey of them, but that they may be renewed in the spirit of their minds, wrought into the image of Christ, and more fully settled in the Christian faith and life; and how unreasonably must those people act, who suffer themselves to be prevailed upon to desert or dislike such ministers! 3. Christ is not fully formed in men till they are brought off from trusting in their own righteousness, and made to rely only on Him and his righteousness.

As a further evidence of his affection and concern, he adds his desire to be with them, that thereupon he might find occasion to change his voice toward them; for at present he was not so fully acquainted with their state, as to know how to accommodate himself to them; he was full of fears, but would be glad to find matters better with them than he feared, and that he might have occasion to commend instead of thus reproving and chiding.

V. 21—31. In these vs. the apostle illustrates the difference between believers who rested in Christ only, and those judaizers who trusted in the law, by a comparison taken from the story of Isaac and Ishmael. Since they were so very fond of being under the law, he would have them duly to consider what is written therein, referring to Gen. chs. 16. and 21. which if they would do, they might soon see how little reason they had for it. And here,

1. He sets before them the history itself, v. 22, 23. Here he represents the different

state and condition of these two sons of Abraham; that the one *was by a bondmaid*, and the other, *by a freewoman*; and that whereas the former *was born after the flesh*, or by the ordinary course of nature, the other *was by promise*, when in the course of nature there was no reason to expect that Sarah should have a son.

2. He acquaints them with the meaning and design of this history, or the use he intended to make of it, v. 24—27. *These things*, says he, *are an allegory*, wherein, beside the literal and historical sense of the words, the Spirit of God might design to signify something further to us, and that was, That these two, Agar and Sarah, *are the two covenants*, or were intended to typify and prefigure the two different dispensations of the covenant. The former, Agar, represented that which was given from Sinai, which though a dispensation of grace, yet, in comparison of the gospel-state, was a dispensation of *bondage*, and became more so to the Jews, through their mistake of the design of it, and expecting to be justified by the works of it. *For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia*, (mount Sinai was then called Agar by the Arabians,) *and it answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children*; that is, it justly represents the present state of the Jews, who, continuing in their infidelity, and adhering to that covenant, are still in bondage with their children. But the other, Sarah, was intended to prefigure Jerusalem *which is above*, or the state of Christians under the new and better dispensation of the covenant, which is *free* both from the curse of the moral and the bondage of the ceremonial law, and *is the mother of us all*; a state into which all, both Jews and Gentiles, are admitted, on their believing in Christ. And to this greater freedom and enlargement of the church under the Gospel dispensation, which was typified by Sarah, the mother of the promised seed, the apostle refers, Is. 54: 1.

3. He applies the history thus explained, to the present case, v. 28. *Now we, brethren,*

PRACT. OBS. V. 21—31. Not only do allegories and types instruct us, but the plainest language imaginable declares the two covenants, that from Sinai, and that of Christ, to be perfectly distinct, and even of opposite tendency, to those who *now* are under them. They who are 'born of the flesh,' whether of Jewish or Christian parents, but not 'of the Spirit,' John 3:3—11. and who in any degree depend for justification on circumcision, baptism, or any personal obedience whatsoever, or even on creeds, however scriptural, or on being members of this or the other church, however excellent, are under the covenant of works, mere Ishmaelites, bond-slaves, citizens of the earthly Jerusalem, but under condemnation. But those who 'are born of the Spirit,' and so believe

in Christ, trusting only in his merits and grace, are the 'children of the promise,' and of the heavenly Jerusalem; they possess true liberty, and are the heirs of everlasting felicity. Millions have already been thus 'born of God,' in the Gentile world, which once lay desolate; and we should pray, and do what we can in every way, that such places as still continue barren, (alas, how numerous and extensive!) may speedily produce far more converts, than have yet been made in the most flourishing churches; [encouraged as we are by God's gracious promises, and 'the signs of the times;'] and especially, that Israel may speedily be gathered from his abject state, which shall be 'as life from the dead' to the nations of the earth. SCOTT.

(20.) *Change my voice.* 'Adapting my language, so as to accommodate myself to the spiritual state and character of each of you, as I could if present.' See *Crellius*. Ed.

V. 21—31. We should not, perhaps, have discovered this allegory, in the history of Sarah and Hagar, if the apostle had not shown it to us; and much sobriety and discretion ought to be used in thus applying scriptural narrations; yet this transaction was so remarkable, the coincidence so exact, and the illustration so instructive, that we cannot doubt it originally was intended by the Holy Spirit, as an allegory and type of those things, to which the inspired apostle referred it; and it should be observed, that it was adduced, as an *illustration* of the subject under consideration, and not as a direct *argument*, or proof of it. — (27) *Rejoice thou barren, &c.*] From the LXX, which accords to the Heb. Is. 54:1.—(30) *Cast out, &c.*] This varies in things not material to the sense, both from the LXX, and from the Heb. Gen. 21:10. 'An allegory is, when one thing is spoken in words, but another is intended in meaning.' *Schleusner*. SCOTT.

(23.) 'It was intended to verify the somewhat impossible assertion he had before made, that they (the Galatians) were sons of Abraham; q. d. Ye are such, though not after the flesh; just as Isaac was the more genuine son of Abraham, though himself not born after the flesh, but formed by the Spirit, according to the divine promise; whereas Ishmael was born in the common course of nature; and yet he that was after the flesh was a slave, and had no participation in the inheritance; but he that was after the Spirit was the master and heir. What then is to hinder you from being Abraham's genuine sons, since you have become such by regeneration in baptism?' *Theoph., Chrys., Bloomf.* But see the note of *Scott* on 3:26—29. Ed.

(24.) *Borzer, in Bloomf.*, gives the following scheme of correspondence. A. The Jews are *servile*, as the offspring of Hagar was *servile*. B. The Jews are sons *after the flesh*, as Ishmael was *after the flesh*. A. Christians are *free*, as the offspring of Sarah was *free*. B. Christians are sons *through the promise*, as Isaac was *through the promise*. Or, with a reference to the image of a *mother*, thus: A. The Jewish religion is, like Hagar, the mother of slaves. A. The Christian religion, like Sarah, is the mother of a free posterity.' 'I would choose, (says

*Doddr.*) to explain this passage of Paul as an *allusion*, rather than an *argument*: which frees it from many objections and embarrassments to which it would otherwise have appeared liable. If any should urge, that such glosses are of little importance, it may be sufficient to reply, that they were much in the Jewish taste, and that we may assure ourselves, that the apostles were preserved from anything in them which was not perfectly agreeable to the *mind of the Spirit*. On the whole, I entirely agree with Mr. Chandler, that this part of the epistle was not intended to *prove* Christianity, but to *illustrate* the different genius of that and Judaism, and to show, that not all the *carnal* descendants of Abraham, but the *spiritual* offspring only, were *heirs, even* according to the principles which the Jews themselves readily admitted.' *Doddr.* 'This way of reasoning was, to the judaizing zealots, familiar and conclusive.' OWEN.

(24.) A long list of comtrs. in *Bl.* 'understand the Gr., to Agar, as not the name of the bondwoman, Hagar, but the Arabic word, Hagar, a rock or rocky mountain, as Sinai is, and was eminently called. That it bore the name Hagar, is attested by all the ancient commentators, and especially *Chrys.*, himself a native of the E. And so many modern travellers; see *Busching*. El-hagar, also, is the name given to Arabia Petraea.' Ed.

(26.) *Jerusalem from above.* 'The Christian church, the economy of the N. T. (*Schoettg., Wets., Chrys., &c.*); the most common opinion, however, is, that it signifies the *heavenly Jerusalem*: which, however, I see not how we can understand otherwise than of the gospel-dispensation, as the earthly Jerusalem represented the old. So I would combine both senses.' BLOOMF.

(29.) *Persecuted.* 'Vexed; the Gr. denotes injurious treatment of every kind, both by words as well as deeds; as in Gen. 21:9. See also the Rabbins in *Wets.* From Gen. 21:10. &c., it appears, that Ishmael not only *mocked* Isaac, but claimed a share of the inheritance with him, which (as he had no just title [in law] to it, and derided the pretensions of the lawful heir) was a persecution, and thus typified the contempt and violence with which the Jews, the natural seed of Abraham, urged their claim to a spiritual inheritance, deriding and excluding those who expected justification by faith.' Ed.



## CHAP. V.

1 He moveth them to stand in their liberty, 3 and not to observe circumcision: 13 but rather love, which is the sum of the law. 19 He reckoneth up the works of the flesh, 22 and the fruits of the Spirit, 25 and exhorteth to walk in the Spirit.

**STAND** <sup>a</sup> fast therefore in the <sup>b</sup> liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, That if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

4 Christ is become of no effect <sup>c</sup> unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen <sup>d</sup> from grace.

5 For we through the Spirit wait <sup>e</sup> for the hope of righteousness <sup>f</sup> by faith.

<sup>a</sup> Ep. 6:14. <sup>c</sup> Ro. 9:31, 32. <sup>e</sup> Ro. 8:25.  
<sup>b</sup> Ju. 8:32, 36. Ro. d Ilc. 12:15. <sup>f</sup> 2 Ti. 4:8.  
6:18. Ac. 15:10.

says he, we Christians, who have accepted Christ, and rely on Him, and look for justification and salvation by Him alone, as hereby we become the *spiritual*, though not the *natural*, seed of Abraham, so we are entitled to the promised inheritance, and interested in its blessings. But lest these Christians should be stumbled at the opposition they might meet with from the Jews, who were so tenacious of their law as to be ready to persecute those who would not submit to it, he tells them that this was no more than was pointed to in the type; for *as then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit*, they must expect it would be *so now*. But, for their comfort in this case, he desires them to consider what the Scripture saith, Gen. 21:10. *Cast out the bond-woman and her son, for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman*. Though the judaizers should persecute and hate them, yet the issue would be, that Judaism would sink, and wither, and perish; but true Christianity should flourish and last for ever. And then, as a general inference from the whole, or the sum of what he had said, he concludes, v. 31. *So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free*.

CHAP. V. In this ch. the apostle comes to make application of his foregoing discourse.

V. 1—12. This ch., or these vs. in particular are, as it were, the general inference or application of all that discourse in the last ch. Since then we can be justified only by faith in Christ, and not by the righteousness of the law; and that the law of Moses was no longer in force, nor Christians under

any obligation to submit to it; therefore he would have them to *stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and not to be again entangled with the yoke of bondage*.

Here observe, 1. Under the Gospel we are enfranchised; freed from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and from the curse of the moral law; so that we are no longer tied to the observance of the one, nor tied up to the rigor of the other, which curses every one that continues not in all things written therein to do them, *ch. 3:10*. 2. We owe this liberty to Jesus Christ; by his merits He has satisfied the demands of the broken law, and by his authority as a King He has discharged us from the obligation of those carnal ordinances which were imposed on the Jews. And, 3. It is therefore our duty constantly and faithfully to adhere to the Gospel, and to the liberty of it, and not to suffer ourselves, on any considerations, *to be again entangled with the yoke of bondage*, or persuaded to return back to the law of Moses. This general caution, or exhortation, the apostle enforces, in the following verses, by several arguments. As,

I. That their submitting to circumcision, and depending on the works of the law for righteousness, was an implicit contradiction of their faith as Christians, and a forfeiture of all their advantages by Jesus Christ, v. 2—4. This he declares with great solemnity, and much assurance, v. 2, 3. He is not speaking of *mere* circumcision, nor was it his design to say, that none who are circumcised could have any benefit by Christ; for all the O. T. saints had been circumcised, and he himself had consented to the circumcising of Timothy. But he is to be understood as speaking of circumcision in the sense in which the judaizing teachers did impose it, who taught, *that except they were circumcised, and kept the law of Moses, they could not be saved*, Acts 15:1. That this is his meaning, appears from v. 4. where he expresses the same thing by their being *justified by the law*, or seeking justification by the works of it. Now, in this case, if they submitted to circumcision in this sense, he declares that *Christ would profit them nothing; that they were debtors to do the whole law; (which required such an obedience as they were not capable of; [and never would perform;] denouncing a curse against those who failed [in the least article], and condemned them [irremediably];) so that Christ was become of no effect to them; and that they were fallen from grace*. Therefore there was the greatest reason why they should steadfastly adhere to that doctrine they had embraced, and not suffer themselves to be brought under this yoke of bondage. Note, Though Jesus Christ is able to save to the uttermost, yet there are multitudes to whom He shall profit nothing. All who seek to be justified by the law, do thereby render Christ of no effect to them; by building their hopes on the works of the law, they forfeit all their

hopes from Him, for He will not be the Savior of any who do not own and rely on Him as their only Savior.

II. To persuade them to steadfastness in the doctrine and liberty of the Gospel, he sets before them his own example, and that of other Jews who had embraced the Christian religion, v. 5. Though Jews by nature, they looked for justification and salvation only by faith in Christ; and therefore it must needs be the greatest folly in those who had never been under the law, to suffer themselves to be brought into subjection to it, and to found their hopes on its works. Here observe, 1. What Christians wait for, *the hope of righteousness*, i. e. chiefly, the happiness of the other world, called the *hope of Christians*, as being the great object of their hope above everything else, and the *hope of righteousness*, as their hopes of it are founded on righteousness, not their own, but that of our Lord Jesus; for though a life of righteousness is the way that leads to this happiness, yet the righteousness of Christ alone has procured it for us, and we can expect it only on account of that. 2. How they hope to obtain this happiness, *by faith* in our Lord Jesus Christ, not by the works of the law, or anything they can do to deserve it, but only by faith, receiving and relying on Him as *the Lord our Righteousness*. And, 3. Whence it is they thus wait for the hope of righteousness, *through the Spirit*; herein they act under the direction and influence of the Holy Spirit; by his assistance they are both persuaded and enabled to believe on Christ, and to look for the hope of righteousness through Him.

III. He argues from the nature and design of the Christian institution, which was to abolish the difference between Jew and Gentile, and to establish faith in Christ, as the way of our acceptance with God. He tells them, v. 6. *that in Christ Jesus, or under the gospel-dispensation, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision*. While the legal state lasted, there was a difference between Jew and Greek, between those who were, and those who were not, circumcised; but now it was neither here nor there whether a man was circumcised or uncircumcised, neither the one nor the other would recommend him to God; therefore their judaizing teachers were very unreasonable in imposing circumcision on them, and they very unwise in submitting to them herein. But he acquaints them what would avail, and that is, *faith*; such faith in Christ as discovers itself to be true, and genuine, by a sincere love to God and our neighbor. If they had this, it mattered not whether they were circumcised or uncircumcised, but without it nothing else would stand them in any stead.

IV. To recover them from their backslidings, and engage them to greater steadfastness for the future, he puts them in mind of their good beginnings, and calls on them to

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1—6. He [the apostle] did not oppose the observance of the ceremonial law, as evil in itself; but as their dependence on it was wholly incompatible with the method of justification revealed in the Gospel.—It is to be noted, that circumcision is here to be considered, partly from the circumstances of the times, (when it had ceased to be “the seal of the righteousness of faith,” as by baptism it was abolished,) and partly from the sentiments of those adversaries, who were desirous to connect it with Christ, as if some part of salvation resided in it. *Beza*. “If the whole confidence of the soul do not rest on Him for salvation, He will reject those divided regards which are offered to Him, and interpret them as an affront, rather than an acceptable homage.” *Doctr.*—It is not easy to perceive, how they should have justification and salvation from Him, from whom, after the revelation made of Him, they did not expect it; nor have faith in Him for justification, by whom they thought not they should be justified. *Whit.* Sc.

(1.) *Liberty.*] Even “among the Jews the Messiah’s reign was [thought] to be a reign of liberty.” See *Dr. A. C.* Ed.

(3.) *Again.*] “I. e. furthermore, on the other hand. *Whole law.*] “For circumcision demands sacrifices, and observes days; sacrifice requires place, and mode, and purifications. Purification, again, requires other observances, all having a necessary connexion; so that, if you undertake a little of the law, you submit to the burden of the whole.” *Theoph.* BLOOMF.

(4.) *Become of no effect, &c.*] “The Gr. signifies, properly, “to be [370]

freed from, no longer bound to,” as Ro. 7:2. and 6. It must here simply denote *separation from*. Thus the sense is: “ye are separated from all community with, and consequently all benefit from,” &c. So *Theoph. Justified.*] Seek to be justified. So *Æc.* The words following *tes charitos* [tr. from græc] are added by way of explanation, and the sense is: “ye miss of justifying græc.” See *Wets.* Or, as *Borger* explains, (with a reference to us, vs. 5, 6.) “ye no longer profess the Christian religion, and therefore are not to be accounted Christians at all.” *Bl.* “Yea, by this mean, whatever your profession may have been of a regard to Christ, ye are indeed fallen from the grace of the Gospel, and have in effect renounced your expectations from it.” *Down.*

(5.) *Spirit.*] “We (Christians) do not expect or hope for salvation by any external rites, but by the internal feelings, i. e. by faith. So *Borger*, *Ros.*, *Par.*, *Grot.* But this seems a very frigid, feeble, and forced sense. Far preferable is that of *Wolf*, who explains *pneumati* of the doctrine of the Gospel, or the economy of the new covenant, as opposed to the *flesh*, just called *the law*. And to this *Koppe* inclines, thinking it equivalent to *through grace*; as at 4:29. *by the Spirit* is equivalent to *by the promise*. But after all, I see no reason to desert the ancient and common opinion, that *pneuma* here signifies the *Holy Spirit*.—*Wait for.*] The Gr. is very energetic, denoting anxious longing and earnest hoping, *thrusting and stretching forward the neck*, as it were; and Paul seems to have had in mind the beautiful passage, Deut. 28:32. *Comp. Ro. 8:19.* BLOOMF.



6 For in Jesus Christ neither <sup>a</sup> circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which <sup>b</sup> worketh by love.

7 Ye did run well; who did <sup>c</sup> hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth?

8 This persuasion *cometh* not of him that calleth you.

9 A little <sup>d</sup> leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

10 I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded; but he that troubleth you shall bear <sup>e</sup> his judgment, whosoever he be.

11 And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer <sup>f</sup> persecution? then is the offence <sup>g</sup> of the cross ceased.

12 I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

[Practical Observations.]

g 1 Co. 7:19.      back.      k 2 Co. 10:6.  
h 1 Th. 1:3.      j Mat. 13:33.      l e. 6:12.  
Ja. 2:18-22.      i Co. 5:6.      m 1 Co. 1:23.  
i or, drive you

consider whence it was they were so much altered from what they had been, v. 7. 1. He tells them, that at their first setting out in Christianity they had discovered a becoming zeal in it; they *did run well*, lived up to their profession. But they had been obstructed in their progress, and were either turned out of the way, or at least made to flag and falter in it. 2. Therefore, though he well knew, he asks them, and calls on them to ask themselves, *Who did hinder them?* He would have them seriously consider, whether they had any good reason to hearken to those who gave them this disturbance, and whether what they offered was sufficient to justify their present conduct. Note, Young converts must expect that Satan will be doing all he can to divert them from the course they are in; but whenever they find themselves in danger of being turned out of it, they will do well to consider *who hinders them*. Whoever they were that hindered these Christians, the apostle tells them, that by hearkening to them, they were kept from *obeying the truth*, and thereby in danger of losing the benefit of what they had done in religion. If therefore they should suffer themselves to be drawn away, they must needs be guilty of the greatest weakness and folly. Note, The truth is not only to be believed, but to be obeyed; to be received, not only in the light of it, but in the love and power of it. *They* do not rightly obey the truth, who do not steadfastly adhere to it. There is the same reason for our

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-12. While so many are struggling for personal and political liberty, or disputing about it, as the greatest of earthly blessings, let us aspire after and 'stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made his people free;' that walking before God with the humble and obedient confidence of children, we may steadfastly reject every 'yoke of bondage,' with which Satan or his ministers may attempt to entangle us. Especially we should regard the apostle's warnings, to keep clear of all dependence on our own works for justification; as in that case 'Christ will profit us nothing.' It is to be feared, that very large numbers impose on themselves in this matter; they imagine that the

obeying the truth that there was for our embracing it; therefore *they* act very unreasonably, who, when they have begun to run well in the Christian race, suffer themselves to be hindered, so as not to persevere in it.

V. He argues for their steadfastness in the faith and liberty of the Gospel, from the ill rise of that persuasion, whereby they were drawn away from it, v. 8. The opinion or persuasion he here speaks of, was, no doubt, that of the necessity of their being circumcised, and keeping the law of Moses, or of their mixing the works of the law with faith in Christ, in the business of justification. This persuasion did not come of Him that called them, i. e. either of God, by whose authority the Gospel had been preached to them, and they had been called into the fellowship of it; or of the apostle himself, who had been employed as the instrument of calling them hereunto: not from God, for it was contrary to that way of justification and salvation He had established; nor from Paul himself; for, whatever some might pretend, he had all along been an opposer of circumcision; and if in any instance he had submitted to it for the sake of peace, yet he had never pressed the use of it on Christians, much less imposed it on them as necessary to salvation. Thus, he leaves them to judge whence it must arise; and sufficiently intimates, that it could be owing to none but Satan and his instruments, who by this mean were endeavoring to overthrow their faith, and obstruct the progress of the Gospel; and therefore that the Galatians had every reason to reject it, and to continue steadfast in the truth they had before embraced. Note, 1. In order to our judging aright of the different persuasions in religion there are among Christians, it concerns us to inquire, whether they come of Him that calleth us, whether or no they are founded on the authority of Christ and his apostles. 2. If, on inquiry, they appear to have no such foundation, how forward soever others may be to impose them on us, we should by no means submit to them, but reject them.

VI. The danger there was of the spreading of this infection, and the ill influence it might have on others, is a further argument the apostle urges against their complying with their false teachers, in what they would impose on them. To extenuate their fault, they might say, there were but few of those teachers among them, who endeavored to draw them into this persuasion; or, that they complied only in some less matters. Or, they might further say, there were but few among them, who had done so, and therefore he needed not be so much concerned about it. Now, to obviate such pretences, and to convince them there was more danger in it than they were aware of, he tells them, v. 9. that *a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*; that the whole of Christianity may be taint-

ed, and corrupted, by one such erroneous principle; or the whole of the Christian society be infected by one member of it; therefore, that they were greatly concerned not to yield in this single instance; or, if any had done so, to endeavor by all proper methods to purge out the infection from among them. Note, It is dangerous for Christian churches to encourage those among them, who entertain, especially who set themselves to propagate, destructive errors.

VII. That he might conciliate the greater regard to what he had said, he expresses his hopes concerning them, v. 10. He had many fears and doubts about them, yet he hoped that, through the blessing of God on what he had written, they might be brought to be of the same mind with him, and to own and abide by that truth, and that liberty of the Gospel, which he had preached to them, and was now endeavoring to confirm them in. Herein he teaches us, that we ought to hope the best, even of those concerning whom we have cause to fear the worst. That they might be the less offended, and sooner reformed, by the reproofs he had given them, for their unsteadfastness in the faith, he lays the blame of it more on others than themselves; possibly he may point to some one man, who was more busy and forward than others, and the chief instrument of the disorder among them; and this may give us occasion to observe, that in reproving sin and error, we should always distinguish between the leaders and the led. But as for him or them that troubled them, whoever he or they were, he did not doubt but God would deal with them according to their deserts; and out of his just indignation against them, as enemies of Christ and his church, he wishes that *they were even cut off*; not from Christ, and all hopes of salvation by Him, but by the censures of the church, which ought to witness against those teachers, who thus corrupted the purity of the Gospel. Those, whether ministers or others, who set themselves to overthrow the faith of the Gospel, and disturb the peace of Christians, do thereby forfeit the privileges of Christian communion, and deserve to be cut off from them.

VIII. To dissuade these Christians from hearkening to their judaizing teachers, and to recover them from their ill impressions, he represents them as men who had used very base and disingenuous methods to compass their designs, for they had misrepresented *him*, the more easily to gain their ends on *them*. They had given out, that Paul himself was a preacher of circumcision, v. 11. It plainly appears that they had reported him to have done so, and that they had made use of this, as an argument to prevail with them to submit to it. Probably they grounded this report on his having circumcised Timothy, Acts 16:3. To prove the injustice of this charge on him, he offers such arguments, as,

merits of Christ will make up for their deficiencies, while their real dependence is placed on their own morality, alms, devotions, or superstitions. May we then keep at a distance from this fatal rock, and be of that number, who 'through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith?' Yet many, who 'seemed to run well' in this evangelical race, have been hindered from obeying the truth, by those who perplexed them with refined notions, or labored to proselyte them to some new sect or form; so that, instead of 'the work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope,' they have turned aside to vain jangling, and zeal for trifling distinctions, and the 'shibboleths' of a party. SCOTT.

(6.) *In . . . Christ.*] 'i. e. in the economy of Christ, in the Christian religion.' WHITT. *Love.*] 'To God, and to man for God's sake.' BL.

V. 7-12. Why did he not command the Galatians to excommunicate them, as he had required the Corinthians to deliver the incestuous person to Satan? 1 Cor. 5:1-5, 9-13. 2 Cor. 2:5-11. It is probable, because the infection had spread so wide in the churches of Galatia, the persons to be censured possessed so great influence, and so very many were concerned in some degree, that there was little prospect, except by the intervention of miracles, that such a command would be obeyed. Their crime, likewise, however ruinous to themselves and others, was of a more plausible nature, than the scandalous conduct of the incestuous Corinthian.—It is also to be noted, that the apostle did not command the Corinthians to excommunicate the false teachers, though he most decidedly testified against them. 2 Cor. 11:13-15. In both cases, having intimated their duty, he waited a more favorable opportunity of interposing his own authority. *Cut off.*] Mk. 9:43, 45. Jn. 12:10, 26.

Ac. 27:32. Cutting off by excommunication is evidently meant, as a mortified limb is separated from the body, to stop the fatal progress of a gangrene. 2 Tim. 2:14-18. This did not in itself imply any degree of persecution, or further punishment; though sometimes accompanied by miraculous judgments. 1 Cor. 4:18-21. 2 Cor. 10:1-6. 13:1-4.

(7.) *Run well.*] An agonistical metaphor, note, 1 Cor. 9: end. Ed. *Hinder.*] 'The Gr. signifies one's going across the race-course, so as to jostle and stop another who is running.'

(8.) *Persuasion.*] 'Craftiness in persuading others, pliability, and obedience, or deceivableness.'

(9.) 'They might say, "This rite is but a little matter;" which supposed objection the apostle answers.'

(10.) *He, &c.*] 'The sing. is used collectively; so the best comtrs. Judgment.] *Krīma*: the result of trial, punishment.' BLOOMR.

(12.) On an objectionable view of some comtrs. here, see BL. Ed.



13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

[Practical Observations.]

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest; which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

n 1 Co. 8:9. q Ro. 8:14, 13. v Ro. 6:14. 8:2.  
 1 Pe. 2:16. r or, fulfil not. w Mat. 15:19.  
 o 1 Ju. 3:18. e Ro. 7:21-23. Ep. 5:3-6. Col.  
 p Le. 19:18. Mat. t Ro. 8:6, 7. 3:5, 6. Re. 22:15.  
 23:39, 40. Ja. 2:3. u Ro. 7:15, 19.

if they would allow themselves to consider, could not fail to convince them of it. It was evident, he was hated and persecuted by the Jews; but what account could be given of their behavior toward him, if he had so far symbolized with them as to preach circumcision, and the observance of the law of Moses, as necessary to salvation? For this great point they were contending. He acquaints us, 1 Cor. 1:23. that the preaching of the cross of Christ, (or the doctrine of justification and salvation only by faith in Christ crucified,) was to the Jews a stumbling-block. What they were most offended at in Christianity, was, that thereby circumcision, and the whole frame of the legal administration, were set aside, as no longer in force. Now if Paul and others could have given into this opinion, that circumcision was still to be retained, and the observance of the law of Moses, joined with faith in Christ, as necessary to salvation, their offence against it would have been in a great measure removed, and they might have avoided the sufferings they underwent for its sake. But though others, and particularly those who were so forward to asperse him, could easily come into it, yet he rather chose to hazard his ease and his credit, yea, his very life-

self, than thus to corrupt the truth, and give up the liberty of the Gospel. Thus the apostle clears himself from the unjust reproach his enemies had cast on him, and at the same time shows, how little regard was due to those men who could treat him in such an injurious manner, and how much reason he had to wish that they were even cut off.

V. 13-26. Here the apostle comes to exhort these Christians to serious, practical godliness, as the best antidote against the snares of the false teachers. Two things especially he presses on them:

1. That they should not strive with one another, but love one another, v. 13. He would have them very careful not to indulge themselves in any corrupt affections and practices, and particularly such as might create distance and disaffection, and be the ground of quarrels and contentions among them: but, on the contrary, he would have them maintain that mutual love and affection, which, notwithstanding any less differences there might be among them, would dispose them to all those offices of respect and kindness to each other, which the Christian religion obliged them to. Note, 1. Christian liberty is not a licentious liberty; Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, yet not from the obligation of it; the Gospel is a doctrine according to godliness, 1 Tim. 6:2. and so far from giving the least countenance to sin, it lays us under the strongest obligations to avoid and subdue it.

2. Though we ought to stand fast in our Christian liberty, yet we should not insist on it to the breach of Christian charity; we should not use it as an occasion of strife and contention with our fellow Christians, who may be differently minded from us; but should always maintain such a temper towards each other, as may dispose us by love to serve one another. This the apostle endeavors to persuade these Christians to, from two considerations. (1.) Love is the sum of the whole law, v. 14. As love to God comprises the duties of the first table, so love to our neighbor those of the second. The apostle notices the latter here, because he was speaking of their behavior to one another; and when he uses this as an argument to persuade them to mutual love, he intimates, both that this would be a good evidence of their sincerity in religion, and also the most likely means of rooting out their dissensions and divisions. (2.) The sad and dangerous tendency of a contrary behavior, v. 15. Note, Mutual strifes among brethren, if persisted in, are likely to prove a common ruin. Christian churches cannot be ruined but by their own hands; but if Christians, who should be helps to one another, and a joy one to another, be as

brute beasts, biting and devouring each other, what can be expected but that the God of love should deny his grace to them, and the Spirit of love should depart from them, and that the evil spirit, who seeks the destruction of them all, should prevail?

II. That they should all strive against sin; and happy would it be for the church, if Christians would let all their quarrels be swallowed up of this, even a quarrel against sin; if, instead of biting and devouring one another, on the account of their different opinions, they would all set themselves against sin, in themselves, and the places where they live. This is what we are chiefly concerned to fight against, and that which above everything else we should make it our business to oppose and suppress. To excite Christians hereunto, and to assist them herein, the apostle shows,

1. That there is in every one a struggle between the flesh and the spirit, v. 17. the corrupt and carnal part of us, and the renewed part of us, the one opposing the will and desire of the other: hence it comes to pass, that we cannot do the things that we would; as the principle of grace in us will not suffer us to do all the evil which our corrupt nature would prompt us to, so neither can we do all the good that we would, by reason of the oppositions we meet with from that corrupt and carnal principle. Even as in a natural man there is something of a struggle between conscience [&c.\*] and the corruption of the heart; so in a renewed man, there is a struggle between the old nature and the new nature, the remainders of sin and the beginnings of grace; and this Christians must expect will be their exercise, as long as they continue in this world.

2. That it is our duty and interest, in this struggle, to side with the better part, our convictions against our corruptions, and our graces against our lusts, v. 16. By the Spirit, here, may be meant, either the Holy Spirit Himself, who condescends to dwell in the hearts of those whom He has renewed and sanctified, to guide and assist them in the way of their duty; or that gracious principle which He implants in the souls of his people, and which lusts against the flesh, the corrupt principle which still remains in them. Accordingly, the duty here recommended, is, that we set ourselves to act under the guidance and influence of the blessed Spirit, and agreeably to the motions and tendency of the new nature in us; and if this be our care in the ordinary course and tenor of our lives, we may depend on it, that, though we may not be freed from the stirrings and op-

\* For we see bad men sometimes doing good actions, not only of justice, but of benevolence, and even devotion, of a certain kind, though not from the motive of supreme love to God. Ed.

PRACT. OBS. V. 13-18. It becomes us most steadfastly to maintain the pure Gospel of a crucified Savior, whatever offence may be taken, or persecution endured by means of it. 'By love' we should become the willing servants of one another and of all men, and in 'loving our neighbor as ourselves,' according to the requirement of the holy com-

mandment, we shall most effectually promote our own comfort, and the happiness of families, of the church, and the community.—The most eminent Christians, indeed, do not attain to all that they desire and aim at, yet those 'who are led by the Spirit,' habitually oppose, subdue, and mortify those sinful workings, which they cannot wholly extirpate. Sc.

V. 16-18. 'According to his manner, the apostle calls that part of a man "the Spirit," which is newly quickened by the Holy Spirit, which is "dead unto sin, and alive unto God," . . . and "the flesh," whatever in man is not renewed by grace, through Christ, as apprehended by faith. He here justly adds, that in the same regenerate man is both "flesh and spirit," the conflict between which is copiously shown Rom. ch. 7. Beza.—The apostle, in his epistle to the Romans, says, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Here he says, "If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law." Hence it follows, that they, who are "not under the law," are "the sons of God." "Ye will not gratify the lusts of your animal nature," (says Mackn.) But all sin has its source and seat in the soul, and the body, even in gross, sensual indulgences, is only "the instrument of unrighteousness to sin." Mat. 15:15-20. Rom. 6:12, 13, 16-19. (16) Walk in the Spirit.] 5:25.—As pneumatized is without the article, it properly signifies, as Beza explains it, that which "is born of the Spirit, and is spirit;" yet this does not alter the meaning of the exhortation, as, when we are influenced by this new principle, we walk in dependence on the Holy Spirit, who both communicated it, preserves it, and works in and by it.—(17) Are contrary.] See on Luke, 21:15. Scorr.

(17.) 'As it is plain that by the flesh, which is the same with what the apostle elsewhere calls the body of sin, and the old man, (Ro. 6:6.) we are to understand, that natural corruption, and depravity, which is the ruling principle in a state of nature, and has so far infected all the faculties of man, that even the regenerate are troubled still with the re-

mainders of it, and find it working in the motions of indwelling sin with them: so by the Spirit, which is here set in opposition to it, and is elsewhere expressed by the new man, that is put on by such as are renewed in the spirit of their mind, (Eph. 4, 23: 24.) we are to understand, that supernatural principle of grace, which is imparted from above to the renewed soul, to overcome the passions of the carnal mind, to set us free from the dominion of our lusts, and to inspire us with a love to holiness; which divine and heavenly principle being communicated to us by the Holy Spirit, has frequently the title of the Spirit given to it, as it is plainly the effect and fruit of it; for that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, (Jn. 3:6.) And there is such a contrariety in these two principles, that they are continually opposing one another in their desires and tendency, so that (as the apostle adds) ye do not the things that ye would, (for so it is expressed in the original, and not, ye cannot do, &c.) ye do them not without doing violence to the opposite principle, that would be drawing you another way; which is agreeable to Ro. 7:19. the good I would, I do not, the evil I would not, I do.' Doddr.

V. 19-21. Several of the sins here specified, as 'the works of the flesh,' have no connexion with [what are usually termed] the bodily appetites; which proves, that we are not to understand, by 'flesh and Spirit,' the animal part of man, as distinguished from the intellectual, but the whole of our fallen nature, as opposed to the new nature communicated by regeneration, and the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit acting upon it and by it. Rom. 8:5-9. There can be no doubt about 'adultery, fornication, &c.' being, in every sense, 'works of the flesh.'



20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like : of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit <sup>x</sup> of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

<sup>x</sup> Jn. 15:5. Ep. 5:9.

positions of our corrupt nature, we shall be kept from fulfilling it in the lusts thereof; so that though it remain in us, yet it shall not obtain a dominion over us. Note, The best antidote against the poison of sin, is, to walk in the Spirit. And this, too, would be good evidence that they were Christians indeed, v. 18. If, in the prevailing bent and tenor of your lives, you are led by the Spirit; if you act under the guidance and government of the Holy Spirit, and of that spiritual nature and disposition He has wrought in you; if you make the Word of God your rule, and the grace of God your principle; it will hence appear, that you are not under the law; not under the condemning, though you are still under the commanding, power of it. Rom. 8:1-14.

3. The apostle specifies the works of the flesh, which must be watched against and mortified, and the fruits of the Spirit, which

must be cherished and brought forth, v. 19, &c., and by specifying particulars he further illustrates what he is here upon.

(1.) *The works of the flesh*, past dispute, are the product of corrupt and depraved nature; and most, here mentioned, are condemned by the light of nature itself, and all, by the light of Scripture. Some are sins against the seventh commandment, such as *adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness*; not only the gross acts of these sins, but all such thoughts, words, or actions, as have a tendency toward the great transgression. Some are sins against the first and second commandments, as *idolatry, and witchcraft*; others are sins against the royal law of brotherly love, such as *hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, which too often occasion seditions, heresies, envyings*, and sometimes break out into *murders*, not only of the names and reputation, but even of the very lives, of our fellow-creatures. Others are sins against ourselves, such as *drunkenness and revellings*; and he concludes the catalogue with an *et cætera*, and gives fair warning to all to take care of them, as they hope to see the face of God with comfort. These are sins which will undoubtedly shut men out of heaven. The world of [happy] spirits can never be comfortable to such as plunge themselves in the filth of the flesh; nor will the righteous and holy God admit such into his favor and presence, unless they are first *washed and sanctified, and justified in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God*, 1 Cor. 6:11.

(2.) He specifies the fruits of the Spirit, or the renewed nature, which as Christians we are concerned to bring forth, v. 22, 23. And as, before, he had chiefly specified those works of the flesh, which are not only hurtful to men themselves, but tend to make them so to one another, so here he chiefly notices those fruits of the Spirit, which have a tendency to make Christians agreeable one to another, as well as easy to themselves: and this was very suitable to the caution or exhortation he had before given, v. 13. that they should *not use their liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another*. He particularly recommends to us, *Love*, to God especially, and to one another for his sake,—*Joy*, by which may be understood cheerfulness, in conversation with our friends, or rather a constant delight in God,—*Peace*, with God and conscience, or a peaceableness of temper and behavior towards others,—*Long-suffering*, patience to defer anger, and a contentedness to bear injuries,—*Gentleness*, such a sweetness of temper, and especially towards our inferiors, as disposes us to be affable and courteous, and easy to be entreated when any have wronged us,—*Goodness*, kindness and beneficence, which shows itself in a readiness to do good to all as we have opportunity,—*Faith*, fidelity, justice, and honesty in what we profess and promise to others,—*Meekness*, wherewith to govern our passions and resentments, so as not to be easily provoked, and, when we are so, to be soon pacified,—and *Temperance*, in meat and drink, and other enjoyments of life, so as not to be excessive and immoderate in

1 Cor. 6:18-20. Idolatry also is 'a work of the flesh,' as it springs from man's carnal enmity to the holy character, worship, and service of God, in the stead of whom he deifies imaginary beings more congenial to himself, and worships them in a manner more suited to his pride and lusts. *Ex. 20:3. Rom. 1:21-27.* 'Witchcraft,' (implying all kinds of sorcery, charms, divinations, incantations, fortune-telling, and attempted intercourse with evil spirits, real or pretended,) is 'a work of the flesh,' as it results from man's carnal dislike of submission to God, and dependence on Him, and a desire of seeking help and information from other quarters; by both these, men virtually worship the devil. *Ex. 22:18.* 'Hatred and variance' are also 'works of the flesh,' and 'emulations' seem in this connexion to signify that ambition of pre-eminence, and thirst for glory, which excite men to vie with one another, and eagerly to aspire after distinction, according to the nature of their objects and pursuits. Poets, orators, historians, philosophers, moralists, and all men, who do not attend to the Bible, deem this the noblest principle of human activity; yet it springs from unmingled pride [vanity] and selfishness, and is nearly allied to envy. When the object of emulation is evil, its effects are dreadful; when the object is good, the glory of man is sacrilegiously substituted in the place of the glory of God; and this thirst for human applause, has caused more horrible violations of the law of love, and done more to desolate the earth, than even the grossest sensuality ever did. *Jam. 3:13-16.* Along with 'strife, and seditions,' by which, schisms in the church and factions in the state may be meant, 'heresies' are called 'works of the flesh.' Pride, ambition, avarice, or other carnal affections, induce men to pervert the truth of God's words, and, espousing some pernicious error, to seek distinction by propagating it. Hence arise contentions, separations, and the most fatal effects to individuals and to the church. 1 Cor. 11:17-22. 2 Pet. 2:1-3. These were therefore joined by the apostle along with adulteries, and unnatural lusts, drunkenness, envy, revellings, seditions, and even murders, as equally the result of a carnal heart, and marks of unregeneracy. Many more he might have mentioned; for covetousness, and the sins connected with it, are elsewhere mentioned, 1 Cor. 6:9-11, but these 'and such like' would, without repentance and its fruits, certainly exclude men from 'inheriting the kingdom of God,' as the apostle had formerly declared to them, and now again forewarned them.—The word tr. 'witchcrafts,' is by some rendered *poisonings*; as if the apostle in this compendium would pause to distinguish one kind of murder from another, when the difference did not at all alter the nature or degree of the crime! 'Witchcrafts' had the name used in the original, from the magical compositions of certain ingredients, which attended these diabolical practices.—'Revellings' were such feasts, as were accompanied with music and dancing, and whatever could promote hilarity and sensual gratification. The Greeks and Romans had an imaginary god, called *Comus*, (from the Greek word here used,) who was supposed to preside over these feasts, and was in that character worshipped by hymns, oblations, and libations. *Rom. 13:11-14. Eph. 5:3-7. 1 Pet. 4:3-5.* The word rendered 'lasciviousness' (19), is used by Demosthenes, in describing the enormous ambition and rapacity of Philip, king of Macedon. It seems to denote the exorbitancy of any passion, which is left without restraint; though in Scripture it is generally used of unbridled sensual indulgence. SCOTT.

(19.) *Works of the flesh* .. (comp. v. 22.) .. *fruits of the Spirit.* Evil works come from ourselves alone; therefore they are called the *works of the flesh*: but virtuous ones require, not our own exertions alone, but the co-operating aids from above; therefore the apostle calls them the *fruits of the Spirit*, the *seed* (namely, the intention) being from ourselves [in a sense, Ed.], but the *fruit* resting with God.' *Chrys., Theoph., Bloomr. The flesh.* 'That natural corruption (note, v. 17.) which has infected all the faculties of man, and so extends to all the powers of the mind, as well as to the appetites of the body: that corruption,

by means of which, *even the mind* and conscience is defiled. Tit. 1:15.' DODDR. The whole group of vices in this verse, are abuses, in different degrees, of the amative propensity (common to man and other animals), assisted by the intellectual faculties, and the body. ED.

(20.) 'Idolatry is rightly numbered among the works of the flesh, since it originates in a grovelling and sensual mind, which cannot worship God in Spirit, but brings Him down to the senses, and represents Him to corporal eyes by images. Thus idolatry originally arose from sensuality, and tended ever to produce and perpetuate it.' BL. Idolatry is the direction of the religious feelings or sentiments towards improper objects; and we know that gods were worshipped, of characters fitted solely to the selfish, animal propensities of our nature in abuse; as Mars, the god of fighting and destroying; Comus, the god of gluttony, &c.; Bacchus, of drunkenness; Venus, the goddess of animal love; Mercury, the god of covetousness; Vulcan, the god of mechanical ingenuity, &c.; all gods of animalism and selfishness. *Witchcraft*, too, was the art of propitiating the capricious favor, and averting, or directing to malicious ends, the capricious wrath of deities; and, as being the offspring of fear, revenge, &c., and not of virtuous principle, is well put in with other selfish and animal propensities. In the next group, we find the abuses of the same elementary propensities as are seen in beasts, to fight and destroy, united with the more strictly (though not exclusively) human sentiments of pride and vanity. DODDR. paraphrases 'enmities, outrageous strifes, and quarrels; inordinate transports of ill-placed and ill-proportioned zeal; deep resentments, treasured up in the mind; clamorous contentions, vented with eagerness, and obstinately carried on; together with the keen divisions of a party-spirit, among those who ought to be united in one interest and affection: yea, sometimes, these ill principles proceed so far as to produce seditions in the state, and heresies also in religious communities, by which professing Christians are induced to separate from each other, and to form sects, who, instead of maintaining true candor and benevolence, renounce and condemn each other.' Note, Titus 3:10.—Sectarism is, indeed, of the lower propensities. ED. 'Heresy, according to the Scripture notion, being not a pure mistake of judgment, but [of will also, in] an espousing of false doctrine out of disgust, pride, or envy, or from worldly [selfish] principles, or to avoid persecution or trouble in the flesh, may well be ranked among carnal lusts.' WHITBY. 'Heresies in the ecclesiastical sense, as distinguished from the scriptural, may generally be said to be works of the flesh; as bad inclinations of mind naturally lead to bad opinions, and to a haughty, [sectarian,] and factious manner of obtruding them on others.' DODDR.

(21.) *Envyings* arise from selfishness, with malice: and, with murder, arise from propensities shared by men with animals, combined with faculties more peculiarly human. Drunkenness and revellings, too, are abused animal appetites. ED.—'No sin has fewer apologies than intemperance. The suffrage of the world is against it; and yet there is no sin so naked in its character, and whose commencement and progress is indicated by so many signs, concerning which there is among mankind such profound ignorance. All reprobate drunkenness; and yet, not one of the thousands who fall into it, dreams of danger when he enters the way that leads to it.' DR. BEECHER.

V. 22-26. The holy affections, and the conduct resulting from them, as here enumerated, are not called 'the works of a believer,' but 'the fruit of the Spirit,' dwelling in the new nature and working by it, which He has produced by regeneration. *Eph. 5:8-14, v. 9.* 'Love' of God and man, of the Savior, his people, and all men, for his sake, and according to his command and example; a joyful frame of mind in the salvation and service of God; a peaceful conscience, and a submissive will, leading to a peaceable conduct towards man; a disposition to bear injuries and affronts, without seeking revenge, or expressing resentment; a mild, unassuming, inoffensive deportment, united with beneficence and philanthropy; truth, sincerity, fidelity, and integrity to man, springing



23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

### CHAP. VI.

1 He moveth them to deal mildly with a brother that hath slipped, 2 and to bear one another's burden: 6 to be liberal to their teachers, 9 and not weary of well doing. 12 He sheweth what they intend that preach circumcision. 14 He glorieth in nothing, save in the cross of Christ.

**B**RETHREN, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

y 1 Ti. 1:9.      b Phi. 2:3.      b Ja. 5:19,20.  
z or, passions.    a or, although.    c Ro. 15:1.

their use. Concerning these things, or those in whom these fruits of the Spirit are found, the apostle says, *There is no law against them*, to condemn and punish them. Yea, hence it appears, that they are not under the law, but under grace; for these fruits of the Spirit, in whomsoever they are found, plainly show, that such are *led by the Spirit*, and, consequently, that they are not *under the law*, as v. 18.

And as, by specifying these works of the flesh, and fruits of the Spirit, the apostle directs us both what we are to avoid and oppose, and what we are to cherish and cultivate; so, v. 24. he acquaints us, that this is the sincere care and endeavor of all real Christians; they have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. They have not yet obtained a complete victory, but sin does not now reign in them, Rom. 6: 12. and they are seeking the utter ruin and destruction of it. Note, If we would approve ourselves to be Christ's, we must make it our constant care and business to crucify the flesh with its corrupt affections and lusts. No doubt, it is also here implied, that, on the other hand, we should show forth those fruits of the Spirit which he had just before been speci-

fying; this is no less our duty than that, nor is it less necessary to evidence our sincerity in religion. It is not enough that we cease to do evil, but we must learn to do well. If, therefore, we would make it appear that we do indeed belong to Christ, this must be our sincere care and endeavor, as well as the other: and that it was the design of the apostle to represent both the one and the other of these as our duty, and as necessary to support our character as Christians, may be gathered from what follows, v. 25. He had before told us, that the *Spirit of Christ* is a privilege bestowed on all the children of God, ch. 4: 6. 'Now,' says he, 'if we profess to be of this number, and as such to have obtained this privilege, let us show it by a temper and behavior agreeable hereunto; let us evidence our good principles by good practices. Our conversation will always be answerable to the principle we are under the guidance and government of. Rom. 8: 5.

The apostle concludes this ch. with a caution against pride and envy, v. 26. He had before been exhorting these Christians *by love to serve one another*, v. 13. and had put them in mind of what would be the consequence, if, instead of that, they did bite and devour one another, v. 15. Now, as a mean of engaging them to the one, and preserving them from the other, he here cautions them against being desirous of vain glory, or giving way to an undue affection of the esteem and applause of men; because this, if it were indulged, would certainly lead them to provoke one another, and to envy one another. This, therefore, the apostle would have us by all means to watch against. An undue regard to the approbation and applause of men, is one great ground of the unhappy strifes and contentions that are among Christians.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—10. This ch. chiefly consists of two parts. In the former the apostle gives us several plain and practical directions, which more especially tend to instruct Christians in their duty to one another, and to promote the communion of saints in love; in the latter he revives the main design of the epistle, which was to fortify the Galatians against the arts of their judaizing teachers, and confirm them in the truth and liberty of the Gospel.

The apostle, having, in the foregoing ch., exhorted Christians *by love to serve one another*, v. 13. and also cautioned us, v. 26. against a temper, which, if indulged, would hinder us from showing the mutual love and servicableness he had recommended, he proceeds to give us some further directions,

which, if duly observed, would both promote the one, and prevent the other of these, and render our behavior both more agreeable to our Christian profession, and more useful and comfortable to one another: particularly,

I. We here are taught to deal tenderly with persons overtaken in a fault, v. 1. who are brought to sin by the surprise of temptation, not by contrivance and deliberation, and full resolution in sin. By *they who are spiritual*, is meant, not only ministers, but other Christians, especially those of the higher form in Christianity. Here observe, 1. The duty,—to restore such; Gr. *to set in joint*, as a dislocated bone; we should endeavor to set them in joint again, to bring them to themselves, by convincing them of their sin and error, persuading them to return to their duty, comforting them in a sense of pardoning mercy thereupon, and, having thus recovered them, confirming our love to them. 2. The manner wherein this is to be done,—with the spirit of meekness; not in wrath and passion, as those who triumph in a brother's falls, but with meekness, as those who rather mourn for them. 3. A very good reason why this should be done in meekness,—considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. We ought to deal very tenderly with those who are overtaken in sin, [as] we none of us know but it may some time or other be our own case.

II. We are here directed to bear one another's burdens, v. 2. This may be considered either as referring to what goes before, or as a more general precept, directing us to sympathize with one another, under the various trials and troubles we may meet with, and to be ready to afford each other the comfort and counsel, the help and assistance, which our circumstances may require. And hereunto the apostle adds, by way of motive, that so we shall fulfil the law of Christ. This is to act agreeably to the law of his precept, and would be also agreeable to his pattern and example, which have the force of a law to us. Note, Though as Christians we are freed from the law of Moses, yet we are under the law of Christ; and therefore, instead of laying unnecessary burdens on others, (as those who urged the observance of Moses' law did,) it much more becomes us to fulfil the law of Christ, by bearing one another's burdens.

The apostle, being aware how great a hindrance pride would be to the mutual condescension and sympathy he had been recommending, and that a conceit of ourselves would dispose us to censure and condemn our brethren, instead of bearing with their

PRACT. OBS. V. 19—26. The apostle has, indeed, repeatedly and plainly forewarned us, that they 'who do such things,' as are here mentioned, or others of a similar nature, 'shall not inherit the kingdom of God;' yet, what numbers of professed Christians live habitually in the grossest of them, and, notwithstanding their adultery, fornication, shameful uncleanness, or secret lasciviousness, still hope for heaven, in neglect of evangelical repentance and faith! Nor can the most idolatrous covetousness, the most exorbitant pride, ambition, and emulation, the most notorious malice, wrath, hatred, envy, or even the murders, committed in revengeful duels, deprive them of their presumptuous confidence. For 'he that believeth not, hath made God a liar.' Nay, some even attempt to revive the worship of Satan, by various divinations and prognostications, who would, nevertheless, be offended to be denied the name of

Christians! Many, also, who are zealous for the apostle's doctrine of justification, and suppose themselves 'not to be under the law,' are so far from being 'led by the Spirit,' that they are evidently and habitually 'fulfilling the lusts of the flesh;' though the feeble remonstrances of a conscience, not totally callous, deceives them into an imagination, that they are engaged in the conflict of the flesh and spirit! But let us never forget, that those 'who are not under the law' for condemnation, are 'led by the Spirit' into the love of its precepts, and an earnest desire to obey them. If we bring forth 'the fruits of the Spirit,' as here described, in our habitual temper and conduct, we can have no objection to the daily examination of ourselves by that perfect standard of sin and holiness; that our love may be exercised 'in knowledge, and in all judgment;' for 'against such things there is no law.' SCOTT.

from faith in God and faithfulness to Him; a humble, teachable, unambitious temper and demeanor, and an evident moderation about earthly objects, and in respect to every animal indulgence; these, and such like, are 'the fruits of the Spirit;' and 'against these there is no law,' for they are what the moral law requires. 1 Cor. 13:4—7. Jam. 3 17, 18. 2 Pet. 1:5—7. So that obedience to the law, as a rule, and as 'written in the heart' by the Holy Spirit, with delight and satisfaction, and earnest desires after more exact conformity to it, is the apostolical evidence of deliverance from the law, as a covenant of works. 'If we live in,' or by, 'the Spirit,' as regenerate persons; 'let us also walk in the Spirit,' and order our daily conversation according to that holy influence, and in dependence on the guidance, and powerful assistance of the Holy Spirit; especially in mortifying the desire of 'vain glory' and human applause, and refraining from whatever may tend to exasperate the minds of other men; or manifest envy of their gifts, reputation, or prosperity. The 'body,' as meaning the animal nature, must be 'kept under and brought into subjection,' by proper discipline, as a child; but 'the flesh' must be crucified, as an enemy and malefactor, which is doomed to inevitable destruction. Rom. 6:5—7. 8:3, 4, 12, 13. 1 Cor. 9:21—27. (25) *Let us walk.* See on [374]

Rom. 4:12.—'To march, as soldiers do, step by step, in their ranks, by rule, and by the word of command.' SCOTT.

(22, 23.) All the virtues here mentioned are more or less practised by all men; heathen, Jew, Mohammedan, or Christian; as they are the results of endowments common to the race: in the true Christian alone are they habitually dominant, under the Holy Spirit. ED.

NOTES. CHAP. VI. V. 1—5. The apostle, having concluded the argumentative part of the epistle, added some particular admonitions before he closed it.—The word rendered 'spiritual,' when applied to persons, seems to denote the spirituality, or heavenly mind and judgment, of those who are thus distinguished: 1 Cor. 2:12—16. 3:1—3. 12:1—3. and is never used, as I recollect, of men endued with miraculous gifts. All rulers, teachers, and workers of miracles, were not 'spiritual,' spiritually minded, 'led by the Spirit,' and filled with 'the fruits of the Spirit,' and many private Christians were. The duty of restoring the fallen might belong to the teachers and rulers primarily, but not exclusively.—Some indeed suppose, that persons endued with spiritual gifts superintended the churches for some time, without any regular appointment, and that there were no other bishops or elders in Galatia at



4 But let every man prove <sup>d</sup> his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself <sup>e</sup> alone, and not in another :

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let <sup>f</sup> him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived ; God is not mocked : for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his <sup>g</sup> flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the <sup>h</sup> Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let <sup>i</sup> us not be weary in well doing : for in due season we shall reap, <sup>j</sup> if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore <sup>k</sup> opportunity, let us do good unto all <sup>l</sup> men, especially to them <sup>m</sup> who are of the household of faith.

d 2 Co. 13:5. e Pr. 14:14. f 1 Co. 9:11-14. g Job 4:8. Pr. 22:8. Ho. 8:7. h Pr. 11:18. Ja. 3:18. i 1 Co. 15:58. He. 10:36. Re. 2:10. k Ec. 9:10. l Mat. 5:43. Tit. 3:8. m 1 Jn. 3:14.

infirmities, and endeavoring to restore them when overtaken with a fault, takes care, v. 3. to caution us against this; he supposes it very possible for a man to look upon himself as wiser and better than other men, and as fit to prescribe to them, when in truth he has nothing of substance or solidity in him, or that can be a ground of confidence and superiority. To dissuade us from giving way to this temper, he tells us that such an one, while he imposes on others, by pretending to what he has not, puts the greatest cheat on himself, as sooner or later he will find. Note, Self-conceit, as it is inconsistent with that charity we owe to others, 1 Cor. 13: 4. so it is a cheat on ourselves; and there is not a more dangerous cheat in the world. As a mean of preventing this evil,

III. We are advised, *Every one to prove his own work*, v. 4. i. e. chiefly our own actions or behavior. These the apostle directs us to *prove*, i. e. seriously and impartially to examine, by the rule of God's Word, to see whether or no they are agreeable to it, and therefore such as God and conscience approve. The better we are acquainted with our own hearts and ways, the less liable shall we be to despise, and the more disposed to compassionate and help, others, under their infirmities and afflictions.

1. This is the way to *have rejoicing in ourselves alone*. If we set ourselves in good earnest to *prove our own work*, and, on trial, can *approve ourselves* to God, as to our sincerity and uprightness towards Him, then may we expect to have comfort in our own

this time, as little mention is made of them (6); but this by no means agrees with the history, which mentions the ordaining of elders by the apostles, 'in every city,' either personally, if they had leisure, or by apostolical men, or evangelists, (as Timothy, Titus, and others,) if compelled previously to leave the new converts. It is, however, probable, that these elders, and the deacons, also, were generally chosen from among those who had been endued with miraculous powers by the laying on of the hands of the apostles. Acts 8:14-17. 14:21-23. 19: 1 Tim. 5:21, 22, 24, 25. Tit. 1:5-9.

(4.) 'Paul is still occupied in lowering their pride; and as, at v. 2. he shows them how empty is all vain boasting, so here he tells them, that not even when any one, on examination, has found anything to authorize boasting, ought he to make a boast of it, (that he is better than another, to that other's injury, say Grot., &c.)' *Borger*. BLOOMF.

(5.) 'Koppe tr. "for each has frailties enow of his own to wrestle with;" but (as *Borger*.) the future tense is at variance with this tr. nor is it agreeable to the context.' Ip.

V. 7. *Koppe* thinks there is reference to contumely shown by rich converts to the teachers, whom they kept in poverty; *Doddr.*, that the various petty subterfuges the covetous use, to excuse themselves from liberality, are glanced at. See *Bloomf.* En.

V. 8. 'Sowing to the flesh, is equivalent to living to the flesh, the fruit of which will be corruption and mortality, namely, spiritual death, i. e. eternal punishment. On the contrary, he that sows to the Spirit, i. e.

souls, 2 Cor. 1: 12. and this, he intimates, would be a much better ground of joy and satisfaction, than to be able to rejoice in another; either in the good opinion others may have of us, or in having gained over others to our opinion, which the false teachers were wont to glory in, as we see, v. 13. or by comparing ourselves with others, as, it should seem, some did, who were ready to think well of themselves, because they were not so bad as some others. Note, If we have the testimony of our consciences, that we are accepted of God, we need not much concern ourselves about what others think or say of us; and without this the good opinion of others will stand us in little stead.

2. The other argument the apostle uses, to press this duty of proving our own work, is, *That every man shall bear his own burden*, v. 5. i. e. that at the great day every one shall be reckoned with according as his behavior here has been. He declares that then the judgment will proceed, and the sentence pass, not according to the sentiments of the world concerning us, or any ungrounded opinion we may have had of ourselves, or on our having been better or worse than others, but according as our state and behavior have really been in the sight of God. And if there be such an awful time to be expected, surely we ought to be often calling ourselves to an account here, to see whether or no we are such as God will own and approve then: and as this is our duty, so, if it were more our practice, we should entertain more becoming thoughts both of ourselves and our fellow-Christians; and instead of bearing hard on one another, on account of any mistakes or failings, we should be more ready to fulfil that *law of Christ*, by which we must be judged, in bearing one another's burdens.

IV. Christians are here exhorted to be free and liberal in maintaining their ministers, v. 6. 1. The apostle speaks of it as a thing known and acknowledged, that, as there are some to be *taught*, so there are others who are appointed to *teach* them. The office of the ministry is a divine institution, which does not lie open in common to all, but is confined to those only whom God has qualified for it, and called to it; even reason itself directs us to put a difference between the teachers and the taught; for if all were teachers, there would be none to be taught, and the Scriptures sufficiently declare that it is the will of God we should do so. 2. Ministers are to teach and preach the Word of God, 2 Tim. 4: 2. to declare his counsel, Acts 20: 27. and it is the duty of those who are taught in the Word, to support those who are appointed to teach them. Ministers are to *give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine*, 1 Tim. 4: 14. they are not to *entangle themselves with the affairs of this life*, 2 Tim. 2:4. and, therefore, it is but fit and equitable, that, while they are *sowing to others spiritual things, they should*

*reap their carnal things*. And this is the appointment of God Himself, 1 Cor. 9: 11, 13, 14.

V. A caution to take heed of mocking God, or of deceiving ourselves, by imagining that He can be imposed on by mere pretensions or professions, v. 7. This may be considered as referring to the foregoing exhortation; or it may be taken in a more general view, as respecting the whole business of religion, and so as designed to take men off from entertaining any vain hopes of enjoying its rewards, while they live in the neglect of its duties. The apostle directs us to lay it down as a rule to ourselves, that according as we behave ourselves now, so will our account be in the great day. And he further acquaints us, v. 8. that as there are two sorts of seedness, sowing to the flesh, and sowing to the Spirit, so accordingly will the reckoning be hereafter. They who live a carnal, sensual life, must expect no other fruit of such a course than *corruption*; a mean and short-lived satisfaction at present, and ruin and misery at the end of it. But they that, under the guidance and influence of the Spirit, do live a holy and spiritual life, a life of devotedness to God, and of usefulness and serviceableness to others, may depend on it, they shall have the trust comfort in their present course, and an eternal life and happiness at the end of it. Hypocrisy in religion is the greatest folly, as well as wickedness.

VI. A further caution given us, *not to be weary in well doing*, v. 9. There is in all of us too great a proneness hereunto; this, therefore, the apostle would have us carefully to watch and guard against; and he gives this very good reason for it, because *in due season we shall reap if we faint not*,—if not in this world, yet undoubtedly in the next; if we hold on and hold out in well-doing. Though our reward may be delayed, yet it will surely come, and will be so great as to make us an abundant recompense for all our pains and constancy. Perseverance in well-doing is our wisdom, for to this only is the reward promised.

VII. An exhortation to all Christians to *do good* in their places, v. 10. It is not enough that we *be good ourselves*, but we must *do good to others*, if we would approve ourselves to be Christians indeed. The duty here recommended, is, the same as that spoken of in the foregoing vs.; and as *there* the apostle exhorts us to *sincerity and perseverance* in it, so *here* he directs us both as to its *objects and rule*. 1. The objects are more generally *all men*; all who partake of the same common nature with us, and more especially the *household of faith*, or those who profess the same common faith, and are members of the same body of Christ, with us: though others are not to be excluded, yet these are to be preferred. 2. The rule we are to observe in doing good to others, is, *as we have opportunity*; while life lasts, the only season wherein we can do good to oth-

lives to the Spirit, will reap the fruits in eternal life, i. e. eternal happiness. "He that lays out his substance, time, and thoughts, only for his own gratifications, for his own necessities and conveniences, shall at the harvest find the fruit and product of such husbandry to be corruption; but he who applies his capacities, abilities, and possessions, to that which is spiritual, to promote the interests of religion, shall inherit eternal glory, and be fully recompensed at the resurrection of the just, (Lu. 14:14.) when all the hope of the sinner is perished." *Valpy*. BLOOMF.

V. 9. 'Persons of known benevolence are not only more frequently called on for charity than others, but (what is still more calculated to disgust and tire them out), they are liable to frequent impositions, abuses of their charity, and ungrateful returns; but let them not weary, their harvest is in eternity. See *Bloomf.* And the disinterestedly benevolent will recollect Luke 6:32, 33. Ed.

V. 10. '*Borger* thus ably recapitulates what Paul has said on Christian liberty, its use and abuse. "He had taught, that those who are subject to the Mosaic law, lead a life of servitude, and are themselves slaves, 3:23-26. 4:1-3, 7-9. that from this subjection to the law, Christians indeed are freed, but still are in a state of servitude, though an easier and more gentle, inasmuch as we are by love to serve one another, 5:13. He had declared, that the force and efficacy of the Mosaic law is broken and worn away, 3:13, 24-27. 4:4-6. And yet (he shows) it is not to be thence inferred, that Christians, being exempted from this servitude (3:13.) are to be no longer subject to any law, since the law of love and benevo-



11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

o Phi. 3:3,7,8. p c. 2:20. r 2 Co. 5:17.  
u or, whereby. q c. 5:6.

ers. Too many defer it till they come to die, under a pretence of doing something of this nature then: but we cannot be sure that we shall then have an opportunity for it; neither, if we should, have we any ground to expect that what we do will be so acceptable to God, much less that we can atone for our past neglects, by leaving something behind us for the good of others, when we can no longer keep it ourselves. But we should take care to do good in our lifetime, yea, to make this the business of our lives. Whenever fresh occasions offer, as far as our capacity reaches, we should be ready to embrace them, too, Eccl. 11: 2. Note, As God has made it our duty to do good to others, so He takes care in his providence to furnish us with opportunities for it, Mat. 26: 11. and He expects we should improve each according to our capacity and ability. But we have need of godly wisdom and discretion to direct us in the exercise of our charity.

V. 11—18. The apostle, having at large established the doctrine of the Gospel, and endeavored to persuade these Christians to a behavior agreeable to it, seems as if he intended here to end the epistle; especially when he had acquainted them, that, as a particular mark of his respect to them, he had written this large letter with his own hand; but such were his affection to them, and concern to recover them from the ill impressions made on them by their false teachers, that he cannot break off, till he has once again given them the true character of those teachers, and an account of his own contrary temper and behavior; that, by comparing these together, they might the more easily see how little reason they had to depart from the doctrine he had taught them, and to comply with theirs.

I. He gives them the true character of

lence remains to be observed by them, 5:14. this is the law of Christ, 6:2. The apostle had said, that by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified, 2:16. And yet (he warns them) it does not follow from thence that Christians may do what they please, and basely abuse their liberty; for, as by the works of the law, so by the works of the flesh, shall no one attain felicity, 5:19—21. But that it is necessary to follow after virtue; every one must prove his own work, 6:4. on Christians it is incumbent to do good, 6:9, 19. That salvation and felicity, indeed, do not depend on the Mosaic law (2:16. 21:3. 11:12, 13, 24.); yet those err grievously who abuse this liberty into utter disregard of virtue, as if to the attainment of felicity nothing on our part were necessary, but to follow the usual routine of life; for that this present existence contains the commencement, and, as it were, seeds of a future one; which seed will produce fruits, either of joy or sorrow, to be gathered at the general harvest, 6:7, 8, 9."

BLOOMF.

V. 11—14. The words here tr. 'how large a letter,' are supposed by many to signify, with what kind of letters, referring to the apostle's want of skill and readiness in writing Greek. He had, however, bestowed great pains to write the epistle 'with his own hand,' either because he had not an amanuensis with him, or rather because he did not choose to employ one; but he wrote the whole himself, that he might convince the Galatians of his love to, and anxiety about them.—His [Paul's] view of the cross of Christ, and of the obligations, motives, and instructions connected with it, had crucified the world to him and him to the world.

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those teachers, in several particulars. As, 1. They were men who, v. 12. were very zealous for the externals of religion; forward to observe, and to oblige others to observe, the rites of the ceremonial law, though at the same time they had little or no regard to real piety; for, as the apostle says of them in the following v., neither do they themselves keep the law: frequently those have least of the substance of religion, who are most solicitous to make a show of it. 2. They were men who were afraid of suffering, for they constrained the Gentile Christians to be circumcised, only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. It was not so much out of a regard to the law, as to themselves. And, 3. Another part of their character was, that they were men of a party-spirit, and who had no further zeal for the law than as it subserved their carnal and selfish designs; for they desired to have these Christians circumcised, v. 13. only that they might say, they had made proselytes of them, of which they carried the mark in their flesh. And thus while they pretended to promote religion, they were the greatest enemies of it; for nothing has been more destructive to the interest of religion than men-siding and party-making. Note, Ti. 3: 10.

II. He acquaints us, on the other hand, with his own temper and behavior; particularly,

1. That his principal glory was in the cross of Christ, v. 14. here meant of his sufferings and death on the cross, or the doctrine of salvation by a crucified Redeemer. The cross of Christ is the Christian's chief glory, and there is the greatest reason, for to it we owe all our joys and hopes.

2. That he was dead to the world. By Christ, or by the cross of Christ, the world was crucified to him, and he to the world; he had experienced the power and virtue of it in weaning him from the world, and this was one great reason of his glorying in it. The false teachers were men of a worldly temper, their chief concern was about their secular interests, therefore they accommodated their religion thereunto. But Paul was a man of another spirit; he was got above both the smiles and the frowns of the world, as one who is a-dying out of it. This is a temper of mind all Christians should be laboring after; and the best way to attain it, is, to converse much with the cross of Christ; the higher esteem we have of Him, the meaner opinion shall we have of the world; and the more we contemplate the sufferings our dear Redeemer met with from the world, the less likely shall we be to be in love with it.

3. That he did not lay the stress of his religion on one side or other of the contesting interests, but on sound Christianity, v. 15. There was at that time an unhappy division among Christians; circumcision and uncircumcision, -ch. 2: 9, 12. The false teachers were very zealous for circumcision;

yea, to that degree, as to represent it as necessary to salvation. But Paul made very little account of it. It was indeed of great importance to the interests of Christianity, that circumcision should not be imposed on the Gentile converts, and therefore this he had set himself with the utmost vigor to oppose: but as for mere circumcision or uncircumcision, whether those who had embraced the Christian religion had been Jews or Gentiles; and whether they were for or against continuing the use of circumcision, so that they did not place their religion in it,—this was comparatively a matter of little moment with him; for he very well knew, that in Jesus Christ, in his account, or under the Christian dispensation, neither circumcision availed anything, nor uncircumcision, as to men's acceptance with God, but a new creature. Here he acquaints us, both wherein real religion does not, and wherein it does consist; it does not consist in circumcision or uncircumcision, in our being in this or the other denomination of Christians; but it consists in our being new creatures; not in having a new name, or putting on a new face, but in our being renewed in the spirit of our minds, and having Christ formed in us. If we compare this text with some others, we may more fully see what it is that renders us most acceptable to God, and which therefore we should be chiefly concerned about. Here we are told, that it is a new creature; and ch. 5: 6. that it is faith which worketh by love, and, 1 Cor. 7: 19. that it is the keeping the commandments of God: from all which it appears, that it is a change of mind and heart, whereby we are disposed and enabled to believe in the Lord Jesus, and to live a life of devotedness to God; and that where this inward, vital, practical religion is wanting, no outward professions, or particular names, will ever stand us in any stead, or be sufficient to recommend us to Him. Were Christians duly concerned to experience this in themselves, and to promote it in others; if it did not make them lay aside their distinguishing names, yet it would at least take them off from laying so great a stress on them as they too often do. Note, Christians should take care to lay the stress of their religion where God has laid it, i. e. on those things which are available to our acceptance with Him; so we see the apostle did, and it is our wisdom and interest herein to follow his example.

The apostle having shown what was of chief consideration in religion, and what he laid the greatest stress on, that is, a sound and saving change, here, v. 16. pronounces a blessing on all who walk according to this rule; i. e. either more generally the whole Word of God, which is the complete and perfect rule of faith and life; or that doctrine of the Gospel, or way of justification and salvation, which he had laid down in this epistle, by faith in Christ without the works of the law; or, as more immediately

'So that he viewed the world, as little impressed by all its charms, as a spectator would be, by anything that had been graceful in the countenance of a crucified person, when he beholds it blackened in the agonies of death, and was no more affected by the objects around him, than one that is expiring would be struck with any of those prospects, which his dying eyes might view from the cross, on which he was suspended.'

DODD.

SCOTT.

(12.) Persecution.] 'This seems to open the main, secret spring of that zeal for the Jewish ceremonies, in some who professed themselves Christians, which occasioned so much uneasiness in the apostolic churches. The persecuting edicts of the Jewish Sanhedrim, the influence of which extended to remote synagogues, had induced many who secretly believed in Christ, to decline an open acknowledgment of Him (Ja. 9:22. 12:42. 19:38.), which yet our Lord Himself had so expressly required, that their consciences, during this state of dissimulation, must be in great anxiety. (See Mark 8:38.) But afterwards, when a scheme arose, of extending Judaism with Christianity, it may be supposed that this would abate the edge of persecution against those who fell in with it, and especially against those who urged the Gentile converts to such complete proselytism, though it might sharpen it against other Christians; and this might, perhaps, weigh more with some than they themselves were aware, in concurrence with the desire of making disciples, and to the prejudices of education, which must naturally be supposed to have their share. Comp. 5:11.'

DODD.



16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace <sup>be</sup> on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

17 From henceforth let no man trouble me; for <sup>I</sup> I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

18 Brethren, the <sup>grace</sup> of our Lord Jesus Christ <sup>be</sup> with your spirit. Amen.

¶ Unto the Galatians, written from Rome.

s Ps. 125:5. t Col. 1:24. u 2 Ti. 4:22. Phil. 25.

referring to the new creature, which he had just before been speaking of. The  *blessings*  he desires for those who walk according to this rule, are,  *peace and mercy* ,—peace with God and conscience, and all the comforts of this life, as far as they are needful for them,—and mercy, that is, an interest in the free love and favor of God in Christ, which are the spring and fountain of all other blessings. These, he declares, shall be the portion of  *all the Israel of God* , i. e. all sincere Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles; all who are Israelites indeed, who, though they may not be  *natural* , yet are become the  *spiritual*  seed of Abraham. The Jews and judaizing teachers were for confirming these blessings only to such as were circumcised, and kept

the law of Moses; but the apostle declares that they belong to all who walk according to the rule of the Gospel, or of the new creature, even to all the Israel of God; intimating, that those only are the true Israel of God, who walk according to this rule, and not that of circumcision, which  *they*  insisted so much on; and therefore that this was the true way to obtain peace and mercy.

4. That he had cheerfully suffered persecution for the sake of Christ and Christianity, v. 17. while the false teachers were afraid of it, and so were zealous for circumcision, as we see, v. 12. But this was the least of Paul's concern; he was not  *moved*  at any of the afflictions he met with, Acts 20: 24. He had already suffered much in the cause of Christ, for  *he bare in his body*  the scars of those wounds he had sustained from persecuting enemies, for his steady adherence to Him, and that doctrine of the Gospel which he had received from Him. As hence it appeared he was firmly persuaded of the  *truth*  and  *importance*  of it, and far from being a favorer of circumcision, as they had falsely reported him to be; so, hereupon, with a warmth and vehemence suitable to his authority as an apostle, and to the deep concern he was under, he insists on it, that  *no man should henceforth trouble him* , by opposing his doctrine and authority, or by any such calumnies and reproaches as had been cast on him; for as, both from

what he had said, and what he had suffered, they appeared to be highly unjust and injurious, so also they were very unreasonable, who either raised or received them.

The apostle, having now finished what he intended to write for the conviction and recovery of the churches of Galatia, concludes the epistle with his apostolical benediction, v. 18. His usual farewell, as we see, Rom. 16: 20, 24. and 1 Cor. 16: 23. He prays that they might enjoy the favor of Christ, receive from Him all the grace needful to guide them in their way, to strengthen them in their work, establish them in their Christian course, and encourage and comfort them under all the trials of life, and the prospect of death itself. This is fitly called  *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* , as He is both the sole Purchaser and the appointed Dispenser of it: and though these churches had done enough to forfeit it, by suffering themselves to be drawn into an opinion and practice highly dishonorable to Christ, as well as dangerous to them; yet, out of his great concern for them, and knowing of what importance it was to them, he earnestly desires it on their behalf; yea, that it might  *be with their spirit* , that they might continually experience the influences of it on their souls, disposing and enabling them to act with sincerity and uprightness in religion. We need desire no more to make us happy, than the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRACT. OBS. The reality and degree of our spirituality should be evinced, by tender and compassionate endeavors to restore the fallen, and confirm the weak, 'in the spirit of meekness;' conscious that we too are liable to be tempted, and have need of humble watchfulness, and constant dependence on God.—Our Christian liberty is enjoyed, in proportion as we 'fulfil the law of Christ,' in loving the brethren, and 'bearing one another's burdens' with compassion and self-denial.—If hitherto any man have 'sown to the flesh,' and is afraid, that 'of the flesh he shall reap corruption,' let him begin, by repentance, faith, and prayer, to 'sow to the Spirit,' that he may at length reap everlasting life.—If we then are 'in Christ, new creatures,' we have the kernel and the substance of religion, and may leave others to contend about the shell or the shadow

of it.—They are peculiarly blamable, who trouble and grieve those soldiers of Christ, that 'bear in their bodies' the scars of the wounds they have received in 'fighting the good fight of faith;' but we should not wonder, or be disconcerted, should our most disinterested and self-denying labors meet with this recompense alone, from those whom we have most loved. There have always been professors and teachers of religion, who 'desired to make a fair show in the flesh,' to render religion subservient to worldly interests or distinctions, and to escape the cross. But the consistent Christian is nobly disdainful of such low aims; he glories in the cross of Christ alone, and desires to 'live no longer to himself, but to Him who died for him, and rose again.' 1 Cor. 1:26—31, vv. 30, 31. 3:18—23. 2 Cor. 5:13—16. 10:17, 18. SCOTT.

V. 16. Rule.] 'Kanōn is both a builder's perpendicular line, or plummet, and a carpenter's rectangular rule.'

BLOOMF.

V. 17, 18. Some think, that the marks which slaves and soldiers received, showing to what master or commander they belonged, are alluded to. But the scars of the stripes and wounds which he had received for Christ's sake, are indisputably meant.

SCOTT.

(17.) Trouble me, &c.] 'It seems most natural to understand, with the ancient contrs. and *Jaspis*, Paul's fixed determination. So *Chrys.* and *Theoph.* observe, that the apostle says this as giving them to understand, that the rules he has laid down are immovably fixed, and that they need not expect anything else from him, but receive this from him as an absolute determination, once for all. Yet, I think, he means *also* to hint, that he had had trouble and chagrin enough on this question already. "For, (says he) v. 12. I have trouble now: I bear," &c.' In bear, &c.,

I see no reference to a triumph, as the ancients suppose; nor do I think (as do *Potter, Deyling, Wets.*, &c.) there is a reference to a custom of the ancients, by which those who were dedicated to the service of any god, had a brand stamped on them. See *Herod.* [and notes and cut, De. 32:6. Ps. 18:5.] Paul, in the word *stigmata*, rather refers to the *weals, bruises, and scars*, left by the scourgings, beatings, and stonings he had received. *Bloomf.*, and so Dr. A. C., who adds, 'or to the *stigmata* or marks with which servants and slaves were often impressed, to show whose they were.' Soldiers are also said to have had the names of their corps, or general, imprinted on their hands. The common way of stigmatizing, in the E., was, by burning the member with a red-hot iron, marked with certain letters, till a fair impression was made, and then pouring ink into the furrows.' See *Bush's* 'Illustrations,' &c. on Rev. 13:16. Is. 44:5. and comp. modern tattooing. Ed.

(Note on Christian Union, Continued from p. 354.)

Comp. 1 Cor. 3:3, 4. Gal. 5:20. Rom. 16:17. 1 Cor. 12:12. Eph. 4:3—6. Gal. 2:11, 14. [In most of which places, Paul asserts sectarianism to be 'carnal,' 'of the flesh,' i. e. of the lower propensities, under the direction of self-esteem, and other kinds of selfishness.] It would seem, therefore, to be irresistibly evident, that the unity of the church ought to be sacredly preserved by all who love the Lord Jesus; and without stopping, at this stage of our investigation, to ascertain all the precise features of this unity, which will hereafter appear, it is evident, that the union inculcated by the apostle is such as is inconsistent with the divisions which he rebukes; and such divisions substantially are those of the present day, which are all based on some difference of doctrine, forms of government, or mode of worship among acknowledged Christians.

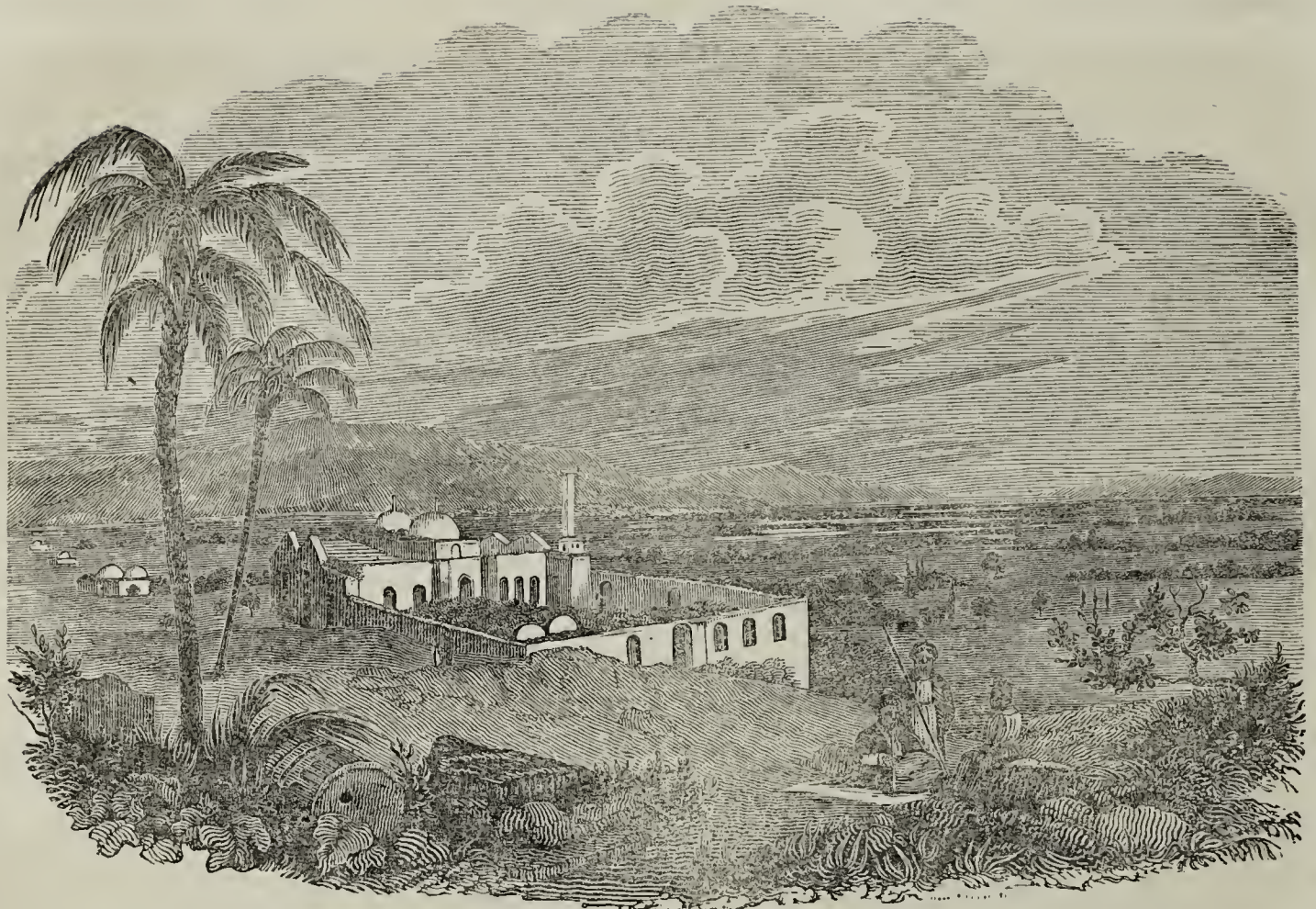
11. Obligation to preserve the unity of the church, is evident from the example of the apostles, of the apostolic and subsequent age.

It would be superfluous to affirm, that no one of the apostles or their fellow-laborers established any sects in the Christian church. The bare supposition of the contrary, is absurd and revolting to every mind acquainted with the inspired record. Yet what ample ground was there for such a course, if it had been thought lawful? There was a difference of opinion among the apostles, and difference among the first Christians; but neither was regarded as a cause for schism or division in the church. Paul differed from Peter, and disapproved of his conduct so much, that he says, (Gal. 2:11—14.) "at Antioch, I withstood him to the face, for he was to be blamed;" yet neither of them dreamed of forming a sect for the defence and propagation of his distinctive views. Paul and Barnabas differed about their arrangements for missionary operations, and when the contention grew sharp, each took as fellow-laborers those whom he preferred, and thus prosecuted his work; but it never entered into their minds to form different sects in the church. In the apostolic age, there existed differences of opinion and practice between the Jewish and Gentile converts, far greater than those which divide some of the religious denominations of our land. Ac. 15:5. Gal. 4:10. Yet they did not divide the church into different sects, under the guidance of the apostles. On the contrary, the apostle enjoined mutual forbearance, Ro. 14:5—10. No did any schism actually arise from these

differences, till the apostles had gone to their rest, when, in direct opposition to this advice, the Nazareans, in the reign of Adrian, separated from the body of Christians, who however strongly disapproved of their conduct. It is certain, too, that during several hundred years, there continued to be persons in the church, who exhibited a lingering attachment to the Mosaic ceremonial observances, yet they were not excluded, nor advised to form themselves into a separate sect. The observance of the Lord's day or Christian Sabbath was universal (see Justin Martyr's apology); but some Christians, during several centuries, continued also to observe the Jewish Sabbath as a sacred day. The time for the observance of Easter was another point of difference, and even of warm controversy; yet, excepting some intolerant individuals, neither party seriously thought of dividing the church, or disowning their brethren on this ground; see Euseb. Book v. ch. 24. Had these differences existed in our time, who can doubt, not only that separate sects would have grown out of them, but that their formation would be approved by Christians generally? . . . Christians were, in those days, called nothing but Christians. This ought certainly to be a solemn fact to those, who have taken it for granted, that sectarian divisions of the church are right; that they were doing God service by their utmost efforts to perpetuate them, by inscribing, on the tender and infant mind, the lineaments of their denominational peculiarity. One thing does appear undeniable. If the sectarian form of Christianity be its best mode of development, the blessed Savior Himself,—with reverence be it spoken! —the Savior and his apostles failed to enjoy it; on the contrary enjoined and practised directly the reverse!! The writer does not, from these facts, infer the obligation of Christians immediately to renounce their present organizations, and all merge into one church. Difficulties now exist, arising from honest diversity of views on church government, which did not exist in the apostolic age, and which render it impossible for persons, thus differing, to unite geographically; but the essence of Christian union may exist, and ought to be promoted immediately, as will be seen in a subsequent stage of this discussion. As to a union of all the churches of the land in one compact ecclesiastical system of judicature, such a one did not exist in the apostolic age, is undesirable, and dangerous.

(Continued on p. 422.)





EPHESUS.

AN EXPOSITION  
OF  
**PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS,**  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. Roswell.)

SOME think this epistle to the Ephesians was a circular letter, sent to several churches; and that the copy directed to the Ephesians, happened to be taken into the canon. The reason is, that this is the only one of all Paul's epistles, that has nothing in it peculiar to the state or case of that particular church, but much of common concern to all Christians, especially Gentile Christians. But it may be observed, on the other hand, the epistle is expressly inscribed, *ch. 1:1. to the saints at Ephesus*; and, in the close of it, he tells them, that he had sent Tyehieus unto them, whom, in 2 Tim. 4:12. he says, he had sent to Ephesus.\*

It bears date out of a prison; and some have observed, that it has the greatest relish and savor in it of the things of God. When his tribulations did abound, his consolations and experiences did much more abound. Whence we may observe, that *the afflictive exercises of God's people, and particularly of his ministers, often tend to the advantage of others, as well as to their own.*

The apostle's design is, to settle the Ephesians in the truth; and further to acquaint them with the mystery of the Gospel, in order to it.† In the former part, he represents the great privilege of the Ephesians, who, having been in time past idolatrous heathens, were now converted to Christianity, and received into covenant with God, which he illustrates from

\* 'Although it does not appear to have been disputed, that the epistle before us was written by Paul, yet it is well known a doubt has long been entertained concerning the persons to whom it was addressed. The question is founded on some ambiguity in the external evidence. Marcion, a heretic of the second century, as quoted by Tertullian, . . . calls it the epistle to the Laodiceans.—The name *Ephesus*, in the first v., on which word singly depends the proof that the epistle was written to the Ephesians, is not read in all the manuscripts now extant. I admit, however, that the external evidence preponderates, with a manifest excess, on the side of the received reading.' *Paley*. The same learned writer proceeds to argue, from *internal* evidence, that the epistle could hardly be written to a people, with whom the apostle had resided three years. *Acts 19:9—12. 20:29—31.* and it must be acknowledged, that in this respect it more resembles the epistle to the Romans, and that to the Colossians, than those epistles which the apostle wrote to the Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, and Thessalonians, in which there are constant allusions and appeals to what had past when he resided among them. As, however, the 'external evidence preponderates, with a manifest excess, in favor of the received reading,' [note, 1:1.] and as Dr. *Paley* seems to be mistaken in supposing, that the word *Ephesus* was wanting in any manuscript extant, (see *Middleton*, on the Gr. article, p. 510,) it is in this exposition adhered to; though it may be observed, that the change of the word *Ephesus* for *Laodicea*, or the total omission of it, would in no respect deduct from the abundant instruction, contained in the epistle itself.—It has been said, that if this epistle was directed

to the Ephesians, it is difficult to understand how the apostle contented himself with giving them a general salutation, without mentioning any of his numerous friends and acquaintance, with whom he had been intimate during his long residence at Ephesus. But the answer is, . . . there are no particular salutations, in the epistles to the Galatians, the Philippian, the Thessalonians, and to Titus; because, to have sent particular salutations to individuals, in churches where the apostle was so generally and intimately acquainted, . . . might have offended those who were neglected. . . . And to have mentioned every person of note in those churches, would have taken up too much room. In writing to the Romans, the case was different. The apostle was personally unknown to most of them; . . . and therefore he could, . . . without offence to the rest, take particular notice of all his acquaintance.' *Mackn. Scott*. For the present state of Ephesus, see notes, end of Acts, and Pref. to Rev. Ed.

† 'Paul's design was, "to establish the Ephesians in the faith; and to this end to give them more exalted views of the eternal love of God, and of the glorious excellence and dignity of Christ; to show them they were saved by grace; [as 'destined by gratuitous election, and adoption,' says *Calvin*, 'to eternal life, before they were born;'] and howsoever wretched they were once, the Gentiles [so wretched before] now have equal privileges with the Jews; to encourage them, by declaring with what steadfastness he suffered for the truth, and with what earnestness he prayed for their establishment and perseverance in it; and finally, in consequence of their profession, to engage them to the practice of those duties that became their character as Christians.'" *Doddr.*



a view of their deplorable state before their conversion, *ch.* 1—3. In the latter part (which we have in the 4th, 5th, and 6th chs.) he instructs them in the principal duties of religion, both personal and relative; and exhorts and quickens them to the faithful discharge of them. Zanchy observes, that we have here an epitome of the whole Christian doctrine, and of almost all the chief heads of divinity.\*

The apostle wrote this epistle, some years after his charge to the elders of Ephesus at Miletus, during his imprisonment at Rome, probably near the close of it; (6:20.) to establish them in the great doctrines of the Gospel, guard them against errors, excite them to a holy conversation, and animate them in their Christian warfare.—This epistle, and the two that follow it, which were also written during his imprisonment, and probably about the same time, are remarkable for a peculiar pathos and ardor, or *rapture*, as some have called it; and this is generally ascribed to the extraordinary consolations enjoyed by the apostle, during his sufferings for Christ's sake. But his mind was doubtless enlarged to a remarkable degree in writing to those, whom he had no occasion to rebuke, and with whom he was not under the necessity of engaging in controversy; so that, entire confidence of affection took place of the caution, reserve, or sharpness, which were requisite in the three preceding epistles.—Learned men, according to their different hypotheses, suppose, that the apostle continually refers, in this epistle, to the mysteries of Diana, to the Gnostics, or to the judaizing teachers; but it may fairly be questioned, whether, writing with an inexpressible flow of holy affections, on the great subjects which rejoiced his heart, he had express reference to any of those things, which expositors, more coldly speculating on his words, have imagined.—Perhaps he had some general regard to the judaizing corrupters of the Gospel; † but, as the epistle to the Colossians, which was written about the same time, and in other respects greatly resembles this, is far more explicit on that subject, it may be supposed that the Ephesians were less in danger from that quarter.

HENRY.

\* This epistle Dr. Goodwin considers, as the richest and noblest of all, and thinks it was peculiarly intended to be so, to reward the generous zeal of the Ephesians in burning their *curious books*, by a book of *divine knowledge*, incomparably more valuable than any or all of them. A thought, as Doddr. says, most remarkable and ingenious: though, with a prudence which I cannot but commend, he declines instituting any comparison of the excellency of the epistle, with that of others. † See a full analysis of the epistle in Doddr.'s Pref. to Eph. Ed.

† It is likely, Paul feared, lest false apostles, thinking them but half instructed, should disturb their faith. For they were Gentiles, and having embraced pure Christianity, had heard nothing of ceremonies or circumcision. But those who were obtruding the law upon Christians, clamored, that all were profane who were not initiated to God by cir-

cumcision; for this was the burden of their cry, that no one was to be deemed of God's people, but the circumcised: that all the Mosaic rites were to be kept. Now, they calumniated Paul, as making Christ common to Jews as well as Gentiles; and asserted, that his apostleship was a profanation of the heavenly doctrine, as it prostituted the covenant of grace, to impure men, indiscriminately. Therefore, lest the Ephesians, urged by such calumnies, should slip, he comes to their aid; contending that they also were thus diligently called to the Gospel, because they were elected before the creation of the world: and on the other hand, he forbids them to think that the Gospel was brought to them rashly, by the will of man, or had flown to them by chance, because, the preaching of Christ among them, was nothing else than the publication of his eternal decree. CALVIN.

## CHAP. I.

1 After the salutation, 3 and thanksgiving for the Ephesians, 4 he treateth of our election, 6 and adoption by grace, 11 which is the true and proper fountain of man's salvation. 13 And because the height of this mystery cannot be easily attained unto, 16 he prayeth that they may come 19 to the full knowledge, and 20 possession thereof in Christ.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the <sup>a</sup> saints which are at <sup>b</sup> Ephesus, and to the faithful <sup>c</sup> in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace <sup>e</sup> be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed <sup>d</sup> be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly <sup>f</sup> places in Christ:

a Ro. 1:7. d Ga. 1:3. Tit. 1:4. f or, things.  
b Ac. c. 19, 20. e 2 Co. 1:3. He. 9:28.  
c Col. 1:2. 1 Pe. 1:3.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. Here is, 1. Paul's title, *an apostle of Jesus Christ*, &c. one of his messengers to the sons of men, furnished with extraordinary gifts, and the immediate assistance of the Spirit. Such an one Paul was, and that not *by the will of man*, or by his own intrusion; but *by the will of God*, very expressly and plainly signified to him; he being immediately called (as the other apostles were) by Christ Himself to the work. 2. The persons to whom this epistle is sent,—*the saints at Ephesus*, the Christians, members of the church at Ephesus, the metropolis of Asia; *saints* in profession, and bound to be in truth and reality, as many of them were, *faithful in Christ*, believing in Him, firmly adhering to Him, [devotedly true to God's service, and] to the profession they make of relation to their Lord, even *Christ Jesus*, from whom they derive all their

grace and spiritual strength, and in whom their persons, and all that they perform, are made accepted. 3. The apostolical benediction,—*Grace be to you*, &c. the token in every epistle; it speaks the apostle's goodwill to his friends, and a real desire of their welfare. By *grace* we are to understand, the free and undeserved love and favor of God, and those graces of the Spirit which proceed from it; by *peace*, all other blessings, spiritual and temporal, the fruits and product of the former. These proceed from God, not as a Creator, but as a *Father*, by special relation: and they come from our Lord Jesus Christ, who, having purchased them for his people, has a right to bestow them on them. Indeed *the saints, and the faithful in Christ Jesus*, had already received grace and peace; but the *increase* of these is to be earnestly prayed for, both for ourselves and others; for the best saints stand in need of fresh supplies of the Spirit, and cannot but desire to improve and grow.

After this short introduction, he comes to the matter and body of the epistle; and though it may seem somewhat peculiar in a letter, yet the Spirit saw fit his discourse of divine things in this ch. should be cast into prayers and praises: solemn addresses to God, yet conveying weighty instructions to others. *Prayer may preach; and praise may do so too.*

V. 3—14. He begins with thanksgivings and praise, and enlarges, with great fluency and copiousness of affection, on the exceeding great and precious benefits we enjoy by Jesus Christ. For the great privileges of our religion are very aptly recounted and enlarged on in our praises to God.

In general, v. 3. he blesses God for *spiritual blessings*; where he styles Him the *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*: for, as *Mediator*, the Father was *his God*; as *God*, and the second Person in the

blessed Trinity, God was *his Father*. All blessings come from God, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. No good can be expected from a righteous and holy God to sinful creatures, but by his mediation. *He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings*: whom God blesses with *some*, He blesses with *all* spiritual blessings; not so with *temporal* blessings; some are favored with health, and not with riches; some with riches and not with health, &c. *Spiritual blessings in heavenly places*; i. e. say some, in the church, distinguished from the world, and called out of it. Or it may be read, in *heavenly things*, such as come from heaven, and are designed to prepare men for it, and to secure their reception into it. These we are blessed with *in Christ*: for as all our services ascend to God through Christ, so all our blessings are conveyed to us the same way; He being the Mediator between God and us.

The *particular* spiritual blessings we are blessed with *in Christ*, and for which we ought to bless God, are (many of them) here enumerated and enlarged upon.

1. Election and predestination, which are the secret springs whence the others flow, v. 4, 5, 11. the former respects that lump or mass of mankind, out of which some are chosen, from which they are separated and distinguished; the latter, the blessings they are designed for; particularly *the adoption of children*: it being the purpose of God, that in due time we should become his adopted children, and so have a right to all the privileges, and to the inheritance, of children. We have here the date of this act of love; it was *before the foundation of the world*: not only before God's people had a being, but before the world had a beginning; for they were chosen in the counsel of God from all eternity; which magnifies God's love. Alms to beggars, at your doors,

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1. Bl. says, the genuineness of the words, 'those who are in Ephesus,' has been called in question, but successfully defended; referring to 'Stale's note, Koppe's Introd. to Eph., Ros., Mich., Hug., or Horne's Introd. Horne coincides with Macknight's opinion, that Paul sent the Ephesians word by Tychicus, who carried their letter, to send a copy of it to the Laodiceans, with an order to them to communicate it to the Colossians.' See also the remarks on Eph., in the 'Supplement to the Comprehensive Commentary.' Eo.

Faithful, &c.] 'I cannot think, with Locke and Wells, that it signifies those, who kept the doctrine of Christ, free from the corrupt admixtures of Judaism, or (with Grot.) those who persevered in the profession of that doctrine. A criticism which Doddr. rightly rejects, observing, that Paul uses the same title to the Colossians, (Col. 1:2.) whom yet he reproves on this very account, (Col. 2:16, 20.) It should rather seem to

mean, as *Whitby* and *Mackn.* interpret, *believers in general*. See *Schl. Lex.* Both this, and "saints," are simply a designation of *Christians*; since that *appropriate* term was then not yet come into use. Sometimes, Paul simply says, "those in Christ."

V. 2. Grace.] 'Charis: all spiritual blessings; Peace, (eirēnē, Heb. shalom,) i. e. all temporal blessings.'

V. 3—8. Vs. 3—14. properly speaking, form one sentence. The apostle's mind was so full of his subject, that he was not very exact about his style, and this renders a double degree of attention requisite in those readers, who would fully enter into his meaning.—Reflecting on the great things God had done for him, and by him, especially among the Gentiles, the apostle broke out into the most rapturous praises and thanksgivings unto God on that account. (3) *Blessed, &c.*] When we bless God, we *speak well of Him*, when He blesses us, He powerfully



4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be <sup>h</sup> holy, and without blame before him in love :

5 Having predestinated <sup>i</sup> us unto the adoption of <sup>j</sup> children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good <sup>k</sup> pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise <sup>l</sup> of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in <sup>m</sup> the Beloved :

7 In whom <sup>n</sup> we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace ;

8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence ;

9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath <sup>o</sup> purposed in himself :

10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in <sup>p</sup> heaven and which are on earth : *even* in him,

11 In whom also we have obtained an <sup>q</sup> inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will ;

g 1 Pe. 1:2. k Lu. 12:32. 1 Pe. 1:18,19.  
h Lu. 1:75. l 1 Pe. 2:9. o 2 Ti. 1:9.  
i Col. 1:22. m 1 Pe. 2:5. p the heavens.  
j Ro. 8:29,30. n He. 9:12. q Ac. 20:32.  
j Ja. 1:12.

proceed from a sudden resolve ; but the provision a parent makes for his children, is the result of many thoughts, and is put into his last will and testament with a great deal of solemnity. God acts in pursuance of his eternal purpose in bestowing spiritual blessings on his people. *He hath blessed us,*

—according as *He hath chosen us in Him*, in Christ, the great Head of the election, who is emphatically called, *God's Elect, his Chosen* ; and, in the chosen Redeemer, an eye of favor was cast on them. Observe, here, one great end and design of this choice ; *chosen,—that we should be holy* ; not because He foresaw they would be holy, but because He determined to make them so. All who are chosen to happiness as the end, are chosen to holiness as the means. Their sanctification, as well as their salvation, is the result of the counsels of divine love. *And without blame before Him* ; that their holiness might not be only external and in outward appearance, so as to prevent blame from men ; but internal and real, and what God Himself will account such, who *looketh at the heart* ; such holiness proceeding from love to God, and to our fellow-creatures ; this charity being the principle of all true holiness. The original word signifies, such an innocence as no man can carp at ; therefore some understand it, of that perfect holiness which the saints shall attain to in the life to come, which will be eminently *before* God ; they being in his immediate presence for ever.

Here is also the rule, and the fountal cause of God's election ; it is *according to the good pleasure of his will*, v. 5. not for the sake of anything in them foreseen, but because it was his sovereign will, and a thing highly pleasing to Him. It is *according to the purpose*, the fixed and unalterable will, of *Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*, v. 11. who powerfully accomplishes whatever concerns his elect, as He has wisely and freely foreordained and decreed : the last and great end and design of all which, is, his own glory. *To the praise of the glory of his grace*, v. 6. *That we should be to the praise of his glory*, v. 12. that we should live and behave ourselves in such a manner that his rich grace might be magnified, and appear glorious, and worthy of the highest praise. *All is of God, and from Him, and through Him*, and therefore all must be *to Him*, and centre in his praise. Note, The glory of God is his own end, and it should be ours, in all that we do. The

next spiritual blessing the apostle notices, is,

2. Acceptance with God through Jesus Christ ; *Wherein*, or by which grace, *He hath made us accepted in the Beloved*, v. 6. Jesus Christ is the *Beloved* of his Father, Mat. 3:17. as well as of angels and saints. It is our great privilege to be accepted of God, which implies his love to us, and his taking us under his care, and into his family. We cannot be thus accepted of God, but in and through Jesus Christ. He loves his people for the sake of *the Beloved*.

3. Remission of sins, and redemption, through the blood of Jesus, v. 7. No remission without redemption. We were captivated by reason of sin ; and cannot be released but by the remission of our sins. This *redemption* we have in Christ, and this remission through his blood. The guilt and the stain of sin could be no otherwise removed, than by the blood of Jesus. This great benefit, which comes freely to us, was dearly bought and paid for by our blessed Lord : and yet it is *according to the riches of God's grace*. Christ's satisfaction and God's rich grace are very consistent in the great affair of man's redemption. God was satisfied by Christ as our Substitute and Surety ; but it was *rich grace* that would accept of a surety, when He might have executed the severity of the law on the transgressor ; and it was *rich grace* to provide such a Surety as his own Son, and freely to deliver Him up, when nothing of that nature could have entered into our thoughts, or have been any otherwise found out for us. In which instance He has not only manifested *riches of grace*, but *hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence*, v. 8. *wisdom*, in contriving the dispensation, and *prudence*, in executing the counsel of his will, as He has done.

4. Another privilege the apostle here blesses God for, is, divine revelation, v. 9. This we owe to Christ, who, having lain in the bosom of the Father from eternity, came to declare his will to men. *According to his good pleasure*, his secret counsels concerning man's redemption, *which He had purposed*, or resolved upon, *merely in and from Himself*,

confers blessings on us.—(4) *Chosen, &c.* [He speaks of whole societies in general, as consisting of saints, . . . because this was the prominent character. . . Nor did he always judge it necessary to make exceptions, in reference to a few hypocrites who had crept in among them, any more than Christ judged it so, to speak of Judas as excluded, when he mentions the 12 thrones on which the apostles should sit. Mat. 19: 23.—In this view, he says of them in general, that they were chosen, . . . not to those present privileges, which they as all professed Christians enjoy, but to real holiness and everlasting glory.] *Predestinated, &c.* [Predestination to the adoption of children,] should be carefully distinguished from actual adoption, which is subsequent to regeneration and actual believing, and makes way for the Spirit of adoption. John 1:10—13. Rom. 8:14—17.

(3.) *Us.* [Himself and the Ephesians, most of whom were Gentile converts. By thus beginning with thanks, he at once declares his firm persuasion of the *calling of the Gentiles*, and his hearty joy in it. *With all, &c.*] The apostle everywhere represents the *graces of the Spirit*, as so much preferable to its *gifts*, it appears very surprising, that *Whithy* should refer the words entirely to those gifts. [Bl., with the ancient comtrs., Dr. Wells, &c., understands the latter, chiefly, though not to the exclusion of the former.] The phrase manifestly takes in *every spiritual blessing* (so the Gr.), and principally must refer, not to extraordinary and miraculous gifts, but to the sanctifying and saving *graces* of the Spirit ; such as effectual calling, justification by grace, the adoption of children, the illumination of the Spirit, and all the graces of the Christian life, which are common unto all believers, and are communicated to them in all their several branches. And these are blessings in the *heavens* (so the Gr. lit.), or in heavenly things [and so Bl. tr.], as they are things that have a manifest relation and respect to heaven, and have a tendency to fit us for it, and to lead us not to seek after the enjoyments of this present world, but to be conversant about, and to be waiting for, those of the heavenly state.] DODDR. Schoettgen says, 'the apostle opposes spiritual and celestial things to Paganism and Judaism,' with their vain, or merely typical externalities ; and he refers to his 'Diss. on the heavenly Jerusalem,' 5, 2 and 3. See Bl. Ed.

(4.) 'The Jews imagined, none were elect but themselves, and that for them alone the world was created, 2 Esdras 6:55—59.' Wells, in Bl. 'Steadfastness and purity of faith, the ancients rightly understand by "holy," and by "without blame," purity of morals. The words, in love, are united by the ancients and most eminent modern critics, to the next v. yet it seems awkward to unite it with *predestinated*, and Koppe, more naturally, takes it with *chosen*.' BLOOMF.

(8.) *Wisdom, . . . prudence.* [Certainly not "their own prudent returns to be made to divine goodness ;" but it refers to God's having, with infinite wisdom, contrived a way to glorify all his attributes in the sal-

vation of men, even those which seemed to have the most different claims ; dispensing mercy in a way of judgment, and awakening a humble awe and reverence [and wonderfully exciting the superior sentiments to action, Ed.] in the soul, by the very method used for granting pardon and peace.]

V. 9—12. The blessings before mentioned were communicated to believers, by the Lord's 'making known to them the mystery of his will,' respecting the method of redemption and salvation, and the admission of sinners into his family by faith in Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles. All these arrangements had been made 'according to his good pleasure, which He had purposed in Himself ;' for, as He advised with no counsellor, so He gave no account of his holy, wise, and righteous appointments. Notes, Job 33:12, 13. Rom. 11:33—36. Having revealed these things to the apostles, and by them to the church, his divine teaching had led those whom 'He had chosen,' to see the glory of those truths, which others were left to blaspheme. Thus were they made to 'know the mystery of his will,' and to understand, that 'in the dispensation of the fulness of times,' which at length had been introduced, the Lord purposed to *gather together* in one kingdom or family, in his beloved Son, and under his government, 'all things in heaven and earth.' So that not only Jews and Gentiles would become one church, not only were the saints, who had before gone to heaven, to be considered as one body under one Head, with believers on earth ; but even holy angels, and all the inhabitants of heaven, as confirmed in Christ, and his worshippers and subjects, would form one kingdom with redeemed sinners, and join with them in adoration, love, and obedience. SCOTT.

(9.) *Mystery.* [As impervious to human knowledge, not being attainable by natural religion (Ro. 11:25. 16:25. Col. 1:26.) ; nay, not perfectly known even to the angels. 1 Pet. 1:2.] KOPPE. Ros. Bl.

(10.) *Dispensation.* *Oikonomia* : 'a similitude from a family, in which the father, or his substitute, measures out, to each, what is taken from the common store-room.' GROT. 'God, in Christ, unites the earthly family to the upper family, his family in heaven, v. 21. and 3:15. which families, says Theoph. "had been split and separated, and had not one head. God determined to unite them in one Head, even Christ ; over the angels by his incorporeal, over men according to his incarnate nature." Bl. Gather together.] 'Lit. unite again, under one head.' DODDR., whom see. Ed.

(11.) *We, &c.* [Locke (alluding to De. 32:9) refers this to the admission of the Gentiles into the church, which is *God's heritage* : but as we in this and the next v. seems opposed to *you*, in v. 13. it must signify the Jews who first trusted in Christ, or the body of the Christian church, incorporated long before the Ephesians were brought into it. Worketh, &c.] God takes such methods to answer his purposes as He knows will be effectual. But it does not prove anything like an over-



12 That we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ.

13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

r or, hoped. u 2 Co. 5:5. w Ac. 20:23.  
s Ro. 10:17. v Ro. 8:23. x ver. 6,12.  
t 2 Co. 1:22.

and not for anything in them. In this revelation, and in his making known unto us the mystery of his will, the wisdom and the prudence of God do abundantly shine forth. It is described, v. 13, as the Word of truth, and the Gospel of our salvation. It contains and instructs us in the most weighty and important truths, and is confirmed and sealed by the very oath of God; from whence we should learn to betake ourselves to it in all our searches after divine truth. It is the Gospel of our salvation: it publishes the glad tidings of salvation, and contains the offer of it: it points out the way that leads to it; and the blessed Spirit renders the reading and the ministrations of it effectual to the salvation of souls. Oh, how we ought to prize this glorious Gospel, and to bless God for it!

5. Union in and with Christ, is a great

bearing impulse on men's minds, to determine them in such a manner as to destroy the natural freedom of their volitions, and so to prevent their being justly accountable to God for such actions.' DODDR.—'The original reference is still kept up here, in the word *prooristhentes*, being predestinated; as in the word *proorisas*, v. 5. (from *pro*, before, and *orizō*, I define, finish, bound, or terminate.) And as Paul speaks of obtaining the inheritance, he most evidently refers to that of which the Promised Land was the type and pledge. And as that land was assigned to the Israelites by *limit* and *lot*, both of which were appointed by God; so the salvation now sent to the Gentiles was as expressly their *lot* or *portion*, as the Promised Land was that of the people of Israel. All this shows, that the Israelites were a typical people; their land, the manner of possessing it, their civil and religious code, &c. &c. all typical; and that in, by, and through them, God had fore-determined, fore-described, and fore-ascertained, a greater and more glorious people, among whom the deepest counsels of his wisdom should be manifested; and the most powerful works of his eternal mercy, grace, holiness, goodness, and truth, be fully exhibited. Thus there was nothing fortuitous in the Christian scheme; all was the result of infinite counsel and design; God deriving all the reasons of his conduct from his own eternal benevolence, v. 5. his own infinite goodness.'

V. 13, 14. Sealed by the Holy Spirit, &c.] This cannot, with any propriety, be explained of miraculous powers. These were not the 'earnest,' pledge, and foretaste of heaven, as this 'seal' is declared to have been; for many unsanctified persons exercised miraculous powers. But the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Spirit seal believers, as the children of God and heirs of heaven; they are the first-fruits of that holy felicity, and they impress the holy image of God upon their souls. (Notes, 4:30—32. 2 Cor. 1:21, 22.)—Thus the Ephesian converts were preserved, supported, and comforted, and would be, during their time of trial and suffering, in life and death, till they should at last be put in full possession of that complete redemption, which Christ had ensured to his 'purchased people;' or till the inheritance, which sin had forfeited, but which Christ had 'purchased' for them, should be, so to speak, fully rescued from the hands of their enemies, and they put in complete possession of it, at the resurrection of the dead, to be forever monuments erected 'to the praise of the glory of God.' All these things are so evidently distinguishing of true Christians, and so inapplicable to collective bodies of professors of Christianity, that we must conclude the apostle spoke of election, as gratuitous, as personal, and not national, and of effectual vocation as inseparably connected with eternal life; and learned men need far more ingenuity, than has yet been employed in the argument, to make the apostle's words speak any other language, consistently with the rules of grammar and of common sense. Rom. 8:23—31. 9:1—5. 11:1—6.

(13.) 'By, or through, whom ye (Gentiles) having heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation, and having believed, were sealed with the Spirit of the promise, (even) the Holy Spirit.' 'So Ros., and formerly Grot., and so the ancient comtrs., and well; for to insert some verb after "ye also," as "trusted," "hoped," or "inherited," is too violent, and breaks up the whole construction, Seal.] "Though the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, whereby the believing Jews and Gentiles, in the first age, were sealed as heirs of the promises, have long ago been withdrawn, the ordinary influences of the Spirit of God still re-

privilege, a spiritual blessing, and the foundation of many others, v. 10. All religion centers in Him. Jews and Gentiles were united to each other, by being both united to Christ. Things in heaven, and things on earth, are gathered together in Him; peace made, correspondence settled, between heaven and earth, through Him. The innumerable company of angels become one with the church through Christ: this God purposed in Himself, and it was his design in that dispensation which was to be accomplished by his sending Christ in the fulness of time, at the exact time that God had prefixed and settled.

6. The eternal inheritance is the great blessing with which we are blessed in Christ, v. 11. Heaven is the inheritance, the happiness of which is a sufficient portion for a soul: it is conveyed in the way of an inheritance; being the gift of a Father to his children. If children, then heirs. Christians are said to have obtained this inheritance, as they have a present right to it; and even actual possession of it, in Christ, their Head and Representative.

7. The seal and earnest of the Spirit are of the number of these blessings. We are said to be sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, v. 13. The blessed Spirit is holy Himself, and He makes us holy. He is called the Spirit of promise, as He is the promised Spirit. By Him believers are sealed; i. e. separated and set apart for God, and distinguished and marked as belonging to Him. The Spirit is the Earnest of our inheritance, v. 14. The earnest is part of payment, and it secures the full sum: so is the gift of the Holy Ghost; all his influences and operations, both as a Sanctifier and a Comforter, are heaven begun, glory in the seed and bud. He is said to be the Earnest, until the redemption of the purchased possession. It may be called here the possession, because

this earnest makes it as sure to the heirs as though they were already possessed of it; and it is purchased for them by the blood of Christ. The redemption of it is mentioned, because it was mortgaged and forfeited by sin; and Christ restores it to us, and so is said to redeem it, in allusion to the law of redemption. Observe, from all this, what a gracious promise that is, which secures the gift of the Holy Ghost to them who ask Him.

The apostle mentions the great end and design of God in bestowing all these spiritual privileges; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ, as Rom. 16:7. they who have for a longer time experienced the grace of Christ, are under more special obligations to glorify God. They should be strong in faith, and more eminently glorify Him; but this should be the common end of all. For this we were made, and for this we were redeemed; this is the great design of our Christianity, and of God, in all that He has done for us; unto the praise of his glory, v. 14. He intends that his grace and power, and other perfections, should by this mean become conspicuous and illustrious, and that the sons of men should magnify Him.

V. 15—23. We are come to the last part of this ch. which consists of Paul's earnest prayer to God in behalf of these Ephesians. Note, We should pray for those for whom we give thanks.

One inducement to pray for them, was, the good account he had of them, of their faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, v. 15. Faith in Christ, and love to the saints, will be attended with all other graces. Another inducement was, because they had received the earnest of the inheritance: this we may observe, from the words being connected with the preceding ones by the particle wherefore. 'Perhaps you will

main; and if they produce in any man a new nature, he is thereby marked, or declared to be, God's son; and that mark, or seal, is to him a stronger evidence of his title to the inheritance, than if he possessed the miraculous gifts; nay, than if an angel from heaven assured him of his title.' MACKN.

(14.) Which.] Hos., 'Rather, who is the Earnest, &c.' DODDR.—'Here hos, [nasc. who.] is put, by a common idiom, for ho, [neut. which.] and used by Paul, from his considering the Holy Spirit as one of the persons of the Godhead; and therefore, by association of ideas, he accommodated the gender accordingly. This, then, affords a strong, though indirect and undesigned proof of the personality of the Holy Spirit. And so Œcum. Purchased possession, &c.] Περιποίησις: 'The construction is very harsh, and quite Hebraic, and so con tort and obscure, that I see not how it can be reconciled with the usus loquendi, or accounted for by the ordinary rules of construction. Comtrs. are exceedingly divided as to the sense. Whitby understands, redemption of life; and quotes many texts from the Sept., where the Gr. means, to save alive: observing, that there are two redemptions, or grand deliverances; (for that is plainly his idea of redemption;) the one, that of justification, consequent upon believing; the other, that by which we are delivered from death, and all the other penal consequences of sin, in the redemption of the body from corruption, that it may partake of eternal life. Comp. Ro. 8:23. This, adds Doddr., nearly coincides with Beza's interpretation, who would tr. till the redemption of vindication, i. e. till we are set at liberty, and receive complete deliverance and salvation. Bos tr. "of salvation," but this is obscure and unauthorized. Doddr. expl. the people whom Christ has purchased, to be his peculiar property; as "very agreeable to the signification elsewhere." Slade explains, "property acquired by any valuable consideration," comparing the Heb. *shih*, peculium. He tr. "for the final deliverance of the people purchased (by his blood). Thus Dr. Wells, "For the redemption of the purchased possession." But I confess, I do not see anything here that approaches to probability: and further than that no interpretation can well rise. I subjoin two others which seem to approximate the truth: 1. that of Ros., and Schl., who understand, liberation from this life, and all its evils. The sense will then be, "with the complete liberation of Christians from all their miseries, until their departure from this earth, when they will receive the promised inheritance;" or, as Schl. tr.: "until the time when Christ shall deliver his worshippers (whom He purchased by his blood. Ac. 20:28.) from this body." 2. that of Koppe, who regards the phrase as the Heb. *status constructus*, in the place of a participle, joined to a noun substantive, put for "which is purchased and obtained for." He comp. 1 Th. 5:9. 2 Th. 2:14. He. 20:39. and observes a similar construction at v. 18. and 1 Pet. 2:9. This mode is somewhat confirmed by the ancient comtrs. See Theoph., between whom and Koppe the truth seems to lie.' BLOOMF. Calvin understands, till the day of the full redemption of the church; the judgment-day. See his comment. En.

V. 15—23. The apostle had, for some time, witnessed the conduct of the Ephesians; but, having been absent from them at least 6 or 7 years, he had again heard of their faith in Christ, and love to all his saints, which excited him, without ceasing, to thank God for his grace and mercy towards them, and animated him in mentioning them expressly by name, in all his secret and social prayers. It is remarkable, that the



17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him :

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened ; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come ;

22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

y Jn. 20:17. d c. 3:16. h Phi. 2:9.  
z Col. 1:9. e Ps. 110:3. i Col. 2:10.  
a or, for the ac- f the might of his i Ps. 3:6.  
knowledge. power. Mat. 23:13.  
b Is. 42:7. g Ac. 2:21,33. j 1 Co. 12:12.  
c c. 4:4. Col. 1:18,24.

think, that, having received the earnest, it should follow, therefore, ye are happy enough, and take no further care : you need not pray for yourselves, nor I for you. No, quite the contrary. Wherefore,—I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, v. 16. While he blesses God for giving them the Spirit, he ceases not to pray that He would give unto them the Spirit, v. 17. greater measures of the Spirit. Observe, Even the best of Christians need to be prayed for, that they may abound and increase yet more and more.

Now Paul prays, not that they might be freed from persecution ; nor that they might possess the riches, honours, or pleasures of

the world ; but the great thing he prays for, is, that their knowledge might increase and abound : he means it of a practical and experimental knowledge. The graces and comforts of the Spirit are communicated to the soul by the enlightening of the understanding. In this way He gains and keeps possession. Satan takes a contrary way ; HE GETS POSSESSION BY THE SENSES AND PASSIONS ; CHRIST, BY THE UNDERSTANDING. Observe,

1. Whence this knowledge must come ; from the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Father of glory, v. 17. It is a Hebraism, God is infinitely glorious in Himself ; all glory is due to Him from his creatures, and He is the Author of all that glory with which his saints are, or shall be, invested. Now He gives knowledge, by giving the Spirit of knowledge ; for the Spirit of God is the Teacher of the saints ; the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. We have the revelation of the Spirit in the Word : but need also the wisdom of the Spirit in the heart ; the knowledge of Him ; not only a speculative knowledge of Christ, and of what relates to Him, but an acknowledgment of Christ's authority by an obedient conformity to Him, which must be by the help of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. This knowledge is first in the understanding. He prays that the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened, v. 18. Observe, Christians should not think it enough to have warm affections, but they should labor to have clear understandings ; they should be ambitious of being knowing Christians, and judicious Christians.

2. What he more particularly desires they should grow in the knowledge of. (1.) The hope of his calling, v. 18. Christianity is our calling. God has called us to it, and on that account it is said to be his calling. And it is desirable to know what this hope of our calling is, to have such an acquaintance with the immense privileges of God's people, and the expectations they have from God, and with respect to the heavenly world, as to be quickened thereby to the utmost diligence and patience in the Christian course. (2.) The riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. Besides the heavenly inheritance prepared for the saints, there is a present inheritance in the saints: grace is glory begun, and holiness is happiness in the bud. There is a glory in

this inheritance ; riches of glory, rendering the Christian more excellent and more truly honorable than all about him : and it is desirable to know this experimentally ; to be acquainted with the principles, pleasures, and powers, of the spiritual and divine life. It may be understood of the glorious inheritance in or among the saints in heaven, where God does, as it were, lay forth all his riches, to make them happy and glorious, and where all that the saints are in possession of is transcendently glorious : as the knowledge that can be attained of this on earth, is very desirable, and must be exceedingly entertaining and delightful. Let us endeavor, then, by reading, contemplation, and prayer, to know as much of heaven as we can, that we may be desiring and longing to be there. (3.) The exceeding greatness of God's power toward them who believe, v. 19. The practical belief of the all-sufficiency of God, and of the omnipotence of divine grace, is absolutely necessary to a close and steady walking with Him. It is a desirable thing to know experimentally the mighty power of that grace beginning and carrying on the work of faith in our souls. It is a difficult thing to bring a soul to believe fully in Christ, and to venture its all on his righteousness, and on the hope of eternal life. It is nothing less than an almighty power that will work this in us. The apostle speaks here with a mighty fluency and copiousness of expression, and yet, at the same time, as if he wanted words to express the exceeding greatness of God's almighty power, that power which God exerts toward his people, and by which He raised Christ from the dead, v. 20. That, indeed, was the great proof of the truth of the Gospel to the world : but the transcript of that in ourselves, (our sanctification, and rising from the death of sin, in conformity to Christ's resurrection,) is the great proof to us. Many understand the apostle here as speaking of that exceeding greatness of power, which God will exert for the raising of the bodies of believers to eternal life, even the same mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him, &c. And how desirable a thing must it be to become at length acquainted with that power, by being raised out of the grave thereby unto eternal life !

Having said something of Christ and his

PRACT. OBS. Faith in Christ, and faithfulness to Him, unite in forming the character of his saints ; and to the sovereign grace of God we wholly owe it, if we are either true believers, or approved ministers. The appointment of the eternal Son of the Father, as the Surety for fallen man, in the divine foreknowledge, is the source of all the hopes and comforts of those who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy, and without blame before Him in love. —The mysteries of God, in man's redemption, must have been for ever hidden from us, if He had not made them known to us by his Gospel, and his Spirit of truth. Thus, in every respect, He dispenses his blessings according to 'the good pleasure, which He hath purposed in Himself.' We need not wonder that self-wise and self-sufficient men deride, and dispute against, these humbling and spiritual mysteries ; nor is it at all desirable, that they should embrace them as a scheme of doctrine, in a proud, carnal mind. But, that humble, believers, who allow their own hearts to be as evil (except as renewed by divine grace) as those of their most irreligious neighbors, should be afraid of tracing back their present experience of that grace, to the sovereign purpose and electing love of God in Christ, that in giving Him the whole glory of having 'made them to differ,' they may also possess a ground of assurance of his perfecting

his good work in their souls ; this, I say, is matter of surprise to those, who find the sweetest animation and encouragement from the glorious review and prospect, and in every past and present mercy possess a pledge and earnest of future and eternal felicity. If any, who appear to have 'faith in the Lord Jesus, and love to all the saints,' are dazzled by the sublime mysteries above stated ; their more established brethren should not forget, 'who has made them to differ' in this respect also ; and, instead of forming rash judgments, and engaging in angry disputations, they should thank God, for what He has done for them, and pray always for those whom they deem mistaken. We shall do far more, in this way, towards bringing believers to 'be of one mind and judgment,' than by eager and acrimonious controversies, however ably conducted ; 'for a man can receive nothing, except it be given him from above ;' and high confidence, on one side of the question, commonly excites the same on the other side, with all its hateful consequences. But, if we disputed with less earnestness, and prayed with greater fervency for each other, 'the eyes of our understandings being enlightened,' we should daily see more and more 'what is the hope of our calling, and the riches of God's glory, in the inheritance of his saints.' SCOTT.

apostle seems here studiously to have exhausted the utmost vigor of the Greek language to express, by a beautiful accumulation of energetic words, the omnipotence of God, as effecting the believer's conversion and salvation ; continuing, as it were, that exertion of it, by which the Redeemer was raised from the dead. 2:4—10. 3:20, 21. 1 Pt. 1:3—5. —Our version well renders the passage ; yet the emphasis of the original is not preserved, nor perhaps can be, in a translation. SCOTT.

(15) Heard.] He had never visited those he is addressing, as it was now 5 or 6 years since he quitted Ephesus. See Marka., or Doctr. Ep. (17) God of our Lord.] 'When this rare expression is used of men,' says Koppe, '(as the God of Abraham), it denotes the object of worship, and the source of benefit. And this may be suitable to the man, Jesus (see Jn. 20:17.) ; but since Jesus was Son of God, and, on that account, united to the Father, in a peculiar manner, who will venture to say, that some profounder sense is not intended by the apostle ?' It is sufficient, with the ancient comtrs, and most judicious modern ones, to consider Christ as here spoken of in his human nature ; as when He speaks of his God, Jn. 20:17. 1 Co. 11:3. 3:23. So that the Unitarians have here no argument at all against the deity of Jesus Christ, since this passage [382]

will only prove that He had a human nature as well as a divine one ; which we readily admit. BLOOMF. (13.) Understanding.] 'Dianoias : rather kardias, so numerous MSS. of various recensions, as also versions, fathers, and ancient comtrs.' In (21.) 'These words plainly indicate, that the apostle has reference to dignities and authorities in heaven, as well as in earth (for what else can "in the world to come," mean) ; and such has ever been the unvaried mode of interpretation, adopted by comtrs. and theologians from the earliest ages. It is strange, therefore, that the recent foreign comtrs. should dispute this. Not so, however, Koppe, who admits the reality of the doctrine, both here and at Col. 1:16. and he refers to 3:14. 6:12. 1 Co. 15:24. Ro. 8:38. Jaspis, too, acknowledges this.' Bl. 'Angels are thus designated, because God, by their hand, exercises his power, virtue, and dominion. For He is wont, in as far as He communicates his own qualities to creatures, to ascribe his name to them, wherefore they are called eiohim. Besides, there were different ranks of angels : which to inquire subtly into, &c., would be folly, rashness, impious, and dangerous curiosity.' CALVIN. (23) Fulness.] 'Pleroma : an immense multitude, which, not cou-



## CHAP. II.

<sup>1</sup> By comparing what we were by 3 nature, with what we are 5 by grace, 10 he declareth that we are made for good works, and 13 being brought near by Christ, should not live as 11 Gentiles, and 12 foreigners in time past, but as 19 citizens with the saints, and the family of God.

**A**ND you <sup>a</sup> *hath he quickened,* who were dead in trespasses and sins;

<sup>2</sup> Wherein <sup>b</sup> in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince <sup>c</sup> of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children <sup>d</sup> of disobedience:

<sup>a</sup> Jn. 5:24.      <sup>b</sup> Ac. 19:35.      <sup>d</sup> Col. 3:6.  
<sup>c</sup> Col. 2:13.      <sup>c</sup> c. 6:12.

resurrection, the apostle [in the fulness of his heart] digresses a little, to make some further honorable mention of the Lord Jesus and his exaltation, v. 20, 21. Jesus Christ is advanced above all, and He is set in authority over all, they being made subject to Him. The Father *hath put all things under his feet*, v. 22. according to the promise, Ps. 110: 1. All must either yield Him sincere obedience, or fall under the weight of his sceptre, and receive their doom from Him. God *GAVE Him to be Head over all things*. It was a gift to Christ, considered as Mediator, to be advanced to such dominion and headship, and to such a mystical body prepared for Him; and it was a gift to the church, to be provided with a Head, endued with so much power and authority. God gave Him to be the Head over all things. He gave Him all power, both in heaven and in earth. But what completes the comfort of this, is, that He is the Head over all things to the church; He is therefore intrusted with all power, that He may dispose of all the affairs of the providential kingdom, in subserviency to the designs of his grace concerning his church. With this therefore we

may answer the messengers of the nations, that the Lord hath founded Zion. The same power that supports the world, supports the church; and we are sure He loves his church, for it is *his body*, v. 23. his mystical body, and He will care for it. It is *the fulness of Him that filleth all in all*. Jesus Christ filleth all in all; He supplies all defects in all his members, filling them with his Spirit, and even with *the fulness of God*, ch. 3: 19. And yet the church is said to be *his fulness*; because Christ, as Mediator, would not be complete if He had not a church.

CHAP. II. The apostle endeavors to affect them with a due sense of the wonderful change divine grace had wrought in them; and this is very applicable to what the same grace works in all who are brought into a state of grace. So that we have here a lively picture both of the misery of unregenerate men, and of the happy condition of converted souls; enough to awaken and alarm those who are yet in their sins, and to put them on hastening out of that state; and to comfort and delight those whom God hath quickened, with a consideration of the mighty privileges with which they are invested.

V. 1—3. The miserable condition of the Ephesians by nature, is here in part described. Observe,

1. Unregenerate souls are *dead in trespasses and sins*; all sorts of sins, habitual and actual; sins of heart and of life. Sinners are *dead in state*, being destitute of the principles and powers of spiritual life; and cut off from God, the Fountain of life: and they are *dead in law*, as a condemned malefactor is said to be a dead man.

2. A state of sin is a state of conformity to this world, v. 2. In v. 1. he speaks of their internal state, in this of their outward conversation; *Wherein*, in which tres-

passes and sins, *in time past, ye walked*: ye lived and behaved yourselves as men of the world.

3. We are by nature bond-slaves to sin and Satan, *the prince of the power of the air*, the devil, or the prince of devils, Mat. 12: 24, 26. The legions of apostate angels are as one power, united under one chief; therefore, what is called *the powers of darkness*, elsewhere, is here spoken of in the singular number, and *the air* is represented as the seat of his kingdom. It was the opinion of both Jews and heathens, that the air is full of spirits, and that there they exercise and exert themselves. But wicked men are slaves to Satan, for they *walk according to him*, according to his suggestions, and in compliance with his temptations; they are subject to him, and are led captive by him at his will; whereupon he is called the god of this world, and *the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*. The children of disobedience are such as choose to disobey God, and to serve the devil; in these he works very powerfully and effectually. The apostle adds, *Among whom, also, we all had our conversation in times past*; which words refer to the Jews, whom he signifies here to have been in the like sad and miserable condition by nature, and to have been as vile and wicked as the unregenerate Gentiles themselves; and whose natural state he further describes in the next words.

4. We are by nature drudges to the flesh, and to our corrupt affections, v. 3. By *fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind*, men contract that filthiness of flesh and spirit which the apostle exhorts Christians to cleanse themselves from, 2 Co. 7: 1. The *fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind*, includes all the sin and wickedness that are acted in, and by, both the inferior and the higher and nobler powers of the soul. *Fulfilling [the wills] of the flesh, &c.* so the word may be rendered; denoting the

fining itself to its own territory, spreads far and near, and thus fills various regions. Ps. 24: 1.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. The words, *hath He quickened*, seem to have been properly, from v. 5. supplied by our trs.; as, in the original, that v. appears to take up and conclude the sentence here begun, merely by changing *you* into *us*, entirely in the apostle's manner. To be 'dead in trespasses and sins,' implies an utter incapacity for spiritual employments and satisfactions; the want of all desire after that felicity, which holy creatures enjoy in the favor and service of God, and a moral inability of worshipping and obeying Him with love and delight; even as a dead man is utterly incapable of the business and enjoyments of life. The employments and pleasures of *animal* nature, and even those of a *rational* being, are within the capacities of a man who is 'dead in sin;' but he cannot relish or desire *spiritual* pleasures. He may be an epicure, or a philosopher, but he cannot find satisfaction in [the will of God] the peculiar employments of a saint. For while 'dead in sin,' he must be 'carnal,' and 'the carnal mind is enmity against God,' and opposition to the holy law. Jn. 3: 3. Rom. 5: 12—14. 8: 5—9. Such a man, therefore, must be an apostate and an idolater, who seeks happiness in the creature, not in the Creator; and he lives only to disobey, to pursue worldly things, to corrupt himself and others, and to aggravate his condemnation as a transgressor of the divine law. 'According to the course of this world,' and according to the will of the devil; a dreadful advance on the preceding clause, though evidently contained in it. Whether [the prevalent opinion as to air-geni and demons] is to be understood literally or figuratively, was sufficient for the apostle's purpose. There, 'in the air,' Satan and the legions of fallen angels, which are subordinate to him, continually wait their opportunity of tempting men to sin, by keeping from their minds good thoughts, and serious impressions, or quenching them, and exciting the enmity of their hearts against them, and by suggesting others of a contrary tendency. In this way, the devil maintains his dominion, and men in general copy his example of rebellion, enmity, and contemptuous defiance of God; of pride, ambition, envy, malice, deceit, and destruction; or they gratify his malignity, by destroying themselves and each other, through gross sensualities, or by horrid war, and murder, committed in various ways, and under many plausible pretences; or his ambition, by idolatry, impiety, and infidelity. Thus he rules in man's heart; he *possesses*, as it were, all unbelievers, and he prompts, and, as it were, inspires with wit and ingenuity, the advocates for vice, impiety, and infidelity, by whom he maintains his empire in the world. Mat. 12: 29, 30. Lu. 11: 14—26. 1 Jn. 4: 4—6. 5: 19. *Worketh*.] See on 1: 11. 'It expresses the influence of Satan over them, as if they were inspired and possessed by him.—It is well known, the word, *energoumenoi*, among the ancients, signified the same with *demoniacs*.' Doddr.

(1.) *Dead*.] 'The philosophers called backsliders from philosophy, and those who again yielded themselves to the dominion of animal passions, *dead*.' See *Wets.*; but the allusion seems not the same.' BL., who defends the present division of the ch., condemning Doddr.'s method of joining v. 1. with 1: 23. and objecting to connecting 'you' with v. 13 and 19. as entirely too harsh. Ed.

(2.) *Course of this world*.] *Aiōna tou kosmou*: here *aiōna* denotes (as often), like the Latin *ævum* and *seculum*, the manner of life. Rosenm.

compares [the classic] *genus scuti*, the way of the world. He might more aptly have cited *Tacitus*, (Germ. c. 19.) "to corrupt and be corrupted, is called the age (*seculum*)." By *this world* is plainly meant the wicked of that time. *Prince*, &c.] The Jews and heathens, especially the Pythagoreans, thought the air thickly peopled with spirits and demons. See *Wets.* Thus Philo speaks of the *most holy troop of bodiless souls in the air*, and in many other passages, representing them as equal in number to the stars, i. e. innumerable. [Compare Milton's "Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth, Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep;" &c.] *Manilius*, 2. 13. speaks of "deities flying thick through the vast universe." *Diog. Laert.* 8. 32. "all the airs are filled with souls, and these are thought to be demons and heroes." And *Porphyry* ascribes the lusts of the flesh to these demons. *Plutarch* speaks of such powerful spirits of the air, p. 2, 361 b. Also *Apuleius* and *Lucan*. And *Koppé* cites, among the rabbinic writings, *Pirke Aboth*, fol. 63. p. 2. "You must know, that from the earth, even to the firmament, all is full of troops and prefects, and below are many creatures, injuring and accusing, and all stand and fly about in the air; nor is any place void, but all are fully preoccupied; of whom some excite to good, some to bad; some to life, some to death." And so *Ignatius*, (Ad Ephesios. § 13.) "In which [i. e. the air] all war is carried on, of spirits on the earth and aerial."—*Wets.* remarks, that "Paul only speaks thus according to the principles of the Pythagorean philosophy, with which those to whom he wrote were imbued, but does not give it as a part of the doctrine revealed to him by Christ, and to be believed by all." Yet Paul not only expresses no disapprobation of it, but the expression, "spirit now energizing," &c., seems to profess his belief of the reality of Satan's agency, and the term *archonta* [ruling] implies others. Yet it should be remembered, that the other words, "power of the air," do not indicate *how far* the apostle's belief on that subject extended. Nor are we to ascribe to him all the dreams of the rabbins. On the other hand, to exclude, as many do, the influence of this demoniacal agency altogether, and to represent Paul himself, as disbelieving it, and yet countenancing it for temporary purposes, is not only doing the greatest injustice to Paul, but is running counter to the testimony both of Paul and the other sacred writers. Indeed, to suppose, because there is no appearance of demoniacal influence now, that there was none in the apostolic age, is as irrational as to suppose, that because no miracles are now worked in proof of the Gospel, none were then worked. That were to confound the ordinary and the extraordinary dispensations of Providence; which would be unphilosophical as well as presumptuous. It should seem that the Almighty permitted, and, as it were, let loose [the minds and hearts of men having then so far depraved themselves] those demons to exercise their power to oppose the spread of the Gospel, in order thereby to put to the proof the obedience of his faithful servants, and evince the divine mission of the preachers of the Gospel, by enabling them to cure evils which heretofore had admitted of no remedy. And the "now" may be thought to favor this opinion. On the kinds of demons, see *Grot.—Disobedience*.] i. e. of the will of God, and the moral law; as was the case with the great bulk of both Gentiles and Jews, in whom Satan *effectually* worked. Though he often *energized* in the good, yet he did not prevail, because they were not children of disobedience. BLOOMF.



3 Among whom also we <sup>a</sup>all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the <sup>f</sup>desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by <sup>g</sup>nature the children of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even <sup>b</sup>when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by <sup>i</sup>grace <sup>j</sup>ye are saved,)

6 And hath raised <sup>k</sup>us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness <sup>l</sup>toward us through Christ Jesus:

e 1 Pe. 4:3. h Ro. 5:6,8,10. k Col. 2:12.  
f wills. i by whose. l Tit. 3:4.  
g Ps. 51:5. j Ro. 3:24.

[plurality and] efficacy of these lusts, and what power they have over those who yield themselves up unto them.

5. We are by nature the children of wrath, even as others. The Jews were so, as well as the Gentiles; and one man is as much so as another by nature, not only by custom and imitation, but from the time when we began to exist, and by reason of our natural inclinations and appetites. What reason have sinners then to be looking out for that grace that will make them, of children of wrath, children of God and heirs of glory! V. 4—13. Here the apostle begins his

V. 3. The apostle before spoke of the Gentile converts exclusively, or at least principally; but here (in the same manner as, in the epistle to the Romans, he proved the Jews also to be under sin) he turns his discourse, and includes both himself, and all the converts from his nation, among those who once were 'dead in sin,' and slaves to Satan; and he proceeds to use the first person plural to the end of v. 7. and then he again addresses the Gentile converts.—'He could not mean the Jews,' say many learned men, 'because they had not been idolaters.' But had the apostle at all mentioned idolatry? and is there no way of conforming to the world, and serving the devil, except by gross idolatry? To suppose that the apostle spake of himself, as one of the Gentiles, or one of the church of Rome, where he then was, as chiefly consisting of Gentile converts, is so absurd in itself, so unsuitable to his argument, so needless, after what he had said of the Gentiles, and so contrary to his language, and that of the most eminent saints in other parts of Scripture, that nothing, it may fairly be presumed, could have reconciled learned writers to it, but the necessity of adopting it, in order to avoid the doctrine of 'original sin,' in the full and proper meaning of the terms, as true of all men Jew, Gentile, or Christian, as 'naturally engendered of Adam's race,' and so to avoid also the doctrine of 'regeneration,' or a real new creation of the soul, by the power of the Holy Spirit.—The author of these notes was once deeply engaged in this scheme, [see in the Supplement to this Commentary, the life of Dr. Scott. Ed.] being strongly attached to Mr. Locke's views; but this very text shook his whole system to the foundation. Much above 40 yrs. have elapsed since that time; and he has had abundant time, and has bestowed no little pains, in reconsidering the subject; but is more and more deeply convinced, that the interpretation is wholly unscriptural, and that it tends to evaporate the meaning of the sacred oracles, as if we had little concern in the greatest part of them.—Not only were the idolatrous Ephesians thus 'dead in sin,' and under the power of Satan, but the apostle, and all other Christians then on earth, had 'in times past their conversation among them,' as alienated from God, and disobedient to Him. So that the Jews, as well as the Gentiles, and the Christians, as well as those who remained unconverted, were 'by nature' 'dead in sin,' and children of wrath,' one as well as another. For, being born of Adam's fallen race, averse to good and prone to evil, they were alike, in the temper of their hearts, and the conduct of their lives, deserving of the wrath of God, and meet objects of it. Rom. 9:22, 23.—Great pains, as it has been observed, have been employed to prove, that 'nature' may signify custom, or habitual practice. But the attempt has been evidently baffled in the critical argument. At the same time, stubborn facts prove, that men called Christians are 'dead in sin,' as much as the Gentiles were, and that the children of believers are as prone to evil, and averse to good, as those of idolaters. And surely no one can suppose, that 'worldly lusts' are more excusable in Christians, than in heathens!—The word rendered 'by nature,' seems never to have been used for any other emotions, than such as resulted from innate propensities [note, end of Ro. 7]; and the whole tenor of the Scripture, as well as the experience and confessions of the most pious persons who ever lived, confirm the interpretation, and expressly contradict that mere flattering one, which some have attempted to substitute in its place. SCOTT.

(3.) We, &c.] Thus the apostle delicately spares their feelings. (See, BLOOMER. Desires.) Paul includes intellectual, moral, and animal, in fine, total depravity. He includes himself, his former sins 'were those of the mind, spiritual pride, and disobedience to God's will, so clearly revealed by Jesus.' The apostle intended to show the utter depravity

account of the glorious change wrought in them by converting grace.

I. By whom, and how. 1. Negatively; not of yourselves, v. 8. Our faith, our conversion, and our eternal salvation, are not the mere product of any natural abilities, or of any merit of our own, v. 9. There is no room for any man's boasting, as though he had done anything that might deserve such immense favors from God. 2. Positively, v. 4. God Himself is the Author of this great and happy change, and his great love is the spring and fountal cause of it; thence He resolved to show mercy. Love is his inclination to do us good, considered simply as creatures; Mercy respects us as apostate and as miserable creatures. Observe, God's eternal love or good-will toward his creatures, is the fountain whence all his mercies vouchsafed to us proceed; and that love of God is great love, and that mercy of his is rich mercy; inexpressibly great and inexhaustibly rich. Then, by grace ye are saved, v. 5. and that through faith,—It is the gift of God, v. 8. the free, undeserved goodness and favor of God; both faith and salvation are his gift. The great objects of faith are made known by divine revelation, and made credible by the testimony and evidence God hath given us; and that we believe to salvation, and obtain salvation through faith, is entirely owing to divine assistance and grace.

II. This change consists in several particulars, answering to the misery of our natural state; some enumerated in this section, others below. 1. We who were dead are quickened, v. 5. saved from the death of sin, and have a principle of spiritual life implanted in us. Grace in the soul is a new life in the soul. Sin, like death to the nat-

ural senses, seals up the soul's faculties: but a regenerate sinner becomes a living soul: he lives a life of sanctification, being born of God; and he lives in the sense of the law, being delivered from the guilt of sin by pardoning and justifying grace. He hath quickened us together with Christ; our spiritual life results from our union with Christ; in Him we live: Because I live ye shall live also. 2. We who were buried, are raised up, v. 6. What remains yet to be done, is here spoken of as passed; though indeed we are raised up in virtue of our union with Him whom God hath raised from the dead. When He raised Christ from the dead, He did in effect raise up all believers together with Him, He being their common Head; and when He placed Him at his right hand, in heavenly places, He advanced and glorified them in and with Him, their raised and exalted Head and Forerunner. And made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This may be understood in another sense; sinners roll themselves in the dust; sanctified souls sit in heavenly places, are raised above the world; the world is as nothing to them, compared with what it has been, and compared with what the other world is. Saints are not only Christ's freemen, but assessors with Him; by the assistance of his grace they have ascended with Him above this world to converse with another, and they live in the constant expectation of it.

III. Observe, what is the great design and aim of God in producing and effecting this change: And this, 1. With respect to others, v. 7. that He might give a specimen and proof of his great goodness and mercy, for the encouragement of sinners in future time. God having this in his design, poor

of the natural man, *ouden pneumatikon phronōn*, [minding nothing spiritual.] *Chrys., Theoph., Beza, Bloomf.* The difficulty attending the reconciliation of this doctrine with that of free will, has been fruitful of controversy, and is well answered, in these words of a respected and beloved friend: 'This [Jn. 6:6. &c.] is a hard saying,—who can hear it? This sentence means, not that a sinner has no power to hear the humbling doctrine of total depravity? but, who, as we say, can bear it, i. e. be willing,—be pleased with it? From that time many of Christ's disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. It was those that could not bear such sayings. Comp. the expressions of natural inability, Ex. 33:20. 2 S. 12:23. Lu. 6:26. &c. with those which mean, aversion of will, moral inability, from disinclination or contrary choice, Mat. 19:20. with Tit. 1:2. He. 6:18. 1 S. 15:29; Is. 1:18. with 15; Jn. 4:4. Mk. 6:5; Mat. 9:15. Mk. 10:33. 26:39. 1:40; Josh. 24:19. with 21; Jn. 5:44. 1 Co. 2:14. with 2 Co. 4:3. Jn. 6:44. The carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. If this means a natural inability, how does regeneration help the matter, as it includes the creation of no new natural powers or faculties? But if it means, that the carnal mind is one which, by its friendship for the world, is at enmity with God, then it is plain, that the mind which prefers the creature to God, cannot, at the same time, prefer God to the creature; though the hindrance is not natural, but the inability of the will,—a moral inability,—a duty prevented by a contrary choice. . . These examples [adduced above], to which thousands might be added, decide, that the Scriptures of the O. and N. T., given by inspiration of God, do maintain the distinction between things, whose existence is perverted for want of sufficient capacity in the agent, and things which lie within the limits of his capacity, and are only prevented by his choice,—and that both are expressed by the terms, cannot, impossible, unable, &c.,—leaving it to the nature and connexions of the subject, to indicate the peculiar meaning,—and never, except in theological controversy, or the cavillings of sinners, leading to any mistake.' [Comp. notes, Ro. 7:13—21. 8:6, 7.]

*Views in Theology.* Dr. BEECHER.  
*Children of wrath.*] 'By this, understand simply, lost, and worthy of eternal death. So the judgment of God signifies: so that, the children of wrath, means the same as, condemned before God. Such, Paul here teaches, were the Jews, and whoever excelled in the church; and that, by nature itself, i. e. from the very origin and womb of the parent. A famous place against the Pelagians, and all who deny original sin; for what is naturally in all, is certainly original.' CALVIN.

*By nature.*] 'The original apostasy and corruption, in consequence of which men do, according to the course of nature, fall early into personal guilt, and so become obnoxious to divine displeasure.' DODDR.

V. 6, 7. 'By means of that relation between Him and us, which divine grace has established, we may look upon his resurrection and exaltation to the right hand of God, as the certain pledge and security of ours, and may be said to share in those felicities and dignities, which are conferred on Him.' *Doddr. Jn. 14:18—20.* The apostle would, therefore, repeat and enlarge on the hint before given, that 'they had been saved by grace.'—Their disposition and ability to love God, and to do good works, should be considered as a part of their salvation, not as the cause of it: for it was the purpose of God, that his redeemed people should habitually walk in good works, from their conversion till they finished their course; and their holy lives were the effect, evidence, and recommendation of their salvation by grace.—'Both faith and works are God's workmanship, both are necessary; but the one the fruit of the other.' *Maclaurin.* SCOTT.



8 For by grace <sup>m</sup> are ye saved, through <sup>n</sup> faith; and that not <sup>o</sup> of yourselves: *it is the gift of God:*

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which <sup>p</sup> God hath before <sup>q</sup> ordained that we should walk in them.

[*Practical Observations.*]

11 Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

13 But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood <sup>r</sup> of Christ.

14 For he <sup>s</sup> is our peace, who hath made both <sup>t</sup> one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us;*

<sup>m</sup> 2 Ti. 1:9.      <sup>p</sup> c. 1:4.      <sup>s</sup> Mi. 5:5.  
<sup>n</sup> Ro. 4:16.      <sup>q</sup> or, prepared.      <sup>t</sup> Ju. 10:16.  
<sup>o</sup> Jn. 6:44,65.      <sup>r</sup> He. 9:12.      <sup>s</sup> Ga. 3:28.

sinner should take great encouragement from it. And what may we not hope for from such grace and kindness, from *riches of grace*, and from *exceeding riches of grace*, to which this change is owing? *Through Christ Jesus*, by and through whom God conveys all his favor and blessings to us. 2. With respect to the regenerated sinners themselves, v. 10. It appears that all is of grace, because all our spiritual advantages are from God. *We are his workmanship*; he means in respect of the new creation; not only as men, but as saints. The new

man is a new creature; and God is its Creator. *In Christ Jesus*, on the account of what He has done and suffered, and by the influence and operation of his blessed Spirit. *Unto good works, &c.* The apostle having before ascribed this change to divine grace, in exclusion of works, lest he should seem thereby to discourage good works, here observes, that though the change is to be ascribed to nothing of that nature, yet God, in this new creation, has designed and prepared us for *good works*, with a design that we should be fruitful in them. Whenever God by his grace implants good principles, they are intended to be for good works. *Which God hath before ordained*, decreed and appointed. Or, the words may read, *To which God hath before prepared us*, by blessing us with the knowledge of his will, and with the assistance of his Holy Spirit; and by producing such a change in us. *That we should walk in them*, glorify God by an exemplary conversation, and by our perseverance in holiness.

The apostle proceeds, v. 11, 12, in his account of the miserable condition of these Ephesians by nature, which he would have them remember, v. 11, as all converts ought frequently to reflect on the sinfulness and misery of the estate they were in by nature. They were called *uncircumcision* by that, &c. i. e. were reproached and upbraided by the formal Jews, who made an external profession, and who looked no further than the outward ordinance. The apostle describes the misery of their ease in several particulars, v. 12. They were Gentiles, and in an unconverted state, without the knowledge of the Messiah, without any saving interest in Him, or relation to Him; so all unconverted sinners are; a sad and deplorable thing. Being without Christ, they did not belong to his church, and had no communion with it, that being confined to the Israelitish nation. It is no small privilege to share with the members of the church in the advantages peculiar to it. *They were strangers from the covenants of promise.* The covenant of grace has ever been the same for substance; but, having undergone various additions and improvements in the sev-

eral ages of the church, it is called *covenants*; and the *covenants of promise*, because it is made up of promises, and particularly contains the great promise of the Messiah, and of eternal life through Him. Now the Ephesians, in their gentilism, were *strangers from this covenant*, having never had any information or overture of it; and all unregenerate sinners are *strangers* to it, as they have no interest in it. They had *no hope*, none beyond this life; no well-grounded hope in God; no hope of spiritual and eternal blessings. They were in a state of distance and estrangement from God; *Without God in the world*; not without some general knowledge of a deity, for they worshipped idols; but living without any due regard to Him, any acknowledged dependence on Him, and any special [communion with, or confidence, or] interest in Him. The words are, *atheists in the world.*

The apostle proceeds further, v. 13, to illustrate the happy change made in their state. 'From being *far off*, on your conversion, by virtue of union with Christ, and interest in Him by faith, you are *made nigh*.' They were brought home to God, received into the church, taken into the covenant, and possessed of all other privileges consequent. Note, *The saints are a people near to God. Salvation is far from the wicked*; but God is a Help at hand to his people; and this is *by the blood of Christ*, by the merit of his sufferings and death. Every believing sinner owes his nearness to God, and his interest in his favor, to the death and sacrifice of Christ.

V. 14—22. Between the Jews and the Gentiles there had been a great enmity; so there is between God and every unregenerate man. Now Jesus Christ is *our peace*, v. 14. He made peace by the sacrifice of Himself; and came to reconcile, 1. Jews and Gentiles to each other; taking away the binding power of the ceremonial law, so removing that cause of enmity and distance between them; and forming one church of believers, whether they had been Jews or Gentiles. Thus He made *in Himself of twain one new man*. He framed both these parties into one *new society*, or body of

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—10. We cannot duly value the Gospel, unless convinced that we are in ourselves 'dead in trespasses and sins,' and that we must have perished, if God had left us, as He most justly might have done. Yet, when we had neither title to happiness, nor capacity for it, when we were *unable* to help ourselves, and *unwilling* to attempt it; when we were utterly insensible of our danger, ready to vindicate our conduct, and perhaps proud of our wisdom, strength, and goodness, the love and mercy of God were extended to us!—The 'prince of the power of the air' illudes his numerous votaries with gay phantoms of fancied good, and enables them to build magnificent palaces in his unsubstantial element, that they may neglect 'the gift of God, which is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Thus millions

copy his example of rebellion, and do as he would have them. There is no doubt a black inspiration; and Satan and his angels working on the hearts of ungodly men, teach them to invent, propagate, and ingeniously defend, impious or infidel notions, and to excuse or palliate their ungodliness and worldly lusts.—When we reflect on the infinite majesty of God, the immensity of the creation, the meanness and wickedness and deep depravity of man, and the stupendous plan of redemption, we shall not be able to account for such favor shown to [repentant sinners], except we also consider, that 'the exceeding riches of divine grace,' will be proportionably displayed and glorified, in the view of the whole creation, on account of each of these circumstances, and of very many others, to eternal ages!

V. 8. *That not.*] If this be understood of the whole of salvation, faith must be included. *Jn. 1:10—13.*—The term 'good works,' is never used, in the N. T., for ritual obedience or moral virtue, as practised by unbelievers, or for any other works than 'the fruits of the Spirit.' If any one doubt of this, let him consult a good concordance. The only text, which seems an exception, is *Rom. 13:3.* and that means 'works good before God,' primarily, though perhaps not exclusively. Without doubt, regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit of Christ, are as much a part of our salvation, as redemption and justification.

(8.) *Grace.*] 'Not only is faith the gift of God, but the being saved by faith.'

V. 11—13. Having spoken of the general state of fallen man, and the salvation of all believers, by the rich grace and mercy of God, the apostle next proceeded to show the Gentile converts the peculiarities of their case, which had placed them much further out of the way of mercy than the Jews had been.—How rude and affronting would a company of unhumiliated, impenitent sinners, especially in a superior station of life, consider it, should a friend in a letter, or a minister in a sermon, at present address them in this language!—If, indeed, 'no man knoweth the Father, but he to whom the Son reveals him;' all men, who reject the Gospel, whether idolaters, unbelieving Jews, Mohammedans, deists, or Socinians, must be 'without God,' according to the apostle's meaning in that expression. *Mat. 11:27. Lu. 10:21, 22. Jn. 5:20—23. 2 Cor. 1:1—7. 1 Jn. 2:20—25.* 'Separate from Christ,' 'having no hope,' 'atheists in the world.' What was the apostle's view of the state of the Gentiles, in respect of salvation? What his judgment as to the duty of seeking, by all scriptural means, their conversion to Christianity? *Ro. 1:16—20. 2:12—18. 10:14—17. 1 Th. 2:12—16. 1 Pet. 2:9, 10* 'The Gentiles had no God, to whom they prayed for eternal life, as the fathers often remonstrate.' *Doddr.*

(12.) 'Though several of the heathens speak of their Jupiter, in terms properly applicable to the one self-existent and eternal Deity only, yet

they taught and believed other things of him quite inconsistent with such perfections; and those who had some knowledge of one supreme, eternal Cause, yet practically disregarded him.' *Doddr.* Perhaps the same may be said of the Hindoos' magnificent description of Brama. *Ep. Afr. . . nigh.*] 'An allusion to the Jewish custom of allowing different degrees of approach to the presence of God in his tabernacle or temple, according to the character of the worshipper. *Le. 10:3. Ps. 65:4. 143:14.* WHITBY.—*No hope.*] 'That the heathens had among them the doctrine of a *future state*, and that it was popularly taught and generally believed by the common people, must, I think, appear incontestible to any who are at all acquainted with antiquity. [Note, end of Pr., and cuts, *Dan. 5:27. &c.*] But it is as apparent, that they reasoned very weakly upon the subject, that they had *no well grounded hope* of future happiness, and that they were but very little impressed with it; so that they had no deity to which they *prayed for eternal life*, [as has been already remarked, and see Supplement, pt. 4.] And by far the greater part of their most learned philosophers either expressly *denied*, in private lectures to their own pupils, the doctrine of *future rewards and punishments*, or taught principles quite inconsistent with it! as must, I think, plainly appear to any one who will impartially peruse what Warburton has written upon the subject, so judiciously defended in the *Critical Review*.' *DODDR.*

(13.) 'One cannot help observing how studiously the apostle introduces, wherever it is possible, the *fundamental doctrine* of the ATONEMENT.'

V. 14—18. In every sense, Christ was to be considered as 'the Peace' of all Christians; the Author, Centre, and Substance of reconciliation to God, and of the union of Gentile converts with Jewish believers in one church. To the ceremonial law the Gentiles were extremely averse, even when otherwise favorable to the worship of JEMOAH; and the Jews were tenacious and proud of this partition-wall, to a degree of disgusting bigotry. But Christ, by assuming human



15 Having abolished <sup>u</sup>in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so making peace* :

16 And that he might reconcile <sup>v</sup>both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity <sup>w</sup>thereby;

17 And came and preached peace to you <sup>x</sup>which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18 For through <sup>y</sup>him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens <sup>z</sup>with the saints, and of the household <sup>a</sup>of God ;

20 And are built <sup>b</sup>upon the <sup>c</sup>foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief <sup>d</sup>corner-stone ;

21 In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy <sup>e</sup>temple in the Lord :

22 In whom ye also are builded <sup>f</sup>together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

### CHAP. III.

5 The hidden mystery, 6 that the Gentiles should be saved, 3 was made known to Paul by revelation : 8 and to him was that grace given, that 9 he should preach it. 13 He desireth them not to faint for his tribulation, 14 and prayeth 19 that they may perceive the great love of Christ toward them.

FOR this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

u Col. 2:14. 1 Pe. 3:18. Re. 21:14.  
v Col. 1:20-22. \*z He. 12:22,23. d Is. 28:16.  
w or, in himself. a c. 3:15. e 1 Co. 3:17.  
x Ac. 2:39. b 1 Co. 3:9,10. 2 Co. 6:16.  
y Ja. 14:6. c Mat. 16:18. f 1 Pe. 2:4,5.

PRACT. OBS. V. 11-22. Besides the general ruined state of all men, every one of us should recollect those peculiarities of situation, character, and disposition, which set us at a greater distance from salvation, than others of our fellow-sinners.—How harmoniously should we live together as members of one body, and children of one family! May his grace reconcile all, who profess his truth, to God and to each other!—We have no 'law of commandments contained in ordinances,' to keep us in bondage, to drive us to a distance, or to excite enmity among brethren; except such as are of human invention. The instituted ordinances of worship, appointed by our Savior, as well as his moral precepts, are suited to aid and encourage our approach to God, and our walk with Him; to excite holy affections, and to conduce to our peace with one another, when properly understood and attended on. Let us then inquire, whether we are 'builded on this foundation,' whether our

nature, and fulfilling, in his priestly character, especially by his sacrifice on the cross, these typical institutions, had abolished them. So that this law, (the commands of which consisted of external ordinances,) having lost all its use and obligation, the Gentiles were admitted into the Christian church, without submitting to the yoke of the ceremonial law, or being deemed unclean because uncircumcised. *Notes, Ac. 10:9-16:27-33.* Thus they became 'one body' with the believing Jews; that so Christ might create, as it were, 'one new man,' consisting of regenerate persons, both Jews and Gentiles, united to Himself the Head, quickened by his Spirit, 'walking in newness of life,' harmonious in worship and obedience, and mutually loving and doing good to one another. *Notes, 4:11-13. Is. 11:6-9. Ro. 12:3-5. 1 Co. 12:12-31. Gal. 3:26-29.* The ceremonial law implied man's state of condemnation, pollution, and enmity against God; to whom he could not approach, except on an external mercy-seat, and by priests, sacrifices, incense, and purifications; being, after all, kept at a great distance from Him; but the death of Christ upon the cross took away the guilt which was the cause of 'the enmity,' that so a holy God might honorably pardon and be reconciled to his rebellious creatures. And it made way for the communication of the Holy Spirit to regenerate sinners, and so to destroy 'the enmity' of their hearts against the holy character, worship, and service of God. Having finished this great design, He came, by his apostles and ministers, to preach the Gospel, or glad tidings, even peace, with God and with each other, to the Gentiles who 'had been far off,' and to the Jews who were outwardly 'nigh' to God. *Notes, Is. 57:19. Ac. 10:33-43. 2 Co. 5:17-21. 2 Th. 2:13, 14.* For through the Person, sacrifice, and mediation of Christ, believers of all descriptions were allowed access to God, as a Father, and were introduced with acceptance into his presence, with their worship and services, under the immediate teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit, as one with the Father and the Son, in this great work of salvation, as well as in the unity of the Godhead. *Access.]* See on Ro. 5:2. 'He alludes to princes' courts; one must not press into the presence-chamber, but he brought in by some courtier.' *Leigh. Ro. 5:1,2. 1 Pet. 3:17,18.* SCOTT.

(14.) 'The Jews call the Messiah, *shlom*, PEACE,' SCHEETT. *Wall.* 'An allusion to the middle or partition wall of the temple, [engraving, end of Ac.] which separated the court of the Gentiles from that of the

God's people, uniting them to Himself as their common Head; they being renewed by the Holy Ghost, and now concurring in a new way of gospel-worship: so making peace between these two parties who were so much at variance before. 2. God and sinners, whether Jews or Gentiles; Christ came to reconcile both to God, v. 16. and this by the cross; or by the sacrifice of Himself on the cross: having slain the enmity thereby. He, being slain or sacrificed, slew the enmity there was between God and sinners. The apostle proceeds to illustrate the great advantages both parties gain by the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, v. 17. Christ, who purchased peace on the cross, came, partly in his own Person, as to the Jews, who are here said to have been nigh; and partly in his apostles, whom He commissioned to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, who are said to have been afar off, in the sense that has been given before. And preached peace, or published the terms of reconciliation with God, and of eternal life. Now the effect of this peace is, the free access which both Jews and Gentiles have unto God, v. 18. the throne of grace is erected for us to come to; and liberty of approach to that throne is allowed us. Our access is by the Holy Spirit; Christ purchased for us leave, and the Spirit gives us a heart and strength to come, even grace to serve God acceptably. The Ephesians, on their conversion, having such an access to God, as well as the Jews, and by the same Spirit, the apostle tells them, *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, &c.* v. 9. This he mentions by way of opposition to what he had observed of them in their heathenism, as being *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*. Observe, here, The church is compared to a city, and every converted sinner is free of it; to a house, and every converted sinner is one of the domestics, one of the family; a servant, and a child in God's house; to a building, v. 20.

and the foundation of that building are the apostles and prophets, so called in a secondary sense, Christ Himself being the primary Foundation; but we are rather to understand it of the doctrine delivered by the prophets of the O. T., and the apostles of the New. It follows, *Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner-stone*. In Him both Jews and Gentiles meet, and constitute one church; and Christ supports the building by his strength, v. 21. All believers, of whom it consists, being united to Christ by faith, and among themselves by Christian charity, grow unto a holy temple, become a sacred society, in which there is much communion between God and his people, as in the temple; they worshipping and serving Him, He manifesting Himself unto them; they offering up spiritual sacrifices to God, and He dispensing his blessings and favors to them. Thus the building, for the nature of it, is a temple, a holy temple; and it becomes such a temple, by grace and strength derived from Himself, in the Lord. The universal church being built on Christ as the Foundation-stone, and united in Christ as the Corner-stone, comes at length to be glorified in Him as the Top-stone, v. 22. Observe, Not only the universal church is called the temple of God, but particular churches; and even every true believer is a living temple, is a habitation of God through the Spirit: an earnest of dwelling with Him to eternity.

CHAP. III. V. 1-13. Here we have Paul's account to the Ephesians of himself, as appointed by God apostle of the Gentiles.

I. The tribulations and sufferings he endured in the discharge of that office, v. 1. The first clause refers to the preceding ch., and may be understood either, 1. 'For having preached the doctrine contained in the foregoing ch., that the great privileges of the Gospel belong not only to the Jews, but to

hopes are fixed on Christ, according to the doctrine of his Word; whether we have devoted ourselves to God through Him; whether we be spiritually minded, and bring forth 'the fruits of the Spirit.' If this is our experience and privilege, let us take care not to defile the temple of God, nor to grieve our holy Comforter; let us earnestly, and with fervent, constant prayer, desire his gracious presence with us, and his influence on our hearts; let us endeavor to fill up the place assigned us, to the glory of God; and let us study to promote the peace and purity of the holy temple, to which we belong, and to forward that work by which it is continually approaching towards its full perfection. Especially, let us seek, and pray, and improve to the uttermost our influence, be it more or less, for the conversion of Jews and Gentiles, who are still 'without Christ and without hope.'

SCOTT.

Jews, and into which it was death for any foreigner to enter. See *Wets.*

BLOOMF.

(15.) *Enmity.* 'I. e. its cause; and such the law was, since it generated an antisocial and haughty spirit on the part of the Jews, which was amply returned by hatred and contempt on the part of the Gentiles. See *Mackn.*'

ID.

(16.) *Body.* 'I. e. society, the mystical body of Christ.' GROT., &c. V. 19-22. By the continual conversion of sinners, and the progressive sanctification of believers; while each individual, in his proper place, conduces to the stability and proportion of the whole, and is himself consecrated and preserved by being a part of it; the spiritual temple is erecting from age to age, and will be till its full completion in heaven. Thus Gentiles became a part of the temple, together with Jewish believers. *Ps. 118:19-24. Is. 28:16. Zch. 3:9, 10. 6:12-15. Mat. 21:40-44. Ac. 4:5-12. 1 Co. 3:16,17. 2 Co. 6:14-18. Re. 21:9-21.*—This is a most decisive testimony to the divine inspiration of the prophets and apostles.

SCOTT.

(19.) *Strangers..foreigners..fellow-citizens.* 'Xenoi..paroikoi..sumpolitai. Xenoi is properly used of a city or country; paroikoi, of a family. That Paul meant these, in their proper sense, is clear from the context, which is exegetical. But *Schl.* thinks there is allusion to the three orders of Grecian inhabitants, *politai, paroikoi, and xenoi*. But those of the second class were called *epoikoi*. *Doddr.* refers it to sojourning strangers among the Jews, who were called *proselytes of the gate.*'

BLOOMF.

(20.) *Build, &c.* 'Is not our faith confirmed, while our taste is gratified, when Paul, addressing the Ephesians, seizes their attention and captivates their fancy, by reiterated and splendid allusion to that temple which was the glory of their city? See also, v. 21, 22. 4:12, 15, 16. where is an accumulation of architectural terms.'

ID.

(21.) 'There are in the church, and have ever been, various degrees through which (as in the human body is the case with the head and heart, in respect to the arteries and veins, muscles, and nerves) the Spirit of God flows even to the most minute parts.'

GROT.

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1-7. Some expositors suppose, that all between the v. 1. and the beginning of the next ch. is a kind of parenthesis; but it seems more obvious to render the sentence, 'For this



2 (If ye have heard of the dispensation <sup>a</sup> of the grace <sup>b</sup> of God which is given me to you-ward :

3 How that by revelation <sup>c</sup> he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote <sup>d</sup> afore in few words ;

4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the <sup>e</sup> mystery of Christ ;)

5 Which in other ages was not <sup>f</sup> made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

6 That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel ;

7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual <sup>g</sup> working of his power.

8 Unto me, who am less <sup>h</sup> than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches <sup>i</sup> of Christ ;

<sup>a</sup> Col. 1:25. <sup>e</sup> c. 1:9. <sup>g</sup> Is. 43:13.  
<sup>b</sup> Ro. 12:3. <sup>f</sup> Mat. 13:17. <sup>h</sup> c. 1:19.  
<sup>c</sup> Ga. 1:12. <sup>i</sup> Ro. 16:25. <sup>h</sup> 1 Co. 15:9.  
<sup>d</sup> or, a little before. <sup>1</sup> Pe. 1:10—12. <sup>i</sup> Col. 1:27.

believing Gentiles, also, though not circumcised; for this cause I am now a prisoner: but a prisoner of Jesus Christ, as I suffer in his cause, and for his sake, and continuing his faithful servant, and the object of his special protection and care, while I am thus suffering for Him.' Christ's servants, if they come to be prisoners, are his prisoners; and He despises not his prisoners. For you Gentiles; the Jews did therefore persecute and imprison him, because he was the apostle of the Gentiles, and preached the Gospel to them. We may learn hence, that the faithful ministers of Christ are to dispense his sacred truths, however disagreeable they may be to some, and whatever they themselves may suffer for doing so. Or, 2. 'For

this cause, since ye are no more strangers and foreigners, (as ch. 2: 19.) but united to Christ, and admitted into communion with his church, I, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, pray that you may be enabled to act as becomen persons thus favored by God.' To this purport, v. 14. where, after the digression contained in the several vs. intervening, he proceeds with what he begun in this first verse.

He speaks again of his sufferings, v. 13. He suffered much in prison; and though on their account, yet he would not have them discouraged nor dismayed at this, seeing God had done such great things for them by his ministry. What a tender concern was here for these Ephesians! The apostle seems to have been more solicitous lest they should be discouraged and faint on his tribulations, than about what he himself endured: and to prevent this, he tells them, that his sufferings were their glory; and so far from being a real discouragement, ministered, if duly considered, cause to them for glorying and rejoicing; as this discovered the great esteem and regard God bore to them, in that He not only sent his apostles to preach the Gospel to them, but even to suffer for them, and to confirm the truths they delivered, by the persecutions they underwent.

II. The apostle informs them of God's appointing him to the office; and, by a special revelation, eminently fitting and qualifying him for it.

The original particle for *if*, here, is sometimes affirmative, and we may read it, *Since ye have heard, &c.* He styles the Gospel the grace of God, here, (as in other places,) because it is the gift of divine grace to sinful men; and also the great instrument in the hands of the Spirit, by which God works grace in the souls of men. He speaks of the dispensation of this grace given to him; he means, as he was authorized and commissioned by God to dispense the doctrine of the Gospel; which commission and authority were given to him, chiefly for the service of the Gentiles; to you-ward. And again, speaking of the Gospel, he says, *Whereof I was made a minister, &c.* v. 7. Here he again asserts his authority. He

was MADE a minister, he did not make himself such; and he was made such according to the gifts of the grace of God unto him, God supplied and furnished him for his work; and in the discharge of it suitably assisted and helped him, and that by the effectual working of his power; in himself more especially; and also in great numbers of those to whom he preached; by which means his labors among them were successful.

He mentions both the mystery revealed, and its revelation, which qualified him.

The mystery revealed is, that the Gentiles should be joint-heirs, with the believing Jews, of the heavenly inheritance, and be members of the same mystical body, he received into the church of Christ, and interested in the gospel-promises, as well as the Jews; particularly in that great promise of the Spirit. And this in Christ, being united to Christ, in whom all the promises are yea and amen; by the Gospel, i. e. in the times of the Gospel, so some, or by the Gospel preached to them; which is the great instrument and mean by which God works faith in Christ.

Of the revelation of this truth, he speaks, v. 3—5. It is called a mystery, because the several circumstances and peculiarities of it (such as time, manner, means) were concealed and kept secret in God's own breast, till by an immediate revelation He made them known to his servant. See Ac. 26: 16—18. And it is called the mystery of Christ, because it was revealed by Him, Gal. 1: 12. and because it relates so very much to Him. Of this the apostle had given some hints afore, or a little before; i. e. in the preceding ch. *Whereby when ye read; or, as those words may be read, Unto which attending, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ; so as to perceive how God had fitted and qualified him to be an apostle to the Gentiles, which might be to them an evident token of his divine authority. This mystery, he says, in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, v. 5. i. e. it was not so fully and clearly discovered in the ages before Christ, as it was now revealed unto the prophets of that age, the prophets of the*

cause, I Paul, am the prisoner of Jesus Christ.' The apostle's zealous preaching to the Gentiles, and openly admitting them into the Christian church, without circumcision, or observance of the ritual law, which implied the abrogation of the Mosaic dispensation, had so irritated the Jews, that they had apprehended him at Jerusalem; in consequence of which he was at this time a prisoner at Rome, in the cause of Christ, and for the sake of the Gentiles. Those who had stately attended on the ministry of the apostle, during his residence at Ephesus, must often have heard from him concerning 'the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to him,' in behalf of the Gentiles (2); but numbers out of the adjacent regions, coming to Ephesus, heard the Gospel from him, many of whom, it is highly probable, returning home, both professed and preached it; and these might need more full information on this subject, which was so peculiarly interesting to the Gentiles.—Peter was sent to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert; but it does not appear, that the whole design of God, respecting the union of uncircumcised and idolatrous Gentiles, when converted to Christianity, in one church with Jewish believers, was so clearly revealed to him, as it was soon after to Paul. At least, the latter, with his coadjutors, proclaimed this doctrine, so encouraging to the Gentiles and offensive to the Jews, far more avowedly, and to immensely greater numbers, than any other of the apostles, of whom we read in Scripture.—Some indeed imagine, that the apostle meant to show, that the value of the Christian revelation was vastly greater, than that of the curious hooks the Ephesians had burned, (Ac. 19:19.) and than the mysteries of the initiated in the worship of Diana. But if the former were indeed 'the oracles' of Satan, and the latter probably no better, we can hardly conceive that the apostle would disgrace 'the oracles of God,' by such a comparison. The same may fairly be said of several other comparisons or allusions, which learned men suppose the apostle to have intended.—The mystery here spoken of, seems very improperly confined, by many expositors, to the calling of the Gentiles; whereas, the mysterious salvation, by Emmanuel's righteousness and atonement, through faith, and by the new creation of his Spirit into holiness, which the Gentiles were called to partake of, in common with the Jews, and on which the apostle had before enlarged, and to which he was about to return (9); was also evidently intended. The former, as *exclusive*, is at best but a meagre interpretation, the latter perfectly agrees with the apostle's manner, when speaking on a subject, of which his heart was full.

(1.) Chrys., Theod., the Syr., Whit., Doddr., Wolf, Ros., Mackn., Koppe, insert 'am,' to supply the much debated connexion; to which Middleton and Bl. strongly object; the latter thinks it 'involves far less difficulty to suppose v. 1—14. parenthetical, and the thread of the reasoning resumed at v. 14. by *épanalepsis*.

(2.) 'Since, I well know, you have heard.'

DODDR.

(5.) 'That the Gentiles should be added to the church, was known long before, but not that they should be admitted on an equal footing, heirs of the same inheritance, and partakers of the promise of the Spirit.' The Jews rather thought of their being slaves to them; least of all did they imagine the ceremonial wall, circumcision, &c., should be broken down. Ac. 10:45. 11:18. Whit., Doddr., Ros. BLOOMF.

(6.) 'Epithets and similes are here accumulated, to show that there is no difference whatever between the Jews and Gentiles.' KOPPE. ROS.

V. 8. The apostle here formed a new word, to express the deep sense he had of his own unworthiness; this is very properly rendered, 'less than the least of all the saints.' He does not seem to have adverted exclusively or principally to his former conduct, as a persecutor and blasphemer. That indeed made him deem himself 'the chief of sinners,' but here he speaks of himself as 'a saint,' though most mean and unworthy of that title. 1 Cor. 15:3—11, vv. 8, 9. 1 Tim. 1:12—16. In general, this must be ascribed to his unaffected humility, his self-knowledge, acquaintance with the holy law, near communion with God, and candor towards his brethren; and perhaps those humiliating infirmities, of which he repeatedly spoke, were in some degree taken into the account. But the consideration of his peculiarly aggravated crimes before conversion, and the unparalleled mercy and favor, which had been shown him, gave him such a sense of his immense obligations, and of the returns of love, gratitude, zeal, and holiness, which became him, that he regarded his disproportioned attainments and experience much more beneath the proper standard, than those of any other true Christian. This did not, however, lead him to doubt of his being a saint, but only to stand more amazed at the love of the Lord toward him; and under this impression, he uttered the feelings of his heart in such energetic language, as very few can use with propriety or sincerity; though many employ the words, rather as expressive of what they ought to mean, than of what they really feel concerning themselves, and some, no doubt, as affecting the praise of humility!—On so great a sinner, and so unworthy a believer, was this astonishing grace conferred, that he should be employed as an apostle, to preach among the idolatrous Gentiles, through many nations, 'the unsearchable riches of Christ!' The immensity of the divine Redeemer's condescension and mercy, the preciousness of his blood and salvation; the fulness laid up in Him, and the freeness with which it was bestowed; the privileges of his people, and their glorious inheritance; those 'riches of Christ,' which were not provided for Himself, or for holy creatures, but purchased for the chief of sinners, for the payment of their debts, the ransom of their souls, and the enriching of them to all eternity, which sufficed for all the multitudes that ever had come, or should come to Him for them, how many soever they were; which never could be exhausted or diminished, by the most liberal and profuse communication of them, or leave the glorious and gracious Pro-



9 And to make all *men* see, what is the fellowship of the <sup>j</sup> mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by <sup>k</sup> Jesus Christ:

10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom <sup>l</sup> of God,

11 According to the eternal <sup>m</sup> purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 In whom we have <sup>n</sup> boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which <sup>o</sup> is your glory.

14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

ver. 4, 5. Ho. 1:2. m c. 1:9.  
1 Th. 3:16. 1 Ro. 11:33. n He. 4:16.  
Ps. 33:6. Jn. 1 Co. 2:7. o 2 Co. 1:6.  
1:3. Col. 1:16.

N. T., who were immediately inspired and taught by the Spirit. And observe, how much we ourselves are interested in this affair; not only as we live in a time in which the mystery is revealed, but particularly as we are a part of the nations which in times past were foreigners and strangers, and lived in gross idolatry; but are now enlightened with the everlasting Gospel, and partake of its promises!

III. The apostle acquaints them how he was employed in this office. 1. With respect to the Gentiles, v. 8. How humbly he speaks of himself, how highly of Christ! *I am less than the least of all saints.* He was, in his own esteem, as little as he could

be. What can be less than the least? Those whom God advances to honorable employments, He humbles, and makes low in their own eyes; and where God gives grace to be humble, He gives all other grace: observe, also, in what a different manner the apostle speaks of himself, and of his office, magnifying *that*. How highly he speaks of Jesus Christ; *The unsearchable riches of Christ*; in whom a mighty treasury, of mercy, grace, and love, is laid up, for Jews and Gentiles both. Or, the riches of the Gospel are here spoken of as the riches of Christ: the riches Christ purchased for, and bestows on, all believers. And they are *unsearchable* riches, of which we cannot find the bottom; which human sagacity could never have discovered; and men could no otherwise know but by revelation. The apostle's employment was, to *preach these unsearchable riches among the Gentiles*, a favor he greatly valued, as an unspeakable honor. It is also an unspeakable favor to the Gentile world, though many are not enriched with these riches; which, if we be not, it is our own fault.

2. With respect to all men, v. 9. to *make all men see*; to publish and make known to the whole world, *what is the fellowship of the mystery*, that the Gentiles, hitherto strangers to the church, shall be admitted to communion with it,—*which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God*; kept secret in his purpose; *who created all things by Jesus Christ*, as Jn. 1:3. No wonder He saves Gentiles as well as Jews; for He is the common Creator of them both: see, too, how both the first creation, when God made all things out of nothing, and the new creation, whereby sinners are made new creatures by converting grace, are of God, by Jesus Christ. The apostle adds, v. 10. that this was one thing, among others, which God had in his eye in revealing this mystery, that the good angels, who have a pre-eminence in governing the kingdoms and principalities

of the world, and who are indued with great power to execute the will of God on this earth, may be informed, from what passes in the church, and is done in and by it, of *the manifold wisdom of God*, of the great variety with which God wisely dispenses things; or of his wisdom manifested in the many methods He takes, in ordering his church in its several ages, and especially in receiving the Gentiles into it. The holy angels, who look into the mystery of our redemption by Christ, could not but notice this branch of that mystery, that among the Gentiles is preached the unsearchable riches of Christ. And this is according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, v. 11. Some tr., *According to the fore-disposing of the ages He made, &c.* So Whitby, &c. 'In the first of the ages,' says he, 'his wisdom seeing fit to give the promise of a Savior to a fallen Adam: in the second age, to typify and represent Him to the Jews in sacred persons, rites, and sacrifices: and in the age of the Messiah, or the last age, to reveal Him to the Jews, and preach Him to the Gentiles.' Others understand it, according to our tr., of the eternal purpose God purposed to execute in and through Jesus Christ: the whole of what He has done in the great affair of man's redemption, being in pursuance of his eternal decree about that matter. The apostle, having mentioned our Lord Jesus Christ, subjoins concerning Him, *In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him*, v. 12. i. e. 'By, or through, whom we have liberty to open our minds freely to God, as to a Father, and a well-grounded persuasion of audience and of acceptance with Him; and this by means of the faith we have in Him, as our great Mediator and Advocate.'

V. 14—21. We have here a devout and affectionate prayer for his beloved Ephesians. For this cause. This may be referred to v. 13. *That ye faint not, &c.* or rather, he

priest less rich than before, to the ages of eternity; these are 'the unsearchable riches of Christ,' and they baffle the powers of computation, nay, even of imagination; they are incomprehensible and infinite. Jn. 1:16. 2 Cor. 8:6—9, v. 9. Col. 2:1—4, v. 3. This was the great subject of the apostle's ministry.—It may be very useful to compare the animated language of this ch., with the cold reasonings of modern theologians, and their extreme caution lest they should speak too highly of Christ and his salvation.—The labors, perils, and sufferings of the apostle, in his preaching to the Gentiles, were so many and great, that nature would have deemed it an intolerably hard and perilous service, and declined it by every possible mean; but grace, inspiring him with love of Christ, zeal for his glory, and a longing desire for the salvation of souls, made him think it an unspeakable privilege. Ac. 20:18—21. 2 Cor. 5:13—15. What an example, for modern missionaries! And what a view does it give us of the desirableness, the importance, and the honor of that service.

(8.) *Less, &c.* 'Incomparably the least. See Wets.' BLOOMF. V. 9—12. This 'preaching of the Gospel, concerning the unsearchable riches of Christ,' was appointed, that men of all nations and descriptions might perceive the happy 'fellowship,' or *partnership*, (so to speak,) of Jews and Gentiles in the blessings of salvation, according to the mysterious plan, which had been formed from the beginning in the counsels of God, but had been hidden from his creatures in general, save as He had given some previous intimation of it 'by his prophets,' and had at length more fully discovered it by Jesus Christ, by whom, as the eternal Word, He at first created all things, and was now effecting a glorious new creation. Jn. 1:1—3. Col. 1:15—17. Heb. 1:1—2. To the intent that angels and archangels, even 'the principalities and powers,' who were around the throne of God, 'in heavenly places,' and had, from the beginning, witnessed and adored the displays of his wisdom, in the works of creation and providence, should now discover still more surprising and most gloriously and beautifully varied displays of it, in his church of redeemed sinners; while they beheld rebels changed into spiritual worshippers, all the persons and perfections of the Godhead more abundantly glorified, even by means of man's apostasy; Satan's devices turned against him, and the most discordant characters united in one loving family, or as 'one body in Christ.' All this was effected 'according to the purpose of God,' which from eternity He had conceived in his infinite mind, of saving sinners by Christ. SCOTT.

(9.) *Fellowship.* 'Koinonia: rather read *oikonomia*, dispensation, so most critics, MSS., vers., fathers, &c.' Bl.—'Communication. *Ibid.* An allusion to burying a treasure, as Jos. 7:21. Mat. 13:41. Though something is now known concerning this glorious mystery, yet there is an incomparably greater part, concerning which we only know, in the general, that it is a rich treasure, without particularly knowing either what, how much, or where it is. Created, &c.] Locke pleads, after *Didakti*, that this refers, not to the creation of the world, but to its renovation; and so may be considered as an intimation, that God always intended Christ should have the honor of forming all things anew, and therefore concealed the mystery in Himself, till after Christ was come. But the words, if taken in the most extensive sense, contain both a cer-

tain and a pertinent truth; [for by and in Christ alone, hath the Infinite united with and become at all known to the finite.] DODDR. And Dwight remarks, of a similar mystery, 'On this, and every other question, concerning the nature of the Divine Existence, and of the existence of finite minds, we cannot even begin to form ideas; but must be indebted for whatever facts we either know, or believe, to the testimony of God.'

(10.) *Manifold.* 'Lit. immensely diversified, and manifold. By.] I. e. by the founding, propagating, and governing of the church. 1 Pet. 1:12. BL. 'Thus the angels understood the divine wisdom, just as we mortals understand it, by considering and surveying the course of events.' Ros.—The O. T. prophecies gave strong intimations, at least, of the intended calling of the Gentiles; and the angels seem expressly to refer to it, Lu. 2:10, 14. I apprehend, therefore, that the apostle here would lead the thoughts of his readers to the series of divine dispensations, as gradually opening this great discovery, and not merely to what he preached concerning it; though to be sure, that greatly illustrated the scheme. It is strangely unnatural to explain this clause, as Locke would do, of the Jewish principalities and powers; by which he is driven to the hard shift (as the first reading of the original will show) of connecting "in the heavenly places" to "wisdom of God." DODDR.

(11.) *According to, &c.* 'Locke would tr. according to that predisposition of the ages, or several dispensations which He made in Christ Jesus, which, by the preordination of God's purpose, were all regulated and constituted in Him; and Whitby, taking it in the same sense, explains it of his being promised in the first age to Adam, typified in the second to the Jews, and in the last age preached to all the world. But perhaps this interpretation may coincide more with a sense they are so solicitous to avoid, than either of these learned authors was aware.'

V. 15. As so great honors redounded to God, and blessings so rich and abundant were conferred on men, through the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles; the apostle was well satisfied with his sufferings on that account; and he entreated his brethren at Ephesus, not to be discouraged, or to turn aside from their profession, on account of them, either for fear of being exposed to similar persecutions from the Jews, or through the insinuations of judaizing teachers, who might attempt to prove, that Paul had done wrong in disregarding the legal ceremonies, and thus had needlessly exposed himself to persecution. Whereas, his constant and patient endurance of sufferings, in defence of the liberty of the Gentile churches, was indeed an honor to them; it manifested the importance of their cause, in his judgment, and it showed the temper of the bigoted Jews; it should therefore animate the Gentile converts to stand fast in the liberty of the Gospel.—The v. may indeed be tr., 'I pray not to faint, at my tribulations for you;' but the sense given in our version, and by most expositors, is far more energetic, and far more in the manner of the apostle. Phil. 1:12—14. 2:14—18. 1 Th. 3:1—5. Sc.

V. 14—19. The apostle could not go from place to place, as formerly, to establish the churches by his personal exhortations, but his affectionate desire of their prosperity was unabated; so that, during his impris-



15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

16 That he would grant you, according to the riches<sup>p</sup> of his glory, to be<sup>q</sup> strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner<sup>r</sup> man;

17 That Christ may dwell<sup>s</sup> in your hearts by faith: that ye, being<sup>t</sup> rooted and grounded in love,

18 May be able to comprehend with all saints, what<sup>u</sup> is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness<sup>v</sup> of God.

20 Now<sup>w</sup> unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

p Phil. 4:19.  
q c. 6:10.  
Col. 1:11.  
r Ro. 7:22.

s Jn. 14:23.  
c. 2:22.  
t Col. 2:7.  
u Jn. 1:16.

v Ro. 16:25.  
He. 13:20, 21.  
Jude 24.

resumes what he began at v. 1. from which he had digressed. Observe, to whom he prays,—to God, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of which, see ch. 1:3. Observe, further, his outward posture, humble and reverent; *I bow my knees*. When we draw nigh to God, we should reverence Him in our hearts, and express it in the most suitable and becoming behavior and gesture. And here, having mentioned Christ, he cannot pass without an honorable encomium of his love, v. 15. The universal church depends on the Lord; *Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named*. The Jews were wont to boast of Abraham as their father; but now Jews and Gentiles both are denominated from Christ; so some. Others understand it of the saints in heaven, who wear the crown of glory, and of saints on earth, who are going on in the work of grace here. Both make but one family, one household; and from Him they are named

**PRACT. OBS.** Should we be called to suffer, even unto bonds, in the cause of truth, and 'as the prisoners of Christ,' we may hope to endure the cross with that cheerfulness and satisfaction, which holy Paul expressed; but our feelings would be very different, if we should 'suffer as evil-doers, or busy-bodies in other men's matters.' This should teach Christians in general, and ministers especially, not to leave their proper employment, to which the dispensations of Providence, and of divine grace have called them, and to seek continual instructions from the Lord, both as to 'the mysteries' of the Gospel, and the path of duty: that so their profiting in the knowledge of Christ, and their competency for the office assigned them, may be evident to all men.—We enjoy very great advantages for these studies; as the mysteries of redeeming love were not made known even to ancient prophets, so clearly, as they now are to those believers in general, who are well acquainted with the Word of God: 1 Pet. 1:10—12. and our encouragement is proportionably great. When we consider our own sinfulness by nature and practice, and contrast the poverty of our attainments, the coldness of our affections, and the manifold defilements of our conduct, with our obligations and opportunities, and the glorious theme on which we ought to insist continually; we may well tremble at the thoughts of preaching, in the name of so holy and exalted a Savior, even to the meanest of our fellow-rebels. But those 'unsearchable riches of Christ,' which we would recommend to others, may give ample encouragement to our own

CHRISTIANS, as they really are such; acknowledging their dependence on, and their relation to, Christ.

Observe, what he asks of God for these his friends,—spiritual blessings; the best blessings, and the most earnestly to be sought and prayed for by every one of us, both for ourselves and for our friends.

I. *Spiritual strength*, v. 16. To be strengthened with might, is to be mightily strengthened, much more than at present; to be endued with a high degree of grace, and spiritual abilities for discharging duty, resisting temptations, enduring persecutions, &c. And the apostle prays that this may be according to the riches of his glory, or according to his glorious riches, answerable to that great abundance of grace, mercy, and power, which resides in God, and is his glory: and this by his Spirit, who is the immediate Worker of grace in the souls of God's people. Observe, from these things, that strength, from the Spirit of God, in the inner man, is the best and most desirable strength; strength in the soul; the strength of faith and other graces; strength to serve God and to do our duty, and to persevere in our Christian course with vigor and with cheerfulness. And further, observe, as the work of grace is first begun, so it is continued and carried on, by the blessed Spirit of God.

II. The indwelling of Christ in our hearts, v. 17. Christ is said to dwell in his people, as He is always present with them by his gracious influences and operations. Observe, It is desirable to have Christ dwell in our hearts; and if the law of Christ be written there, and the love of Christ be shed abroad there, then Christ dwells there. Where his Spirit dwells, there He dwells; and He dwells in the heart by faith; by means of the continual exercise of faith on Him. Faith opens the door of the soul, to receive Christ, admits Him, and submits to Him. By faith we are united to Christ, and have an interest in Him.

III. The fixing of pious and devout affections in the soul; *That ye, being rooted and grounded in love*, steadfastly fixed in your love to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to all the saints, the beloved of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some understand it of their being settled and established in

the sense of God's love to them; which would inspire them with greater ardors of holy love to Him, and to one another. And how very desirable is it to have a settled, fixed sense of the love of God and Christ to our souls; so as to be able to say with the apostle, at all times, *He has loved me!* Now the best way to attain this is, to be careful that we maintain a constant love to God in our souls; this will be the evidence of the love of God to us. *We love Him, because He first loved us*. In order to this, he prays,

IV. For their experimental acquaintance with the love of Jesus Christ, v. 18, 19. Christians should aim more clearly to understand, and firmly to believe, the wonderful love of Christ to his, which the saints do understand and believe in some measure, and shall understand more hereafter: we should desire to comprehend with all saints, not above all saints, to have so much knowledge of the subject as the saints are allowed to have in this world.

It is observable, how magnificently the apostle speaks of the love of Christ. The dimensions of redeeming love are admirable. By enumerating them, the apostle designs to signify the exceeding greatness, the unsearchable riches of the love of Christ, Job 11:8, 9. Some describe the particulars thus: by its breadth, understand its extent, to all ages, nations, and ranks of men; by its length, its continuance from everlasting to everlasting; by its depth, its stooping to the lowest condition, with a design to relieve and save those who are sunk into the depths of sin and misery; by its height, its entitling, and raising us up, to the heavenly happiness and glory. We should desire to comprehend this love: it is the character of all the saints that they do so; for they all have a complacency and a confidence in the love of Christ. We must pray and endeavor to know something, and should still covet and strive to know more and more of it, though, after the best endeavors, none can fully comprehend it: in its full extent it passeth knowledge. The love of Christ may be better perceived and known by Christians than it generally is, yet it cannot be fully understood on this side heaven.

V. He prays that they might be filled with all the fulness of God. It is a high ex-

hearts; and our deepest humiliation will not abate our confidence of hope, if we duly advert to the power and love of our Redeemer.—Men of generous minds, often consider more the effects their sufferings may have on others, than their own feelings under them; and they who know human nature will fear, lest others 'should faint,' on account of those trials endured by themselves for their sake, which are indeed their glory.—The instructions and admonitions of ministers, or others, should always be watered, as it were, with fervent prayers; and we may serve our brethren or relatives in this way, when precluded from all other methods. Nor can we do better, than often to enlarge on the petitions before us, whether we are praying for ourselves, or our fellow-Christians. In asking for enlarged blessings, for ourselves and for all our brethren, we should not be straitened in our own minds, as we are not in our gracious God. Let us then enlarge our expectations, (according to the 'exceeding great and precious promises,' made in Christ,) and multiply our supplications; encouraged by what He has already done for his church, and by his regenerating and upholding our souls; being assured that the conversion of sinners, and the increasing light, holiness, and comfort of believers, will redound, in more abundant adorations and thanksgivings, to his 'glory by Christ Jesus,' in his whole church, and to all the ages of eternity. Amen, so be it. Let thy name, O Lord, be thus hallowed on earth, as it is, and ever shall be, in thy holy habitation above! Mat. 6:9, 10, 13. Rev. 5:8—14. 19:1—6. SCOTT.

onment, he 'bowed his knees,' in constant prayer for them, 'unto the Father of our Lord Jesus; of whom the whole family' of believers on earth, and saints and angels in heaven, 'are named,' and considered as the children of God, being gathered together in one, in Christ. 1:9—12. To 'the Father of the Lord Jesus,' and of the whole family, the apostle prayed, that, 'according to the riches of his glory,' his plentiful mercy which was emphatically 'his glory,' He would grant them to be powerfully 'strengthened by his Spirit,' in all the holy dispositions of their renewed souls, in faith, reverential fear, love, gratitude, hatred of sin, hope, patience, that thus they might be steadfast, amidst temptations and persecutions, enjoy comfort, and glorify God in every situation and duty. Ps. 138:5. Is. 40:27—31. 2 Cor. 12:7—10. Phil. 4:10—13, v. 13. Col. 1:9—14, v. 11.—'The whole family in heaven and earth,' (15) may include all holy creatures; but, certainly, none of the obstinate enemies of God. Perhaps the redeemed from among men are exclusively meant; and Christ, as the immediate antecedent, is He from whom this family is named Christians.—'The height, &c.' is here explained, as connected with 'the love of Christ,' mentioned in the following v. But the glo-

rious plan of redemption, in general, may be meant; this, however, does not materially alter the sense. SCOTT.

(15.) *Whole.*] Levelled (so *Koppe*) against that narrow notion of the Jews, that they alone were entitled to the names *people of Jehovah, sons of Jehovah*. So that the sentiment of v. 16—19. (comp. Col. 2:1—10.) is, May He, by his divine Spirit, produce in you the firm persuasion, that ye are the temple of Christ, built by the divine goodness; so that ye may comprehend, and be sensible of, the vast extent of this temple, to which all the pious and good belong, and feel how great is his goodness, who willed that ye should be joined to the same temple. BLOOMF.

'The Jewish writers call *heaven* the upper, and *earth* the lower family of God.' DODDR.  
(18) *Height.*] 'I. e. of the great mystery of redeeming love.' Id. V. 20, 21. The apostle added, to his most enlarged petitions, an act of adoration, suited still more to exalt the expectations of the readers. In attempting to explain such portions of Scripture, it is almost impossible to avoid comparative flatness and insipidity; an inspired writer alone could do justice to them. SCOTT.



## CHAP. IV.

1 He exhorteth to unity, 7 and declareth that God therefore giveth divers 11 gifts unto men, that his church might be 13 edified and 16 grown up in Christ. 18 He calleth them from the impurity of the Gentiles, 24 to put on the new man, 25 to cast off lying, and 29 corrupt communication.

**I** THEREFORE, the prisoner <sup>a</sup> of the Lord,) beseech you that ye walk <sup>b</sup> worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all <sup>c</sup> lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in-you all.

a or, in. b Col. 1:10. c Mat. 11:29.

pression, like those others, of being *partakers of a divine nature*, and of being *perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect*. We are to understand it, of his fulness as a God in covenant with us; as a God to his people: such a fulness as God is ready to bestow, who is willing to fill every one to the utmost of his capacity, and that with all those gifts and graces which He sees they need. They who receive grace for grace from Christ's fulness, may be said to be *filled with the fulness of God*, according to their capacity: all which is in order to their arriving at the highest degree of the knowledge and enjoyment of God, and an entire conformity to Him.

The apostle closes the ch. with a doxology, v. 20, 21. *It is proper to conclude our prayers with praises*. Our blessed Savior has taught us to do so. Notice how he describes God; and how he ascribes glory to Him. There is boundless fulness of grace and mercy in God, which the prayers of all the saints can never exhaust. Whatever we think to ask, [in our stunted faith,] God is able to do more, abundantly more, exceedingly abundantly more. In our applications to God, we should encourage our faith by a consideration of his all-sufficiency, and almighty power. *According to the power which worketh in us*. As if he had said, we have already had a proof of this power of God, in what He hath wrought in us, and done for us, having quickened us by his grace, and converted us to Himself. The power that still worketh for the saints, is according to that power that hath wrought in them. Wherever God gives of his faithfulness, He gives to experience his power. Having thus described God, he ascribes glory to Him:

(18, 19.) 'To comprehend the length and breadth, and depth and height, of the love of Christ, we must first take the dimensions of our own sins.'

ADAMS.

(20.) *Ask, &c.*] Few texts are so frequently misquoted, as this,—the insertion of the word 'can,' being far from unusual; and even the accurate *Doddr.* has himself given it, in a parenthesis. But is it not evident, that we 'can' ask any absurdity? The apostle alludes to the deficiency of our faith, and to our almost habitual distrust of God.

ED.

(21.) *Throughout, &c.*] 'Through all the successions of an endless eternity, comes something near Paul's self-invented and most expressive phrase: but even this, emphatical as it may seem, falls vastly short of the sublimity of the original.'

DODDR.

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1—6. The privileges and prospects, to which the grace of God had called them, from a state of abject idolatry, ignorance, and vice; the obligations conferred on them; the plain and full instructions, the motives and encouragements afforded them, and everything in the doctrine and love of Christ, as well as the nature of their future inheritance, required of them a peculiar temper and conduct, which he was about to point out to them in various particulars. See.

(1.) 'This epistle, as it sets forth, in the preceding part of it, the gracious design of God in the gospel-dispensation, and represents the benefits and privileges that belong to *all the faithful in Christ Jesus*, as well to Gentiles as to Jews, is cast into a strain of thanksgiving and prayers, and written (as it were) all in a rapture, in a sublime and elevated style, as flowing from a mind transported with the consideration of the unsearchable wisdom and goodness of God in the work of redemption, and of the amazing love displayed in Christ towards the Gentile world. And

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in this we ascribe all excellences and perfections to Him, glory being the effulgency and result of them all. Observe, The seat of God's praises is *in the church*. That little rent of praise which God receives from this world, is from the church: a sacred society, constituted for the glory of God: every particular member of which, both Jew and Gentile, concurs in this work of praising God. The Mediator of these praises is Jesus Christ. All God's gifts come from Him to us through the hand of Christ; and all our praises pass from us to Him through the same hand. And God should and will be praised thus *throughout all ages, world without end*: for He will ever have a church to praise Him, and He will ever have his tribute of praise from his church. Amen.

CHAP. IV. The former part of this epistle consists of several important doctrinal truths; the latter, on which we now enter, has in it the most weighty and serious exhortations that can be given. Observe, in this, as in most others of Paul's epistles, the former part is doctrinal, fitted to inform the minds of men in the great truths and doctrines of the Gospel; the latter practical, designed for the direction of their lives and manners; all Christians being obliged to endeavor after soundness in the faith, and regularity in life and practice. The best way to understand the mysteries, and partake of the privileges, of which we have read before, is, conscientiously to practise the duties prescribed to us in what follows: as, on the other hand, a serious consideration and belief of the doctrines that have been taught us in the foregoing chs., will be a good foundation for the practice of the duties prescribed in those yet before us. Christian faith and Christian practice mutually befriend each other.

V. 1. This v. 1. is a general exhortation to walk as becomes our Christian profession. Paul was now a prisoner at Rome; the *prisoner of the Lord, or in the Lord*, which signifies as much as *for the Lord*. See, of this, ch. 3: 1. He mentions this once and again, to show that he was not ashamed of his bonds, well knowing that he suffered not as an evil-doer: and likewise to recommend what he wrote to them, with the greater tenderness, and with some special advantage. We have here Paul's petition, as if he had said: 'Considering what God has done for you, and to what a state and condition He has called you, as has been discoursed before, I now earnestly request you, (not to send me relief, or to use your interest to obtain my liberty, the first thing poor prisoners are wont to solicit from their friends, but,) that you would approve yourselves good Christians, and live up to your profession and calling. Observe, Being called Christians, we must answer that name, and live like [Christ].'

the remaining part of it is no less admirable, for the engaging manner in which he improves what he had before delivered, urging the duties which became their character with the greatest tenderness, in expressions full of love and endearment, adding the strongest arguments to enforce them, and making mention of his bonds to recommend his exhortations.'

DODDR.

(2.) 'Meekness may be said to be the result of *lowliness*, since the Gr. signifies such a *lowly opinion of one's own merit and claims*, as will effectually produce a temper of mildness and indulgence, not requiring too much from our brethren, who are encompassed with the same frailty as ourselves; it is obvious, how requisite this is, in those who should feel how equally unmerited by all is the grace of God.'

BLOOMF.

(3.) 'Anxiously striving after the unity of the Spirit by a strong bond, even the study of peace,' *Bl.*; who justly reprobates that license of interpretation, which (contrary to ancient and early modern comtrs., and to the use of the article) degrades the meaning of *pneumatosis to mind*.

ED.

(4.) 'There is one body, or church, which comprehends you all, and one Spirit, which animates that body by its gifts.'

MACKY.

(6.) *Above all, and through all, and in all.*] 'The three expressions are treated by *Koppe*, as merely synonymous, i. e. "to whom you owe everything." But I can never cease to protest against this slovenly way of wrapping up matters, into which the recent comtrs. so often fall, and which is the *other extreme* to that of the excessively *minute*, and sometimes fanciful, distinctions into which the earlier modern comtrs. ran.—For a sufficient answer to the Socinian perversion of the "*who is above all*," see the able note of *Whitby*.'

BLOOMF.



7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the <sup>d</sup> measure of the gift of Christ.

8 Wherefore he saith, <sup>e</sup> When he ascended up on high, he led <sup>f</sup> captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)

10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might <sup>g</sup> fill all things.)

11 And <sup>h</sup> he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

<sup>d</sup> Ro. 12:3.  
<sup>e</sup> Ps. 68:18.

<sup>f</sup> or, a multitude  
of captives.

<sup>g</sup> or, fulfil.  
h 1 Co. 12:28.

in a bundle of rods, they may be of different lengths, and different strength; but when they are tied together by one bond, they are much stronger than any, even than the thickest and strongest were of themselves.

III. Motives proper to promote this Christian unity and concord. He urges,

1. The many unities there are, that are the joy and glory of our Christian profession. There should be one heart; for *there is one body, and one Spirit*, v. 4. If there be but *one body*, all that belong to that body should have one heart. The church universal is one mystical body of Christ, and all good Christians make up but one body, incorporated by one charter, that of the Gospel; animated by *one Spirit*, the same Holy Spirit, who, by his gifts and graces, quickens, enlivens, and governs, that body; *even as ye are called in one hope of your calling*. Hope is here put for its object, the thing hoped for, the heavenly inheritance; to the hope of which we are called. All Christians are called to the same hope of eternal life. There is one Christ that they all hope in, one heaven that they are all hoping for; therefore they should be of one heart. *One Lord*, v. 5. i. e. Christ, the Head of the church, to whom, by God's appointment, all Christians are immediately subject. *One faith*, i. e. the Gospel, containing the doctrine of the Christian faith: or, it is the same grace of faith, faith in Christ, where-

by all Christians are saved. *One baptism*, by which we profess our faith; being baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and so the same sacramental covenant, whereby we engage ourselves to the Lord Christ. *One God and Father of all*, v. 6. *One God*, who owns all the true members of the church for his children; for He is *the Father of all* such by special relation; as He is *the Father of all men* by creation: and He is *above all*, by his essence, and with respect to the glorious perfections of his nature; and as He has dominion over all creatures, and especially over his church; *and through all*; by his providence upholding and governing them: *and in you all*; in all believers, in whom He dwells, as in his holy temple, by his Spirit and special grace.

If then there be so many *ones*, it is pity, but there should be one more; one heart, or one soul.

2. The variety of gifts Christ has bestowed among Christians, v. 7. *Unto every one of us Christians is given grace*, some gift of grace, in some kind, or degree, or other, for the mutual help of one another. *Unto every one of us ministers is given grace*; to some a greater measure of gifts, to others a less measure. The different gifts of Christ's ministers proved a great occasion of contention among the first Christians; *One was for Paul, and another for Apollos*. The apostle shows that they had no reason to quarrel about them, but all the reason in the world to agree in the joint use of them, for common edification; because all was given *according to the measure of the gift of Christ*, in such a measure as seemed best to Christ to bestow on every one. Observe, All the ministers, and all the members of Christ, owe all their gifts and graces to Him: and this is a good reason why we should love one another, *because to every one of us is given grace*. All to whom Christ has given grace, and on whom He has bestowed his gifts, (though they are of different sizes, different names, and different sentiments, yet,) *ought to love one another*.

The apostle takes this occasion to specify some of the gifts Christ bestowed. And that they were bestowed by Christ, he makes appear, v. 8. by those words of David, wherein he foretold this, Ps. 68: 18. David prophesied of the ascension of Christ; and the apostle descants on it here, and in the three following vs. *On high*, we may understand

both of *the place* into which Christ ascended in his human nature, i. e. the highest heavens; and particularly of *the state* to which He was advanced, He being then highly exalted, and eminently glorified, by his Father. Allusion is had to the manner in which conquerors rode, in triumph, attended with the most illustrious of their captives led in chains, when they were wont to scatter their largesses and bounty among the soldiers, and other spectators. *Leading captivity captive*, is a phrase used in the Old Test., to signify a conquest over enemies, especially over such as formerly had led others captive; see Jud. 5: 12. *Captivity* here signifies all our spiritual enemies, who brought us into captivity before; such as sin, the devil, and death. *And He gave gifts unto men*: in the psalm it is, *He received gifts for men*. He received, that He might give; and particularly, He enriched his disciples with the gift of the Holy Ghost. The apostle, thus speaking of the ascension of Christ, notices, that *He descended first*, v. 9. As much as if he had said, when David speaks of Christ's ascension, he intimates the knowledge he had of Christ's humiliation on earth. *Into the lower parts of the earth*, may refer either to *his incarnation*, Ps. 139: 15. or, to *his burial*, Ps. 63: 9. He calls his death (say some fathers) *his descent into the lower parts of the earth*.

The apostle next tells us, what were Christ's gifts at his ascension, v. 11. Indeed, He sent forth some *apostles* before his ascension, Mat. 10: 1, 2, 5. But one was then added, Ac. 1: 26. and all were more solemnly installed, and publicly confirmed in their office, by his visible pouring forth of the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary manner and measure upon them. Note, The great gift Christ gave to the church at his ascension, was that of the ministry of peace and reconciliation. The gift of the ministry is the fruit of Christ's ascension. And ministers have their various gifts, all from the Lord Jesus.

The officers Christ gave his church were of two sorts; *extraordinary*, as *apostles, prophets, and evangelists*; *ordinary*, as *pastors and teachers*; two names, so some, to signify one office, implying the duties of ruling and teaching belonging to it; or, as others, two distinct offices, both ordinary, and of standing use in the church; and then *pastors* are such as are fixed at the head of particular churches, with design to guide, instruct,

V. 7—10. He, whose name is Emmanuel, received at his ascension, from the Father, those gifts which He conferred on men, his brethren. The death and burial of Christ, as well as his incarnation, seem intended.—(8) *He led captivity captive*.] 'He led a multitude of captives.' S.

(8.) 'The sum of the argument is this. "In the Jewish sacred books some one is said to have ascended up unto heaven, and from thence to have distributed gifts unto men. But since God Himself cannot be said to have ascended into heaven, inasmuch as He always is in heaven, and never descended from it, the prophet must necessarily have had in mind some other person, who, after He had descended from heaven to earth, afterwards ascended from thence unto heaven. And He can be no other than Jesus the Messiah, whom we know to have descended from, and again ascended to heaven." The argument proceeds on these two reasons: 1. that God Himself cannot properly be said to have descended from heaven; 2. that *on high*, in the Ps. is to be interpreted of heaven; and *giving gifts to men*, of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. (Kop.) Though the Ps. may not, in its original and primary sense, have reference to the Messiah, yet in a secondary and mystical one it may. And the Jews, it seems, have always interpreted part of this Ps. of the Messiah. Kop. well observes: "we should confide in the wisdom and divine authority of the apostle; that he would not have used this passage unless he well knew that its interpretation of the Messiah, and his ascent to heaven, was received and approved by the Jews of his time." If this be not admitted, it must be considered as an *accommodation* of this part of the Ps. to the present purpose. So Doddr.: "I cannot undertake to prove, that the passage here referred to is, strictly speaking, a prediction of Christ's ascension, and of his *shedding* down the gifts and graces of the Spirit. The Psalmist, celebrating a late victory, goes back, in rapturous meditation, to God's victory over the Egyptians, and the spoils with which He enriched the Israelites, ungrateful and rebellious as they had been, and by which He prepared for Himself, in the course of his providence, a dwelling among them; for the tabernacle was built principally with those spoils. And the apostle beautifully accommodates the words to the triumph of an ascending Savior, and to the royal donative of the Spirit; which He shed down on his church, into which many, who had once been rebellious, were admitted, and whereby it was fitted to be his habitation."

BLOOMF.

'Christ might poetically be said, to *lead captivity captive*, when He triumphed over those that had subdued his people, and acquired such a power over the infernal spirits, as a conqueror has over a captive that

he drags at his chariot wheels.' Doddr. 'Captivity is here a collective term for captive enemies; it therefore signifies, simply, that God will reduce enemies to his power: which is more fulfilled in Christ than ever otherwise. Nor, indeed, did He alone prostrate Satan, sin, and death; but daily makes of rebels an obedient people, when by his Word he tames the last of our flesh.'

CALVIN.

(9.) *Lower, &c.*] 'Bp. Pearson (on the Creed) has shown, how very precariously this text is urged in support of the opinion that Christ went down into hell.' DONOR. 'The most judicious adopt one of two opinions: some tr. *grave, Hades*. Ps. 68:10. Ez. 26:10. 32:18. and are supported by the *usus loquendi*, and (so Koppe) by the modes of thinking and speaking, prevalent in that age, by which the mansions, both of demons and the dead, were placed under ground. See Philo, 2:20. and 1 Pe. 3:19. But how can *heaven* and *grave* be well opposed to each other? I therefore accede to many eminent moderns, that the phrase means the *earth itself*, i. e. the lower parts, the earth.' BL., whom see. 'Vainly do some twist this to mean limbo, or hell, [lybium . . . inferos]: since Paul is speaking only of the condition of this present life. And their argument from the use of the comparative is too weak; for one part of the earth is not compared with another, but the whole earth with heaven.' ID.

V. 11—13. Christ, having been exalted to his glory in heaven, first plentifully poured out the Holy Spirit on his chosen 'apostles,' as his invaluable 'gifts to men,' that, through their ministry, and by the laying on of their hands, sinful men might be made partakers of his salvation, and of abundant spiritual gifts and miraculous powers; and that, from them, as the grand repository, the church, in all future ages, might receive all divine truth, especially by those sacred oracles which were written by them, and under their inspection, to be the standard of Christianity. He next qualified and raised up 'prophets,' or extraordinary teachers, endued with the gift of prophecy, and acting in subordination to the apostles, in making known his Gospel in the world; others he qualified to be 'evangelists,' to preach from city to city, as assistants to the apostles, and observing their directions. He also qualified and appointed stated 'pastors and teachers,' in the different churches, to carry on the work begun by the apostles and evangelists. Thus the ascended Savior, by sending forth able and faithful ministers, 'gave gifts unto men,' as through their labors He communicated 'the Spirit of life and holiness' to mankind.—(11) *Evangelists*.] 'Under this name they are to be understood, whom the apostles used as their attendants, in performing their office, because they were not sufficient for everything. . . .



12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ :

13 Till we all come <sup>i</sup> in the unity <sup>j</sup> of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect <sup>k</sup> man, unto the measure of the <sup>l</sup> stature of the fulness of Christ :

<sup>i</sup> or, into. <sup>j</sup> Col. 2:2. <sup>k</sup> 1 Co. 14:50. <sup>l</sup> or, age.

and feed them, in the manner appointed by Christ; therefore frequently called *bishops* and *elders*: and the *teachers* were such, whose work it was also to preach the Gospel, and to instruct the people by way of exhortation. But this brings to the third argument.

3. Christ's great end and design in giving gifts unto men, v. 12. for the perfecting of the saints, that is, according to the import of the original, to bring them into an orderly, spiritual state and frame, who had been, as it were, dislocated and disjointed by sin ;

and then to strengthen, confirm, and advance them therein : that so each, in his proper place and function, might contribute to the good of the whole. For the work of the ministry ; or, dispensation ; that they might dispense the doctrines of the Gospel, and successfully discharge the several parts of their ministerial function. For the edifying of the body of Christ, to build up the church, which is Christ's mystical body, by increase of their graces, and an addition of new members. All are designed to prepare us for heaven, v. 13. Some of the gifts and offices are to continue in the church till the saints be perfected, which will not be till they all come, in the unity of the faith, till all true believers meet together, by means of the same precious faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God : not a bare speculative knowledge, or acknowledging of Christ to be the Son of God, and the great Mediator ; but such as is attended with appropriation and affection, with all due honor, trust, and obedience. Unto a perfect man, to our full

growth of gifts and graces, free from those childish infirmities, that we are subject to in the present world. Unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, so as to be Christians of a full maturity and ripeness, in all the graces derived from Christ's fulness : or, according to the measure of that stature which is to make up the fulness of Christ, which is to complete his mystical body. Lightfoot understands the apostle as speaking here of Jews and Gentiles knit in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God ; so making a perfect man, and the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

The apostle further shows, in the following vs. God's design in his sacred institutions, and what effect they ought to have on us. As,

(1.) That we henceforth be no more children, &c. v. 14. i. e. in knowledge, faith, and judgment ; easily yielding to every temptation, readily complying with every one's humor, and being at every one's beck.

Of this kind were Timothy, Titus, Silvanus, Apollos, whom Paul joined with himself in the inscription of the epistles, yet so as to call himself alone an apostle. This office, therefore, was only temporary.' Beza. The opinion of this venerable Reformer, in the last clause, seems not well founded. The office of 'Evangelists,' in the primitive times, was in most respects similar to that of missionaries, in subsequent times. They were preachers of the Gospel, without full apostolical authority, and without any stated charge ; going among the heathen to found churches, while the apostles lived, under their personal direction ; and afterwards according to their doctrine and methods of proceeding ; or, visiting the churches already planted, 'to set in order such things as were wanting,' to supply the deficiencies, or aid the labors, of stated pastors ; and to stimulate them to greater earnestness in discharging their duty. When zeal for propagating the Gospel subsided, this office sunk into disuse, and thus, for ages, the heathen have been in a great measure neglected ; and it seems to have been one grand defect at the Reformation, that no part of the funds, which had been appropriated to religious purposes, was reserved for the special object of supporting evangelists to the heathen world ; but, in one form or other, the office of 'evangelist,' or something of the same nature, must revive, along with the spirit of evangelizing the nations.—'These, when they' (the persons above mentioned) 'were employed in preaching the Gospel to those who had not yet received it, the Scripture calls evangelists.' Hammond. Acts 21:7—14. 2 Tim. 4:1—5.—It might have previously been expected, in the present lamentably divided state of the church, that the zealots of each division would find out their own plan of church-government, and their own orders of ministers, exclusively, in this passage ; but it is probable, that none of them would be satisfied with so general a statement, were they called to write their sentiments on the subject.—It appears to me, that 'bishops,' however the word may be understood, are included under the general terms, 'pastors and teachers,' as the principal resident rulers and teachers of the church. Acts 20:17. 1 Tim. 3:1. Rev. 2:1.—Were diocesan bishops more constantly resident, and more 'instant in preaching the Word,' as well as in ruling the flock as 'shepherds,' their authority would be more revered, and their usefulness allowed. Note, Jn. 21:15—17.

(11.) *Evangelists.* 'The term occurs (only in Acts 21:8. 2 Tim. 4:5. and here) too seldom, and is used in too general a way, to enable us to judge of the exact nature of the office. But we learn from the fathers, and early eccles. historians (see Suicer, Thes. 1, 1234), what is, of itself, highly probable, that the name was, in the apostolic age, given to those Christian teachers, and assistants of the apostles, who were not appointed to the charge of any particular church, but were itinerant, and sent by the apostles to such congregations as might be most in need of their labors ; and it is supposed, that they did not commence the work of conversion, but followed up the rudiments first communicated by the apostles.

'As to *poimenes* [shepherds, pastors] and *didaskaloi* [teachers], Doddr. thinks they would have been expressed distinctly [by the repetition of the article], as were the others ; but (as Koppe obs.) in so irregular a writer as Paul, this is a very precarious principle.—The most eminent interpreters, ancient and modern, admit, that by the *poimenes* are meant, such as are called *episcopoi*, Acts 20:28. and (it seems) *presbuteroi*, 1 Pet. 5:1, 2. The word, indeed, carries with it far more of meaning and dignity than *didaskalos*. For it was originally applied to kings, generals, and, indeed, *præfecti* in general : a use found in the earliest Gr. authors, probably derived from oriental phraseology, since it often occurs in the O. T. ; as Je. 3:15. And thus, (as Kop. obs. from Grot. and Vitruv.) these *poimenes* seem to have been similar to the governors of synagogues, who were called *præsym*. In 1 Pet. 1:25, the two terms are conjoined. Theod. and Schl. think the *poimenes* had charge of cities ; and the *didaskaloi*, of villages. Which may have been the case originally ; but, from their more important situations, those would acquire a sort of influence and authority over the country pastors. From the difference of appellation, however, we may presume a difference of situation ; though we are not to suppose, but that the *poimenes* discharged all the offices of the *didaskaloi*, as teaching, preaching, &c. ; yet we may imagine some duties, to which the *didaskaloi* were not appointed.

'No commentator has so well treated on this subject as Whitby ; thus :—'That these *pastors* and *teachers* were, in the first ages, men of extraordinary gifts, is evident from this very place ; for the preceding words, He gave gifts unto men, some apostles, some prophets, &c., show, that all the persons mentioned here were partakers of the gifts which Christ, ascending up on high, and sending down the Holy Spirit, gave to men. Hence, among the different *charismata*, gifts, of the Holy Ghost, are reckoned *didaskalia*, teaching, Rom. 12:6, 7. and, among the gifts exercised in their assemblies, *didachē*, doctrine, 1 Cor. 14:6, 26. Among

the persons who had received the *diversities of gifts*, are reckoned, after prophets, *didaskaloi*, teachers, 1 Cor. 12:28. Rom. 12:6, 7. and here. And so Tertullian makes mention of them, as persons educated with the grace of knowledge. The *pastors* seem, probably, the same with the *kubernēseis*, governments, 1 Cor. 12:28. and the *proestōtes* [over-standers, he that ruleth], Rom. 12:8. And it is evident, from both these places, that they were also men endued with those spiritual gifts there mentioned. Hence, it is observable of those *doctors*, that, when the extraordinary gifts to the church ceased, their very names grew out of use, they being very rarely mentioned in the succeeding ages of the church.' BL.

*Apostles.* 'The 12, including Paul. *Evangelists.* Next to the 12, and with an office nearly similar : only in rank, inferior : such were Timothy, &c., to whom Paul gives the name. Between these 2 kinds Paul interposes — *Prophets.* These, as doctrine is here the matter in hand, I prefer to interpret, not those who are powerful (as Agabus, for instance) in the gift of vaticination, but excellent interpreters of prophecy, accommodating it to present time by a singular gift of revelation : but so that the gift of prophesying, so far as it was annexed to doctrine, be not excluded. *Teachers* and *pastors*, some think one and the same office, because the disjunctive particle is not between, as between the others. So Chrys. and Aug. However, I think the *pastors* were those to whom the care of a particular flock was committed. They might be called *doctors* ; only let it be understood, there is another kind of *doctors*, who preside as well over the formation of pastors as over the teaching of the whole church. Not but that the same may be pastor who is doctor : but because their powers [facultates] are diverse. Only the last two offices are perpetual.' CALVIN.

A distinction between pastors and teachers was early attempted by the New England churches, but was not long maintained. See Cambridge Platform, 1648. Prest. T. Dwight makes no distinction between the two. Theol. Sermon. 150. Doddr. says, 'I shall not take upon me to determine whether two different officers are intended here, of which the former were intrusted with the care and oversight of particular churches, whereas the latter only were employed in instructing the people by the way of exhortation, without being called to the pastoral office ; though, if this were the case [and so Dwight, &c. argue], it seems most probable they would have been expressed distinctly, as the others are, and some, *pastors* ; and some, *teachers*. — But if diocesan bishops were the very remedy by which the Holy Ghost designed to prevent or to heal those schisms, of which the Ephesian church was in such apparent danger, (Acts 20:29, 30.) it is very strange, there should be no mention of them amidst all these ecclesiastics, which are here enumerated, though some of them inferior to the supposed bishop in dignity.' DODDR.

'The pastoral office is the first, in the church, both for dignity and usefulness. Rom. 11:13. The person who fills this office, hath, in Scripture, obtained different names, expressive of his various duties. As he has the oversight of the flock of Christ, he is termed bishop. Acts 20:29. As he feeds them with spiritual food, he is termed pastor. Jer. 3:15. 1 Pet. 5:2—4. As he serves Christ, in his church, he is termed minister. 1 Cor. 4:1. 2 Cor. 3:6. As it is his duty to be grave and prudent, and an example of the flock, and to govern well in the house and kingdom of Christ, he is termed presbyter or elder. 1 Pet. 5:1. Ti. 1:3. 1 Tim. 5:1, 17, 19. As he is the messenger of God, he is termed the angel of the church. Mal. 2:7. Rev. 2:1. 1:20. 3:1, 7. As he is sent to declare the will of God to sinners, and to beseech them to be reconciled to God through Christ, he is termed ambassador. 2 Cor. 5:20. Eph. 6:20. And, as he dispenses the manifold grace of God, and the ordinances instituted by Christ, he is termed steward of the mysteries of God. Luke 12:42. 1 Cor. 4:1, 2.' Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

On the various offices of church government, appointed in the several religious denominations, see the *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* ; in the distinct articles, severally. ED.

(12.) *Ministry.* 'Diakonia : office undertaken for the good of Christians. Schl., Wahl.' BLOOMF.

(13.) 'Paul is exhorting the teachers of each congregation to mind and endeavor, that all and every one of the Christians therein, be carried forward in knowledge, till none remain quite ignorant ; so that all and each, one as well as another, may be confirmed in faith, until no one be left who is in doubt, or fluctuates in uncertainty, or does not know more of the Christian doctrine than he formerly did.' MORUS, understanding parity rather than unity. So Valpy. But Bloomf. rejects this, though 'ingenious and acute,' and apprehends, that Paul 'only means, they should earnestly strive to promote this unity of faith and knowledge in all the essential and fundamental doctrines of the Gospel: for that seems the sense of knowledge of the Son of God.—Whitby well lays down the sense, So as to be Christians of a full maturity and ripeness, in all the graces derived from Christ Jesus to the body.' ED.



14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

19 Who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

m Ja. 1:6. p Col. 1:13,19. t Ro. 1:24,25.  
n or, being sincere. q Ja. 15:5. u Col. 3:8,9.  
o 2 Co. 4:2. r Ac. 26:18. v Ro. 6:5.  
s or, hardness.

By the sleight of men, is a metaphor taken from gamblers, and signifies the mischievous subtlety of seducers; as cunning craftiness means their skillfulness in finding out ways to seduce and deceive. How wicked those, who set themselves to seduce and deceive others into false doctrines! The best method to fortify ourselves against such, is, to study the sacred oracles, and to pray for the illumination and grace of the Spirit of Christ, that we may know the truth as it is in Jesus, and be established in it.

(2.) That we should speak the truth in love, v. 15. or follow the truth in love; or be sincere in love to our fellow-Christians. While we adhere to the doctrine of Christ, which is the truth, we should live in love one with another: truth and peace should go together.

(3.) That we should grow up into Christ in all things. Into Christ, so as to be more deeply rooted in Him. In all things; in

knowledge, love, faith, all the parts of the new man. We should grow up toward maturity; which is opposed to the being children. Those are improving Christians, who grow up into Christ, into an acquaintance with Him, faith in Him, love to Him, dependence on Him. He is the Head; and we should thus grow, that we may thereby honor our Head. The Christian's growth tends to the glory of Christ.

(4.) We should be assisting and helpful one to another, as members of the same body, v. 16. Here the apostle makes a comparison between the natural body and Christ's mystical body, and observes, that as there must be communion and mutual communications of the members of the body among themselves, in order to their growth and improvement, so there must be mutual love and unity, together with the proper fruits of these, among Christians, in order to their spiritual improvement and growth in grace. From whom, says he, i. e. from Christ their Head, who conveys influence and nourishment to every particular member, the whole body of Christians, fitly joined together and compacted, being orderly and firmly united among themselves, every one in his proper place and station, by that which every joint supplies, by the assistance which every one of the parts, thus united, gives to the whole: or by the Spirit, faith, love, sacraments, &c. which (like the veins and arteries in the body) serve to unite Christians to Christ their Head, and to one another as fellow-members. According to the effectual working in the measure of every part: i. e. say some, according to the power the Holy Ghost exerts to make God's appointed means effectual for this great end; in such a measure as Christ judges to be sufficient and proper for every member, according to its respective place and office in the body. Or, as others, according to the power of Christ, who, as Head, influences and enlivens every member. Or, according to the effectual working of every member, in communicating to others of what it has received, nourishment is conveyed to all in their proportions, and, according to the state and exigence of every part, makes increase of the body, such an increase as is convenient for the body. Observe, Particular Christians receive their gifts and graces from Christ for the sake and benefit of the whole body. Unto the edifying of itself in love. We may understand this two ways. Either, that all the members of the church may attain to a greater measure of love to Christ and to one another. Or, that they are moved to act in the manner mentioned, from love to Christ and to one another. Observe, Mutual love among Christians is a great friend to spiritual growth: it is in love that the body edifies itself: whereas, A kingdom, divided against itself, cannot stand.

V. 17—32. The apostle now exhorts to Christian purity, and holiness of heart and life; and that both more general, v. 17—24. and in several particular instances, v. 25—32. This is solemnly introduced; 'This I say

therefore, and testify in the Lord; i. e. seeing ye are members of Christ's body, and partakers of such gifts; this I urge on your consciences, and bear witness to as your duty in the Lord's name, and by virtue of the authority I have derived from Him.' And then, the more general exhortation to purity and holiness of heart and life, begins thus; 'That ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk.' Here he takes occasion to describe the wickedness of the Gentile world, out of which regenerate Christians were snatched.

I. Their understandings were darkened, v. 18. void of all saving knowledge; yea, ignorant of many things concerning God, which the light of nature might have taught them: and by their ignorance they were alienated from the life of God. They were estranged from, and had a dislike and aversion to, a life of holiness; which begins in light and knowledge. And what was the cause? The blindness, or the hardness of their heart; not that God did not make Himself known to them by his works, but they would not admit the instructive rays of the divine light. They were ignorant because they would be so. Their ignorance proceeded from their obstinacy, and the hardness of their hearts; they resisting the light, and rejecting all the means of illumination and knowledge.

II. Their consciences were debauched and seared; Who being past feeling, v. 19. They had no sense of their sin, or of the misery and danger of their case by means of it; whereupon, they gave themselves over unto lasciviousness. They indulged themselves in their filthy lusts; and, yielding themselves up to the dominion of these, they became the slaves and drudges of sin and the devil; working all uncleanness with greediness. They made it their common practice to commit all sorts of uncleanness, and even the most unnatural and monstrous sins, and that with insatiable desires. [See the relics of Pompeii and Herculaneum.] Observe, When men's consciences are once seared, there are no bounds to their sins. When they set their hearts on the gratification of their lusts, what can be expected, but the most abominable sensuality and lewdness, and that their horrid enormities will abound?

This was the character of the Gentiles; but these Christians must distinguish themselves from such Gentiles; Ye have not so learned Christ, v. 20. It may be read, But ye are not so; ye have learned Christ. The meaning is, 'Ye have not so learned Christianity,—the doctrines of Christ, and the rules of life prescribed by Him. Not so, as to do as others do. If so be, or since, that ye have heard Him, v. 21. have heard his doctrine preached by us, and have been taught by Him, inwardly and effectually. As the truth is in Jesus. This may be understood two ways; either, 1. 'Ye have been taught the real truth, as held forth by Christ Himself, both in his doctrine and in his life.' Or, 2. Thus, 'The truth has

V. 14—16. This shows the intent, tendency, and duties of the several stations of Christians in the church; and if these were more attended to the resemblance would be more manifest, and the effects unspeakably beneficial. SCOTT.

(14.) Tossed, &c.] The apostle's life well accounts for this nautical metaphor! Ed. Wind.] 'Gust of wind; such are common in the Mediterranean.' Bl. Sleight.] Kubeia; lit. dice-playing, from kubos, [a cubc,] a die or cubic tessera, or psephos. So, as dice-players, &c. were usually cheats, it came to denote craft or treachery, such as loading the dice, &c. It also refers perhaps to keeping the minds of the taught in an unsettled state, by either promulgating, or suppressing, or altering doctrines at pleasure, just as dicers change the places and faces of the dice as they please. See Morus and Bl. Ed.

(16.) 'As from the head [the grand repository of nervous matter and vital energy] all the other parts of the body derive life, vigor, and motion, so that each by their mutual ministry assist one another; so the universal body of Christ is so conjoined by that virtue which it derives from Christ as its Head, that each part may in its own way lend its vigor to another, by which the whole may grow and thrive. Ros. According, &c.] By the operation or working of each individual part or member, according to the measure (of its power). For, as Ros. obs., Christ does not carry forward his congregation Himself without the interven-

tion of man, but by ministers, whose cooperation He employs, and whom love should prompt to exert their whole powers, to bring about what He willeth, namely, the building up of Himself (i. e. the body) in love.' Bl.

V. 17. Other, &c.] This shows us the apostle's judgment concerning the Gentile world at large. SCOTT.

(17.) 'Paul depicts that voluntary, self-engendered and insatiable sensuality, [and animalism,] which blunted all the feelings of virtue, deadened the force of conscience, and darkened the understanding and moral perceptions, so that they neither knew nor cared aught for the living God.' Bl.

V. 20—24. (22) The old man.] That sinful nature derived from fallen Adam, and which is corrupt in all its principles and affections, according to those various inordinate desires of worldly things, which mock men's expectations, deceive their souls, and make them deceivers of each other; and which may therefore be called 'deceitful lusts,' or 'lusts of deceit.' The 'corrupt conversation,' including doubtless the bad habits of the heathen, is distinguished from 'the old man,' or the depraved nature, whence all these evils spring. The root would still remain, after the converts had 'put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man;' and this would render watchfulness and diligence needful to the end, till 'the body of sin should be abolished.' Ja. 1: [393]



23 And be renewed <sup>w</sup> in the spirit of your mind ;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created <sup>x</sup> in righteousness and <sup>y</sup> true holiness.

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth <sup>z</sup> with his neighbor : for we <sup>a</sup> are members one of another.

26 Be ye angry and sin not ; let <sup>b</sup> not the sun go down upon your wrath :

27 Neither <sup>c</sup> give place to the devil.

28 Let him that stole steal no more : but rather let <sup>d</sup> him labor, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to <sup>e</sup> give to him that needeth.

<sup>w</sup> Ro. 12:2. <sup>x</sup> Ga. 6:15. <sup>y</sup> or, holiness of <sup>z</sup> Ec. 7:9. <sup>a</sup> Ro. 12:5. <sup>b</sup> Ec. 7:9. <sup>c</sup> Ja. 4:7. <sup>d</sup> Ac. 20:35. <sup>e</sup> or, distribute.

made such an impression on *your* hearts, in your measure, as corresponds to the exemplification of it in Him.' The truth of Christ *then* appears in its beauty and power, when it appears as in Jesus.

Another branch of the *general* exhortation follows, v. 22—24. Here the apostle expresses himself in metaphors taken from garments. The principles, habits, and dispositions of the soul must be changed, before there can be a saving change of the life.

(1.) *The old man* must be put off. The corrupt nature is called *a man*, because, like the human body, it consists of divers parts, naturally supporting and strengthening one another. It is *old*, as derived from Adam, and brought into the world with us. It is said to be *corrupt*, for sin in the soul is the corruption of its faculties, and tends to destruction. *The deceitful lusts*, are sinful inclinations and desires, which promise happiness, but beget misery, and betray to destruction, if not subdued and mortified. Their *former conversation*, is their state of unregeneracy and heathenism.

(2.) *The new man* must be put on. By the *new man*, is meant the new nature, the new creature, which is actuated by a *new* principle, even regenerating grace, enabling a

man to lead a *new* life ; that life of righteousness and holiness which Christianity requires. This new man *is created*, or produced, out of confusion and emptiness, by God's almighty power, whose workmanship it is, truly excellent and beautiful. *After God* ; in imitation of Him, and in conformity to that grand Exemplar and Pattern. The loss of God's image on the soul, was both the sinfulness and misery of man's fallen state ; and that resemblance which it bears to God, is the beauty, the glory, and the happiness, of the new creature. *In righteousness* toward men, including all the duties of the *second table* ; and *in holiness* toward God, signifying a sincere obedience to the commands of the *first table* : true holiness, in opposition to the outward and ceremonial holiness of the Jews. We are said to *put on* this new man, when, in the use of all God's appointed means, we are endeavoring after this divine nature, this new creature.

This is the more *general* exhortation to purity and holiness of heart and life. The apostle proceeds to some things more *particular*.

[1.] Take heed of lying, and be ever careful to speak the truth, v. 25. Of this sin the heathens were very guilty, affirming that a profitable lie was better than a hurtful truth ; therefore the apostle exhorts them to cease from lying, from everything that is contrary to truth. It is the character of God's people, that they are *children who will not lie*, who dare not lie, who hate and abhor lying. All who have grace, make conscience of speaking the truth, and would not tell a deliberate lie for the greatest gain and benefit to themselves. The reason here given for veracity, is, *We are members one of another*. Truth is a debt we owe one another : and if we love one another, we shall not deceive or lie one to another. We belong to the same society or body, which falsehood and lying tend to dissolve : therefore we should avoid that, and speak truth. Observe, Lying is a very great sin ; a peculiar violation of the obligations Christians are under, and very injurious and hurtful to Christian society.

[2.] 'Take heed of anger and uncontrolled passions. *Be ye angry and sin not,*' v. 26. This is borrowed from the LXX tr. of Ps. 4:4. where we render it, *Stand in*

*awe, and sin not*. Here is an easy concession ; for as such we should consider it rather than as a command. *Be ye angry*. This we are apt enough to be ; but we find it difficult enough to observe the restriction, *and sin not*. If we would be angry, and not sin, (says one,) we must be angry at nothing but sin : and we should be more jealous for the glory of God, than for any interest or reputation of our own. One great and common sin in anger, is, to suffer it to burn into wrath, and then to let it rest ; therefore we are here cautioned against that : *'let not the sun go down upon your wrath*. If it burn into wrath, see that you suppress it speedily.' Observe, Though anger in itself is not sinful, yet there is the utmost danger of its becoming so, if it be not carefully watched, and speedily suppressed. Therefore, though anger *may come into* the bosom of a wise man, *it rests only in the bosom of fools*. *Neither give place to the devil, v. 27*. they who persevere in sinful anger and in wrath, let the devil into their hearts, and suffer him to gain on them, till he bring them to malice, mischievous machinations, &c. *'Neither give place to the calumniator, or the false accuser ;'* (so some read the words ;) *'let your ears be deaf to whisperers, tale-bearers, and slanderers.'*

[3.] We are here warned against the sin of stealing, and advised to honest industry, and to beneficence, v. 28. It is a caution against all manner of wrong-doing, by force or fraud : and not only must we not steal, but we must *labor, working with our hands the thing that is good*. Idleness makes thieves ; so Chrysostom. They who will not work, and are ashamed to beg, expose themselves greatly to temptations, to thievery, [over-reaching, &c.] Men should therefore *be diligent and industrious*, not in any unlawful way, but in some honest calling. *Working the thing which is good*. But there is another reason why a man ought to be industrious ; *That he may have to give to him that needeth*. Observe, even those who get their living by their labor, should be charitable out of their little to those who are disabled for labor. Observe, further, Those alms that are likely to be acceptable to God, must not be the produce of unrighteousness, but of honesty and industry.

[4.] We are here warned against *corrupt communication* ; and directed to that which

19—21. 1 Pet. 1:13—21. 2:1—3. If 'the old man,' means no more than *bad habits*, as many explain it, how does it come to pass, that these bad habits have always been so *general*, not to say *universal* ; while *good habits* have been exceedingly rare, if any instances can be adduced, which never yet have been, in a satisfactory manner ? We never read of *bad habits*, in any degree, among holy angels : nor would they have been heard of among men, if they had not apostatized from God, and become 'dead in sin,' and 'by nature children of wrath.' 2:1—3.—The state of the unconverted Gentiles is indeed here particularly adverted to: yet it is most certain, that the nature of the unregenerate (nay, their practice, also, except in respect of gross idolatry, and some of its abominable appendages) is similar, even in those who are called Christians.

(21.) *Doddr., Mackn., Ros., and Bl.*, infer, 'that there was a certain manner of teaching and of learning the Christian doctrine not quite inconsistent with such irregularities ; and that this may glance, like some other passages in the apostle's writings, at those Christian teachers, who took too little care to inculcate the duties of practical morality. Now this we know,' adds *Bl.*, 'was much the case at Corinth ; and it seems to have been so, though in a less degree, at Ephesus. And no wonder, since the two cities were supposed to be the most vicious and depraved of any in the world. Indeed, the morals of the Ionians were almost proverbially depraved. See *Mitscherlich*, on Horace, *Carin.* 3, 6, 21.'

(22.) *Deceitful.* For lusts delude the judgment and conscience ; lulling them, while the consciousness is occupied with present pleasure, ending in disappointment and shame on the review, when consciousness returns to seat itself in the judgment. But this right feeling is less and less clear, till vice and sin comes to be thought harmless, even that which will at length destroy. *Comp. He. 3:13.*

(23.) 'Mind (*nous*) may be put for the whole soul, and *pneuma* (the Spirit) for its intellectual and leading faculty [faculties], on which the Spirit of God might chiefly operate, yet not exclusive of some influence on the inferior powers.' *Doddr.* (24) *After.* I. e. after the example of, (Col. 3:9.) or in conformity to the will of God. *Righteousness* means duties to men ; *holiness*, those to God. *Sec Bl.*

V. 25. 'Whitby hath well shown, in his note on this passage, that several of the best of the heathen moralists thought lying might in many cases be justified : and I wish that none but heathens had ever taught so loose and dangerous a doctrine.' *Doddr.* *Scott.* See *Wayland's* *Elts. Mor. Science.*

V. 26, 27. Great stress seems, in many places, to be laid on this, [the relief of the sick and aged,] which, in a very striking manner, shows to what an extent charitable communications, from the substance or gains of Christians, in every station of life, for the relief of their brethren, and of others, for Christ's sake, ought to be carried. But alas ! those who are not eager to amass wealth, as most in these days are, spend very far too much [*time and money*] on themselves and their families, to spare a due proportion for beneficent purposes : and a degree of liberality, even far beneath the scriptural and primitive standard, is now regarded rather as a prodigy to be wondered at, than an example to be imitated. Acts 2:44—47. 9:36—43. P. O. 32—43. *Notes*, 11:27—30. *Scott.* See 'Mammon,' a Prize Essay. *Ed.*

(27.) *Devil.* 'Strange, that almost all the recent interpreters, as *Ros.* and *Schl.*, should take *diabolos* to mean the *adversary*, the *calumniator*, and the former call it the more natural and easy sense ! *Such* indeed I grant it would have been to a *Pagan*, who had accidentally taken up the N. T. ; but not to a *Christian*, who has learnt from the sacred writings, of the existence of a being who, by himself and his agents, tempts men to the commission of sin, and who is ever ready to assault us when the more violent passions of any kind are in commotion. Besides, the sense which those contrs. here introduce is not only *harsh*, but very rarely found in Scripture, and scarcely ever with the article, as here. Even *Koppe* (sufficiently prone to innovation) admits that the common interpretation is supported by the *tenor of Scripture*, which represents Satan as the author and exciter of all bad passions. And from *Schoettzen's* note, it appears, the Rabbins thought violent anger was excited by the devil.' *Bl.* Give not place then to the devil, by over-indulgence of any propensity ; lest, being thus a recipient of hellish influences, and, by habitual indulgence of evil, fitted for hell, you go to his and your own place there ! *Id.*

(28.) *Theft* is generally, especially when on a *small scale*, the vice of the poorer classes, among whom most of the Christians were then gathered. It rises from an over-active propensity to acquire, or from want, occasioned by indulged appetite or idleness ; in either case, the best remedy is that the apostle suggests, habitual *industry*, a busy head and busy hands ; 'for Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do ;' and charity to others, that selfish lusts may be denied, and *better* impulses become habitual. *Ed.* 'Among all those, who, within my knowledge, have appeared to become sincerely penitent and reformed, I recollect only a single lazy man : and this man became industrious from the moment of his apparent, and, I doubt not, real conversion.' *DWIGHT.*



29 Let <sup>f</sup> no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good <sup>g</sup> to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve <sup>h</sup> not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed <sup>i</sup> unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all <sup>j</sup> bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and <sup>k</sup> evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice :

32 And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving <sup>l</sup> one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

### CHAP. V.

<sup>2</sup> After general exhortations, to love, 3 to flee fornication, 4 and all uncleanness, 7 not to converse with the wicked, 15 to walk warily, and to be 18 filled with the Spirit, 22 he descendeth to the particular duties, how wives ought to obey their husbands, 25 and husbands ought to love their wives, 32 even as Christ doth his church.

**B**E ye therefore followers of God, as dear children ;

2 And walk in <sup>a</sup> love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given

f Col. 4:6. h Is. 63:10. k Tit. 3:2.  
g or, to edify profitably. i c. 1:13,14. l Ma. 11:25,26.  
j Col. 3:8. a Jn. 13:34.

is useful and edifying, v. 29. It may be taken in general, for all that, on the one hand, which provokes the lusts and passions of others ; and all that, on the other, which is good to the use of edifying. The great use of speech is, to edify those with whom we converse. Observe, It is the great duty of Christians to take care that they offend not with their lips ; and that they improve discourse and converse, as much as may be, for the good of others.

[5.] Here is another caution against wrath and anger ; and further advice to mutual love, and kindly dispositions towards each other, v. 31, 32. By bitterness, wrath, and anger, are meant violent, inward resentment and displeasure against others : and by

PRACT. OBS. 'The mind that was in Christ' will teach those who suffer for his sake, to be more desirous that Christians, and those especially with whom they are peculiarly connected, should 'walk worthy of their vocation,' than of their own exemption from the cross : and though we can do nothing towards our own justification ; yet, by the grace of God, we may do a great deal for the honor of the Gospel, and the benefit of mankind. If all who profess the Gospel did indeed thus 'endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,' what a different face would the church of God assume ! But alas ! how grievously do the remaining ignorance, bigotry, and disproportionate zeal about comparative trifles, even in good men ; the designing ambition and furious passions of bad men ; and the artifices of the devil, defeat the endeavors of those who labor for peace ; and perpetuate, yea, multiply, divisions and dissensions among those who are agreed in the great essentials of Christianity ! Let us, however, persevere in seeking and praying for the peace of the church ; for 'blessed are the peace-makers ;' and, whatever eager zealots may say of us, we shall, in so doing, 'be called the children of God.'—While Christians should be exhorted to value the faithful ministry of the Gospel, as the precious gift of Christ, and the principal means of salvation to their souls ; 'pastors and teachers,' however distinguished, should be reminded of the grand purpose for which they were appointed, even 'for the perfecting of the saints, and for the work of the ministry,' and not for the emolument or reputation or rank in society connected with it ; and for the edification of the body of Christ, not for the indulgence of themselves, or the advancement of their families to wealth or preferment, with the treasures or patronage intrusted to their stewardships, that with them they may promote the cause of true religion, and of which stewardship they must at length give a strict account.—We should indeed 'hold the truth with firmness,' but it should also be 'in love ;' otherwise zeal for orthodoxy may dictate such violent measures, as shall more distract the church, and injure the cause of Christ, than false teachers themselves could do. Let all ministers 'testify in the Lord,' with all solemnity and authority, against unchristian tempers and practices, as well as against false doc-

V 30—32. When a father has done everything proper for the benefit of his son, he 'is grieved' if his son acts in an unbecoming manner ; and, consequently, will not be free and cheerful in his company ; but will either shun him, or frown on him.—As a kind and wise Friend, the Holy Spirit watched over the Ephesian converts for their good, with infinite condescension and love : all their hope, wisdom, strength, and joy were from Him ; and the only return He required, was a ready compliance with his holy suggestions, and a watchfulness against everything of a contrary tendency. None but true believers, persons really partaking of the regenerating, sanctifying Spirit of Christ, could feel the energy of this exhortation.

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clamor, big words, loud threatenings, and other intemperate speeches, by which bitterness, wrath, and anger, do vent themselves. Christians should not entertain these vile passions in their hearts, nor be clamorous with their tongues. Evil-speaking signifies, all railing, reviling, and reproachful speeches, against such as we are angry with. And by malice we are to understand, that rooted anger which prompts men to design and to do mischief to others.

The contrary to all this follows ; Be ye kind one to another. This implies the principle of love in the heart, and the outward expression of it, in an affable, humble, courteous behavior and carriage. It becomes the disciples of Jesus to be kind one to another ; as those who have learned, and would teach, the art of obliging. Tender-hearted ; merciful, and having a tender sense of the distresses and sufferings of others, so as to be quickly moved to compassion and pity. Forgiving one another. Occasions of difference will happen among Christ's disciples ; and therefore they must be placable, and ready to forgive ; therein resembling God Himself, who for Christ's sake hath forgiven them, and that more than they can forgive one another. Now,

We may observe, concerning all these particulars the apostle has insisted on, that they belong to the second table ; whence Christians should learn the strict obligations they are under to the duties of the second table ; and that he who does not conscientiously discharge them, can never fear or love God in truth and in sincerity, whatever He may pretend to.

In the midst of these exhortations and cautions the apostle interposes that general one, And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, v. 30. By looking to what precedes, and to what follows, we may see what it is that grieves the Spirit of God. In the vs. before it is intimated, that all lewdness and filthiness, lying, and corrupt communications that stir up filthy appetites and lusts, grieve the Spirit of God. In what follows it is intimated, that those corrupt passions of bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil-speak-

ing, and malice, grieve this good Spirit. Not that that blessed Being could properly be grieved or vexed, as we are : but it is spoken after the manner of men ; and it is a great good reason why we should not grieve Him, because by Him we are sealed unto the day of redemption, the resurrection-day, when God's people will be delivered from all sin and misery, and their full and complete happiness commence. All true believers are sealed to that day. God has distinguished them from others, having set his mark on them : He gives them the earnest and assurance of a joyful and a glorious resurrection : and the Spirit of God is the Seal. Wherever that blessed Spirit is, as a Sanctifier, He is the Earnest of all the joys and glories of the redemption-day ; and we should be undone, should God take away his Holy Spirit from us.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. Here we have the exhortation to mutual love, or Christian charity. 'Because God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you, (4 : 32.) therefore be ye followers of God, or imitators of Him ;' for so the word signifies. Pious persons should imitate the God whom they worship, as far as He has revealed Himself as imitable by them. This puts a great honor on practical religion, that it is the imitation of God. Especially should they resemble Him in his love, and in his pardoning goodness. As children usually resemble their parents in the lineaments and features of their faces, and in the dispositions and qualities of their minds ; so the character we bear of God's children, obliges us to resemble Him, especially in his love and goodness, in his mercy and readiness to forgive. And they only are God's dear children, who imitate Him in these. It follows, And walk in love, v. 2. This Godlike grace should conduct and influence our whole conversation, which is meant by walking in it ; and we should be more careful to give proof of the sincerity of our love one to another. As Christ also hath loved us. Here the apostle directs us to the example of Christ, in whom we have an instance of the most free and gen-

trines ; and insist on it, that believers must not 'walk as others do,' who are Gentiles in conduct, though Christians in name : for the difference between heretofore and henceforth, is of immense importance in this grand concern. Indeed, there are many professors of evangelical truth, who have so perversely received the Gospel, as not to be convinced of the necessity of mortifying their corrupt nature and its deceitful lusts, of being 'renewed in the spirit of their minds,' and of 'putting on the new man, which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness !'—Those who most carefully watch over and examine themselves, will most clearly perceive the extreme difficulty of adhering to exact 'truth' and sincerity in all their conversation, and of avoiding every kind and degree of falsehood : they also find it very difficult to feel and express anger, on the most justifiable occasions, and to perform the duties of parents, masters, or ministers, without falling into sin, and dishonoring their profession.—Even exact and scrupulous honesty in all things is far more uncommon, than is generally imagined ; nay, many truly pious persons do things not strictly just, for want of being instructed and admonished after the apostolical manner. But, though thieves and robbers are as welcome, when they come to the Savior by penitent faith, as their more moral neighbors, yet, therefore they must 'steal no more,' whatever hard labor may be necessary for a mean, frugal, and honest livelihood. What then shall we think of those professed Christians, who grow rich and live in luxury, by various frauds and oppressions, by excessive profits, [speculations which hazard other men's property,] smuggling, and other acts of injustice, without restitution or amendment ! And if the poor laborer ought to 'give to him that needeth,' what shall we think of those, whose large revenues, and immense expenses or hoardings, are far out of all proportion to their penurious and scanty alms ?—When we in any degree or respect neglect these rules, we 'grieve the Holy Spirit of God,' lose our comfort and evidence, and even bring our state into doubt and suspicion. Let us then watch against all the evils here stated, and against all anger and malice, and every violent and malignant temper ; and in all things copy diligently the loving example of our God and Savior.

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NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. Not that the Father could take pleasure in beholding the intense sufferings 'of his beloved Son,' in whom 'his soul delighted,' on their own account ; but his justice and holiness were thus glorified, and a way was opened for the honorable exercise of mercy, towards those who deserved his awful vengeance, and in this display of his glory He was well pleased.—Compassion for the deservedly miserable, condescension to the mean and vile, a readiness to forgive injuries, self-abasement, self-denial, and enlarged beneficence, all in full perfection, were most illustriously manifested in that love, which is here proposed as the pattern for our imitation.

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(2.) Walk. 'Peripatete : it expresses habit, perpetual tenor of life.'



himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a <sup>b</sup> sweet-smelling savor.

3 But <sup>c</sup> fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once <sup>d</sup> named among you, as becometh saints;

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which <sup>e</sup> are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that <sup>f</sup> no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who <sup>g</sup> is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive <sup>h</sup> you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of <sup>i</sup> disobedience.

b 1 Co. 1:9      e Ro. 1:28.      g Col. 3:5.  
c 1 Co. 6:13.    f He. 13:4.      h Je. 29:8,9.  
1 Th. 4:3.      Re. 22:15.      i or, unbelief.  
d ver. 12.

erous love that ever was; that great love wherewith He hath loved us. The apostle designedly enlarges on the subject; for what can yield us more delightful matter for contemplation than this? Christ gave Himself to die for us; and the death of Christ was the great sacrifice of atonement. Some observe, that the sin-offerings were never said to be of a sweet-smelling savor: but this is said of the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. As He offered Himself with a design to be accepted of God, so God did accept, was pleased with, and appeased by, that sacrifice.

V. 3—20. These vs. contain a caution against all manner of uncleanness, with proper arguments and remedies proposed: some further cautions are added, and other duties recommended. *Fornication* is folly committed between unmarried persons. *All uncleanness* includes all other sorts of filthy lusts, which were too common among the Gentiles. Or *covetousness*; which, being

thus connected, and mentioned as a thing which should not be *once named*, some understand of unnatural lusts; while others take it, in the common sense, for an immoderate desire of gain, or an insatiable love of riches, which, estranging the affections from God, is spiritual adultery. Now these sins must be dreaded and detested, in the highest degree. *Let it not be once named among you*, never in a way of approbation, and without abhorrence, *as becometh saints*, holy persons, who are separated from the world, and dedicated unto God. The apostle not only cautions against the gross acts of sin, but against what some may be apt to make light of, and think to be excusable. *Neither filthiness, v. 4.* By which may be understood all wanton and unseemly gestures and behavior. *Nor foolish talking*, obscene and lewd discourse; or, more generally, such vain discourse as betrays much folly and indiscretion, and is far from edifying the hearers. *Nor jesting.* The Greek word is the same that Aristotle, in his *Ethics*, uses for pleasantness of conversation, making it a virtue. And there is, no doubt, an innocent and inoffensive jesting, which we cannot suppose the apostle here forbids. Some understand it, of such scurrilous and abusive reflections as tend to expose others, and to make them ridiculous. This is bad enough: but the context seems to restrain it to such pleasantry of discourse as is filthy and obscene; which he may also design by that *corrupt*, or putrid and rotten, communication he speaks of, *ch. 4:29.* Of these things he says, *They are not convenient*: the meaning is, they do not become Christians, and are very unsuitable to their profession and character. Christians are allowed to be cheerful and pleasant; but they must be merry and wise. The apostle adds, *but rather giving of thanks.* Note, 1. We should take all occasions to render thanksgivings and praises to God for his kindness and favors to us. 2. A grateful reflection on the grace and goodness of God to us, with a design to excite our thankfulness to Him, is proper to refresh and delight the Christian's mind, and to make him cheerful. Dr.

Hammond thinks gracious, pious, religious discourse in the general may be meant; by way of opposition to what the apostle condemns. If men abounded more in good and pious expressions, they would not be so apt to utter ill and unbecoming words. To fortify us against the sins of uncleanness, &c. the apostle urges several arguments, and prescribes several remedies, in what follows.

I. He urges several arguments. As,

1. Consider that these are sins which shut persons out of heaven, *v. 5.* They knew it, being informed of it by the Christian religion. By a *covetous man*, some understand a lewd, lascivious libertine, who indulges himself in those vile lusts which were accounted the certain marks of a heathen and an idolater. Others understand it in the common acceptance of the word; and such a man is an idolater, because there is spiritual idolatry in the love of this world. A covetous man makes a god of his money; sets those affections upon it, and places that hope, confidence, and delight, in worldly good, which should be reserved for God only. *Heaven* is here described as a kingdom, (as frequently elsewhere,) with respect to its eminency and glory, its [order,] fulness, sufficiency, &c. In this kingdom, the saints and servants of God have an inheritance; for it is the inheritance of the saints in light. But those who are impenitent, and allow themselves, either in the lusts of the flesh or the love of the world, are not Christians indeed, and so belong not to the kingdom of grace, nor shall they ever come to the kingdom of glory. Let us then be excited to be on our guard against those sins which would exclude from heaven.

2. These sins bring the wrath of God on those who are guilty of them, *v. 6.* 'Let none flatter you, as though such things were not very provoking and offensive to God; or, as though you might indulge yourselves in them, and yet escape with impunity. These are *vain words.*' Observe, They who flatter themselves and others with hopes of impunity in sin, do but cheat. By *children of disobedience*, may be meant the Gentiles,

*Koppe* here remarks on the constant and perpetual opinion of men, that no sure hope of pardon could be conceived without the death of a victim. Also, that *prophora* [offering], and *thusia* [sacrifice], are not synonymous; the former, (which answers to the Heb. *michh*, [note, Lev. 1:2.] being used of any gifts offered to procure the favor of the Deity, unbloody sacrifices; the latter, (which answers to the Heb. *zchh*), being used solely of victims, as Heb. 10:3. Dr. *Bates* thinks, that the *prophora* refers to the *peace-offering*; and the *thusia* to the *sin-offering*. Be that as it may, they seem conjoined (as *Doddr.* obs.) to signify the completeness of the sacrifice. *Sweet-smelling.* [Grateful, acceptable: and this was all the phrase came to signify; it was derived (so *Koppe*) from the opinion, that the Deity was Himself present at the sacrifice, and ate the flesh, or inhaled the fumes and odor. Hence, the most fragrant sacrifice was deemed the most acceptable.] BL.

V. 3, 4. The degree, in which 'fornication,' in particular, and other kinds of licentiousness, were practised and even allowed, nay, excused or vindicated, not only by poets, but even by grave philosophers of the Gentiles, can hardly be conceived by those who are not conversant with their writings. The exhortation, therefore, as it respects these vices, needs little comment; but many learned men maintain, that the word rendered 'covetousness,' means an insatiable craving after more and more of these sensual indulgences. Now, it cannot be denied, that the word sometimes has that sense, yet it can hardly be supposed, that the apostle would, in so general a way, have added to his warning against fornication, the mention of that 'uncleanness with greediness,' which he before had stated, as the excess of Pagan blindness, and hardness of heart, 4:17—19. On the other hand, can it be thought, that 'covetousness,' should here, and in all other exhortations of a similar nature, which the apostle addressed to the churches, be almost if not entirely overlooked? For those who explain the word in this text, of *greediness* in lewdness, put the same construction on it in many other places where it occurs.—No doubt 'covetousness,' or the eager desire of gain, whether to hoard, or to support extravagance, is as contrary to vital Christianity as the grossest sensualities, though more plausible and not so easily defined. It also supplies the means, in many cases, of silencing or softening the reproofs of those, who would fruitfully protest against 'fornication,' and even prosecute the offenders with the censures of the church.—The clause, 'Let it not once be named, &c.' may only mean, 'Let it not be said, that a Christian is guilty of such crimes.' But, if understood of the discourse, in which the 'naming' licentious practices, in a manner too common, tends to pollute the imaginations, or inflame the passions of the hearers; IT CANNOT BE DOUBTED, THAT THE CONVERSATION OF THOSE, WHO SPEAK AS IF EVERYTHING WAS VALUABLE IN PROPORTION AS MONEY CAN BE GOT OR SAVED BY IT, CORRUPTS THE JUDGMENT AND PRINCIPLES OF MEN, THOUGH IN ANOTHER WAY, YET AS EFFECTUALLY AS OBSCENE DISCOURSE. It seems also to be with pe-

culiar propriety, that the apostle joined this odious vice with these others, more generally scandalous. Col. 3:5, 6. 1 Tim. 6:6—10. See

(3.) *Covetousness.* *Pleonexia*: all inordinacy of selfish propensity, whether to animal love, acquisition, alimentation, opposition, destruction, or malice. But Paul had in mind, probably, only the union of the first two; and *BL.* remarks, that 'as the word is joined with *illicit veneration*, most recent contrs. agree, that it denotes *prostitution*, [of all kinds; and few, the *Ed.* hopes, in this country, are aware how many kinds exist,] for *lucre's sake*; not, however, to the exclusion of all false methods of money-getting, as that of bawds, procurers, &c., which *Grot.* thinks, was a necessary admonition, [to the lower classes, especially,] of a disolute *trading* place, like Ephesus. Thus it would answer to the *aischrokerdeia*, [gains of shame,] of which Theophrastus gives so masterly a sketch.' Yet *BL.* inclines to think, with *Hilary, Est., Ham., Heins., Whit., Locke, Olearius, Franckius, Doddr.* &c., that the term here signifies intemperance, even in lawful indulgence; for if covetousness, or base gains be meant, why should Paul direct them not even to be 'named.' But the *Ed.* sees little force in this objection; for the phrase seems to inculcate such a horror, as will render them so disgusting, that they will not be made *topics* of conversation; which alone, as *BL.* remarks, 'is pernicious to morals,' and so it is better they should not be mentioned at all. Ed.

(4.) *Immodesty* in speech, or action, smuttiness, indecent talking, coarse jokes, scurrility, *double entendre*, &c., are forbidden. See *BL.* 'And that the Gr. should abound in such *euphemisms*, is a proof, as always, of corruption of manners.' Ed. *Convenient.* [Suitable, i. e. to our Christian calling, and our engagements as professors of a religion, which was especially promulgated to suppress all such abominations.] BLOOMF.

V. 5—7. The apostle here supposed his readers to know, that 'fornicators, unclean persons, and covetous men,' were out of the way to heaven. 'The covetous,' though often more favored than debauched characters, were, in the strictest sense, 'idolaters;' seeing they loved, trusted, and expected happiness from wealth, rather than from God; and sought to increase or secure their treasures, instead of seeking first his favor, image, and glory. Ex. 20:3. Ps. 10:2—11. 1 Tim. 3:3. 6:6—10, vs. 9, 10. Tit. 1:5—9. 1 Pet. 5:1—4. 2 Pet. 2:1—3, 12—14. They were not therefore truly converted; and, not being subjects of Christ's kingdom on earth, they could not be entitled to 'inherit' his heavenly kingdom. Some might indeed argue against this declaration; and, palliating these evils, or amusing themselves with speculations on the mercy of God and the freeness of salvation, might persuade others, that they were not absolutely inconsistent with a state of acceptance. But let none suffer any man to 'deceive them with vain words,' as these very crimes brought the wrath of God on 'the children of disobedience,' or those who persisted in unbelief, impenitence, and the allowed practice of sin.



7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light;

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

J. c. 2:11, 12. m Ga. 5:22, &c. o 1 Co. 5:9, 11.  
k 1 Th. 5:5. n Ro. 12:2. p 1 Ti. 5:20.  
l Ju. 12:36.

who disbelieved, and refused to comply with, and to submit themselves to the Gospel: or, more generally, all obstinate sinners, who will not be reclaimed, but are given over to disobedience. *The wrath of God comes upon* such, because of their sins; sometimes in this world, but more especially in the next. And dare we make light of that which will lay us under the wrath of God? Oh no, v. 7. 'Do not partake with them in their sins, that ye may not share in their punishment.' We partake with other men in their sins, not only when we live in the same sinful manner they do, and comply with their temptations and solicitations to sin, but when we encourage them in their sins, or do not prevent them, as far as in our power.

3. Consider what obligations Christians are under to live at another rate than such sinners do, v. 8. The apostle calls their former condition *darkness*, in the abstract, to express the great darkness they were in. They lived wicked and profane lives, being destitute of the light of instruction without, and of the illumination and grace of the

blessed Spirit within. A state of sin is a state of darkness. But the grace of God had produced a mighty change in their souls; *Now are ye light in the Lord*, savingly enlightened, by the Word and Spirit of God. *Children of light*, according to the Hebrew dialect, are those who are in a state of light, endued with knowledge and holiness. 'Now, being such, let your conversation be suitable to your condition and privileges, v. 10. examining and searching diligently what God has revealed to be his will; and making it appear that ye approve it by conforming yourselves to it.' Observe, We must not only dread and avoid what is displeasing to God, but inquire and consider what will be acceptable to Him; searching the Scriptures with this view; thus keeping at the greatest distance from these sins.

II. He prescribes some remedies.

1. We must bring forth the fruit of the Spirit, v. 9. This is expected from the children of light; that, being illuminated, they be also sanctified by the Spirit, and thereupon bring forth his fruit, which is in all goodness, an inclination to do good and to show mercy; and righteousness, which signifies justice in our dealings: or, more generally, all religion is goodness and righteousness. And in, and with, these must be truth, sincerity, and uprightness of heart.

2. We must have no fellowship with sin or sinners, v. 11. Sinful works are works of darkness; they come from the darkness of ignorance, they seek the darkness of concealment, and they lead to the darkness of hell. They are unfruitful; whatever profit is pretended, sin issues in the utter ruin and destruction of the impenitent sinner. We must therefore have no fellowship with these unfruitful works; not practise them ourselves, nor countenance them in others. If we share others' sin, we must expect to share their plagues. But we must rather reprove them; implying, that if we do not, we have fellowship with them. We must prudently, and in our places, witness against

the sins of others, and especially by abounding in the contrary duties. One reason given, is, v. 12. they are so filthy and abominable, that it is a shame to mention them, except in a way of reproof; much more must it be a shame to have any fellowship with them. *The things which are done of them in secret*. The apostle seems to speak here of the Gentile idolaters, and of their horrid mysteries, which abounded with detestable wickedness, and which none were permitted to divulge, on pain of death. Observe, A good man is ashamed to speak that which many wicked people are not ashamed to act: but, as far as their wickedness appears, it should be reprov'd by good men. There follows another reason for such reproof, v. 13. The meaning of which may be; 'All those unfruitful works of darkness which ye are called on to reprove, are laid open, and made to appear in their proper colors to the sinners themselves, by the light of doctrine, or of God's Word in your mouths, as faithful reprovers; or by that instructive light which is diffused by the holiness of your lives, and by your exemplary walk.' Observe, the light of God's Word, and the exemplification of it in a Christian conversation, are proper means to convince sinners of their sin and wickedness. It follows, *For whatsoever doth make manifest is light*; i. e. it is the light that discovers what was concealed before in darkness; and accordingly it becomes those who are children of light, who are light in the Lord, to discover to others their sins, and to endeavor to convince them of the evil and danger of them, thus shining as lights in the world. The apostle further urges this duty from the example of God or Christ, v. 14. as if he had said, 'In doing this, you will copy after the great God, who has set Himself to awaken sinners from their sleep, and to raise them from the death of sin, that they might receive light from Christ.' He saith. The Lord is constantly saying in his Word what is more particularly expressed, Is. 60: 1.

(Note, 2: 1, 2.)—Indeed, 'vain words,' of various kinds, by which men deceive themselves and each other, might be adduced, did our limits permit. The common principles which prevail, in countries professing Christianity, among those who think themselves far removed from an antinomian perversion of evangelical truth, dictate 'vain words,' which deceive vast multitudes; while they consider Christians as under a remedial law, which does not require that strictness, which the holy moral law of God does, that faith compensates for failures even in this relaxed obedience, and that they may safely indulge in such things, under the Gospel, as they must not venture on, if they were 'under the law.'—A smattering of vain philosophy, also, united with these common notions, leads numbers to conclude, that God will not punish men for indulging their natural inclinations, however irregularly. Many popular writers, of late, have spoken of 'fornication,' and even the seduction of an unmarried woman, as no crime, or, merely as 'indulging the most amiable weakness of human nature!' In these, and in various other ways, ingenious men, and even philosophers, by 'moral essays,' (so called,) in modern times, deceive millions 'with vain words;' and, no doubt, the grand deceiver of mankind had prophets of a similar stamp in ancient days.—5) *Whoremonger*.] 1 Co. 5:9—11. 6:9. 1 Ti. 1:10. He. 16. 13.4. Ro. 21:8. 22:15. See on Lu. 15:30.—The word being generally used of the most profligate fornicators, by no means conveys a just view of this most extensive and energetic decision, on the case of all, however varied, included in the term.—*Covetous man*.] *Pleonektēs*. See 1 Co. 5:10.—Why should *pleonektēs*, especially, be an idolater, if the word be nearly synonymous with  *pornos*?

SCOTT.

(5.) 'G. Sharpe, Dr. Wordsworth, and Bp. Middleton, would render, "Of Him who is the Christ and God." See Valpy.'

BLOOMER.

(6.) *Deceive*, &c.] 'It should appear (as *Theoph.* obs.), that some had suggested, that God issued heavy threatenings with respect to these comparatively light offences, but never meant to put them in execution. And I am the more ready to believe this, since I have known men, nay, even churchmen, of great ability and extensive learning, avow the same opinion. Where then is the wonder, that persons who, though converted, still retained the leaven of vain philosophy, should have so reasoned?' Bp. And since the human heart is still 'deceitful above all things,' where is the wonder, that hundreds of thousands at this day, in this land, should be brought to forget God's laws, under pretence of reverencing that love, which made those very laws, and maintain, that the soul that sinneth shall not die, and that the children of disobedience will, somehow, one day escape that wrath revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men? And that, too, because Christ died to support God's Law! Reader, let no man deceive you, by building for you so slender a parapet of vain words, upon the very edge of that precipice, which overhangs the bottomless abyss of God's and your enemies!

ED.

*Vain*.] 'I cannot agree with the recent comrs., who maintain, that Paul refers to those philosophers who thought there was nothing wrong in fornication, adultery, incest, sodomy, and egregious cheating. This is, I think, doing an injustice to the philosophers; who, whatever might be their practice, never held such opinions, except, perhaps, as to forni-

cation, in young men. But the truth is, that the apostle has reference to Christians, who wavered between the Gospel and heathenism.' Bp. This, however, seems not to be the whole truth; for, as *Dwight* remarks, after *Lardner*, on the heretic subtleties Paul was obliged again and again to combat, 'Heretics were, in the general, men of a curious and inquisitive turn of mind, and greatly indulged this disposition, which led them to speculate on many points of doctrine. . . . When the Scriptures were in some cases inconsistent with their notions, they were for making them yield to their philosophical opinions. Thus the simplicity of truth was banished, and endless divisions arose.' Tertullian, also, says, 'that heresies are derived from philosophy; and that secular wisdom is a rash (or fool hardy) interpreter of the divine nature, and disposition.' These observations (adds Dr. D.) 'are, with equal force and justice, applicable to heresies of modern days, [see note, above,] and those of the ancients; and few of either will be found to have arisen from any other source beside a philosophy, too proud, or too knowing, to submit implicitly to the testimony of God.' *Theol. Sermon*. 42. 'A little philosophy (well says *Bacon*) will make a man an atheist, but a great deal will make him a Christian.' *Sermon*. 3.

ED.

V. 8. *Ye were darkness*, &c.] What then is that 'light of nature,' of which some speak as sufficient, without the Gospel, to lead the Gentiles to heaven?—Surely, this one text ought for ever to silence the vain speculations of those, who, arguing from figurative expressions, concerning the state of sinners as asleep, nay, 'dead in sin,' not only object to, but absolutely condemn, as heresy, the most scriptural addresses and calls on them to repent and turn to God, and believe in Christ, and seek salvation!

SCOTT.

(8.) *Children of light*.] 'The studios of light and knowledge.' Bp.

V. 9. *Goodness*.] 'Of every kind, as regards man; righteousness, virtue to God and man; and truth seems to stand in the place of an adjective, qualifying both the preceding. See *Schl.* or *Wahl*.'

ED.

V. 12. *A shame to speak of*, &c.] 'See *Whitby's* note on this text, concerning the impure and abominable nature of some religions, nocturnal mysteries of the heathen. Its quotations, to which many might be added, plainly prove, that if (as the learned *Warburton* supposes) the lower sort of mysteries, among them, were first intended, by the magistrates, to impress the minds of the people with the belief and sense of future rewards and punishments, and the higher sort of them to instruct persons of more reflection and penetration than the rest, in the knowledge of the true God, and the other great principles of natural religion, they were, long before the apostle's time, greatly corrupted and degraded to the most detestable purposes; so that some persons in public characters, by no means remarkable for the purity of their own morals, thought it absolutely necessary, in order to prevent the most scandalous and profligate disorders, to prohibit their celebration. *Saurin* observes a sarcasm, seldom attended to; as if it were insinuated here, they are called *aporrheta*, things not to be spoken of; true, says Paul, they are properly so; things not too sacred, but too infamous to be mentioned.' *Doddr.* On the 'heathen mysteries,' see the controversy of *Warburton* and *Leland* in *Mackn.*, pref. to *Eph.*

ED.



13 But all things that are <sup>q</sup>reproved are made manifest <sup>r</sup>by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14 Wherefore <sup>s</sup>he saith, 'Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.'

[Practical Observations.]

15 See then that ye walk <sup>u</sup>circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are <sup>v</sup>evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what <sup>w</sup>the will of the Lord is.

18 And be not drunk <sup>x</sup>with wine, wherein is <sup>y</sup>excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

19 Speaking to yourselves in <sup>z</sup>psalms and hymns, and spiritual

q or, discovered. t Is. 60:1. w Jn. 7:17.  
r Jn. 3:20, 21. u Col. 4:5. x Lu. 21:34.  
s or, it. v Ps. 37:19. y Col. 3:16.

Or, Christ, by his ministers, who preach the everlasting Gospel, is continually calling on sinners to this effect; *Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.* The same thing in the main is designed by these different expressions; and they serve to remind us of the great stupidity and the wretched security of sinners; how insensible they are of their danger, and how unapt they naturally are to spiritual motions, sensations, and actions. When God calls on them to *awake*, and to *arise*, his meaning is, that they would break off their sins by repentance, and enter on a course of holy obedience; and He encourages them to do their utmost that way, by that gracious promise; *And Christ shall give thee light*; or, *Christ shall enlighten thee*, or, *shall shine upon thee.* He shall bring thee into a state of knowledge, holiness, and comfort; assisting thee with <sup>z</sup>is grace, and refreshing thy mind with joy

and peace here, and rewarding thee with eternal glory at length.' Observe, When we are endeavoring to convince sinners, and to reform them from their sins, we are imitating God and Christ, in that which is their great design throughout the Gospel. Some, indeed, understand this as a call to sinners and to saints: to sinners, to repent and turn; to saints, to stir up themselves to their duty. The former must arise from their spiritual death; and the other must awake from their spiritual deadness.

3. Another remedy against sin, is, circumspection, care, and caution, v. 15. This may be understood, either with respect to what immediately precedes; or else, we have here another remedy, or rather preservative from the before-mentioned sins; and this I take to be the design of the apostle; it being impossible to maintain purity and holiness of heart and life without great circumspection and care. *Walk circumspectly*; or, as the word signifies, accurately, exactly, in the right way: in order to which, we must be frequently consulting our rule, and the directions we have in the sacred oracles. *Not as fools*, who walk at all adventures, and who have no understanding of their duty, or of the worth of their souls; and through neglect, supineness, and want of care, fall into sin, and destroy themselves: *but as wise*; as persons taught of God, and endued with wisdom from above. Circumspect walking is the effect of true wisdom; but the contrary of folly. It follows, *redeeming the time*, v. 16. literally, *buying the opportunity.* It is a metaphor taken from merchants and traders, who diligently observe and improve the seasons for merchandise and trade. It is a great part of Christian wisdom to redeem the time. Our time is a talent given us by God for some good end, and it is misspent and lost when it is not employed according to his design. If we have lost our time heretofore, we must endeavor to redeem it, by doubling our diligence in doing our duty for the future. The reason given, is, *because the days are evil*: either by reason of the wickedness of those who dwell in them; or,

rather, 'as they are troublesome and dangerous times to you who live in them.' Those were times of persecution wherein the apostle wrote this: the Christians were in jeopardy every hour. When the days are evil, we have one superadded argument to redeem time; especially, because we know not how soon they may be worse. People are very apt to complain of bad times; it were well if that would stir them up to redeem time. 'Wherefore,' says the apostle, v. 17. 'because of the badness of the times, be ye not unwise, ignorant of your duty, and negligent about your souls; but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Study, consider, and further acquaint yourselves with, the will of God, as determining your duty.' Observe, Ignorance of our duty, and neglect of our souls, are evidences of the greatest folly; while an acquaintance with the will of God, and a care to comply with it, bespeak the best and truest wisdom.

The three following vs. warn against some other particular sins, and urge some other duties.

(1.) The sin of drunkenness, v. 18. a sin very frequent among the heathens, particularly on occasion of the festivals of their gods, and more especially in their *Bacchanalia*: when all manner of inordinate lusts were consequent upon it; therefore the apostle adds, *wherein*, or in which drunkenness, is excess. The word may signify *luxury* or *dissoluteness*; and certainly drunkenness is no friend to chastity, and purity of life; but it virtually contains all manner of extravagance, and [by exciting the neighboring propensities] transports men into gross sensuality, [violence,] and other vile enormities. Note, Drunkenness is a sin that seldom goes alone, is very provoking to God, and a great hindrance to the spiritual life. The apostle may design all such intemperance and disorder as are opposite to the sober and prudent demeanor he intends in his advice, to redeem the time.

(2.) Instead of being filled with wine, he exhorts them to be filled with the Spirit. The meaning is, that men should labor for a plentiful measure of the graces of the Spirit,

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-14. Wicked men follow the example of 'their father the devil,' and may be known as his progeny. *Jn. 8:41-47. 1 Jn. 3:7-10.* Surely, then, the 'beloved children of God' should imitate his holiness, and ought especially to walk in love with their brethren and their neighbors, and even with their enemies, 'as Christ hath loved them.' The perfection and obligations of this example are infinite: so that there is no kind or degree of self-denying, liberal, laborious, patient, or forgiving love, to which it will not direct and animate the grateful believer.—We should always keep in mind our character as Christians, and inquire, whether this or the other part of our conduct 'becometh saints,' the redeemed, sanctified, and devoted worshippers of God. Our social intercourse ought to be conducted entirely in subserviency to mutual improvement; which will best be promoted by declaring the loving-

kindness of the Lord, and celebrating his praises.—The holy converse and conduct of a consistent Christian is of the nature of light: it manifests that the contrary conduct of others is inexcusable; and his very silence is often most emphatically eloquent and convincing. After the example therefore of prophets and apostles, we should call on those, who are 'asleep and dead' in sin, to 'awake and arise, that Christ may give them light;' and the Lord will employ such [living] warnings and invitations to 'quicken' with divine life some or many of the ignorant, the careless, the self-satisfied among our hearers, and so guide them into the ways of peace and salvation, even as He uses the further instructions of his ministers, to guide the converted in the paths of holy and joyful obedience. *Is. 42:13-17.* SCOTT.

V. 13. *Bl.* suggests, that Paul alluded to *Mat. 5:14.* as that Gospel was published long before; whether, with Owen, Townson, Tomline, Horne, we date it in 37 or 33; or, with others, in 41, 43, or 43. Ed.

V. 14. 'The ancients and most moderns think P. quotes *Is. 60:1-3.* (which is clearly alluded to in "*Christ shall give thee light*;"') or 26: 19. (to which *awake, arise from the dead*, may allude); or to both passages. *Surenhusius* fixes on *Is. 40:1, 2.* See his masterly work on the quotations from the O. in the N. T., upon which subject the two *Vitrinas*, and Owen, deserve to be consulted. BLOOMF.

V. 16. 'Few passages have more exercised comtrs., on few are opinions more various. Some ancient comtrs., and Grot., Ham., Whit., Locke, Mackn., expl. "using all prudent means to prolong your lives, because the days in which you live are evil, and therefore perilous, and such as will require much wisdom to preserve you from dangers." I. e. of the caution to be observed in avoiding persecution, that so they might draw out their time, as long as possibly they could, and not provoke their enemies to cut them off. *Comp. Dan. 2:8. See Whit.* "This," *Doddr.* adds, "was certainly their duty, and it had been well if the zeal of some primitive Christians had regarded the precept in this sense. But it expresses only part of that Christian diligence and prudence Paul directs and exhorts to." I could add to their examples of this sense of the Gr., but, though it seems countenanced by *Col. 4:5.* I cannot reconcile it with the context, which demands the sense (given by the ancient and many recent comtrs., as Ros., Kop., Slade), "using the opportunity we have, of living holily, righteously, and godly, in this present time, though it be evil and wicked, and this be especially arduous, on account of the peculiar trials under which we labor, from the temptations and persecutions to which we are exposed." I think, too, with *Doddr.*, that there is also allusion to the time lost in heathen life." Id.

V. 18. *Drunk.*] 'A vice the Greeks, both Asiatic and European, were proverbial for: whence the phrase to *Grecise*, i. e. to get drunk.' See *Bl.* Ed.—'Probably there is allusion to those dissolute ceremonies [398]

called the *Bacchanalia*, in honor of the god of wine. While they continued, men and women made it a point of religion to intoxicate themselves, and ran about the streets, fields, and vineyards, singing and shouting, in a wild and tumultuous manner; in opposition to which extravagant vociferations, the use of devout psalmody is with great propriety recommended. *Plato* somewhere tells us, that there was hardly a sober person to be found in the whole Attican territories, during the continuance of these detestable solemnities.' *DODDR.*—'A multitude of persons, who are not accounted drunkards, create disease and shorten their days, by what they term "a prudent use of ardent spirit." Let it therefore be engraven upon the heart of every man, that THE DAILY USE OF ARDENT SPIRIT, IN ANY FORM, OR DEGREE, IS INTEMPERANCE. Its effects are certain, and deeply injurious, though its results may be slow, and never ascribed to the real cause. This war upon the human constitution,—like the letting out of waters, by little and little, the breach widens, till life itself is poured out. If all the diseases which terminate in death, could speak out at the grave, or tell their origin on the coffin lid, we should witness the most appalling disclosures. Happy the man who shortens not his days, by what he may call "the prudent use of ardent spirit." DR. BECHER.

V. 19. 'Adverting (according to his custom) to the opposite vice, while he is inculcating any virtue, Paul means to admonish them, when, in society, they feel themselves elevated beyond ordinary conversation to give vent to this cheerfulness, not (as did the heathens) in dissolute scolia, or drinking catches, and such incentives to vice; but in reciting aloud to each other psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; or, when inclination and opportunity served, singing and playing on musical instruments, to such psalms, &c., in a heartfelt manner, to the honor of God. The verse has been strangely misunderstood.' BLOOMF.

*Speaking.*] 'Thought, by *Koppe*, synonymous with *singing*; I rather think it refers to the words being always recited (which would equally promote mutual edification, *Col. 3:16.*) by some, previously to being



songs, <sup>z</sup> singing and making melody in your <sup>a</sup> heart to the Lord;

20 Giving thanks <sup>b</sup> always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

22 <sup>c</sup> Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body.

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing <sup>d</sup> of water by the word:

27 That he might present <sup>e</sup> it to himself a glorious church, not having <sup>f</sup> spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

<sup>z</sup> Ps. 147:7.      <sup>c</sup> 1 Pe. 3:1, &c.      <sup>e</sup> Jude 24.  
<sup>a</sup> Ps. 57:7, 8.      <sup>d</sup> Col. 3:13, &c.      <sup>f</sup> Ca. 4:7.  
<sup>b</sup> Is. 63:7.      <sup>d</sup> Tit. 3:5.

that would fill their souls with holy joy, strength, and courage; which things sensual men expect their wine should inspire them with. Now, by this mean, being filled with the Spirit, we shall come to *understand what the will of the Lord is*; for the Spirit of God is given as a Spirit of wisdom and of understanding. And because those who are filled with the Spirit will be carried out in acts of devotion, and all the proper expressions of it, therefore the apostle exhorts,

(3.) To sing unto the Lord, *v. 19*. The Christian's joy should express itself in songs of praise. In these, Christians should *speaking to themselves* in their assemblies and

*sung.* Psalms.] *Psalmoi*: not simply David's, for then the article would have been used. *Kop.* understands, *any carmina*. The truth may lie between. It should seem they chiefly consisted of David's, the *thym*, but certainly comprehended other compositions, also, adapted (as they were) to instruments and voices, i. e. consisting of compositions in parts, accompaniments, &c. (as our *verse anthems* and *instrumental anthems*. 1 Cor. 14:26. See *Burney's Music. Dict.*) Of course, this included the *antiphonia*, or singing *alternatim*, as in cathedral services; which *Bp.* *Bull* thinks is denoted, by the *speaking to or with yourselves*. And, but for Col. 3:16. I should agree with him. That the *psalmoi* were thus performed, is also shown by a passage of Pliny, in his letter to Trajan, "Carmen quod Christo quasi Deo dicere *secum invicem*," [one to the other.] *Hymns.*] *Hymnoi*: probably, plainer compositions, (chiefly in praise of God,) both in words and set to music, and perhaps in *one part* (called *homophonia*) without *instrumental accompaniments* (so *Justin* says the Christians of his time sung). Some think, these were extemporaneous; but of this there is no proof, nor is it probable. That seems rather to apply to the *songs*; *Odoi*: which (and so the ancient and best modern contrs.) must signify, not merely *religious*, or spiritual and edifying, in opposition to the carnal and impure songs at the heathen festivals, &c. like the *scolia*, but *suggested by the Holy Spirit*. So *Zanchy* and *Ham*. These, perhaps, were sung by the person alone, like our *solo anthems*. Probably, too, (from Col. 3:16.) they were sometimes *recited*; and if so, the *spiritual songs* would be something like the strains of the Italian *Improvisatore*, in that sort of composition, half poetry, half prose, so characteristic of the oriental style; such are those of Elizabeth, Mary, and Zecharias, Lu. 1. None, probably, but those who had the spiritual *charisma* [gift] were allowed to sing: and the subjects were perhaps more diversified than those of the hymns and psalms; containing not only the praises of God, but (as *Zanchy*) exhortations, doctrines, prophecies, and, indeed, all religious subjects whatsoever. [May poetry and song one day be fully restored to their legitimate use, the beautiful and elevated expression of the best thoughts, and the best affections, in the best manner! En.]—There is no reason why the same routine should not be adopted also in *public worship*, and 1 Cor. 12:13, 14. renders it highly probable that it was, while this is placed beyond a doubt, by the passage of *Tertullian*: ut quisque, de Scripturis sanctis, (which must mean the Ps.) vel de proprio ingenio (which must refer to the *odoi*), potest, provocator in medium Deo canere. BLOOMF.

V. 20. *All.*] 'For his sparing mercies, Ps. 103:3, 4. his preventing mercies, Eph. 1:4. Ti. 1:2. his distinguishing and peculiar mercies, He. 2:16. for his common mercies and benefits daily bestowed, as well as his extraordinary favors; for past mercies, to be celebrated by annual festivals, Ex. 12:14, 17, 24. Le. 23:21. for the mercies we hope for, 1 Pet. 1:3, 4.

meetings together, for mutual edification. By *psalms* may be meant David's psalms, or such composes as were fitly sung with musical instruments; by *hymns*, such others as were confined to matter of praise, as those of Zacharias, Simeon, &c. *Spiritual songs* may contain a greater variety of matter, doctrinal, prophetic, historical, &c. Observe, here, Singing of psalms and hymns is a gospel-ordinance: an ordinance of God, and appointed for his glory. Though Christianity is an enemy to profane mirth, yet it encourages joy and gladness, and the proper expressions of these in the professors of it.

(4.) Thanksgiving is another duty the apostle exhorts to, *v. 20*. We are not *always* singing, but we should be *always giving thanks*; we should never want a *disposition* for this duty, as we never want *matter* for it. We should give thanks *for all things*; not only for *spiritual* blessings enjoyed, and *eternal* ones expected; but for *temporal* mercies, too: not only for our comforts, but also for our sanctified afflictions; not only for what immediately concerns *ourselves*, but for the instances of God's kindness and favor to *others* also. It is our duty in *everything* to give thanks *unto God and the Father*; to God as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father in Him; in whose *name* we are to offer up all our prayers and praises, and spiritual services, that they may be acceptable to God.

V. 21—33. Here the apostle begins his exhortation to the discharge of relative duties. As a general foundation for these, he lays down that rule, *v. 21*. Christians owe a mutual *submission* one to another, of which Paul was an example, who *became all things to all men*; and where there is this mutual condescension and submission, the duties of all relations will be the better performed. From *v. 22*. to the end, he speaks of the duties of husbands and wives; and he speaks of these in a Christian manner, setting the church as an example of the wife's subjection, and Christ as an example of love in husbands.

1. The duty prescribed to *wives*, is, *submission to their husbands in the Lord, v. 22*. which *submission* includes the honoring and the obeying them, and that from a principle of

love to them, and in compliance with God's authority, who has commanded it, which is doing it *as unto the Lord*. Or, it may be understood by way of similitude and likeness; that the sense may be, 'as, being devoted to God, you submit yourselves to Him.' The apostle assigns the reason of this submission, *v. 23*. The metaphor is taken from the head in the natural body, which, being the seat of reason, and the fountain of sense and motion, is more excellent than the rest of the body. God has given the man the pre-eminence, and a right to direct and govern by creation, and in that original law of the relation, *Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*. Whatever there is of uneasiness, in that, it is an effect of sin coming into the world. Generally, too, the man has, (what he ought to have,) a superiority in wisdom and knowledge. He is, therefore, the head; *even as Christ is the Head of the Church*. There is a resemblance of Christ's authority over the church, in that superiority and headship which God has appointed to the husband. The apostle adds, *and He is the Savior of the body*. Christ's authority is exercised over the church for the saving her from evil, and the supplying her with everything good for her. In like manner should the husband be employed for the protection and comfort of his spouse; and therefore, she should the more cheerfully subject herself to him. So it follows, *Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, v. 24*. with cheerfulness, with fidelity, with humility, *so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything*; everything lawful, and consistent with duty to God.

2. The duty of *husbands*, on the other hand, is, *to love their wives, v. 25*. for without this they would abuse their superiority and headship: and wherever this prevails as it ought to do, it will infer the other duties of the relation; it being a special and peculiar affection that is required in her behalf. The love of Christ to the church is proposed as an example of this; which love of his is a sincere, a pure, an ardent, and a constant affection; and that, notwithstanding the imperfections and failures she is guilty of. While such exemplars are offered to both, and so much required of each, neither has

for adverse as well as prosperous events, blessing Him *who doth thus give us warning*, Ps. 16:7. but chiefly for spiritual blessings. WHTBY. *God and, &c.*] *Doddr.* better tr. 'God, even the Father.' Ed.

V. 21. *Submit.*] 22, 24. 1:22. Lu. 2:51. See on Ro. 8:7. The kind and compliant conduct of the superior relations may be enjoined in an indirect way, but it cannot be directly meant by this word. Ex. 20:12. Sc.

(21.) 'Paul inculcates the order and subordination with which even private religious exercises, as well as public, should be conducted.' BL.

V. 22. 'Paul begins with the lower relations, for the duties of inferiors are commonly most apt to be objected to, as what are thought most difficult to be complied with; and where these are well and faithfully performed, the correspondent duties of superiors will be more readily attended to, and more effectually secured.' *Doddr.* Besides, inferiors are, in all communities, by far the most numerous class; and further, 'not many' great ones of the earth were then 'called.' Ed.

V. 23. 'The terms in the Greek and Latin, *anēr* and *vir*, neither very significant, seem to derive their application from the Heb. *aysh*, a man; though that language to express husband has another term, *baī*, which signifies *master*. So the German *che-ueiber*, a high man. The Germ. *weifer*, English, *wife*, probably signifies no more than *woman*, by way of eminence, like the Greek *gunē*; or perhaps it comes from *weiber*, to unite, conjoin, like the Latin *maritus* and *marita*. I know no term, in any language, so significant, or so expressive of the duties annexed to that state, as our *husband*, i. e. the *house-band*, or bond of the family.' BL.

V. 25. 'This love (as *Ros.* obs.) comprises every kind of *care* for the safety and welfare of the wife; and, in the case of Christ, as respects the church. It, however, imports something *more*, namely, an affectionate demeanor, and a magnanimous indulgence to the frailties of the weaker sex. So *Theoph.*' BL. Note, Mk. 10:6—9. En.

V. 26. *Washing.*] 'From original sin, Ac. 2:38. *Elsner* and *Doddr.*, not improbably, think the terms allude to the custom, Esth. 2:3. 9:12. Ez. 10:7—14.' BL.

V. 27. 'In this description,' says *Mackn.*, 'may not the perfections of the bodies of the saints be included, as well as the perfection of their minds?' *Spot*, &c.] 'How bright an idea does this give us of the grand plan and design of Christianity, to bring all the millions of which the church consists to such a state of perfect virtue and glory, that, when the penetrating eye of Christ, its great and holy Bridegroom, shall survey it, there shall not be one spot or wrinkle, or anything like it, in the least to impair its beauty or offend his sight! Where is such a scheme or thought to be found in the world, but in the New Testament, and those who have been taught by it?' *Doddr.* God grant the writer and reader to share this glorious consummation! Ed.



28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies; he that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it; even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular, so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

g 1 Co. 12:27. h Ge. 2:24. i 1 Co. 6:16.

reason to complain of the divine injunctions. The love God requires from the husband in behalf of his wife, will make an amends for the subjection He demands from her to her husband: and the prescribed subjection of the wife, will be an abundant return for that love of the husband which God has made her due.

The apostle, having mentioned Christ's love to the church, enlarges upon it; assigning the reason why He gave Himself for it, That He might sanctify it in this world, and glorify it in the next, v. 26, 27. The instrumental means whereby this is effected,

PRACT. OBS. V. 15—33. By the light of divine truth we should walk with accuracy and 'circumspection'; 'redeeming our time' from sloth, needless sleep or recreation, and impertinent visits, for useful and important purposes; because life, health, liberty, and the use of our senses and understandings, are at all times uncertain. The world also is full of misery and iniquity; and there is 'no work nor counsel... in the grave, whither we are going.' Let us then acquaint ourselves with the will of our Lord, attend to his work, and wait for his coming.—'filled with the Spirit.' Thus we shall be animated to 'speak to each other in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs;' instead of those vain songs, in praise of war, sensual love, hunting, drinking, and such like, which are in use among men called Christians, just as odes to Mars, Venus, Bacchus, or Diana were among the Gentiles. Let us at least, with the melody of a grateful heart, 'give thanks always, for all things, to our God and Father, in the name of his beloved Son: and thus we shall anticipate the joys of heaven, in the communion of the saints on earth.—If we all were 'subject one to another in the fear of God,' and according to our several relations in life, society would appear like a well organized body, and every individual would share the advantages.

V. 28—31. The apostle, having described in the most affecting manner 'the love of Christ to his church,' and the subjection of the church to his authority, here shows, that men ought to love their wives with a wise, holy, constant, and tender affection, in conformity to that perfect pattern: in everything seeking their comfort and advantage, sympathizing in their sorrows, bearing with their infirmities, and endeavoring to promote their salvation and sanctification.—What an affecting view does this give of Christ's love to his people! 'He loves, and nourishes, and cherishes them,' as a man does his own body! SCOTT.

(28.) 'Sunt enim conjuges unum quid per individuum vite societatem. The wife is the other part of the homo [man], who consists of man and woman. So they say, a man without a wife is only a *semi-homo*, or a man halved.' See *Drusius, Cleanse.* 'The husband's true love leads him also to cleanse his wife, i. e. to form her mind, and assist her progress in virtue, thus promoting his own happiness too in the best manner.' MACKN.

(30.) 'We are represented as related by blood to Christ, because He assumed our human nature, and was in all respects made like as we are, only without sin. Heb. 2:14.' Ros. See *Bp. Horne, Serms.* Ep.

V. 32, 33. It is obvious, that there must, in all cases, be manifold defects and failures on both sides, in the present state of human nature; and often grievous offences may be committed: yet this does not materially alter the duty of the injured party, except in some cases elsewhere provided for.—It is observable, that the apostle says, 'let every one love his wife,' not *wives*; so that polygamy is not even supposed by the exhortation to exist among Christians.—(32) *Mystery.* The Vulgate, or old Latin version, exclusively used by the church of Rome, renders this, *sacrament*; which is the only scriptural reason, or shadow of reason, for the absurdity of numbering marriage among the sacraments; even while that church considers the married state inconsistent with high attainments in holiness, forbids its priests to marry, and discourages marriage in various other ways!—Many have enlarged on this *mystery*, namely, the appointment of marriage in the garden of Eden, as a type or emblem of Christ and his church; for so they understand it. The following quotation gives the substance of ancient and modern expositions of the passage, in this particular.—'Adam, in whom the whole human race began, was a natural image of Christ, in whom the human race was to be restored: and his deep sleep, the opening of his side, and the formation of Eve of a rib taken out of his side, were fit emblems of

are, the instituted sacraments, particularly *the washing* of baptism, and the preaching and reception of the Gospel. *And that He might present it to Himself, &c. v. 27.* Dr. Lightfoot thinks, the apostle alludes here to the Jews' extraordinary care in their washings for purification, that there should be no wrinkle to keep the flesh from the water, and no spot or dirt not thoroughly washed. Others understand him as alluding to a garment come new out of the fuller's hand, purged from spots, stretched from wrinkles. *That He might present it to Himself,* that He might perfectly unite to Himself in the great day, *a glorious church*, perfect in knowledge and in holiness, *not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing*; nothing of deformity or defilement remaining, but entirely amiable and pleasing in his eye; *holy, and without blemish*, free from the least remains of sin. The church in general, and particular believers, will not be without spot or wrinkle till they come to glory. From this and the former v. together, we may notice, that the glorifying of the church is intended in the sanctifying of it: and that those, and those only, who are sanctified now, shall be glorified hereafter. *So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies, &c. v. 28.* The wife being *civilly, relatively,* [and *spiritually,*] made *one* with her husband, this is an argument why he should love her as cordially and ardently as he loves himself. *For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, v. 29.* however deformed, or whatever his imperfections might be: so far from it, that he uses himself with the greatest care and tenderness; and is industrious to supply himself with every convenience, &c. *even as the Lord*

*the church:* as the Lord nourishes and cherishes the church, which He furnishes with all things He sees needful or good for her, with whatever conduces to her everlasting happiness and welfare. The apostle adds, *For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, v. 30.* He assigns this as a reason why Christ nourishes and cherishes his church,—because all who belong to it, are members of his mystical body. Or, we are members out of his body: all the grace and glory the church has, are from Christ; as *Eve* was taken out of the man. But (as one observes) it being the manner of the sacred writings to express a complex body of the enumeration of its several parts; as the heaven and earth for the world; evening and morning, for the natural day; so here, by body, flesh, and bones, we are to understand Himself; the meaning of the verse being, that we are members of Christ. *For this cause,* because they are one, as Christ and his church are one, *shall a man leave his father and mother;* the apostle refers to the words of Adam, when Eve was given to him for a meet-help, Ge. 2: 24. We are to understand by them, only, that this relation is to be preferred to all others; there being a nearer union between these two, than between any others; that the man must rather leave any of his relatives than his wife. *And they two shall be one flesh,* i. e. by virtue of the matrimonial bond. *This is a great mystery, v. 32.* Those words of Adam, just mentioned by the apostle, are spoken literally of marriage; but they have also a hidden, mystical sense in them, relating to the union between Christ and his church, of which the conjugal union between Adam and the

—Every relative duty should be enforced by evangelical motives and examples.—The most entire submission of wives to their own husbands will be no infringement of their liberty, if performed 'for the Lord's sake;' and after the example of the church's obedience to Him: especially if 'husbands also love their wives,' after the pattern of Christ's love to his chosen people. He died for them, 'that He might sanctify and cleanse them,' to be to Him for an honor and praise to all eternity, and that He might be glorious in making them happy. While we adore and rejoice in this condescending love, and press forward to that perfect holiness which is intended for us; and while we reverence both the mystery of this sacred union with the Lord, and his loving authority over us, let husbands hence learn how to love their wives, and wives hence learn to obey and 'reverence their husbands.' If the original appointment of marriage, and the subject before us, were duly attended to, all harshness, tyranny, and unfaithfulness must be excluded. In short, were Christianity general, and Christians more attentive to the precepts of their Lord; harmony and affectionate confidence would sweeten domestic life, without any material interruption or alloy, [and happy families would expand into happy nations, and a happy world.] SCOTT.

Christ's death, of the opening of his side on the cross, and of the regeneration of believers by his death. The love which Adam expressed towards Eve, and his union with her by marriage, were lively emblems of Christ's love to believers, and of his eternal union with them in one society after the resurrection. And Eve herself, who was formed of a rib taken from Adam's side, was a natural image of believers, who are regenerated, both in their body and mind, by the breaking of Christ's side on the cross... These circumstances... we may suppose... to prefigure that great event; and by prefiguring it, to show that it was decreed of God from the beginning.' MACKN.—The mystery, in reality is, that He, 'who is God over all, blessed for evermore,' should, from most free love of Adam's fallen race, become Man, Emmanuel, and thus 'purchase the church with his own blood;' and should love this church of redeemed sinners, with a love immensely exceeding that of the most endeared relations among men. SCOTT.

(32.) *Mystery.* 'This union of Adam and Eve, as relating to Christ and his church, is a great *mystery*, containing important truths and illustrations, for ages [and still] imperfectly understood.' SLADE.

'The mystery certainly was, that the eternal Son of God, receiving the degenerate race of men into an union with Himself, should have loved them with an affection exceeding that to be found among the most intimate human relations. This sublime doctrine had long been concealed, and cannot now be perfectly comprehended; and therefore may, with the greatest propriety, be called a *mystery*, in every sense of the word.' DODDR.

'On the shameful blunder of the Vulg. translator solely, (in tr. *musterion* here, by *sacramentum*.) do the Romanists found their doctrine of marriage being a *sacrament*. Valpy obs., that *sacramentum* was long used very indefinitely by ecclesiastical writers; it came at length to acquire a meaning more precise and fixed.' BL.

'Dr. Allen, in *Whitby*, says, it was a Jewish notion, that the union of Adam was a type of that between the Messiah and his church. Thus, the Jews say, (so *Voisin*.) and the *mystery of Adam is the mystery of the Messiah*, who is the Bridegroom of the church. These two writers therefore, says *Whitby*, confirm the remark of *Munster*, "That the creation of the woman from the rib of the man, was made by the Jews to signify the marriage of the celestial man who is blessed, or of the Messiah, with the church;" whence Paul applies the very words Adam said of Eve, to those Christians who are the Spouse of Christ, v. 30.' IN.



## CHAP. VI.

<sup>1</sup> The duty of children towards their parents, <sup>5</sup> of servants towards their masters. <sup>10</sup> Our life is a warfare, <sup>12</sup> not only against flesh and blood, but also spiritual enemies. <sup>13</sup> The complete armor of a Christian, <sup>18</sup> and how it ought to be used. <sup>21</sup> Tychicus is commended.

**C**HILDREN, <sup>a</sup> obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

<sup>2</sup> Honor <sup>b</sup> thy father and mother, (which is the first commandment with promise,)

<sup>3</sup> That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

<sup>a</sup> Pr. 23:22. Col. 3:20, &c. <sup>b</sup> Ex. 20:12.

mother of us all, was a type: though not instituted or appointed by God to signify this, yet it was a kind of *natural type*, as having a resemblance to it; *I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

After this, the apostle concludes this part of his discourse with a brief summary of the duty of husbands and wives, *v. 33.* 'Nevertheless; though there be such a secret, mystical sense, yet the plain, literal sense concerns you. *Let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, with such a sincere, peculiar, singular, and prevailing*

NOTES. CHAP. VI. V. 1—4. The apostle next exhorts believers, who had parents living, to be obedient to them, 'in the Lord,' for his sake, from gratitude to Him, in obedience to his commands, and for the honor of his Gospel. *Col. 3:16, 17, v. 16.* The Lord Jesus seems especially intended. This general exhortation must be limited, according to the ages and particular circumstances of children. Some, it is probable, had Gentile parents, and they ought not to obey them, when their commands contradicted those of Christ; yet, it would be peculiarly incumbent on them, to give up their own will in all things lawful, for the credit of Christianity. The obedience of children to their parents, thus limited, is in itself 'right,' equitable, and reasonable, a debt due to the instruments of their existence, and the tender guardians of their infancy, and generally conducive to their good. Indeed, the sentiments of all nations coincide in this, and the law of God expressly commands children 'to honor' the persons and authority of both father and mother, and to requite their kindness as they have opportunity and ability. This was placed in the decalogue, as 'the first commandment' of the second table, being the first of the relative duties, and the source of all the others. Indeed, it has been observed, in every age, that those who have distinguished themselves by filial obedience were remarkably prospered. *Gen. 9:20—23. Ex. 20:12. Lev. 19:3. Prov. 1:8. Mat. 15:3—6*—The apostle also exhorted parents (for though fathers only are mentioned, doubtless mothers also were intended) to use their authority without rigor, lest their children should be discouraged; prejudiced against Christianity, or provoked to obstinacy and disobedience, which would always prove painful to the parents, and often ruinous to the children. *Ex. 21:15—17. P. O. 12—36. De. 21:18—21. Prov. 29:17. 30:17.* The restraints, reproofs, and corrections of parents, ought, therefore, always to be used in a meek, affectionate, and forgiving disposition; while they diligently educate their children in such a manner, and with such instructions, as may best initiate them in the knowledge of Christ and true religion, and give them such friendly admonitions, as may guard them against the various snares of the world, and the temptations of Satan. *Prov. 13:24. Col. 3:20, 21.*—In these exhortations the inferior relation is constantly mentioned first; perhaps because the duty of it is most contrary to corrupt nature; yet it ought to be attended to, even when the superiors neglect theirs.—'Instruct them in the principles of piety towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Make them to read the Scriptures, says Theophylact, which is the duty of all Christians; for is it not a shame to instruct them in heathen authors, whence they may learn bad things, and not to instruct them in the oracles of God?' *Whitby.* This is an important remark; but immensely more is required, in catechizing and otherwise instructing children, in reproof, mild correction, example, conversation, watchfulness against everything in word or deed unbecoming in their presence, seizing every opportunity of drawing their attention to the great truths and duties of religion, and illustrating the effects of wickedness, the love of God, and the state of the world. Indeed, immensely more than can be even hinted at in a note, is implied in this brief exhortation. SCOTT.

(2, 3.) *With promise.* See *Bloomf. or Dodd.* The feelings awakened towards parents are those due in a higher degree to God, and promote such. The experience, too, of parents, if thoroughly educated for God, intellectually, morally, and physically, could give such lessons to obedient children as would preserve them, in obedience to God's natural laws, from excess of any kind, and so secure to them long life; a nation, also, of such parents and children, thus educated to reverence the paternal authority of its lawgivers and laws, would be united and invincible, and so long-lived in their land. Thus the text may be taken in its broadest sense, of all the blessings, temporal and eternal, which flow from the proper use of the family relation: indeed, 'more is implied in the religious obligations involved in the *family tie*, than is ordinarily recognized.' See the 'Family at Home,' republished by *G. D. Abbot*, in 1834.

'The principle of devoted obedience to the parent has been a most imperative rule of conduct; one against which no appeal has been dreamed of, from the foundation of its monarchy, probably by a grandson of Noah, in that singular community the Chinese family; comprising by very far the most populous empire and people existing. Its political government turns entirely on the duties of fathers toward their children, and of children towards their fathers; and as the highest functions and authority are concentrated in the emperor, who calls himself the great father, and the son of heaven, [for, says *Baines*, 'God is the Father of all fatherhoods,'] and whom the Chinese call sometimes the father,

affection as that is which he bears to himself. *And the wife see that she reverence her husband.*' Reverence consists of love and esteem, which produce a care to please; and of fear, which awakens a caution lest just offence be given. That the wife thus reverence her husband, is the will of God, and the law of the relation.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—9. Here we have further directions concerning relative duties, in which the apostle is very particular.

I. The duty of children to their parents, *v. 1.* Parents being the instruments of the being of their children, God and nature has given them an authority to command them, in subserviency to God; and if children will be obedient to their pious parents, they will be in a fair way to be pious as they are. Some take in the Lord, as a limitation, and understand it thus, 'as far as is consistent with your duty to God.' We must not disobey our heavenly Father in obedience to earthly parents; for our obligation to God is prior and superior to all others. I take it rather as a reason: 'Children, obey your parents; for the Lord has commanded it: obey them therefore for the Lord's sake, and with an eye to Him.' Or

and the mother of his people, they affirm, that he is not only the emperor to govern, and the pontiff to sacrifice, but is also the master of instruction. The governors of cities and provinces rule them respectively as their fathers, &c. All punishment, therefore, is inflicted as a fatherly chastisement; ruling as God does, by the affections, *Mat. 6:9* which removes the feeling of disgrace, all objection to its being summary, and all questions as to its equality. Every officer of state, from the 9th degree up to the 4th, can punish his inferior with the bamboo, the traditional mode, *Dent. 25:2.* and the emperor thus corrects, when it seems good to him, his ministers, and the four higher classes. The vitality of this patriarchal principle has been put to the strongest test, by frequent rebellions, internal convulsions, and changes of dynasty, and twice by foreign conquest; but, the Chinese changing the unfatherly for paternal rulers, again and again, its simplicity and efficacy have triumphed to this day. Indeed, the stability, says *Sir G. Staunton*, "of the Chinese government, the few changes that have been made in its civil institutions, for such a number of ages [see *Chron. tables*, in Supplement], the vast extent of empire, and immense population, forming one society, guided by the same laws, [and *written language*,] and governed by the will of a single individual, offer the grandest collective object that can be presented for human contemplation or research;" [especially, now that the Gospel is at last, by the living voice, and translated Word, offering to its hundreds of millions] . . . Descended from a dutiful son of Noah, the ancestor of China migrated, before faith in the promise to filial obedience would have been staggered by the early prosperity of the race of Ham, upon which the malediction did not fully come for some centuries. . . Now, in the question of obedience or disobedience to this primeval law to reverence the parent, under which Ham was probably punished, nothing can be well imagined to do more honor to the perfect rule of God, than that mankind should, during ages and ages, see the blessings and the curses attached to this ordinance, in continued and uninterrupted operation; and we must be entirely assured that the almighty wisdom, in all justice, reason, and policy, will act upon the same principles of reward as well as of punishment, in the aggregate as individually, towards nations as towards men; and that blessings attached to the observance of the 5th commandment, which, being of the moral law, was unquestionably of the highest antiquity, would as certainly be granted to a state, which should make it its rule of conduct, as it would be to any one of its citizens. [Note, \* p. 344. Vol. II.] And, indeed, the Almighty, in his wisdom and his mercy, appears to design to attach a very especial importance to the obedience of large bodies of men, and to give a value to acts which bear the character of national reverence of, and submission to Him, very far above any which we could presume them to possess. And if, in the reward of its filial piety, this nation has very long, and in great riches, and extraordinary numbers, *enjoyed the land given to it*, a beautiful illustration of the heavenly wisdom is afforded to us, because we see, that the conduct approved by God, necessarily carries with it, and works out, the blessing pronounced by Him as attached to it. The strength and simplicity of the principle of filial obedience, is admirably calculated to ensure permanency and stability to each family, and to each aggregation of families built upon it.

'Thus it is, that whilst we see Africa, the first ancestor of whose nations was accursed for irreverence to his father, bearing still the peculiar punishment attached to his crime, and a servant of servants, through that father's curse, ratified by the Almighty; we behold the Chinese nation, the fundamental principle of whose rule, laws, and policy, is, that of reverence to the parent, and was undoubtedly such from the very cradle of the monarchy, in a wonderful degree prolonging its days in the land which the Lord its God hath given it. In these opposite, predestined fortunes of the human race, placed at vast distances from each other, prevailing through thousands of years, we see perhaps one of the most beautiful, permanent, and instructive of God's dispensations existing on a gigantic scale, proportioned to the period of its duration' . . . *Sir G. H. Rose, Script. Researches.* Americans! may the example not be lost upon us!—'All the schools, and houses of reformation, in Prussia, do not cost the government as much as old England is obliged to expend in prisons and constables, for the regulation of that part of her population for which the government provides no schools but the hulks and the jails; and I leave it to any one to say, which arrangement produces the greatest amount of public happiness.'—*Prof. Stowe*; see his highly important Report to the government of Ohio, on Prussian public education.



4 And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

5 ° Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

6 Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

7 With good-will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men;

8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he* be bond or free.

9 And ye masters, do the same things unto them, <sup>d</sup> forbearing threatening: knowing that <sup>e</sup> your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect <sup>f</sup> of persons with him.

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

c 1 Pe. 2:13, &c. d or, moderating. e Some read, both your and their. f Ro. 2:11.

no other after it that has, therefore it would be improper to say it is the first: but the meaning may be this, 'This is a prime or chief commandment, and it has a promise; it is the first commandment in the second table. The promise is, *That it may be well with thee,*' &c. v. 3. Observe, Whereas the promise in the commandment has reference to the land of Canaan, the apostle hereby shows, that that and other promises in the O. T. relating to the land of Canaan, are to be understood more generally. That you may not think that the Jews only were bound by the 5th commandment, he here gives it a further sense, *That it may be well with thee,* &c. Outward prosperity and long life are blessings promised to those who keep this commandment: *ordinarily* it is thus rewarded; and where it is not it is made up with something better. Observe, I. The Gospel has its temporal promises, as well as spiritual ones. 2. Although the authority of God be sufficient to engage us in our duty, yet we are allowed to have respect to the promised reward: and, 3. Though it contains some temporal advantage, even that may be considered as a motive and encouragement to our obedience.

II. The duty of parents, v. 4. I. 'Do not provoke your children to wrath.' Though God has given you power, you must not abuse that power; remembering that your children are, in a particular manner, pieces of yourselves, and therefore ought to be governed with great tenderness and love. Be not impatient with them; use no unreasonable severities, and lay no rigid injunctions on them. When you caution them, when

you counsel them, when you reprove them, do it in such a manner as not to *provoke them to wrath.* In all such cases deal prudently and wisely with them, endeavoring to convince their judgments, and to work on their reason.' 2. 'Bring them up well; in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; in the discipline of proper and of compassionate correction; and in the knowledge of that duty which God requires of them, and by which they may become better acquainted with Him. Give them a good education. Let them have a religious education. Instruct them to fear <sup>g</sup> God; and inform them of, and excite them to, the whole of their duty toward God.'

III. The duty of servants; that also is summed up in one word, which is, *obedience.* He is largest on this article; as knowing there was the greatest need of it. These servants were generally slaves, and they may be the Lord's freemen, who are slaves to men, *masters according to the flesh,* v. 5. of the bodies, not of the souls and conscience. Now with respect to servants, he exhorts,

1. That they obey *with fear and trembling.* They are to reverence those who are over them; *fearing* to displease them, and *trembling* lest they should justly incur their anger and indignation.

2. That they be sincere in their obedience; *in singleness of heart;* not pretending obedience when they design disobedience, but serving them with faithfulness.

3. They should have an eye to Jesus Christ, in all their service, v. 5—7. *doing service as to the Lord, and not to men;* not to men only or principally. To have an eye to Christ, is to remember that He sees them, and is ever present with them; and that his authority obliges them to a faithful and conscientious discharge of the duties of their station.

4. They must not serve their masters *with eye-service,* v. 6. i. e. only when their masters' eye is on them; but be as conscientious in the discharge of their duty, when they are absent; because then their Master in heaven beholds them; therefore they must not act *as men-pleasers;* as though they had no regard to the pleasing of God, and approving themselves to Him, if they can impose on their masters. Observe, A steady regard to the Lord Jesus Christ will make men faithful and sincere in every station of life.

5. What they do they must do cheerfully; *doing the will of God from the heart;* serving their masters, as God wills they should, not grudgingly or by constraint, but from a principle of love to them and their concerns. This is *doing it with good-will,* v. 7. which will make their service easy to themselves, pleasing to their masters, and acceptable to the Lord Christ. There should be *good-will* to their masters; *good-will* to the families they are in; and especially a readiness to do their duty to God. Observe, Service, performed with conscience, and from a regard to God, though it be to unrighteous masters, will be accounted by Christ as service done to Himself.

6. Let faithful servants trust God for their

wages, while they do their duty in his fear; *Knowing that whatsoever good thing,* v. 8. how poor and mean soever it may be, considered in itself, *the same shall he receive of the Lord,* i. e. (by a metonymy) the reward of the same. Though his master on earth should neglect or abuse him, instead of rewarding him, he shall certainly be rewarded by the Lord Christ; *whether he be bond or free,* whether he be a poor bond-servant, or a free man or master. Christ regards not these differences of men at present; nor will He in the great and final judgment. And what can be said more proper, both to engage and to encourage servants to their duty?

IV. The duty of masters, v. 9. they must act after the same manner. Observe, Masters are under as strict obligations to discharge their duty to their servants, as servants are to be obedient and dutiful to them. 'Forbearing threatening; moderating threatening, and remitting the evils you threaten them with. Remember that your servants are made of the same mould with yourselves, and therefore be not tyrannical and imperious over them, *knowing that your Master also is in heaven:*' some copies read, both *your* and *their* Master. He will call masters and servants to an impartial account for their conduct one to another; and will neither spare the one, because they are more advanced, nor be severe toward the other, because they are inferior and mean in the world. If masters and servants would consider both their relation and obligation to God, and the account they must shortly give to Him, they would be more careful of their duty to each other.

Thus the apostle concludes his exhortation to relative duties.

V. 10—18. Here is a general exhortation to constancy in our Christian course, and courage in our Christian warfare. Christians are soldiers for Jesus Christ; and if soldiers then they must,

I. Have a good heart for it. This is prescribed here; *Be strong in the Lord,* strong for service, for suffering, for fighting. Let a soldier be ever so well armed without, if he have not within a good heart, his armor will stand him in little stead. Note, Spiritual strength and courage are very necessary for our spiritual warfare. Be strong in the Lord; either in his cause, and for his sake; or rather, in his strength. We have no sufficient strength of our own; but all our sufficiency is of God. We should stir up ourselves, therefore, to resist temptations, in a reliance on God's all-sufficiency, and the omnipotence of his might.

II. Be well armed, v. 11. Observe, They who would approve themselves to have true grace, must aim at all grace; the whole armor. It is called the armor of God, because He both prepares and bestows it. This armor is prepared for us, but we must *put it on;* we must pray for grace; we must use the grace given us, and draw it out into act and exercise, as there is occasion. The reason assigned, why the Christian should be

(4.) *Nurture.*] 'Paideia: the whole of the *disciplina puerilis*, the instruction, whether by example, benefits, admonitions, or punishment; synonymous with *nouthesia* [admonition], which, like Heb. *tusd*, signifies training to virtue. 1 S. 3:13. KOPPE.—How few are found to be converted in after life, except of those who had some religious instruction when young!

Ed.

V. 5—9. In general, the servants at that time were slaves, the property of their masters, and were often treated with great severity, though seldom with that systematic cruelty which commonly attends slavery in these days. But the apostles were ministers of religion, not politicians; they had not that influence among rulers and legislators, which would have been requisite for the abolition of slavery. Indeed, in that state of society, as to other things, this would not have been expedient; God did not please miraculously to interpose in the case, and they were not required to exasperate their persecutors, by expressly contending against the lawfulness of slavery. Yet both 'the law of love,' and the gospel of grace, tend to its abolition, as far as they are known and regarded; and the universal prevalence of Christianity must annihilate slavery, with many other evils, which in the present state of things cannot wholly be avoided. Ex. 21:20. 1 Cor. 7:17—24.—'In the wisdom

of God,' the apostles were left to take such matters as they found them, and to teach servants and masters their respective duties; in the performance of which the evil would be mitigated, till in due time it should be extirpated by Christian legislators.

SCOTT.

(7.) *As to the Lord and not to men.*] How very far is this from giving the right to hold slaves as property! See Channing and Wayland; also every precept Christ ever uttered.

Ed.

(9.) To illustrate what slaveholders and other masters *are to do*, Paul instances, says *Bl.*, 'what they are *not to do*: adverting to a fault in masters, which is inconsistent with any sense of responsibility towards a common master, namely, a minatory, oburgatory, and passionate demeanor, since it tends to destroy that well-affectedness which is the most powerful of all human motives to fidelity of service.'

Id.

V. 10—13. The apostle here draws his practical instructions to a close, by a figurative exhortation, taken from military affairs. In the fulness of Christ, and in the promised influences and assistance of the Holy Spirit, a 'panoply,' or complete suit of armor, was provided for every believer: this the Lord held out, as it were, to the Christians at Ephesus and all others; that, receiving it from Him, by the prayers of faith, they might put it on daily, in a diligent and watchful use of the



11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.

g Ro. 13:12. i Ro. 8:33. k or, heavenly, as  
2 Co. 6:7. j or, wicked c. 1:3.  
h blood and flesh. l spirit.

completely armed, is, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil; to hold out, and to overcome, notwithstanding all his assaults, both of force and fraud. This the apostle enlarges on here, and shows,

1. What our danger is, and what need we have to put on this whole armor: considering what sort of enemies we have to deal with,—the devil, and all the powers of darkness, v. 12. The combat for which we are to be prepared, is not against ordinary human enemies; nor against our own corrupt natures, singly considered; but against the several ranks of devils, who have a government they exercise in this world. We have to do,

(1.) With a *subtle enemy*; an enemy who uses *wiles* and stratagems, as v. 11. hence called a *serpent*, for subtlety; *an old serpent*, experienced in the art and trade of tempting.

(2.) A *powerful enemy*; *principalities*, and *powers*, and *rulers*. They are numerous, vigorous, ruling in the heathen nations that are yet in darkness: yea, over all men who are yet in a state of sin and ignorance. Satan's is a kingdom of darkness; whereas Christ's is a kingdom of light.

appointed means.—(12) '*Spiritual wickedness in high places*,' evil spirits holding their empire in the air, according to the general opinion, (Note, 2:1, 2.) and tempting men to wickedness, especially in their religion, and also as being the authors of all idolatry. Indeed, they became proud rebels, and apostates, even 'in heavenly places.' Having been 'spiritual wickednesses' in that holy world, they were cast out thence; and had from the beginning opposed man's entrance into heaven by every mean, which malice, sagacity, and subtlety could suggest. 2 Pet. 2:4—9. Ju. 5—8. Rev. 12:7—12. They must be prepared every day for the conflict, and would continually be called to resist their foes: but some days would peculiarly encourage or give advantage to Satan's assaults. They could not however know beforehand, when such occasions would be afforded him, and permission granted him: Job 1:9—12. 2:6. Lu. 22:31—34. they must, [therefore,] as vigilant and valiant soldiers, be always ready.

SEOTT.

(11.) *Wiles of the Devil.* (1.) He cometh and closeth as a friend; insinuating, as if he bare us more good-will than God, Gen. 3. So to Christ, "Master, spare Thyself:" but mark what Christ replieth, Go behind me, Satan. So he cometh to another, what? He hath abused thee; do not let Him do thee that wrong, others will be heartened to do thee the like. So when he persuades covetousness. You must have more than this. You have, and may have a great charge. So to him that would double his diligence, What need you so to discase yourself? God forbid, none but such great painstakers should come to heaven. Thus he would, with a friendly parley, with a Joab's kiss, utterly betray us. (2.) He hath sometimes taken on him the person of an angel of light, in words which he can speak good, Mk. 1:24. 5:7. Thou art the Son of God. The maid with the spirit of divination, (Ac. 16:16.) saith, you are the servants of the most high God; but he profaneth the words, and useth them unto evil ends, to win himself credit in his lying, or weaken the truth of them by his confessing: So *in nomine Dei* [in the name of God] beginneth much wickedness. (3.) He will set us unseasonably and busy us about good works, and thus he did Martha, Lu. 10:40. making her so busy in the entertainment, that she had no leisure for the better work, that which Mary chose. This is his wickedness, and he always doth it either to juggle out a better work, or to draw in with that good some greater evil. So in the church, many read often and are thinking of good things, but the devil doth draw them to this, that they might not attend the work in hand. (4.) He will persuade to evil under the show of good: thus he will make us, under the pretence of discretion and moderation, be like those who were neither hot nor cold, sit for nothing but to be spued out of God's mouth: he will with a show of zeal fetch us off to murder, Lu. 9:54. He did the disciples, and thus he beguileth such who will reform without authority [and separatists]: so, by persuading providence, he doth fill the heart with covetousness: so, by persuading perfection, he foilth in will-worship; so those doctrines of devils, forbidding meats, marriage, religiously, are broached under pretence of chastity, abstinence; Invocation of angels, and doubting, under pretence of humility, Col. 2. and unwritten truths, with curious questions, under pretence of profound learning: such like doctrine, Rev. 2:24, so styled, is therefore called the depth of Satan. (5.) By dissuading that which is truly good, as if it were a vice: thus repenting, and leading new lives, and taking up the orders of God, this is now-fangledness, and levity: thus doing any duty that is not so generally received, is dissuaded as singu-

(3.) They are *spiritual enemies*, *spiritual wickedness*; or wicked spirits, as some tr. They are *wicked spirits*, and chiefly annoy the saints with, and provoke them to, spiritual wickednesses, pride, envy, malice, &c. They are said to be in *high places*, or in heavenly places, so the word is; the whole *expansum*, or spreading out of the air between the earth and the stars. Or the meaning may be, '*We wrestle about heavenly places, or heavenly things*;' so some of the ancients. Our enemies strive to prevent our ascent to heaven, to deprive us of heavenly blessings, and to obstruct our communion with heaven. They assault us in the things that belong to our souls, and labor to deface the heavenly image in our hearts; therefore, we need be on our guard against them. We need faith in our *Christian warfare*, because we have spiritual enemies to grapple with, as well as faith in our *Christian work*, because we have spiritual strength to fetch in. Thus you see your danger.

2. What our duty is; to take and put on the whole armor of God, and then to *stand* our ground, and *withstand* our enemies.

(1.) We must *withstand*, v. 13. not yield to, but oppose, the devil's allurements and assaults. Satan is said to *stand up against us*, 1 Chr. 21:1. If he stand up against us, we must stand against him; and to stand against Satan, is to strive against sin. *That ye may be able to withstand in the evil day*, in temptation, or any sore affliction.

(2.) We must stand our ground; *And having done all, to stand*; resolve, by God's grace, not to yield to Satan. If we give back, he will get ground. If we distrust, either our cause or our Leader, or our armor, we give him advantage. Our present business is, to *withstand* the assaults of the devil, and to *stand* it out; and then, *having done all*, that is incumbent on the good soldiers of Jesus Christ, our warfare will be

accomplished, and we shall be finally victorious.

(3.) We must stand armed; and this is here most enlarged on. Here is a Christian in complete armor: and the armor is divine. *Armor of God*. *Armor of light*, Rom. 13:12. *Armor of righteousness*, 2 Cor. 6:7. The apostle specifies the particulars of this armor, both offensive and defensive. Here is the military girdle or belt; the breast-plate; the greaves, or soldier's shoes; the shield; the helmet, and the sword. It is observable, among them all, there is none for the back; if we turn our back on the enemy, we lie exposed.

[1.] *Truth*, or *sincerity*, is our girdle, v. 14. It was prophesied of Christ, Is. 11:5. that *righteousness should be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins*. What Christ was girt with, all Christians must be girt with. *God desires truth*, i. e. sincerity, in the inward parts. Some understand it of the doctrine and the truths of the Gospel: they should cleave to us, as the girdle does to the loins. Je. 13:11. This will *restrain* from all libertinism and licentiousness, as a girdle restrains and keeps in the body. This is the Christian soldier's belt: *ungirt* with this, he is *unblessed*.

[2.] *Righteousness* must be our *breast-plate*. The breast-plate shelters the vitals. Christ's righteousness, imputed to us, is our breast-plate against the arrows of divine wrath; and his righteousness, implanted in us, our breast-plate to fortify the heart against the attacks of Satan against us. The apostle explains this in 1 Th. 5:8. *Putting on the breast-plate of faith and love*. Faith and love include all Christian graces: for by faith we are united to Christ, and by love to our brethren. These will infer a diligent observance of our duty to God, and a righteous deportment toward men, in all the offices of justice, truth, and charity.

larity and pride; thus zeal is madness, as in Christ's practice censured, Mk. 3:21. And Paul was thought to be mad through much learning: thus the lawful remedy is calumniated as uncleanness; depending on God's providence is counted tempting Him, as in that example of Ahaz, Is. 7:12. Particular faith is pride, &c. And thus he doth set fine colors on foul clothes, and like an angel of light doth beguile us.' . . .

'He dissembleth his strength [to be less apparent in his attacks]; sometimes elevating or lessening his power: as when our Lord hath foiled him in us, he will make as if he were easily withstood, that we might after a sort command him, that then we might wax secure and be betrayed. Second, by dissembled flight, like the stratagem, Josh. 7. Jud. 20. He will seem as fled, but then he playeth the Parthian, he fighteth most dangerously: Thus many that have been prodigal, given to women, are grown better husbands, and become new men; the devil seemeth to be fled: but if they be not new creatures indeed, having new hearts, hungering after righteousness, and the knowledge of God in Christ, the devil hath them far surer than before.'

BAINES.

(11-17.) *Whole armor.* '*Panoplia*: the complete apparatus of arms for an optile, whether offensive or defensive.' BL. The cut, of a trophy, sometimes set up after victory, shows the several pieces of ar-



mor in use in Paul's time. The soldier is one represented on the column of Trajan, in contest with barbarians. *Devil.* 'It is remarkable how studious the recent comrs. are, to remove from this passage, as well as others, all notion of *demoniacal agency*. The Jews applied the term *kosmokratōr* [world-ruler], not only to sovereigns, as the emperors of Rome, Persia, &c., (as the k. of Egypt is called by *Aristoph.*, and Pan and Apollo are named by *Orpheus.*) but likewise to the devil, called the *prince of this world*, Ju. 12:31. *Wrestle.* Agonistical arc mixed with military metaphors.' BL. *Loins girt.* The Hebrews, like the modern Persians, when undertaking extraordinary muscular exercise, as running, &c., girt about them leather



14 Stand, therefore, having your loins girt <sup>m</sup> about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness;

15 And your feet <sup>n</sup> shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking the shield of <sup>o</sup> faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet <sup>p</sup> of salvation, and the sword <sup>q</sup> of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18 Praying <sup>r</sup> always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching <sup>s</sup> thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints:

19 And for <sup>t</sup> me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

<sup>m</sup> Is. 11:5.  
<sup>n</sup> Ca. 7:1.  
<sup>o</sup> 1 Ju. 5:4.

<sup>p</sup> Is. 59:17.  
<sup>q</sup> He. 4:12.  
<sup>r</sup> Lu. 18:1.

<sup>s</sup> Mat. 26:41.  
<sup>t</sup> 2 Th. 3:1.

[3.] *Resolution* must be as the greaves to our legs, v. 15. Shoes, or greaves of brass, or the like, were formerly part of the military armor, 1 S. 17: 6. to defend the feet against gall-traps, and sharp sticks, wont to be laid privily in the way, to obstruct the march of the enemy; they who fell on them being unfit to march. *The preparation of the Gospel of peace*, signifies a prepared and resolved frame of heart, to adhere to the Gospel, and abide by it; which will enable us to walk with a steady pace in the way of religion, notwithstanding the difficulties and dangers that may be in it. It is styled *the Gospel of peace*, because it brings all sorts of peace; peace with God, with ourselves, and with one another. It may also be meant of that which *prepares* for the entertainment of the Gospel; i. e. repentance. With this our feet must be shod: for by living a life of repentance, we are armed against temptations to sin, and the designs of our great enemy.

Dr. Whitby thinks the sense may be, 'That ye may be ready for the combat, be ye shod with the Gospel of peace; endeavor after that peaceable and quiet mind which the Gospel calls for. Be not easily provoked,

things so tight, that it is dangerous, nay, mortal, for them even to stoop. Comp. cut of a Roman chariot-victor, in the Concordance, (forming part of the Supplement to this Com., under the word *gird*.) with the soldier, given at p. 403. *Breast-plate.*] *Thorax*: note, and cuts, end of Jer. *Feet shod.*] See the war-sandals, &c., given at end of Jer., and also note, Is. 9:5, which text is thought to allude, as does Paul, perhaps, to the spiked sandal, or iron shoe. *Bl.* preferring, as he says, 'systematically, the most extensive sense any words will bear,' paraphrases: 'and, (like as soldiers have their feet shod with sandals, armed with iron, as a preparation or defence against the roughness, and security against the slipperiness or miriness of the roads,) so do ye arm yourselves against the roughness, and secure yourselves against the slippery temptations of your Christian course, by being, as it were, shod with the preparation and defence supplied by the Gospel of peace, even the strong motives to constancy in religion, and a holy life, supplied by the Gospel of salvation. *Peace.*] Between God and the soul, Ro. 5:1. Phil. 4:7.' *Doddr.* and *Slade* understand, that *peaceful temper* the Gospel inculcates, that mild and moderate demeanor, so important to protect the early Christians from the fury and malice of persecution. *Shield.*] *Thureon*: an ample, *door-like* (so the Gr. lit.) shield, used by the hoplites. *Fiery darts.*] Small, slender spicula of cane, thrown from a very weak bow to set wooden buildings, walls, or tents on fire. See *Wets.* *Bl.* Missiles with burning flax, &c., were also used. See *Raphelius.* *Doddr.* *Helmet.*] *Periképhaleion*: cuts, end of Jer. 'Take as an helmet "the hope of salvation." *Bl.* *Sword.*] *Machaira*: cuts, wrongly placed at p. 645, Vol. III; described p. 643. *Of the Spirit.*] 'I. e. the O. and N. T. revelations, and the promulgation of the Gospel with such glorious power in that age. Now *this* would supply the best offensive weapon against all attacks of adversaries, as supplying abundant matter to refute all their objections.' [See note, 2 Tim. 2:3,4.]

(11—18.) 'The armor with which Satan furnishes his followers is directly the reverse of the Christian armor, described by Paul. Instead of the *girdle* of truth, he girds the sinner with error and deceit. Instead of the *breast-plate* of Christ's righteousness, he furnishes him with one of his own fancied righteousness. Instead of the shield of faith, the sinner has the shield of unbelief, with which he defends himself against the curses of the law and the arrows of conviction. Instead of the sword of the Spirit, Satan teaches the sinner to wield the sword of a

or prone to quarrel; but show all gentleness, and all long-suffering, to all men; and this will as certainly preserve you from many great temptations and persecutions, as did those shoes of brass the soldiers from those gall-traps,' &c.

[4.] *Faith* must be our shield, v. 16. This is more necessary than any of them. The *breast-plate* secures the vitals; but with the shield we turn every way. *This is the victory over the world, even our faith.* We are to be fully persuaded of the truth of all God's promises and threatenings; such a faith being of great use against temptations. Consider faith, as it is *the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for*; and it will appear to be of admirable use for this purpose. Faith, as receiving Christ, and the benefits of redemption, so deriving grace from Him, is like a shield, a sort of universal defence. Our enemy the devil, is here called *the wicked one*. He is wicked himself, and he endeavors to make us wicked. His temptations are called *darts*, because of their swift and undiscerned flight, and the deep wounds they give; *fiery darts*, by way of allusion to the poisonous darts which were wont to inflame the parts wounded with them, and therefore were so called; as the serpents with poisonous stings are called *fiery serpents*. Violent temptations, by which the soul is set on fire of hell, are the darts Satan shoots at us. Faith is the shield, with which we must *quench* these fiery darts; wherein we should receive them, and so render them ineffectual, that they may not hit us, or at least, not hurt us. Observe, Faith, acted on the Word of God, and applying that, *acted upon the grace of Christ*, and improving that, quenches the darts of temptations.

[5.] *Salvation* must be our helmet, v. 17. that is, *Hope*, which has salvation for its object; so 1 Th. 5: 8. The helmet secures the head. A good hope of salvation, well founded and well built, will both purify the soul, and keep it from being defiled by Satan; and it will comfort the soul, and keep it from being troubled and tormented by Satan. He would tempt us to despair; but good hope keeps us trusting in God, and rejoicing in Him.

[6.] *The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit*. It is called *the sword of the Spirit*, because it is of the Spirit's inditing; and He renders it efficacious and powerful, and *sharper than a two-edged sword*. Scripture-

arguments are the most powerful arguments to repel a temptation with. Christ Himself resisted Satan's temptations with, *It is written*, Mat. 4: 1, 2, &c. This, being hid in the heart, will preserve from sin, Ps. 119: 11. and mortify and kill the lusts and corruptions latent there.

[7.] *Prayer* must buckle on all the other parts of our Christian armor, v. 18. We must join prayer with all these graces, and pray *always*. Not as though we were to do nothing else; but we should keep up constant times of prayer, and be constant to them. We must always keep up a disposition to prayer; and should intermix ejaculatory prayers with our duties, and with common business. Set and solemn prayer may sometimes be unseasonable, yet pious ejaculations can never be so. We must *pray with all prayer and supplication*; with all kinds of prayer, public, private, and secret; social and solitary; solemn and sudden; with all the *parts* of prayer; confession of sin, petition for mercy, and thanksgivings for favors received. We must *pray in the Spirit*; our spirits must be employed in the duty; and we must do it by the grace of God's good Spirit. We must *watch thereunto*, endeavoring to keep our hearts in a praying frame; and take all occasions, and improve all opportunities, for the duty: we must watch all the motions of our own hearts toward the duty. When God says, *Seek ye my face*, our hearts must comply, Ps. 27: 8. This we must do *with all perseverance*. We must abide by the duty of prayer, whatever change there may be in our outward circumstances; and we must continue in it as long as we live in the world. We must *persevere in a particular prayer*; not cutting it short, when our hearts are disposed to enlarge, and there is time for it, and our occasions call for it. We must likewise *persevere in particular requests*, notwithstanding some present discouragements and repulses. And we must *pray with supplication*, not for ourselves only, but *for all saints*; for we are members one of another: and none are so much saints, and in so good a condition in this world, but they need our prayers.

The apostle passes to the conclusion.

V. 19—24. I. He desires their prayers for him, v. 19. Having mentioned *supplication for all saints*, he puts himself into the number. We must pray for all saints, and particularly, for God's faithful ministers. Observe, what he would have them pray for

tongue set on fire of hell, and furnishes him with a magazine of cavils, excuses, and objections, with which to attack religion and defend himself. He builds, too, for his soldiers many refuges of lies, in which, as in strong castles, they proudly hope to shelter themselves from the wrath of God.

Rev. Dr. PAYSON.

V. 14—17. The minds of Christian soldiers ought to be fortified, and prepared for the assault, by conscious sincerity in their profession, and by an habitual and conscientious obedience to the various commandments of God, which would defend them from fatal wounds in the day of conflict: whereas, conscious negligence and disobedience would render them afraid to face persecution or death, in the cause of Christ. To stand their ground in difficult or slippery situations, or to march forward in rugged paths, 'their feet must be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace,' that is, their motives and encouragements to obedience, amidst temptations and persecutions, must be derived from a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the Gospel; through which God is revealed as 'in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself,' and actually at peace with every believer, notwithstanding past transgressions, and present defects and infirmities. *Rom.* 5:1, 2. 8:1, 2. This assurance would make obedience delightful, though self-denying; and animate the established believer to resist temptation, to endure tribulation, and to march through difficulties and enemies, in the cause of Christ and in the way to heaven. *De.* 33:25. *Lu.* 15:22—24, v. 22. The suggestions of the tempter would indeed often resemble 'fiery darts'; so they would inflame the anger, pride, sensual passions, avarice, or other corrupt propensities of the heart, unless immediately intercepted and quenched by 'the shield of faith,' resting on the promises, and the truth, power, and mercy of God, to perform them. *Gen.* 39:8—10.—This clause [(16) *Quench*, &c.] is often interpreted exclusively of those harassing temptations, by which hard thoughts of God, and horrid or desponding conclusions concerning themselves, are excited in men's minds. These lead to immense distress, and eventually to guilt; and faith in the promises of God must *extinguish* them: yet the apostle evidently meant the words in a more comprehensive sense.

SCOTT.

V. 19—20. The reader, who is acquainted with what has been copiously written on this subject, will perceive that, in a few particulars, the exposition here given of the Christian panoply rather varies from that of some approved writers. Zeal for particular doctrines often ren-



20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

21 But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:

22 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.

23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

¶ Written from Rome unto the Ephesians by Tychicus.

u or, a chain. x Ac. 20:4. a or, with incor-  
v or, thereof. y Col. 4:7, 8. ruption.  
w Is. 53:1. z 1 Pe. 5:14.

in his behalf; 'that utterance may be given unto me; that I may be enlarged from my present restraints, and so have liberty to propagate the faith of Christ; that I may have ability to express myself in a suitable and becoming manner, and that I may open my mouth boldly; that I may deliver the whole counsel of God, without any base fear, shame, or partiality.' The mystery of the Gospel, some understand of that part of the Gospel which concerns the calling of the Gentiles, which had hitherto, as a mystery, been concealed. But the whole Gospel was a mystery, till made known by divine revelation; and it is the work of Christ's ministers to publish it. Observe, Paul had a great command of language; they called him Mercury, because he was the chief speaker, Acts 14: 12. yet he would have his friends

ask of God the gift of utterance for him. He was a man of great courage, and often signalized himself for it; yet he would have them pray that God would give him boldness. He knew as well what to say as any man; yet he desires them to pray for him, that he may speak as he ought to speak. The argument with which he enforces his request, is, that for the sake of the Gospel he was an ambassador in bonds, v. 20. He was persecuted and imprisoned for preaching the Gospel; though, notwithstanding, he continued in the embassy committed to him by Christ; and persisted in preaching it. Observe, 1. It is no new thing for Christ's ministers to be in bonds. 2. It is a hard thing for them to speak boldly, when that is their case. And, lastly, The best, and most eminent ministers have need of, and may receive advantage by, the prayers of good Christians; and therefore should earnestly desire them.

Having thus desired their prayers, H. He recommends Tychicus to them, v. 21, 22. He sent him with this epistle, that he might acquaint them with what other churches were informed of, i. e. how he did, and what he did; how he was used by the Romans in his bonds; and how he behaved himself in his present circumstances. It is desirable to good ministers, both that their Christian friends should know their state, and likewise to be acquainted with the condition of their friends; for by this mean they may the better help each other in their prayers. And that he might comfort their hearts: by giving such an account of his sufferings, of the cause of them, and of the temper of his mind, and his behavior under them, as might prevent their fainting at his tribulations, and even minister matter of joy and thanksgiving unto them. He tells them, that Tychicus was a beloved brother, and faithful minister in the Lord: he was very dear to Paul: which makes his love to these Christian Ephesians the more observable, in that he should now part with so

good and dear a friend for their sakes, when his company and conversation must have been peculiarly delightful and serviceable to himself. But the faithful servants of Jesus Christ are wont to prefer the public good to their own private or personal interests.

III. He concludes with his good wishes and prayers for them; and not for them only, but for all the brethren, v. 23, 24. His usual benediction was, grace and peace: here it is, Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith. By peace, we are to understand all manner of peace, and all outward prosperity is included in the word; as if he had said, 'I wish the continuance and increase of all happiness to you.' And love with faith. This in part explains what he means in the following v. by grace: not only grace in the fountain, or the love and favor of God; but grace in the streams, the grace of the Spirit flowing from that divine principle; faith and love including all the rest. It follows, from God the Father, &c. All grace and blessings are derived to the saints from God, through the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ our Lord.

The closing benediction is more extensive than the former; for in this he prays for all true believers at Ephesus, and everywhere else. It is the undoubted character of all the saints, that they sincerely love our Lord Jesus Christ. The words may be read, Grace be with all them who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption, who continue constant in their love to Him, so as not to be corrupted out of it by any baits or seductions whatsoever; and whose love to Him is uncorrupted by any opposite lust, or the love of anything displeasing to Him. Grace, i. e. the favor of God, and all good, spiritual and temporal, i. e. the product of it, is, and shall be, with all them who thus love our Lord Jesus Christ. And it is, or ought to be, the desire and prayer of every lover of Christ, that it may be so with all his fellow-Christians. Amen.

PRACT. OBS. When children 'honor and obey their parents,' they take a proper method to obtain temporal comfort and prosperity; and when they do it 'in the Lord,' from faith and love, it forms an evidence of their interest in his promises, which will be fulfilled in their everlasting felicity. Similar motives should induce parents, to attend diligently to the education of their children, with meekness, firmness, prudence, and affection; that they may 'not provoke them to wrath,' or tempt them to sin, but 'bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' But alas! how grievously is this duty neglected, even among those who are zealous for the great doctrines of the Gospel! How many parents 'seem to be religious,' and are strict in some things; yet by their imprudence, violent passions, harshness, or unforgiving temper and conduct, disgust their children, prejudice them against religion, render them uncomfortable in their presence, and consequently induce them to prefer almost any other company! This does not indeed excuse the children's disobedience, but it awfully occasions it. On the other hand, how commonly do we see more regard paid to every kind of instruction, or trifling embellishment, than to the religious principles and conduct of young persons! So that, too often, the education given to children leads them to those habits, notions, or connexions, which make way for their subsequent ungodliness, infidelity, dissipation, licentiousness, or avarice, by which they ruin themselves, and propagate impiety, vice, and misery, in an accumulating progression. Those who fear God, and love their children, should watch and pray, even with trembling, that they may not thus prove the occasion of condemnation to their own offspring; for, though God alone can change the heart, yet He commonly does it, by the good instructions and example of parents, the means which they use for their children's spiritual good, and in answer to their fervent prayers. Gen. 18:18, 19.—The grand maxim to be laid down, as most of all giving a scriptural ground to expect the blessing, is this; 'Decidedly "seek," for your children as well as yourselves,

"first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;" and steadily subordinate all regard to temporal advantage, and external accomplishment, and even proficiency in learning, to this great concern. Desire and aim "first of all," that your children may be true Christians, and form all your plans in entire subserviency to this main object.' Whereas they, whose chief anxiety seems to be, that their children may be wealthy, polite, learned, [famous,] or accomplished, whatever be the event to their souls, or who suffer these things materially to influence their plan of education, and to interfere with their children being 'brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,' can have no scriptural ground to expect his blessing on them.—Again, it is probable, that but few masters will refuse their approbation to the injunctions here laid on their servants, or servants their approbation to the exhortations given to their masters; but alas! those who ought to obey the precept are exceedingly prone to object to it, or to explain it slightly. The greater advantages, however, servants now enjoy to what slaves of old did, or slaves in many countries now do, the more cheerfully should they yield obedience and perform service 'to their own masters,' and the greater caution should they use not to dishonor the Gospel by a negligent, refractory, contentious, or unfaithful behavior. The same principles will render 'masters' considerate, kind, gentle, and conscientious, in their whole deportment; 'remembering that they also have a Master in heaven,' who 'is no Respector of persons.' And what orderly, and happy families will those be, where relative duties are thus on all sides constantly and circumspcctly attended to!—We should consider all the saints, wherever they live, as fellow-soldiers in our spiritual warfare, though divided into different battalions, distinguishable by a few unimportant externals; and we must help them all with our supplications: for general success against the powers of darkness, the kingdom of Satan, as well as personal victory, should be our noble ambition.

SCOTT.

ders pious men too apt to explain every expression in support of them; though it weakens the general proof of them, makes one part of the Scriptures coincide with the other by a needless repetition, and leaves out other matters equally important. Indeed, it may be apprehended, that by adducing everything which can be thought of, in explaining metaphors, many things are supposed to be contained in them which were entirely out of the writer's mind when he wrote them.—(20) Bonds.] Or, 'in a chain.'—The apostle was allowed to live at Rome, with a soldier that kept him.—To this soldier he was tied with a chain, fixed on his right wrist, and fastened to the soldier's left arm; and the chain being of a convenient length, the two could walk together with ease. . . The soldiers, who were thus employed, no doubt, reaped great benefit from the apostle's conversation and preaching.' Mackn. This is probable, and the thought is worthy of attention; but the words, 'no doubt,' imply more than we know on the subject.

(18.) Prayer.] 'The mode of making their "sword" effectual. There seems a pleonasm, usually ascribed to Hebrew idiom, but (as often) it is

occasioned by intense fervor of mind in the sacred writer. There is a climax.'

(20.) 'He thought soon to be brought to a hearing. Ac. 26.' Id. (21.) Tychicus.] 'Mentioned also Col. 4:7. 2 Tim. 4:12. Ti. 3:12. one of Paul's diakonoi, or assistants, in propagating the Gospel; born in Proconsular Asia, Ac. 20:4.'

(23.) 'Faith and love united have the hope of eternal life.' HARDY. 'The apostle prays, that, with their faith, there might be peace and love. These are the genuine effects of true faith, and from these spring religious comfort, and joy. Love first produces inward peace. It extinguishes malice, envy, hatred, wrath, revenge, and every unfriendly passion,—every unsocial feeling. It operates, by meekness under provocations,—by the forgiveness of injuries,—by condescension in cases of controversy,—by compassion to the afflicted,—by beneficence to the needy,—by rightness in dealings,—by tenderness of men's characters,—by joy in the prosperity of neighbors, and by a promptitude in relieving the distressed, and promoting the happiness of mankind.' Dr. J. LATIMER.



AN EXPOSITION  
OF  
PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Dr. W. Harris.)

PHILIPPI was a chief city of the western part of Macedonia, Acts 16:12. It took its name from Philip, the famous king of Macedon, who repaired and beautified it; and it was afterward made a Roman colony. Near this place were the *Campi Philippii*, remarkable for the famous battles between Julius Cesar and Pompey the Great; and that between Augustus and Antony on one side, and Cassius and Brutus on the other. But it is most remarkable among Christians for this epistle, which was written when Paul was prisoner at Rome, A. D. 62.\*

Paul seems to have had a very particular kindness for the church at Philippi, which he himself had been instrumental in planting [A. D. 50. says *Horne*]; and though he had the care of all the churches, he had, on that account, a particular fatherly, tender care of this. Those whom God has employed us to do any good to, we should look upon ourselves both encouraged and engaged to study to do more good to. I. He was called in an extraordinary manner to preach the Gospel at Philippi, Acts 16:9. He saw God going before him, and was encouraged to use all means for carrying on the good work begun among them. II. At Philippi he suffered hard things, Acts 16:33. yet he had not the less kindness for the place. We must never love our friends the less for the ill-treatment our enemies give us. III. The beginnings of that church were very small; yet that did not discourage him. If good be not done at first, it may be done afterward; and the last works may be more abundant. We must not be discouraged by small beginnings. IV. It seems, by many passages in this epistle, † that this church at Philippi grew into a flourishing church; and, particularly, was very kind to Paul. [Sending him money, too, again and again, though, says *Horne*, but a small community.] He had reaped of their temporal things, and he made a return in spiritual things. He acknowledges the receipt of a present they had sent him, ch. 4:18. and that when no church communicated with him as concerning giving and receiving besides, v. 15. and he gives them a prophet's, and an apostle's reward, in this epistle, which is of more value than thousands of gold and silver.

HENRY.

The apostle had visited Philippi a second time, [A. D. 57, so *Horne*,] though few particulars are recorded. Acts 20:1—6. As this epistle was manifestly written from Rome, and during the latter part of the apostle's first imprisonment in that city, nearly 12 years had passed since he first preached at Philippi; but the conduct of the Christians there had uniformly been so exemplary, and their grateful affection to him so fully evinced, that he had only to rejoice over them with heartfelt gratitude, while he poured out his prayers for them, and affectionately animated them to persevere and press forward in their heavenly course. Some cautions, indeed, against deceivers of different descriptions, 3:17—19. whose base conduct and awful doom he declares, in most expressive terms, are joined with his exhortations. Not one censure, however, is passed or implied on any of the Philippians, but unqualified commendation and confidence, Rev. 2:8—11.—The subjects treated on, and the instructions to be deduced from them, need not be anticipated. 'The apostle's design in this epistle, (which is quite of the practical kind,) seems to be, to comfort the Philippians under the concern they had expressed at the news of his imprisonment; to check a party spirit, that appears to have broke out among them, and to promote, on the contrary, an entire union and harmony of affection; to guard them against being seduced from the purity of the Christian faith, by judaizing teachers; to support them under the trials with which they struggled; and, above all, to inspire them with a concern to adorn their profession, by the most eminent attainments in the divine life.' *Doddr*. 'The genuineness of this letter was never questioned.' *Horne*.

SCOTT.

\* It is undeniable, that the epistle was sent not long before the 2 years of the apostle's imprisonment at Rome were ended, which the Oxford Bible supposes to have taken place about the close of A. D. 65.—According to this I have dated the epistle, (though many affix an earlier date,) on a full conviction, that more years were spent in the various labors of this great apostle, than are generally supposed; yet, at the same time, not considering the subject as of great importance. *SCOTT*. 'From 1:7, 13. 4:22. it appears, Paul was now prisoner at Rome; and from the expectation he discovers, of being soon released and restored to them, as well as from the intimations, 1:12. 2:26. that he had been some time at Rome, he probably wrote, near the close of his first imprisonment, at the end of 62, or beginning of 63.'

HORNE.

† It is evident, that Epaphroditus, who had been sent with a supply of money to the apostle at Rome, and who seems to have been a pastor, and perhaps the principal pastor, of the church, conveyed the epistle to Philippi. He had, either by his journey to Rome, or by his zealous labors in assisting the apostle, when in that city, brought a dangerous sickness on himself, the tidings of which so afflicted the Philippians, and their sorrow, when made known to Epaphroditus, so distressed him, that the apostle was induced to send him back sooner than he had intended, though to his own inconvenience. 2:24—30. *SCOTT*. 'When the Gospel was first preached in Macedonia, no church but the Philippian contributed anything to Paul's support; while he was preaching

at Thessalonica, they sent him money twice, that the success of the Gospel might not be hindered by its preachers becoming burdensome to the Thessalonians, 4:15, 16. The same they did, and for the same reason, while Paul preached at Corinth. 2 Cor. 11:9. And when they heard he was confined at Rome, they showed the same affectionate concern for him; and sent Epaphroditus with a present, lest he should want necessaries during his imprisonment. Phil. 2:25. 4:10, 14—18. The more immediate occasion of this epistle was, Epaphroditus' return, by whom Paul sent it, as a grateful acknowledgment of their kindness, in sending him supplies of money. From the manner in which Paul expressed himself, it appears, he was in great want of necessaries before their contributions arrived; for as he had not converted the Romans, he did not consider himself as entitled to receive supplies from them. Being a prisoner, he could not work as formerly; and it was his rule never to receive anything from the churches where factions had been raised against him. It also appears, that the Philippians were the only church from whom he received any assistance, and that he conferred this honor upon them, because they loved him exceedingly, had preserved the Christian doctrine in purity, and had always conducted themselves as sincere Christians. It is remarkable, that this is the only epistle of Paul, in which not one censure is expressed or implied against any member of the church. Its style is singularly animated, affectionate, and pleasing.'

HORNE.

A. D. 65.

CHAP. I.

3 He testifieth his thankfulness to God, and his love toward them, for the fruits of their faith, and fellowship in his sufferings, 9 daily praying to Him for their increase in grace. 12 He sheweth what good the faith of Christ had received by his troubles at Rome, 21 and how ready he is to glorify Christ either by his life or death, 27 exhorting them to unity, 28 and to fortitude in persecution.

PAUL and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

a Ac. 16:12, &c.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. The inscription and benediction.

I. The persons writing the epistle. Paul joins Timothy with himself, to express his own humility, and to honor Timothy. The aged, strong, and eminent, should support the reputation of those who are younger, and weaker, and of less note. *The servants of Jesus Christ*; not only common disciples, but an apostle, and an evangelist. The highest honor of the greatest apostles, and most eminent ministers, is, to be, not the masters of the churches, but the servants of Christ.

II. The persons to whom it is directed.

1. All the saints in Christ at Philippi. He mentions the church before the ministers, because ministers are for the church, for their edification and benefit; not the churches for the ministers, their dignity, dominion, or wealth. The Christians here are called saints; set apart for God, or sanctified by his Spirit, either by visible profession or real holiness. And, it is directed to all the saints, one, as well as another, even the meanest, the poorest, and those of the least gifts. Christ makes no difference; the rich and the

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1. As Paul's apostleship had never been called in question at Philippi; and as he wrote this epistle, not only in his own name, but in that of Timothy, [Paul's companion in each journey to Philippi,] who was then at Rome with him, he styles himself and Timothy 'the servants of Jesus Christ.' *Jn.* 12:25—26. 13:12—17. *Col.* 3:22—25. *Ja.* 1:1. 2 *Pet.* 1:1, 2. He addressed himself to 'the saints at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons;' hence we learn, that the distinction between bishops and presbyters was not then generally estab-

lished, but that the pastors of the church were distinguished from the deacons, who managed the secular matters and the charities of the church. *Acts* 6:1—6. 20:17. 1 *Tim.* 3:1—7. Much labor and learning have indeed been employed, to set aside this conclusion, but with little success, even by the allowance of decided Episcopians.—'Though it be generally resolved, that the word 'bishop,' and 'elder,' are equivalent in Scripture; yet this is not to be understood so, that either, or both of them, signifies indifferently those whom we now call presbyters, but



2 Grace <sup>b</sup> be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God upon every <sup>c</sup> remembrance of you,

4 Always in every prayer <sup>d</sup> of mine for you all making request with joy,

5 For your fellowship in the gospel, from the first day until now ;

6 Being <sup>e</sup> confident of this very thing, that he <sup>f</sup> which hath begun a good <sup>g</sup> work in you will <sup>h</sup> perform it until the day <sup>i</sup> of Jesus Christ :

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because <sup>j</sup> I have you in my heart ; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the <sup>k</sup> defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers <sup>l</sup> of my grace.

b Ro. 1:7. c or, mention. d Ep. 1:14, &c. e 1 Th. 1:2. f He. 10:35. f Ps. 138:8. g Ja. 6:29. h or, finish. i 2 Pe. 3:10. j or, ye have me in your. k ver. 17. l or, with me of grace.

poor meet together in Him : and the ministers must not make a difference in their care and tenderness on these accounts, Ja. 2: 1. *Saints in Christ Jesus* ; saints are accepted only by being in Christ Jesus, or as they are *Christians*. Out of Christ, the best saints are *sinners*, unable to stand before God.

2. The *ministers*, or church-officers, the *bishops* and *deacons*. The *bishops* or elders, in the first place, whose office it was to teach and rule ; and the *deacons*, or overseers of the poor, who took care of the outward business of the house of God ; the *place*, the *furniture*, the *maintenance* of the ministers, and *provision* for the poor. These were all the offices then known in the church, and of divine appointment. The apostle, in the direction of his epistle to a Christian church, acknowledges but two orders, which he calls *bishops* and *deacons*. And whosoever shall consider, that the same characters and titles, the same qualifications, the same acts of office, and the same honor and respect, are everywhere ascribed throughout the N. T. to those who are called *bishops* and *presbyters*, (as Dr. Hammond and other learned men allow,) will find it difficult to make them a different *office*, or distinct *order* of ministry in the scripture-times.

III. The apostolical *benediction*, v. 2. It

is the same, almost, in all the epistles ; we must not be shy of *forms*, though we are not to be tied to them, especially such as are not scriptural. The only form in the O. T. is that of a *benediction*, Nu. 6: 23—26. So in the N. T., the good wished, is spiritual good, *grace and peace* ; the free favor and good-will of God ; and all the blessed fruits and effects of it : and that *from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ* ; jointly from them both, though in a different way : from God our Father, but in and through our *Lord Jesus Christ* ; Christ, as Mediator, and the Channel of conveyance.

V. 3—6. The apostle proceeds to *thanksgiving* ; he tells them he thanked God on their account. Observe,

1. Paul remembered them : he bore them much in thought, though at a distance from them. As he often thought of them, so he often spake of them ; and the very mention of them was grateful to him : it is a pleasure to hear of the welfare of an absent friend.

2. He remembered them *with joy*. At Philippi he was evil-entreated, scourged, put into the stocks, and for the present saw little fruit of his labor ; yet he remembers Philippi with joy. He looked upon his sufferings for Christ as his credit, comfort, crown ; so far was he from being ashamed, or loth to hear of the scene of his sufferings.

3. He remembered them in *prayer*, v. 4. the best remembrance of our friends. Paul was much in prayer for all his friends, for these particularly. It should seem, he mentioned at the throne of grace the several churches he was interested in, particularly, and by name. God gives us leave to be thus free with Him ; though, for our comfort, He knows whom we mean, when we do not name them.

4. He *thanked* God on every joyful remembrance of them. Thanksgiving must have a part in every prayer ; and whatsoever is the matter of our rejoicing, ought to be the matter of our thanksgiving. He thanked God, as well as made *requests with joy*. It encourages us in prayer, and enlarges the heart in praise, to see every mercy coming from the hand of God, as our God. But,

(1.) He thanks God for the comfort he had in them, v. 5. Gospel-fellowship is a good fellowship ; the meanest Christians have fellowship with the greatest apostles ; for the Gospel salvation is a *common salvation*, Jude 3. and they *obtain like precious faith* with them, 2 Pet. 1: 1. The Christian has fellowship in the Gospel, is inter-

ested in all the promises and privileges of the Gospel, from the *first day* of his becoming such. *Until now*. Observe, It is a great comfort to ministers, when they who begin well, hold on and persevere.

Some, by their *fellowship in the Gospel*, understand, their liberality toward propagating the Gospel, and tr. *koinōnian*, not *communion* but *communication*. But, comparing it with Paul's thanksgiving on the account of other churches, it rather seems taken more generally, for the fellowship they had, in faith and hope, and holy love, with all good Christians ; a fellowship in gospel-promises, ordinances, privileges, and hopes ; and this from the *first day until now*.

(2.) For the confidence he had concerning them, v. 6. Paul speaks with much confidence concerning the good estate of others ; hoping well concerning them in the judgment of clarity, and being confident in the judgment of faith, that, if sincere, they should be happy.

Observe here, 1. The work of grace is a good work, a blessed work ; because it makes us good, and is an earnest of good to us.

2. Wherever this good work is begun, it is of God's beginning. We could not begin it ourselves, for we are by nature *dead in trespasses and sins* : It is God who quickens them *who are thus dead*, Eph. 2: 1. Col. 2: 13. 3. The work of grace is but begun in this life ; as long as we are in this imperfect state, there is more to be done. 4. If the same God who begins the good work, did not undertake to finish it, it *would never be finished*. 5. We may be confident God will not forsake, but will finish and crown, *the work of his own hands*. For, *as for God, his work is perfect*. 6. The work of grace will never be perfected *till the day of Jesus Christ*, the day of his *appearance*, when He shall come to judge the world, and finish his mediation ; then He will complete it. We have the same expression, v. 10.

V. 7, 8. The apostle expresses the ardent affection he had for them, and his concern for their spiritual welfare, v. 7. He loved them as his own soul. Observe,

1. Why ; They had received benefit by his ministry, were partakers of that *grace* of God, which, through him, was communicated to them. Receiving benefit by their ministry, makes people dear to their ministers. Or, They were partakers of his affliction by sympathy and concern, and readiness to assist him. This he calls being partakers of *his grace* : for they who suffer with the saints, are, and shall be, comforted with them. He loved them because they

that they both signify *bishops*, one settled in each church by the apostles ; there being no use of the second order in the church, till the numbers of believers increased. Hammond. Beyond doubt, the apostle ordained more than one, either bishops or presbyters, in some of the churches. Acts 14:23. 20:17. Indeed the address fully proves it, as to 'the bishops.' But this learned expositor did not perceive, that one bishop, without any presbyters under him, comes to precisely the same thing, as one presbyter, without any bishop over him. Till the churches were multiplied, the bishops and presbyters were the same ; but afterwards, probably in the times of the apostles, the senior or more eminent presbyter, was called *episcopus*, or *overseer*, not of the church only, but also of its pastors. [Comp. 1 Pet. 5:1,2. Gr.]

(1.) *Bishops, &c.* 'On this, as on most occasions, I see no reason to forsake our venerable guides, the ancient comtrs., who inform us, that these *episkopoi* were the *presbyters* of the several congregations of Christians in Philippi, (and, I would add, its vicinity, to some distance.) On this, see *Whitby's* long and able Diss., who says : "The Gr. and Lat. fathers, with one consent, declare, that *the apostle here calls their presbyters their bishops*. So Chrys., Theod., Gec., Theoph., among the Greeks ; and among the Latins, Jer., Pseud-Ambrose, Pelagius, and Primasius ; and that, not only because *there could be but one bishop, properly so called, in one city* ; but for another, alleged by them all, viz., that *then the names were common to both orders*, the Bishops being called Presbyters, and the Presbyters Bishops." Bl.—'This proves there must have been more than one bishop at Philippi.' Dodd.—'Of consequence, the primitive church, under the apostles, differed from modern episcopacy, where there is but one bishop in a diocese. Still more important : those bishops and deacons are included with the saints in Christ Jesus, the whole forming the body of the church of Christ ; consequently, had experienced the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost ; and surely, to suppose *elders, bishops, and deacons*, engaged as instruments, under the Holy Ghost, for the conversion of others, while unconverted themselves, would be most preposterous.' Hawker.—'The apostle did not mention the bishops and deacons in the inscription of his other epistles, for they were all concerning points of faith and practice ;

but this was a letter of thanks to the church at Philippi for their present to him ; in collecting which, the deacons and bishops may have showed such forwardness, as to merit this mark of respect and gratitude.' Mackn.—*Servants.* 'So all ministers employed in preaching the Gospel are called.' Ros. 'The term is also found in the classics, applied to priests of heathen gods.'

V. 5. *Fellowship.* Some tr. 'communication toward the Gospel,' and understand, the liberality the Philippians had shown the apostle. [Notes, 4:10—20.] But this, in itself, was a far inferior cause of gratitude to God, than the conversion of very many souls, to partake of all the blessings and salvation of Christ ; the sentiment is not at all in the apostle's manner in other epistles, or even in the other parts of the epistle, where he mentions that subject openly and perspicuously ; the word here used, more frequently means *participation*, than *communication*, and even when it has the latter meaning, it implies that the giver made the receiver his *partner*, or a *sharer* with him in his abundance. Sc.

(5.) *Fellowship.* *Koinōnia* : 'participation of Christian doctrine by having embraced the Christian faith,' so Crell., Whit., Grot., Me-noch., Heinr., Ros., our com. vers. and most Eng. trs. Gal. 2:9. 1 Cor. 2:9. Yet there is no occasion to abandon the common interpretation of the Gr. comtrs., also Pierce, Cæder, Mich., Wells, Pyle, Hardy, Storr, and Slade, viz. 'for your liberality in contributing to the furtherance of the interests of the Gospel,' a sense of *koinōnia*, found Ro. 15:26. 2 Co. 8:4. 9:13. Of this they had given striking proofs, [note, † pref.] So that at 4:15. Paul uses the same word. This interpretation is also required by the words following ; and so Phot. and Theod. tr. Bloomf.

V. 6. *He which hath begun, &c. will perform.* 'This may be understood either of the church, or of individual believers. The objection, that confidence of success has a tendency to produce carelessness and indifference, is so contrary to general experience, that we cannot but wonder when we see it mentioned. What so much animates and encourages any person in the progress of a great and good work, as the persuasion that he shall be enabled to complete it ?' Williams.

V. 7. *Defence.* 'Apologia : supposed to have been when he pleaded before Nero, against his Jewish enemies. Ac. 23:17, &c. Grace.'



8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound <sup>m</sup> yet more and more in knowledge and <sup>n</sup> in all <sup>a</sup> judgment;

10 That <sup>o</sup> ye may <sup>p</sup> approve things that are <sup>q</sup> excellent; that ye may be <sup>r</sup> sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;

11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the <sup>s</sup> glory and praise of God.

[Practical Observations.]

12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

13 So that my bonds <sup>t</sup> in Christ are manifest in all <sup>u</sup> the palace, and <sup>v</sup> in all other places;

m 1 Th. 3:12. p or, try. t or, for.  
2 Pe. 3:13. q or, differ. u or, Cesar's  
n or, sense. r Ep. 5:27. court. c. 4:22.  
o Ro. 2:18. s Ju. 15:8. v or, to all others.

adhered to him in his bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel: they were as ready to appear in their places, and according to their capacity, for the defence of the Gospel, as the apostle was in his; therefore he had them in his heart; or, ('as it may be rendered,' says Scott, 'more obviously, and in equal consistency with the idiom of the language,') you have me at heart. The truest mark of respect towards our ministers, is, receiving and abiding by the doctrine they preach.

2. The evidence of it; *It is meet for me, &c.* By this it appeared, that he had them in his heart, because he had a good opinion of them, and good hopes concerning them. Observe, It is very proper to think as well as we can of other people, in all cases.

3. An appeal to God concerning the truth of this, v. 8. either he longed to see them, or to hear from them, or he longed for their

spiritual welfare, and their increase and improvement in knowledge and grace. He longed after them all, even the meanest and poorest; longed greatly after them, or with strong affection and great good-will; and this in the bowels of Jesus Christ, with that tender concern Christ Himself has, and has shown, Oh, how infinitely! to precious souls. Paul was herein a follower of Christ, and all good ministers should aim to be so. Shall not we pity and love those souls whom Christ had such a love and pity for? For this he appeals to God; *God is my record.* He expressed an inward disposition of mind, which God only was Witness to the sincerity of, therefore to Him he appeals.

V. 9—11. These vs. contain Paul's prayers for them. It is an encouragement to us, to know that we are prayed for by our friends, who, we have reason to think, have an interest at the throne of grace. It was intended likewise for their direction in their walk, and that they might labor to answer his prayers for them; for by that it would appear God had answered them. It is an inducement to us to do our duty, that we may not disappoint the expectations of praying friends and ministers. He prays,

1. That they might be a loving people, and that good affections might abound among them, v. 9. He means it of their love to God, one another, and all men. Observe, They who abound much in any grace, need abound more and more; because something is still wanting in it, and we are imperfect in our best attainments.

2. That they might be a knowing, judicious people. We must love God, because of his infinite excellence and loveliness; and love our brethren, because of what we see of his image on them. Strong passions, without knowledge and a settled judgment, will not make us complete in the will of God, and sometimes do more hurt than good. Rom. 10: 2. Jn. 16: 2.

3. That they might be a discerning people, v. 10. that we may, on trial, approve the things which are excellent, and discern their difference from other things. The truths and laws of Christ are excellent; and every one should approve, and esteem them such, and will do so, if candid and discerning.

4. That they might be an honest, upright-hearted people; *That ye may be sincere.* Sincerity is that in which we should have our conversation in the world, and the glory of all our graces.

5. That they might be an inoffensive people; *without offence until the day of Christ:* not apt to take offence; and very careful not to give offence to God or their brethren; so Paul himself, Acts 23: 1. 24: 16. And we must continue, that we may be presented blameless, at the day of Christ, Eph. 5: 27. Jude 24.

6. That they might be a fruitful, useful people, v. 11. From God is our fruit found, therefore from Him it must be asked. The fruits of righteousness are the evidences and effects of our sanctification; and these fruits should really fill us, and wholly take us up. Fear not being emptied by bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, for you will be filled with them. These fruits are by Jesus Christ, by his strength and grace, for without Him we can do nothing. He is the Root of the good olive, from which it derives its fatness. We are strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. 2: 1. and strengthened with might by his Spirit, Eph. 3: 16. and they are unto the glory and praise of God. We must not aim at our own glory in our fruitfulness, but at the praise and glory of God; that God may be glorified in all things, 1 Pet. 4: 11. and whatsoever we do, we must do all to the glory of God, 1 Cor. 10: 31. It is much for the honor of God, when Christians are not only good, but do good, and abound in good works.

V. 12—20. The apostle being now a prisoner at Rome, takes pains, lest they should be stumbled at it, to show how his sufferings were reconcilable to God's wisdom and goodness in employing him.

1. He suffered by the sworn enemies of the Gospel; but they should not be stumbled at this, for it tended to further the Gospel, v. 12.

1. It alarmed those without, v. 13. 'The emperor, the courtiers, the magistrates, know I do not suffer as an evil-doer, but as an honest man, with a good conscience. They know that I suffer for Christ, and not for any wickedness.' Paul's sufferings made him known at court, where, perhaps, he

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—11. Alas! how often are faithful pastors constrained to make request 'with tears,' instead of 'with joy,' for those in whom they once were confident, but for whom they now tremble! We may, however, be always confident, that God 'will perform his good work' in every soul, in which He has really begun it, by regeneration; though we should warn men not to trust in superficial appearances, sudden emotions, external reformation, change of sect or sentiment, or in anything short of 'a new creation' unto holiness.—We cannot, in general, pray for ourselves, and in behalf of those who possess that 'faith

which worketh by love,' in a better manner, than by copying the example before us, and requesting, that 'our love may abound yet more and more,' and be exercised 'in knowledge and in all judgment,' that we and they may 'discern between things that differ,' and know how to choose the good and refuse the evil; that we may be sincere and diligent disciples, preserved from all scandals and offences, and 'filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are, through Christ, to the praise and glory of God.'

Bonds, imprisonment, and persecutions, accounted by Paul, as marks of divine favor. And so the ancient contrs., and Grot., Ham., Noesselt, Storr, Jaspis.

V. 9. Judgment.] *Epignōsis*: discernment, so *Theoph.*; that natural sense, says *Heinr.*, by which they discern and feel what is true, right, and excellent in Christian doctrine. "Perception or discrimination of right and wrong." *Stale.* *Whitby* says, the word is so used 20 times in Prov. and refers to Heb. 5:14. The prayer, *Heinr.* thinks, is, that the increase of their love may have added to it a perpetual increase of knowledge. [Or, as *Dr. Dwight* somewhere, it is believed, uses the phrase; might not only know that they loved God, but know that they knew it. I. e., that feeling, mere blind, impulsive feeling, which so many are apt to mistake for religion, might be united with intellectual appreciation, and conscientious approval, intelligent conviction. Ed.] *Ros.* remarks, that love is increased by divine knowledge and understanding; since the more we understand of the benefits of God and Christ, and the more we experience the force of heavenly truths [and know of heavenly laws and universal relations], the more [if we begin right] is our love to God and Christ augmented. This may be true; but I think it is not the truth Paul means: and that the ancients were right in supposing he meant to pray, that their knowledge and understanding might keep pace with that increase of love and affection: since, by that mean, Christian love produces better fruits. [Could this prayer take effect on the church now, how soon would the dreadful results of sectarianism cease!] The Philippians had, it seems, been, from the first, docile, well-disposed, and kind-hearted. But, as would appear from the words following, their simplicity had been somewhat abused by crafty false teachers, chiefly Judaizers, &c. *Bl.* *Knowledge and judgment.*] 'The former is explained of speculative, and the latter of practical knowledge; but I think the idea better preserved by rendering the original, perception, or inward sensation. He wishes they might not only know the principles which recommend candor and benevolence, but feel their influence on their hearts.'

which differ,' is more exact than the text; but it is evident, that 'to distinguish things which differ,' was especially intended, and to guard against counterfeit revelations, false affections, and all those specious errors and evils, by which Satan and his ministers imposed on the unwary.

(10.) *Howe* introduces this text to show, that we need the light of the Spirit to help us to apprehend, to consider, to judge, and determine our actions agreeably to that judgment. *Doddr.*—*Things that are excellent.*] 'Paul intimates, that a knowledge of men and things, and a delicate sensibility, or "moral feeling," was necessary to guard the Philippians against being imposed upon.'

V. 11. Unto . . . God.] For the heathen, say *Chrys.* and *Theoph.*, claimed the praise of performing that part of *dikaiosunē* [tr. righteousness] which regards men; but it was done through vainglory, and to gain human approbation, and not in the way Christ would have it, namely, to the praise and glory of God. *Bl.* How much of modern Christianity would stand the test of this precept? How uncommon is it, to do everything we do from supreme love and regard to God and his will!

V. 12—14. The apostle had probably been informed, that the Philippians feared lest his imprisonment should check the progress of the Gospel, and intimidate others from preaching or embracing it; and no doubt Satan and his servants desired and expected this effect from it. *Scott.*

(13.) 'So that it is manifest, that my bonds and imprisonment, suffered on account of Christ's religion only, and not for any fault, are become plain to all the Pretorians, and to all other persons.' *Pierce, Mackn., Ros., Heinr. Bl.* Indeed, as the government was military, and the intercourse between Rome and the provinces was kept up, over military roads, and by military couriers, and interchange of captains and governors, and as Paul was now at the head-quarters and focus of this Roman intelligence and intercourse, he could not have been placed in circumstances better calculated to have his case and the Gospel known and talked of, in an empire without newspapers.

V. 10. Approve.] The marginal reading, 'Try,' or *pr. ve.* 'things

Palace.] *Praitōrion*: it may signify, lit. the Pretorian camp or pal-



14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will.

16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds;

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

18 What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

[Practical Observations.]

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

w Ro. 8:28. y Ro. 5:5. a Ro. 14:7,8.  
x 2 Co. 1:11. z Ep. 6:19,20. b Re. 14:13.

would never have otherwise been known; hence, some might inquire after the Gospel for which he suffered, who might otherwise have never heard of it. When his bonds were manifest in the palace, they were manifest in all other places. The sentiments of the court have a great influence on the sentiments of all people.

2. It imboldened those within, v. 14. As his enemies were startled, so his friends were

PRACT. OBS. V. 12—20. The consideration, that the Lord 'worketh all things after the counsel of his own will,' should reconcile us even to those afflictive dispensations, which seem to preclude us from usefulness. He often works by apparent contraries; and his most able ministers have been immured in prisons, that their 'bonds in Christ' might bring the knowledge of his truth into the courts of justice, nay, even into the palaces of princes; and the blood of the martyrs has more abundantly made fruitful the good seed of the Word of God. Nay, the extreme sufferings and cruel death of his saints, instead of intimidating, have infused courage into their brethren, while they witnessed the triumphant consolations of the happy sufferers. Indeed, Satan will endeavor to prevent these blessed effects, even by stirring up men 'to preach the Gospel' from unworthy motives; and Christ and his truth have often been preached, in order to grieve, perplex, or expose to enmi-

ty and persecution, his faithful, suffering servants! So varied are the effects of human depravity! The painful and vexatious circumstances, which sometimes attend these transactions, will 'turn to our salvation,' if we bear them in a proper manner, through 'the supply of the Spirit of Christ,' granted in answer to the prayers made for us, and by us. Our 'earnest expectation and hope' should be, not to be honored by men, or to escape the cross, but to be so upheld amidst contempt and affliction, that we may not be put to shame, or disgrace the cause of God, and that we may act with such boldness and constancy, amidst dangers and enemies, that 'Christ may be magnified in our bodies,' whether by our laborious services and protracted sufferings, or by the honorable conclusion of our work and warfare. Rom. 6:12, 13, 16—19. 12:1. 1 Cor. 6:13—20. SCOTT.

acc, says Bloomf.; who, however, thinks it too harsh to supply places, and read all other places: and so prefers, 'with most recent comrs., to take praetorium for the Praetorians themselves, the whole camp, and (by their means) to all others, i. e. to the public at large. Some [see Mackn.] take praetorium to denote the palace, called by the provincials, Praetorium, since that was the name given to the residence of the provincial, military governors. But it is observed, by Heinr. and Rox., the custody of the emperor's prisons (over which he who was placed in command, bore the title of praefectus praetorii) was called praetorium. Hence, by metonymy, the same name was applied to the praetorian camp, situated at Rome. [Map in pref. to Romans, and cut (d) end of Ezek.] See Acts 23:16. where it is related, that Paul was delivered in charge to the praefectus praetorii, and bound with a chain to a soldier? Bl. From his situation, being frequently present at, or habitually hearing talk about the military exercises, &c. of the camp, (note, end of Eph.,) Paul seems to have borrowed some striking allusions, comp. 2 Tim. 2:3—5. Eph. 6:11—17. Ed. 'In Rome, the public hall, where the praetor determined causes; or more commonly a place without the city, where the praetorian cohorts, [comp. plan of Rome, pref. to Rom.] or regiments of guard, were stationed: in the provinces, the governor's palace, Mk. 15:16. Acts 23:35. both because the governors administered justice there, and there had also their guards stationed. The apostle, though writing from Rome, yet writing to those in the provinces, uses the word here in the provincial sense.' MACKNIGHT.

(14.) Persecution helps what it would hinder, as it always excites our best sympathies in favor of the persecuted. Hence the proverb, 'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.'

V. 15. It is not certain who these preachers [who preached Christ out of envy and strife] were, or whether they meant to excite divisions between the Jewish and Gentile converts, or to stir up the persecuting rage of idolaters against the apostle, for boldly propagating a doctrine

heartened. Upright men shall be astonished at this, and the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite. The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he who hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger, Job 17: 8, 9.

When his friends saw Paul imprisoned for Christ, they were so far from being deterred from preaching Christ, and praising his name, that it made them the more bold; they could gladly suffer in Paul's company. Besides the comfort Paul had in his sufferings, his extraordinary consolations, received from Christ, greatly encouraged them. They were more fully satisfied and persuaded by what they saw. Observe the power of divine grace; what was intended by the enemy to discourage the preachers of the Gospel, was overruled for their encouragement. And are much more bold to speak the Word without fear: they see the worst of it, therefore are not afraid to venture. Their confidence gave them courage, and their courage preserved them from fear.

II. Paul suffered from false friends, as well as from enemies, v. 15, 16. and they thought to grieve his spirit, and make him afraid of losing his interest, uneasy under his confinement, and impatient for release. This might stumble some; and it is sad, that there should be men who should preach the Gospel through party strife.

However, others were animated by Paul's suffering, to preach Christ the more vigorously, and from sincere affection. They knew Paul was appointed to support and propagate the Gospel, and were afraid lest it should suffer by his confinement. This made them the more bold to preach the Word, and supply his lack of service to the church.

It is very affecting to see how easy the apostle was, in the midst of all, v. 18. so far from envying those who had liberty while he was in confinement, he rejoiced in the preaching of the Gospel, even by those who did it in pretence, and not in truth. How much more then should we rejoice in the preaching of the Gospel, by them who do it in truth, yea, though it should be with much weakness, and some mistake!

He rejoices in the preaching of the Gospel:

1. As tending to the salvation of the souls of men, v. 19. What reward can they expect, who preach Christ out of strife, and envy, and contention, and to add affliction to a faithful minister's bonds; who preach in pretence, and not in truth? And yet even this may turn to the salvation of others; and Paul's rejoicing in it turned to his salvation, too. This noble spirit appeared in John the Baptist, at the first public preaching of Christ, Jn. 3:29, 30. 'Let Him shine, though I am obscured; and his glory be exalted, though on my ruins.' Others understand it of the malice of his enemies being defeated, and contributing toward his deliverance from his confinement; through your prayers, and the supply of the Spirit of Christ. Note, Whatever turns to our salvation, is by the supply, or the aids and assistance of, the Spirit of Christ; and prayer is the appointed means of fetching in that supply.

2. It would turn to the glory of Christ, v. 20, where he takes occasion to mention his own entire devotedness to the service and honor of Christ. His great desire was, as it is of every true Christian, that Christ may be magnified and glorified; that his name may be great, and his kingdom come; that Christ may be magnified with every member of his body, Rom. 6:13. as well as faculty of his soul. In nothing would he be ashamed of Christ; but would serve Him boldly, with freedom and liberty of mind, and without discouragement. The boldness of Christians is the honor of Christ; and Paul, if Christ may be magnified in his body, will maintain a holy indifference, whether it be by life or by death. He refers it to Him, which way He will make him serviceable to his glory, whether by labor or suffering; by diligence or patience; by living to his honor in working for Him, or dying to his honor in suffering for Him.

V. 21—26. We have here an account of the life and death of blessed Paul: his life was Christ, and his death gain. It might be thought, if death was his gain, he would be weary of life, and impatient for death. No, says he, v. 22. If I live in the flesh, this

subversive of idolatry, or that of the emperor and statesmen against him, for 'preaching another King, one Jesus.' But the whole tenor of his writings and conduct shows, that if the doctrine which they taught had been materially erroneous, he would have opposed them, instead of rejoicing in the success of the preachers. Gal. 1:6—10. 2:1—5. SCOTT.

(15.) Some from envy and strife.] 'Who? Not surely regenerated men? Yet, is it not possible? May not jealousy appear [even] in the ministry? Alas! where, or in what state on earth, is a child of God exempt from corruption, in all that pertains to the flesh? As to those who preached Christ out of good-will, there is something very blessed in it. But what we have most to admire here is, that the great soul of the apostle rejoiced at everything, and in everything, provided Christ was the one glorious subject of all preaching.' HAWKER.

V. 16. To add, &c.] By ruining Paul's reputation, and so strengthening his enemies; also, by exciting the fury of the ignorant multitude, or rulers, against him; and to increase the severity of his bonds, by malignantly preaching Christ with excessive publicity. See Doddr. and Bl. Ed.

(18.) What, then, signifies saying more? Paul thinks, it was better the heathens and Jews should have some, than no knowledge of Christ. See Rosenm. and Bloomf. Let those consider this, who object to missions, and withhold their aid, because they are not in their view perfect, or precisely such as they would have them. Id.

V. 19. Salvation.] The connexion between 'salvation,' and the 'supply of the Spirit of Christ,' fully proves, that eternal salvation and not temporal deliverance was meant. Rom. 3:11—14. SCOTT.

(19.) 'Some refer this to a temporal deliverance; but Doddr. observes, that such an event could not be said to proceed from the supply of the Spirit of Christ.' HENRY, abr.

V. 21—26. With peculiar animation, the apostle here declared the happy frame of his mind, in his perilous situation. He had no other



22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire <sup>c</sup> to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far <sup>d</sup> better:

24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith;

26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me, by my coming to you again.

27 Only <sup>e</sup> let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ; that, whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye <sup>f</sup> stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving <sup>g</sup> together for the faith of the gospel;

28 And in nothing terrified <sup>h</sup> by your adversaries: which <sup>i</sup> is to them an evident token of perdition, but <sup>j</sup> to you of salvation, and that of God.

29 For unto you it is given, <sup>k</sup> in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

30 Having the same conflict which <sup>l</sup> ye saw <sup>m</sup> in me, and now hear <sup>n</sup> to be in me.

c 2 Co. 5:8. g Jude 3. j Ro. 8:17.  
d Ps. 16:11. h Is. 51:7,12. k Ac. 5:41.  
e Ep. 4:1. c. 3:20. Mat. 10:23. l Ac. 16:19.  
f c. 4:1. i 2 Th. 1:5. m 1 Th. 2:2.

is the fruit of my labor, i. e. Christ is. It is worth while for a good Christian and a good minister to live in the world, as long as he can glorify God, and do good to his

PRACT. OBS. V. 21—30. We are most of us very far from having made that progress in the divine life which holy Paul had; yet, if true believers, we habitually consider Christ as 'our Life.' Our main interest, work, honor, and comfort in this world, are centered in Him, and his glory is the great end, to which we would direct all our conduct. In proportion to the depth of our experience in this respect, should be our well-grounded assurance, that to 'die will be our gain.' If we have this earnest of our inheritance, death can take us away from nothing but what is vain, vexatious, defiling, ensnaring, and utterly insufficient for our felicity; and it will convey us to the fountain-head of those holy joys, which here we relished, and from time to time had tastes of, but were never able to participate without alloy or interruption; and what a blessedness must that be, which can render death the richest gain, and make us long earnestly for the approach of 'the king of terrors,' as the messenger of our Father, to put us in possession of our eternal inheritance!—How cold and heartless, compared with this, are philosophy's applauded antidotes against the fear of death! We cannot read even

business, interest, honor, or pleasure, for which 'to live,' but Christ, and his glory, service, and favor.—'Christ is gain to me living and dying,' (21.) Thus Beza, and many others, tr. and understand the words; but the antithesis between the two parts of the v. is thus destroyed; the meaning is comparatively cold, nay, selfish; and, though I would speak diffidently, after such eminently learned critics, the original seems incapable of this construction.—'The original is the highest superlative which it is possible to form in any language.' Mackn. 'Better, beyond all comparison and expression.' Doddr. 'Could Paul think a state of insensibility much better than a life tending so much, as his did, to the glory of God, to the propagation of the Gospel, and to the furtherance of the joy of Christians?' Whitby.—'The doctrine of the soul's immediate happiness, with Christ in glory, is here declared, beyond almost the possibility of doubt, except as men disbelieve the apostle's testimony. 2 Cor. 5:1—8. SCOTT.

(21, 22.) 'Life has its enjoyments, and is not the contemptible thing we make it, but heaven on earth, when it is conducted on right principles, directed to a right end, and devoted to the will of God. What would we have more, when the way to heaven is through heaven; if quiet passions, regular desires, contented minds, pure wills, well-grounded hopes, holy longings, happy foretastes, communion with God, and reconciliation to death, can make it so.'

(22.) 'But if my life, in the flesh, be of use to the Gospel (be it so, I say no more), verily, what I shall choose, I see and know not.' Bl.

(23.) 'In a strait.' A nautical phraseology, in allusion to a ship at anchor, and yet likely to be forced to sea by the winds; which represents Paul's attachment to his position in the church, and the vehemence of his desire to be unbound, for so the Gr. Doddr.—'This plainly proves,

church. Yet Paul was in a strait betwixt two, not two evil things, but two good things, two blessings,—living to Christ, and being with Him. Here we have him reasoning with himself on the matter.

I. His inclination was for death. See the power of faith and of divine grace; it can make us willing to die, though death is the greatest natural evil, v. 23. *having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ.* Observe, 1. It is *being with Christ*, which makes a departure desirable to a good man. 2. As soon as ever the soul departs, it is immediately with Christ, Lu. 23: 43. 2 Cor. 5: 8. and this is *far better, very much exceeding, or vastly preferable*: for if we come to be with Christ, farewell sin and temptation, farewell sorrow and death, for ever!

II. His judgment was, rather to live a while longer in this world, for the service of the church, v. 24. Observe, They who have most reason to desire to depart, should be willing to continue in the world as long as God has any work for them to do. Thus, to advance the interest of Christ and his church, Paul chose rather to tarry here, where he met with oppositions and difficulties, and to deny himself for a while the satisfaction of his reward. Nay, he had confidence, that he should abide and continue with them all for their furtherance and joy of faith, v. 25. He had great confidence that Divine Providence would order all for the best to him; for whatsoever is best for the church, we may be sure God will do. Observe, what ministers are continued for: for our furtherance and joy of faith, our further advancement in holiness and comfort. What promotes our faith, and joy of faith, is very much for our furtherance in the way to heaven. There is need of a settled ministry, not only for the conviction and conversion of sinners, but for the edification of saints, and their furtherance in spiritual attainments.

So the apostle would add to the joy of the Philippians in his hope of coming to them again, v. 26. Observe, The continuance of ministers with the church, ought to be the rejoicing of all who wish well to its

interests. All our joys should terminate in Christ. Our joy in good ministers should be our joy in Christ Jesus for them; for they are but the friends of the Bridegroom, and are to be received in his name, and for his sake.

V. 27—30. The ch. concludes with two exhortations:

I. To strictness of conversation, v. 27. Observe, They who profess the Gospel of Christ, should have their conversation as becomes the Gospel, or in a suitableness and agreeableness to it. It is an ornament to our profession, when our conversation is of a piece with it. He had spoken, in v. 26. of his coming to them again, and had spoken it with some assurance, though now a prisoner; but he would not have them build on that. Our religion must not be bound up in the hands of our ministers; 'Whether I come or no, let me hear well of you, and do you stand fast.' Whether ministers come or no, Christ is always at hand, Ja. 5: 8. Let me hear of you, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel. Three things he desired to hear of them; and they are all such as become the Gospel.

1. It becomes those who profess the Gospel, to strive for it, to use a holy violence in taking the kingdom of heaven. A man may sleep and go to hell; but he who will go to heaven, must look about him and be diligent.

2. The unity and unanimity of Christians become the Gospel; Strive together, not one with another: all of you must strive against the common adversary. There may be a oneness of heart and affection among Christians, where there is diversity of judgment and apprehensions about many things.

3. Steadfastness becomes the Gospel; Stand fast, &c. It is a shame to religion when the professors of it are off and on, unstable in their minds; such will never excel.

II. He exhorts them to courage and constancy in suffering, v. 28. Our great care must be to keep close to our profession, whatever oppositions we meet with; consid-

Cicero on this subject, without feeling that his vigorous genius languishes for want of interesting topics, and that he at last advances nothing which can at all satisfy the mind, in the prospect of dissolution, and of an unexplored, eternal state. Yet it can hardly be expected, that all believers should be found thus superior to the love of life, and the fear of death; and thus willing to live and suffer, from love to their brethren, when assured of their own salvation. Nor should we 'despise the day of small things,' either in ourselves or others, though we should press forward to this full assurance of hope, this fervor of longing, grateful love, and this entire submission to the Lord's will. This should be our primary, personal concern; and all the company of believers, however divided and subdivided, should consider themselves as one great army; and endeavor to 'stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel,' and to recommend the salvation of Christ to all around them, and diffuse the knowledge of it to 'every creature under heaven,' as far as possible; [and, blessed be God, the facilities for extending his kingdom multiply daily.] SCOTT.

that the separate spirits of good men are with Christ, in such a manner that their state is far better than while they continue in this world; which a state of insensibility cannot possibly be. But Fleming very justly observes, that it will not at all disprove that large accession of happiness after the resurrection, which other Scriptures plainly declare. The Gr. is here tr. *far better*; I know not how more justly to express it, than to render *better, beyond all expression.* DODDR.

(24.) *Needful.* As if he said, There is no need of my going to heaven now, but there is need of my doing my duty, now and always. EN.

(25.) *Know.* 'I. e. have strong confidence of being spared to you till God raise another in my place.' See Stade. The expression, *abide and continue with you*, is a strong one, indicating, not continuance in life, but occasional enjoyment of their society; a beautiful trait of the overflowing kindness of the apostle's heart. BLOOMER.

V. 27—30. The Gr. tr. 'conversation,' denotes the conduct of citizens, when it accords to their privileges, and tends to the credit, safety, peace, and prosperity of the city. Thus, having been most graciously made citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, they ought to act suitably to that high character, and to seek the honor of the Gospel, and the welfare of the church, in all their actions.—Many expositors are very exact, in this and other passages, in distinguishing between the persecutions, which the apostle and the churches were exposed to from the Jews, and those which they endured from the Gentiles. But this rather embarrasses than clears the interpretation; and the practical instructor, if not best sight of, is the same in either case. No doubt, the Jews excited most of the persecutions, to which the apostle was exposed: and his zeal for the admission of the Gentiles into the church, without circumcision, or regard to the ritual law, rendered him peculiarly obnoxious



CHAP. II.

<sup>1</sup> He exhorteth them to unity, and to all humbleness of mind, by the example of Christ's humility and exaltation: <sup>12</sup> to a careful proceeding in the way of salvation, that they be as lights to the wicked world, <sup>15</sup> and comforts to him their apostle, who is now ready to be offered up to God. <sup>19</sup> He hopeth to send Timothy to them, whom he greatly commendeth, <sup>25</sup> as Epaphroditus also, whom he presently sendeth to them.

**I**F there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any <sup>a</sup> bowels and mercies, <sup>2</sup> Fulfil <sup>b</sup> ye my joy, that ye be <sup>c</sup> like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.

<sup>3</sup> Let nothing <sup>d</sup> be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each <sup>e</sup> esteem other better than themselves.

<sup>4</sup> Look not every man on his <sup>f</sup> own things, but every man also on the things of others.

<sup>5</sup> Let this <sup>g</sup> mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

<sup>6</sup> Who, being <sup>h</sup> in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal <sup>i</sup> with God:

a Col. 3:12.	Ja. 3:14.	1 Pe. 2:21.
b Ju. 3:9.	e 1 Pe. 5:5.	h Ju. 1:12.
c 2 Co. 13:11.	f 1 Co. 13:5.	Col. 1:15.
1 Pe. 3:3.	g Ja. 13:14.	1 Jn. 5:18.
d Ga. 5:26.		

ering the condition of the persecuted much better and more desirable than that of the persecutors. Opposers of the Gospel are marked out for ruin; but being persecuted, is a *token of salvation*. Not a certain mark; many hypocrites have suffered for their religion; but it is a good sign we are in good earnest in religion, and designed for salvation, when we are enabled in a right manner to suffer for the cause of Christ.

<sup>V. 29.</sup> For to you it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his name. Here are two precious gifts given, and both on the behalf of Christ; not only the blessedness which is the object of faith, but the grace of faith itself: the ability and disposition to believe is from God. To suffer for the sake of Christ, is a valuable gift, too, a great honor, a great advantage; for we may be very serviceable to the glory of God, which is the end of our

creation, and encourage and confirm the faith of others. And there is a great reward attending it, too, Mat. 5: 11, 12. <sup>2</sup> Tim. 2: 12. always provided we behave under our sufferings with the genuine temper of the martyrs and confessors, v. 30. *Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me; you suffering in the same manner as you saw, and now hear of me that I suffer.* It is not simply the suffering, but the cause; and not only the cause but the spirit, which makes the martyr.

CHAP. II. V. 1—11. The apostle here further exhorts to Christian duties.

<sup>1.</sup> The great gospel-precept to love one another. This he represents, v. 2. We are of a like mind when we have the same love. Christians should be one in affection; it is always in their power, always their duty, and the likeliest way to bring them nearer in judgment. *Having the same love.* Christian love ought to be mutual love. Love, and you shall be loved: *Being of one accord*, &c. not crossing and thwarting, or driving on separate interests; but unanimously agreeing in the great things of God, and keeping the *unity of the Spirit* in other differences. Observe,

<sup>1.</sup> The pathetic pressing of the duty. The inducements to brotherly love are:

*Consolation in Christ.* 'Have you experienced consolation in Christ? Evidence that experience by loving one another.' Or 'Do we expect consolation in Christ? If we would not be disappointed, we must love one another.'

*Comfort of love.* 'If there is any comfort in God's love to you, in your love to God, or in your brethren's love, be ye like-minded.'

*Fellowship of the Spirit.* 'If there is such a thing as communion with God and Christ, by the Spirit, such a thing as the communion of saints, by virtue of their being animated and actuated by *one and the same Spirit*; be ye like-minded: for Christian love and like-mindedness will preserve to us our communion with God, and with one another.'

*Any bowels and mercies*, in God and Christ toward you. 'If ye expect the benefit of God's compassions to yourselves, be

ye compassionate one to another. If there is such a thing as mercy among the followers of Christ; if all who are sanctified have a disposition to holy pity; make it appear this way.'

Another argument he insinuates, is, the comfort it would be to him; *Fulfil ye my joy.* It is the joy of ministers to see people like-minded, and living in love.

<sup>2.</sup> Some means to promote it. *Do nothing through strife and vainglory*, v. 3. There is no greater enemy to Christian love, than pride and passion. If we do things in contradiction to our brethren, that is doing them through *strife*; if we do them through *ostentation* of ourselves, that is doing them through *vainglory*; both are destructive of Christian love, and kindle unchristian heats.

We must *esteem others, in lowliness of mind, better than ourselves*; be severe on our own faults, and charitable in our judgment of others; quick to observe our own defects, but ready to overlook, or make favorable allowances for, those of others. We must esteem the good in others above that in ourselves; FOR WE BEST KNOW OUR OWN UNWORTHINESS AND IMPERFECTIONS.

We must interest ourselves in the concerns of others, not in a way of curiosity and censoriousness, or as *busy-bodies in other men's matters*, but in Christian love and sympathy, v. 4. A selfish spirit is destructive of Christian love. We must *love our neighbor as ourselves*, and make his case our own.

<sup>II.</sup> Here is a *gospel-pattern* proposed to our imitation, and that is the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, v. 5. Christians must be of Christ's mind, Rom. 8: 9. Now what was his mind? Eminently humble, and this we are peculiarly to learn of Him, Mat. 11: 29. If lowly-minded, we should be like-minded; and if like to Christ, lowly-minded. Now here we have the two natures, and the two states, of our Lord Jesus. Observe, The apostle, having occasion to mention the Lord Jesus, and the mind which was in Him, takes the hint to enlarge on his Person, and to give a particular description of Him. It is a pleasing subject, and a gospel-minister needs not think himself out of the way when upon it; any fit occasion should be readily taken.

to them. But it is also evident, that zeal for idolatry and for local customs, and fear of innovations and insurrections, joined with enmity against God and holiness, disposed the Gentiles generally to concur, and often to take the lead in persecution. *Acts 19:23—41.—Striving together.* Contending like wrestlers, earnestly, but in concert with each other, against their common antagonists. (29) *It is given.* 'To suffer for Christ's sake, is grace and favor (7.)' *Whitby.* If so, then 'to believe in Christ,' is grace, the free gift of God, though not unconnected with our exertions, attendance on the means of grace, and prayers. SCOTT.

(27.) *Only, &c.* 'On this passage, so finely representing his own views and hopes, and their glorious Christian prospects, Paul skillfully engrafs an admonition which, from the frailty of human nature can never be unseasonable, and is here introduced most impressively. — *Come.* It will be observed, he does not say he shall come, nor indicate any time at which he should be present.' BLOOMF.

(28.) *Terrified, &c.* 'Hence, and from several other passages in this epistle, it evidently appears, the Philippians were now in a suffering state, a circumstance to be borne in mind, as it illustrates several masterly strokes in the apostle's address to them.' DODDR.

NOTES CHAP. II. V. 1—4. (Notes, 1:27—30. Eph. 4:1—6.) The apostle evidently deemed harmony among Christians essential to 'a conversation becoming the Gospel.'—*Consolation.* The original word signifies exhortation, as well as consolation, or rather an encouraging and animating exhortation. The authority of Christ, speaking by his apostle, as well as the consolation derived from Him, seems implied. The expressions which follow are varied to include all that can be imagined, in the most cordial amity, unity, and sympathy. Let them live together as members of one body, animated by one soul. 1 Cor. 12:12—26. 13: 4—7. SCOTT.

(1.) 'If ye would give me any consolation in my straits, any love-hegotten comfort; if ye will show that ye have any fellowship with me in spirituals, and as to Christ; if ye pity, and your bowels yearn over me for my sufferings; recompense me all these by loving one another.' THEORN. and so *Theod., Chrys., &c.*, and the Syr. Tr. But *Bl.* prefers to tr. *koinōnía pneumatos*, 'unity of mind.' Ed.

V. 5—8. To illustrate and enforce, in the most effectual manner, that conduct which he had recommended, the apostle here called on Christians, to cultivate and manifest the same mind, judgment, and disposition, which had been so conspicuous in Christ Jesus. Rom. 8:5—9. The example can never be done justice to by human language, and all our imitation of such immense condescension, compassion, self-abasement,

self-denial, and liberal, laborious, forgiving, patient, suffering love, must necessarily fall infinitely short of it. In this view of the subject, how important and energetic is the apostle's argument! How striking is the illustration!—But Socinians and others have labored to prove, that the apostle only meant, that 'the Man Jesus, though He acted as the Ambassador and Representative of God, did not think of robbing Him of his glory, by claiming equality with God!' Now this would sink the meaning, not only into insipidity, but absurdity: for it would propose as an example of the most perfect love, self-denial, and humility, a bare exemption from the most horrible impiety and ambition imaginable! as certainly it must be such, for a mere creature, in any possible circumstances, to harbor a thought of aspiring to equality in honor and majesty with the infinite God. Indeed, this sense cannot be consistent with our Lord's frequent and most express declarations concerning Himself. (Jn. 5:17, 18, 23. 8:58. 10:30—33. 14:9, 10.) Nay, the whole interpretation of the passage must be forced and unnatural: the reality of our Lord's human nature, 'in the likeness of man,' and 'in fashion as a man,' might as justly be questioned, as the reality of his Deity; who 'was in the form of God,' and his 'taking upon Him the form of a servant,' and 'becoming obedient,' are unmeaning words, on the Socinian interpretation, but exceedingly emphatical on that [see *Henry*, above] before proposed.—On a portion of Scripture of so great importance, both in respect of its general import, and also in the argument concerning our Lord's Deity; and which, at the same time, has been perplexed by discordant interpretations, more than most other passages; something additional may be properly adduced. 'Who does not perceive, that Paul declares what Christ was, before He assumed "the form of a servant?"... Christ Himself, when He was God, and consequently in that glory and majesty which belong to God alone; and when He did not think that He usurped anything not belonging to Him; yet, as laying aside this glory, abased Himself, even so far as to become such as the servants of God are, i. e. to "become man:" yea, and then also He conducted Himself towards the Father, not as towards his equal, but his Lord; so that He voluntarily submitted to undergo the most ignominious death! And shall not we, mortal and mean slaves, be ashamed of our arrogance, in acting as if we excelled our brethren? This, I say, is Paul's argument, than which nothing can be more weighty and forcible. . . . "He thought it not robbery." Or, as a most learned interpreter renders it, "He did not think it a prey to be seized on." For He refers that which follows to the manifestation made in the flesh; that this should be the meaning; Christ, as God, possessed of eternal glory and majesty, knew indeed that



7 But; made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a <sup>k</sup>servant, and was made in the <sup>l</sup>likeness of men :

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became <sup>m</sup>obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

J Ps. 22:6. k Lu. 22:27. l or, habit. m He. 12:2.

It was just and lawful for Him to appear, not in humble flesh, but with a dignity worthy of God; but He chose rather to abase Himself. . . But I think that this also belongs to the pristine glory of Christ, which He mentions, *Jn. 17:5*. and that this is the meaning: Christ, when possessed of that eternal glory of Deity, was not ignorant, that in this thing, (i. e. in being coequal with God the Father,) He did no injury to any one, but used his own right: nevertheless He, as it were, receded from his right, when He reduced Himself even to nothing, by "taking on Him the form of a servant." *Beza*.—The word, rendered *robbery*, is not found in any other place in the N. T., and but very seldom in other writers; yet the derivation of it fixes it to the meaning given to it in our tr. The word rendered *equal*, is *isa*, not *ison*; and many have argued from this circumstance, that *similitude*, not *equality* is meant; but the learned Bp. Pearson has shown, that *isa*, especially used with *einai*, may express equality as well as *ison*.—*Socinus* inquires, 'How can God be said to be equal to Himself?' To this, it may be answered, that the Son may be equal to the Father, in the unity of the Godhead, which is all that the apostle's language implies, and all that Trinitarians contend for: nor can this be denied, without hegging the question, and denying that there is any distinction of Persons in the unity of the Godhead.—'He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant; being made in the likeness of men.' Thus Bp. Pearson literally tr. v. 7.—'If any man doubt how Christ 'emptied Himself,' the text will satisfy him; By 'taking on Him the form of a servant;' and if any still question, how 'He took on Him the form of a servant,' he has the apostle's answer; By 'being made in the likeness of men.'—Here it may be observed, that if Christ had originally been a creature of God, He must have been also his servant, before his incarnation: and this is conclusive against the Arians, as well as the Socinians.—So afterwards, 'Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' As therefore his humiliation consisted in his obedience unto death; so his emptying Himself, consisted in 'taking on Him the form of a servant,' and that in the nature of man. The clauses are connected in the original, not by way of conjunction, in which there might be some diversity; but by way of opposition, which signifies a clear identity. The grand point, in order to understand the passage, is this, to determine in what sense Christ 'was in the form of God,' and how 'He emptied Himself;' and the above remarks, suggested by Bp. Pearson's learned and able disquisitions on the passage, and sometimes in his words, give, as it appears to me, the most complete satisfaction. (*Note, Mat. 17:1, 2*).—The passage indeed is full to the point, as to our Lord's Deity; and all, who oppose this construction of it, are evidently baffled in the argument: so that, after all their efforts, it stands unmoved, as the deep-rooted rocks amidst the raging billows. But, had some deeper impression been made on it, the Bible would still afford the humble believer abundant proof of this 'great Mystery of godliness,' on which every well-grounded human hope must be established. *1 Tim. 3:16*.

SCOTT.

V. 5—11. *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:* (*Mat. 11:29. 20:26—28. Lu. 22:27. Jn. 13:15. Ac. 10:33. 20:35. Ro. 14:15. 15:3,5. 1 Co. 10:33. 11:1. Eph. 5:2. 1 Pe. 2:21. 4:1. 1 Jn. 3:6*) who being in the form of God, (*Is. 7:14. 8:8. 9:6. Jer. 23:6. Mic. 5:2. Mat. 1:23. Jn. 1:1,2,13. 17:5. Ro. 9:5. 2 Cor. 4:4. Col. 1:15,16. 1 Ti. 1:17. 3:16. Ti. 2:13. He. 1:3,6,8. 13:8*) thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (*Gen. 3:2. 24—30. 48:15,16. Ex. 3:2—6. Jos. 5:13—15. Illos. 12:3—5. Zech. 13:7. Jn. 5:18,23. 8:58, 59. 10:30,33. 14:9. 20:28. Rev. 1:17,18. 21:6*) but made Himself of no reputation, (*Ps. 22:6. Is. 49:7. 50:5,6. 52:14. 53:2,3. Dan. 9:26. Zech. 9:9. Mk. 9:12. Ro. 15:3. 2 Cor. 8:9. He. 2:9—13. 12:2. 13:13*) and took upon Him the form of a servant, (*Is. 42:1. 49:3. 52:7. 13:3. 14:1. He. 2:14—17. 4:15*) and, being found in fashion as a man, (*Mat. 17:2. Mk. 9:2,3. Lu. 9:29*) He humbled Himself (*Pr. 15:33. Ac. 8:33. Heb. 5:7—12. 12:2*) and became obedient unto death, (*Ps. 40:6—8. Is. 50:5,6. Jn. 4:34. 15:10. He. 5:8,9. 10:7—9*) even the death of the cross. (*De. 21:23. Jn. 10:18. 12:28—32. 11:31. Gal. 3:13. Ti. 2:14. He. 12:2. 1 Pe. 2:24. 3:18. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him.* (*He. 3:15. Ps. 2:6—12. 8:5—8. 45:7,7. 63:29,30. 72:17—19. 91:14. 110:1—5. Is. 9:7. 49:6—8. 52:13. 53:12. Dan. 2:44,45. 7:14. Mat. 11:27. 28:18. Lu. 10:22. Jn. 3:35,36. 5:22—27. 13:3. 17:1—3. 5. Ac. 2:32—36. 5:31. Ro. 14:9—11. 1 Cor. 15:24—27. He. 2:9. 12:2. 2 Pe. 1:17. Rev. 1:5. 5:12. 11:15. 19:16*) and given Him a name, which is above every name: (*Ps. 89:27. Eph. 1:20—23. Col. 1:13. He. 1:4. 1 Pe. 3:22*) that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, (*Gen. 41:43. Is. 45:23—25. Mat. 27:29. Ro. 11:4. 14:10,11. Eph. 3:14. He. 1:6. Rev. 4:11. 20:13*) of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: (*Mat. 12:40. Jn. 5:28,29. Eph. 4:9. Rev. 20:13*) and that every tongue should confess, (*Ps. 13:49. marg. Mat. 10:32. Jn. 9:22. 12:42. Ro. 10:9. 15:9. 1 Jn. 4:2,15. 2 Jn. 7. Rev. 3:5*) that Jesus Christ is Lord, (*Ps. 110:1. Je. 23:6. Lu. 2:11. Jn. 20:28. Ac. 2:36. 10:35. Ro. 10:9—12. 14:11. 1 Co. 8:6. 12:3. 15:47*) to the glory of God the Father. (*Jn. 5:23. 13:31. 14:13,23. 16:14,15. 17:1. 1 Pe. 1:21*)

In.

(6.) *Being in the form of God.* [*En morphē Theou huparchōn*: Whitl., Wolf, Crnpz., Ellis, Mackn., very ingeniously interpret thus: "As Paul is speaking of what Christ was, before He took the form of a bondman, the form of God, of which He is said in v. 7. to have divested Himself when He became man, cannot be anything which He possessed, during his incarnation, or in his divested state; consequently, neither Erasmus' opinion, that the form of God consisted in those sparks of divinity, by which Christ, during his incarnation, manifested his Godhead, nor the opinion of the Socinians, that it consisted of the power of working miracles, is well founded. For Christ did not divest Himself either of the one or the other, but possessed both during the whole time of his public ministry. In like manner, the opinion of those who, by the form of God, understand the divine nature and the government of the world, cannot be admitted; since Christ, when He became man, could not divest Himself of the nature of God; and, with respect to the government of the world, we are led by Heb. 1:3. to believe He did not part even with that, but, in his divested state, still upheld all things by the word of his power. Wherefore the opinion of Whitley, &c., adds Mackn., seems better founded, who by the form of God, understand, the visible glorious light, in which the Deity is said to dwell, *1 Tim. 6:16*. and by which He manifested Himself to the patriarchs of old, *De. 5:22, 24*. which was commonly accompanied with a numerous retinue of angels, *Ps. 69:17*. and which is called the *similitude* of the Lord, *Nu. 12:8*. the

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### 1. The two natures of Christ.

(1.) His divine nature; in the form of God, v. 6. This agrees with *Jn. 1:1*. and of the same import are *Col. 1:15*. and *Heb. 1:3*. He thought it not robbery to be equal with God; did not think Himself guilty of any invasion of what did not belong to Him, or assuming another's right, *Jn. 10:30*. It is the highest robbery for any mere man [any creature] to pretend to be equal

with God, or profess Himself one with the Father. This is for a man to rob God, not in tithes and offerings, but of the rights of his Godhead, *Mal. 3:8*.

Some understand being in the form of God, of his appearance, in a divine majestic glory, to the patriarchs, and the Jews, under the O. T.; often called the glory, and the Shechinah. The word is used in such a sense by the LXX, and in the N. T.; *Mk. 16:*

*face, Ps. 31:16. the presence, Ex. 33:15. and the shape, Jn. 5:37*. This interpretation is supported by the term *morphē*, here, which signifies a person's external shape, or appearance, and not his nature or essence. Thus *Mk. 16:12. Mat. 17:2*. This form He had with the Father before the world was, *Jn. 18:5. Heb. 1:3*. and He will appear again with it at the last day, *Mat. 16:27*. Lastly, the sense of *morphē Theou* is confirmed by the sense *morphēn doulou*, [form of a servant,] v. 7. which evidently denotes the appearance and behavior of a bondman, not that Christ was really any person's bondman or slave."

'Yet the proofs of this interpretation seem not such as should induce us to abandon that of the ancients and early moderns, which has also been maintained by many eminent comtrs. for the last century and a half; and among the rest, the great Bp. Pearson, Bull, Burnet, Elsner, &c. in Wolf, and recently Schl. and the venerable Bp. Burgess, also Bp. Tomline, and Abp. Magee, who explain *morphē*, by metonymy, the very nature and essence, the phusis and ousia. So Valpy: "being in the form and nature of God," i. e. being really God. Of this signification several examples are produced by Elsner and Schl., as *Plato, de Rep. 2 p. 431*. I am not willing, I confess, to desert our ancient and venerable guides, who, in points regarding the Divinity of our blessed Savior, the Trinity, &c., rise far above the moderns. Indeed, from whence have the mighty champions of orthodoxy in modern times derived their most powerful arms, but from this quarter, as the works of Bps. Pearson and Bull prove. See D'Oyley and Mant. Bp. Bull (in Burgess) says, this passage is almost sufficient for the refutation of all heresies respecting the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ; as Chrys., Theoph., and Phot., had before said.

'The interpretation of the Socinians, though supported by the acuteness of Crell., and the learning of Grot., Le Clerc, and Ros., will not bear examination, and has been completely refuted by many moderns; see Wolf. Bp. Burnet (in Doddr.) well observes, that "it is extremely cold and insipid, as if it were a mighty argument of humility, that though Christ wrought miracles, which they strangely think signified by 'being in the form of God,' yet He did not set up for supreme deity!" *Huparchōn*, some (as *Suidas*) think, imports *pre-existence*; but it seems sufficient to suppose the word may import *subsisting in the real form of God, one with, and equal to, the Father.*'

BLOOMP.

As to *thought it not robbery, &c.*, Bl. prefers (with Greg., Naz., Bp. Middleton, the ancients, and Ros. and Schl., in part) the explanation of Theoph. and Chrys. 'He did not eagerly seize and tenaciously hold; thus says Theoph. "When any one seizes anything, he is afraid to lay it down, lest he should lose it, as being not his own: but when any one has anything by nature, he can very well disregard it, knowing that he has something which he cannot lose; and if he chooses to lay it down, he can take it up again. Paul therefore means to say, 'The Son of God was not afraid to descend from his own dignity, since he had not this by rapine, namely, the being equal with God the Father, but knew it was his natural dignity. Therefore He chose even to humble Himself, as, even in his humiliation, still retaining his exaltedness.'" So Theod.

ED.

'As to the words, *to be equal with God (to einai isa Theō)*, few things ever more surprised me, on seriously applying myself, with the apparatus of very many years of classical study, to the interpretation of the N. T., than to find that so many eminent moderns (after Whitley), maintain *isa* to signify not *equality with*, but *similarity to*; a signification of which there are many examples in the classics, but none, I think, in such a context as the present. It is a frivolous argument (of Whitley), that, if Paul had meant *equality with*, he would have written *ison*, as *Jn. 5:18*. for Paul is not John, and often uses greater liberties than this. Indeed, I see no reason to desert the universal opinion of the ancients and early moderns, that *isa* is put for *ison*. And so that learned and accurate scholar Schl. revives this opinion, though scouted by the German comtrs.; and gives, as examples, *Job 5:4. 10:10. 15:16. Hippocr. Jureju. col. i. p. 42. Ælian, V. H. 8, 38*; referring also to Glass, Phil. Sacr. p. 65. I have also met with several instances in the classics, and I think *isa* is put for *kat' isa merō*, at equal shares, on an equal footing, equality. Doddr. and Slade tr. "to be even as God, assuming the highest divine names, titles, and attributes, by which God has made Himself known, and receiving from his servants divine honors and adoration." This is the same sense, but liable to perversion. Finally, Schl. renders, "non rapinam duxit, Dei personam sustinere, seu æqualem naturā et majestatem Deo esse."

BLOOMP.

(6—8.) The word translated "*robbery*," J. P. Smith would render, with many of the fathers, "an object to be caught at;" considering the sense to be, that our Lord did not ostentatiously show, or glory and boast, of his being equal with God. He adds: "whether this allusion be admitted or not is of little importance; as in any case the idea is plainly indicated, that the object intended would not have been, to Jesus Christ, an act of seizure, a usurpation, a thing to which He had no right, but on the contrary that to which He had a just claim, to waive which is shown by this passage to have been an act of the most gracious condescension and humiliation."—"In the form of God," J. P. Smith considers may be expressed as having the characteristics of God. He observes, that, with respect to this contrast, "if the characteristics of human nature mark the Savior incontrovertibly to be man, so the distinguishing characteristics of God must denote that which is peculiar and distinctive to the Divine Being. "He humbled Himself." The idea is, that of reduction from a previous state of fulness or excellency, referring to a pre-existent state of dignity and glory." J. P. Smith. "He humbled Himself." J. P. Smith considers this is to be understood in the sense of the O. T. phrase, "to afflict the soul," an expression applied to persons who underwent voluntary sufferings from religious motives. He remarks on all the parts of the passage, "that, under every variety of fair interpretation, none appears tenable which does not recognize a nature



9 Wherefore <sup>n</sup> God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus <sup>o</sup> every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;

11 And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is <sup>p</sup> Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work <sup>q</sup> out your own salvation with <sup>r</sup> fear and trembling:

n He. 2:9. p Jn. 13:13. 27-29 He. 4:11-12. Re. 3:1. Ro. 14:9. 2 Pe. 1:5-10. o Is. 45:23. q Pr. 10:16. Jn. 6: r Ep. 6:5. Re. 5:13.

12. He appeared to the two disciples, in another form: Mat. 17:2. He was transfigured before them. And, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God; He did not greedily catch at, or covet and affect to appear in that glory; He laid aside the majesty of his former appearances, while here on earth; which is supposed the sense of the peculiar expression. Vid. Bp. Bull's Def. cap. 2. sect. 4. et alibi, and Whitby in locum, [and Macknight.]

(2.) His human nature; He was made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man. He was really and truly man; took part of our flesh and blood; appeared in the nature and habit of man, and voluntarily. Herein He emptied Himself; divested Himself of the honors and glories of the upper world, and of his former appearance.

2. His two estates.

(1.) Of humiliation. He not only took

in the Messing distinct from the human,—pre-existent, superior to all that is glorious and excellent in dependent existence, and really divine." HENRY Abr. To be equal ] 'To be and appear as God. So the original words are most exactly rendered.' DODDR.

V. 9—11. When the eternal Word, 'the Son of God,' had fulfilled his engagements as our incarnate Surety; God the Father 'most highly exalted Him,' in our nature, by advancing Him to the mediatorial throne. For the two circumstances, that it is Christ, as Man, who is thus exalted, and that He is exalted as Mediator, renders this perfectly consistent with his eternal glory and dominion, as 'God over all, blessed for evermore.' (Ref.—Notes, Ja. 5:20—23.) The absolute kingdom of the Creator, and the mediatorial kingdom of the Redeemer, established for the benefit and salvation of rebels against the Creator, who are condemned by his law, must be distinguished. (Note, 1 Cor. 15:20—23.) It was in consequence of the engagements of the eternal Son, that the reign of mercy was introduced. (Note, Jn. 1:17.) For this 'joy set before Him, He endured the cross, &c.' (Note, Heb. 12:2, 3.) Nothing could be deducted from his authority as God, nor anything added to it: but it did not consist with the honor of the divine law, and justice, to deal with men, except through a Mediator, who was One with the Father; and One with them, their Surety, Sacrifice, and Intercessor. The mediatorial kingdom alone was 'given' to Christ, and given to Him as Man: but had He not been God also, and possessed of all divine perfections, how could He possibly have administered it? (Note, Mat. 28:18.) Thus God the Father 'gave Him a name,' and a degree of honor and authority, above that of every other name; so that no created being ever was or could be so honored, as He was, who had been 'the Man of sorrows,' and was crucified between two thieves! (Ref.—Notes, Eph. 1:9—12, 15—23.) Inasmuch that, 'at the name of Jesus,' the name given to a poor Babe, born in a stable, and laid in the manger, (because that Babe was Emmanuel, 'God with us,' that Child born, that Son given, was the 'mighty God,') 'every knee should bow,' in submission and adoration. (Notes, Mat. 1:20—23. Lu. 2:8—14. Rev. 5:11—14.) I. e. all rational creatures should either willingly adore Him; or be punished as the enemies of God and his kingdom. This includes angels and saints in heaven, men on earth, the bodies of the dead who are under the earth, the souls of the wicked in a separate state; and indeed all the principalities and powers of darkness. In short, 'every tongue shall confess,' every creature must, one way or another, acknowledge, 'that Jesus Christ is Lord,' the Lord of all, 'the Lord of glory,' yea, JEHOVAH the Savior; and this will be so far from interfering with the honor of God the Father (as Anti-trinitarians object) that it will be to his glory. For 'He and the Father are One;' and the whole Deity is more displayed and glorified, in the Person and Redemption of Christ, before the whole universe, than by all other divine operations and discoveries; so that all the honor and worship which is rendered to the Person of the Son, as 'God manifest in the flesh,' is virtually rendered to the Godhead through the medium of his humanity, by which alone sinners can know, approach, or worship the infinite God. (Ref.—Notes, 1:9—11. v. 11. Ps. 2:10—12. Is. 45:20—25. Ro. 14:10—12.) 'Surely in JEHOVAH have I righteousness and strength.' This is the language, which both here and in the parallel passage in Rom., Paul applies to Jesus; when he says, 'Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.' Can his meaning be doubted? SCOTT.

the likeness of a man, but the form of a servant, i. e. a man of mean estate. One would think He should have been a Prince, in splendor. But quite the contrary; He took the form of a servant. This was the humiliation of his life. But the lowest step was his dying on the cross; He became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. He not only suffered, but was actually and voluntarily obedient, Jn. 10:18. And He was made under the law, Gal. 4:4. Emphasis is laid on the manner of his dying, which had in it all the humbling circumstances possible; even the death of the cross, a cursed, painful, shameful death; a death accused by the law; full of pain, the body nailed through the nervous parts, and hanging with all its weight on the cross; and the death of a malefactor and a slave, not of a freeman; and exposed as a public spectacle. Such was the condescension of the blessed Jesus!

(2.) His exaltation, v. 9. This was the reward of his humiliation; because He humbled Himself, God exalted Him, his whole Person; as respects the divine nature, it could only be a recognizing his rights, or the display and appearance of the glory He had with the Father before the world was, Jn. 17:5. not any new acquisition of glory; and so the Father Himself is said to be exalted. But the proper exaltation was of his human nature, which alone seems to be capable of it, though in conjunction with the divine. His exaltation here is made to consist in honor and power. In honor; so He had a name above every name; a title of dignity above all the creatures, men or angels. And in power, Every knee must bow to Him. The whole creation must be in subjection to Him; things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth; the inhabitants of heaven and earth, the living and the dead. At the name of Jesus, i. e. the authority of Jesus; all should pay a solemn homage. And that

every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord; every nation and language should publicly own the universal empire of the exalted Redeemer; and that all power in heaven and earth is given to Him, Mat. 28:18. Observe, the vast extent of the kingdom of Christ; it reaches to heaven and earth, and to all the creatures in each; to angels as well as men, and to the dead as well as the living. To the glory of God the Father. Observe, it is to the glory of God the Father, to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord; for it is his will, that all men should honor the Son, as they honor the Father, Jn. 5:23. Whatever respect is paid to Christ, redounds to the honor of the Father; He who receiveth Me, receiveth Him who sent Me. Mat. 10:40.

V. 12, 13. He exhorts them to diligence and seriousness in the Christian course; Work out your own salvation. It is the salvation of our souls, 1 Pet. 1:9. our eternal salvation, Heb. 5:9. deliverance from all evil, and the possession of all good. It is our own salvation, the salvation of our own souls; though we must promote the common salvation, Jude 3. as much as we can, yet we must on no account neglect our own. We are required to work out our salvation; the word signifies working thoroughly at a thing, and taking true pains. Salvation is the great thing we should mind, and set our hearts upon; and we cannot attain salvation without the utmost care and diligence. He adds, With fear and trembling, i. e. with great care and circumspection, Heb. 4:1. Fear is a great guard and preservative from evil. He urges this from the consideration of their readiness always to obey the Gospel, v. 12. They were not merely awed by the apostle's presence, but obeyed even much more in his absence. And because it is God who worketh in you, do ye work out your salvation. It should encourage us to

(9.) 'Nothing can be more evident than that He who was exalted was humbled, and consequently that there was a proper change made in the state and condition of Christ, by that emptying Himself spoken of, v. 7.' Doddr. Name above every name.] 'The name of Jesus. Even the name of Creator is inferior to that name; inasmuch as it was a greater exertion of goodness in the Son of God to save men by his humiliation and death, than to create.' MAERN.

(10.) Things, &c.] 'Epouraniōn, epigeiōn, katachthoniōn: lit. heav- enlies, earthlies, under-earthlies; 'it means, all the persons in the whole universe. Most of the ancients expl. angels, men, and devils; the best moderns, however, expl. katachthoniōn of the departed, which seems preferable.' Bl. Ed. That at the name, &c.] 'In the name,—in humble subjection to his authority and command.' DODDR.

V. 12. Work out (3:13, 14. Pr. 10:16, 13:4. Mat. 11:12, 29. Lu. 13:23, 24. Jn. 6:27—29. Ro. 2:7. 1 Cor. 9:24—27. 15:58. Gal. 6:7—9. 1 Th. 1:3. He. 4:11. 6:10, 11. 12:1. 2 Pe. 1:5—10. 3:13.) your own salvation (2:19. Ro. 13:11—14. 1 Cor. 9:20—3. 2 Ti. 2:10.) with fear and trembling: (Eza. 10:3. Ps. 2:11. 119:130. Is. 66:2, 5. Ac. 9:6. 16:29. 1 Cor. 2:3. 2 Cor. 7:15. Eph. 6:5. He. 4:1. 12:28, 29.) for it is God which worketh in you. (2 Chr. 30:12. Is. 26:12. Jer. 31:33. 32:39. Jn. 3:27. Ac. 11:12. 2 Cor. 3:5. He. 13:21. Ja. 1:16—18.) both to will and to do (1 K. 8:58. 1 Chr. 29:14—15. Eza. 1:1, 5. 7:27. Ne. 2:4. Ps. 110:3. 119:35. 114:1. Pr. 21:1. Jn. 6:45, 65. Eph. 2:4, 5. 2 Th. 2:13, 14. Ti. 3:4, 5. 1 Pe. 1:3.) of his good pleasure. (Lu. 12:32. Ro. 9:11, 16. Eph. 1:5, 9, 11. 2:8. 2 Th. 1:11. 2 Tim. 1:9.) SCOTT.

V. 12, 13. 'The phrase, ("with fear and trembling,") in other places of these books, seems to imply, . . . not only lowliness of mind, but diligence, and caution, and solicitude, and fear of displeasing.' Ham. (Marg. Ref. k.)—'Though we are freely saved in Christ alone, apprehended by faith; yet we must press forward unto salvation in the way of righteousness, seeing that the sons of God are led by the Spirit of Him by whom they are justified, that they may walk in good works.' Beza.—'Salvation,' here, signifies, not justification, either exclusively or primarily, but deliverance from sin and all its consequences, which must be, and will be, diligently and vigilantly labored for by all the regenerate, as long as any sin remains in them, and this salvation will not be in all things completed, till 'death shall be swallowed up in victory.' (Note, Ro. 13:11—14, v. 11.) The righteousness, atonement, and mediation of Christ, have made 'all things ready' for our salvation; the Gospel calls us to partake of it; the regenerating Spirit of Christ quickens us, when dead in sin, and brings us to repentance and faith. Thus excited and animated, we first diligently seek for an interest in Christ; next, to 'make our calling and election sure;' and then, for 'the full assurance of hope unto the end.' (Notes, Heb. 6:11, 12. 2 Pct. 1:5—11.) In this way of diligence we also receive daily more and more of 'salvation' itself, by liberty from sin, victory over it, peace and communion with God, and the earnestness of heavenly felicity: (Note, 1 Pet. 1:3, 9.) and at the same time we glorify God, adorn the Gospel, are useful to our brethren, and 'shine as lights in the world.'—(13) To will, &c.] 'We are not therefore stocks, but are willing in doing well; not that God helps the implicity of our will, but that from being evil He makes it good, and that wholly of his grace.' Beza.—And to do.] 'He does not say, that we may have the faculty of willing, and doing well if we will; but he says, that the efficacious gift of willing and doing well is bestowed on us.' Beza. This shows the nature of divine influences on the mind, according to the constitution of the rational nature, and not against it, by producing in us 'a willing mind,' to use all means of ob-



13 For it is God <sup>a</sup> which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without <sup>a</sup> murmuring and <sup>a</sup> disputings;

15 That ye may be blameless and <sup>a</sup> harmless, the sons <sup>w</sup> of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a <sup>x</sup> crooked and perverse nation, among whom <sup>y</sup> ye shine as lights <sup>z</sup> in the world;

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in <sup>a</sup> vain, neither labored in vain.

17 Yea, and if I be <sup>b</sup> offered <sup>c</sup> upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

<sup>s</sup> He. 13:21.      <sup>w</sup> Mat. 5:45.      <sup>z</sup> Mat. 5:14, 16.  
<sup>t</sup> 1 Co. 10:10.      <sup>x</sup> Ep. 5:1.      <sup>a</sup> 1 Co. 9:26.  
<sup>u</sup> Ro. 14:1.      <sup>y</sup> De. 32:5.      <sup>b</sup> poured forth.  
<sup>v</sup> or, sincere.      <sup>y</sup> or, shine ye.      <sup>c</sup> 2 Ti. 4:5.

do our utmost, because our labor shall not be in vain. God is ready to concur with his grace, and assist our faithful endeavors. Observe, Though we must work out our salvation, yet still we must do it in dependence on the grace of God. His grace works in us in a way suitable to our natures, and in concurrence with our endeavors;

and its operations in us are so far from excusing, that they are intended to quicken and engage, our endeavors: for *He worketh in you*. All our working depends on his working in us. It is the grace of God which inclines the will to that which is good; and then enables us to perform it, and to act according to our principles. *Thou hast wrought all our works in us*, Is. 26: 12. *Of his good pleasure*. As there is no strength in us, so there is no merit in us. As we cannot act without God's grace, so we cannot claim it, or pretend to deserve it. God's good-will to us, is the cause of his good work in us; and He is under no engagements to his creatures, but those of his gracious promise.

V. 14—18. The apostle here exhorts them to adorn their Christian profession by a suitable temper and behavior. 1. By cheerful obedience to the commands of God, v. 14. God's commands were given to be obeyed, not to be disputed. This greatly adorns our profession, and shows we serve a good Master, whose service is freedom, and whose work is its own reward. 2. By peaceableness, and love one to another. Do all things without disputings, wrangling, or debating one with another; the light of truth and the life of religion are often lost in the heats and mists of disputation. 3. By a blameless conversation towards all men, v. 15. not injurious to any in word or deed; *Blameless and sincere*; so some. Blameless before men,

sincere toward God. The sons of God. The children of God should differ from the sons of men. *Without rebuke*,—*amōmēta*. Momus was a carping deity among the Greeks, mentioned by Hesiod and Lucian, who did nothing himself, and found fault with every body and every thing. From him all carpers at other men, and rigid censurers of their works, were called *Momi*. The sense of the expression is, 'Walk so *circumspectly*, that Momus himself may have no occasion to cavil at you, that the severest censurer may find no fault with you.' *In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation*; i. e. among the heathens, and those who are *without*. Where there is no true religion, we should be careful to keep ourselves blameless and harmless, Gen. 13: 7. *Among whom ye shine as lights in the world*. Or it may be read imperatively, *Among whom shine ye as lights*; Comp. Mat. 5: 16. Christians should not only approve themselves to God, but recommend themselves to others, that *they may also glorify God*. They must shine as well as be sincere.

*Holding forth the Word of life*, v. 16. The Gospel is called the *Word of life*, because it reveals and proposes to us eternal life through Jesus Christ, 2 Tim. 1: 10. It is our duty, not only to hold it fast for our own benefit, but to hold it forth for the benefit of others. This Paul tells them would be his joy, not only their steadfastness, but their usefulness. He would have them think his pains well

taining help and deliverance, and not by driving or constraining us against our will. By the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, the mind and heart are prepared to discern and love truth and holiness; the Gospel sets objects before us, and proposes them to us, suited to this new state of mind and heart, and we accordingly 'choose' them, without the least infringement of our liberty. We feel no force, we are perfectly voluntary; we act according to our present feelings and desires, as if the whole were from ourselves; and perhaps it is not till long after, that we learn from what Author and Source the revolution in our judgment and affections, which led to 'newness of life,' originated; nay, numbers cannot clearly discern this, during their subsequent earthly course. In short, 'the carnal mind is enmity against God'; all are by nature 'carnally minded,' none are of themselves 'willing' to repeat and believe the Gospel, according to the Word of God; none can be compelled to do these things against their will; but 'God works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.' 'The grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.' (Art. x.) If the opposers of the doctrine, improperly called Calvinistic, in former and later times, had been *willing and able* to understand those against whom they have contended and still contend, it would have saved them immense labor, in combating sentiments, which few comparatively maintain, in the sense which they seem to suppose. One of these opposers, however, has repeatedly quoted, *operator in vobis velle*, as one of Calvia's dreadful dogmas, when it is the Vulgate translation, and an exact version of Paul's words, which we render, 'worketh in us to will!' In fact, our zealous opponents are not unfrequently betrayed into similar mistakes. 'He worketh in us effectually; . . . that we may effectually work.'—The man, in whom God has wrought effectually to will, and who yet cannot fully accomplish what He wills, but earnestly cries to God to help and deliver him, is evidently described by the apostle. Notes, Rom. 7:12—25. SCOTT.

(12.) *Fear*.] Not of hell only, but of sin chiefly. Note, 1 Pet. 3:15. Ed.

(12, 13) 'Sophists sweat much in their schools, to reconcile free will with God's grace; pretending it is flexible by its own motion, and has a proper and separate faculty, with which God's grace co-operates: (I dispute not about names, but the reality:) that as God indeed re-begets in us free choice, by which we can will well, so, they say, the faculty of well willing is received from God, but assign good will to man. But this Paul pronounces without exception to be the work of God. He does not say, that our hearts are only turned or incited, or that the infirmity of good will is helped; but that good will is entirely effected by God. Their calumny, that we make men to be like stones, in teaching that they have no good but from mere grace, is impudent. We confess we have will by nature, but that since it is evil by the corruption of sin, it then begins to be good when reformed by God. Nor, say we, can man do any thing good unless willing; but then when his will is ruled by the Spirit of God. Unless God act efficaciously in us, He would not be said to effect a good will.' CALVIN. But, not being God, we cannot explain (as heretofore remarked), how God acts in us while we are left with free will, even in the most ordinary action of life, and yet we perform all our natural functions without settling the metaphysical subtleties involved in every act. Henry, above, has sufficiently explained the text, by repeating it; and the attempt to go further has roused the sectarian and selfish corruptions of the heart, to the disgrace of the name of Christian: one party sinking, with materialists, &c. into Turkish fatalism, the other souring, with atheists, &c. into unknown regions of bewilderment, according as they found their system on external observation or self-revolving consciousness: both lead away from practical godliness. It seems as if this controversy should close. Ed.—*Work out, &c. for it is God, &c.*] 'If I be asked in what sense I accept this scripture; I humbly answer . . . The work I am working out, is not the work of labor, or of merit, or of justification, or of recommendation to God, but simply an employment, in a constant attendance upon it, and that of such earnestness and anxiety, as men of the world, when engaged in an arduous

concern, are fearful and trembling in, lest they should fail of success. Not a bondage fear, but an holy, childlike fear. Not a fear of the loss of divine love, for the adoption of children prevents such apprehensions, and the faithful covenant promises of God in Christ, render it impossible. But the fear of an unholy weariness in the path of grace, as those who rejoice in the full assurance of faith, but *rejoice with trembling*. Beholding the wreck of our fallen nature, in the instance of the floating carcasses all around, we bless the God of our salvation, that He has brought us by his grace safe on shore, while we tremble to look back and see the tremendous storm from whence we have escaped. If this be the meaning of the passage, it is truly blessed, and in exact conformity to the whole tenor of Scripture. I find, through grace, the Lord working in me. He worketh in me, to show me my total helplessness in myself, and my complete all-sufficiency in Christ. Conscious of the infinite importance of salvation, I feel the Lord's grace prompting me to an unceasing desire after the Lord, so that I am working *from* life, not *for* life; *from* grace, not *for* grace. And thus I am going humbly and softly all my days, as one, who hath an object of such infinite moment before him, that, while rejoicing, I am trembling in myself.' HAWKER.—*Claude* deduces from the words the following theological propositions: 1. God, by his Holy Spirit, illuminates the *understandings* of men; for working in us *to will*, must necessarily be by illuminating the understanding. 2. That operation of grace which illuminates the understanding is practical, and not barely speculative, but descends even to the heart. Paul says, God works *in us to do*. 3. The first *dispositions* to conversion are effects of grace, as well as conversion itself: for Paul not only says God works in us *to do*; but adds that He worketh in us *to will*; now this *will* consists in dispositions to conversion. 4. This operation of grace, does not consist in putting us in a state capable of converting ourselves, but actually *converts*; for the apostle says, "God worketh in us to will and to do." 5. The operation of this grace which converts us, is of victorious efficacy, and obtains its end in spite of all the resistances of nature; for Paul says, "God effectually worketh in us to will and to do;" which means, that when He displays this grace, nothing can [effectually] resist Him. 6. When God converts us, whatever irresistible there is in his grace, He displays it, nevertheless, in a way which neither destroys our nature, nor offers any violence to our will; for Paul says, "God worketh in us to will:" that is, He converts us by inspiring us with love for his Gospel, in gentle ways, suited to the faculties of our souls.' WILLIAMS.

V. 14—18. Nothing can exceed the genuine magnanimity and disinterested love, expressed in this most beautiful passage. The Athenian who came mortally wounded from the battle of Marathon, with news of a glorious victory, and having said to the rulers, 'Rejoice ye, we rejoice,' (*chairete, chairomen*,) then dropped down dead before them, has been greatly admired, and justly, as a patriot and a hero; but in the view of a future and eternal world, it does not appear that his joy was rational. 'He did it for a corruptible crown,' the apostle, for 'an incorruptible,' to himself and multitudes. SCOTT.

(14.) *Murmurings, disputings*.] *Grumbling*, and that *spirit of excuse or subterfuge* in which the muttering usually finds vent, namely, a disposition which seeks out doubts, and magnifies difficulties, [as is very common on matters connected with v. 13. Ed.] ever seizing any flimsy reason wherein to justify neglect of what is required.' BL.

(15.) *Shine as lights*.] 'As elevated lights, [alluding after Saurin to] *light-houses*, the most illustrious of which [in those days], was built by Ptolemy Philadelphus, on the island of Pharos, where a light was always kept burning, to light mariners in entering the port of Alexandria.' DONDR. BL., however, thinks this injudicious, and that the allusion is to the heavenly luminaries, as the Gr. has this meaning, Gen. 1: 14, 16, &c. An ancient custom is still kept up in China, of telegraphing, as it were, by signals of 3 fires, at intervals, on lofty hills. Comp. Jer. 6: 1. Ed.

(17.) *Parkhurst* well remarks, that the apostle compares the faith of the Philippians to the sacrificial victim, and his own martyrdom to the libation.' GREENFIELD.



18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

[Practical Observations.]

19<sup>d</sup> But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus<sup>e</sup> shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

20 For I have no man<sup>f</sup> like-minded, who will naturally care for your state.

21 For all seek their<sup>g</sup> own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.

24 But<sup>h</sup> I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.

25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you<sup>i</sup> Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labor, and<sup>j</sup> fellow-soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful.

bestowed, and that he had not run in vain, nor labored in vain.

Observe, the work of the ministry requires the putting forth of the whole man. Running denotes vehemence, vigor, and continual pressing forward; laboring denotes constancy and close application.

It is a great joy to ministers, when they perceive that they have not run in vain, nor labored in vain; and it will be their rejoicing in the day of Christ, when their converts will be their crown. 1 Th. 2: 19.

The apostle not only ran and labored for them with satisfaction, but shows that he was ready to suffer for their good, v. 17. He could reckon himself happy, if he could promote the honor of Christ, the edification of the church, and the welfare of the souls of men; and is not that worth our labor, which he thought worth his life? He was ready to be offered, poured out as the wine of the drink-offerings, 2 Tim. 4: 6. And if the minister loves the people, and is willing to spend and be spent for their welfare, the people have reason to love the minister, and to joy and rejoice with him, v. 18.

V. 19—30. Paul, though himself a great apostle, took all occasions to respect his inferiors. He speaks,

I. Of Timothy, whom he intended to send to the Philippians, that he might have an account of their state. Many good ministers were in care for the souls of those for whom they preached; but none comparable to Timothy; a man of an excellent spirit and tender heart, a genuine son of blessed Paul. None were like him; he, as Paul, cared for the churches, and did so naturally, i. e. sincerely, not in pretence only: with a willing heart and upright view, so agreeably to the make of his mind. Note, 1. It is the duty of ministers to care for the state of their people, and be concerned for their welfare, not yours, but you, 2 Cor. 12: 14. 2. It is a rare thing to find one who does it naturally: such a one is remarkable, and distinguished among his brethren.

All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's, v. 21. All; he means the

generality; all, either the most, or all in comparison of Timothy. Note, Seeking our own interest, with the neglect of Jesus Christ's, is a very great and common sin among Christians and ministers. We are apt to prefer our own credit, ease, and safety, before truth, holiness, and duty; the things of our own pleasure, [power,] and reputation, before the things of Christ's kingdom, and his honor and interest in the world: but Timothy was none of those.

Ye know the proof of him, v. 22. Timothy was a man who had been tried, and had made full proof of his ministry, 2 Tim. 4: 5. and was faithful in all which befell him. He was Paul's assistant in many places where he preached, and served with him in the Gospel with all the dutiful respect, and with all the love and cheerfulness, of a child to his father. Their ministrations together were with great respect on the one side, and great tenderness and kindness on the other, —an admirable example to elder and younger ministers, joined in the same service.

Paul designed to send him shortly, v. 23. He was now a prisoner, and did not know what would be the issue; but, according as it turned, he would dispose of Timothy. Nay, he hoped to come himself, v. 24. and soon. I trust in the Lord. He expresses his hope and confidence of seeing them, with a humble dependence and submission to the divine will, 1 Cor. 4: 19. Ja. 4: 15. so Acts 18: 21. and Heb. 6: 3.

II. Of Epaphroditus, whom he calls his brother, and companion in labor, and fellow-soldier, and their messenger, one sent by them to him; probably, to consult him about some affairs relating to their church, or to bring a present from them for his relief; for he adds, and him who ministered to my wants. He seems to be the same who is elsewhere called Epaphras, Col. 4: 12. He had an earnest desire to come to them, and Paul was willing he should. But it seems, he had been sick, v. 26, 27. which the Philippians were exceedingly sorry to hear of; though it pleased God to recover and spare him, v. 27. The apostle owns it is a great mercy

d moreover. i c. 4:18.  
e 1 Th. 3:2. h c. 1:25. j Phil. 2.  
f or, so dear unto me.

PRAC. OBS. V. 1—18. All our consolations, hopes, and experience of 'the fellowship of the Spirit, and the bowels and mercies' of God our Savior, as well as all our regard to our own peace, should engage us to be 'of one mind' with our brethren, and so 'to fulfil the joy' of all wise and faithful ministers and Christians. [Note, end of 1 Cor.] Nothing so honors Christ, defeats the machinations of his enemies, or fills the soul with consolation, as this holy love; but envy, contention, and ambition, not only disturb the peace of the church, but torture the soul which entertains them. Neither inward nor outward peace can be enjoyed, except in proportion as 'in lowliness of mind we esteem others better than ourselves, and look at the things of others as well as at our own.' These are hard sayings to the proud and carnal heart of man. Many have learned the doctrines of the Gospel very accurately, who have not 'thus learned Christ.' Note, Eph. 4:20—24.—Let us examine whether we do indeed reverence, love, obey, and worship the incarnate Son of God, or whether we are yet among those enemies, who must be bruised under his feet shortly. 1 Cor. 15:20—28.—Even those professed

Christians, of whom we have the most favorable opinion, should be exhorted, not only to 'be obedient,' as in the presence of their pastors; but to increase in circumspection, when removed from under their faithful care.—Surely some zealous advocates for evangelical truths have never read this ch., for they can do nothing 'without murmurings and disputings!' These are their element; these are the unhallowed 'weapons of their warfare.' How can they be 'blameless and harmless,' on this plan, when 'envy and strife' are inseparable from 'confusion and every evil work!' And how can they think themselves the 'children of God,' who, in so many features, bear the express image of Satan? But let us pray [for them and ourselves] to be made peaceable, humble, unambitious, and inoffensive, both in the church and in the community, that 'by well doing we may put to silence' the calumnies of ungodly men; and that we may be 'without rebuke,' in the midst of this our nation; which, alas! is proved to be 'crooked and perverse,' by the prevalence of infidelity, impiety, and every kind of immorality, under a Christian profession, and abundant means of religious instruction! Sc.

V. 19—23. Probably, this [seeking their own] was wholly the case with several, who had offered their assistance to Paul, but had declined difficult and perilous services; others, perhaps, had rendered themselves suspected, by the same selfish conduct, and most concerned had given the apostle cause for dissatisfaction, by preferring easier and more secure services, to those of far greater importance, but connected with more self-denial, labor, and peril. It may be supposed, that several of his most approved helpers were absent on other services, and others might be fully employed at Rome; but, after all deductions and limitations, the apostle's complaint must stand, as a lamentable testimony to the selfishness of human nature.—The words, 'trust in the Lord Jesus,' as introduced with reference to a providential concern, and not anything immediately relating to his salvation and grace, should not pass unnoticed. Perhaps the most satisfactory assurance of our Lord's Deity, may be obtained by carefully noting such words, as seem to drop without design from the pen of the sacred writers, and which are seldom noticed in the controversy; but which can in no other way be reconciled to the other Scriptures. (Notes. Ps. 146:3, 4. Jer. 17:5—8. Eph. 1:9—14.) This shows, that Timothy had been at Philippi with the apostle; yet the history does not expressly mention it. (Notes, Acts 16:8—40.) but, by carefully comparing one part of the narrative with another, this appears evidently to have been the case. (Acts 16:1—3. 17:14, 15.) Undesigned coincidences of this kind, between the history and the epistles, [see Supplement to Comp. Com. and Paley's Horæ Paulinæ,] prove that both are genuine, and if genuine, then inspired. SCOTT.

(20.) Naturally.] Gnēsios: 'germanus.' Calvin. 'With the same paternal feelings as myself.' So Theoph. too. Comp. 1 Tim. 1, 2. BLOOMF. Will it interfere too much with theological dogmas, to suppose Timothy's good natural disposition is also meant? Peculiarities of character are certainly innate.

Ed.

(21.) All seek, &c.] 'The "all" of whom the apostle here speaks, were the teachers who preached Christ from envy and strife, as mentioned ch. 1:16.'

MACKNIGHT.

V. 24—30. Probably, Epaphroditus was a pastor of the church at Philippi, and, being absent from his stated charge, 'he longed after' the people, and his labors of love among them; especially he 'was in heaviness, because they had heard' of his sickness, and the thought of their sorrow, on his account, was more painful to him than his own sickness! What a beautiful and admirable instance of genuine sensibility and affection is here most simply exhibited! In what book, except the Scriptures, do we meet with such?—It does not appear, that any miracle was wrought in this case; and we may thence infer, that the gift of miracles could only be exercised on particular occasions, of which those endued with them had some previous intimation. This is clearly indicated; and it shows, that the apostle was not ready to own his want of power, when truth required it, as to speak of his miracles when needed.—As Philippi lay at a great distance from Rome, Epaphroditus must have continued with the apostle a considerable time, or the report of his sickness at Rome could not have reached Philippi, and that of their sorrow have reached Rome before Epaphroditus left that city; and consequently the epistle must have been written towards the close of the apostle's two years' imprisonment.

SCOTT.

(25.) Messenger.] Apostolon: and so Bl. (whom see, or Doddr.) translates, with 'some ancients and moderns,' as Jn. 13:16.

Ed.

(27.) Sick.] 'So that the gift of healing could not be exercised at pleasure, but by special, divine impulse; not being for recovery of the sick, but to convince unbelievers.' See Whitby.

Id.

(28.) Carefully.] Rather, more hastily. So the Vulg., &c. BLOOMF.



29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and <sup>k</sup> hold such in reputation:

30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, <sup>l</sup> to supply your lack of service toward me.

CHAP. III.

<sup>1</sup> He warneth them to beware of the false teachers of the circumcision, <sup>4</sup> shewing that himself hath greater cause than they to trust in the righteousness of the law: <sup>7</sup> which notwithstanding he counteth as dung and loss, to gain Christ and his righteousness, <sup>12</sup> therein acknowledging his own imperfection. <sup>15</sup> He exhorteth them to be thus minded, <sup>17</sup> and to imitate him, <sup>18</sup> and to decline the ways of carnal Christians.

**F**INALLY, my brethren, rejoice <sup>a</sup> in the Lord. To write the same <sup>b</sup> things to you, to me indeed <sup>c</sup> is not grievous, but for you <sup>d</sup> it is safe.

<sup>2</sup> Beware of <sup>e</sup> dogs, beware of <sup>f</sup> evil workers, beware of the <sup>g</sup> concision.

<sup>3</sup> For we <sup>h</sup> are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh:

<sup>4</sup> Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

<sup>5</sup> Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law <sup>i</sup> a Pharisee;

<sup>6</sup> Concerning <sup>j</sup> zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, <sup>k</sup> blameless.

k or, honor such. c Is. 55:10,11. g Ac. 23:6.  
1 Co. 16:18. Re. 22:15. h Ac. 22:3,4.  
1 Co. 16:17. d Ps. 119:115. Ga. 1:13,14.  
a 1 Th. 5:16. e Ga. 5:1-3. i Lu. 1:6.  
b 2 Pe. 1:12-15. f Ro. 2:28,29.

to himself, as well as to Epaphroditus and others. Though the church was blessed at that time with extraordinary gifts, they could even then ill spare a good minister. Epaphroditus was willing to make a visit to the Philippians, that he might be comforted with those who had sorrowed for him when he was sick, v. 28. He gave himself the pleasure of comforting them by the sight of so dear a friend.

Paul recommends him to their esteem and affection, v. 29. It seems, he had caught his illness in the work of God, v. 30. The apostle does not blame him for his indiscre-

PRACT. OBS. V. 19-30. Alas! in the best times, how few are 'like-minded' with the apostles, and 'naturally care' for the state of the church and of their fellow-Christians! For while numbers, *evidently* and *wholly*, seek their own interest, reputation, ease, or indulgence, 'and not the things of Jesus Christ,' we are all too attentive to personal concerns, and often allow them to interfere with our usefulness. So that a man, who is ready to engage, even in a service of great importance, where no emolument or credit can be expected, and in which losses, hardships, perils, and sufferings must be encountered, is deemed a prodigy, and rather an object of astonishment, not to say censure and pity, than of imitation.—If then the apostle made this grievous complaint concerning the ministers of Christianity, in his days, what would he say, were he now on earth, to witness and give his sentiments and judgment on the whole body of professed Christian ministers, of all ranks, and titles, and names, in these degenerate times! What language could do justice to his deep but mingled feelings!—What an ingenious spirit does the Gospel inspire! The most eminent ministers, who most

(30.) 'Heinr. and Rosenm. most ingeniously, and with probability, conjecture, that the *peril of life*, of which Paul speaks, was brought on by Epaphroditus' hastening forward to reach Rome, to fulfil his commission, in spite of a *severe fit of illness*, which seized him, and with which he struggled so as to *reach his destination* and fulfil his commission, though nearly at the expense of his life; since the disorder was so aggravated as to become nearly mortal.' BLOOMF. *Supply*, &c.] Performing all those kind offices of sympathy, that I should have enjoyed if in the midst of you. See *Doddr.* or *Bloomf.* Ed.

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 2. *Dogs.*] 'Κυῶν, in the plain-spoken phraseology of ancient times, both in the E. and W., was employed to characterize impudence, petulance, and greediness. [Note, Ps. 59:14,15.] See Suicer; also, Is. 56:11. Ps. 22:16. Mat. 15:26. Rev. 22:15. It is used [416]

tion in hazarding his life, but reckons they ought to love him the more on that account. They were to receive him with joy, as newly recovered from sickness. It is an endearing consideration, to have our mercies restored to us after danger of removal; and should make them the more valued and improved. What is given us in answer to prayer, should be received with great thankfulness and joy.

CHAP. III. V. 1-3. It seems, the church at Philippi, though faithful and flourishing, was disturbed by judaizing teachers, who endeavored to keep up the law of Moses, and mix its observances with the doctrine of Christ and his institutions. He here warns against these seducers.

1. He exhorts them to *rejoice in the Lord*, v. 1. to rest satisfied in the interest they had in Him, and the benefit they hoped for by Him. *The joy of the Lord is our strength*, Neh. 8: 10.

2. He reiterates a caution to take heed of those *false teachers*, v. 2. It is good often to revive the remembrance and strengthen the impression of things of importance. It is a wanton curiosity to desire always to hear some *new thing*.

The prophet calls the false prophets *dumb dogs*, Is. 56: 10. to which the apostle here seems to refer. *Dogs*, for their malice against the faithful professors of the Gospel of Christ, barking at them and biting them. They cried up *good works* in opposition to the *faith* of Christ; but Paul calls them *evil workers*: they boasted themselves to be of the *circumcision*; but he calls them the *concision*:\* they rent the church of Christ, and contended for an abolished rite.

3. He describes true Christians, who are indeed the spiritual circumcision, the peculiar people of God, in covenant with Him, as the O. T. Israelites were, v. 3. They *worshipped in the spirit*, in opposition to the carnal ordinances of the O. T. which consisted in *meats and drinks*, and divers *washings*, &c. The work of religion is to no purpose, any further than the heart is employed in it, Jn. 4: 24. 2 Cor. 3: 8. They *rejoice in Christ Jesus*, not in the peculiar privileges of the Jewish church, or what answers to them in the Christian church,—mere outward enjoyments and performances. They rejoice in their [spiritual progress, their] relation to Christ, and interest in Him. They have no *confidence in the flesh*, those carnal ordinances and outward performances. We must be taken off from trusting in ourselves, that we may build only

\* Concisors, or sectarians, whether for an external rite, or an inexplicable dogma, would do well conscientiously to reconsider their disunion, and to recollect that the *spirit of splitting* has no end, while human hate and pride last. See Rom. ch. 14. and note, end of 1 Cor. Ed.

on Christ; our confidence, as well as our joy must be in Him.

V. 4-8. The apostle here proposes himself for an example of trusting in Christ only, and not in his privileges as an Israelite.

I. He shows what he had to boast of as a Jew and Pharisee; and that he had as much cause to boast as any man, v. 4. He was not a proselyte, but a native Israelite; *A Hebrew of the Hebrews*, by father and mother, and from one generation to another; none of his ancestors had matched with Gentiles. He had the token of God's covenant in the flesh, was circumcised the very day God had appointed. For learning, he was a Pharisee, a scholar learned in all the learning of the Jews; taught according to the *perfect manner* of the law of the fathers, Acts 22: 3. He had a blameless conversation; as far as the Pharisees' exposition of the law went, and as to the mere letter and outward observance, he could acquit himself from all breach of it. He had been an active man for his religion, so as even to persecute those whom he looked upon as enemies to it. He showed he was in good earnest, though he had a *zeal without knowledge*, Acts 22: 3, 4. All this was enough to have made a proud Jew confident, and stock sufficient to set up with for his justification. But,

II. The apostle tells us, here, how little account he made of these, in comparison of his interest in Christ, and his expectations from Him, v. 7. He counted them loss; not only insufficient to enrich him, but what would certainly impoverish and ruin him, if he trusted to them, in opposition to Christ. Observe, The apostle did not persuade them to do anything but what he himself did; to quit anything but what he had quitted himself; or venture on anything but what he himself had ventured his immortal soul upon.

*Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*, v. 8. Here the apostle explains himself.

1. He tells us what it was he reached after; the *knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord*, a believing, experimental acquaintance with Christ as Lord, not a mere notional and speculative, but a practical and efficacious knowledge of Him. So knowledge is sometimes put for faith, Is. 53: 11. And it is the *excellency* of knowledge. There is a transcendent excellency in the Christian religion, above all the knowledge of nature, and improvements of human wisdom; it is suited to the case of fallen sinners, and furnishes them with all they need, all they can desire and hope for, with all saving wisdom and saving grace.

2. He shows how he had quitted his priv-

ly 'trust the Lord Jesus' for everything, will yet frankly acknowledge their obligations for temporal assistance to those, who owe their salvation to their labors of love. The affectionate pastor will be more full of heaviness for the grief of his people on his account, than for his own pain and sickness; and he will 'long after them,' and to renew his labors among them, as a tender mother does after her beloved infant.—The Lord often afflicts such zealous and affectionate Christians, to manifest the excellency of their disposition; but He 'will have mercy upon them,' and not let them 'have sorrow upon sorrow;' and they will readily put themselves to inconveniences to remove the grief or increase the comfort of their brethren, rejoicing, though at a distance, in the thoughts of their joy, as an alleviation of their own sorrow. Those ministers who thus spend their strength, and disregard even life and health in his cause, and to 'supply the lack of service' of those who are incapable of performing it, should be peculiarly honored by the church, and by every Christian; yet none should, without necessity, be kept very long from the people of their own peculiar charge. SCOTT.

by the most dignified characters of the Iliad; and was applied to a whole class of philosophers, who seem to have been little sensible to any disgrace. See Laertes' life of Diogenes; also, *Wets. Theoph.* well observes, that as the Jews applied this term to the Gentiles (as the Mohammedans do now to the Christians), so there was a peculiar propriety in the term. *Concision.*] As if he had said, Beware of this cutting and hacking the flesh; for it is *no more*. So also, *Schl.* and *Heinr.*, who remark, that the expression is ironical and contemptuous, to show indignation at the fancy, that no one could be made a Christian but by means of such an insignificant rite. BLOOMF.—*Beware of dogs.*] 'The Romans chained their dogs at the door of their house, with this inscription over them, *Beware of this dog*, to which this seems to allude.' *L'Enfant.* DODDR.



7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss<sup>j</sup> for Christ.

8 Yea, doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for<sup>k</sup> the excellency of the knowledge of the Christ Jesus my Lord : for whom I have<sup>l</sup> suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own<sup>m</sup> righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness<sup>n</sup> which is of God by faith :

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the<sup>o</sup> fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death ;

11 If by any means I might<sup>p</sup> attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already<sup>q</sup> perfect : but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended : but *this* one thing I *do*, forgetting<sup>r</sup> those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

<sup>j</sup> Mat. 13:44.    <sup>l</sup> 2 Co. 11:25,27.    <sup>p</sup> Ac. 26:7.  
<sup>k</sup> Is. 53:11. Je. 9:    <sup>m</sup> Ro. 10:3,5.    <sup>q</sup> He. 12:23.  
<sup>l</sup> 23,24. Jn. 17:3.    <sup>n</sup> Ro. 1:17.3:21,22.    <sup>r</sup> Ps. 45:10.  
<sup>o</sup> 1 Co. 2:2.    <sup>o</sup> 1 Pe. 4:13.    He. 6:1.

ileges as a Jew and a Pharisee; his expression rises with a holy triumph. There are five particles in the original; *But indeed even also do I count all things but loss.* He had spoken before of *those things*; his Jewish privileges; here he speaks of *all things*, all worldly enjoyments and outward privileges whatsoever, which could stand in competition with Christ for the throne in his heart, or pretend to merit and desert. He had said he *did* count them but loss; but it might be asked, what he would do when he came to the trial. And he tells us, he had himself practised according to this estimate of the case; *For whom I have suffered the loss of all things.* Nay, he not only counted them loss, but *affals*, thrown to dogs; they are not only less valuable than Christ, but in the highest degree contemptible, when they come in competition with Him.

Note, The New Testament never speaks of *saving grace* in any terms of diminution,

V. 7. *What was my gain.*] 'I. e. these were such as to bring me into great credit with our ecclesiastical rulers (see Acts); these made my reputation considerable (Acts 9:1); and would have led to [further] dignities and emoluments, an introduction into the Sanhedrim, &c.; but all these opportunities of gain I (on my change of views and conversion to Christ) no more regarded than if they had been sources of loss. . . . And not these things only, but all other things thought honorable and profitable, did I despise. Nay, to the present time, I continue to think all things but loss, &c., and such they appear, because of the excellency of, &c.'

V. 8—11. 'The present time is to be noted; . . . so that the apostle, as to what relates to justification before God, excludes all works; those which follow, as well as those which precede faith.' Beza.—The apostle not only had judged at his first conversion, that his legal righteousness, and his worldly prospects, were 'loss to him,' compared with Christ; but, after many years spent in successfully preaching the Gospel, with apostolical authority, abundant miraculous gifts, immense labors, extraordinary success, multiplied sufferings, and most exemplary holiness, he decidedly 'counted all these things to be loss,' in comparison of 'the most excellent knowledge of Christ,' from revelation, by faith, and subsequent experience in the glory of his Person and redemption. — It is evident, that the apostle speaks, not of the resurrection in general, for this will be both 'of the just and of the unjust;' but of 'the resurrection to eternal life,' in that glorious view of it, which is afterwards given. Note, 20:21.—When the sinner believes in Christ, he is immediately 'justified by faith, and has peace with God;' yet he, 'through the Spirit, waits for the hope of righteousness by faith;' for at the day of judgment, when living faith will be distinguished by its fruits from dead faith, the sentence

but, on the contrary, represents it as the *fruits* of the divine Spirit, and the *image of God* in the soul of man; as a *divine nature*, and the *seed of God*: and faith is called *precious faith*; and meekness is in the *sight of God of great price*, 1 Pet. 3: 4. 2 Pet. 1: 1, &c.

V. 9—14. We have heard what the apostle renounced; let us now see what he laid hold on, and resolved to cleave to, and that was, *Christ and heaven.*

I. He had his heart on Christ, as his *Righteousness.*

1. He desired to *win* Christ; and an unspeakable gainer he would reckon himself, if he had but an interest in Christ and his righteousness, and if Christ became his Lord and his Savior. The expression intimates, that we need to strive for Him, and reach after Him.

2. That he *might be found in Him*, v. 9. as the *manslayer* in the *city of refuge*, safe from the *avenger of blood*, Num. 35: 25. [as Noah in the ark. SCOTT.] Or, it alludes to a judicial appearance; so we are to be *found of our Judge in peace*, 2 Pet. 3: 14. We are undone, without a righteousness wherein to appear before God, for we are guilty. Righteousness is provided for us in Jesus Christ, complete and perfect; but to have interest or benefit by it, we must come off from confidence in ourselves, and believe heartily in Him. 'Not having my own righteousness, which is of the law; not thinking my outward observances and good deeds able to atone for my bad ones; or that, by setting the one over against the other, I can balance accounts with God. No, the righteousness I depend on, is that *which is through the faith of Christ*: not legal, but evangelical. *The righteousness of God by faith*, ordained and appointed of God.' The Lord Jesus Christ is the *Lord our Righteousness*, Is. 45: 24. Had He not been *God*, He could not have been *our Righteousness*; the transcendent excellence of the divine nature put such a value on, and such a virtue into, his sufferings, that they became sufficient to satisfy for the sins of the world, and to bring in a righteousness which will be effectual to all who believe. Faith is the ordained means of actual interest and saving benefit in all the purchase of his blood. It is *by faith in his blood*, Rom. 3: 25.

3. That he might know Christ, v. 10. Faith is called *knowledge*, Is. 53: 11. *Knowing* Him, here, is *believing* Him: it is an *experimental* knowledge of the *power of his resurrection* and *fellowship of his suffering*, or feeling the transforming efficacy and virtue of them.

4. That he might be conformable unto Him, is also meant of his sanctification. We are then made conformable to his death, when we die to sin, as Christ died for sin; when

we are *crucified with Christ*, the *flesh* and *affections* of it mortified, and the *world* is *crucified to us*, and *we to the world*, by *virtue of the cross of Christ.*

II. The apostle had his heart on heaven, as his happiness, v. 11. here called the *resurrection of the dead*, because, though the souls of the faithful, when they depart, are immediately with Christ, yet their happiness will not be complete till the general *resurrection of the dead*, at the last day, when soul and body shall be glorified together. *Anastasis* sometimes signifies the future state. This the apostle had his eye on; this he would attain. The *joyful* and *glorious* resurrection of saints, a return to life, and bliss, and glory, is called the *resurrection, by eminence*, because it is in virtue of Christ's resurrection, as their Head and First-fruits; whereas the wicked shall rise from the grave, by the power of Christ, as their Judge, only to return to a *second death*. It is called the *resurrection of the just*, and the *resurrection of life*, Jn. 5: 29. and they are *counted worthy to obtain that world*, and the *resurrection from the dead*, Ln. 20: 35.

This joyful resurrection the apostle pressed toward. He was willing to do, or suffer anything, that he might attain that resurrection. The hope and prospect of it carried him with courage and constancy through all the difficulties he met with in his work. Observe, 1. He speaks as if they were in danger of missing it, and coming short of it. A holy fear of coming short, is an excellent mean of perseverance. Observe, 2. His care to be found in Christ, was in order to his attaining it. He did not hope to attain it through his own merit and righteousness, but through the merit and righteousness of Jesus Christ.

He looks upon himself to be in a state of imperfection and trial, v. 12. Observe, The best men will readily own their imperfection in the present state. If Paul had not attained to perfection, much less have we. Again, *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended*, v. 13. 'I thus reason with myself.' They who think they have grace enough, give proof that they have little enough, or rather, none at all; because, wherever there is true grace, there is a desire of more grace, and a pressing toward the perfection of grace. Observe, here,

(1.) The apostle's actings under this conviction: he pressed forward, v. 12.—*I pursue* with vigor, as one following after the game. I endeavor to get more grace [make more progress in spiritual affections], and do more good. Observe, Our grace comes, not from our laying hold of Christ first, but his laying hold of us, 1 Jn. 4: 19. Not our keeping hold of Christ, but his keeping hold of us, is our safety, 1 Pet. 1: 5. Observe, The happiness of heaven is, *to apprehend that for which we are apprehended of Christ.*

of justification will not only be confirmed, but proclaimed to the whole assembled world. Mat. 15:34—46. Gal. 5:1—6, v. 6. Ja. 2:19—24. Sc.

(3.) *All.* 'Lost all opportunity of gaining. *Dung.*] *Skubala*: it sometimes means the *wreck* thrown out by the sea (as in Achilles Tat.), and *stubble*, such as in farm-yards is trampled under foot by the cattle, and thus converted into dung. The expression may be Englished by "a mere drug." BLOOMER. *Suffered the loss*, &c.] 'Doddr. thinks it not improbable (we think it almost certain) that Paul had been laid, by his unbelieving brethren, under the great excommunication, which forfeited all his property.' WILLIAMS.

(11.) *If, &c.*] 'Eipōs: it often, in the Hellenistic style, at least, implies no doubt. See *Glass and Wolf*. So Ro. 1:10. 11:14, 21. 2 S. 16: 12. Paul seems to say this, less with a reference to himself than as a delicate admonition to them.' BLOOMER.

V. 12—14. When we consider what the apostle had actually attained; (Notes, 8—11. 1:19—25. 4:3—13.) even so much genuine holiness, that very few can endure a comparison of their own attainments with his; and yet consider him as acknowledging that he had not attained, and as 'pressing forward' at something far higher; we may form our judgment of every modern pretence to sinless perfection, as well as of our own exceedingly inferior proficiency. Rom. 7:13—25. SCOTT.

(12.) *Attained.*] 'Tetelōimai: an agonistic metaphor, for arriving at the goal, and obtaining the prize. See *Schl.* and *Mackn.* And similar metaphors are used in vs. 13, 14. as *diōkō*, pursue, follow after, and *katalabō*, overtake, apprehend, &c.; in *apprehended* (*katalēphthēn*) there is not, however, as *Doddr.* supposes, allusion to the honorable introduction of candidates [note, 1 Cor. 9: end.]; the very nature of the term will not permit this; it seems rather to refer to *pressing*, or im-



14 I press <sup>a</sup> toward the mark for the prize of the high <sup>t</sup> calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as be <sup>a</sup> perfect, be thus <sup>v</sup> minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same <sup>v</sup> rule, let us mind the same thing.

17 Brethren, be followers <sup>x</sup> together of me, and mark them which walk so, as ye have us <sup>y</sup> for an example.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies <sup>z</sup> of the cross of Christ;

19 Whose <sup>a</sup> end is destruction, whose <sup>b</sup> God is their belly, and whose <sup>c</sup> glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

20 For our <sup>d</sup> conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look <sup>e</sup> for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

s 1 Co. 9:24. w Ga. 6:16. 2 Pe. 2:1.  
He. 12:1. x 1 Th. 1:6. b 1 Ti. 6:5.  
t He. 3:1. y 1 Pe. 5:3. c Ho. 4:7.  
u 1 Co. 2:6. z Ga. 1:7. 6:12. d Ep. 2:6, 19.  
v Ga. 5:10. a 2 Co. 11:15. e He. 9:23.

When Christ laid hold of us, it was to bring us to heaven; and to apprehend that for which He apprehended us, is to attain the perfection of our bliss.

He adds, further, v. 13. *This one thing I do*; this [only] was his great care and concern. There is a sinful forgetting of past sins and past mercies, which ought to be remembered for the exercise of constant repentance and thankfulness to God. But he forgot the things behind, so as not to be content with present measures of grace: he was still for having more and more. So he reached forth, stretched himself forward, [as a racer earnestly stretches forward the neck,] bearing toward his point: expressions of a vehement concern.

(2.) The apostle's aim, in these actings, v. 14. He pressed toward the mark. The fitter we grow for heaven, the faster we must press towards it. Heaven is called here the mark, because every good Christian has it in his eye, as the archer the mark he designs to hit. A Christian's calling is a high calling; from heaven, as its original; to heaven, in its tendency. Heaven is the prize of the high calling, the prize we fight

for, run for, wrestle for; what we aim [to be fit for] in all we do, what will reward all our pains. It is of great use in the Christian course, to keep our eye on heaven. This is proper to give us measures in all our service, and to quicken us every step we take; and it is of God, from Him we are to expect it, Rom. 6:23.; but in Christ Jesus, through his hand it must come to us, as it is procured for us by Him. There is no getting to heaven as our home, but by Christ as our Way.

V. 15—16. The apostle, having proposed himself as an example, urges the Philippians to follow it.

1. He shows, that this was the thing wherein all good Christians were agreed; to make Christ *all in all*, and set their hearts on another world. To win Christ, and to be found in Him, is our happiness both here and hereafter. Therefore, let us walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing. Let us agree to press toward the mark, and make heaven our end.

2. That this is a good reason why Christians who differ in less matters, should yet bear with one another, because they are agreed in the main matter; 'If in anything ye be otherwise minded; if ye differ from one another, as to meats and days, and other matters of the Jewish law; yet judge not one another, while ye all meet now in Christ, as your Centre, and hope to meet shortly in heaven, as your home. As for other matters of difference, lay no great stress on them, God shall reveal even this unto you. Whatever it is wherein ye differ, ye must wait till God give you a better understanding, which He will do in his due time. In the mean time, as far as ye have attained, ye must go together in the ways of God, join together in all the great things in which ye are agreed, and wait for further light in the less things wherein ye differ.

V. 17—21. He closes the ch. with warnings and exhortations.

1. He warns them against following the examples of seducers and evil teachers, v. 18, 19. Observe, Many called by Christ's name, are yet enemies to Christ's cross. Their walk is a surer evidence what they are, than their profession, Mat. 7:20. The apostle warns people against such: *I have told you often*. We so little heed warnings, that we need to have them repeated. To write the same things is safe, v. 1. He warns them feelingly and affectionately; *I now tell you weeping*. Paul was, on proper occasions a weeping preacher, as Jeremiah a weeping prophet. Observe, What we say often, we may say again, if affectionately, and under the power of it. He gives the characters of those who were the enemies of the cross of Christ. They mind nothing

but their sensual appetites; the same observance good people give to God, epicures give to their appetites, Rom. 16:18. They not only sinned, but boasted of it, and gloried in what they ought to be ashamed of. Christ came by his cross to crucify the world to us, and us to the world; but they mind earthly things, directly contrary to the cross of Christ, and this great design of it. He gives them this character, to show how absurd it would be for Christians to follow the example of such, or be led away by them. To deter all from it, he reads their doom: Their way seems pleasant, but death and hell are at the end of it, Rom. 6:21. Perhaps he alludes to the total destruction of the Jewish nation.

II. He proposes himself and his brethren for an example, in opposition to these evil examples, v. 17. Mark them for your pattern. He explains himself, v. 20. by their regard to Christ and heaven: *for our conversation is in heaven*. Observe, Good Christians, even while here on earth, have their conversation in heaven, their citizenship there, so the word is; because our citizenship is there, our conversation is there; being related to that world, we keep up a correspondence with it.

The apostle had pressed them to follow him, and other ministers of Christ; it is good having fellowship with those who have fellowship with Christ, and conversation with those whose conversation is in heaven.

1. Because we look for the Savior from thence, v. 20. He is not here, He is ascended, He is entered within the veil for us; and we expect his second coming from thence, to gather in all the citizens of that New Jerusalem to himself.

2. Because at the second coming of Christ we expect to be happy and glorified there. There is a glory reserved for the bodies of the saints, in which they will be instated at the resurrection, v. 21. The body is now at the best a vile body,—the body of our humiliation, often the occasion and instrument of much sin, which is called the body of this death, Rom. 7:24. Or it may be understood of its vileness when it lies in the grave; at the resurrection it will be found a vile body, Eccl. 12:7. But it will be made a glorious body; and not only raised again to life, but raised to great advantage. Observe, (1.) The sample of this change, the glorious body of Christ; when He was transfigured on the mount, his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light, Mat. 17:2. He went to heaven, clothed with a body, that He might take possession of the inheritance in our nature, and be not only the First-born from the dead, but the First-born of the children of the resurrection. We shall be conformed to the image of his Son,

pressing, into the public service, as Thucyd. 6:22. uses the word. *Reaching forth, epkteinomenos; pressing toward; mark, skopon; prize, brabeion; high-calling, and klēseōs, calling up*, are all agonistic metaphors, [note, 1 Cor. 9: end.] The last two are supposed to have allusion to the *brabeion*, or *ἀγωνοθηται*, who sat on an elevated seat, and called forward the candidates for the *brabeion*, or *prize*. Bl.

V. 15, 16. This exhortation (Note, 12—14.) implies, that the temper and conduct, before described, form the Christian's highest perfection in this world.—The word here rendered 'perfect,' may signify the sound character of the established believer, the man who is matured in judgment and experience, and has made great progress in Christianity. It is used in the Greek authors, especially Xenophon, for men of full age, (about 30,) as distinguished from boys and young men, and the apostle conveys a similar idea by it in other passages. Rom. 16:1. 1 Cor. 2:6. Ja. 1:4. Ju. 2:5, &c. (Note, Heb. 5:11—14.)—In this way Christians would best wait for further instruction; and if any were otherwise minded than their brethren, or than the apostle, being under some mistake or misapprehension, by thus avoiding disputation, and diligently practising what they knew, from evangelical principles, they might hope that God would make known to them those things, of which they still remained ignorant; and their stronger brethren ought to bear with their prejudices, till they were in this manner obviated. Rom. 14:1—15:1—3. Scott.

(15.) Perfect. 'Telcioi: sometimes applied metaphorically to denote one advanced in the knowledge of any art or science, as religious knowledge, whence it was used of those who were initiated into the heathen mysteries, [see Mackn. pref. to Eph.] and so most comers. understand it here, as in 1 Cor. 2:6.—God shall, &c.] I. e. us to that wherein ye think otherwise, and continue in prejudice and error, God

will, in his own good time, and by various means, show you your error, and let in truth on your minds.' Bl.—As many as be perfect.] 'That is, all who have attained to any proficiency in the Christian life.—"be thus minded,"—thus earnest in persevering, thus eager to win the prize?'

WILLIAMS.

(16.) On the slight diversity of readings here, see Bl. 'Only (mind this) to walk by that degree of knowledge wheremto we have attained.'

ED.

V. 17—19. Some expositors explain this, almost exclusively, of the Judaizing teachers and their followers, but others suppose the Gnostics to be especially meant, and doubtless many among each of these were of this stamp. Yet there were others also who perverted the Gospel; and the apostle's words at least equally point out licentious Antinomian professors, whether Jews or Gentiles, of which we cannot doubt that many sprang up in every part of the church. Nor is it prudent to represent all the danger to lie on one side when the opposite extreme is equally fatal. (17) *Be followers together*.] Here only. 'Imitate me among others who imitate me.' Erasmus.

SCOTT.

(18.) 'As the promulgator of doctrines too spiritual for their groveling dispositions, some Jews and Gentiles were, of course, enemies to Paul and the cross of Christ, i. e. to all those pure and spiritual doctrines by which we are enjoined to crucify vicious inclinations, to conquer unuly appetites, and resist temptations to worldly gain.' See Bl.

ED.

(19.) *Mind*.] 'Rather, whose minds are given up to, as Col. 3:2.' Bl. V. 20, 21. The contrast between 'the body of our humiliation,' and the 'body of his glory,' into the likeness of which Jesus will change our bodies, is remarkable. There seems to be a reference to the transfiguration. Mat. 17:1—8.—If omnipotence is an incommunicable divine



21 Who shall change <sup>l</sup> our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working <sup>s</sup> whereby he is able even <sup>h</sup> to subdue all things unto himself.

## CHAP. IV.

1 From particular admonitions 4 he proceedeth to general exhortations, 10 shewing how he rejoiced at their liberality towards him lying in prison, not so much for the supply of his own wants, as for the grace of God in them. 19 And so he concludeth with prayer and salutations.

**T**HEREFORE, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved.

2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3 And I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-laborers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice <sup>a</sup> in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

f 1 Co. 15:43, &c. g Ep. 1:19. a c. 3:1.  
i Jn. 3:2. h 1 Co. 15:26, 27.

that He might be the First-born among many brethren, Rom. 8: 29. Observe, (2.) The power by which this change will be wrought: according to the working, &c. There is an efficacy of power, an exceeding greatness of power, and the working of mighty power, Eph. 1: 19. Let this confirm our faith of the resurrection, that we not only have the Scriptures, which assure us it shall be, but we know the power of God, which can effect it, Mat. 22: 29. As Christ's resurrection was a glorious instance of the divine power, and therefore He is declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead, Rom. 1: 4. so will our

PRACT. OBS. We ought to be 'zealous of good works,' but to rejoice in the Lord' alone.—We cannot too earnestly guard men against those, who either oppose or pervert the doctrine of salvation by mercy and grace alone; we should also protest against 'evil workers,' of every description, with decision and impartiality. The true Christian will be aware of them, he 'worships God in the Spirit, glories in Christ Jesus,' has 'the circumcision of the heart,' and confides in nothing of which unregenerate men are capable. Jer. 9:23, 24. Col. 2:10—12. 1 Pet. 1:23—25.—But how far short do many, who 'have confidence in the flesh,' come of the attainments of Saul the persecutor! Their birth of Christian parents, early baptism, and 'form of godliness,' can scarcely be imagined superior to his distinctions of a similar nature; but where is their strictness, their zeal, their morality, and their blameless conduct? Yet they trust in their poor, scanty, worthless forms and duties, and count them too valuable to be exchanged for Christ and his salvation! But if they ever 'come to themselves,' and become acquainted with God, his law, and their own characters; they will 'count all their gain,' to be 'lost for Christ;' and deprecate, as sure destruction, having their eternal state in any measure decided according to their own righteousness; they will desire above all things to have 'that righteousness which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God by faith.' They will see, that no additions need be made to his 'unsearchable riches,' no scenery added to his sure refuge, no appendages to his robe of righteousness. Thus they will account themselves rich, safe, and happy, in proportion to their assurance of being 'found in Christ,' and 'made the righteousness of God in Him;' but, in seeking for this assurance, as well as in order to glorify so bounteous and beloved a Friend, they will also earnestly desire, and aim at,

perfection, the apostle's language doubtless attests his Deity, in the most emphatical language. 1 Cor. 15:50—54. SCOTT.

(21.) 'Christ is here said to subdue all things to Himself by his own strong working, notwithstanding the same subjection of all things is ascribed to the Father, 1 Co. 15:25. He. 2:8. As Ro. 4:17. Ac. 26:6. Eph. 1:19. So Christ is said to raise Himself from the dead, Jn. 2:19. and to be raised by the Father, Ro. 4:24. &c. The inference is plain, [that, in his own words, He and the Father, "are One." Slade, Mackn.] BL.—*Vile body.* 'Literally the body of our humiliation, &c., i. e. this body in the form of sinful flesh, humbled and degraded as at present it is, and so different from what the body of Adam originally was.' DODDR.

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1. This v. is principally remarkable for the variety of expressions, in which the apostle poured out the affection of his heart towards his brethren, or rather children, at Philippi. SCOTT.

(1.) 'Joy, i. e. object of joy; crown, i. e. cause of reward, Pr. 12:4.' BL.—*So stand fast, &c.* 'There is no more reason for making this the beginning of a new ch. than there would be for disjoining the last v. of 1 Cor. 15. in sense exactly parallel to this, from the preceding discourse on the resurrection, with which it is so beautifully and properly connected.' DODDR.

V. 2, 3. It is probable, Euodias and Syntyche were women of note at

resurrection be: and his resurrection is a standing evidence, as well as pattern, of ours. And then all the enemies of the Redeemer's kingdom will be completely conquered. Not only he who had the power of death, i. e. the devil, Heb. 2:14. but the last enemy shall be destroyed, i. e. death, 1 Cor. 15:26. Death will be swallowed up in victory, v. 54.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—9. The apostle begins with exhortations to divers Christian duties.

I. To steadfastness in our Christian profession, v. 1. It is inferred from the close of the foregoing ch. Seeing our conversation is in heaven, and we look for the Savior from thence to fetch us thither: therefore, let us stand fast. Note, The believing hope and prospect of eternal life should engage us to be steady, [consistent,] even, and constant, in our Christian course. Observe, here,

1. The appellations are very endearing; *My brethren, dearly beloved, and longed for, my joy and crown*; and again, *My dearly beloved*. Thus he expresses the pleasure he took in them, the kindness he had for them, to convey his exhortations to them with so much the greater advantage. Warm affections become ministers and Christians toward one another. Brotherly love must always go along with the brotherly relation. Never was proud ambitious man more pleased with the ensigns of honor, than Paul was with the evidences of the sincerity of the faith and obedience of the Philippians. All this is to prepare his way to greater regard.

2. The exhortation itself; *So stand fast in the Lord*. Being in Christ, they must stand fast in Him, even and steady in their walk with Him, and close and constant unto the end. Or, *To stand fast in the Lord*, is to stand fast in his strength, and by his grace; not trusting in ourselves, and disclaiming any sufficiency of our own; we must be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, Eph. 6:10.

II. He exhorts them to unanimity and

mutual assistance, v. 2, 3. This is directed to some particular persons. *Euodias* and *Syntyche*, it seems, were at variance, either one with the other, or with the church; either on a civil or on a religious account; it may be they were of different opinions and sentiments.

His exhortation to mutual assistance, v. 3. is also to particular persons. Who this true yoke-fellow was, is uncertain. Some think *Epaphroditus*, supposed to be one of the pastors of the Philippian church. Others think some eminent good woman, perhaps Paul's wife, because he exhorts his yoke-fellow to help the women which labored with him. It seems, there were women who labored with Paul in the Gospel; not in the public ministry; for the apostle expressly forbids that, 1 Tim. 2:12. but by entertaining the ministers, visiting the sick, instructing the ignorant, and convincing the erroneous.

With Clement, also, and other my fellow-laborers. Paul had a kindness for all his fellow-laborers; he says of them, *Whose names are in the book of life*; either they were chosen of God from all eternity, or registered and enrolled in the corporation and society to which the privilege of eternal life belongs, alluding to the custom among the Jews and Gentiles, of registering the inhabitants or the freemen of a city. So we read of their names being written in heaven, Luke 10:20. not blotting his name out of the book of life, Rev. 3:5. and of them who are written in the Lamb's book of life, Rev. 21:27. Observe, There is a book of life; there are names in that book, and not characters and conditions only. Whose names are written there we cannot know; but we may conclude, they who labor in the Gospel, and are faithful to the interests of Christ and souls, have their names in the book of life.

III. He exhorts to holy joy and delight in God, v. 4. All our joy must terminate in God, and our thoughts of God must be delightful. Observe, It is our duty and

a more transforming 'knowledge of Christ,' a deeper experience of the power of his resurrection, and a nearer conformity to Him in his sufferings and death, by dying to sin, and crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts. And, at the same time, the love of Christ will constrain them, if called to it, to suffer, yea, to die with Him, that they may be also glorified together; if so be they may, by any means, be partakers of the resurrection to eternal felicity in heaven. Thousands, and ten thousands, yea, millions, have testified, that the above is the judgment and experience of true Christians; nor can any measure of personal holiness or self-denying labors satisfy the man, who 'counts all but loss that he may win Christ,' and be justified by faith in Him alone.—Those who are most 'perfected and matured' in the life of faith and grace, still needs exhortations to be thus minded; they who are newly set out, should be called on to emulate such honorable examples; and while they judge and act in this manner, as to these grand concerns, the Lord will guide them into the further knowledge of his truth and will. For satisfactory views of divine things are far better acquired by peaceable meditation and diligent obedience, than by eager and angry disputations. (Notes, John 7:14—17. 8:30—36.) We should, however, be very careful not to grow remiss and languid, in those things 'to which we have already attained;' but still continue to 'walk by the same rule, and mind the same things,' that we may make a perpetual progress in the divine life, and secure, as it were, every post of which we have got possession. Let us then assiduously endeavor to walk after the example of apostles and evangelists, that our conduct may be meet for others to copy with advantage; (Note, 1 Th. 1:5—8.) for alas! in every age, there are professors of the Gospel, of whom the humble, zealous Christian can scarcely think or speak, without sorrow and weeping. SCOTT.

Philippi. The 'true yoke-fellow,' or *genuine associate* in the work of Christ, whom the apostle addressed without naming, was doubtless well known at Philippi, though our conjectures respecting him must be precarious. Some think, he was husband to one of the women above mentioned, others that he was some eminent minister at Philippi.—*Clement.* It is not certain that this was Clement Romanus, an epistle of whose writing is yet extant; but it is generally supposed that the apostle meant him.—(3) *True yoke-fellow.* The words may be used in the feminine; but they far more naturally lead the mind to think of a male associate. *Labored.* See on 1:27. (Note, 1:27—30.) It signifies to wrestle together, to make painful, earnest, and perilous exertions, with union and concert, in order to accomplish an important object.

(3.) 'Unworthy members might be erased from the list. Rev. 3:5.' BL.—*Whose names.* 'As I have reason in charity to hope; and we have no reason to conclude Paul had any particular revelation as to these friends, as certainly destined to salvation.' DODDR. And Fuller (in Williams) understands it of God's servants, not as elect, or as redeemed, or as called, but as his *professed followers*.

V. 4. *The Lord.* The Lord Jesus, or 'God in Christ,' 'God become our Salvation,' is especially meant, in all these animating calls to rejoice. Sc.



5 Let your moderation <sup>b</sup> be known unto all men: The Lord <sup>c</sup> is at hand.

6 Be careful <sup>d</sup> for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God:

7 And the peace <sup>e</sup> of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are <sup>f</sup> true, whatsoever things are <sup>g</sup> honest, whatsoever things are <sup>h</sup> just, whatsoever things are <sup>i</sup> pure, whatsoever things are <sup>k</sup> lovely, whatsoever things are of good <sup>l</sup> report; if there be any <sup>m</sup> virtue, and if there be any <sup>n</sup> praise, think on these things.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God <sup>o</sup> of peace shall be with you.

[Practical Observations.]

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me <sup>p</sup> hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked <sup>q</sup> opportunity.

b 1 Co. 9:25. c Re. 22:7,20. d Mat. 6:25. e 1 Pe. 5:7. f Is. 26:3. g Jn. 14:27. h Ep. 4:25. i or, venerable. j 2 Co. 8:21. k De. 16:20. l Is. 26:7. m Ja. 3:17. n Jn. 3:3. o 1 Co. c. 13. p Col. 4:5. q He. 11:2. r 2 Pe. 1:3,4. s Ro. 13:3. t He. 13:20. u or, is revived. v 2 Co. 6:7.

privilege to rejoice in God, and to rejoice in Him always; at all times, in all conditions; even when we suffer for Him, or are afflicted by Him. There is enough in God to furnish us with matter of joy in the worst circumstances on earth. He had said it before, ch. 3:1. Here he says it again. Joy

PRACT OBS. V. 1—9. Affectionate ministers, like tender parents, can scarcely find words emphatical enough to express their love, and their fervent desires after the felicity of those, whom they regard as their present 'joy,' and their future 'crown.' They so love the blessed office of peace-makers, that they will even supplicate, by name, their own children, to 'be of one mind in the Lord;' and they so much desire the success of every good work, that they use all their influence to excite every one 'to help all those, who labor' in any way to promote the Gospel, and thus give assurance that 'their names are written in the book of life.' This affectionate spirit should be cultivated, and sought in constant prayer, by all ministers, as peculiarly conducive to usefulness.—Believers have always ground of 'rejoicing in the Lord,' though they are not always able to rejoice; the perfection of their duty, and the full enjoyment of their privilege, are precisely the same; their disconsolations arise from weakness of faith and grace, and they should be called upon to 'rejoice in the Lord always,' though they be not able to come up to the standard that they may aim high; for the nearer they come to it, the more will God be glorified in and by them. Living upon these holy, satisfying, and substantial joys, we should make it appear,

V. 5—7. Peace of God.] This peace is 'my peace,' says Jesus; it is the 'fruit of the Spirit;' it is 'the peace of God.'—(5) Moderation.] It means, meekness under provocation, readiness to forgive injuries, equity in the management of business, candor in judging characters and actions, . . . sweetness of disposition, and the entire government of the passions.' Mackn. 'Equity, a mind moderate as to the things of this life, and by no means strictly exacting what is justly due.' Beza.—'The Lord is at hand,' (5) or near. Some understand the clause of his being a present help in trouble. Others suppose the apostle meant, that the Lord would speedily come to destroy Jerusalem, and deprive the Jews of that power and influence, by which they became the general instigators of persecution. Probably this interpretation was adopted, lest it should be inferred, that the apostle erroneously supposed the day of judgment to be near at hand; but it is by no means satisfactory. It is, however, the manner of the sacred writers, to consider all temporal things as short, and the end of them as 'at hand,' and 'the Judge as at the door;' and, seeing death is the same, in a great measure, to individuals, as judgment will be to the world at large, their language is in this respect highly suitable and proper.—(6) With thanksgiving.] 'Thus David, very often beginning with lamentations and tears, concludes with thanksgiving.' Beza.—The mind and heart are distinguished. 'The peace of God,' and the happy experience of it, fortifies and garrisons the intellectual faculties, against the cavils, objections, and vain reasonings of Infidels, skeptics, philosophers, and heretics, and the affections against the allurements and terrors of worldly objects, and both mind and heart against all the temptations of the devil. SCOTT.

V. 8, 9. The substance of the practical exhortations, which the apostle had further to give, might be comprised in few words. Whatsoever

in God is a duty of great consequence in the Christian life; and Christians need to be again and again called to it. If good men have not a continual feast, it is their own fault.

IV. We are here exhorted to candor, gentleness, and good temper towards our brethren, v. 5. 'In things indifferent, do not run into extremes; avoid bigotry and animosity; judge charitably concerning one another.' The word signifies a good disposition towards other men; and this moderation is explained, Rom. 14. Some understand it of patiently bearing afflictions, or sober enjoyment of worldly good; and so it well agrees with the following v. The reason is, The Lord is at hand. The consideration of our Master's approach, and our final account, should keep us from smiting our fellow-servants, support us under present sufferings, and moderate our affections to outward good.

V. Here is a caution against disquieting, perplexing care, v. 6. the same expression with that, Mat. 6:25. Take no thought for your life, i. e. anxious care and distracting thoughts in the wants and difficulties of life. Observe, The duty and interest of Christians, is, to live without care. A care of diligence is our duty, and consists in a wise forecast and due concern; but a care of diffidence and distrust is our sin and folly, and only perplexes and distracts the mind.

VI. As a sovereign antidote against perplexing care, he recommends constant prayer; In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. Observe, 1. We must pray not only at stated times, but on every particular emergence. 2. We must join thanksgiving with our prayers; grateful acknowledgments of what we have, argue a right disposition of mind, and are prevailing motives for further blessings. 3. Prayer is offering up our desires to God, or making them known to Him; not that God needs to be told either our wants or desires; but He will know them from us, have us [be constantly in this spiritual state]

show our regards, and express our value of the mercy, and sense of our dependence on Him. 4. The effect of this will be the peace of God keeping our hearts, v. 7. the comfortable sense of our reconciliation to God, and interest in his favor, and the hope of blessedness, and enjoyment of God hereafter, which passeth all understanding, a greater good than can be sufficiently valued or duly expressed.

VII. We are exhorted to get and keep a good name; a name for good things with God and good men, v. 8. a regard to truth in our words and engagements, and to decency and becomingness in our behavior, suitable to our circumstances and condition of life; justice and righteousness in our dealings with men; without the impurity or mixture of sin; things that will render us beloved, and make us well spoken, as well as well thought of, by others. If there is any virtue, any praise, anything really virtuous and worthy of commendation, think on these things, imitate them. Virtue has its praise, and will have. We should walk in all her ways, and abide therein; then, whether our praise be of men or no, it will be of God, Rom. 2:29.

In these things he proposes himself for an example, v. 9. Paul's doctrine and life were of a piece. What they saw in him, was the same thing with what they heard from him. He could propose himself as well as his doctrine to their imitation. It gives great force to what we say to others, when we can appeal to what they have seen in us. And this is the way to have the God of peace with us,—to keep close to our duty to Him. The Lord is with us while we are with Him.

V. 10—19. In these vs. the apostle, I. Acknowledges their former kindnesses to him, v. 15, 16. Paul had a grateful spirit: his friends did nothing for him in comparison of what he deserved from them; yet he speaks of their kindness as if it had been a generous charity, when it was really far short of a just debt. Surely never was a present so well repaid.

that we are not of this world. The transient joys and sorrows of the present scene are not worth our solicitude; all our temporal and eternal interests are in the Lord's hands; we should therefore be 'careful for nothing,' except to know the state of our souls, and the path of duty. In all our sorrows, fears, wants, or trials, we should 'make our requests known unto God;' for, though He knows them beforehand, He loves to hear them from us.—All our privileges, and salvation, originate wholly from the free mercy of God, yet the actual enjoyment of them is intimately connected with our holy conversation. Therefore, 'whatsoever things are true,' venerable, just, pure, loving, 'lovely, or of good report,' whatsoever is virtuous and commendable; whatsoever prophets, apostles, or martyrs have exemplified; whatsoever excellency we have heard and read of, or witnessed, in the conduct of the saints; nay, whatever things the world, on good grounds, regards and approves as virtuous and commendable; these things we should continually think of, and diligently practice, and in this way we may confidently expect, and shall doubtless experience, the presence and blessing of the God of peace and love, in every circumstance of life and death. SCOTT.

temper, words, or actions, in any way expressed truth, candor, sincerity, or fidelity; whatsoever appeared grave, 'venerable,' or respectable; whatsoever was just and upright, stamped with probity and integrity; whatsoever evinced purity, chastity, and temperance; whatsoever was amiable, or friendly; whatsoever was justly of good report, and approved as virtuous or commendable, among men; let the Philippians continually 'think of these things,' form a due estimate of the value of each, adopt such as were really good, and manifest them in every part of their conduct. (M. R. b—k.) In short, let them practice what he had taught them, and what they had received as teachable scholars; what they had heard from him, and witnessed in his example; then he could confidently assure them of the comforting and protecting presence of their reconciled God, (as the Author of inward and outward peace,) with their souls and in their assemblies. SCOTT.

V. 8. Honest.] 'Grave and venerable. Lardner well expresses the apostle's design; "they should avoid unbecoming levity in word, action, habit, and outward behavior, which tends to render men despicable."—Lovely, friendly, and kind; this seems more exact than lovely, though there is certainly a lovely charm in such friendly things.' DONDR.

V. 10—13. (11) Learned, &c.] He seems to have learned these things, by a deep sense of his own unworthiness, and his obligations to the Lord, by continually contemplating the poverty, abasement, and sufferings of Christ, by a believing confidence in the wisdom, faithfulness, and love of God, who ordered all this concern in the best manner possible, by a lively hope of immortal felicity, and an ardent desire, by any labors or sufferings, to promote the cause of Christ in the world.—It appears to us wonderful, that the apostle, in so affluent a city as Rome, where a flourishing church of Christ had been for a considerable time



11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where, and in all things, I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

14 Notwithstanding, ye have well done that ye did communicate with my affliction.

15 Now, ye Philippians, know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

17 Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.

19 But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

20 Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

21 Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

r He. 13:5.      u or, have received.      w Ps. 23:t.  
s Jn. 15:5.      x Ep. 3:16.  
t Co. 12:9.      v He. 13:16.      y Ro. 16:27.  
2 Co. 11:8,9.

He reminds them, how they not only maintained him comfortably while with them, but sent tokens of their kindness after him, when he departed from Macedonia; and this, when no other church did so besides, v. 15. It redounded so much the more to their honor, that they were the only church who were thus just and generous. *Even in Thessalonica* (after he was departed from Macedonia) ye sent once and again to my necessity, v. 16. It is an excellent thing to see those to whom God has abounded in the

established, and even after his imprisonment for the Gospel had excited very great attention, among large multitudes, should want the necessities or comforts of life. But the Gentiles, in general, were little in the habit of giving to the poor, or contributing to the support of the ministers of religion; and the apostle, like Elisha in respect of Naaman, would be extremely careful not to excite their prejudices, or interrupt the success of the Gospel, by his own concerns; so that, probably, it was not generally known that he was in want. The Christians at Rome, as in other places, were, it may be supposed, chiefly of the lower orders, and they had already to provide for their own pastors, the poor, and the expenses of their religious worship. Yet, after all these considerations have been allowed their full weight, not only the disinterestedness of the apostle, but the inattention, to say no more, of the Christians, cannot but excite our astonishment!—*I am instructed.*] A reference is made to the initiation of select persons into certain concealed mysteries, among the heathen. There is reason to believe, that these celebrated mysteries contained much evil, and little or no good; but the mystery of the life of faith, submission to God, and reliance on Him, was of a higher and nobler nature.—(11) *To be content.*] The seat of his satisfaction is in himself, independent of creatures, but derived from God, and sustained by Him.

(10.) *Bl.* remarks here the dignified delicacy of the apostle; also at v. 11. such a mixture of dignity and delicacy as is rarely to be met with in the most finished compositions. *ED.*—'The apostle likened the Philippians' care of him to a plant, which withers and dies in winter, but groweth in the following year; or to trees, which, after their leaves drop in the autumn, put them forth again in spring. Lest, however, the Philippians might think this expression insinuated a complaint, that they had been negligent latterly, the apostle immediately added, that they

gifts of his grace, abounding in grateful returns to his people and ministers, according to their own ability, and their necessity; *Ye sent once and again.* Many people excuse their charity, that they have given once; but the Philippians often relieved and refreshed Paul in his necessities. He makes this mention of their former kindness, not only in his own gratitude, but for their encouragement.

11. He excuses their neglect of late. It seems, for some time, they had not sent to inquire after him, or sent him any present; but now, at the last, their care of him flourished again, v. 10. like a tree in the spring, which seemed all the winter to be quite dead. They might have sent a messenger on purpose. But the apostle is willing to suppose, in favor of them, that they would have done it if a fair opportunity had offered. How contrary is this to the conduct of many to their friends, by whom neglects, which really are excusable, are resented very heinously.

111. He commends their present liberality, v. 14. It is good to help a good minister in trouble. Here see the nature of true Christian sympathy; not only to be concerned for our friends in their troubles, but to do what we can to help them, Ja. 2:16. He rejoiced greatly in it, v. 10. because it was an evidence of their affection to him, and the success of his ministry among them.

IV. He obviates the ill use some might make of his taking so much notice of what was sent him. It did not proceed either from discontent and distrust, v. 11. or from covetousness, and love of the world, v. 12.

1. Not from discontent, or distrust of Providence, v. 11. not in respect of any want he felt, or of any he feared. As to the former, he was content with the little he had; as to the latter, he depended on the providence of God to provide for him from day to day. We have here an account of Paul's learning, not what he got at the feet of Gamaliel, but of Christ. He was in bonds, and imprisonments, and necessities, often; but in all he had learnt to be content, to bring his mind to his condition, and to make the best of it, v. 12. This is a special act of grace, to accommodate ourselves to every condition of life, and carry an equal temper of mind through all the varieties of our state. In prosperity, not to be proud and secure, is as hard, as, in adversity, not to lose comfort in God, and distrust his providence. And how must we learn it? v. 13. We need strength from Christ, to enable us to perform not only those duties which are purely Christian, but even those which are the fruit of moral virtue. We need his strength to teach us to be content in every condition. The apostle had seemed

to boast of himself, and of his own strength, v. 12. but here transfers all praise to Christ. The word in the original is a participle of the present tense, and denotes a present and continued act; 'Through Christ, strengthening me continually, by his constant, renewed strength, I am enabled to act in everything; I wholly depend on Him for all my spiritual power.'

2. Not from covetousness, or an affection to worldly wealth; *Not because I desire a gift, v. 17. i. e.* 'I welcome your kindness, not because it adds to my enjoyments, but because it adds to your account.' He desired it not so much for his own sake, but theirs; *fruit that may abound to your account*; it is not with any design to draw more from you, but to encourage you to such an [habitual] exercise of beneficence, as will [be its own] glorious reward hereafter. 'For my part,' says he, 'I have all, and abound,' v. 18. They sent him a small token, and he desired no more; he was not solicitous for a present superfluity, or a future supply; *I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you.* Note, A good man will soon have enough of this world; not only of living in it, but of receiving from it. A covetous worldling, if he has ever so much, would still have more; but a heavenly Christian, though he has little, has enough.

V. The apostle assures them, that God did accept, and would recompense, their kindness to him.

1. He did accept it; *It is an odor of a sweet smell; a sacrifice, acceptable, well-pleasing to God.* Not a sacrifice of atonement, for none makes atonement for sin but Christ; but a sacrifice of acknowledgment, and well-pleasing to God. It was more acceptable to God as the fruit of their grace, than to Paul as the supply of his want. *With such sacrifices God is well pleased,* Heb. 13:16.

2. He would recompense it, v. 19. 'He shall do it, not only as your God, but as my God, who takes what is done to me as done to Himself. You supplied my needs, according to your poverty; and He shall supply yours, according to his riches.' But still it is by Christ Jesus: through Him we have grace to do that which is good, and through Him we must expect the reward of it. Not of debt, but of grace; for the more we do for God, the more we are indebted to Him, because we receive the more from Him.

V. 20—23. The apostle concludes:

1. With praises to God, v. 20. as our Father, a relation of great condescension in God, and of great encouragement to us; we should look upon God, under all our weakness and fears, not as a tyrant or an enemy, but as a Father, who is disposed to pity and help us. 2. With salutations to his friends at Phi-

lippi, v. 21. He had always been careful to supply his wants, but had not had an opportunity till now.

V. 14—20. Nothing could more fully show the peculiar confidence the apostle had, concerning the Christians at Philippi, (as well as the fervor of his prayer for them,) than this conduct in receiving support from them, and so long after thus acknowledging it. Thessalonica was indeed a larger city than Philippi, but probably the converts to Christianity were poorer, and perhaps they had not been so fully proved, when he was driven from them, as the Philippians had been 2 Cor. 8: 1—5.—As Thessalonica was the chief city of Macedonia, at which Paul continued some time, it has been supposed that the clause, 'when I departed from Macedonia,' relates to a supply sent to him, after he was gone into Achaia, distinct from what had been sent him in Thessalonica.—The language used, concerning the conduct of the Philippians, being in the most emphatical terms the same which is used concerning the atonement of Christ, (Eph. 5:2,) is wonderful; and it shows how pleasing real good works, 'the fruits of the Spirit,' are to God, through Jesus Christ. Heb. 6:9, 10. 13:15, 16.

(15.) *Giving and receiving.*] *Doseōs, lēpseōs:* mercantile terms of credit and receipt. If anything was given, it was not worth noting or putting down, i. e. in the account book, denoted by *logon*, as at v. 11? See *Bl.*

V. 21, 22. 'The brethren,' may here either mean the ministers at Rome, or such of the apostle's friends, as were come from other parts to be with him.—There were true 'saints in Nero's household,' who kept their places, and served Christ in that most perilous and ensnaring situation, as Daniel did in the court of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius. Dan. 4—6.—It is probable, that they were generally in inferior stations.



22 All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cesar's household.

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

¶ It was written to the Philippians from Rome, by Epaphroditus.

PRACT. OBS. V. 10—23. Even those who on the whole prosper in religion, have their winters, as well as their spring seasons; sometimes their zeal and love seem to languish, and then again at last they 'flourish' more abundantly. Yet they often 'lack opportunity,' when they perhaps are judged inattentive; and faithful ministers may sometimes suspect or mourn over them, when, if they knew all, they might be rejoicing greatly in the Lord for them. We should, however, confide in God alone, for human friendships are precarious.—It is a great and exceedingly rare and difficult attainment, to 'learn, in whatever state we are, therewith to be content.' Pride, unbelief, a vain hankering after something unpossessed, a fickle, sickly disrelish of present comforts, and the tedious repetition of the same actions and scenes which no longer give pleasure, render men naturally discontented in the most favorable circumstances; and their continual shiftings, from one thing to another, resemble the tossing to and fro of a man in a fever, who imputes his restlessness to his *posture*, rather than to his *disease*. The discontented spirit, then, is the effect of inward *disease*, not of outward circumstances; and content must spring from inward health of soul, even from holiness. It requires much humility, spirituality, faith, and resignation, to render us contented in our appointed situations. Probably, few Christians, who even enjoy liberty and plenty, can sincerely and unreservedly adopt the language of Paul, the indigent prisoner of Jesus Christ. We ought, however, to study this important lesson; we can indeed of ourselves 'do nothing;' but we may do all things through

(21, 22.) *The brethren . . . all the saints.*] 'From this distinction, I conclude that it is highly probable, the ministers at Rome were called brethren.'

(22.) *Of Cesar's house.*] '*Kaisaros oikias* : relatives of Cesar, see

(*Note on Christian Union, Continued from p. 377.*)

III. 'The importance and duty of unity is further demonstrated, by the baneful effects of sectarian divisions.'

'They tend to destroy that community of interest, and sympathy of feeling which the Savior and his apostles so urgently inculcate. How fervently does our blessed Lord supplicate (Jn. 17:20, 21.) for the unity of all his followers! "Neither pray I for these (the apostles) alone, but for them also who believe on Me through their word; that they may all be one, as Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee,"—that there may be among them that unity of counsel, of feeling, of purpose, of action, which exists between the Father and the Son. What can be more reasonable? If all his disciples, all who "believe in Him through the Word," are hereafter to inhabit the same heaven, to surround the same throne of God and the Lamb! No! sectarianism is an acknowledged and,—alas that it should be so,—a cherished trait of the church on earth, which will never, never be admitted into heaven. And who can doubt, that the nearer we can bring the church on earth to the character of the church in heaven, the more pleasing will she be to Him that purchased her with his blood, 1 Cor. 12:25. But, gracious Lord! . . . does not the great mass of the several religious denominations of our land exhibit anything else than "the same ear" for the other members of Christ's body? If one denomination suffers, fails of success, or meets with disgrace in some of its unworthy members, do not surrounding denominations rather at least tacitly and cheerfully acquiesce, if not rejoice, hoping that thus more room will be made and facility offered for their own enlargement? We do not find that members of the same family thus cordially acquiesce or triumph in each other's misfortune or disgrace. If one brother is visited by any calamity, if he falls a victim to intemperance, and bears about in his bloated face the ensign of his disgrace, do we not rather sympathize, feel hurt ourselves, and mourn over his downfall? Thus ought it to be among all who deserve the name of Christ. Thus would it be, if the community of interest, in the Savior's family, had not been impaired by sectarian divisions, which place several distinct religious families on the same ground, with separate pecuniary interests, with conflicting prejudices, with rival, sectarian aims! In the apostolic age, and for centuries after it, only one Christian church occupied the same field, and thus three fourths of the causes which originate contention among modern Christians, were avoided. Again, sectarian divisions impede the impartial study of the sacred volume, by ministers and laymen. [See Guide to Study of Bible, (Supplement to Comp. Com.) p. 23.] The doctrines believed by what are termed the orthodox churches, as well as their forms of government and worship, may be divided into two classes, those which are undisputed, and held by all in common, and those which are disputed by some of them, and which distinguish the sects from each other. The sectarian principle builds a wall of defence around the peculiar opinions of each sect. It enlists all Christians in defence of the peculiarities of their denominations, and creates powerful motives of a self-interested and unholy character in vindication of these peculiarities, rather than of the grand truths of Christianity, which are essential to the salvation of all; motives which appeal to the pride of some, [the love of power in others,] the avarice of others, and the ambition [and vanity] of a fourth class. Each member is taught by the very principles of his [selfish and] sinful nature, to feel identified with the peculiar interests of his sect. His vanity is flattered by the supposed respectability of his sect, his ambition is at least tempted by the prospect of extended influence, [admiration,] or distinction in the ministry, or as a layman in the ecclesiastical councils of his extensive and respectable church; and his avarice is concerned in diminishing his own expenses, by the increasing numbers of his fellow-members; or, if a minister, by the ample support he may obtain. We would not insinuate, that all Christians are influenced by these namable motives; nor that any true disciple of the Savior is mainly actuated by them. But we fear, that the majority of professors in the church are more influenced by these secular considerations, than they themselves are aware. Accordingly, the peculiarities of sect acquire a factitious importance, are often inculcated with as much assiduity, as the great and cardinal doctrines of the Gospel. End-

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lippi, v. 21. He desires remembrances, not only to the bishops and deacons, and the church in general, but to every particular saint. Paul had a kind affection to all good Christians. 3. He sends salutations from those who were at Rome; all the saints, chiefly the Christian converts who belonged to the emperor's court. The Gospel early

obtained among some of the rich and great. Chiefly they, &c. Observe, They, being bred at court, were more complaisant than the rest. See what an ornament to religion sanctified civility is. 4. The apostolical benediction, as usual: 'the free favor and good-will of Christ be your portion and happiness!'

Christ, who inwardly strengthens his people, in proportion as they simply depend on Him. He can teach and enable his ministers to live in poverty among the affluent, without grudging, envying, coveting, or repining, even when they have an equitable claim on them for a portion of their abundance. Indeed, we should peculiarly aim at this, if we would be examples to the flock, and convince the wealthy that we 'seek not theirs but them.'—Notwithstanding this, the people should be taught, that 'they do well in communicating to the wants' of their faithful pastors, who are justly entitled to liberal assistance, in proportion as they are willing to 'endure all things, rather than hinder the Gospel of Christ.' (*Note, 1 Cor. 9:7—23.*) And those who distinguish themselves in such services, from pure motives, shall he 'had in everlasting remembrance.'—Pride, rather than disinterestedness; sometimes induces men, when in actual straits, to refuse or decline such help, as is offered them in the most unexceptionable manner; but still more evidently, it is this evil principle, which makes them unwilling to acknowledge the favors they have received.—Whether saints reside in palaces, cottages, or dungeons, communion should be maintained among them, by mutual prayers, salutations, and kindnesses. The Lord will have some to honor Him in every situation, and He can preserve them unhurt in their proper places, however perilous, by the power which protected the three young men in the fiery furnace, Dan. 3: for 'the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ' will be with all his true people, wherever dispersed, or however distinguished, and prove eventually 'sufficient for them.' Sc.

Raphel, so some; others, with more probability, explain, Cesar's [i. e. the Roman emperor's] domestics and ministers, especially freed-men. See *Jos. and Philo.* The *domus Cesaris* often occurs in the inscriptions, and the *oikia Kaisaros* in the Greek historians, as Dio Cass. Bl.

less and useless controversies about these points agitate the church, and disturb her peace. These peculiarities are instilled into the tender minds of children, and are often represented as involving the marrow of salvation. Prejudices are raised in their behalf. The tenets of other denominations are often kept out of view, [unknown, misrepresented,] or stated in a manner but ill calculated for an impartial investigation of God's truth. The antipathies of the social circle are sometimes arrayed in opposition, and, may I say, sometimes, in ridicule of other denominations; and even the gentler sex, sisters of her of Bethany, who, sitting at her Master's feet, imbibed the [effluences] of his love; sisters of them, who, true to their affection, were "Last at the cross, and earliest at the grave," have hated [for hatred of something is but too natural to every human heart] even that Savior, in the person of his followers, because they wore not the badge of their sect! have forgotten that their religion is love,—that charity, divine charity, is the brightest ornament of their nature! Under such circumstances, doubts of the sectarian peculiarities inculcated, would expose the ingenuous youth, who should avow them, to social inconveniences, to parental disapprobation; and rarely does he enjoy ample opportunity for impartial investigation, before adult age. The fact, that, almost invariably, young persons adopt and prefer the peculiar sectarian views of their parents, is a demonstrative proof that their preference is not built on argument, but that the mode of religious education, in the different churches, is unfavorable to impartial investigation. The simple circumstance of parental belief, is assuredly no satisfactory proof of the creed which we adopt on account of it. For the same reason, we would have been Mahommedans, if born in Turkey; Papists, in Italy, and worshippers of the Grand Lama, in Thibet. And ministers of the Gospel have still greater obstacles to surmount, as their disbelief of the peculiarities of their sect tarnishes their reputation [and injures their proper influence] with their associates; yea, not unfrequently excludes them from their pastoral charge, and their families from daily bread!

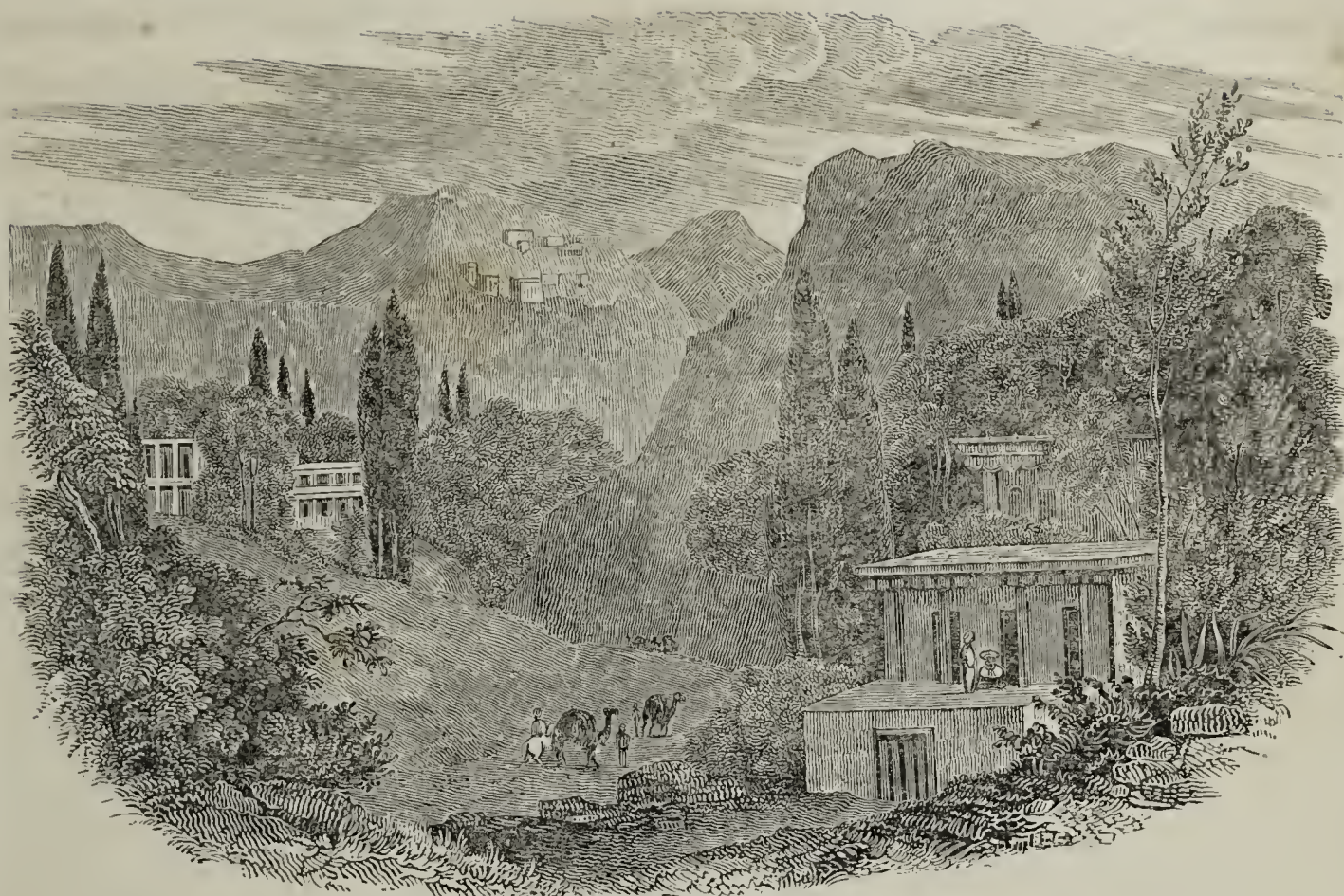
'Lastly, the principle of sectarian divisions powerfully retards the spiritual conquests of Christianity over the world. Who that knows aught of the divine life, can doubt, that in proportion as he permits pride, envy, jealousy, hatred, to arise in his heart, the spirit of piety languishes, his graces decline, and his sense of the divine presence is impaired? But sectarianism, by which, in this discussion, we [mean generally] the principle of divisions on the ground of difference in non-essentials, among those who profess to regard each other as fellow-Christians, sectarianism indubitably creates various conflicting interests, presents numerous occasions and temptations to envy, hatred, jealousy, slander, and creates an atmosphere around the Christian, in which the flame of piety cannot burn with lustre, and not unfrequently expires.

'What observer of transpiring scenes can doubt, that the sectarian strife, and animosity between the churches, deter many sinners from making religion the subject of their chief concern, and from being converted to God? The Savior prayed: "That they all may be one, as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee; that they may also be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou has sent Me." Here, then, the Savior Himself informs us, what influence unity among his followers was designed to effect; history tells us, that when surrounding heathen were constrained to say, "See how these Christians love one another," the moral influence of their example was amazing: and who can doubt, that inverse causes produce inverse effects.

'How often does not the principle of sect, exclude the blessed Savior from our villages, and sparsely populated sections of country, in which united Christians might support the Gospel; but, cut up into jealous and discordant sects, and hating one another as though each believed a different Christ, all remain destitute of the stated means of grace! The occasional visits of ministers of different sects, serve to confirm each party in its own predilections, and thus we often witness the melancholy spectacle of the Savior excluded from such places by the dissensions of his professed friends, and sinners shut out from the sanctuary of God, because saints cannot agree whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas shall minister unto them.

(Continued on p. 433.)





KHONOS, THE ANCIENT COLOSSE.

AN EXPOSITION  
OF  
**PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS,**  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Dr. W. Harris.)

Colosse was a considerable city of Phrygia, probably not far from Laodicea and Hierapolis; we find these three mentioned together, *chap. 4:13*. It is now buried in ruins, [see the cut, from *Arundell*,] and the memory of it chiefly preserved in this epistle.\* Paul professes a great satisfaction in their *steadfastness* and constancy, and encourages them to *perseverance*. It was written about the same time with the epistles to the Ephesians and Philippians, *A. D. 62*, and in the same place, while he was now prisoner at Rome. He was not idle in his confinement, and the Word of God was not bound.

[The immediate occasion of this epistle, says *Horne*, was Epaphras' requesting Paul's advice, and perhaps the Laodicean letter, *4:16*.] Like that to the Romans, it was written to those whom Paul had never seen. The church was not planted by Paul's ministry, but by the ministry of Epaphras, or Epaphroditus, † an evangelist, one whom he delegated to preach the Gospel among the Gentiles; and yet, I. There was a flourishing church at Colosse, and one eminent and famous among the churches. God is sometimes pleased to use the ministry of those who are of less note, and lower gifts, for doing great service to his church; He is not tied to those of note, that the *excellence of the power may appear to be of God, and not of men*, 2 Cor. 4:7. II. Though Paul had not the planting of this church, yet he did not, therefore, neglect it; nor, in writing his epistles, does he make any difference between that and other churches. The Colossians, who were converted by the ministry of Epaphras, were as dear to him, and he as much concerned for their welfare, as the Philippians, or any others who were converted by his ministry. Thus he put an honor on an inferior minister, and teaches us not to be selfish, or think all that honor lost, which goes beside ourselves. We learn in his example not to think it a disparagement to us to *water what others have planted; or build on the foundation others have laid: as he himself, as a wise master-builder, laid the foundation, and another builded thereon*, 1 Cor. 3:10.

HENRY.

There is a great similarity between this epistle, and that to the Ephesians; ‡ and it is generally supposed, they were written about the same time, and sent by the same messenger, even Tychicus; though Onesimus, being a Colossian, who accompanied Tychicus, is not mentioned in the epistle to the Ephesians. 4:7—14, v. 9.—The apostle had probably heard of some teachers, who, grafting heathen philosophy, along with the tradition of the Pharisees, on the ritual law of Moses, had corrupted the Gospel by this heterogeneous mixture, and were attempting to draw aside the Colossians. He therefore particularly warned them against these deceivers, and against all who, either by superstitious observances, or philosophy, attempted to seduce them from 'the simplicity of Christ,' in whom alone 'they were complete,' and had everything they could possibly want, or *imagine*, as really conducive to their edification and salvation. These cautions and exhortations are introduced, and connected with the most exalted views of the personal and mediatorial dignity of Christ, and the fulness and freeness of his salvation; which many suppose to have been directed against some of those heretical sects, which sprang up at an early period in the church, the leaders of which sought to exalt themselves, by derogating from the glory of the divine Savior.—It appears, however, that the church at Colosse was, on the whole, in a very flourishing state; and accordingly the epistle abounds far more in thanksgivings to God, commendations, and animating exhortations, than in reproofs and warnings.—Epaphras was, probably, when the apostle wrote, confined as a prisoner at Rome. § *Phil. 23*. SCOTT.

\* Colosse was situated nearly midway between Laodicea and Hierapolis, on an eminence S. of the river Meander, near where the river Lycus enters the earth. All these cities were destroyed by an earthquake in the 10th year of Nero, and about a year after the writing of this epistle. Colosse is [proved] to have occupied a site now covered with ruins, near the village of *Konous*, or *Khonos*, about 3 hours from Laodicea, but on the other side of the river, supposed the Lycus, and about 20 miles N. W. of *Deg-nizlu*.

† This has of late been much controverted, yet (the general testimony of antiquity favors it, and) my decided opinion is, that the evidence against the apostle's having been at Colosse (comp. 2:1.) is far greater than any adduced on the affirmative side. S. ‡ Whoever, says *Mich.*, would understand the Ephesians and Colossians, must read them together: one being, in most places, a commentary on the other, and parallel passages interpret each other. Yet in Colossians there is much not in Ephesians, especially as to worship of angels, and many single points which appear to be Essene, and might prevail at Colosse.

Parallel passages in Ephesians and Colossians.

Ephesians.	Colossians.	Ephesians.	Colossians.	Ephesians.	Colossians.
1:1, 2. . . .	1:1, 2.	3:3. &c. . . .	1:26—29.	5:6. . . . .	3:6.
1:6. . . . .	1:13.	4:2—4. . . .	2:12—15.	5:7, 8. . . .	3:7, 8.
1:10. . . . .	1:19, 20.	4:16. . . . .	2:19.	5:15, 16. . .	4:5.
1:15, 16. . .	1:3, 4.	4:22—25. . .	3:9, 10.	5:18—20. . .	3:16, 17.
1:17—21. . .	1:9—15.	4:17—21. . .	{ 1:21, 2:6, 3:8 } —10.	5:21—23, 6: } 1—9. } 6:18—20. . .	3:19—25, 4:1. 4:2—4.
1:22, 3:10, 11.	1:16—19.	4:29. . . . .	4:6.	6:21, 22. . .	4:7—9.
1:19, 2:1—5.	2:12, 13.	4:32. . . . .	3:12, 13.		
2:1. . . . .	1:21.	4:31. . . . .	3:8.		
2:13—16. . .	1:20, 2:14.	5:5. . . . .	3:5.		
3:1. . . . .	1:24, 25.				

§ 'On the undesigned coincidences between Colossians and Acts, see Paley's *Horne's Id.* Pauline, chapter 8.'

Horne.



## CHAP. I.

1 After salutation he thanketh God for their faith, 7 confirmeth the doctrine of Epaphras, 9 prayeth farther for their increase in grace, 14 describeth the true Christ, 21 encourageth them to receive Jesus Christ, and commendeth his own ministry.

**PAUL**, \* an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother,

2 To the saints <sup>b</sup> and faithful brethren in Christ which are at <sup>c</sup> Colosse: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 We <sup>d</sup> give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints;

5 For the hope which is laid up <sup>e</sup> for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

6 Which is come unto you, as *it is* in all <sup>f</sup> the world; and bringeth <sup>g</sup> forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the day ye heard <sup>h</sup> of it, and knew the <sup>i</sup> grace of God in <sup>j</sup> truth.

7 As ye also learned of <sup>k</sup> Epaphras our dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

8 Who also declared unto us your love <sup>l</sup> in the Spirit.

9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his <sup>m</sup> will, in all <sup>n</sup> wisdom and spiritual <sup>o</sup> understanding.

10 That ye might walk <sup>p</sup> worthy of the Lord unto all <sup>q</sup> pleasing, <sup>r</sup> being fruitful in every good work, and increasing <sup>s</sup> in the knowledge of God;

a Ep. 1:1.      g Jn. 15:16.      Ep. 5:10,17.  
b 1's. 16:3.    h Ro. 10:17.      n Ps. 119:99.  
c Ga. 1:3.      i Tit. 2:11,12.    o 1 Jn. 5:20.  
d Ep. 1:15,16.    j Ja. 4:23.      p Phi. 1:27.  
e 2 Ti. 4:8.      k Phil. 23.      q 1 Th. 4:1.  
f ver. 23.      l Ro. 15:30.      r Jn. 15:8,16.  
                    m Ro. 12:2.      s 2 Pe. 3:18.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. The inscription of this epistle is much the same with the rest; only it is observable,

1. That he calls himself an *apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God*. He attributes this not to his own merit, strength, or sufficiency; but to the free grace and good-will of God.

2. He joins Timothy with himself; in his humility he calls him *his son*, 2 Tim. 2:1.

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. 'I cannot think, they are called holy and faithful brethren, on account of their adhering to the purity of the Christian faith, in opposition to those that urged the necessity of observing the Jewish law. This was indeed one instance of their fidelity, but I think it greatly impoverishes and debases the sense of such an extensive phrase, to reduce it within such narrow bounds. Many scores of criticisms of some modern commentators of reputation are liable to the same exception.' DODDR.—The author quotes this passage, as exactly conveying his own opinion on several learned expositions, both before and since the time of the pious Doddridge. They give you a bucket of water, and speak as if they had emptied the well. SCOTT.

(2.) *Saints*.] 'I would beg the reader not to overlook, that here, as in all others of Paul's inspired writings, [the epistle is] directed to the church of God, and to that church only.' HAWKER.—'It is plain there may be *saints* in this life,—on earth: this confutes the papists, who acknowledge no saints till canonized by the pope, and it must be one hundred years after they are dead.' BYFIELD, in *Henry*, *abr.*

V. 3. *To God and the Father*.] 'The God and Father.' DODDR. and MACKN.—*Always*.] 'It may be joined with either *giving thanks*, as by the more recent commentators; or with *praying*, as by the ancient, and earlier moderns. The latter is more natural:—but it may be said to belong to both.' BLOOMF.

V. 4. *Faith*.] 'The steadfastness, constancy, and perseverance of their faith.' HEWLETT.—*Faith and love*.] 'The former denotes the profession of the Christian religion; the latter, kindness and charity towards the poor brethren.—But the full sense of *faith* and *heard* [here] will depend on the determination of the question, whether or

yet here *his brother*; an example to elder and more eminent ministers, towards the younger and more obscure.

3. He calls the Christians at Colosse *saints, and faithful brethren in Christ*. Note, Faithfulness runs through every character and relation of the Christian life, and is the crown and glory of them all.

4. The apostolical benediction is the same as usual. He wishes them *grace and peace*, the free favor of God, and all the blessed fruits of it; all kinds of spiritual blessings, and that *from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*; jointly from both, and distinctly from each; as in the former epistle.

V. 3—8. Here he proceeds with thanksgiving to God for what he had heard of them, though he had no personal acquaintance with them, and knew their state and character only by report. Observe,

I. Whom he gives thanks to, v. 3. In our thanksgiving we must have an eye to God as God, and as the *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, in, and through whom, all good comes to us.

II. What he gives thanks to God for, v. 4, 5. *Faith, hope, and love*, the three principal graces in the Christian life, and proper matter of our prayer and thanksgiving. We must believe in Jesus Christ, love Christian brethren, and be looking for the blessed hope of heaven hereafter. Some understand the love here of their charity to the saints in necessity: the happiness of heaven is called their *hope*, because it is the *thing hoped for*, Tit. 2:13. Having blessed God for these graces, he blesses God for the means of grace which they enjoyed. They heard of the hope laid up in heaven in the word of the truth of the Gospel, v. 6.

'This Gospel is preached, and bringeth forth fruit in other nations; it is come to you, as *it is in all the world*, according to the commission, *Go preach the Gospel in all the nations, and to every creature*.' He takes this occasion to mention the minister by whom they believed, v. 7, 8. He mentions him with great respect, to engage their love to him. He calls him his *fellow-servant*; to signify not only that they served the same Master, but that they were engaged in the same work. He calls him his *dear fellow-servant*: it is an endearing consideration to the servants of Christ, that they are engaged in the same service. He represents him as one who was a *faithful* minister of Christ to them. Observe, Christ is our proper Master, and we his ministers. He does not say, *your minister*; but the *minister of Christ for you*. It is by Christ's authority, but for the people's service. He represents him as one who gave them a *good word*, v. 8. He recommends him to their affection, from the good report he made of their sincere love to Christ and all his members, which was wrought in them by the Spirit, and is agree-

able to the Spirit of the Gospel. Faithful ministers are glad to be able to speak well of their people.

V. 9—11. The apostle proceeds in these vs. to pray for them. He heard they were good, and prayed they might be better. He was constant in this prayer. Observe, What he begs of God for them.

1. That they might be knowing, intelligent Christians; *filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*. The knowledge of our duty is the best knowledge. Our knowledge of the will of God must be always practical. Our knowledge is *then* a blessing indeed, when it is in wisdom; when we know how to apply our general knowledge to our particular occasions, and to suit it to all emergencies. Christians should endeavor to be filled with knowledge; not only to know the will of God, but to know more of it, and to *increase in the knowledge of God*, v. 10. 2 Pet. 3:18.

2. That their conversation might be good. Good knowledge, without a good life, will not profit. Our understanding is *then* a spiritual understanding, when we exemplify it in our way of living—*That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing*, v. 10. that is, as becomes the relation we stand in to Him, and the profession we make of Him. The agreeableness of our conversation to our religion, is pleasing to God, as well as to good men. This is what we should aim at. *Good words* will not do without *good works*. We must *abound* in good works, in every good work: not in some only, but in all, and in every instance of them. There must be a regular, uniform regard to all the will of God. And the more fruitful we are in good works, the more we shall *increase in the knowledge of God*, Jn. 7:17.

3. That they might be strengthened; *strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power*, v. 11. fortified against the temptations of Satan, and furnished for all their duty. To be strengthened, is to be furnished by the grace of God for every good work, and fortified by that grace against every evil one: it is to be enabled to do our duty, and still to hold fast our integrity. Of this strength, the blessed Spirit is the Author, Eph. 3:16. the Word of God the mean, and the method, prayer: so the apostle obtained sufficient grace. Observe, He prays they might be strengthened *with might*: i. e. might be mightily strengthened, or strengthened with might derived from another; with *all might*: he means, all we have occasion for, to enable us to discharge our duty, or preserve our innocence; the *grace sufficient* for us in all the trials of life, and to *help us in time of need*. It is according to *his glorious power*. He means, the grace of God: which in believers is the *power* of God; and there is a *glory* in it; it is an excellent and sufficient power; the communi-

not Paul founded the church at Colosse,—which, however, probably, he did not. BLOOMF.

V. 6. *In all the world*.] 'In all the provinces of the Roman empire, as the phrase often signifies.' DODDR. 'Thus understood, the apostle's affirmation is no hyperbole.' MACKN. 'The best commentators are agreed it may be regarded as a popular hyperbole. Rom. 1:8.' BL. *In all the world* . . . comp. v. 23. *Gospel . . . preached to every creature under heaven*.] Being preached at Rome, whence was constant communication, from Parthia to Britain, from the Baltic to Ethiopia, it might be said to be heard of throughout that space. Some of the apostles, we know, though we have the lives of but few, (see *Cave*.) travelled to Babylon, India, Parthia, Tartary, Persia, &c., but the records of their labors are mostly buried in the obscurity of heathenism, and so can not much confirm, certainly not contradict, the assertion of Paul. The Chinese had intercourse, in the century before Christ, with foreigners dealing in 'pearls and merchandise,' some coming 'on a voyage of 4 or 5 months,' as their records evince (see *Morrison*); and also, expressly with 'India,' the 'Great West,' &c., in 173 to 195 A. D. Obscure traditions, too, are said to exist, both among the Chinese and Japanese, of the preaching of the Gospel among them, by the middle of the 1st century, A. D. So that, very possibly, Paul's language is not mere hyperbole: the subject, indeed, is well worthy of further investigation. ED.

V. 9—14. The apostle joined himself (12—14.) and the Jewish converts along with the Gentiles in these things; and doubtless all are the subjects of the prince of darkness, of whatever nominal religion they are, till inward conversion translates them into the kingdom of Christ. Mat. 12:43—45. Jn. 8:41—47. Eph. 2:1—3. Tit. 3:4—7. 1 Jn. 5:19. Rev.



11 Strengthened <sup>t</sup> with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all <sup>u</sup> patience and long-suffering with <sup>v</sup> joyfulness;

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet <sup>w</sup> to be partakers of the inheritance <sup>x</sup> of the saints in light:

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of <sup>y</sup> darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of <sup>z</sup> his dear Son;

14 In <sup>a</sup> whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins;

15 Who is the image <sup>b</sup> of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

16 For by <sup>c</sup> him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by <sup>d</sup> him, and for him:

17 And he is before <sup>e</sup> all things, and by him all things consist.

t Is. 45:24.	x Ac. 20:32.	b He. 1:3.
u Ja. 1:4.	y 1 Pe. 2:9.	c Ju. 1:3.
v Ro. 5:3.	z the son of his love.	d Ro. 11:36.
w Re. 22:14.	a Ep. 1:7.	e Jn. 1:1.

eations of strength are not according to our weakness, to whom the strength is communicated, but according to his power, from whom it is received. The special use of this strength was for suffering work, v. 11.

He prays, not only that they might be supported under their troubles, but strengthened for them: there is work to be done, even when suffering. And they who are strengthened according to his glorious power, are strengthened not only to bear troubles patiently, but to receive them as gifts from God, and be thankful for them, Ja. 1:4. To you it is given to suffer, Phil. 1:29. The same reason for bearing one trouble, will hold for bearing another. All patience, includes all kinds of it; not only bearing patience, but waiting patience. This is even unto long-suffering, patience drawn out to bear trouble, as long as God pleases to continue it. It is with joyfulness that we are counted worthy to suffer for his name; to have joy as well as patience in the troubles of life. This we could never do by any strength of our own, but as we are strengthened by the grace of God.

V. 12—29. Here is the summary of the doctrine of the Gospel concerning the great work of our redemption by Christ, coming in here as the matter of a thanksgiving, v. 12. not in the natural order, the purchase first, and afterward the application; but here he inverts the order, the application before the purchase. The order and connexion of the apostle's discourse, may be considered in the following manner:

1. He speaks of the operations of the Spirit of grace on us. We must give thanks for them, because by these we are qualified for an interest in the mediation of the Son, v. 12, 13. It is spoken of as the work of the Father, because the Spirit of grace is the Spirit of the Father, and the Father works in us by his Spirit.

1. He hath delivered us from the power of

darkness, v. 13. He hath rescued us from the state of heathenish darkness and wickedness; saved us from the dominion of sin, which is darkness, 1 Jn. 1:6. from the dominion of Satan, the prince of darkness, Eph. 6:12. from the damnation of hell, which is utter darkness, Mat. 25:30. They are called out of darkness, 1 Pet. 2:9.

2. He hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, brought us into the gospel-state, and made us members of the church of Christ, which is a state of light and purity, Eph. 5:8. 1 Pet. 2:9. The conversion of a sinner, is the translation of a soul into the kingdom of Christ, out of the kingdom of the devil. The power of sin is shaken off, and the power of Christ submitted to. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, makes them free from the law of sin and death; and it is the kingdom of his dear Son, of the Son of his peculiar love, his beloved Son, Mat. 3:17. and eminently the Beloved, Eph. 1:6.

3. He hath not only done this, but hath made us meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light, v. 12. prepared us for the eternal happiness of heaven, and given us the earnest and assurance of it. This he mentions first, because it is the first indication of future blessedness, that, by the grace of God, we find ourselves in some measure prepared for it. God gives grace and glory, and we are here told what they both are. The glory is the inheritance of the saints in light, an inheritance which belongs to them as children, the best security, and the sweetest tenure, Rom. 8:17. an inheritance of the saints,—proper to sanctified souls, an inheritance in light; the perfection of knowledge, holiness, and joy, by communion with

12:7—12. And to interpret it of the deliverance of the Gentile converts from idolatry, and of the happy state of the Jewish converts, as 'the saints in light,' is totally to encrivate this highly animated passage.—The 'glorious power,' here spoken of, is sometimes ascribed to the Father, or to God absolutely, sometimes to the Holy Spirit, and frequently to Christ. For 'these three are One.' Notes, Ps. 138:3. 2 Cor. 12:7—10. Eph. 3:14—19, v. 16. Phil. 4:10—13, v. 13.

(9.) 'Qualities, &c., are not, in the N. T., denominated spiritual, because they relate to things which are immaterial. But it is, in relation to the Spirit of God. The word spirit, as used to designate the third person in the Trinity, is the substantive, from which is formed the adjective spiritual. Christians are, therefore, denominated spiritual, because they are born of the Spirit of God. Things are called spiritual, as they stand related to the Spirit of God.'

V. 15—17. Being possessed of all divine perfections, as 'One with the Father,' [Christ] appeared on earth, displaying those perfections, and performing all divine operations, through the medium of the human nature. Thus, He made the invisible God known to mankind, as his 'express Image;' He represented the Father, and manifested his glory. [Indeed, how else could God have been otherwise than a mere infinite abstraction to us finite beings? ED.] In and through Him, as 'God manifest in the flesh,' sinners, believing 'the sure testimony of God,' might know, approach, trust, and worship Him with acceptance, which otherwise they could not have done.—It seems evident, that Christ is not called 'the Image of God,' in respect of his divine nature, as many, especially the ancient expositors, supposed; and so, by their illustrations, weakened or perplexed the argument for his real Deity; for the divine essence is no more visible in the Person of the Son, than in that of the Father, and therefore the One cannot be 'the Image,' or visible representation, of the other. 1 Tim. 6:13—16. But the Person of Christ, as God in human nature, is the visible, or sensible, discovery of the invisible God; and 'He that hath seen Him hath seen the Father.' Jn. 12:44—50. 14:7—14, v. 9. 15:22—25.—The apostle further declared Christ to be 'the First-born of the whole creation;' for so the words may be literally rendered. Christ is called the 'First-begotten,' or 'Only begotten,' of the Father; and it has been shown, that these expressions must be understood, of the mysterious union in the sacred Trinity, and the relation of the second Person to the first, in the divine subsistence; for the grand display of the love of God to the world, consisted, in 'giving his own Son' to become man, in order to die for our sins, rather than in giving Him, when incarnate, to death for us. The expression here used seems to be of the same import; He was qualified to be 'the Image of the invisible God' to men, by reason of his original and essential glory. (M. R. y, z.—Notes, Jn. 1:14, 18. 1 Jn. 4:9—12.) Existing, as the co-eternal Son of the Father, before the creation of the world, He appeared as the 'First-begotten Son of God,' to be 'the Heir of all things;' when they were called into existence, as the first-born is the heir of the estate or kingdom. The reason, or proof, adduced by the apostle, demonstrates, that he meant the words in this sense; 'for,' says he, 'by Him all things were created.' He then proceeds to mention all creatures in heaven and earth; and by the terms of 'thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers,' clearly including the highest created dignity and exaltation, he evidently intended to declare, in the most emphatical terms, that every creature of God, however distinguished, was created by Christ, as one in Deity and operation with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Nay, he added, that they were all 'created for Him,' for the display of his glory, and to do Him service; (M. R. a—d.—Notes, Prov. 8:22—33. 16:4. Is. 42:8, 9. 44:24. Jn. 1:1—3. that 'He was before all things,' yea,

that 'all things by Him consist,' or are preserved in being and order; so that without his sustaining power, they must fall into confusion, or non-existence. (M. R. e, f.—Note, Rom. 11:33—35.)—It is, perhaps, impossible to use stronger language, to express creating and upholding Power, universal Sovereignty, and real Deity, than is here employed, to which the Socinians can only say, that it is all figurative, and means no more than the introduction of the gospel-dispensation, as a kind of new creation; but nothing can be more absurd. Or they may say, that the apostle was mistaken; and to such obstinate infidelity, we oppose the demonstrative evidences of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. In fact, we find language in some respects similar, almost in every part of the N. T.—It should also be observed, that, however we may interpret the expression, 'The First-born of every creature,' no man can infer from it, that Christ is a sort of supra-angelic creature, (according to the inconsistent opinion of the Arians,) without expressly opposing Paul's inference from his own doctrine, or rather the argument by which he confirms it, in which he evidently shows, that he meant Christ was before, above, and distinct from all creatures, yea, the Author, Proprietor, and Supporter, of all ranks and orders of them in the universe.—18) The first-born.] Prōtotokos. Mat. 1:25. Luke 2:7. Rom. 8:29. Heb. 1:6. 11:28. 12:23. Rev. 1:5. Ps. 89:23. Sept. By using this word, and not 'First-created,' Prōtoktistos, the apostle marks the distinction, between the eternal Son of God and the most exalted of those creatures which derived their existence from Him.

(15.) First-born of every creature.] 'Or, "chief of all the creation." In the early ages, the first-born son possessed extraordinary privileges and honors. Hence the Heb. term, and its correspondent word in other languages, acquired the secondary meaning of that which is chief and most excellent. Of this there are many examples in the Scriptures; and in Jewish phraseology, the holy and blessed God is called the First-born of the world, to signify his supremacy over all created beings. The just inference is, that Christ is superior to all creatures, and consequently, that in his proper and original nature, He cannot be a creature.' J. P. SMITH, in Henry abr. — 'According to the Arians, "the first-born of the whole creation" is the first-made creature. But the reason advanced to prove the Son the first-born of the whole creation, overturns that sense of this passage. For surely, the Son's creating all things, doth not prove Him to be the first-made creature, unless his power of creating all things originated from his being the first-made creature; which no one, I think, will affirm. As little does the Son's creating all things prove, that He first of all created Himself. Yet all these absurdities will be established by the apostle's reasoning, if "the first-born of the whole creation" signifies the first-made creature.'

(15—17.) Of the two different views which have been taken of this passage, the one literal, referring to the natural creation of all things, by Christ, and the other figurative, referring to a new moral and spiritual creation, in the establishment of the Christian church, Bloomf., though he admits there is, from the connexion, plausibility in the latter view, yet prefers the former, as 'yielding an unobjectionable sense;' and, concerning the favor the former seems to have from the connexion, he remarks, 'that it must be remembered, that in so irregular a writer as Paul, even that is a principle of no very certain application.' As to parallel passages, he says, 'they are, most of them, not really such, or at least doubtful; and in the interpretation of them the present passage is appealed to, which is really reasoning in a circle. Besides, the exposition in question,' he adds, 'though it may be justified, as far as the use of the original word for create is concerned, yet, in other respects, it involves greater difficulties than the common one.' — Whitby's reasons



18 And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence.

19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

[Practical Observations.]

21 And you, that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled,

22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight;

f Ep. 5:23.	l Jn. 1:16.	l or, by.
g 1 Co. 15:20.	j or, making.	m or, in.
h among all.	k Ep. 2:14-16.	n Jude 24.

God, who is light, and the Father of lights, Ja. 1:17. 1 Jn. 1:5. The grace is a meetness for the inheritance; a fitness for the heavenly state, by a proper temper and habit of soul, by the powerful influence of his Spirit. It is the effect of the divine power to change the heart, and make it heavenly. Observe, All who are designed for heaven hereafter, are prepared for heaven now. They who have the inheritance of sons, have the education and disposition of sons; they have the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba Father, Rom. 8:15. Gal. 4:6.

This meetness for heaven, is the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts; part of payment,

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-20. All spiritual blessings, 'from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,' belong to 'the saints and faithful brethren in Christ,' wherever they are dispersed. May we be found of that number!—The hope of real Christians is 'laid up for them in heaven,' out of the reach of enemies and disappointments; they have been called to partake of it, by 'the word of the truth of the Gospel;' and, blessed be God, the joyful message is 'come to us,' in this far distant region!—If we have 'known the grace of God in truth,' it 'bringeth forth fruit,' in our holy lives and spiritual worship; but if it has in no degree this effect on us, it will only aggravate our condemnation. This may be learned from 'all the fellow-servants' of our common Lord, who faithfully minister in different parts of his church; for they all declare, that 'love in the Spirit,' love of Christ, of holiness, and of the people, ordinances, and commandments of God, and the unreserved obedience of love, are inseparable from saving faith.—It is not enough that we understand the grand outlines of divine truth; but we should also pray for ourselves, and for one another, while we use diligently all proper means, that we may be 'perfected in the knowledge of the Lord's will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;' in order that we may 'walk worthy of our vocation,' please God in every part of our conduct, and produce every kind of holy fruit in abundance.—Indeed, we may well be very joyful and thankful to the 'Father,' if we have 'the witness in ourselves,' 1 Jn. 5:9, 10, that 'we are made meet for the inheritance of the saints

(in Bloomf. and confrated by him) for understanding the passage in the natural sense, are: 1. The things here spoken of are such as are not capable of a moral creation; since all must comprehend inanimate substances; and to the angels, good or bad, it can by no means apply. 2. The words in this sense were far from being true when the apostle spoke them; for only a very small remnant of the Jews were then converted to the Christian faith; and yet the apostle plainly speaks of a creation wholly past already. 3. The apostle afterwards enters on the moral creation at vs. 18-20.

(16.) 'Davenant considers, that the exposition of those who apply the terms used in this passage exclusively to heavenly and invisible beings, is most correct.'

V. 18-20. The same glorious Person, of whose original majesty such sublime language had been employed, was next declared to be 'the Head of the body, the church.' This manifestly related to his mediatorial character, which He voluntarily assumed, and sustained in human nature.—For 'it pleased the Father, that in Him should all fulness dwell.' It seemed good to Him, that all the plenitude of divine power, authority, wisdom, knowledge, holiness, justice, truth, mercy, grace, even all 'the fulness of God,' should dwell in the Person of Christ, and be exercised and communicated, through his human nature, by virtue of the union of the Deity and humanity in his mysterious Person. Thus 'it pleased all Fulness,' the original, infinite, inexhaustible Fulness of Being and perfection, or of the Deity, 'to dwell in' Christ, for the benefit of his church.—(20) Reconcile, &c.] 'The spirits of just men' then in heaven, owed their reconciliation to the Savior's undertaking for them; and all on earth, whether Jews or Gentiles, who believed in Christ, were reconciled unto God, through their union with Him, and their interest in the atonement of his blood. Rom. 3:21-26. Thus the whole became

and assures the full payment. They who are sanctified shall be glorified, Rom. 8:30. and will be for ever indebted to the grace of God, which hath sanctified them.

II. Of the Person of the Redeemer. 'Glorious things are here said of Him; blessed Paul was full of Christ, and took all occasions to speak honorably of Him. He speaks of Him distinctly as God, and as Mediator. As God, he speaks of Him, v. 15-17.

1. He is the Image of the invisible God. Not as man made so, Gen. 1:26. in his natural faculties and dominion over the creatures: no, He is the express Image of his person, Heb. 1:3. so the Image, as the Son is of his Father, who has a natural likeness to Him; and [so] as he who has seen Him, has seen the Father; and his glory was the glory of the only begotten of the Father, Jn. 1:14. 14:9.

2. He is the First-born of every creature. Not that He is Himself a creature; for the Greek is,—born or begotten before all the creation, or any creature was made; which is the scripture-way of representing eternity, and by which the eternity of God is represented to us, Pr. 8:23-26. It signifies his dominion over all things; as the first-born in a family is heir and lord of all, so He is the Heir of all things, Heb. 1:2. The word, with only the change in the accent, signifies, actively, the first begotter or producer of all things, and so it well agrees with the following clause: Vid. Isidor. Pelus. epist. 30. lib. 3.

3. He is so far from being Himself a creature, that He is the Creator, v. 16. He made all things of nothing; the highest angel in heaven, as well as men on earth, Jn. 1:3. He speaks as if there were several orders of angels, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers: which must signify either different degrees of excellence, or different offices and employment.\* Angels, authorities, and pow-

\* Both, doubtless, each being fit for his place. Ed.

in light; having acquired a relish for those contemplations, and that holy worship, society, and felicity, in which the blessed spirits before the throne are incessantly engaged. Rev. 4:6-11. 5:8-14. 7:9-17.—When admitted into heaven, and not before, we shall have some adequate conceptions of 'the great mystery of godliness;' and shall understand, in another manner than we now do, the import of the apostle's energetic language concerning the Lord Jesus. Let us then at present adore these mysteries, in humble faith; and, instead of wanting material images 'of the invisible God,' or framing gross notions of Him, let us contemplate the glory of our God in Christ Jesus, 'the express Image' of his essential excellency. Here we may learn humble confidence, reverential fear, and filial love, and be prepared for spiritual worship, joyful communion with God, and growing conformity to his holiness, as dwelling in our nature, reconciling the world unto Himself; here we may become acquainted with the harmoniously glorious perfections of our God, and may approach Him, and have fellowship with Him, notwithstanding our exceedingly great guilt, and pollution, and infirmity. For it has pleased the infinitely glorious God, that 'all fulness should dwell in Christ,' both to relieve our weak apprehensions, and our guilty consciences, in our discoveries of his glorious majesty and holiness, through so encouraging a medium, as the Person of Emmanuel, 'making peace by the blood of his cross,' and reconciling all things in heaven, and on earth, to Himself and to each other, in this most gracious and astonishing manner. Sc.

one church and one body in Him; and they all will at length be translated to heaven, there to continue for ever in a state of perfect reconciliation to God, and friendship with Him and each other. This seems to be what is meant by 'all things in heaven and earth;' for, though holy angels become one family through Christ with released sinners, yet they cannot be said to be reconciled unto God, as they never were in a state of enmity against Him.—Some commentators would wholly confine the meaning, to man's being reconciled to God and his service; others explain it wholly of God's being reconciled to his offending creatures; but why should not both be included? For the atonement of Christ procured for all believers both pardon of sin and new-creating grace; that they might walk with God, in a state of mutual peace, and reciprocal friendship and love.

(20.) By Him. 'Whether God or Christ be meant, commentators are not agreed: the latter seems preferable.—[All things.] The best founded opinion on these words seems to be that of Ham., and the most eminent interpreters since his times, that the neuter gender is here put for the masculine, as often; and that by all things, as far as regards the things in earth, may be understood Jews and Gentiles.' Bloomf.

V. 21-23. The Lord had commanded, that this Gospel should be 'preached to every creature under heaven;' it had actually been published very widely, among Jews and Gentiles, without distinction of nation, or previous character; [but] he uses a general term, 'under heaven,' commonly employed on similar occasions, the import of which may be learned from other places. 'In all the creation, which is under the heaven.' See on Rom. 8:19.—This last v. may be rendered, 'Since ye continue, &c.' implying a confidence of the sincerity of the Colossians, as evidenced by their steadfastness. But our tr. is more obvious and literal, and perfectly consistent with the apostle's doctrine concerning per

ers, 1 Pet. 3:22. Christ is the eternal Wisdom of the Father, and the world was made in wisdom. He is the eternal Word, and the world was made by the Word of God. All things are created by Him and for Him. Being created by Him, they were created for Him; being made by his power, they were made according to his pleasure, and for his praise. He is the End, as well as the Cause of all things, Rom. 11:36.

4. He is before all things, v. 17. He had a being before the world was made; before the beginning of time, and therefore from all eternity, Prov. 8:22. Jn. 1:1. He not only had a being before He was born of the virgin, but before all time.

5. By Him all things consist: by the word of his power they are still upheld in their order and dependencies, Heb. 1:3. The whole creation is kept together by the power of the Son of God, and made to consist in its proper frame.

He is a Mediator, v. 18, 19.

The Head of the body, the church: not only a Head of government and direction, but a Head of vital influence, as the head in the natural body: all grace and strength are derived from Him; the church is his body, the fulness of Him who filleth all in all, Eph. 1:22, 23. He is the Beginning, the First-born from the dead. All our hopes and joys take their rise from Him who is the Author of our salvation. Not that He was the first who ever rose from the dead, but the first and only one who rose by his own power, and was declared to be the Son of God, and Lord of all things. ['First who rose to die no more.' Scott.] And He is the Head of the resurrection, and has given us an example and evidence of our resurrection from the dead. He rose as the First-fruits, 1 Cor. 15:20. He hath in all things the pre-eminence; is preferred above angels, and all the powers in heaven, Heb. 1:4. and in all the affairs of the kingdom of God among men,



23 If ye continue ° in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every <sup>p</sup> creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions ° of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church;

25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, <sup>r</sup> to fulfil the word of God;

26 Even the mystery \* which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now <sup>v</sup> is made manifest to his saints:

27 To whom God would make known what <sup>is</sup> the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ ° in you, the <sup>v</sup> hope of glory:

28 Whom we preach, warning <sup>v</sup> every man, and teaching <sup>x</sup> every man in all wisdom; that <sup>y</sup> we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

29 Whereunto <sup>z</sup> I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

o He. 10:33.	preach.	w Ac. 20:28,31.
p Mat. 24:14.	s Ep. 3:9.	x 2 Ti. 2:24,25.
q Ma. 15:15.	t 2 Ti. 1:10.	y 2 Co. 11:2.
r Phi. 3:10.	u or, among.	z 1 Co. 15:10.
v or, fully to	v 1 Ti. 1:1.	

He should have the pre-eminence. He has the pre-eminence in the hearts of his people above the world and the flesh; and by giving Him the pre-eminence, we comply with the Father's will, That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father, *Jn. 5:23. All fulness dwells in Him, and it pleased the Father it should do so, v. 19.* a fulness of merit and righteousness, of strength and grace for us. As the head is the seat and source of the animal spirits, so is Christ of all graces to his people; and we may have free resort to Him for all that grace which we have occasion for. He not only intercedes for it, but is the Trustee in whose

hands it is lodged to dispense to us. *Of his fulness we receive, and grace for grace; grace in us answering to that grace which is in Him, *Jn. 1:16* and *He fills all in all, Eph. 1:23.**

III. Of the work of redemption, which consists in remission of sin, *v. 14. Eph. 1:7.* and in reconciliation to God, *v. 20.* and is procured by the Mediator through the blood of his cross. The Gentiles, who were alienated, and enemies in their minds by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled, *v. 21.* By nature they were estranged from God, and at enmity with God; but now this enmity is slain, and, notwithstanding this distance, we are now reconciled. The greatest enemies to God may be reconciled, if it is not their own fault. It was the blood which made an atonement; for without the shedding of blood there is no remission, *Heb. 9:22.* Such was the value of Christ's shedding his blood, that, on that account, God was willing to deal with men on new terms, and bring them under a covenant of grace; and, for his sake, to pardon, and accept to favor, all who comply with them.

IV. Of the preaching of this redemption.

It was preached *To every poor creature under heaven, v. 23.* so *Mk. 16:15.* The Gospel excludes none who do not exclude themselves. More or less it has been, or will be, preached to every nation; though many have sinned away the light of it, and some never yet enjoyed it. It was preached by Paul, and according to the dispensation of God, *v. 25.* though an apostle, yet a minister, as his highest honor; and for you, for your benefit: *ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake, 2 Cor. 4:5.* Christ's ministers for the good of his people: *to fulfil the Word of God, fully to preach it, of which you will have the greater advantage.* What kind of a preacher Paul was, is particularly represented. 1. He was a suffering preacher, *v. 24.* not by way of expiations for sin, as the sufferings of Christ were; but Paul, and other good ministers, made themselves conformable to Christ, and followed Him in his suffering state: so they are said to fill up what was behind of the sufferings of Christ. Or it may be meant not of Christ's sufferings, but of the apostle's suffering for Christ. He filled up that which was behind. He had a certain rate and measure of suffering for Christ assigned him; and as his sufferings were agreeable to that appointment, so he was still filling up more and more what was behind, or remained of them to his share.

2. He was a close preacher, *v. 28.* Every man has need to be warned and taught, and therefore let every man have his share. Observe, *Warning and teaching must go together.* Men must be warned and taught in all wisdom. We must choose the fittest seasons, and use the likeliest means, and accommodate ourselves to the different circumstances, capacities [and spiritual state], of those we have to do with, and teach them as they are able to bear. What he aimed at, was, to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; either perfect in the knowledge of the Christian doctrine, *Phil. 3:15. 2 Tim. 3:17.* or else crowned with a glorious reward hereafter, when He will present to Himself a glorious church, *Eph. 5:27.* and bring them to the spirits of just men made perfect, *Heb. 12:23.* Observe, Ministers ought to aim at the improvement and salvation of every particular person who hears them. 3. He was a laborious preacher, and one who took pains, *v. 29.* Observe, As Paul laid out himself to do much good, so he had this favor, that the power of God wrought in him the more effectually. The more we labor in the work of the Lord, the greater measure of help we may expect from Him in it, *Eph. 3:7.*

The Gospel preached. We have an account of that, *v. 26, 27.* Observe, The mystery of the Gospel was long hidden, concealed from ages and generations, the several ages of the church under the O. T. dispensation, but is now, in the fulness of time, made manifest to the saints. *2 Cor. 3:14. Eph. 3:4, 5.* And what is this mystery? The riches of God's glory among the Gentiles, the peculiar doctrine of the Gospel, was a mystery, which was before hid, and is now made manifest and made known. But the great mystery here referred to, is, the preaching the Gospel to the Gentile world, and making them partakers of the privileges of the gospel-state, who before lay in ignorance and idolatry, *Eph. 3:6.* Which mystery, thus made known, is, *Christ in you, the hope of glory, or among you.* Observe, Christ is the hope of glory. The ground of our hope is Christ in the Word, or the gospel-revelation, declaring the nature and methods of obtaining it. The evidence of our hope is Christ in the heart, or the sanctification of the soul, and its preparation for the heavenly glory.

The duty of those who are interested in this redemption, *v. 23.* is, to continue in the faith grounded and settled, and not be moved away from the hope of the Gospel;

PRACT. OBS. V. 21—29. If we be convinced, that once we were 'alienated from God, and enemies in our minds by wicked works;' and if we are now reconciled to Him, by the incarnation, sacrifice, and grace of Christ; we shall not attempt to explain away, or presumptuously expect to comprehend, these deep mysteries; but we shall see a glory and suitableness in this plan of redemption, as uniting the honor of the divine law and government with the hope of guilty, perishing sinners, though much yet remains far above and out of the reach of our low capacities, and feeble conceptions of spiritual things; and, while we long to be 'presented holy, unblamable, and unreprouvable in the sight of God,' it will be impossible for us to abuse or pervert his grace, to en-

severance; for many specious professors of true religion are 'moved away from the hope of the Gospel,' 'having no root in themselves;' fear of coming short is one grand mean of the true believer's perseverance, and it was frequently the apostle's manner, by such intimations, to caution his readers to beware of deceiving themselves.—(21) *Mind, &c.*] In the higher powers of the soul, the intellect and reasoning faculty, as well as the will and affections, man is 'an enemy to God;' so vain is the notion, that the opposition of reason to the sensual appetites, is the conflict 'between flesh and spirit,' of which the apostle elsewhere discourages! *Rom. 7:12—25. Gal. 5:16—18.*

(23.) *Preached to every creature . . . under heaven.*] Note, *v. 6.* *Ev.* *v. 24.* *Filled up, &c.*] The sufferings of Christ perfectly sufficed for the redemption of 'his body the church,' and were an atonement of infinite value. But his atonement must be received. It is received by faith; 'faith comes by hearing;' hearing by preaching; and preaching was in those days inseparable from suffering; so that the apostle's sufferings in his flesh, for the benefit of the church, were necessary in their place, and could not be dispensed with. *Rom. 10:12—17. 2 Thes. 2:13, 14. 2 Tim. 2:8—13.* By them he 'filled up what was behind of the afflictions of Christ,' as the sufferings of martyrs, confessors, and believers in general, form one aggregate of pain and distress, with those of the Head of the church, all of which is conducive and necessary, in different ways, to the complete salvation of the whole body. But the apostle might, with the more propriety, say this, as he suffered in the same cause, from the same persons, or those of the same character, in the

congruence ourselves in sin. Many things, indeed, must try the faith of professed Christians; but every trial which we stand, and every temptation which we resist, without 'being moved away from the hope of the Gospel;' and every event which shows that we 'continue in the faith, grounded and settled,' tends to assure us, that we shall soon 'be presented faultless before our God, with exceeding joy.' (*Notes, Jude 20—25.*) May this Gospel then be [speedily and] successfully 'preached to every creature that is under heaven!'—And as Christ is preached among us, let us seriously inquire, whether He dwells and reigns in us, which alone can warrant our assured hope of his glory. *Scott.*

same meek and patient manner, and from the same spirit of zeal and love, with his divine Master; so that his afflictions resembled those of the Savior in everything, except that the Savior's alone were *expiatory.* Christ is also represented, as sympathizing in the sufferings of his disciples; and many think, the apostle had in view, the words, with which the Lord addressed him, in the way to Damascus; 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?' In this sense, the sufferings of every part of the Lord's mystical body, are his sufferings; the former sense, however, is by far the most suitable to the tenor of the passage. *18:20. Eph. 1:15—23. Scott.*

*v. 25—27.* Not only was Christ, the promised Messiah, 'God manifest in the flesh,' preached among the Gentiles, *1 Tim. 3:16.* not only did He reign among them; but He actually dwelt in the hearts of true believers, 'in' the hearts of multitudes of the Gentiles, by faith, and the power of his Spirit; implanting his love, renewing his image, and writing his law, which fully sealed and warranted their hope of eternal glory.—Indeed, it cannot be made intelligible, how 'Christ, among the Gentiles,' according to the interpretation of some learned expositors, could give individuals a warranted 'hope of glory.' *2 Cor. 1:20, 21. 3:17, 18. 4:13—18. 13:5, 6. Eph. 1:13, 14. 1 Pet. 5:10, 11.*

*v. 23.* According to his working, i. e. of a divine power on his [the apostle's] soul, which 'wrought mightily in him;' exciting fervent desires after God, and the salvation of souls; communicating vigor to all holy affections; raising him above all low and selfish aims; and supporting him in constancy, patience, and cheerful fortitude, amidst all difficulties and persecutions. Some would explain this power, to mean



CHAP. II.

<sup>1</sup> He still exhorteth them to be constant in Christ, <sup>8</sup> to beware of philosophy, and vain traditions, <sup>13</sup> worshipping of angels, <sup>20</sup> and legal ceremonies, which are ended in Christ.

**F**OR I would that ye knew what great <sup>a</sup> conflict I have for you, and for them at <sup>b</sup> Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

<sup>2</sup> That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in <sup>c</sup> love, and unto all riches of the full <sup>d</sup> assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery <sup>e</sup> of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

<sup>3</sup> In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

<sup>4</sup> And this I say, lest any man should beguile <sup>e</sup> you with enticing words.

<sup>5</sup> For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the Spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

<sup>6</sup> As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk <sup>h</sup> ye in him:

<sup>7</sup> Rooted <sup>i</sup> and built up in <sup>j</sup> him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

<sup>8</sup> Beware <sup>k</sup> lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the <sup>l</sup> rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

a or, fear, or, care. He. 6:11. e 1 Ju. 5:7. b Re. 3:14, &c. f or, wherein. k Ro. 16:17. Ep. c c. 3:14. g Na. 13:22. 5:6 He. 13:9. d Is. 32:17. h 1 Ju. 2:6. i or, elements.

i. e. we must be so well fixed in our minds, as not to be moved from it by any temptations, 1 Cor. 15:58. Heb. 10:23. Then, only, can we expect the happy end of our faith, when we continue in the faith, and are so far grounded and settled in it, as not to be moved from it, Heb. 10:39. We must be faithful to death, through all trials, that we may receive the crown of life, and receive the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls, 1 Pet. 1:9.

CHAP. II. V. 1—3. Paul had a great concern for the Colossians, and other churches, not personally known to him. He had never been at Colosse, and the church there was not of his planting; yet he had as tender a care of it, as if it had been the only people of his charge, v. 1. His care amounted to a conflict, a sort of agony, wherein he was a follower of his Master, who was in an agony for us. See how we can think, and pray, and be concerned for one another, at the greatest distance; and how those we never saw in the flesh, we may hope to meet in heaven.

But what was it the apostle desired for them? v. 2. It was their spiritual welfare; not that they may be healthy and merry, and rich and great, and prosperous; but that their hearts might be comforted. Note, The prosperity of the soul is what we should be most solicitous about for ourselves and others. We have here a description of soul-prosperity.

1. When our knowledge grows to an understanding of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; either what was before concealed, but is now made known concerning the Father and Christ: or, the mystery before-mentioned, of calling the Gentiles into the Christian church, as the Father and Christ have revealed it in the Gospel; then the soul prospers.

2. When our faith grows to a full assurance, and bold acknowledgment of this mystery; and we not only believe with the heart, but are ready, when called to it, to make confession with our mouth; and are not ashamed of our Master and our holy religion, under the frowns and violence of their enemies. This is called the riches of the full assurance of understanding. Great knowledge and strong faith make a soul rich. This is being rich toward God, and rich in faith, and the true riches, Lu. 12:21. James 2:5.

3. It consists in the abundance of comfort in our souls; That their hearts might be comforted. The soul then prospers, when it is filled with joy and peace, Rom. 15:13. and has a satisfaction within, which all the troubles without cannot disturb; and is able to joy in the Lord, when all other comforts fail, Hab. 3:17, 18.

4. The more intimate communion we have with our fellow-Christians, the more the soul prospers; Being knit together in love. The stronger our faith is, and the warmer our love, the more will our comfort be. Observe, The treasures of wisdom are hid,

not from us, but for us, in Christ, v. 2, 3. They who would be wise and knowing, must apply to Christ. He is the Wisdom of God, and is, of God, made unto us Wisdom, &c. 1 Cor. 1:24, 30.

His concern for them is repeated, v. 5. He had heard of the Colossians, that they were orderly and regular; and though he had never seen them, nor was present with them, he tells them he could easily think himself among them, and look with pleasure on their good behavior. The order and steadfastness of Christians are matter of joy to ministers; the more steadfast our faith in Christ is, the better order there will be in our whole conversation; for we live and walk by faith, 2 Cor. 5:7. Heb. 10:38.

V. 4—12. The apostle cautions the Colossians against deceivers, v. 4. and v. 8. He insists so much on the perfection of Christ and the gospel-revelation, to preserve them from the insinuating insinuations of those who would corrupt their principles. Note, Satan and his agents spoil men, by beguiling them with enticing words. See the danger of enticing words; how many are ruined by the flattery of those who lie in wait to deceive; and by the false disguises, and fair appearances, of evil principles and wicked practices. Observe,

I. A sovereign antidote against seducers, v. 6, 7. the reception of Christ. Here, note, 1. All Christians have received Jesus Christ the Lord; received Him as the great Prophet of the church, anointed by God to reveal his will; as the great High Priest, and Savior from sin and wrath, by the expiatory sacrifice of Himself; and as Lord, or Sovereign and King, whom we are to obey and be subject to. 2. The great concern of those who have received Christ, is, to walk in Him; to make their practices conformable to their principles, and their conversations agreeable to their engagements. 3. The more closely we walk with Christ, the more we are rooted and established in the faith. A good conversation is the best establishment of a good faith. If we walk in Him, we shall be rooted in Him; and the more firmly we are rooted in Him, the more closely we shall walk in Him; rooted and built up. Being established in the faith, we must abound therein, and improve in it more and more; and this with thanksgiving. We must join thanksgiving to all our improvements, and be sensible of the mercy of all our privileges and attainments. Observe,

II. The fair warning given us of our

exclusively the miracles which the apostle wrought; but every one must perceive, that this wholly destroys the energy, and darkens the sense of the passage.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 2—4. The apostle... especially, wrestled most earnestly with God in prayer, that their hearts might be encouraged by divine consolations, in every part of their duty; and that, in order to this, they might be united together in the most perfect love of one another: that so all envies, resentments, suspicions, and competition might be excluded; which would otherwise certainly burden their consciences, inflame their passions, 'grieve the Holy Spirit,' and interrupt their comfort. (3:12—15. Eph. 4:1—6, 14—16, 30—32. Phil. 2:1—4.) (2) *Mystery, &c.* 'The mystery of God, even of the Father and of Christ,' his beloved Son, as One with Him, according to 'the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh;' 1 Tim. 3:16. 'in whom' (or in which mystery) were 'hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.' These treasures were indeed hidden from the eyes of unbelievers; but the infinite wisdom and knowledge of God were more displayed in the Person and redemption of Christ, than in all his other works. All true wisdom and knowledge consisted in a believing, and practical, and experimental understanding of these mysteries, and such instructions as are deducible from them: yea, from this treasury all true wisdom and knowledge must be derived by faith and prayer; and all science or philosophy contrary to this are worthless. 'It grieved the apostle to think, how incapable he was rendered of serving them, otherwise than by his letters and prayers. Oh! that such language might inspire every minister who reads it, with a desire to use his liberty to the best purposes, and to exert himself, as under such confinement he would wish he had done.' Doddr.—(3) *All the treasures, &c.* 'Let this be the firmest argument against cavillers, that without Christ there is no true wisdom.' Beza.—The language of the first v. renders it at least highly probable, that the apostle had not been at Colosse. (1) *What great conflict.* 'Fear, or care.'—Earnest prayer seems here specially intended. (3) *In whom.* 'Wherein.' Marg. As 'Christ' is the more immediate antecedent, the version of the text is more obvious, and indeed in every respect preferable.—Hil.] Mk. 4:22. Lu. 3:

17. Mat. 11:25.—(4) *Beguile.* 'Deceive by fallacious reasoning.' Jam. 1:22. Not elsewhere.—*Enticing words.* Here only. Persuasive, plausible, but sophistical oratory.

(1) *Seen my face.* 'Or, "seen me in person."... Possibly, he may intend to intimate, that he was not only concerned for those whom he personally knew, but likewise for others, to whom he was a stranger, and who might have been converted after he left them; yet I think this epistle contains no argument from whence it can certainly be inferred that he was acquainted with these Christians.' Doddr.

(2) 'The mystery referred to, is, God revealed, not merely in the unity of his character, but in the plurality of Persons, the Son as well as the Father,—God in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.' [See the copious Expos. of Bp. Davenant.] SenoLefield, in Henry, abr.

(3) *In whom.* 'I. e. Christ; so Wolf, with the ancients, most moderns, and, recently, Hein. It respects, so Whitty, the Person of Christ as Mediator, the knowledge of whom, the apostle says, hath an excellency beyond all other knowledge. Phil. 3:8.' Bloomf.

V. 5—7. Some think, that he had an immediate revelation concerning the prosperous state of their church; as Elisha had of Gehazi's conduct in following Naaman. 2 K. 5:26. 27. 6:8—12. Scott.

(7) *Rooted, &c.* 'Rooted and well founded in it, as Jude 20. like the immense stones, without cement, which formed the foundations of the edifices of the ancients.' Bloomf.

V. 8, 9. It was especially requisite for the Christians at Colosse to be on their guard, that no man might 'rob them,' (as victorious armies plunder the vanquished,) of their hope and comfort, or turn them aside from Christ, by philosophical subtleties, and vain, exclusive speculations, opposed to the simple faith of the Gospel. These were 'traditions of men,' delivered from the heads and teachers of the several sects of philosophers, and so handed down from age to age: they formed 'the elements,' or first principles, of a supposed wisdom, suited to the proud, curious, speculating, and carnal temper of the world; but which was totally incompatible with the doctrine of Christ.—The Judaizing teachers seem to have blended their systems with speculations borrowed from the Pagans, and their different sects of philosophers: thus the tra-



9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power;

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

m c. 1:19. o 1 Pe. 3:22. q Ro. 6:4,5.  
n He. 5:9. p Je. 4:1. Phi. 3:3. r Ep. 1:19.

danger, v. 8. There is a philosophy which nobly exercises our reasonable faculties, and highly promotes religion; such a study of the works of God, as leads to the knowledge of God, and confirms our faith in Him. But there is a vain and deceitful philosophy, prejudicial to religion, and that sets up the wisdom of man in competition with the wisdom of God; as nice and curious speculations about things above us, or of no use to us; or a care of words and terms of art, which have only an empty, and often a cheating, appearance of knowledge. After

tradition, after the rudiments of the world: as the Jews governed themselves by the traditions of their elders, and the Gentiles mixed maxims of philosophy with their Christian principles; and both alienated their minds from Christ.

The deceivers were especially the Jewish teachers, who endeavored to keep up the law of Moses in conjunction with the gospel of Christ, but really in competition with it, and contradiction to it. Here the apostle shows,

1. That we have in Christ the substance of all the shadows of the ceremonial law: for example, (1.) Had they then the *Shechinah*, or special presence of God, called the *glory*, from the visible token of it? So have we now in Jesus Christ, v. 9. Now the presence of God dwells, not between the cherubim, in a cloud covering the mercy-seat, but in the Person of our Redeemer, who partakes of our nature, and has more clearly declared the Father to us. It dwells in Him bodily; not as the body is opposed to the spirit, but as the body is opposed to the shadow. The fulness of the Godhead dwells in Christ, really, and not figuratively, for He is both God and Man. (2.) Had they *circumcision*, which was the seal of the covenant? In Christ we are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, v. 11. by the work of regeneration in us, which is the spiritual or Christian circumcision, Rom. 2:29. This is owing to Christ, and belongs

to the Christian dispensation. It is made without hands; not by the power of any creature, but by the power of the blessed Spirit of God, Ju. 3:5. Ti. 3:5. It consists in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh; in renouncing sin, and reforming our lives, not in mere external rites. It is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, 1 Pet. 3:21. Rom. 6:6. Christ was circumcised, and, by virtue of our union to Him, we partake of that effectual grace which puts off the body of the sins of the flesh. Again, The Jews thought themselves complete in the ceremonial law; but we are complete in Christ, v. 10. That was imperfect and defective, Heb. 8:7. 10. 1. But all the defects of it are made up in the Gospel of Christ, (by the complete sacrifice for sin,) and revelation of the will of God, who is the Head of all principality and power. As the O. T. priesthood had its perfection in Christ, so likewise had the kingdom of David, which was the eminent principality and power under the O. T. and which the Jews valued themselves so much upon. And He is the Lord and Head of all the powers in heaven and earth, of angels and men. 1 Pet. 3:22.

2. We have communion with Christ in his whole undertaking, v. 12. We are both buried and rise with Him, and both are signified by our baptism; not that there is any

ditions of the sages, and those of the Pharisees, were incorporated; and the 'worldly elements' of heathen superstition, or philosophy, were blended with legal and traditional external observances. Unless something of this kind be supposed, it will be found difficult to understand the apostle's discourse: for he spoke of philosophical delusions and legal ceremonies at the same time; he argued against both of them at once; but he levelled his reasonings chiefly against the Judaizing teachers. (Mat. 15:1-6.)—To what he had before advanced, he here added, that 'in Christ all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily.' . . . All the divine perfections are exercised by Christ, as 'God manifest in the flesh,' through the mysterious Union of the divine and human nature in one Person. When the apostle spoke of believers being 'filled with all the fulness of God;' Eph. 3:14-19, he evidently meant it of their receiving a rich abundance of all divine communications from God; and his *in-dwelling* in his people refers to his gracious and powerful presence with them. But 'all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily' in Christ, is language unspeakably stronger, and evidently refers to his being constituted the repository of all spiritual blessings, from whose fulness all believers receive. John 1:14-16. For God, dwelling in human nature as in a temple, exercises all divine perfections, performs all divine operations, and communicates all benefits to man, through that medium. 1-4, v. 3. 1:15-20. John 5:20-23. 14:18-20. 2 Cor. 5:18-21. 'Christ is not here said to be "filled with all the fulness of God;" . . . but the whole fulness of the Godhead is said to reside in Him. Now, *theiotēs* and *to theion*, never signify the gifts of God, or the doctrine of the Gospel, but the divine nature only; nor can the will or revelation of God be said to "dwell bodily" in any person.' *Whitby*.—If the union of Deity and manhood in one person can be expressed in human language, without doubt this verse does express it. 1 Tim. 3:16. [Comp. also *Davenant's* Exp. by Allport, 1831.]

(8.) *Through philosophy and vain deceit.* 'Sophistical and fallacious philosophy. So most commentators. For the apostle, they say, does not absolutely condemn philosophy, but only comparatively [when it is] out of its limits, &c. But I rather apprehend he meant to censure the Grecian philosophy in general.' BLOOMF.

(9.) *Godhead.* 'A plain *Anglicism*, equivalent to *Deity*. Comp. Ac. 17:29. I cannot think these wonderful words are intended merely to signify, that God hath lodged, in the hands of Christ, a fulness of gifts to be conferred on men, as if the passage were merely parallel to Eph. 3:19, and Ju. 1:16, 17. I assuredly believe it refers to the adorable mystery of the union of the divine and human natures in the person of the glorious Emmanuel, which makes Him such an object of our hope and confidence, as the most exalted creature, with the most glorious endowments, could never of himself be.' DONNE.

'The ancients, and earlier moderns, recognize here a strong evidence of the Deity of Christ. . . . *Whitby* observes, the apostle does not directly say Christ is God, but expresses his divine nature thus, partly to represent to the Jews the divinity of Christ, with allusion to the God of Israel dwelling in the temple, partly to oppose Him to the *plerōma* of the Gnostics, and to the partial deities of the heathen. We may, I think, conclude, with *Whitby*, adopting the words of the council of Antioch, that the body born of the Virgin, receiving the whole fulness of the Godhead bodily, was immutably united to the Divinity, and deified, which made the same person, Jesus Christ, both God and Man.' BL.

V. 10. As Christ was completely qualified for his mediatorial work, by 'all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in Him bodily,' so believers are completely supplied with all they want, by their mystical union with Him: . . . all their instruction, acceptance, holiness, deliverance, liberty, victory, and happiness, are derived from Him by faith, in the use of his appointed means, and they want nothing, which they have not in Him. They therefore can have no need to seek any additional instruction, wisdom, help, or encouragement, either from Jewish ordinances and traditions, or from heathen sages.—As Christ is also 'the Head of all principality and power,' all angels being his willing servants, and the whole creation being subjected to Him; so Christians have no cause to fear any creatures, or reason to seek help from them. Rom. 8:28-39. 1 Cor. 1:26-31. Eph. 1:15-23. Phil. 2:9-11. 1 Pet. 3:21-22.

—The Judaizing teachers seem to have imbibed, and new modelled, the Pagan notions of subordinate deities, and, applying it to the scriptural doctrine of angels, to have introduced the mediatorial worship of them; with which they, at an early period, attempted to corrupt the Christian church, and not wholly without success. To this, the apostle here evidently refers, as well as in what is said afterwards. (N. T. 20-23.) But Christians could have no occasion to pay homage of any kind to those creatures, who, however exalted, were subjected to Christ, their Lord and Redeemer. SCOTT.

V. 11, 12. 'The circumcision of Christ,' seems rather to signify his work in the believer's soul, than his own personal circumcision, though that was a part of his mediatorial humiliation, by which the true circumcision was procured for them, and in which they are rendered conformable to Him.—The baptism of Jews and Gentiles, when converted to Christianity, implied their 'death unto sin, and new birth unto righteousness,' their entrance into the church and kingdom of Christ; the washing away of the guilt and pollution of their sins, and their dedication to the service of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in whose name, as the God of their salvation, they were baptized. (Note, Mat. 28:19, 20, v. 19.) The same inward change had been signified by circumcision, which was administered to adult proselytes, and then to their infant offspring; so that no argument can hence be produced against the baptism of infants. (Notes, Gen. 17:9-12. Rom. 4:12.)—This conformity to the crucified and risen Savior was effected, 'through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead,' or, by a believing reliance on that effectual saving power of God, as displayed in the resurrection of Christ. Eph. 1:15-23. It is, no doubt, an important scriptural truth, that the faith, by which we receive all other blessings, is itself the gift and work of God: (Notes, An. v. 10-13. Eph. 2:4-10) and this has induced some expositors, in many preachers, to explain the clause to mean, 'the faith which God has wrought in the heart.' This was the author's view, when he wrote the first edition of this work. But a careful examination of the subject has convinced him, that this is rather imposing a sense on the apostle's words, than inquiring after the true meaning of them. The ablest Greek scholars are decided, that the idiom of the language will not admit of that construction; and certainly there is no instance in the N. T., in which a similar mode of expression can fairly be thus interpreted. (Mk. 11:22. Acts 3:16. Rom. 3:22, 26. Gal. 2:16, 20. 3:22. Eph. 3:12. Phil. 1:27. 3:9. 2 Thes. 2:13. Jam. 2:1. Rev. 2:13. 14:12. Gr.) It should however be observed, that though the clause does not affirm faith to be the work and gift of God, it neither teaches nor implies anything to the contrary. Indeed, this is taught in the subsequent v. 10.

(12.) See Woods on Baptism, page 159 and onward. See also Stuart on this passage, in Bib. Repos. article, 'Is the mode of Bap. prescribed in the Bible?' See Wardlaw, on Bap. p. 117, published by Wm. Pierce. 'In regard to the parallel passage in Rom. 6:4. *Dwight* remarks, 'in the next v. it is said, "For if we are planted together in the likeness of his death." My antagonists (the Baptists) are bound to show, that this figurative expression, which refers to the same thing, does not as strict signify the mode in which baptism is received, as the word "buried," and, if it does, to point out the particular mode of administering baptism denoted by the word "planted."'

(12.) *Buried with Him in baptism.* Pr. Stuart (on the parallel passage, Rom. 6:4.) says: 'Most comtr. have maintained, that *synetaphemen* (buried with, or like) has here a necessary reference to the mode of literal baptism, which, they say, was by immersion; and this, they think, affords ground for the employment of the image used by the apostle, because immersion (under water) may be compared to burial (under the earth). It is difficult, perhaps, to procure a patient rehearing of the subject, so long regarded by some as being out of fair dispute. Nevertheless, as my own conviction is not, after protracted and repeated examinations, accordant here with that of commentators in general, I feel constrained briefly to state my reasons.

'The first is, that in the v. before us there is a plain antithesis; one so plain, that it is impossible to overlook it. If now *synetaphemen* is to be interpreted in a physical way, i. e. as meaning baptism in a physical sense, where is the corresponding physical idea, in the opposite part of the antithesis or comparison? Plainly, there is no such physical idea or reference in the other part of the antithesis. The resurrection there spoken of, is entirely a moral, spiritual one; for it is one which Christians have already experienced, during the present life; as may be fully seen by comparing Rom. 5:6, 11. I take it for granted, that after *hemeis*, in v. 4. *egertentes* is implied; since the nature



13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses ;

14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross ;

15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days ;

s Ep. 2:1,5,11. 18. 11:22. Jn. x or, for eating  
t Ep. 2:15,16. 12:31. and drinking.  
u Ps. 68:13. Is. v or, himself. y or, part.  
53:12. Lu. 10: w Ro. 14:10,13.

thing in the sign or ceremony of baptism, which represents this burying and rising, any more than the crucifixion of Christ is represented by any visible resemblance in the Lord's supper: and he is speaking of the circumcision made without hands; and says, it is through the faith of the operation of God. But the thing signified by our baptism, is, that we are buried with Christ, as baptism is the seal of the covenant, and an obligation to our dying to sin; and that we are risen with Christ, as it is a seal and obligation to our living to righteousness, or newness of life. God in baptism engages to be to us a God, and we engage to be his people, and by his grace to die to sin, and to live to righteousness, or put off the old man, and put on the new.

V. 13-15. The apostle here represents the privileges of Christians.

1. Christ's death is our life, v. 13. A

state of sin is a state of spiritual death. They who are in sin, are dead in sin, in separation from God and his favor, morally impotent, though possessed of natural power, or the power of a reasonable creature. The Gentile world lay in wickedness, and were dead, Eph. 2: 11, 12, dead in their sins. It may be understood of the spiritual uncircumcision or corruption of nature; and so it shows that we are dead in law, and dead in state. The sinner has no spiritual power, till he has the divine life, or renewed nature. An unsanctified heart is called an uncircumcised heart: this is our state. Now, through Christ, we, who were dead in sins, are quickened; effectual provision is made for the taking away of the guilt of sin, and breaking the power and dominion of it. Quickened together with Him; by virtue of our union to Him, and in conformity to Him. Christ's death was the death of our sins; Christ's resurrection is the quickening of our souls.

2. Through Him we have the remission of sin; Having forgiven you all trespasses. This is our quickening. The pardon of the crime is the life of the criminal: and this is owing to the resurrection of Christ, as well as his death; for as He died for our sins, so He rose again for our justification, Rom. 4: 25.

3. Whatsoever is in force against us, is taken out of the way. He has obtained for us a legal discharge from the handwriting of ordinances, which was against us, v. 14. which may be understood, (1.) Of that obligation to punishment, in which consists the guilt of sin. The curse of the law is the handwriting against us, like the handwriting on Belshazzar's wall. This was removed when He redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a Curse for us, Gal. 3: 13. He cancelled the obligation for all who repent and believe. He vacated and disannulled the judgment which was against us. And our indwelling corruption is crucified with

Christ, and by the virtue of his cross. Or, rather, (2.) It must be understood of the ceremonial law; the handwriting of ordinances, the ceremonial institutions, or the law of commandments contained in ordinances, Eph. 2: 15, which was a yoke to the Jews, and a partition-wall to the Gentiles. This the Lord Jesus disannulled, that all might be satisfied it was no more binding, 2 Cor. 3: 13. Heb. 8: 13. The expressions are in allusion to the ancient methods of cancelling a bond, either by crossing the writing, or striking it through with a nail.

4. He has obtained a glorious victory for us over the powers of darkness, v. 15. redeemed us from the power of Satan, with a high hand. He led captivity captive. The devil, and all the powers of hell, were conquered and disarmed by the dying Redeemer. The first promise pointed at this, Gen. 3: 15. The expressions are lofty and magnificent: let us turn aside, and see this great sight. The Redeemer conquered by dying. See his crown of thorns turned into a crown of laurels. He spoiled them, broke the devil's power, and conquered and disabled him, and made a show of them openly; exposed them to public shame, and made a show of them to angels and men: triumphing, either in his cross and by his death; or, as some read it, in Himself, by his own power; for He trod in the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with Him.

V. 16-23. The apostle concludes with exhortations to proper duty, which he infers from the foregoing discourse.

I. Here is a caution to take heed of Judaizing teachers, or those who would impose on Christians the yoke of the ceremonial law, v. 16. It appears by Rom. 14. there were such, who were for keeping up those distinctions: but here the apostle shows, that since Christ is come, and has cancelled the ceremonial law, we ought not to keep it up. And this the rather, because these things were shadows of things to come, v. 17.

of the comparison, the preceding hos egerthe Christos, and v. 5, make this entirely plain.

If we turn now to the passage in Col. 2:12. (altogether parallel,) we shall there find more conclusive reason still, to argue as above, respecting the nature of the antithesis presented. "We have been buried with Him (Christ) in baptism." What now is the opposite of this? What is the kind of resurrection from this grave in which Christians have been buried? The apostle tells us: "We have risen with Him (Christ) by faith wrought by the power of God, (tes energias tou Theou,) who raised Him (Christ) from the dead." Here, then, is a resurrection by faith, i. e. a spiritual, not a one. Why then should we look for a physical meaning in the antithesis? If one part of the antithesis is to be construed in a manner entirely moral, or spiritual, why should we not construe the other in the like manner? To understand sunetaphemen, then, of a literal burial under water, is to understand it in a manner which the laws of interpretation forbid.

(b) Nothing can be plainer, than that the word sunetaphemen, in Rom. 6:4. is equivalent in sense to the word apothanomen in v. 8. It seems to be adopted merely for the sake of rendering more striking the image of a resurrection, which the apostle employs in the other part of the antithesis. A resurrection from the grave is a natural phrase, when one is speaking with respect to the subject of a resurrection; see Jn. 5:28, 29. comp. Dan. 12:2. In accordance with this statement, the context does most plainly speak, both in respect to Rom. 6:1. and Col. 2:12. For in respect to Rom. 6:4. the apostle goes on in the very next v., (as is usual with him,) to present the same idea which is contained in v. 4. in a different costume. V. 5. (which is a mere epexegesis of v. 4.) says: if we have been homogeneous (sumphutot, like, of the same kind) with Christ IN HIS DEATH, then shall we be in his resurrection. The same idea and explanation is repeated in v. 8.—apothanomen,—succeomen, and the whole is summarily explained in v. 11. So reckon ye yourselves to be nekros men te hamartia, zontas de to Theo.

Exactly in the same manner has the apostle gone on to explain sunetaphentes in Col. 2:12. In v. 13. he adds: "You nekros in your offences . . . succeoopotes, has He (God) made alive with Him (Christ), having forgiven us all our offences."

There can be no real ground for question, then, that by sunetaphemen, in both cases, is meant neither more nor less than by apothanomen, nekroti, &c. The epexegesis added in both cases seems to make this quite plain.

The only reason, then, which I can find, why sunetaphemen is preferred in Rom. 6: 4. and in Col. 2:12. is, as has been suggested above, that the language may be a fuller antithesis of the word resurrection, which is employed in the corresponding part of the comparison. "You who were (dead) buried with Christ," gives energy to the expression.

(c) But my principal difficulty in respect to the usual exegesis of sunetaphemen is, that the image or figure of immersion, baptism, is, so far as I know, nowhere else in Scripture employed as a symbol of burial in the grave. Nor can I think that it is a very natural symbol of burial. The obvious import of washing with water, or immersing in water, is, that it is symbolical of purity, cleansing, purification. But how will this aptly signify burying in the grave, the place of corruption, loathsomeness, and destruction?

For these reasons I feel inclined to doubt the usual exegesis of the passage before us, and to believe that the apostle had in view only a burying which is moral and spiritual; for the same reasons, that he had a moral and spiritual (not a physical) resurrection in view, in the corresponding part of the antithesis.

Indeed, what else but a moral burying can be meant, when the apostle goes on in v. 5. We are buried with Him (not by baptism only, but) by baptism INTO HIS DEATH? Of course, it will not be contended, that a literal physical burying is here meant, but only a moral one. And although the words, into his death, are not inserted in Col. 2:12. yet, as the following v. there shows, they are plainly implied. In fact, it is plain, that reference is here made to baptism, because, when that rite was performed, the Christian promised to renounce sin and to mortify all his evil desires, and thus to die unto sin, that he might live unto God. I cannot see, therefore, that there is any more necessary reference to the modus of baptism, than there is to the modus of the resurrection. The one may as well be maintained as the other.

I am aware, however, that one may say, "I admit that burial with Christ has a moral sense, and only such a one; but then the language in which this idea is conveyed (sunetaphemen), is evidently borrowed from the custom of immersion." In reply to this, I would refer to the considerations under (c) above. The possibility of the usage I admit; but to show that the image is natural, and obvious, and that it is a part

of Scripture usage elsewhere, is what seems important, in order to produce entire satisfaction to the mind of a philological inquirer. At any rate, I cannot at present think the case to be clear enough, to entitle any one to employ this passage with confidence, in a contest respecting the mode of baptism."

STUART.

V. 13-15. This 'handwriting was against' the Jews, and contrary to them, as well as to the Gentiles; for it is observable, that the apostle changed the person, when he came to speak on this subject, saying 'against us,' not you. Mat. 5:17, 18. Jn. 1:17. Eph. 2:14-18. Heb. 7: 18, 19. 8:7-13. 9:1-14, 13-23. 10:1-18. Not only was the ritual law a heavy yoke for them to bear, Acts 15:7-11. but all its sacrifices and ablutions testified, that they were guilty and polluted; yet these typical expiations could not take away sins. So that the bond could never have been discharged, except Christ had come and made payment of it; and unbelievers among the Jews were under condemnation, by the testimony even of the ceremonial law, as well as for the additional sins which the multiplying of precepts necessarily occasioned. Rom. 5: 20, 51. At the same time, the Gentiles, who had not so much as these typical expiations, were under condemnation as transgressors, and were excluded by them even from the visible church. Eph. 2:11-13. But Christ, . . . by satisfying the justice of God for sin, had removed the ease of fallen man's subjection to Satan, and made way for the preaching of the Gospel to the nations, 'with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven,' to make it successful. (14) Against us.] 'Circumcision publicly testified innate depravity; the purifications, the pollutions of sin, and the sacrifices, that its guilt deserved death, to which the remarkable saying of Augustine refers. In those ceremonies there was rather the confession, than the removal of sin.' Beza.—The silencing of the heathen oracles and the gradual, yet rapid subversion of the Grecian and Roman idolatry, in consequence of the death of Christ, are fixed on by some commentators, as almost the exclusive meaning of the clause, 'triumphing over them in it;' but these, however important, constituted only a small part of that victory over 'the powers of darkness,' which Christ obtained on the cross, and of his subsequent triumphs. Of these triumphs, the salvation of the dying thief may be considered as an earnest. Lu. 23:39-43.—(15) Having spoiled' 39. Not elsewhere. See on 11. 'He disarmed them, . . . and left them naked, and spoiled of all power to do hurt.'—He made a show of them.] Here only.—'Conquerors . . . lead their captives chained together after their triumphal chariot into the city, with great pomp, the people looking on and applauding.' Leigh.

SCOTT.

V. 16, 17. Doubtless, this last [sabbath days] related principally to the weekly Sabbath, which, as observed on the 7th day, was now become a part of the abrogated Jewish law. For the Sabbath, under the Mosaic dispensation, was a ceremonial, and a judicial, as well as a moral requirement; the morality of it had no necessary connexion with the 7th day, in preference to all others, save as that was appointed during that dispensation; but the appropriation of a part of our time for the [special] worship and service of God, is of moral and essentially immutable obligation. (Marg. Ref. f—k—Ex. 20:8-10. 'The first day of the week,' 'the Lord's day,' was the time kept holy by Christians, in remembrance of Christ's resurrection, and 'the Sabbath,' in the N. T., always signifies the 7th day, the observance of which the Judaizing



17 Which are a shadow<sup>z</sup> of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

18 Let<sup>a</sup> no man<sup>b</sup> beguile you of your reward,<sup>c</sup> in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding<sup>d</sup> into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind;

19 And not holding the<sup>e</sup> Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

20 Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the<sup>f</sup> rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not;

22 Which all are to perish with the using,) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

z He. 8:5.  
a Re. 3:11.  
b or, judge  
against you.

c being a voluntary in humility.  
d De. 29:29.

Job 38:2.  
e Ep 4:15,16.  
f or, elements.

intimating, that they had no intrinsic worth in them, and that they are now done away: the *body is of Christ*. Observe, the advantages we have under the gospel, above what they had under the law: they had the shadows, we the substance.

II. He cautions them to take heed of those who would introduce the worship of angels as mediators between God and them,

as the Gentile philosophers did, v. 18. It looked modest to do so; but though it has a *show of humility*, it is a voluntary, not a commanded humility; and therefore not acceptable, yea, not warrantable: it is taking that honor which is due to Christ only, and giving it to a creature. Besides, the notions on which this practice was grounded, were merely the inventions of men, and not by divine revelation; the proud conceits of human reason, which makes men presume to dive into things, and determine them without sufficient knowledge and warrant; pretending to describe the orders of angels, and their respective ministries, which God has hidden from us; and, therefore, though there was a show of humility in the practice, there was a real pride in the principle. Pride is at the bottom of a great many errors and corruptions, and even of many evil practices, which have a great show and appearance of humility. They who do so, do *not hold the Head*, v. 19. They did, in effect, disclaim Christ, the only Mediator between God and man. It is the highest disparagement to Christ, who is the Head of the church, for any of the members of it to make use of any intercessors with God but Him. When men let go their hold of Christ, they catch at that which is next them, and will stand them in no stead. Observe, 1. Jesus Christ is not only a Head of government over the church, but a Head of vital influence to it. 2. The church is a growing body; the nature of grace is to grow, where there is not an accidental hindrance. *Increase of God*, is an increase from God as its Author; or, in a usual Hebraism, a large and abundant increase. *That ye may be filled with all the fulness of God*,

Eph. 3:19. See a parallel expression, Eph. 4:15, 16.

He takes occasion from hence to warn them again, v. 20. 'If, as Christians, ye are dead to the observances of the ceremonial law, why are ye subject to them?' v. 21, 22. Under the law, there was a ceremonial pollution contracted by touching a dead body, or anything offered to an idol; or by tasting any forbidden meats, &c., *which all are to perish with the using*; having no intrinsic worth in themselves to support them; and they who used them, saw them perishing and passing away: or, which tend to corrupt the Christian faith, having no other authority than the traditions and injunctions of men. *Which things have, indeed, a show of wisdom in will-worship and humility*. They thought themselves wiser than their neighbors, in observing the law of Moses, together with the gospel of Christ, that they might be sure, in one at least, to be in the right; but alas, it was but a show of wisdom, a mere invention and pretence. So they seem to *neglect the body*, by abstaining from such and such meats, and mortifying their bodily pleasures and appetites; but there is nothing of true devotion in these things, for the Gospel teaches us to worship God *in spirit and truth*, and not by ritual observances; and through the mediation of Christ alone, and not of any angels. Subjection to ordinances, or [mere] human appointments in the worship of God, is highly blamable, and contrary to the freedom and liberty of the Gospel. The apostle requires Christians *to stand fast in the liberty with which Christ hath made them free, and not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage*, Gal. 5:1. and the imposition is invading the authority

teachers wanted to impose on the Gentile converts; and 'the Lord's day,' not the 'Sabbath,' is the scriptural term for this day of sacred rest. *Jn. 20:19—23. Ac. 20:7—12, v. 7. Rev. 1:9—11, v. 10. Drink.*—'In the law, no kind of drink was forbidden, except to the Nazarites. . . . Now . . . it is not improbable, that the elders, who pretended to have received from Moses and the prophets, by tradition, many precepts not written in the law, might enjoin abstinence from wine and strong drink, to such of their disciples as aimed at superior holiness.' *Mackn. S.*

(16.) *Sabbath days.* 'Dwight, in answer to *Paley*, states, that the passage refers to the ordinary holidays of the Jews, or at most to the 7th day only, and not at all to the Christian Sabbath, especially as the latter is not, in the Scriptures, and was not, by the primitive church, called the Sabbath, but "the first day of the week," and, "the Lord's day."—The Sabbath, under the Mosaic dispensation, was a *ceremonial*, as well as a *moral* requirement.'

V. 18, 19. *Beguile.* The original word seems to be taken from the office of those, who presided in the Olympic and Isthmian games, and decided to whom the prize belonged. Now, if any man usurped authority of this kind among Christians, he would mislead all who willingly submitted to him, as well as dominate over their consciences.—It has before been intimated, that the Jews seem to have borrowed some of the Pagan notions, and applied them to the scriptural doctrine of angels; by these means, the Judaizing teachers had begun to corrupt Christianity with a new and refined species of idolatry. To what lengths the same principles afterwards carried professed Christians, in the worship of departed saints, real or imaginary, and the worship of images, as well as that of angels, especially in the church of Rome, is well known; and indeed it continues, in very many places, unimpaired to this day. But the whole has always been done in direct defiance to the apostle's testimony, which fully proves all such practices to be as contrary to the honor of Christ in the gospel, as the most gross, or rather acknowledged idolatry is to the honor of God in the law.—Many expositors bestow great pains, in showing what heretics, or heretical teachers, the apostle had in view, and what sects of the philosophers had supplied, so to speak, the materials for these corruptions of the Gospel. But it appears to me, that if Cerinthus, or the Gnostics, or any other heretics, had been then known, as avowing anti-Christian tenets; the apostle would no more have scrupled to name them, than he did to name 'Hymeneus and Philetus;' unless he had thought that by naming some, he should be supposed to exculpate others, who, with some shades of difference, were equally corrupting the Gospel. In like manner, the Stoics and Epicureans are named by the sacred historian, in the same way as the Pharisees and Sadducees are: *Acts 17:18*, and if Christianity had been corrupted, *exclusively*, by the speculations of Pythagoreans or Platonists, it does not appear, why the apostle should omit to protest against them. But, if all the sects of the philosophers held notions suited to corrupt Christianity, then the reason is evident, why the apostle names no one; and it is equally strong against our interpreting his words of any one exclusively. In fact, it is of immensely more importance for us to know *what*, than *whom*, he opposed; for if our attention be engrossed by the danger of ancient Christians, from this or the other sect, either of heretics or philosophers, we shall probably be led to forget our own danger, from papists, Socinians, philosophizing infidels, *rational* Christians, (as some falsely call themselves,) and all the varieties of superstitious and enthusiastical deceivers, against all of whom the apostle's words, as explained in an enlarged sense, most solemnly warn us. *In a voluntary humility.* 'Being a voluntary in humility.' The deceiver was voluntary in humility.

SCOTT.

(18.) 'It is justly remarked by Bp. *Burnet*, that, had it been the apostle's intention to give the least encouragement to any religious addresses to *saints* and *angels*, this would have been a very natural occasion of introducing the subject, and adjusting its proper boundaries.' *DODDR.*—'Some suppose, there is a reference here and in the following vs. to the doctrines and overscrupulousness of the Essenes, who, among other singularities, had peculiar views respecting angels. From affected humility, some held, that direct access to God in prayer was presumptuous, and that prayers could only be presented and accepted through the mediation of angels. The worship of angels afterwards prevailed so much in that country, that it was found necessary expressly to condemn it, at a council held at Laodicea, A. D., 363.'

*HENRY, abr.*  
V. 20—23. The next words [which all are to perish] are differently interpreted. But the more general, and, as it appears to me, the best founded interpretation, supposes the apostle to refer to our Lord's words concerning the traditions of the Pharisees, and implies, that abstaining from such things, when not divinely prohibited, as supported the body by perishing themselves, could do nothing towards the salvation of the soul; as all such things perish with the using, and could communicate no real defilement. *Mat. 15:10—20. 1 Cor. 6:12—17.*—The last clause is differently interpreted.—'Nor are they of any value, as they regard those things by which the flesh is gratified (or pampered)?' *Beza.* By 'the flesh,' he means 'the carnal mind,' which is gratified with everything that affords nutriment to pride, self-preference, and contempt of others.—'Not by any provision for satisfying the flesh;' *timē* (*honor*) 'sometimes, in Scripture, signifies the food and clothing necessary for the body.' . . . Thus the provision of the necessaries and conveniences of life, made for parents, elders, and widows, is called *timē*. (*1 Tim. 5:17.*) The body is as real a part of our nature as the soul, and ought to have such food and recreation, as are necessary to its health and vigor. [So essential also to a sound mind.] . . . The wisdom which teaches the "neglecting of the body," is not wisdom, but folly.' *Mackn.*—'Forbidding marriage, which "is honorable in all."—And allowing no honorable means of satisfying those desires, which are implanted by nature, . . . brought them to all dishonorable lusts.' *Hann.* If this last meaning could be clearly made out, and established, it would very well suit the context. For it can hardly be doubted, that the Holy Spirit led the apostle to speak against the corruptious, by which certain Judaizing and speculating teachers, grafting the heathen philosophy, so to speak, on the superstitious Pharisee, attempted to corrupt the church, in language strictly prophetic of the subsequent corruptions of the 'man of sin,' the papal antichrist. (*Note, 1 Tim. 4:1—5.*)—But it can hardly be supposed, that the words tr. 'satisfying the flesh,' which seems to imply *full gratification, even to repletion*, would have been used by the apostle in this connexion; so that, on the whole, the first interpretation appears to me the most satisfactory. 'While it puffed up men with a vain conceit of their own sanctity, it might rather be said to tend to the dishonorable satisfying "of the flesh," though it seemed most to afflict it; for that self-complacency, ostentation, and contempt of others, with which these severities are often attended, is indeed a carnal principle; nor could the grossest sensualities be more contrary to the will of God, and the genius of true religion.' *Doddr.*—(22) *To perish with the using.* *2 Pet. 1:4. 2 12, 19.* See on *Rom. 8:21*. 'All these things tend to the corruption of that excellent religion, into which you are initiated.' *Doddr.*—This accords to one meaning of *phthora*, but does not suit the context.—*Commandments, &c.* *Ental-mata.* 'This word occurs but thrice in the N. T. (*Mat. 15:9. Mk. 7:7.*) . . . In all these places it is joined with *anthrōpōn, of men*, and is men-



23 Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh.

CHAP. III.

1 He sheweth where we should seek Christ. 5 He exhorteth to mortification, 10 to put off the old man, and to put on Christ, 12 exhorting to charity, humility, and other several duties.

**I**F ye then be risen <sup>a</sup> with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ <sup>b</sup> sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your <sup>c</sup> affection on things above, not <sup>d</sup> on things on the earth.

3 For <sup>e</sup> ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When <sup>f</sup> Christ, who is <sup>g</sup> our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

5 Mortify <sup>h</sup> therefore your members which are upon the earth;

*g or, punishing, or, not sparing. a c 2:12. b Ro. 8:31. c or, mind. d 1 Jn. 2:15. e Ro. 6:2. f 1 Jn. 3:2. g Jn. 11:25, 14:6. h Ro. 8:13. Ga. 5:24. Ep. 5:3. —6.*

of Christ, the Head of the church, and introducing another law of commandments contained in ordinances, when Christ has abolished the old one, Eph. 2:15. Observe, Such things have only a *show of wisdom*, but are really folly. True wisdom is, to keep close to the appointment of the Gospel; and an entire subjection to Christ, the only Head of the church.

CHAP. III. V. 1—4. The apostle, having described our privileges by Christ, in the former part of the epistle, and our discharge from the yoke of the ceremonial law, comes here to press our duty inferred from

of faith, and the way to the Father. *Mat. 11:27. Jn. 14:4—6, v. 6.* Without union and communion with Christ, and with the Father through Him, by 'the supply of his Spirit,' we can do nothing: *Note, Jn. 15:3—5.*—but true Christians are 'complete in Him.' If we enter into the spirit of genuine Christianity, we have no occasion either for Jewish ceremonies or newly-invented superstitions. We want no other wisdom, righteousness, strength, holiness, liberty, or victory, than those which Christ bestows. We need not regard those, who 'judge us in respect of meats and drinks, and holy-days,' or other human traditions, which are not so much as 'a shadow of things to come,' as Jewish ceremonies once were: but we enjoy the substance in Christ, living by faith in Him, and walking in his ordinances and commandments blameless.—Having one all-sufficient 'Advocate with the Father,' we want no other mediators; and must not by any means abuse ourselves to worship fellow-servants, to the great dishonor of our common Lord. The church has long enough been corrupted, and souls deceived, with these gross delusions, with human inventions, 'will-worship,' and self-imposed austerities: men have long enough been misled by those who said, 'Touch not, taste not, handle not;' concerning such 'things as perish with the using.' Let us then not depart from the simplicity of our dependence on the Lord Jesus, and obedience to Him. As 'dead with Him' to the world, and its wisdom and maxims, let us willingly bear his yoke, and steadily assert our liberty from human impositions. What he has left indifferent, let us regard as such, and leave others to the like freedom; and, remembering the transient nature of earthly things, let us endeavor to glorify God by a temperate, thankful, and charitable use of them. *SCOTT.*

tioned with evident disapprobation, and contrasted, by implication, with the commandments of God, which are called *entolai.* *Campbell. Sc.*

*Concluding Note. V. 12.* 'After all, what resemblance is there between a man's being dipped or plunged in water, and Christ's being laid in a sepulchre hewn out of a rock?—The common manner of burial among us is very different from that in which Christ was buried, and may have been the occasion of misleading the judgment of common readers. There are still remaining in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, many ancient tombs, which clearly show the manner of interment formerly practised. A chamber or excavation was made in a rock, and, at the sides, niches were formed for the reception of dead bodies. The body of Jesus was wrapped in linen and laid in one of these niches. Now what resemblance is there between a body's being carried, —not let down, as into a grave, but carried into such a chamber or excavation in a rock, and lying there 3 days in one of the niches at the side, and the plunging of a living person, for a moment, in water? If there is any resemblance, is it not too remote and fanciful to be regarded by the apostle?' *Rev. Dr. Woods.* See his Treatise on Infant Baptism, in which he justifies it from its suitability to the relation between parents and children, from its administration being decidedly implied in the N. T., though not directly enjoined, because, being a substitute for circumcision, no question arose rendering its injunction necessary: also from considerations founded on 1 Cor. 7:14. 1:15. Is. 55:23. Rom. 11:16. &c., &c. He further points out its utility; and the fact of its use by the primitive Christians, proved, from the direct testimony of Origen, Cyprian, Optatus, Gregory Nazianzen, &c., and the expressions of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Irenæus, &c. See the Notes on Heb. 6:2. 9:10. *Ed.*

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1—4. *Hid, &c.* The Fountain of their life, and the nature, supports, and principles of it, were 'hidden' from carnal men, who could not understand what were the secret springs of

thence. He begins with exhorting them to set their hearts on heaven, and take them off from this world. It is our privilege, that we are *risen with Christ*, have benefit by the resurrection of Christ, and, by virtue of our union and communion with Him, are justified and sanctified, and shall be glorified. From hence he infers, that we must seek those things which are above, seek the favor of God, and make it our constant care and business to secure our title to the heavenly bliss. And the reason is, because *Christ sits at the right hand of God.* He who is our best Friend, and our Head, is advanced to the highest dignity and honor in heaven, and is gone before, to secure to us the heavenly happiness; therefore, we should seek and secure what He has purchased at so vast an expense, and is taking so much care about. We must, according to our capacities, live such a life as Christ lived here on earth, and lives now in heaven.

He explains the duty, v. 2. Observe, To seek heavenly things, is, to set our affection on them, love them, and let out our desires toward them. This is to be *spiritually minded*, Rom. 8:6. and to seek and desire a better country, that is, a heavenly, Heb. 11:14, 16. Things on earth, are here set in opposition to things above; for heaven and earth are contrary one to the other, and a supreme regard to both is inconsistent; and the prevalence of our affection to one, will proportionably weaken and abate our affection to the other. He assigns three reasons for this, v. 3, 4.

1. We are dead; i. e. to present things, and as our portion. We are so in profession and obligation, *buried with Christ, planted into the likeness of his death, crucified unto the world, and the world unto us*, Gal. 6:14. And if dead to the earth, having renounced it as our happiness, it is absurd for us to set our affection on it, and seek it. We should be like a dead thing to it, unmoved and unaffected towards it.

2. Our true life lies in the other world, v. 3. The new man has its livelihood from thence. It is born and nourished from above; and the perfection of its life is reserved for that state; *hid with Christ.* Because I live ye shall live also, *Jn. 14:19.* Christ is at present a hidden Christ, or one whom we have not seen; but this is our comfort, that our life is hid with Him, and laid up safe with Him: we love Him whom we have not seen, 1 Pet. 1:8. and a happiness out of sight is reserved in heaven for us.

3. Because, at the second coming of Christ, we hope for the perfection of our happiness. If we live a life of Christian purity and devotion now, when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, we shall also appear with Him in glory, v. 4. Observe, (1.) Christ is a believer's life, Gal. 2:20; the Principle and End of it, Phil. 1:21. (2.) Christ will appear again. He is now hid; and the heavens must contain Him; but He will appear in all the pomp of the upper world, with his holy angels, and his own glory, and his Father's glory, Mk. 8:38. Lu. 9:26. (3.) We shall then appear with Him in glory. It will be his glory to have his redeemed with Him, 2 Thess. 1:10. and their glory to come with Him, and be with Him for ever. At the second coming of Christ, there will be a general meeting of all the saints; and they whose life is now hid with Christ, shall then appear with Christ in that glory He Himself enjoys, *Jn. 17:24.* Do we look for such a happiness as that, and should we not set our affection on that world, and live above this? What is there here to make us fond of it? What is there not there to draw our hearts to it?

V. 5—11. The apostle exhorts the Colossians to the mortification of sin, the great hindrance to seeking the things above. It is our duty to mortify our members which are upon the earth, which naturally incline us to the things of the world. 'Subdue the vicious

their active diligence and joyful patience, in opposition to all temporal interests and satisfactions. *Rev. 2:17.* This life was likewise secured, as 'a hidden treasure,' from wicked men and fallen spirits, who could by no means deprive them of it; nor was it in their own keeping, but in that of Christ, by whom it was sustained, and who was Himself the un-failing Source of it. Thus it was 'with Christ in God,' through the union of the Deity with his human nature, and so the immutable power, faithfulness, wisdom, and love of God secured it for them. *SCOTT.*

(1.) *Seek.* Seek, in Scripture, denotes the constant employing of one's thoughts and endeavors for obtaining the object of one's desires, *Mat. 6:33.*

(2.) *Things above.* Calvin takes this of the sublime doctrines of Christianity, as opposed to the rudiments of the world, ch. 2:20. yet Doddr. objects, that those are not in heaven. This, however, seems not very conclusive. It is plain, the words must be taken in their popular acceptation, and in all that extent of signification which a plain Christian would assign to them. And it is well observed by Doddr., that Paul proceeds on the principles he had laid down, to graft a most important practical exhortation, different from any he had advanced before, v. 5. than which nothing could more effectually tend to take them off from those bigoted attachments, of which he was solicitous to cure them. *BL.*

V. 5, 6. The exhortations here given are similar to those already considered. *Eph. 4:17—32. 5:1—7.*—In the detail of particulars here ad-



fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry :

6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience :

7 In<sup>i</sup> the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them.

8 But now ye also put off all these ; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds ;

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed<sup>j</sup> in knowledge after the image of him that created him :

11 Where<sup>k</sup> there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free : but Christ is all, and in all.

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels

habits of mind which prevailed in your Gentile state ; suppress them, destroy them, as an enemy which fights against you and wounds you.' *Your members which are upon the earth ; either the members of the body, or the corrupt affections of the mind, the members of the body of death, Rom. 7:24. He specifies the lusts of the flesh, for which they were before so notorious ; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil-concupiscence ; also, the love of the world ; and covetousness, which is idolatry ; an inordinate love of present good, and outward enjoyments. Observe, Covetousness is spiritual idolatry : it is giving that love and regard to worldly wealth, which is due to God only ; and carries a greater degree of malignity in it, and is more highly provoking to God, than is commonly thought : it is very observable, that among all the other instances of*

duced, we may observe, that 'inordinate affection' may relate to inordinate and excessive desires, after even lawful indulgences of any kind ; though some understand it of unnatural crimes. 'Evil concupiscence,' signifies the sensuality of the heart and imagination, which must be mortified, or gross crimes will follow. But several expositors explain the word rendered 'covetousness,' as denoting rather the excessive desire of sensual gratification, than the love of riches. *Eph. 5:3-7. This appears to me a most dangerous misconception ; for, by this mean, sensuality is supposed to be forbidden with a needless redundancy of words, and 'covetousness' escapes without the least rebuke ; whereas, 'the love of money is the root of all' kinds of 'evil,' and both the Scripture and matter of fact, show it to be one of the greatest possible hindrances to men's salvation, and the greatest of all snares to the professors of the Gospel ; nor can any vice so properly be called 'idolatry,' as avarice. 'As heathens place their confidence in idols, so the avaricious man doth his in gold and silver. . . The covetous person, though he doth not indeed believe his riches or his money to be a god ; yet by so loving and trusting in them, as God alone ought to be loved and trusted in, he is as truly guilty of idolatry, as if he so believed.' *Whitby. — By 'the children of disobedience,' some understand wicked men in general ; others seem to confine the interpretation to idolaters. But the word rendered 'disobedience' often signifies 'unbelief.' (Note, Rom. 11:25-32.) — 'It signifieth the want of the obedience of faith.' *Leigh. — And 'the children of disobedience' are doubtless all those, however distinguished, who do not believe and obey the Gospel, while the most profligate and abandoned, believing and obeying the Gospel, become the 'children of obedience.' *Eph. 2:1, 2. 5:5-7. 1 Pet. 1:13-16. — The rites of Bacchus and Cybele were peculiarly observed at Colosse, the chief city of Phrygia, and conducted exceedingly to deprave the morals of the inhabitants, in many of the things here spoken of ; but alas ! the ease of immense multitudes, even in professed Christian countries, requires precisely the same warnings and exhortations.****

(5.) *Covetousness, which is idolatry.*] Paul enumerates some disgusting fruits of selfish propensity, and sums them up with *covetousness*, note, 2 Tim. 3:2. which is *idolatry*, the worst form of sin he could think of ! For, says *Harris*, in his admirable essay, 'Self, self is the idol to which [we] are perpetually sacrificing ; the master, whose ravenous appetite [we] are perpetually feasting, and which eats up nearly all [we] have. So great is the cost of dressing and decorating this idol, of serving and feasting it, of consulting its voracious appetites, and ministering to its various gratifications, that but little is left for the cause of Christ. It is (says Howe) "a soul-wasting monster, that is fed and sustained at a dearer rate, and with more costly sacrifices and repasts, than can be paralleled by sacred or profane history ; that hath made more desolation

in the souls of men, than ever was made in their towns and cities, where idols were served with only human sacrifices, or monstrous creatures, satiated only with such food ; or where the lives and safety of the majority were to be purchased by the constant tribute of the blood of not a few ! that hath devoured more, and preyed more cruelly upon human lives, than Moloch or the Minotaur !" [How many millions have been sacrificed to one attribute of it, covetousness, alone ! Call to mind the millions killed in this new world, for wealth ! — the hundreds stranded yearly on our coast, or blown up in steamboats, in the pursuits of commerce, who would have been ridiculed as enthusiasts, had they perished in the missionary cause. Yes, self is, indeed,] 'Dives in the mansion, clothed in purple, and faring sumptuously every day, — the cause of Christ, is Lazarus, lying at his gate, and fed only with crumbs which fall from his table.' *Mammon*, a Prize Essay, of which, could room be spared, the Ed. would gladly quote the whole, in the aim to rouse the church to cast off the worship, in all his forms, of that 'demon of selfishness, whose name is Legion ;' and which, in every age, has been the great antagonist of the Gospel, threatening at times even to drive from the world the principle of benevolence ; 'to reinstate which, in the hearts of man, the ocean of divine love was stirred to its utmost depths, and its infinite treasures lavished on the world in the "unspeakable gift" of Jesus Christ, the embodied love of the adorable Godhead ! "Herein is love !" — love defying all computation. How should the very mention of it surcharge our hearts with gratitude, impress us with infinity, and replace our selfishness with a sentiment of the most generous and diffusive benevolence.' *HARRIS. Ed. — 'The acquisition and selfish appropriation of wealth has a tendency to strengthen all our earthly passions, and so to exclude God and eternity from our minds. Now, if Christians will take a part of that which has been the nutriment of their selfish passions, and has withdrawn their hearts from God, and will devote it to his honor, and the good of his church ; they will directly counteract this spirit of covetousness. CHRISTIANS WHO HOLD LARGE ESTATES, SELDOM ATTAIN TO EMINENT PIETY ; and, for the most part, they are destitute of those elevated enjoyments in religion, which are so often granted to others. By giving, the poison is extracted from riches, — the curse is removed.'*

Scott.

(6.) *Wrath.*] Both in this world and the next. *Disobedience.*] Disobedience of any of God's laws draws after it some appropriate punishment. *Ed.*

V. 7-11. The word tr. 'blasphemy,' may signify slanders and revilings, as well as profane speeches respecting God and holy things. *Sc.*

(8.) *Filthy communications.*] 'Lewd conversation, obscene or impure words.' *DODDR.*

V. 12. *Kindness.*] 'Properly, that sweetness of disposition, [433]

sin, which good men are recorded in the Scripture to have fallen into, there is no instance in all the Scripture of any good man charged with covetousness.

He proceeds to show how necessary it is to mortify sins, v. 6, 7.

1. Because, if we do not kill them, they will kill us, v. 6. See what we all are by nature, more or less ; *children of disobedience*, under the power of sin, and naturally prone to disobey, Ps. 58:3. And, being *children of disobedience*, we are *children of wrath*, Eph. 2:3. The *wrath of God* comes on all the *children of disobedience*. The sins he mentions were their sins in their heathen and idolatrous state, and they were then especially the *children of disobedience* ; yet these sins brought judgments on them, and exposed them to the wrath of God.

2. We should mortify these sins, because they have lived in us, v. 7. Observe, 'The consideration that we have formerly lived in sin, is a good argument why we should now forsake it. We have walked in by-paths, therefore let us walk in them no more, Job 34:32. 1 Pet. 4:3. When ye lived among them who did such things, (so some understand it,) then ye walked in those evil practices. It is as hard to live among them who do the works of darkness, and not have fellowship with them, as it is to walk in the mire, and contract no soil. Let us keep out of the way of evil-doers.

And as we are to mortify inordinate appetites, so we are to mortify inordinate passions, v. 8. *anger, wrath, malice* : for these are contrary to the design of the Gospel, as well as grosser impurities ; and though more spiritual, have not less malignity. For the Gospel introduces a change of the higher as well as the lower powers of the soul, and supports the dominion of right reason and conscience, over appetite and passion.

And as corrupt principles must be cut off, so must the product of them : as *blasphemy*, which seems here to mean, not so much speaking ill of God, as giving ill language to men, or raising ill reports of them, and injuring their good name by any evil arts and *filthy communication* : all lewd and wanton discourse, which comes from a polluted mind in the speaker, and propagates the same de-

filements in the hearers. *Lying, v. 9.* is contrary both to the law of truth and the law of love ; is both unjust and unkind, and naturally tends to destroy all faith and friendship among mankind. Lying makes us like the devil, the *father of lies*, and is a prime part of the devil's image on our souls. Therefore, we are cautioned against this sin by that general reason ; seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man. They who have put off the old man, have put it off with its deeds ; and they who have put on the new man, must put on all its deeds. The new man is said to be renewed in knowledge ; because an ignorant soul cannot be a good soul. Without knowledge, the heart cannot be good, Prov. 19:2. The grace of God works on the will and affections, by renewing the understanding. Light is the first thing in the new, as it was in the first, creation : after the image of Him who created him. It was the honor of man, in innocence, that he was made after the image of God ; but that image was defaced and lost by sin, and is renewed by sanctifying grace : so that a renewed soul is something like what Adam was in the day he was created.

In the privilege and duty of sanctification, there is now no difference arising from different country, or different condition and circumstance of life, v. 11. it is as much the duty of the one as of the other, to be holy ; and as much the privilege of the one as of the other, to receive from God the grace to be so. Christ came, that all might stand on the same level before God, both in duty and privilege. And for this reason, because *Christ is all in all*. Christ is a Christian's all, his only Lord and Savior, and all his Hope and Happiness. And to those who are sanctified, one as well as another, and whatever they are in other respects, He is *All in all*, the *Alpha and Omega*, the *Beginning and the End* : He is *All in all things* to them.

V. 12-17. The apostle proceeds to exhort to mutual love and compassion, v. 12. The argument used to enforce the exhortation, is very affecting ; *Put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved*. The holy, are the elect of God ; and the elect of God,



of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering ;

13 Forbearing <sup>l</sup> one another, and forgiving <sup>m</sup> one another, if any man have a <sup>n</sup> quarrel against any : even as Christ forgave you, so also *do ye*.

14 And above all these things *put on* <sup>o</sup> charity, which is <sup>p</sup> the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace <sup>q</sup> of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body ; and be ye thankful.

16 Let the word <sup>r</sup> of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in <sup>s</sup> psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And whatsoever <sup>t</sup> ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

l Ma. 11:25. o 1 Pe. 4:8. r Ps. 119:11.  
Ep. 4:2,32. p 1 Co. 13:2,8,13. s Ep. 5:19.  
m Mat. 6:14,15. q Phi. 4:7. t 1 Co. 10:31.  
n or, complaint.

and holy, are *beloved* ; beloved of God, and ought to be of all *men*. They ought to conduct themselves, in everything, as becomes them, and so as not to lose the credit of their holiness, or the comfort of their being chosen and beloved. Observe, What we must put on in particular. 1. *Compassion* toward the miserable ; *bowls of mercy*, the tenderest mercies ; *merciful, as your Father is merciful*, Lu. 6 : 36. 2. *Kindness* toward our friends, and those who love us ; a courteous, soft, sweet disposition : the design of the Gospel is, to promote friendship and benevolence among men, as well as reconciliation with God. 3. *Humbleness of mind*, in submission to those above us, and condescension to those below us ; not only a humble carriage, but a humble mind. *Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart*, Mat. 11 : 29. 4. *Meekness* toward those who have provoked us, or been any way injurious to

us. We must not be transported into resentment, but prudently bridle our anger, and patiently bear that of others. 5. *Long-suffering* toward those who continue to provoke us. *Charity suffereth long*, as well as *is kind*, 1 Cor. 13 : 4. If God is *long-suffering* to us, under all our provocations of Him, we should exercise *long-suffering* to others in like cases. 6. *Mutual forbearance*, in consideration of the infirmities and deficiencies we all labor under ; *forbearing one another*. We all have something which needs to be borne with ; and that is a good reason why we should bear with others in what is disagreeable to us. 7. A readiness to *forgive injuries* ; *forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any*. While we are in this world, where there is so much corruption in our hearts, and so much occasion of difference and contention, quarrels will sometimes happen, even among the elect of God, who are *holy and beloved*, Acts 15 : 39. Gal. 2 : 14. But it is our duty to forgive one another in such cases ; not to bear any grudge, but put up with the affront, and pass it by. And the reason is, the consideration that we are forgiven by Christ so many offences, Mat. 6 : 12.

Now, in order to all this, we are exhorted here to several things :

1. To clothe ourselves with love, v. 14. *Above, over all things, put on charity*. Let this be the upper garment, the robe, the livery, the mark of our dignity and distinction. Or, Let this be principal and chief, as the whole sum and abstract of the second table, 2 Pct. 1 : 5—7. He lays the foundation in faith, and the top-stone in charity, *which is the bond of perfectness*, the cement and centre of all happy society. Christian unity consists in unanimity and mutual love.

2. To submit ourselves to the government of the *peace of God*, v. 15. *Let the peace of God rule in your hearts*, i. e. God's being at peace with you, and the comfortable sense of his acceptance and favor : or, a disposition to peace among yourselves, a peaceable spirit, that keeps the peace, and makes peace. This is called the *peace of God* ; because it is of his working in all who are his. We are called to this peace, to peace

with God, as our privilege, and peace with our brethren, as our duty. Being united in *one body*, we are called to be at peace one with another, as the members of the natural body ; for *we are the body of Christ, and members in particular*, 1 Cor. 12 : 27. ' Instead of envying one another, on account of any particular favors and excellence, be thankful for his mercies, which are common to all.'

3. To let the *Word of Christ dwell in us richly*, v. 16. The Gospel is the Word of Christ, which must *dwell* in us, not as a servant in a family, under control, but as a master, to prescribe and direct. It must *dwell in us* ; be always ready and at hand in everything, and have its due influence and use. We must be familiarly acquainted with it, and *know it for our good*, Job 5 : 27. It must *dwell in us richly* : not only keep house in our hearts, but keep a good house. Then the soul prospers, when we have *abundance* of the Word of God in us, and are full of the Scriptures, and of the grace of Christ. And this *in all wisdom*. The Word of Christ must dwell in us, not in all *notion* and *speculation*, to make us doctors, but in all *wisdom*, to make us good Christians, and enable us to conduct ourselves in everything as becomes Wisdom's children.

4. To *teach and admonish one another*. This would contribute very much to further us in all grace ; for we sharpen ourselves by quickening others, and improve our knowledge by communicating it for their edification. We must *admonish one another in psalms and hymns*. Observe, Singing of psalms is a gospel-ordinance ; this was instead of their lewd and profane songs in their idolatrous worship. Religious poetry seems countenanced by these expressions, and is capable of great edification. But when we sing psalms, we make no melody unless we are suitably affected with what we sing, and go along in it with true devotion and understanding. Singing of psalms is a teaching ordinance, as well as a praising ordinance ; and we are not only to quicken and encourage ourselves, but to *teach and admonish one another*.

5. All must be done *in the name of Christ*,

leads men to comply with the innocent inclinations of others, and to speak to them courteously.'

V. 12—15. 'Our obedience must not consist in the mere *negatives* ; it must include the *positives* of religion. Sins of *omission* are breaches of the commands of God, as much as sins of *commission*. (Mat. 25.) A man is not universally obedient, only because he is no thief or drunkard ; he must be pious, humble, forgiving, charitable, &c.' EDWARDS.

(14.) *Bond of perfectness*.] 'An elegant allusion to the girdle of the orientals, which was not only ornamental and expensive, but was put on last, serving to adjust the other parts of the dress, and to keep the whole together.'

V. 16, 17. By 'the Word of Christ' the whole of the sacred Scripture seems to be meant, which was all from Him, as 'the Light of the world,' and the personal 'Word of God,' and which, in one way or other, all related to Him. Rev. 19:9, 10.—It [the singing of songs on festive occasions] has always been the case, in every country ; and the popular songs have an immense, but generally a most pernicious, effect on the people. They are learned in early life, and not soon forgotten ; and often are considered as proverbial or oracular.—Let then Christians, excluding those polluting vanities, labor to get their memories and minds richly replenished with hymns and songs of praise to God, and poems of every kind, which are suited to prepare them for the worship of heaven, and to anticipate its joys ; and let them use these hymns and songs constantly, not on public occasions alone, but in social meetings also ; and even when alone in their houses, or when journeying, and, indeed, in any other situation. (Note, Eph. 5:15—20, v. 18.) This will also render them edifying and animating companions to their fellow-Christians.—In general, whatever they are employed about, whether in conversation, in public acts of adoration, in social worship, in their secular or domestic concerns, in everything relative to the place of their abode, their removal to other residences, their employment in life, the connexions they form, for themselves or their children, as well as in every work of piety or charity ; let them do all in the name of the Lord Jesus ; in a believing dependence on his merits and grace, out of love to Him, in obedience to his precepts, and for the honor of his name, 'giving thanks to God, even the Father, by Him.' For even the best services can be accepted from sinners, only through his intercession : and nothing ought to be ventured on or engaged in by them or any Christians, which cannot thus be done 'in the name' and for the sake of Jesus the Savior.

SCOTT.

(16.) 'I see not the authority for supposing all these words refer to David's poetical pieces, and think it much more reasonable to believe, that by *hymns* and *spiritual songs*, he means such poetical compositions as, under the influence of the Spirit, were written or uttered. For it would be very absurd to suppose, that when there was such a gift in the

church as we are sure there was, (comp. 1 Cor. 14:15, 16.) they should be confined to the words of David, in all their devotions of this kind. And it would certainly be as reasonable for us, in these latter ages, to explode all kinds of prayer in public, but liturgies collected from the words of Scripture, as well as sacred songs in divine worship, but literal translations from what is called the Book of Psalms. Numberless passages of the O. and N. T. are equally capable of furnishing us with sacred anthems. DODDR. So MACKN., and modern divines in general. And *Williams* here refers to that well known passage in *Pliny*, concerning the early Christians, that they used 'to meet before daylight, and sing hymns to Christ as to God.' He refers also to the musical historian, *Burney*, in proof that inspiration is not necessary to these sacred hymns and songs, since as *B. testifies*, 'the gondoliers (or bargemen of Venice) are wont to address and challenge one another in extemporaneous stanzas.' *Rich* observed the harvesters of Kurdistan thus singing at their work. Comp. Is. 9:3. 16:9. Ed.—*Sacred music* is a very important part of Christian, as it was of Jewish public worship. (Notes, Eph. 5:19. Ja. 5:13.) But it is one which is too much neglected in nearly all our churches, and considered rather as a religious performance, by the choir, than a solemn, and *devotional exercise*, in the spirit of which all are bound to participate, as much as in that of the prayers. Very little pains are taken in most of our churches, to improve and sustain the singing, it being generally left to a few persons, usually of the younger class, who volunteer to perform the service, while the great mass, even of the members of the church, are regardless of the subject as though it were no part of the services of God's house. But there is no good reason why it should not be considered *absolutely essential* in these services, and therefore provision should be made and care taken that it be properly sustained and conducted, as well as the preaching. Not by the employment of *theatrical* performers, and other persons, of notoriously irreligious character, but by liberally supported schools, for the instruction of the young, in the science, and by proper care on the part of the officers of the church, to provide a sufficient number of competent persons, who will properly *lead* in the exercise, 'singing with the *spirit* and with the *understanding*,' and 'with grace in their hearts.' The principal singer, or leader, at least, of the choir, he who gives character and tone to the whole exercise, should be a religious man, and both he and his assistants should feel a *special, religious responsibility* for this part of the worship of the sanctuary ; and every member of the church ought to feel, that he is bound to do all in his power, by his efforts and example, to promote an increased regard for, and interest in, this important exercise. Oh, could our churches catch something more of that spirit which animates their redeemed brethren in heaven, as they sing 'the song of Moses and the Lamb,' how would their feelings of devotion be kindled, and their hearts bow with humble adoration, when assembled for the worship of God !

ED.



18 <sup>v</sup> Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them.

20 <sup>v</sup> Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

21 Fathers, provoke not your children *to anger*, lest they be discouraged.

22 <sup>v</sup> Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh: not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men;

24 Knowing, that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

<sup>v</sup> Ep. 5:22, &c.      <sup>1</sup> Pe. 3:1, &c.      <sup>w</sup> 1 Pe. 2:18.  
<sup>Tit.</sup> 2:4, 5.      <sup>v</sup> Ep. 6:1, &c.

v. 17. according to his command, in compliance with his authority, by strength derived from Him, with an eye to his glory, and depending on his merit for the acceptance of what is good, and pardon of what is amiss; *Giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.* Observe, We must give thanks in all things; *whatsoever* we do, Eph. 5:20. The Lord Jesus must be the Mediator of our praises as well as of our prayers; *in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*, Eph. 5:20. They who do all things in Christ's name, will never want matter of thanksgiving to God, even the Father.

PRACT. OBS. The sincerity of our professed faith and love must be evidenced by a consistent temper and conduct. Thus we shall know our interest in the atonement of the Savior, by the life which we have derived from Him; *Rom. 8:5-9*, and may be assured, that 'when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory.' Having such hopes and comforts, we should daily employ ourselves in mortifying every carnal affection, and in seeking a more entire deliverance, not only from all hankering after forbidden gratifications, but from every desire of sensual indulgence even if lawful, if in any way inexpedient; and from that idolatrous 'covetousness, which God abhorreth;' for 'because of these things cometh the wrath of God on the children of disobedience.' Let us also put off anger, malice, slander, revilings, irreverent words concerning God, polluting discourse, and all kinds and degrees of insincerity. Having therefore 'put off the old man and his deeds,' and 'put on Christ,' and being 'renewed in knowledge after his image,' let us study more and more to copy his example, to have the same mind which was in Him, and to act consistently with our rank and character. We may well be indifferent to all other interests and distinctions, if we be indeed true believers, seeing 'Christ is all and in all;' but we should be earnestly desirous of evidencing that we are 'the elect of God, holy and beloved,' by cultivating every benign, friendly, humble, and gentle temper; by copying the forgiveness through which we are saved; and by putting on that 'love which is the bond of perfectness,' that it may above all appear in every part of our conduct; while 'we follow peace with all men,' and are of one mind with those who belong to the Lord's body.—We should also seek to be enriched in

V. 18, 19. Christian wives would, at that time, in many cases be required to obey idolatrous husbands; and Christian husbands to love heathen wives. (19) *Be not bitter.*] 'Thou art not a lord, but a husband; thou hast not got a maid-servant, but a wife: God would have thee the ruler of the inferior sex, not the tyrant.' *Ambrose.* [It will be recollected, that the oriental wives, as now, 'stood before,' (Gen. 2:18. marg.) their husbands while the latter sat eating, eat separately, &c.] *Gen. 2:21-24. 3:16. Deut. 24:1-4. Mal. 2:13-16. Mat. 19:7, 9.*—'In this precept, fidelity to the marriage-covenant is enjoined; as well as care to provide for the wife such conveniences, as may be necessary to her happiness, agreeably to the husband's station.' *Mackn. Scott.*

(19.) 'It is a great injury to a man to be an unkind and disobliging husband; it injures him in his inner man, [in his spiritual habits,]—in ways which he does not suspect; whereas, the smallest acts that indicate the submission of his own feelings to those of his wife in certain cases have a good influence upon him, by [fixing habits of feeling that] make him a better and happier man.'

Rev. NEB. ADAMS.

V. 20, 21. *Provoke not.*] A manifestation of the lusts of power and distinction, and the fighting propensity, so common in parents while punishing children, only excites fear, the lowest and most selfish principle of duty, arousing the hereditary propensities in the child cognate to those the parent sets in example before him. And so the punishment excites

V. 18—25. The apostle concludes with exhortations to relative duties, as in Ephesians. The epistles most taken up in displaying the glory of the divine grace, and magnifying the Lord Jesus, are most particular and distinct in pressing the duties of the several relations. We must never separate the privileges and duties of the Gospel.

I. He begins with the duties of wives and husbands, v. 18. Submission is the duty of wives; the same word is used to express our duty to magistrates, *Rom. 13:1*, and for subjection and reverence, *Eph. 5:24, 33*. See *1 Tim. 2:13, 14. 1 Cor. 11:3, 8, 9*. It is agreeable to the order of nature and the reason of things, as well as the appointment and will of God. But then it is submission, not to a rigorous lord, or absolute tyrant, who may do his will, and is without restraints; but to a husband, *her own husband*, who stands in the nearest relation, and is under strict engagements to proper duty too. And *this is fit in the Lord*: it is becoming the relation, and what they are bound in duty to do, as an instance of obedience to the authority and law of Christ.

On the other hand, *husbands must love their wives, and not be bitter against them*, v. 19. They must love them with tender and faithful affection, as *Christ loved the church*, and as *their own bodies*; and *even as Himself*, *Eph. 5:25, 28, 33*, with a love peculiar to the nearest relation and the greatest comfort and blessing of life. And they must not be *bitter against them*; or use them unkindly, with harsh language, or severe treatment; but be kind and obliging to them in all things, *1 Cor. 11:9, 11, 12*.

II. The duties of children and parents, v. 20. Children must be willing to do all their parents' lawful commands, and be at their direction and disposal; as those who have a natural right, and are fitter to direct them than themselves. The apostle, *Eph. 6:2*, requires them to honor, as well as obey, their parents; their obedience must proceed from esteem. This, also, is well-

pleasing to God, or acceptable to Him; for it is the *first commandment, with promise*, *Eph. 6:2*, an explicit promise; and dutiful children are the most likely to prosper in the world, and enjoy long life.

But parents must be tender, as well as children obedient, v. 21. 'Let not your authority be with rigor and severity, but with kindness and gentleness; lest you raise their passions, and discourage them in their duty, and, by holding the reins too strait, you make your children fly out with the greater fierceness.' The ill-temper and example of imprudent parents often prove a great hindrance to their children, and a stumbling-block in their way; see *Eph. 6:4*. And it is by the tenderness of parents, and dutifulness of children, that God ordinarily furnishes his church with a *seed to serve Him*, and propagates religion from age to age; [for, as is often remarked, most converts are from those who have had some early impressions of religion.]

III. Servants and masters, v. 22. Servants must do the duty of the relation in which they stand, and obey their masters' commands in *all things*, consistent with their duty to God, their heavenly Master: not only when their master's eye is on them, but when they are from under it. They must be both just and diligent; without selfish designs, or hypoerisy and disguise, as those who fear God, and stand in awe of Him. Observe, The fear of God, ruling in the heart, will make people good in every relation, *Gen. 20:11. Neh. 5:15*. 'And *whatsoever ye do, do it heartily*, v. 23, with diligence, not idly and slothfully;' or, 'Do it cheerfully, not discontented at the providence of God which put you in that relation.' *As to the Lord and not as to men.* Observe, We are really doing our duty to God, when we are faithful in our duty to men. And for servants' encouragement, let them know, that a good and faithful servant is never the further from heaven for his being a servant, v. 24. Serving your masters according to the command of Christ, you

divine 'knowledge and wisdom,' by a comprehensive acquaintance with 'the Word of Christ;' that, being familiarly versed in the Holy Scriptures, we may be 'thoroughly furnished unto every good work.' By these means, our ordinary employments and relative conduct will be sanctified, and made a spiritual sacrifice. Thus the disobedient and disobliging behavior of wives, and the bitter words and harsh conduct of husbands, will alike be precluded; children will learn obedience to their parents; parents will learn to exercise their authority with prudence and gentleness; not exasperating their children by violent anger or durable resentment, nor discouraging them, by disapproving of their endeavors to please; and servants will learn to be faithful, diligent, and conscientious in obeying their masters, from fear of God, and regard to his authority and all-seeing eye upon them. In short, true religion will teach every man to do the work of his station, from his soul, to the best of his ability, and with cheerful diligence, in obedient faith, as the servant of Christ, expecting from Him the gracious reward of the heavenly inheritance; and fearing, when tempted to do wrong, lest he should come short of that inheritance, or expose himself to the displeasure of God, who is 'no Respector of persons.' These principles, and these alone, will render men *universally* conscientious in all places and circumstances, from love to Christ, zeal for his glory, a desire of recommending the Gospel, and of possessing the assurance that they are interested in its blessings. Let us then earnestly pray for grace, to enable us 'to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior,' in these and in all other things; that the sincerity of our love may be evinced, beyond all reasonable ground of doubt, either in our own consciences, or in those of other men. Sc.

instead of correcting, selfish habits and lusts. Yet there should be in the parent a sufficient manifestation of feeling, to show his child he has caused disturbance and unhappiness to the parent; then his better nature is exercised, and thus the end of punishment, as to the individual, attained. *Ep. (21) Lest they be discouraged.*] When parents are continually finding fault with their children, and confounding the distinction between wilful offences, obstinate disobedience, or immoral conduct, and the heedlessness or inadvertencies of youth; and when they sharply reprove even the defects of their endeavors to obey, without commending what is right; children imbibe the notion, that it is impossible to please their parents, and so discouragement renders them careless. They then count their parents harsh and unfriendly: they shun their company, and prefer the society of others; and in consequence are exposed to numberless and powerful temptations.

V. 22—25. (22) *Singleness, &c.*] He who simply aims to please one master, will serve him with an open, *liberal*, and *free* heart.—Thus the poor slave, who singly aimed to please his gracious Lord and Savior, in obeying even the unreasonable commands of a harsh and severe master, would do it cheerfully and willingly, to the best of his ability, as singly aiming to honor and obey Christ, and adorn his Gospel: and he would never want a powerful motive to faithful obedience, even to an idolatrous, iniquitous, and cruel master; as 'his Master in heaven' abundant-



## CHAP. IV.

1 He exhorteth them to be fervent in prayer, 5 to walk wisely toward them that are not yet come to the true knowledge of Christ. 10 He saluteb them, and wisbeth them all prosperity.

**MASTERS,** <sup>a</sup> give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

2 Continue <sup>b</sup> in prayer, and watch <sup>c</sup> in the same with thanksgiving;

3 Withal praying also for us, that God would open <sup>d</sup> unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

4 That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

5 Walk in wisdom <sup>e</sup> toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

6 Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned <sup>f</sup> with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

## [Practical Observations.]

a Ep. 6:9, &c. d 2 Th. 3:1. Ep. 5:15, 16.  
b Lu. 13:1. e Ps. 90:12. f Ma. 9:50.  
c Ma. 13:33.

serve Christ, and will have a glorious reward at last. But, on the other hand, *He who doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, v. 25.* There is a righteous God, who, if servants wrong their masters, will reckon with them for it, though they may conceal it from their notice; and so of masters, if they wrong their servants. The righteous Judge of the earth will be impartial, and carry it with an equal hand toward master and servant; the one and the other will stand on a level at his tribunal.

It is probable the apostle has a particular respect, in all these instances of duty, to the case mentioned, 1 Cor. 7. of relations of a different religion, as a Christian and heathen, a Jewish convert and uncircumcised Gentile; where there was room to doubt, whether they were obliged to the proper duties of their several relations to such persons. And if it hold in such cases, it is much stronger on Christians, one to-

**PRACT. OBS.** V. 1—6. There 'is no respect of persons' with God; and his ministers must act with similar impartiality, and instruct and exhort masters as well as servants, the rich as well as the poor, and rulers as well as their subjects, when opportunity is given them, in the duties of their several stations. . . .—None of these duties can be performed aright, except we 'persevere in prayer,' and watch unto it with thanksgiving.—Those who love the Gospel should always remember faithful ministers in their prayers, beseeching the Lord to assist and prosper all their labors, and to enable them, with suitable plainness and boldness, to declare 'the mystery of Christ;' (*Notes, 2 Cor. 3:12—16. 4:1—4.*) and they who are exposed to peculiar dangers or sufferings, in

ly deserved it at his hands. (24) *Serve the Lord Christ.* 'We are (saith Schlichtingius, a Socinian) to serve Christ as our heavenly Lord, which, saith He, comprehends faith in Him, obedience to Him, and worship and adoration of Him.' *Whitby.*—(25) *He that doeth wrong, &c.* The misconduct of the servant would not excuse the cruelty and injustice of the master; and the idolatry, wickedness, or severity of the master would not exempt the slothful, dishonest, or disobedient servant from punishment. SCOTT.

**NOTES.** CHAP. IV. V. 1. 3:22—25. The obligation here of masters toward their servants, implies the duty of care for them in sickness, provision in old age, and proportionable rewards for extraordinary fidelity and exertions. ID.

(1.) *Give.* 'Yield in turn. Do as you would be done by.' The phrase seems to suggest all that was necessary; and it required no Oedipus to see why Paul should be brief and delicate on this head, considering that slaves formed so very considerable a part of the population, in some places far exceeding the free persons.' *Bl.*—*Just and equal.* To their fearful responsibility, as in subjection to God, and to their conscience, as awakened and enlightened by this and similar passages of his Word, those who sustain the relation of master to slaves, must ultimately be left. But how, in view of the divine requirements, can any man or body of men, acknowledging Christian obligation, systematically withhold the SS. from the slave? The Lord show them the path of duty, and enable them to walk in it! ED.

V. 2—4. In order to the suitable performance of all the before-mentioned duties, the apostle exhorted the Colossians to *persist* steadily in prayer. SCOTT.

(3, 4.) *That God would open, &c. . . as I ought.* 'Give him a fur-

wards another, and where both are of the same religion. And how happy would the Gospel make the world, if it everywhere prevailed; and how much would it influence every state of things, and every relation of life!

CHAP. IV. V. 1. The apostle proceeds with the duty of masters to their servants, which might have been joined to the foregoing ch. and is a part of that discourse.

1. Justice is required of them, v. 1. not only strict justice, but equity and kindness. Be faithful to your promises to them, and perform your agreements; not defrauding them of their dues, or *keeping back by fraud the hire of the laborers, Ja. 5:4.* Require no more than they can perform. Provide for them what is fit, and allow them such liberties as may enable them the better for cheerful service, and make it the easier to them.

2. A good reason for this regard; '*Knowing ye also have a Master in heaven.* Deal with your servants as you expect God should deal with you; and as those who believe you must give an account. Ye are both servants of the same Lord, in the different relations in which you stand, and are equally accountable to Him at last. *Knowing that your Master, also, is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with Him,*' Eph. 6:9.

V. 2—4. If this be considered as connected with the foregoing v. then we may observe, that it is part of the duty of masters to their servants, to pray with them, and daily, or to *continue in prayer*; be concerned for their souls as well as their bodies; 'as parts of your charge, and under your influence.' And this is the duty of every one; to *continue in prayer.* Christians should seize all opportunities for prayer, choose the fittest seasons, and keep their minds lively in the duty. *With thanksgiving, or solemn acknowledgment of the mercies received.* Thanksgiving must have a part in every prayer.

*Withal praying also for us, v. 3.* People must ever pray particularly for their ministers, Eph. 6:19. 1 Thess. 5:25. Heb. 13:18. *That God would open to them a door of utterance*; either afford opportunity to preach the Gospel, 1 Cor. 16:9. or give ability and courage, to do it with freedom

the cause of the Gospel, should be especially remembered in the supplications of their brethren.—Great wisdom and circumspection are required in all our conduct, 'towards those that are without,' with whom we are often connected in relative life, and engaged in secular concerns. They will certainly watch and scrutinize our whole behavior, and sometimes artfully endeavor to persuade, entice, or provoke us to sin, that they may charge the blame on our religious principles; and they will make little or no allowance for our faults.—We ought then to 'redeem the time,' that we may employ it in seeking wisdom from the Word and Spirit of God, as well as in using it for the benefit of mankind. SCOTT.

ther and more favorable opportunity of preaching the Gospel, by *setting him at liberty.* That such is the sense, is clear from what follows, where he alludes to this liberty, in relation to what he felt to be his obligation, being an apostle of the Gentiles.' BLOOMF.

V. 5, 6. 'Wisdom toward them that were without,' might perhaps be intended to include a prudent caution, not to expose themselves needlessly to their persecutors, to which some expositors in a great measure restrict it. But the words contain a general rule of great extent and importance.—(6) *Salt.* The wit, smartness, or ingenuity, often accompanied with polluting or profane allusions, which was customary and admired among the Greeks, was called *Attic salt.* Probably, the apostle refers to this, but shows his readers a far more excellent way. SC.

(5.) 'Christ is an example of entering mixed society. But a feeble man must avoid danger. If one can go into society as Christ did, let him go: let him attend marriage-feasts and Pharisees' houses. Yet if a Christian falls in with a mere worldling, it must be like the meeting of two persons in rain,—they part hastily. To love such company, is an evil symptom.' CECIL.

(6.) *With grace, &c.* 'Salt was the emblem of wisdom and virtue. Its well known effects in preventing corruption from taking place, and in communicating a pleasing relish to almost every kind of animal and vegetable food, render the metaphorical use of salt, peculiarly significant and happy.' HEWLETT.—*Bl.* with other 'eminent moderns,' understands it, of the *mode* in which any conversation with the heathens should be maintained, and interprets it in 'a moral not religious sense,' of 'that prudence and discretion which regards place, time, and persons.' ED.—'Paley, here, notices a minute coincidence, which should not be passed over. Some names being mentioned as of the circumcision, or Jews,



7 All <sup>s</sup> my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, *who is* a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord :

8 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts ;

9 With <sup>h</sup> Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They shall make known unto you all things which *are done* here.

10 <sup>l</sup> Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and <sup>j</sup> Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas; (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him ;)

11 And Jesus, which is called Justus ; who are of the circumcision. These only *are my* fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.

12 Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always <sup>k</sup> laboring <sup>l</sup> fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand <sup>m</sup> perfect and <sup>n</sup> complete in all the will of God.

13 For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them *that are* in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

14 <sup>o</sup> Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.

15 Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the <sup>p</sup> church which is in his house.

16 And when <sup>q</sup> this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans ; and that ye likewise read the *epistle* from Laodicea.

g Ep. 6:21,22. k or, *striving*. o 2 Ti. 4:10,11.  
h Phil. 10. l Ja. 5:15. p Ro. 16:5.  
i Ac. 27:2. m Mat. 5:43. q 1 Co. 16:19.  
j Ac. 15:37. He. 6:1. q 1 Th. 5:27.  
2 Ti. 4:11. n or, *filled*.

V. 7—18. In the close of this epistle the apostle does several of his friends the honor to leave their names on record, with some

the others, it is inferred, were not so. Among the latter, is Luke, the penman of the Acts, and in Ac. 1:19. we find an observation apparently by the historian, who, speaking of the Heb. language, calls it "their proper tongue," an expression not likely to have been used by a Jew, but suitable to a Gentile writing of Jews.

V. 7, 8. (*M. R.—Note, Eph. 6:21—24.*) These vs. compared with the parallel passage in Ephesians, show that the two epistles were written about the same time, and sent by the same persons.—(7) *Minister.* *Diakonos.* 'A deacon of your church.' *Doddr.* In Eph. he paraphrases it, 'a minister and fellow-servant.' Tychicus was rather an assistant of the apostle, like Timothy and Titus. The word *diakonos* is used with great latitude, and the apostle uses it of himself. 1:23, 25. 1 Cor. 3:5. nay, of Christ his Lord. Rom. 15:3.

V. 9—14. Onesimus, of whom we read elsewhere, *Philem. 2—21.* had been formerly an inhabitant of Colosse. Aristarchus continued with Paul during his imprisonment, but it is not certain, whether this was voluntary, or whether he was confined with him for the sake of the Gospel; the latter, however is probable. Acts 19:23—31. 20:1—6. 27:1, 2. Probably, the Colossians had formerly received some injunction from the apostle, not to countenance Mark as a minister, but he now reversed it; for he and Aristarchus, with one called Jesus, (a common name among the Jews,) and surnamed 'Justus,' because of his integrity, were the only ministers 'of the circumcision,' who had cordially united with him in preaching the kingdom of God among the Gentiles, and who had been a comfort to him, by their animating converse, hearty counsel, and zealous concurrence or assistance, in all his designs. This is generally and justly urged, as absolutely conclusive against the traditions of the papists, that the apostle Peter was at this time bishop of Rome, where he resided 25 years! It also renders it highly probable, that Luke was not a Jew, or a circumcised proselyte. (*Pref. to Luke.*)—Epaphras, a Colossian, a pastor of the church, and probably its founder, sent his salutations to them. (*Note, 1:3—8.*) (11) *Comfort.* *Parægoria.* Here only. It implies animating and encouraging exhortation, such as delights and solaces the soul.—(12) *Laboring fervently.* *Agônizomenos.* 1:29.

(13.) 'Laodicea was situated near the Lycus; about 63 miles E. of

testimony of his respect, which will be spoken of wherever the Gospel comes, and last to the end of the world.

1. Tychicus, v. 7. By him this epistle was sent; and he gives them no account in writing of his present state, because Tychicus would do it by word of mouth more fully and particularly. He gives him the character of a *beloved brother, faithful minister, and a fellow-servant in the Lord.* Faithfulness in any one is truly lovely, and renders him worthy our affection and esteem; and it adds much to the beauty and strength of the gospel-ministry, when ministers are thus loving and condescending one to another, and by all just means support and advance one another's reputation.

2. Onesimus, v. 9. He was sent back from Rome with Tychicus, probably, with the epistle to Philemon, to introduce him again into his master's family. Observe, Though he was a poor servant, and had been a bad man, yet, being now a convert, Paul calls him a *faithful and beloved brother.* The meanest circumstances of life, and greatest wickedness of former life, make no difference in the spiritual relation among sincere Christians: they partake of the same privileges, and are entitled to the same regards. Perhaps this was sometime after he was converted, and sent back to Philemon; and by this time he had entered into the ministry, because Paul calls him a *brother.*

3. *Aristarchus, a fellow-prisoner.* They who join in services and sufferings, should be thereby engaged to one another in holy love, and endeared to one another. Paul had a particular affection for his fellow-servants and his fellow-prisoners.

4. *Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas.* This is supposed to be the same who wrote the gospel which bears his name. Paul is not only reconciled to him himself, Acts 15:38. but recommends him to the respect of the churches, and gives a great example of a truly Christian and forgiving spirit. If men have been guilty of a fault, it must not be always remembered against them. We must forget as well as forgive, Gal. 6:1.

5. Here is one called *Jesus*, which is the Greek name for the Hebrew *Joshua*, Heb. 4:8. *Who is called Justus.* Probably he changed it for the name of Justus, in honor to the name of the Redeemer. Or else Jesus was his Jewish name, for he was of the circumcision; and Justus his Roman or Latin name. Observe, what comfort the apostle had in the communion of saints and ministers. One is his *fellow-servant*, another his

*fellow-prisoner*, and all his *fellow-workers*, who were *working out* their own salvation, and endeavoring to promote the salvation of others. Good ministers take great comfort in those who are their fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God. Their friendship and converse together are a great refreshment under the sufferings and difficulties in their way.

6. *Epaphras, v. 12.* the same with *Epaphroditus.* He is *one of you*, one of your church; he *solves you*, or sends his service to you, and his best affections and wishes. *Always laboring fervently for you in prayers.* Epaphras had learned of Paul to be much in prayer for his friends. Observe, He *labored* in prayer, *fervently*, and *always* for them. They who would succeed in prayer, must take pains in prayer; and we must be earnest in prayer, not only for ourselves, but for others, also, Ja. 5:16. v. 17.

His prayer was, *That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God*; in the will of his precepts, by a universal obedience; and in the will of his providence, by a cheerful submission to it; and perfect and complete in both, by constancy and perseverance unto the end. The apostle was witness for Epaphras, that *he had a great zeal for them*; and his zeal extended to all about them; to *them who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.* He had a great concern for the Christian interest in the neighboring places, as well as among them.

7. *Luke* is another here mentioned, whom he calls *the beloved physician.* This is he who wrote the *gospel* and *Acts*, and was Paul's companion. Observe, He was both a physician and an evangelist. Skill in physic is a useful accomplishment in a minister, [a missionary peculiarly,] and may be improved to more extensive usefulness and greater esteem among Christians.

8. *Demas.* Whether this was written before the second epistle to Timothy, or after, is not certain, 2 Tim. 4:10. Some have thought it was written after; and then it is an evidence, that though Demas forsook Paul, yet he did not forsake Christ, or but for a time, and recovered himself again, and Paul forgave, and owned him as a brother. But others think, this epistle was written before the other; this in *anno 62*, that in *66*, and then it is an evidence how considerable a man Demas was, who yet afterward revolted.

9. *The brethren in Laodicea* are here mentioned, as living in the neighborhood of Colosse; and Paul sends *salutations* to them,

Ephesus; it is now called *Eski-hissar*, 'the old castle.' When visited by Chandler, all was silence and solitude; and a fox, first discovered by his ears peeping over a brow, was the only inhabitant. [Note, *pref. to Rev.*]—*Hieropolis*, now *Pambouk-Kalesi*, was situated, according to the Itinerary, 6 miles N. of Laodicea; and its ruins are now about a mile and a half in circumference. GREENFIELD.

V. 15, 16. Nymphas seems to have been an eminent Christian at Laodicea, whose well-ordered family might properly be called a Christian church, or a society by whom the Lord was stately worshipped. Mat. 13:15—13.—This direction [that about the letter] has given rise to various conjectures; but, probably, the apostle had written to the Laodiceans, though the epistle was not preserved.—'For all the epistles, which the apostles ever wrote, are not preserved, any more than all the words and actions of our blessed Lord.' *Doddr.*—Some think, that the epistle to the Ephesians was intended to be a kind of circular letter, and that, by private direction, a copy of it was sent to Laodicea, to be thence forwarded to Colosse. Indeed, that epistle contains so little peculiar to the church at Ephesus, and so much important instruction of general interest, that this opinion, though probably unfounded, is not destitute of plausibility. (*Pref. to Eph.*) SCOTT.

(16.) *Epistle from Laodicea.* 'Those who contend that Paul wrote to the Laodiceans, understand this of that epistle, to be received from them, which seems an unnatural construction. *J. Edwards*, therefore, suggests, that it was the epistle to Timothy to which the apostle refers, and which, by the superscription, appears to have been written from that city. This we consider as much the most easy and natural solution of the difficulty.' WILLIAMS.—'The question here is for the *epistle*. 1. There is a writing extant, called Paul's epistle to the Laodiceans, but it is an evident forgery. 2. Some suppose, an epistle which has been lost is referred to; but there is nothing to support this but conjecture; and had the apostle written expressly for the Laodiceans, he would in that have named Nymphas, who was a Laodicean, rather than when writing to the Colossians. 3. The best and most general explanation seems to be, that the epistle referred to was written partly, but not solely, for the use of the Laodiceans. This epistle, in all probability, is that to the Ephesians, for Laodicea was within the circuit of which Ephesus was



17 And say to 'Archippus, 'Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

18 The 'salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember "my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen.

¶ Written from Rome to the Colossians by Tychicus and Onesimus.

r Phil. 2. t 2 Th. 3:17. u He. 13:3,25.  
 ■ 1 Ti. 4:14.

and orders that this epistle should be read in the church of the Laodiceans, v. 16. Some think he sent another epistle at this time to Laodicea, and ordered them to send for that from Laodicea, and read it in their church; And that ye likewise read the epistle from La-

odicea. If so, that epistle is now lost, and did not belong to the canon; for all the epistles the apostles ever wrote, were not preserved, any more than all the words and actions of our blessed Lord, Jn. 21:25. But some think it was the epistle to the Ephesians [also], which is still extant.

10. *Nymphas* is mentioned, v. 15. as one who lived at Colosse, and had a church in his house; either a religious family, where the several parts of worship were daily performed; or some part of the congregation met there, when they had no public places of worship allowed, and they were forced to assemble in private houses for fear of their enemies, Jn. 20:19. Acts 28:23, 30. In the former sense it showed his exemplary piety; in the latter his zeal and public spirit.

11. *Archippus*, who was one of their min-

isters at Colosse, v. 17. Observe, They who have received the ministry, must fulfil it, and people may put their ministers in mind of their duty, and excite them to it; Say to *Archippus*, Take heed to the ministry; though, no doubt, with decency and respect, not from pride and conceit.

12. Paul himself, v. 18. He had a scribe to write all the rest of the epistle, but these words he wrote with his own hand; Remember my bonds; not 'I am a prisoner, and send me supply;' but, 'Remember I am in bonds as the apostle of the Gentiles, and let that confirm your faith in the Gospel of Christ;' it adds weight to his exhortation; I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy, Eph. 4:1. 'Grace be with you. The free favor of God, and all good, the blessed fruits and effects of it, be with you, and your portion.'

PRACT. OBS. V. 7—18. Christians should desire to know one another's state; and mutual visits, or friendly correspondence, among faithful ministers and fellow-servants of Christ, may help forward this 'communion of saints,' excite their prayers for each other, and conduce to the comfort of their hearts.—What amazing changes does divine grace make in men's characters! *Dishonest and worthless servants* thus become 'faithful and beloved brethren.' Often 'the first becomes last, and the last first,' in the visible church. Mat. 19:29, 30. 20:1—16, v. 16. Lu. 13:22—30, v. 30. our fears of some who have misbehaved are removed, and they become 'fellow-workers who are a comfort to us;' while our hopes of others are grievously disappointed. But 'the Lord knoweth them that are his;' and we should always 'labor fervently in

the metropolis. See T. H. Horne. Doddr. remarks, that this supposition may the rather be adopted, as the epistle to the Ephesians has nothing peculiarly referring to the state of that church, but much of common concern to all Christians, particularly Gentile converts. Bl. considers it to have been in some measure a circular epistle.'

HENRY, abr.

V. 17. Some suppose Archippus to have been the bishop of Colosse. —That he should have been then bishop of Colosse, and that Paul should not write one word, or send one salutation to him, but send to the people at Colosse to admonish him of his duty, is not very credible. *Whitby*.—'Archippus being old and infirm, . . . received this encouragement from the apostle, to strengthen him.' *Bengelius*. It is far more probable, that he had been newly appointed to the ministry, and showed some symptoms of timidity or negligence; the apostle therefore sent a message to him in particular, charging him to take heed to his sacred ministry; and to perform fully the several duties of it, with diligence, faithfulness, boldness, and zealous affection, for the edification of believers and the conversion of sinners, by sound doctrine, a holy example, fervent prayers, unwearied labors, and every mean in his power. For he had 'received it from the Lord,' being accountable to Him for his conduct in it; he was warranted to expect his assistance in his endeavors to act by his authority, and he was bound to seek his glory, in a

prayer,' for those connected with us, 'that they may stand perfect and complete in the whole will of God,' in this manner testifying our zeal for them, when unable to render them other help.—Ministers, especially when they first enter on their office, or when they seem wavering in it, should be seriously and affectionately exhorted, 'to take heed to their ministry, which they have received of the Lord, that they fulfil it.' Let such persons 'take heed to themselves and to their doctrine,' as those who serve the Lord Jesus; let them remember the counsel of Paul, his bonds for Christ, and his laborious, self-denying faithfulness even unto death; for in preaching his doctrine, imbibing his spirit, and copying his example, we may expect that the favor and blessing of God will be with our souls, and prosper all the labors of our hand. 1 Tim. 4:11—16. Sc.

decided preference to his own ease, security, interest, reputation, or accommodation. SCOTT.

CONCLUDING NOTE. Ch. 3:9. *Lie not.*] In *Davenant's* Exp. of Col. many things are argued against the church of Rome, with which was the leading controversy of his day. His editor, in carrying out those views, appends the following important note to the ch. on 3:9, 10. 'The doctrine of the church of Rome, concerning equivocations, mental reservations, and the lawfulness, or rather obligation, of concealing, with the most solemn oaths, what has been revealed under the seal of confession, has, perhaps, some affinity with the doctrine of the Priscillianists, which overspread and disturbed Europe in the 5th cent.—a sect which inculcated on their proselytes the dreadful maxim, "Swear, forswear, but never betray a secret." The defence set up by the Romish divines for such a notion, is, "That what is only known under the seal of confession, is not known to a man, but to God, represented by a man, i. e. to the priest, or confessor; and, therefore, the priest may, with a safe conscience, affirm, even upon oath, that he knows not what he thus knows. It is by recurring to this doctrine, that P. Daniel Bartoli, in his Hist. of Engl., or rather of the *Jesuits* in Engl., endeavors to justify the conduct of the Jesuit Garnet, in not discovering the gunpowder plot, to which he supposes him to have been privy. But as it was disclosed to him in confession, he would have sinned grievously by discovering it, though by such a discovery he might have saved a whole nation from destruction. So that, violating under such a seal, is a far greater evil, than the loss of so many lives,—than the utter ruin of an entire nation;"—a doctrine evidently repugnant to the dictates, both of reason and humanity, horrible in its own nature, and awfully dangerous in its consequences wherever it is held. See Bower's Hist. of the Popes, Vol. I. p. 150.' ALLPORT'S DAV. on Colossians.

(Note on Christian Union.—Concluded from p. 422.)

'Nor is the principle of sect less unfriendly to the spread of the Gospel in heathen lands. By often stationing on the same ground, at home, more men than are necessary, or can be supported, laborers are improperly withdrawn from the destitute portions of the field, which is "the world;" conflicting interests unavoidably arise among the ministers and churches thus crowded together: as all cannot long continue, a struggle for existence is carried on, more or less openly, and with different degrees of violence, until the failure of one or more drives them from the field, and makes room for others. Nor is this conflict to be attributed so much to the want of piety in the parties, as to that actual conflict of interests which unavoidably results from the influence of sects. But certainly every true Christian must deplore this state of things, and it is the writer's deliberate conviction, that one of the many bitter ingredients in the cup of ministerial sorrow, in many portions of our land, is this unholy and unhappy strife among brothers. In short, it is a solemn and mournful truth, that sectarianism, the principle of sect, in a great measure changes the direction in which the energies of the church are applied, transfers the seat of war from pagan to Christian lands, from the territory of Christ's enemies into the very family of his friends! In the beginning, the church of the Redeemer, at peace, at home, directed all her surplus energies against the world around her, and the world of Jews and Gentiles in foreign lands. The war was waged, not by one portion of Christ's family against another, but emphatically and distinctly by the church against the world; such was the almighty force of the spiritual artillery wielded in this holy war, that, in about 300 years, the little band, of fishermen and tentmakers, fought their way to the utmost bounds of the Roman empire, [and perhaps the world?] and the banner of King Jesus, first unfurled in the valleys of Judea, was waving in triumph over the palace of the Cæsars. But who can deny, that a large portion of the energies of Christian sects, is now expended in contending with each other, in building up walls of partition, in fortifying and defending those peculiar views by which they are kept asunder? The war is no longer a foreign, it is an intestine one. How large a portion of the periodical literature of the day, is occupied in these family feuds, and consists of mere "doubtful disputations?" How large a portion of ministerial talent is placed in requisition to sustain this conflict? How many precious hours of time are thus applied? If all the time, and talent, and effort, spent by the orthodox Protestant churches, in disputing with one another, about the points of their differ-

ence, since the blessed Reformation, had been devoted to the projects of benevolent enterprise for the unconverted, heathen world, who can calculate the progress that might have been made in evangelizing the Gentile nations? Let every true disciple of the Savior, inquire, why do 600 millions of our fellow-men languish in the shadows of death, 1800 years after the blessed Gospel has been entrusted to Christian hands for them? [Note, Lu. 24:36—48.] Four and fifty times has the entire population of the globe been swept into eternity, since the Savior commissioned his disciples to publish the glad tidings to every creature. Who that has witnessed the prompt, and overwhelming blessing of God, on the efforts of the little band of Christians in Europe and America, during the last 30 years; who that has seen a nation new-created almost in a day, in the isles of the Pacific, and witnessed the standard of the cross erected in Africa, in Greece, in Turkey, in Hindoostan, in Ceylon, in China, and many other places; and the glorious Gospel of the Son of God, translated into about 150 languages; who that reflects on the millions of Bibles, and the tens of millions of tracts, which the united bands of liberal-minded Christians have sent forth, can doubt, that if the Christian church had not become secularized by the unhappy union with the civil government, under Constantine, in the 4th century, the world had been long ago evangelized? Or, if the Protestant church had not been split into so many parts by adopting the new, and we must believe unauthorized and pernicious doctrine, that they had a right to adopt for themselves, and require of others as terms of communion, not only the fundamental doctrines which were required in the earlier centuries, and were supposed sufficient for hundreds of years after the apostolic age, but also as many additional and disputed points as they pleased, thus dividing the body of Christ, and creating internal dissensions; who that is acquainted with her history, can doubt, that greater, far greater, inroads would have been made into the dominions of the papal beast, and the glorious Gospel of the Son of God, in the three centuries since the Reformation, have been carried to the ends of the earth?

'Such then being the mournful consequences of that disunion, against which the Savior and his apostles so urgently admonished their followers, we feel, with double force, that the church has been guilty of suicidal error, and that it is the solemn duty of every friend of Jesus, sincerely to inquire, Lord what wouldst Thou have me to do, to heal the wounds of thy dismembered body?' Rev. Prof. SCHMUCKER, in *Bib. Repos.*, Jan., 1833. See, further, a plan of Christian Union, detailed, &c., in the Jan. and April Nos. of the *Bib. Repos.* Ep.



AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
FIRST EPISTLE OF  
PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

*(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. D. Mayo.)*

THESSALONICA, formerly the metropolis of Macedonia, is now [under the Turks, and] called *Salonica*, and is the best peopled, and one of the best towns for commerce, in the Levant. Paul, being diverted from his design of going into the provinces of Asia, properly so called, and directed, after an extraordinary manner, to preach the Gospel in Macedonia, Acts 16:9, 10. in obedience to the call of God, went from Tarsus to Samothracia, thence to Neapolis, and thence to Philippi, where he had good success in his ministry; but met with hard usage, being cast into prison with Silas, his companion in travel and labor; from whence, being wonderfully delivered, they comforted the brethren there, and departed. Passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where the apostle planted a church, that consisted of some believing Jews, and many converted Gentiles, Acts 17:1—4. But a tumult being raised in the city by the unbelieving Jews, and the lewd and baser sort of inhabitants; Paul and Silas, for safety, were sent away by night to Berea: and afterwards Paul was conducted to Athens, leaving Silas and Timotheus behind, but sent them directions to come to him with all speed.

When they were come, Timotheus was sent to Thessalonica, to inquire after their welfare, and to establish them in the faith, 1 Thess. 3:2. who returned to Paul at Athens, and was sent again, with Silas, to visit the churches in Macedonia. So that Paul, being left at Athens alone, 1 Thess. 3:1. departed thence to Corinth, where he continued a year and a half; in which time Silas and Timotheus returned to him from Macedonia, Acts 18:5. and then he wrote this epistle to the church of Christ at Thessalonica; which, though placed after Paul's other epistles, is supposed to be *first* in time of them all, and to have been written about A. D. 51. The main scope is, to express the apostle's thankfulness for his good success in preaching among them, establish them in the faith, and persuade them to a holy conversation. [See the 'Supplement.'] HENRY.

In the notes on the concise narrative of the apostle's labors at Thessalonica, it has been shown to be at least highly probable, that he continued there a considerable time, preaching to the Gentiles, beyond the 'three Sabbath days,' on which he 'reasoned with the Jews in the synagogues;' and that he was peculiarly successful. (*Notes, Acts 17:1—9.*) He was, however, at length constrained, by the persecution of the zealots for the Mosaic law, and the zealots for idolatry, who had formed a most unnatural coalition against him, to leave the newly planted church under heavy trials, and destitute of many advantages; for though it seems clear, that pastors had been appointed over them, yet the pastors themselves must have been new and inexperienced converts. (*Note, 5:12—15.*) The apostle was, on this account, peculiarly solicitous about them; and Timothy having come to him at Athens, according to his appointment, he chose to be left alone in that city, that he might send this his faithful coadjutor to Thessalonica, (*Notes, 3:1—10. Acts 17:10—15. 18:1—6.*) But Timothy, returning to him at Corinth, brought him so good an account of them, that he was filled by it with joy and gratitude. He, indeed, exceedingly longed to visit them; but, having been repeatedly disappointed in his plans for that purpose, he at length wrote this epistle, which breathes a peculiar spirit of paternal love and affection, and shows, that he considered the Christians at Thessalonica, as at least equal, in faith and holiness, to those of any church to which he wrote.—It is clear from these particulars, that this epistle was written from Corinth, and not from Athens, according to the spurious postscript, but probably soon after the apostle arrived at Corinth. This is supposed, by some expositors, to have been as early as A. D. 51; [as above;] by others, A. D. 54; but, for reasons before given, a rather later date is here assigned to it. (*Note, Acts 15:1—6. Pref. 1 Cor.—Note, Gal. 2:1—5.*) It is, however, generally agreed, that it was written before any other of the apostolical epistles: and some think, probably without sufficient reason, before any other part of the New Testament.

As it was the apostle's design, to confirm the Thessalonians in the faith, and animate them to a courageous profession of the Gospel, and the practice of all the duties of Christianity, notwithstanding their persecutions and trials, he mentions, with high approbation, the manner in which they had received the Gospel from him; which led him to speak of his ministry and conduct among them, in a way peculiarly instructive to the ministers of the Gospel, in every age and place.—'With much address he improves the influence his zeal and fidelity in their service gave him, to inculcate on them the precepts of the Gospel, and persuade them to act agreeably to their sacred character. This grand point he always kept in view, to which everything else was made subservient. Nothing appears, in any part of his writings, like a design to establish his own reputation, or to use his ascendancy over Christian friends, to answer any secular purposes of his own. On the contrary, in this and in his other epistles, he discovers a most generous, disinterested regard for their welfare, expressly disclaiming all authority over their consciences, and appealing to them, that he had chosen to maintain himself by the labor of his own hands, rather than prove burdensome to the churches, or give the least color of suspicion, that, under zeal for the Gospel, and concern for their improvement, he was carrying on any private, sinister view.—The discovery of so excellent a temper, must carry with it a strong, presumptive argument in favor of the doctrines he taught. . . . And, indeed, whoever reads Paul's epistles attentively, and enters into their spirit, will discern such intrinsic characters of their genuineness, and the divine authority of the doctrines they contain, as will, perhaps, produce in him a stronger conviction, than all external evidence.' *Doddr.* These remarks are well grounded and important; but to suppose, with Dr. Macknight, that the apostle's main object was, to prove the divine authority of Christianity, by regular arguments against the several objections, which the heathen philosophers are supposed to have advanced against him, seems foreign to the nature of the epistle; and also to be grounded on a mistake, that the philosophers deigned, at so early a period, to enter into a regular disputation with the Christians, when, in fact, they derided them as enthusiasts, and their doctrine as 'foolishness.'—The apostle, in writing this first epistle, found very much to commend, which he does unreservedly, and scarcely anything to blame; though he saw it needful to intermix cautions and warnings with his exhortations.—The exact, though manifestly undesigned, coincidence of this epistle with the history contained in the Acts of the Apostles, which it tends to elucidate and confirm, is worthy of special notice.\*—It appears, that afterwards the apostle visited Thessalonica; (*Note, Acts 20:1—6.*) but nothing further is found in Scripture concerning this flourishing church, except the second epistle which the apostle wrote to it.—'Our epistle concludes with a direction, that it should be publicly read in the church to which it was addressed. . . . The existence of this clause . . . is an evidence of its authenticity; because, to produce a letter, purporting to have been publicly read in the church at Thessalonica, when no such letter had been read or heard of in that church, would be to produce an imposture destructive of itself. . . . Either the epistle was publicly read in the church of Thessalonica, during Paul's lifetime, or it was not. If it was, no publication could be more authentic, no species of notoriety more unquestionable, no method of preserving the integrity of the copy more secure. . . . If it was not, the clause . . . would remain a standing condemnation of the forgery, and, one would suppose, an invincible impediment to its success.' *Paley.*—It may also be added, that the circumstance of this injunction being given, in the first epistle which the apostle wrote, implied a strong and avowed claim to the character of an inspired writer, as, in fact, it placed his writings on the same ground with those of Moses and the ancient prophets. SCOTT.

\* *Paley* remarks, that the accordance between this epistle and the history in the Acts of the Apostles, is circumstantial and complete in many points. Thus, the sufferings of the apostle and his companions at Philippi, Ac. 16. are mentioned, ch. 2:2. The tumult at Thessalonica, Ac. 17:5. see ch. 3:4. Paul, Silas, and Timothy were together at Thessalonica, Ac. 18:5. see ch. 2:17. He also refers to facts noticed in the

epistle, but not mentioned in the Acts, as a visit Paul had intended to pay them, ch. 2:18. 3:10, 11. and observes, that a person conscious of his own purpose, may probably mention it in a letter, though his historian is likely to be silent, if not ignorant respecting it. Thus it is evident, the materials of neither of these writings were derived from the other.' HENRY, *abr.*



CHAP. I.

<sup>1</sup> The Thessalonians are given to understand both how mindful of them St. Paul was at all times in thanksgiving, and prayer: <sup>5</sup> and also how well he was persuaded of the truth and sincerity of their faith, and conversion to God.

PAUL, and <sup>a</sup> Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the <sup>b</sup> Thessalonians, which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace <sup>c</sup> be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>2</sup> We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

<sup>3</sup> Remembering without ceasing your work <sup>d</sup> of faith, and labor <sup>e</sup> of love, and patience <sup>f</sup> of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

<sup>4</sup> Knowing, brethren <sup>g</sup> beloved, your election of God.

<sup>5</sup> For our gospel came <sup>h</sup> not unto you in word only, but also in <sup>i</sup> power, and in the <sup>j</sup> Holy Ghost, and in much <sup>k</sup> assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

<sup>6</sup> And ye became <sup>l</sup> followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy <sup>m</sup> of the Holy Ghost;

a 1 Pe. 5:12.	f Ro. 12:12.	i 1 Co. 2:4.
b Ac. 17:1, &c.	g or, beloved of	j 2 Co. 6:6.
c Ep. 1:2.	God, your elec-	k He. 2:3.
d Ju. 6:29.	tion.	l 2 Co. 8:5.
e 2 Th. 1:11.	h Is. 55:11.	m Ac. 13:52.
e He. 6:10.	Ma. 16:20.	

CHAP. I. V. 1. Paul, the inspired writer of this epistle, though he makes no mention here of his apostleship, which was not doubted by the Thessalonians, or opposed by any false apostles among them, yet, in his humility, joins Silvanus [or Silas] and Timotheus with himself, who were now come to him with an account of the prosperity of the churches in Macedonia.

The persons to whom he writes, are the church of the Thessalonians; the converted Jews and Gentiles in Thessalonica: said to be in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ; Gentiles turned to God from idols, and Jews among them believing Jesus to be the promised Messiah; all devoted and dedicated to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: to God as their chiefest Good and highest End: to Jesus Christ as their Lord, and Mediator between God and man.

Grace and peace, as in the salutations in the other epistles, are here well joined together; for the free grace and favor of God are the spring and fountain of all the peace and prosperity we do or can enjoy; and where there are gracious dispositions in us, we may hope for peaceful thoughts in our

own breasts: no good can be hoped for by sinners, but from God in Christ, and the best good may be expected from God, as our Father, for the sake of Christ.

V. 2—5. I. The apostle begins with thanksgiving to God. God is the Object of all religious worship, of prayer, and praise. And thanksgiving to God is a great duty, to be performed constantly: even when we do not actually give thanks to God by our words, we should have a grateful sense of his goodness on our minds; and not only be thankful for the favors we ourselves receive, but for benefits bestowed on others, our fellow-creatures and fellow-Christians. The apostle gave thanks for all.

II. He joined prayer with his praise or thanksgiving. So we should do, Phil. 4: 6. We may sometimes mention names; at least, we should have persons and circumstances in our minds; remembering them without ceasing.

Note, As there is much that we ought to be thankful for on the behalf of ourselves and our friends, so there is much occasion of constant prayer for further supplies of good.

III. He mentions the particulars for which he was so thankful to God; namely, 1. The saving benefits bestowed on them.

(1.) Their faith, and work of faith. This, v. 8. was very famous, and spread abroad, Jam. 2: 18.

(2.) Their love, and the labor of love. Faith works by love, love to God, and love to our neighbor.

(3.) Their hope, and the patience of hope. This grace is compared to the soldier's helmet, and sailor's anchor; and wherever there is a well-grounded hope of eternal life, that will appear by the exercise of patience; in a patient bearing of the calamities of the present time, and a patient waiting for the glory to be revealed.

The apostle not only mentions these three cardinal graces, faith, hope, and love, but also the Object and efficient Cause of them,—our Lord Jesus Christ. He notices the sincerity of them,—being in the sight of God, even our Father. The great motive to sincerity, is, the apprehension of God's eye as always upon us. Then is the work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope, sincere, when it is done as under the eye of God. He mentions the fountain whence these graces flowed,—God's electing love, v. 4. Some would understand, only the temporary separation of the Thessalonians from the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles in their conversion; but this was according to the eternal purpose of Him, who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will, Eph. 1: 11. Speaking of their election, he calls them, brethren beloved: for the original of the brotherhood between Christians, and the relation they stand in one to another, is, election. The election of the Thessalonians was known to the apostle, and might be to themselves, and that by the fruits thereof,—

their sincere faith, and hope, and love. Observe, All those who, in the fulness of time, are effectually called and sanctified, were from eternity elected and chosen to salvation. The election of God is of his own good pleasure and mere grace, not for the sake of any merit in them who are chosen; and it is to be known by the fruits thereof. Whenever we give thanks to God for his grace, either to us, or others, we should run up the streams to the fountain, and thank God for his electing love, by which we are made to differ.

2. Another ground or reason of the apostle's thanksgiving, is, the success of his ministry among them. He had the seal and evidence of his apostleship hereby, and great encouragement in his labors and sufferings.

(1.) The Gospel came to them not in word only, but in power; they not only heard the sound of it, but submitted to the power of it; it affected their hearts: a divine power went along with it, convincing their consciences and amending their lives.

(2.) It came in the Holy Ghost, that is, with the powerful energy of the divine Spirit. Note, Wherever the Gospel comes in power, it is to be attributed to the operation of the Holy Ghost; and unless the Spirit of God accompanies the Word of God, to render it effectual by his power, it will be to us but as a dead letter; and the letter killeth, the Spirit giveth life.

(3.) It came in much assurance. Thus did they entertain it by the power of the Holy Ghost. They were fully convinced of the truth of it, willing to leave all for Christ, and to venture their souls and everlasting condition on the verity of the gospel-revelation. Their faith was the evidence of things not seen; and the Thessalonians thus knew what manner of men the apostle and his fellow-laborers were among them, and what they did for their sake, and with what good success.

V. 6—10. In these words we have the evidence of the apostle's success among the Thessalonians.

I. They were careful to imitate the good examples of the apostle and ministers of Christ, v. 6. Herein they became also followers of the Lord, who is the perfect example we must strive to imitate; and we should be followers of others no further than they are followers of Christ, 1 Cor. 11: 1. Perhaps their trials and sufferings made the Word more precious, being dear-bought; and the examples of the apostles shined very bright under their afflictions; so that the Thessalonians embraced the Word cheerfully, and followed the example of the suffering apostle with joy; such solid, spiritual, lasting joy, as the Holy Ghost is the Author of, who, when our afflictions abound, makes our consolations much more abound.

II. Their zeal prevailed to that degree, that they were themselves examples to all about them, v. 7, 8. Their example was very effectual to make good impressions on

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1—4. Silas, or Silvanus, did not come to the apostle when driven from Thessalonica and Berea, till after his arrival at Corinth, nor did Timothy continue with him in that city, being speedily sent back to Thessalonica. 3:1—5. Acts 17:10—15. 18:1—5. so that the epistle could not be written from Athens. These graces and duties they attended to, as 'in the sight of God,' even their reconciled Father, and the apostle was satisfied, from what he had witnessed, that they were his 'brethren beloved,' and 'the elect of God' in Jesus Christ. This he did not speak as a matter of immediate revelation; but his favorable conclusion respecting them was drawn, by tracing back the effects of divine grace in their conversion, to the source of them in 'their election of God.' (Marg. Ref. n.—Notes, Phil. 1:3—8. 2 Pet. 1: 5—11.)—The purpose of God, in calling the Gentiles collectively, could not be known in this manner, and, indeed, some of the Thessalonians were Jewish converts. And in what sense a remnant of Thessalonians, (that is, a small proportion of the inhabitants of one city,) could prove the national election of the Macedonians, those who adopt this opinion would do well to inform us. Some explain the words to mean, election to external privileges, as Israel had been chosen. Rom. 9:6—23. but an external profession of Christianity was sufficient to prove this; whereas the apostle grounds his confidence, respecting the Thessalonians, on 'their work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope,' 'things which,' no doubt, 'accompany salvation.' (Notes, Rom. 8:28—31. 2 Thes. 2:13, 14. Heb. 6:9—12.)—He had once indeed had his fears of

them, but subsequent tidings from them had fully satisfied him. (3:5—7.) yet, if any individuals did not show the same 'active faith, laborious love, and patient hope,' as the rest did, they were exceptions also to the apostle's general confidence, respecting the professed Christians at Thessalonica.

(1.) The church, &c. which, &c.] 'The sense seems to be, "who are founded in and joined to Christ." See 1 Jn. 5:20.' BLOOMF.

(2, 3.) We, &c.] 'The plural throughout the epistle, is to be referred to Paul only: though Timothy and Silvanus are joined in the salutation.' Bloomfield, after KOPPE.—Work of faith, &c.] 'Plainly Hebrewisms for active faith, laborious love, and patient hope.' DODD.

(4, 5.) 'It is a most decided mark, whereby we know our election of God, when we cannot receive false doctrines, nor follow teachers un- sent of the Lord. The glorious, and discriminating truths of grace, the elect of God delight in. They know from their own experience, what manner of men they are who hold up Christ, as the one only ordinance of heaven; who inculcate among their people salvation in his blood and righteousness without works; determined to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.' HAWKER.

V. 5—8. In power, and in the Holy Ghost, &c.] This cannot relate to miracles exclusively; for numbers saw miracles, who notwithstanding continued unbelievers; but the new-creating power of the Holy Spirit, accompanying the Word of God, had produced such a full conviction of its nature and importance, and such an assurance of faith and hope, as



7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

8 For from you sounded <sup>n</sup> out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place <sup>o</sup> your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God <sup>p</sup> from idols, to serve the living and true God;

10 And to wait <sup>q</sup> for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath <sup>r</sup> to come.

## CHAP. II.

<sup>1</sup> In what manner the Gospel was brought and preached to the Thessalonians, and in what sort also they received it.  
<sup>18</sup> A reason is rendered, both why St. Paul was so long absent from them, and also why he was so desirous to see them.

FOR yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain :

2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at <sup>a</sup> Philippi, we were <sup>b</sup> bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much <sup>c</sup> contention.

3 For our exhortation *was* not of <sup>d</sup> deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile :

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust <sup>e</sup> with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

n Ro. 10:18.	q Phi. 3:20.	b Ac. 17:2,3.
o 2 Th. 1:4.	r Mat. 3:7.	c Jude 3.
p 1 Co. 12:2.	Ro. 5:9.	d 2 Pe. 1:16.
Ga. 4:3.	a Ac. 16:12, &c.	e 1 Ti. 1:11,12.

many others. They were *tupoi*, *stamps*, or instruments to make impression with.

Their influence reached even to all Macedonia, and further, in Achaia; the Philip- pians, and others who received the Gospel

PRACT. OBS. It excites cordial joy and fervent gratitude, in faithful ministers, when they witness 'the work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in the Lord Jesus,' of those among whom they have preached the Gospel. . . . But faith which works not obedience, professed love that declines self-denying labor, and hope which is separated from 'patient continuance in well-doing,' can never prove a man's 'election;' all other ways of proving it are vain and delusory, and this scriptural medium is not capable of being perverted.—Alas! even the Gospel, which the apostle preached, often 'comes in word only,' and thus men continue impenitent, and slaves to sin, or, at most, become only notional formalists and mere *professors* of the Gospel. This should excite all who preach, and all who love the Gospel, to 'pray without ceasing,' that it may everywhere, and at all times, be attended by the divine power of the Holy Spirit, producing, in the minds and hearts of men, that 'full assurance' of its truth and importance, which alone can prevail with them to break through all hindrances, and make all sacrifices, that they may follow Christ and be partakers of his salvation. (*Notes*, Rom. 1:13—16. 1 Cor. 1:25. 2:3—5. 2 Cor. 4:7. 10:1—6.) This is 'the work of God,' but He works by means; and when great numbers of careless, ignorant, and immoral persons, are turned from their idols and iniquities, their worldly pursuits and connexions, 'to serve the living

and true God,' to believe in and obey the Lord Jesus, to 'deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world,' and to 'wait for the Lord Jesus from heaven;' there needs little pains to spread the report, for it is a work of God which will be sure to be known, and rendered conspicuous by its own light. May He then send forth ministers into all parts of the world, attended by his power, and thus made abundantly successful, in the conversion of the nations to the worship of the living God, and the obedience of faith in his beloved Son!—But let us remember, 'that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.' Rom. 1:18—20. None but Jesus can deliver any man from this merited condemnation; all who believe in Him, with an obedient faith, are delivered from it, and on all others 'the wrath of God still abideth.' Let us then 'give diligence to make our calling and election sure,' and if we have obtained this assurance, let us remember the price our deliverance cost the great Redeemer, that humble love may constrain us devotedly to obey Him, and cheerfully to suffer for Him. But, if any are conscious that they have not experienced this deliverance, let them take warning, without delay, 'to flee from the wrath to come,' and to seek refuge in Christ and his salvation. Heb. 6:16—20.

before the Thessalonians, were edified by their example. The Word of the Lord, or its wonderful effects on the Thessalonians, was famous and well known, in the regions round about that city, and in every place; not strictly everywhere, but here and there, up and down in the world: so that, from the good success of the Gospel among them, many others were encouraged to entertain it, and to be willing, when called, to suffer for it.

The readiness of their faith was famed.

They embraced the Gospel as soon as it was preached to them; so that every body took notice what manner of entering in among them the apostles had; that there were no such delays as at Philippi, where it was a great while before much good was done.

The effects of their faith were noted. They quitted their idolatry, in which they had been educated, gave themselves up to serve the living and true God, and wait for his Son from heaven, v. 10. And this is one of the peculiarities of our holy religion, to wait for Christ's second coming, as those who believe He will come, and hope He will come to our joy. Believers under the Old Test. waited for the coming of the Messiah, and believers now wait for his second coming; He is yet to come. And there is good reason to believe He will come, because God has raised Him from the dead, which is a full assurance unto all men, that He will come to judgment, Acts 17:31. And there is good reason to hope and wait for his coming, because He has delivered us from the wrath to come; from that wrath which is yet to come on unbelievers; and which, when it is once come, will be yet to come, because it is everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, Mat. 25:41.

CHAP. II. V. 1—6. Here we have an account of Paul's manner of preaching, and his comfortable reflection on his entrance in among the Thessalonians. As he had the testimony of his own conscience witnessing to his integrity, so he could appeal to the Thessalonians how faithfully he, and Silas, and Timothy, his helpers in the work of the Lord, had discharged their office, v. 1. He here comforts himself either in the success of his ministry, that it was not fruitless or in vain, or, as others think, reflecting on the sincerity of his preaching, that it was

not vain and empty, or deceitful and treacherous. The subject-matter of his preaching was not vain, but sound, solid truth, such as was most likely to profit his hearers. A good example this is, to be imitated by all the ministers of the Gospel. Much less was his preaching vain or deceitful, 2 Cor. 4:2. He had no sinister or worldly design in his preaching; and he puts them in mind how it was,

I. With courage and resolution, v. 2. He had met with ill usage at Philippi, as they well knew; there he and Silas were put in the stocks; yet no sooner were they set at liberty than they went to Thessalonica, and preached the Gospel with as much boldness as ever, nay, with contention, with great agony: which denoted either the apostles' striving in their preaching, or their striving against the opposition they met with. This was Paul's comfort; he was neither daunted in his work, nor driven from it.

II. With great simplicity, and godly sincerity, v. 3. This, no doubt, was matter of the greatest comfort to the apostle,—his conscious sincerity; and was one reason of his success. The Gospel he preached was pure and holy, worthy of its holy Author, tending to discountenance all manner of impurity; and as the matter of his exhortation, so the manner of his speaking was without guile. He not only asserts his sincerity, but subjoins the reasons and evidences thereof. The reasons are contained, v. 4.

1. They were stewards, in trust with the Gospel, who must be called to an account, when they must be no longer stewards.

2. Their design was to please God, and not men. The Gospel is not accommodated to the fancies and lusts of men: but, on the contrary, is designed to mortify corrupt affections, and deliver from the power of fancy, that we may be brought under the power of faith, Gal. 1:10.

3. They acted under the consideration of God's omniscience, as in the sight of Him who tries our hearts.

The evidences of the apostle's sincerity follow; and they are these: He avoided,

(1.) Flattery, v. 5. He and his fellow-laborers were far from that. They did not flatter men in their sins; nor tell them, if they would be of his party, they might live as they listed.

had induced the Thessalonians, at all events, to embrace and profess the Gospel; even as a ship is carried, by a full tide and a fair wind, over every obstacle, into the haven. 'A metaphor taken from ships, when they are carried on under full sails.' Leigh.

(5—8.) 'For ages, the true method of promoting religion had been sadly misunderstood. And when Providence placed the church in America on its own resources, the general expectation was, that we should become a nation of infidels. And even now, thousands in the world imagine that religion cannot live and flourish, without the fostering care of civil government. America, therefore, owes it to the universal interests of the church, and to that method of promoting religion which must be everywhere adopted before religion can have universal sway, to be very holy, very zealous, very benevolent,—to undertake enterprises on a scale which measures the earth, and to demonstrate that they can be accomplished by the power of truth and love. The church, in this country, must not only sustain herself and purify the nation, but she must stretch out her arms, and make the whole world feel the strong embrace of her benevolence.'

Rev. Dr. Rice.

V. 9. 'I do not hesitate to say, having well considered the import of my words, that men are not so mean (I must use the word) to any cause, as Christians in general are to Christ's cause. They give more sparingly to it than to any other. Some Christians will give more to promote a political election, than to [serve the living God, by] helping on the conversion of the world.'

Rev. Dr. NEVINS.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1. In vain.] 'Many ancients interpret it "free of danger and fear;" but the sense is inapposite. Most moderns explain it "false, lying;" but this is harsh. If the connexion be traced it must be taken in the sense of unfruitful, to which I am more inclined.'

BLOOMF.

V. 3. Exhortation.] 'Here it must signify teaching, and comprehend the whole of the apostle's religious instruction. Ac. 13:15. 15:31. Deceit.] 'It may denote either imposture and seduction: as Eph. 4:14. 2 Thess. 2:11. 1 Jn. 4:6. 2 Pet. 3:17. or error, self-deceit, enthusiasm; as Rom. 1:27. Ja. 2:13.' So Bloomf., who reports Benson as adopting the former; but he himself, after Koppe, Mackn., Schl., Ros., and most commentators, adopts the latter.



5 For neither <sup>f</sup> at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God <sup>is</sup> witness:

6 Nor of men <sup>g</sup> sought we glory, neither of you, nor <sup>yet</sup> of others, when we might have <sup>h</sup> been <sup>i</sup> burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

8 So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have <sup>j</sup> imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our <sup>k</sup> labor and travail: for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved <sup>ourselves</sup> among you that believe:

11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father <sup>doth</sup> his children,

12 That ye would walk <sup>l</sup> worthy of God, who <sup>m</sup> hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

[Practical Observations.]

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received <sup>it</sup> not

f 2 Co. 2:17.      *ity.*      2 Th. 3:7,9.  
g Jn. 5:41-44.    i 2 Co. 12:13-15.    1 Ep. 4:1.  
Ga. 1:10          j Ro. 1:11.          m 1 Co. 1:9.  
h or, used author- k Ac. 20:34,35.

(2.) *Covetousness, v. 5.* His design was not to enrich himself by preaching the Gospel; so far from that, he did not condition with them even for bread. He was not like the false apostles, who, *through covetousness, with feigned words made merchandise* of the people, 2 Pet. 2:3.

(3.) *Ambition and vainglory, v. 6.* He expected neither people's purses nor their caps, neither to be enriched by them, nor caressed and adored by them, and *called Rabbi, ch. 5:26.* His ambition was to obtain *that honor which comes from God, John 5:41.*

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-12. Confidence in God, zeal for his glory, love to the souls of men, and conscious integrity, will support faithful ministers amidst manifold hardships and sufferings.—All ministers should be careful, that their preaching be far removed from fallacy, deceit, and a licentious tendency; and that their *motives* be equally pure from all artful designs of advancing, enriching, or indulging themselves, by means of their ministry. For such scandalous discoveries have been made, respecting priests of different religions, and even the more plausible and earnest of them; that men are very apt to suspect some fraud, or corrupt intention, lurking under a great appearance of zeal and devotion. It is in vain to oppose *arguments* to this deep-rooted suspicion, except they are corroborated by *manifest facts*.—We should by no means 'seek to please men;' but simply study to 'approve ourselves to God, who trieth the hearts.' Even the approbation of pious men may be fallacious, and may interfere with our simplicity, in aiming to please the Lord by faithfulness to our trust. A man may, indeed, by harshness and severity, in his manner of stating the truth, prevent his own usefulness; but selfish principles will far more generally lead men to temporize, to palliate, and to 'speak smooth things.' This strain tends to bring the hearers into a *good humor* with themselves, and that makes them friend-

V. 5-8. (5) *Flattering.* 'Because men flatter for the sake of the belly.' Leigh. *Her children.* 'Her own children,' ns distinguishing the nursing mother, from the hired nurse of another woman's child.—(8) *Being affectionately desirous, . . . we were willing, &c.* Here only. 'Longing after you, we took pleasure.' The clause can hardly be done justice to in a translation; and the original throughout is peculiarly tender and pathetic.

(6.) *Burdensome.* 'The apostle evidently refers to his right of being maintained at their charge. Comp. v. 9. 2 Cor. 11:9. 1 Tim. 5:18. 1 Cor. 9. throughout. But he was acting now on the same maxims at [442].'

He tells them, they might have used greater authority as apostles, and expected greater esteem, and demanded maintenance, which is meant by the phrase of *being burdensome*; because, perhaps, some would have thought this too great a burden for them to bear.

V. 7-12. He here reminds them of the manner of their conversation among them. He and his fellow-laborers were,

I. *Gentle* in their behavior, v. 7. He showed great mildness and tenderness, who might have acted with the authority of an apostle of Christ. Though he abhorred flattery, yet he was most condescending to all men. He showed the kindness and care of a nurse that cherishes her children. This is the way to win people, rather than to rule with rigor. The Word of God is indeed powerful; and as it comes often with awful authority on the minds of men, as it always has enough in it to convince every impartial judgment, so it comes with the more pleasing power, when the ministers of the Gospel recommend themselves to the affections of the people. And as a nursing mother bears with frowardness in a child, and condescends to mean offices for its good, and cherishes it in her bosom; so in like manner should the ministers of Christ behave toward their people, 2 Tim. 2:24. This gentleness and goodness the apostle expressed several ways.

1. By the most affectionate desire of their welfare, v. 8. He sought *them*, not *theirs*; their spiritual and eternal welfare was what he was earnestly desirous of.

2. By great readiness to do them good, v. 8. See here the manner of Paul's preaching. He spared no pains, was willing to run hazards, and venture his soul, or life, willing to spend and be spent; and as they who give bread to the hungry from a charitable principle, are said to impart their souls in what they give, Isa. 58:10. so did the apostles in giving forth the bread of life; so dear were these Thessalonians in particular to this apostle, and so great was his love to them.

3. By *bodily labor* to prevent their charge, v. 9. He denied himself the liberty he had of *taking wages from the churches*. To the labor of the ministry he added that of *his calling*, as a tentmaker, that he might get his own bread; not that he spent the *whole night and day* in bodily labor; but he was willing to forego his rest *in the night*, that he might have opportunity to do good to the souls of men in the *daytime*: a good example for ministers of the Gospel, to be industrious for the salvation of men's souls; though it will not follow that they are al-

ways obliged to preach *freely*: no general rule is to be drawn from this, that ministers may at *no time* work with their hands, for supply of their outward necessities, or that they ought *always* so to do.

4. By the holiness of their conversation, concerning which, he appeals not only to them, but to God also, v. 10. They were observers of their outward conversation in public before men, and God was witness not only of their behavior in secret, but of the inward principles from whence they acted. Herein, said this apostle, *do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men, Acts 24:16.*

II. He mentions their faithful discharge of the work and office of the ministry, v. 11, 12. Concerning this also, he could appeal to them as witnesses. Paul exhorted the Thessalonians, not only informing them in their duty, but *exciting* and quickening them to the performance of it, by proper motives and arguments. He comforted them, also, endeavoring to cheer and support their spirits, under difficulties and discouragements they might meet with. And this he did not only *publicly*, but *privately* also, and from house to house, Acts 20:20. and charged every one of them by personal addresses: this, some think, is intended by the similitude of a father's charging his children. As my beloved sons, I warn you, 1 Cor. 4:14.

The manner of this apostle's exhortation ought to be regarded by ministers in particular for their imitation; and the matter of it is greatly to be regarded by them and all others; namely, that they would walk worthy of God, who hath called them to his kingdom and glory, v. 12. Observe, 1. Our great gospel-privilege,—God has called us to his kingdom and glory. 2. Our great gospel-duty,—that we walk worthy of God; that the temper of our minds, and tenor of our lives, be answerable to this call, and suitable to this privilege.

V. 13-16. Here observe,

I. The apostle mentions the success of his ministry among these Thessalonians, v. 13. expressed,

1. By the manner of their receiving the Word of God, v. 13. Where, note, The Gospel is preached by men like ourselves, yet it is, in truth, the *Word of God*; from the apostles, by divine inspiration; from others, as in the Scriptures: and they are greatly to blame, who give out their own fancies or injunctions for the Word of God: this is the vilest way of imposing on people, and to deal unfaithfully. They are also to blame, who, in hearing the Word, look no further than to the ministry of men, or the

ly to the preacher; which may be greatly conducive to his popularity and secular advantage, and for a time even add to his reputation. It is therefore a very great thing indeed, for a minister to be able on good grounds to say, 'Neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, or a cloak of covetousness, God is witness; nor of men sought we glory;' and to be able to appeal, both to the Lord and to men, that he has constantly receded even from his equitable claims, out of love to the souls of his hearers, and lest he should be 'burdensome to them.' But, when this decided faithfulness, this unambitious, disinterested and self-denying 'plainness of speech,' on all occasions, unites with equal tenderness and affection; so that the same persons can say, 'We were gentle among you, even as a nursing mother cherisheth her own children: so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us;' then the servants of Christ come as near to the mind of their Lord, as can be conceived attainable by mortal men. There are, however, but few, if any, who are not warped, either one way or the other, by constitution, habit, or circumstances: it behooves us therefore to search out our spirits, to be open to conviction, and to guard against our own peculiar weakness. SCOTT.

Corinth, whence he wrote this epistle, by which he had governed himself at Thessalonica. See Ac. 18:3.

DODDR.

V. 9, 10. 'Paley shows, that although Ac. 17. only mentions Paul's resort to the synagogue at Thessalonica on three Sabbath-days, yet there is nothing which shows that he did not remain and exercise his ministry there, among the Gentiles, for a longer period, as the passage implies.'

HENRY, Abr.

V. 15-16. The apostle and his friends thanked God continually, because the Christians at Thessalonica, when they received 'the Word of God, which they had heard from them, did not receive it as the word of



as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

14 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews;

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men;

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway; for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

20 For ye are our glory and joy.

CHAP. III.

I Paul testifieth his great love to the Thessalonians, partly by sending Timothy unto them to strengthen and comfort them; partly by rejoicing in their well doing; 10 and partly by praying for them, and desiring a safe coming unto them.

WHEREFORE when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

n Mat. 10:40.	out,	u or, glorying.
2 Pe. 3:2.	r Ac. 17:5,13.	v 2 Co. 1:14.
o Ja 1:18.	18:12.	Phi. 4:1.
1 Pe 1:23.	■ Ge. 15:16.	w Jude 24.
p Ac. 7:52.	Mat. 23:32.	x Re. 1:7.
q or, chased us	t Re. 22:11.	

words of men; who are only, or chiefly, pleased with the elegance of the style, or the beauty of the composition, or the voice and manner in which the Word is preached,

PRACT. OBS. V. 13—20. It is incumbent on us, to 'give thanks to God without ceasing,' in behalf of those who receive the Gospel from us, not as the opinion of fallible men, but as the 'sure testimony of the Lord,' which maketh wise the simple. This it most certainly is, as far as any man preaches according to the Scriptures; however unlearned, obscure, or frail he may be. When thus received with reverent faith and obedient attention, it 'works effectually' an entire change in the judgment, disposition, and characters of men: they become not so much followers of this or the other leader of a sect, as imitators of the primitive Christians, and so of Christ Himself. But they who would forbid us thus to preach to 'the chief of sinners,' and to those who are dead in sin, and to send or carry the Gospel, and the Word of God to the heathen, 'that

they may be saved,' do not in this 'please God, and they are contrary to all men.' The object and motives of those in general, who would hinder the publishing of the Gospel, in any part of the world, are manifest: they idolize worldly interests, care little for the temporal good, and nothing for the souls of men, and either hate or slight the genuine and unadulterated Word of God. But it is grievous to think, that some apparently pious men, misled by an undue attachment to system, should in any way or degree, countenance the conduct of those, who in every age are actuated by the same worldly, proud, bigoted, and selfish spirit, which influenced the Jews of old, when filling up the measure of their sins, 'till wrath came upon them to the uttermost.' SCOTT.

This might be disputed against, rejected, or even derided; or it might be received and believed in part. The morose and unsocial bigotry of the Jews, respecting all Gentiles, from the time when they ceased to copy their idolatries, is largely insisted on by commentators in general; and the testimony of Gentiles is adduced in proof of it. This evidence, however, is not much to be regarded: for if the Jews had shown the most compassionate, liberal, and friendly attention to idolaters in temporal things; while they steadily adhered to the divine law, by separating from them in all things relating to religion; the clamor of the Gentiles against their bigotry would not have been silenced, if it had been even abated. The steady refusal of what some have called an *intercommunity* of deities and religious rites, would have sufficed to keep up the prejudice against Jews, and the disdain of them, among the proud Greeks and Romans; for the same reasons, that no philanthropy or liberality can exempt those from contempt and reproach, even among professed Christians, who unreservedly avow their attachment to the doctrines of the Gospel as their rule of faith, and the precepts of Christ as their rule of conduct. The Jews were, however, in this respect very blamable; and so are many Christians: but the grand point, which here demands consideration, is this; that the determined opposition of the Jewish nation, to the preaching of the Gospel among the Gentiles, was the immediate cause of 'wrath coming on them to the uttermost.' Let Britain, let America, let every inhabitant of every Christian land, tremble at the thought, of opposing the cause of missions among the heathen, as too many are disposed to do, 'lest wrath come upon us also

and expect to receive their advantage herein. We should receive the Word of God as the Word of God, with affections suitable to the holiness, wisdom, verity, and goodness thereof.

2. By the wonderful operation of this Word they received, v. 13. They who by faith receive the Word, find it profitable: it converts their souls, enlightens their minds, rejoices their hearts, Ps. 19. and such as have this inward testimony of the truth of the Scriptures, have the best evidence to themselves of their divine original.

II. He mentions the good effects of his preaching,

1. On himself and fellow-laborers. It was a constant cause of thankfulness, v. 13. The apostle expresses his thankfulness to God so often on this account, that he seems to think he never could be sufficiently thankful that God had counted him faithful, and put him into the ministry, and made his ministrations successful.

2. On themselves. The Word wrought effectually in them, not only to be examples to others in faith and good works, but also in constancy and patience under sufferings and trials for the sake of the Gospel, v. 14. Note, The cross is the Christian's mark: if we are called to suffer, we are called only to be followers of the churches of God, Mat. 5:12. It is a good effect of the Gospel, when we are enabled to suffer for its sake. The churches in Judea first heard the Gospel, and they first suffered for it: for the Jews were the most bitter enemies Christianity had, and were especially enraged against their countrymen who embraced it. They were the ringleaders of persecution in all places, particularly at Thessalonica, Acts 17:5. The apostle gives their character, v. 16. enough to justify their final rejection, and the ruin of their place, and church, and nation, which was now approaching. Murder and persecution are most hateful to God; and they had an implacable enmity to the Gentiles; they envied them the offers of the Gospel. Nothing provoked them more, than our Savior's speaking to them at any time concerning this matter; and so of Paul, when he told them he was the apostle of the Gentiles, Acts 22:21. Thus did the Jews fill up their sins; and for the sake of these things, wrath is come upon them to the uttermost; it was not many years after this, that Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Jewish nation

cut off by the Romans. Note, When the measure of any man's iniquity is full, and he has sinned to the uttermost, then comes wrath, and that to the uttermost.

V. 17—20. In these words, the apostle apologizes for his absence. He and his brethren were involuntarily forced from them, v. 17. He was unwillingly sent away by night, to Berea, Acts 17:10. But though absent in body, yet he was present in heart. He had still a remembrance of them, and great care for them.

Even his bodily absence was but for a short time; (the time of an hour.) All our time on earth is short and uncertain, whether we are present with our friends, or absent from them. It is in heaven that holy souls shall meet, and never part more.

He earnestly desired, and endeavored to see them again, v. 17. So he, at least, intended his absence should be but for a short time. But men of business are not masters of their own time. Paul did his endeavor, and could no more, v. 18.

He tells them, Satan hindered his return, v. 18. that is, either some enemy or enemies, or the great enemy of mankind, who stirred up opposition to Paul, either in his return to Thessalonica, when he intended to return thither, or stirred up such contentions or dissensions in those places whither he went, as made his presence necessary. Note, Satan is a constant enemy to the work of God, and does all he can to obstruct it.

He assures them of his affection and high esteem for them, though not able, as yet, to be with them according to his desire. They were his hope, and joy, and crown of rejoicing; his glory and joy. These are expressions of great and endeared affection and high estimation.

The apostle here puts the Thessalonians in mind, that however it might be with him, yet our Lord Jesus Christ will come, nothing shall hinder that. And further, when He shall come, all must appear in his presence, or before Him; ministers and people; and faithful people will be the glory and joy of faithful ministers in that great and glorious day.

CHAP. III. V. 1—5. In these words the apostle gives an account of his sending Timothy to the Thessalonians. Observe,

I. The character he gives of Timothy, v. 2. Elsewhere he calls him his son; here brother. This was an instance of the apos-

to the uttermost.'—'They who obstruct the progress of the Gospel, and persecute the promoters of it, are the ministers of Satan, and therefore bear his name.' (18.) *Whitby*.—It should also be distinctly noted, that the apostle does not give the least intimation, that the Gentiles could be saved by Christ, or in any other way, unless the Gospel were preached to them. *Rom.* 10:12—17. *Eph.* 2:11, 12. SCOTT.

(14.) 'We learn from Ac. 17:5. that the Jews stirred up the Gentiles at Thessalonica against the Christians.' PALEY.

(15.) *Contrary to all men.* 'The Jews in general entertained invincible prejudices against all other nations.' *Doddr.* after *Elsner*, from *Tacitus*.—'This hatred was directly contrary to the law of Moses, which enjoined humanity to strangers.' [Ex. 22:27.] MACKN.

(16.) *Wrath, &c.* 'Chiefly the destruction of Jerusalem, yet vast numbers of Jews were soon destroyed in other provinces of the Roman empire, particularly under Trajan and Adrian.' *Doddr.*—*Alway*.] 'It signifies every way.' BLOOMF.

V. 17—20. The fervor of affection, and the animation with which it is expressed, in this chapter, are incomparable. SCOTT.

(17.) *Short time.* 'It was several years before the apostle returned to them, but his mind was full of the ideas of eternity, which did, as it were, annihilate any period of mortal life.' DODDR.

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1—5. *Acts* 17:10—15. 18:1—6. Timothy came from Berea to Athens, while Paul was there; but it seems that Silas did not.—The apostle, being anxious about the new converts at Thessalonica, could not endure to remain any longer in suspense, or to



2 And sent <sup>a</sup> Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow-laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith;

3 That <sup>b</sup> no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we <sup>c</sup> are appointed thereunto.

4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

5 For this cause, when <sup>d</sup> I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest <sup>e</sup> by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labor <sup>f</sup> be in vain.

6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring <sup>g</sup> greatly to see us, as we also <sup>h</sup> to see you;

7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted <sup>b</sup> over you, in all our affliction and distress, by your faith:

8 For now we live, if ye stand fast <sup>i</sup> in the Lord.

9 For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;

10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect <sup>j</sup> that which is lacking in your faith?

a Ac. 17:15. d ver. 1. i Ep. 6:13,14.  
b Ep. 3:13. e 2 Co. 11:2,3. Phil. 4:1.  
c Jn. 16:2. 1 Co. f Ga. 4:11. j 2 Co. 13:9,11.  
4:9. 2 Ti. 3:12. g Phil. 1:8. Col. 4:12.  
1 Pe. 2:21. h 2 Co. 7:6,7.

tle's humility, and showed his desire to honor Timothy, and to recommend him to the esteem of the churches. He calls him also a *minister of God*, also his *fellow-laborer in the Gospel of Christ*. Note, Ministers of the Gospel must look upon one another as *fellow-laborers*; and should therefore love one another, and strengthen one another's hands, not strive and contend *one with another*.

act as if he were unconcerned for their welfare. 2 Cor. 2:12, 13. 7:5—7. he therefore decidedly chose, and submissively acquiesced, to be left alone at Athens, though that must have been very inconvenient to him; and he sent back Timothy to Thessalonica, to establish the Christians of that city in the faith; by suitable instructions, which he was eminently qualified to give them, and to exhort and encourage them to hold fast their profession, whatever opposition they might meet with, by assuring them of peculiar protection, consolation, and reward.—Some would explain what the apostle here speaks concerning persecution, exclusively of himself and the other apostles and evangelists, as if the enemies pleaded this argument against the divine original of Christianity; and as if the danger of the Thessalonians arose, not from any persecutions to which they themselves were exposed, but from the vain reasonings of their heathen neighbors, respecting those which the apostle endured, and his leaving Thessalonica on account of them. But the Thessalonians were themselves exposed to persecution, as all must expect to be 'who live godly in Christ Jesus;' and what they suffered or dreaded would be at least as likely to 'move them,' as any reasonings of their enemies; and such reasonings of philosophical opposers do not appear to have existed at so early a period. Pref.—Acts 14:21—23. 2 Thes. 1:3, 4. (1) *We thought it good.*] Mat. 3:17. 17:5.—The apostle here speaks in the plural, having Timothy with him, in consulting what to do; but afterwards he uses the singular, 5.—(3) *Be moved.*] It includes the effects of persuasions and allurements, as well as those of terror. Sc.

(1.) *Left alone.*] 'From this circumstance it appears, Silas was absent from Paul, while that apostle was at Athens,—though others have been of a different opinion. Comp. Ac. 18:5. which seems farther to confirm the fact.' DODDR.

(2.) *Sent Timotheus.*] 'It appears from Ac. 17:14. that Timothy had been in those parts before, as Paul's fellow-laborer, and so no doubt he was known to the Thessalonians, and his coming on this occasion, would be the more agreeable to them.' Id.—*Our brother.*] 'Our brother-minister, or colleague. See Col. 1:1. This is not a mere term of affection.—*Minister of God.*] 'A general term, denoting all teachers of religion, nay, even apostles themselves. See 1 Cor. 3:5. By all these terms, the apostle means to hint, that he had supplied his absence by an able substitute.—*Establish . . . and comfort.*] The most natural sense, and that most agreeable to the adjunct "*concerning your faith,*" is, [444]

II. Paul's end and design in sending Timothy, v. 2. He was desirous they might be confirmed and comforted; confirmed in the choice they had made of the Christian religion, and comforted in the profession and practice of it; concerning the object of their faith, the truths of the Gospel; and particularly that Jesus Christ was the Savior of the world, and so wise and good, so powerful and faithful, that they might rely on Him: concerning the recompense of faith, which was more than sufficient to balance all their losses, and reward all their labors.

III. His motives: a godly fear or jealousy, lest they should be moved from the faith of Christ, v. 3. He apprehended there was danger, and feared the consequence.

1. There was danger, by reason of his afflictions, v. 3. They might possibly stumble at them; also, those who made profession of the Gospel were persecuted, and without doubt these Thessalonians themselves were afflicted.

2. By reason of the tempter's subtlety and malice, v. 5. The devil is subtle and unwearied, seeks opportunity to beguile and destroy, and takes all advantages against us, both in prosperity and adversity; we have reason, therefore, to be jealous over ourselves and others, lest we be ensnared by him.

The consequence the apostle feared, was, lest his labor should be in vain. And thus it would have been, if the tempter had tempted them, and prevailed against them, to move them from the faith. Note, It is the devil's design, to hinder the good fruit and effect of the preaching of the Gospel. Note, also, Faithful ministers are much concerned about the success of their labors; and are loath to spend their strength, and pains, and time, for nought.

To prevent this danger, with its bad consequence, the apostle tells them what care he took in sending Timothy. (1.) *To put them in mind of what he had told them before, concerning suffering tribulation, v. 4.* It only came to pass according as God had determined; so that they should not think it strange, and, being fore-warned, should be fore-armed. Besides, it might prove a confirmation of their faith, when they perceived, that it only happened to them as was predicted before.

(2.) *To know their faith:* that so he might inform the apostles, whether they remained steadfast under all their sufferings, whether

their faith failed or not. Because, if their faith did not fail, they would be able to stand their ground against the tempter and all his temptations: their faith would be a shield, to defend them against all the fiery darts of the wicked, Eph. 6:16.

V. 6—10. Here we have Paul's great satisfaction, on the return of Timothy with good tidings from the Thessalonians. In which we may observe,

I. *The good report Timothy made of them, v. 6.* Without question, he was a willing messenger of these good tidings. As to their faith, they were steadfast, not shaken in mind, nor turned aside from the profession of the Gospel. Their love also continued; their love to the Gospel, and the ministers of the Gospel; for they remembered the apostles, constantly, or always, and desired greatly to see them again, and receive some spiritual gift from them; and there was no love lost, for the apostle was as desirous to see them. It is happy where there is such mutual love between minister and people.

II. *The great comfort and satisfaction* the apostle had in this good report concerning them, v. 7, 8. The apostle thought this sufficient to balance all the troubles he met with. Thus, he was not only comforted, but greatly rejoiced also, v. 8. It would have been a killing thing to the apostles, if the professors of religion had been unsteady, or proved apostates, whereas nothing was more encouraging than their constancy.

III. *The effects of this were thankfulness and prayer to God on their behalf.*

1. Observe, How thankful the apostle was, v. 9. When we are most cheerful, we should be most thankful. Paul speaks, as if he could not tell how to express his thankfulness to God, or his joy and rejoicing for their sakes. His heart was enlarged with love to them, and with thanksgiving to God.

2. He prayed for them night and day, v. 10. evening and morning, or very frequently; in the midst of the business of the day, or slumber of the night. Thus we should pray always. And Paul's prayer was fervent prayer. He prayed exceedingly, and was earnest in his supplication. There was something still lacking in their faith; Paul desired that this might be perfected, and to see their face in order thereunto. Note,

(1.) The best men have something wanting in their faith; in the matter of it, there being some mysteries or doctrines not suffi-

teach, instruct; as in v. 2, 3. and Ac. 15:20. where the two are likewise joined. It may, however, signify both *teach* and *admonish*; since the senses are cognate. The Thessalonians had, it seems, been wavering for want of instruction and admonition.

(3.) *For yourselves know, &c.*] 'I would here compare Job 5:7. and 2 Tim. 3:12. Commentators are not agreed, whether the words are to be referred to the apostles, or extended to the Thessalonians, or to all Christians. It should seem, that they are here meant only of the apostles and Thessalonians, but they are applicable to all Christians, according to the circumstances of the Gospel.' Id.—'The people of God have the same need of affliction as our bodies have of physic; that our trees have of pruning; that gold and silver have of the furnace; that liquors have of straining; that iron hath of the file; and that the child hath of the rod.' PHILIP HENRY.

(5.) 'Here we have a resumption of what was said v. 1, and 2. The best modern commentators have (after Grotius) taken *tempted* to signify, tempt with effect, successfully to tempt, citing Ga. 6:1. Ja. 1:13.' BL.

V. 6—10. During Timothy's absence, Paul departed from Athens to Corinth, whither Timothy and Silas also returned to him. The tidings which he received from Thessalonica, concerning the faith and love of the brethren in that city, and their affectionate remembrance of him, and earnest reciprocal desire to see him, were so entirely satisfactory, that they not only relieved his mind from anxiety, but abundantly compensated for all his other trials and distresses, and filled his benevolent heart with consolation. Nor could he find language sufficiently energetic to express the gratitude which he owed to God, and the thanks which he was excited to render Him, on their account, and for that overflowing joy, with which this inspired his heart before God.—'Estius observes, from the 9th verse, that both the apostles' joy, and their faith and constancy, were the gift of God; . . . for giving of thanks is not except for benefits received. He might also have observed, the excellent pattern the apostle here gives to all the bishops and pastors of the church, to be continually solicitous to know of the welfare of their flock, incessantly praying for it, blessing God daily for it, and looking upon it as the very felicity of their own lives.' Whitby.

(8.) *Live.*] 'It is well known that, in the sacred writings, *life* is put for *happiness*. Let it be the life of ministers, to see [the flocks of their charge] standing fast in the Lord.' DODDR.



11 Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>k</sup> direct our way unto you.

12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love <sup>l</sup> one toward another, and toward all men, even as we *do* toward you :

13 To the end he may stablish your hearts <sup>m</sup> unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming <sup>n</sup> of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

CHAP. IV.

<sup>1</sup> He exhorteth them to go forward in all manner of godliness, <sup>6</sup> to live holily and justly, <sup>9</sup> to love one another, <sup>11</sup> and quietly to follow their own business : <sup>13</sup> and last of all to sorrow moderately for the dead. <sup>15</sup> And unto this last exhortation is annexed a brief description of the resurrection, and second coming of Christ to judgment.

**F**URTHERMORE then we <sup>a</sup> beseech you, brethren, and <sup>b</sup> exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk <sup>c</sup> and to please God, so ye would abound <sup>d</sup> more and more.

2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

3 For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that <sup>e</sup> ye should abstain from fornication :

4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor ;

k or, guide.	n Zec. 14:5.	c Col. 1:10.
l 1 Jn 4:7-12.	Julde 14.	d 1 Co. 15:53.
m 2 Th. 2:17.	a or, request.	e 1 Co. 6:15,18.
1 Jn. 3:20,21.	b or, beseech.	

ciently known or believed by them ; or, in the clearness and certainty of it, there being some remaining darkneses and doubtings ; or, at least, as to the effects and operations of it, these being not so conspicuous and perfect as they should be. And,

(2.) The ministry of the word and ordinances is helpful, and to be desired and used for the perfecting of that which is lacking in our faith.

V. 11-13. In these words we have the earnest prayer of the apostle. In which, observe,

1. Whom he prays to, namely, God and Christ ; to God only ; to God, even the Father and our Father ; and to Christ, even our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, Jesus Christ our Lord is God, even as God our Father is God. Prayer is to be offered to God as our Father. So Christ taught his disciples to pray ; and so the Spirit of adoption prompts them to pray, to cry *Abba, Father*. Prayer is not only to be offered in the name of

PRACT. OBS. The love which zealous ministers of Christ bear to their people, and the longing desires after their salvation which they experience, and desire to cherish, cannot wholly be separated from painful solicitude on their account.—In the most peaceful times, every Christian should ‘count his cost,’ and remember that the followers of Christ are ‘appointed to suffer’ affliction : *Luke 14:25-33*. and ministers should not shun to forewarn their hearers, that they may be prepared for the cross, and meet every trial with watchfulness and prayer ; as in this manner they will best be preserved constant and ‘steadfast in the faith.’ So many indeed, who for a time made a creditable profession of the Gospel, have been overcome in the day of trial, that the experienced minis-

V. 11-13. ‘This invocation of Him,’ (Christ,) by all Christians, in all places, must suppose Him omniscient, omnipresent, and the Searcher of all hearts, and these are the properties of God alone.’ *Whitby*. Sc.

(11.) *Now God Himself and our Father, &c.* ‘God Himself, even our Father,’ &c. *Doddr. and Bloomf.—Direct our way.* ‘An elegant way of saying : “May God cause us to come unto you ;” this being a sort of prayer to the Father and the Son. Thus we have here an example of prayer addressed to Christ ; as 2 Thess. 2:16, 17. and 3:5. &c. Benson contends, the prayers are addressed to Christ as Mediator. But I apprehend this to be a mistake, and a most unwarrantable refinement. Prayer, offered up by all Christians, in all places, implies omniscience, omnipresence, and a searching of all hearts in the Being so addressed ; therefore, as this implies Deity, prayers must be offered to Him in that capacity : it were frivolous then to address Him as Mediator.’ *Bl.*

(13.) *At the coming, &c.* ‘Some ancients and some eminent moderns, as Grot., Wolf, Koppe, and Rosenm., interpret it, the angels, ac-

Christ, but to Christ Himself, as our Lord and our Savior.

II. What he prays for, with respect to himself and his fellow-laborers, then on behalf of the Thessalonians.

1. He prays that they might have a prosperous journey to them by the will of God, v. 11. The taking of a journey, one would think, is a thing depending so much on a man’s own will, and lies so much in his own power, that Paul needed not by prayer to go to God about it. But the apostle knew that we depend on God in all our motions and actions, as well as for the continuance of life and being. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in a particular manner, directs the motion of his faithful ministers, *those stars which He holds in his right hand*. Let us acknowledge God in all our ways, and He will direct our paths.

2. He prays for the prosperity of the Thessalonians, whether he should have an opportunity of coming to them or not : two things he desired for them :

(1.) That they might increase and abound in love, v. 12. love to one another, and love to all men. Love is of God, and the fulfilling of the gospel as well as of the law. Timothy brought good tidings of their faith, and charity, and love, yet the apostle prays that that might increase and abound. Note, We have reason to desire to grow in every grace, have need of the Spirit’s influence in order to it, and the way to obtain that is prayer. And to our prayer we must add endeavor. To excite this in the Thessalonians, the apostle again mentions his love, his abounding love, toward them. The more we are beloved, the more affectionate we should be.

(2.) That they might be established unblamable in holiness, v. 13. This spiritual benefit is mentioned as an effect of increasing and abounding love : to the end that He, the Lord, may establish your hearts. Our desire should be, to have our hearts established in holiness before God, and be preserved safe to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and that we may be unblamable before God, even the Father, now, and be presented blameless before the throne of his glory, when the Lord Jesus will come with all his saints. Note, The Lord Jesus will certainly come, and come in his glory. When He comes, his saints will come with Him : and then the excellency, as well as the necessity of holiness, will appear ; because, without this, no hearts shall be established at that day, nor shall any one be unblamable, or avoid everlasting condemnation.

CHAP. IV. V. 1-8. Here we have,

I. An exhortation to abound more and more in holiness, v. 1, 2. In which, we may observe,

ter will generally feel a degree of anxiety ; and he will not fail to caution the people to be on their guard, ‘lest by any means the tempter should tempt them, and his labor should be in vain.’ But in proportion to these solicitudes will be his rejoicing, when he finds that his beloved children ‘stand fast in the faith,’ and walk in love, and that their remembrance of him, and affection to him, correspond with his feelings towards them. . . .—May the Lord make all, who are called the ministers of Christ, partakers of this faithful, loving, diligent, and disinterested spirit ! May He prosper all their labors and ‘comfort their hearts’ with numbers of converts like these Thessalonians, and may He send forth numbers of such laborers into all the nations of the earth !

SCOTT.

CORDING to the usual description of the day of judgment. But most ancients, including the Vul., and most moderns, our Eng. Trans., Beza, and Benson, [also *Doddr.*] take it to denote all faithful Christians, as 2 Thess. 1:10. Phil. 5. Perhaps both may be meant.’ *Bl.* *Unblamable in holiness.* ‘Hypocrites long for discoveries, more for the present comfort of them, and from a notion that they are a manifestation of the love of God, than for their sanctifying influence. But neither longings after discoveries, nor for the love of God ; nor desiring to be in heaven, or to die, is so distinguishing a mark of true piety, as earnest desires after holiness of heart and life.’

EDWARDS.

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 4. *His vessel.* ‘I. e. his body. The woman being elsewhere called “the weaker vessel,” implies that the man is a vessel also. 1 Pet. 3:7. And our apostle, himself, speaks of himself and brethren as “earthen vessels.” 2 Cor. 4:7.’ *WILLIAMS.*—Bloomfield also says, ‘his own body,’ is ‘the only interpretation that will bear examining.’



5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles<sup>f</sup> which know not God :

6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in<sup>h</sup> any matter; because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but<sup>i</sup> unto holiness.

8 He therefore that<sup>j</sup> despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

[Practical Observations.]

9 But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught<sup>k</sup> of God to love one another.

10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more:

11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to<sup>l</sup> do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

f Ep. 4:17,18. g or, oppress, or, overreach. h or, in the. i Le. 11:44. j 12:14. k 1 Pe. 1:14. l 1 Pe. 4:15.

2 Cor. 7:1. And as chastity is one branch of our sanctification, so this is one thing God commands in his law, and what his grace effects in all true believers. 2. This will be greatly for our honor: so much is plainly implied, v. 4. Whereas the contrary will be a great dishonor, Prov. 6:33. The body is here called the vessel of the soul, that dwells therein, so 1 Sam. 21:5. and that must be kept pure from defiling lusts. What can be more dishonorable, than for a rational soul to be enslaved by bodily affections and brutal appetites? 3. To indulge the lust of concupiscence, is to live

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—2. The ministers of Christ are bound to instruct their flocks, not only in the great doctrines and promises of the Gospel, but also in every part of their duty, that they may 'know how they ought to walk and to please God;' and Christians should as readily receive these instructions, as they do the most encouraging declarations of saving grace, and everlasting love. They should also take in good part, the earnest, repeated, affectionate, and authoritative exhortations of their pastors, when they 'beseech and charge' them to abound 'more and more' in every good work, according to 'the commandments given them in the name of the Lord Jesus.'—It is a deep disgrace to a rational creature to be a slave to his animal inclinations, and to act contrary to his better judgment, his true interest, or the welfare of his neighbor, for the sake of gratifications, of which the beasts are equally capable; but it is far more dishonorable for a spiritual man, a child of God, a member of Christ, a temple of the Holy Spirit, and an heir of heaven, to have his mind and body polluted, or unfitted for communion with God, by unlawful or inexpedient gratifications, or even by improper thoughts and desires. Yet in many cases this will not be avoided, without very strict watchfulness, and fervent, persevering prayer; without diligence in

V. 6—8. In like manner, the apostle warned the Thessalonians, not to overreach, or defraud, their brethren or neighbors in any transaction, either by taking advantage of their ignorance, necessity, or credulity; by exacting immoderate profits, or by any of those artifices and subterfuges, which selfishness devises to impose upon the unwary, without ruining men's credit, or incurring punishment by human laws. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. 20:15. 1 Cor. 6:7—11.) Such dishonest persons might not be detected, or could not be called to account, by men; but the Lord would not suffer their hypocrisy and injustice to escape with impunity, being Himself 'the Avenger of all' clandestine frauds and impositions, as well as of open injustice and oppression. (Marg. Ref. s.)—The word 'uncleanness,' here used, has led many learned expositors to explain the sixth verse of clandestine adultery. But, if fornication were forbidden, adultery must be of course; for even the Gentiles condemned adultery, while they connived at fornication; nay, in fact, they sanctioned it, when committed only with slaves and courtezans; as it is evident from the writings of Demosthenes, Cicero, and others. This interpretation is far from the most obvious meaning of the passage; dishonesty is as inconsistent with Christianity as licentiousness, and, in this overreaching, fraudulent manner, perhaps even more common; and the word 'uncleanness,' may either be referred to what went before, or be understood as a general word for wickedness, all which is filthiness in the sight of God.—Notwithstanding the excellent state of the Thessalonian church, some might have found admission into it, who would speak of the doctrines and comforts of Christianity, and yet affect to despise

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and act like heathens; even as the Gentiles who know not God, v. 5. It is not so much to be wondered at, if Gentiles indulge their fleshly appetites and lusts; but Christians should not walk as unconverted Gentiles, in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, &c. 1 Pet. 4:3. for they who are in Christ have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts. 4. The sin of uncleanness, especially adultery, is a great injustice, that God will be the Avenger of; so we may understand those words, That no man go beyond or defraud his brother, v. 6. in any matter,—in this matter, namely, the sin of uncleanness. Some understand it, as a further warning and caution against injustice and oppression, all fraud and deceit in our dealings with men, which are certainly criminal and contrary to the Gospel. But the meaning may rather be, to show the injustice and wrong that in many cases are done by the sin of uncleanness. Not only are fornication and other acts of uncleanness sins against his own body who commits them, 1 Cor. 6:18. but sometimes they are very injurious, and, no less than defrauding, acts of injustice to others; particularly to them who are joined together in the marriage-covenant, and to their posterity. And as this sin is of such a heinous nature, so it follows, that God will be the Avenger of it. Heb. 13:4. Rom. 1:18. 5. The sin of uncleanness is contrary to the nature and design of our Christian calling, v. 7. The law of God forbids all impurity, and the gospel requires the greatest purity; it calls us from uncleanness unto holiness. 6. The contempt, therefore, of God's law and gospel, is the contempt of God Himself. He that despises, despises God, not man only. Some might possibly make light of the precepts of purity and holiness, because they heard them from men like themselves; but the apostle lets them know they were God's commands, and to violate them was no less than to despise God. He adds, God hath given Christians his Spirit; intimating, that all sorts of uncleanness especially grieve the Holy Spirit, and provoke Him to withdraw from us; and also the Holy Spirit is given unto us, to arm us against these sins,

and to help us to mortify these deeds of the body, that we may live, Rom. 8:13.

V. 9—12. Here we have the great duty,

I. Of brotherly love. This he exhorts them to increase in yet more and more. The exhortation is introduced, not with a compliment, but with a commendation; because they were remarkable in the exercise of it, which made it less needful he should write to them about it, v. 9. Note, we should notice that in others which is good, to their praise, that by so doing we may lay engagements on them to abound therein more and more. Observe, the apostle commends in them, not so much their own virtue as God's grace; yet he notices the evidence they showed of grace, v. 9. All who are savingly taught of God, are taught to love one another. Note, also, The teaching of the Spirit exceeds the teaching of men; none can teach so effectually as He teaches; and men's teaching is vain and useless, unless God teach also. The Thessalonians gave good evidence of their being taught of God, v. 10. They not only loved those of their own city and society, or such as were near them, and just of their own sentiments; but their love was extensive. And a true Christian's is so to all the saints, though distant from him in place, and differing from him in some opinions or practices of less moment.

The exhortation itself is, to increase more and more in this great grace and duty of brotherly love, v. 10. Though these Thessalonians had in some sense no need of an exhortation to brotherly love, as if it were wholly wanting; yet they must be exhorted to pray and labor for more. None on this side heaven are perfect in love.

II. Of quietness and industry in their callings. Observe,

1. The apostle exhorts to these duties, v. 11. It is most desirable to have a calm and quiet temper, and to be of a peaceable and quiet behavior. This tends much to our own and others' happiness, and we should study how to be calm and quiet in our own minds, and toward others; or of a meek, mild, gentle, peaceable disposition, not given to strife, contention, or division.

every mean of grace, and a constant care to shun all temptations and occasions of evil. It is equally inconsistent with the character of a Christian, to 'go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter,' or to injure him in his property, reputation, or connexions. This too calls for the most diligent care, and the most impartial scrutiny into every part of our conduct; for self-love, and the customs of the world, and even former habits will otherwise lead us, without reflection, in some measure, to violate the golden rule of 'doing to others, as we would they should do unto us.' If a believer be led to commit offences of this kind, the Lord will surely chastise him, and thus bring him to repent and forsake them. . . . For the Lord has not called us into a state of peace with Him, that we may go on in the polluting practice of worldly lusts, but that, depending on his promises, 'we may cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' (Note, 2 Cor. 7:1.) And let it be remembered, that he who despises such admonitions, does not so much despise him who enforces them from the pulpit or the press, as that God by whose Spirit they were originally dictated; yea, he as really despises God, as that man does, who contemns the message of salvation by the grace of the Gospel. (Note, 1 Sam. 12:9, 10.) Sc.

these practical exhortations, as inconsistent with the grace and liberty of the Gospel; but the apostle reminded them, that in so doing, they did not despise him, or Silvanus, or Timothy, but God Himself, who had given them his Holy Spirit, by whose inspiration these exhortations had been written.—'In this passage, Paul asserts his own inspiration, in the strongest terms, and with the greatest solemnity.' Mackn. Sc.

(6.) Go beyond and defraud, &c.] 'Injuring their neighbor's bed is no doubt included, but I see no reason for limiting the clause to such a sense.' Doddr.—Bloomfield expresses his surpris, that Doddr. should 'mite both senses,' and adds: 'Almost all the Greek fathers and commentators, and, of the Latin ones, Jerome and Hilary, and many modern ones, refer this to adultery; which was formerly my own opinion, and certainly is much countenanced by the context from v. 4. But when we turn to the phraseology, there appears little to countenance the interpretation. It is well remarked by Koppe, that the expression of all, [Avenger of all such, i. e. vices,] intimates, that the apostle was speaking of more than one vice, namely, fornication. And it is worthy of observation, that the apostle elsewhere, as in Eph. 5:5. and Heb. 3:4. associates the vices of fornication and covetousness, as being, we may conceive, the two especially prevalent.' Ed.

V. 11. Do your own business.] 'An exhortation peculiarly proper to the Thessalonians, as there seems to have been a meddling, pragmatical temper prevailing among some of them, 2 Thess. 3:11. which tended much to the reproach of their profession.' Doddr. See excellent considerations on this subject in Wayland's 'Limitation of Human Responsibility.' Ed.



12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so they also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

live comfortably, and have lack of nothing. They are not burdensome to their friends, nor scandalous to strangers. They earn their own bread, and have the greatest pleasure in so doing.

V. 13—18. In these words the apostle comforts the Thessalonians, who mourned for the death of their relations and friends that died in the Lord. His design is, to dissuade them from excessive grief, or inordinate sorrow, on that account. All grief for the death of friends is far from being unlawful; yet we must not be immoderate or excessive in our sorrows; because,

1. This looks as if, like the Gentiles, we had no hope, v. 13. whereas, we Christians have a most sure hope, the hope of eternal life after this, which God, who cannot lie, hath promised us; this hope should more than balance all our griefs on account of any crosses of the present time.

II. This is an effect of ignorance concerning those who are dead, v. 13. Some things we cannot but be ignorant of, concerning them; for the land they are removed to, is a land of darkness. Death is an unknown thing, and the state of the dead, or the state after death, we are much in the dark about; yet some things concerning them, especially, who die in the Lord, we need not, and ought not, to be ignorant of: and if those things are rightly understood and duly considered, they will be sufficient to allay our sorrow concerning them.

1. They sleep in Jesus, v. 13. 1 Cor. 15: 18. Death is but a sleep to them; their rest, an undisturbed rest. They are retired out of this troublesome world, to rest from all their labors and sorrows, and they sleep in Jesus, v. 14. in union with Him, and under his special care and protection; so that they are not lost, nor are they losers, but great gainers, by death, and their removal out of this world is into a better.

2. They shall be raised up from the dead, and awakened out of their sleep, for God will bring them with Him, v. 14. The doctrine of the resurrection, and the second coming of Christ, is a great antidote against the fear of death, and inordinate sorrow for the death of Christian friends; and this doctrine we have a full assurance of, because we believe that Jesus died and rose again, v. 14.

3. Their state and condition shall be glorious and happy at the second coming of Christ. The resurrection of the dead, and future state of blessedness, though a part of the creed of the O. T. saints, yet is much more clearly revealed in and by the Gospel, this Word of the Lord, v. 15.

(1.) The Lord Jesus will come from

heaven, v. 16. will descend into this our air, v. 17. The appearance will be with pomp and power, with a shout,—as of a King, and a mighty Conqueror, with the voice of the archangel; an innumerable company of angels will attend Him; perhaps one, as general of those hosts of the Lord, shall give notice of his approach; and the glorious appearance of this great Redeemer and Judge shall be proclaimed and ushered in, by the trump of God. For the trumpet shall sound, and that will wake them that sleep in the dust of the earth, and shall summon all the world to appear. For,

(2.) The dead shall be raised, The dead in Christ first, v. 16. so those who shall then be found alive, shall not prevent them that are asleep, v. 15. The first carc of the Redeemer in that day, will be about his dead saints; He will raise them before the great change passes on them that shall be found alive; so that those who did not sleep in death, will have no greater privilege or joy at that day than those who fell asleep in Jesus.

(3.) They that shall be found alive, will then be changed. They shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, v. 17. At, or immediately before, this rapture into the clouds, those who are alive will undergo a mighty change, that will be equivalent to dying. This change is so mysterious, that we cannot comprehend it, 1 Cor. 15: 51. Only we know, in the general, this mortal must put on immortality; and these bodies be made fit to inherit the kingdom of God, which flesh and blood, in its present state, are not capable of. This change will be in a moment, 1 Cor. 15: 52. in the very instant, or not long after the raising up of them that sleep in Jesus. And those who are raised, and thus changed, shall meet together in the clouds, and there meet with their Lord, to congratulate Him on his coming, to receive the crown of glory He will then bestow on them, and to be assessors with Him in judgment, approving and applauding the sentence He will then pass on the prince of the power of the air, and all the wicked, who shall be doomed to destruction with the devil and his angels.

(4.) Here is the bliss of the saints at that day; they shall be ever with the Lord, v. 17. It will be some part of their felicity, that they all shall meet together, and remain together for ever: but the principal happiness of heaven is this, to be with the Lord, to see Him, live with Him, and enjoy Him, for ever. This should comfort the saints on the death of their pious friends: that, although death has made a separation, yet

m Ro. 13:13. p Mat. 24:30, 31. q Re. 20:5, 6.  
n or, n, mar. Ac 1:11. r Re. 11:12.  
o 1 Co. 15:20, &c. 2 Th. 1:7. s Jn. 14:3.

Satan is very busy to disquiet us; and we have that in our own hearts, that disposes us to be unquiet; therefore, let us study to be quiet. It follows, *Do your own business*; when we go beyond that, we expose ourselves to great inquietude. Those who meddle in other men's matters, generally have but little quiet in their own minds, and cause great disturbances among their neighbors; at least, they seldom mind the other exhortation, to be diligent in their own calling, to work with their own hands: yet this the apostle commanded them, and it is required of us also. Christianity does not discharge us from the work and duty of our particular callings, but teaches us to be diligent therein.

2. The exhortation is enforced with a double argument: namely, (1.) So we shall live creditably, walking honestly, or decently, toward them that are without, v. 12. a great ornament to a religion. (2.) We shall live comfortably, and lack nothing, v. 12. People often by their slothfulness reduce themselves to great straits, when such as are diligent in their own business,

V. 13—18. (Notes, 1 Cor. 15:20—28, 50—54.) Perhaps the apostle heard, that some of the Thessalonian believers had lately died, or suffered martyrdom, and that their relatives and brethren were greatly dejected about them, not duly attending to the consolations suggested by the Gospel.—Some suppose, that the apostle expected to live till the day of judgment, because he spoke in the first person plural, concerning those who should be alive at that time; but he elsewhere spoke of being absent from the body, and of being 'raised up with Jesus.' 2 Cor. 4:14. 5:8. He was one, who remained alive after others had been removed; his faith and hope annihilated, as it were, the intervening space; his love made him consider the cause of the whole multitude as his own, and it is evident that he did not speak it personally of himself; for when the Thessalonians imagined that 'the day of judgment was at hand,' he diligently set himself to rectify that mistake. 2 Thes. 2:1, 2. As the apostle expressly declares, that he spake 'by the word of the Lord,' or by divine inspiration, the consequences of allowing him to be mistaken in what he said, should very seriously be considered. Similar expressions may be found in other parts of Scripture. Ps. 66:6. 81:5. Hos. 12:4. Some suppose, that Christ Himself was meant by 'the archangel,' being 'the ruler of all angels,' but as we must understand the words 'the Lord,' of Him, it seems not natural to explain another term in the same sentence of Him likewise; and many intimations are given of different ranks and orders among the holy angels. (Comp. 2 Pet. 2:11. Jude 9.—Notes, Eph. 1:15—23, v. 21. 3:9—12. 1 Pet. 3:21, 22, v. 21. Jude 9:10.)—The resurrection of believers is exclusively meant, as every attentive reader must perceive; therefore all speculations concerning the bodies with which the wicked shall arise, (a matter on which the Scripture observes a profound silence,) must be wholly foreign to the subject. (Notes, Eph. 1:21. 3:9. 1 Pet. 3:22.) The notions which prevailed among the Gentiles, left them totally destitute of a firm, well-grounded, and animating hope of again meeting their deceased friends, in a state of happiness; and so do the notions on these subjects of merely nominal Christians.—Some expositors have said, that the ex-

pression 'So shall we ever be with the Lord,' implies that the souls of believers are not previously, at least not permanently, with Him; but has not the apostle expressly assured us of the contrary? 2 Cor. 5:8. Phil. 1:23, 24. (15) By the word of the Lord.] 1 Kings 13:1.—In the air.] See on Eph. 2:2.—Christ shall 'come in the clouds'; 'the air' here means the same, and, however understood, has no reference to the reality of that kingdom, which his saints shall then inherit. SCOTT.

(15.) The word of the Lord.] 'Express word of the Lord, on the authority of an immediate revelation from Christ Himself.' DODDR.—Remain alive.] 'This has been understood by many, as an intimation, that the apostle expected to be found alive at the day of judgment; and, on that interpretation, some have urged it as an instance of his entertaining, at least for a time, mistaken notions on that head, as if the day of the Lord were nearly approaching. But this is directly contrary to his own explication of the matter, 2 Thes. 2:1, &c. as well as other passages, in which he expresses his expectation of death. Comp. Phil. 1:20. and 1 Cor. 6:14. 2 Cor. 4:14. 2 Tim. 4:6. Others have pleaded this passage in favor of the doctrine of the resurrection of some of the most eminent saints, before the main body of believers, to share with Christ in the glories and felicities of his personal reign on earth. But to me it seems most natural to suppose, Paul here speaks as one of the Christian body, though he was not one of that particular number, concerning whom he directly asserts what is here said.' DODDR.

(16.) The dead in Christ shall rise first.] 'It has generally been inferred hence, that good men shall rise before the wicked, and 1 Cor. 15:23. seems to favor it. But this text only asserts their rising before the saints, who are found alive shall be changed.' DODDR.—'As the best commentators are agreed, nothing is either here, or at 1 Cor. 15. said of the wicked, dead or living; as the description of their case could have been no consolation to Christians under the loss of friends.' BLOOMF.

(17.) Clouds.] 'Clouds sometimes signify great multitudes of people. See Heb. 12:1. According to this sense, the meaning will be, "caught up in great numbers at once."' HEWLETT.



18 Wherefore 'comfort one another with these words.

CHAP. V.

<sup>1</sup> He proceedeth in the former description of Christ's coming to judgment, 16 and giveth divers precepts, 23 and so concludeth the epistle.

**B**UT of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh <sup>a</sup> as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail <sup>b</sup> upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But <sup>c</sup> ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore <sup>d</sup> let us not sleep, as <sup>e</sup> do others; but let us watch and be <sup>e</sup> sober.

7 For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breast-plate <sup>f</sup> of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed <sup>g</sup> us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

<sup>t</sup> or, exhort. <sup>c</sup> Ep. 5:8. <sup>e</sup> 1 Pe. 5:8.  
<sup>a</sup> 1 Jn. 12:39, 40. <sup>f</sup> 1 Jn. 2:8. <sup>f</sup> Is. 59:17.  
<sup>2</sup> Pe. 3:10. <sup>d</sup> Mat. 25:5. <sup>g</sup> Ro. 9:22.  
<sup>Re.</sup> 16:5. <sup>Ro.</sup> 13:12, 13. <sup>g</sup> 1 Pe. 2:8.  
<sup>b</sup> Je. 13:21.

their souls and bodies will meet again; we, and they, with all the saints, shall meet our Lord, and be with Him for ever. The apostle would have us comfort one another with these words, v. 18. We should endeavor to support one another in times of sorrow, by serious consideration and discourse on the many good lessons to be learned from the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, the second coming of Christ, and the glory of the saints in that day.

CHAP. V. V. 1-5. In these words, observe,

1. The apostle tells the Thessalonians, it

PRACT. OBS. V. 9-18. All true believers are 'taught of God to love one another,' as brethren in Christ, and from love to his name: 1 Jn. 2:7-11. 3:13-15, 18-24. 4:7, 8. 5:1-3. by practice they acquire habits of kindness, compassion, forbearance, and forgiveness, and they feel an expansive benevolence to all mankind; yet, it is very proper to exhort them to 'increase' in these things 'more and more.'—Christianity does not forbid, grace does not extinguish, our natural affections; but only teaches us to regulate and moderate them. Indeed, inconsolable sorrow, however admired by the world, is rebellion against the appointment of God, and the offspring of unbelief; grief should no more be indulged and cherished, than our anger or other passions. Nor shall such of us, as endure the stroke of death, be eventually less favored and

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1-3. As the hour of death is the same to each person, which judgment will be to mankind in general, so the same remarks and illustrations equally answer to both cases; and when sinners are flattering themselves with the hope of 'peace and safety,' then sudden destruction will come upon them. As the woman with child, often, when she is thinking of something else, is suddenly seized with her travailing pangs, which will unavoidably increase upon her; so ungodly men have abundant reason to look forward with terror to death and judgment; yet they are employed and amused by so many other matters, that they are suddenly surprised with those solemn events, when they least expect them, and this first astonishment will be followed with increasing misery, from which it will be impossible for them ever to escape. The former ch. ends with a special revelation, concerning the Lord's coming to judgment; and the beginning of this ought certainly to be interpreted of the same grand events. SCOTT.

(1.) 'As the apostle had treated of the second coming of Christ, of the resurrection of the pious dead, of the transformation of the living, and of their being all made happy with Christ; some might inquire, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign? He, therefore, v. 1-11. endeavors to divert their minds from such an improper inquiry, [443]

was useless to inquire about the particular time of Christ's coming, v. 1. The thing is certain, Christ will come, and a certain time is appointed for his coming; but he need not write about that, and therefore had no revelation about it; nor should they or we inquire into this secret, which the Father has reserved in his own power. Of that day and hour knoweth no man. There are times and seasons for us to do our work in; these it is our duty and interest to know and observe; but the time and season when we must give up our account, we know not, nor is it needful we should.

2. He tells them the coming of Christ would be sudden, and a great surprise to most men, v. 2. And this is what they knew perfectly, or might know, because our Lord Himself had so said, Mat. 24:44. So Mark 13:35, 36. And no doubt the apostle had told them, as of the coming of Christ, so also of his coming suddenly, which is the meaning of his coming as a thief in the night, Rev. 16:15. The knowledge of this will be more useful than to know the exact time, because this should awaken us to stand on our watch, that we may be ready whenever He cometh.

3. He tells them how terrible Christ's coming would be to the ungodly, v. 3. The righteous God will bring ruin on his, and his people's enemies; and this, their destruction, as it will be total and final, so it will be sudden, and unavoidable; there will be no means possible for them to avoid the terror or the punishment of that day,—no shelter from the storm, or shadow from the burning heat that shall consume the wicked.

4. He tells them how comfortable this day will be to the righteous, v. 4, 5. They are not in darkness; but are the children of the light, &c. This was the happy condition of the Thessalonians, and is of all true Christians. They were not in a state of sin and ignorance, as the heathen world. They were sometime darkness, but were made light in the Lord. And this was their great advantage, that, on this account, that day should not overtake them as a thief, v. 4. They had fair warning and sufficient helps to provide against that day, and might hope to stand with comfort and confidence before the Son of man. This would be a time of refreshing to them, from the presence of the Lord, who, to them that look for Him, will appear without sin unto their salvation, and will come to them as a friend in the day, not as a thief in the night.

V. 6-10. On what had been said, the apostle grounds seasonable exhortations to several needful duties.

happy than those, who will be 'found alive at the coming of the Lord,' that great event, to which we should continually look forward. For when the incarnate Lord of all worlds shall appear, in 'his own glory, and in that of the Father, with all his holy angels,' at his summons, attended 'with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God,' 'the dead in Christ shall rise first,' and, being joined by their brethren then living on the earth, 'they shall meet their Lord in the air,' with unutterable joy, and be for ever with Him in the regions of perfect felicity. May we, by realizing faith and hope, continually anticipate that solemn but joyful period, and comfort ourselves and each other with these words of truth and love! P. O. 1 Cor. 15:41-58. SCOTT.

I. To watchfulness and sobriety, v. 6. duties distinct, yet mutually befriending one another. For while we are compassed about with so many temptations to intemperance and excess, we shall not keep sober, unless we be on our guard; and unless we keep sober, we shall not long watch. The generality of men are too careless of their duty, and regardless of their spiritual enemies. Either they do not consider the things of another world at all, because they are asleep; or they do not consider them aright, because they dream. But let us watch, and act like men that are awake, and that stand on their guard.

Let us also be sober, or temperate and moderate. Sobriety is usually opposed to excess in meats and drinks, and here, particularly, it is opposed to drunkenness; but it also extends to all other temporal things. Thus our Savior warned his disciples, Luke 21:34. Our moderation, then, as to all temporal things, should be known to all men, because the Lord is at hand.

Beside this, watchfulness and sobriety are most suitable to the character and privilege of Christians, as being children of the day, v. 7. What! shall Christians, who have the light of the blessed Gospel shining in their faces, be careless about their souls, and unmindful of another world? They who have so many eyes on them, should conduct themselves with peculiar propriety.

II. To be well armed, as well as watchful: to put on the whole armor of God. And this is necessary, in order to such sobriety as becomes us, and will be a preparation for the day of the Lord; because our spiritual enemies are many, mighty, and malicious; draw many to their interest, and keep them in it, by making them careless, secure, and presumptuous, by making them drunk; drunk with pride and passion, and giddy with self-conceit; drunk with the gratifications of sense: so that we have need to arm ourselves against their attempts, by putting on the spiritual breast-plate, to keep the heart, and the spiritual helmet, to secure the head; and this spiritual armor consists of the three great graces of Christians, faith, love, and hope, v. 8. Faith will keep us watchful and sober. If we believe the eye of God is always upon us, that we have spiritual enemies to grapple with, that there is a world of spirits to prepare for, we shall see reason to watch and be sober. Love, also, will be our defence. True and fervent love to God, and the things of God, will keep us watchful and sober, and hinder our apostasy in times of trouble and temptation. And we must make salvation our hope, for

to something of more moment, viz. that they should so live as to be always prepared for the coming of Christ. BLOOMF. — *Times and seasons.*] 'The time and exact season of Christ's coming.' ID.—'Times denote periods of considerable duration; seasons denote particular portions of these periods, when some important events connected with them take place.' DAVIDSON, in *Henry, abr.*

(3.) *Destruction.*] 'Not so much destruction, as perdition, and that judicial; as appears from the nature of the thing, and from 2 Thess. 1:9.—Also, it should seem to give a limit with respect to the fate of the wicked at the great day, who were not adverted to in the preceding passage on the resurrection.' BLOOMF.

V. 4-11. The apostle judged it needful to give these warnings, for the benefit of those who were negligent in preparing for 'the coming of the Lord;' yet he was well satisfied as to the Christians at Thessalonica in general. SCOTT.

(6.) 'Watching is a point of much importance, and is frequently in Scripture joined with prayer. Our hearts are a tinder-box, ready to take fire from every spark; and the whole atmosphere around us is filled with scintillations as from a furnace. Without the most constant watchfulness, some flame will secretly kindle, that will burn up the



10 Who died for us, that, whether <sup>h</sup> we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11 Wherefore <sup>i</sup> comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

[Practical Observations.]

12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them <sup>j</sup> which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you ;

13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be <sup>k</sup> at peace among yourselves.

14 Now we <sup>l</sup> exhort you, brethren, warn them that are <sup>m</sup> unruly, <sup>n</sup> comfort the feeble-minded, support the <sup>o</sup> weak, be patient <sup>p</sup> toward all men.

15 See that none render <sup>q</sup> evil for evil unto any man ; but ever follow <sup>r</sup> that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

h Ro. 14:8,9. 2 Co. 5:15.  
l or, exhort. 1 He. 13:7,17.  
j He. 13:7,17.  
k Ma. 9:50.

1 or, beseech. m or, disorderly. n He. 12:12. o Ro. 15:1. p Ep. 4:2.

q Pr. 20:22, 24:29. Mat. 5:39,44. 1 Pe. 3:9. r Ga. 6:10.

this good hope, through grace, of eternal life, will be as a helmet to defend the head, and hinder our being intoxicated with the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season.

Having mentioned salvation and the hope of it, the apostle shows what grounds and reasons Christians have, to hope for this salvation ; as to which, observe, he says nothing of *their meriting it*. But our hopes are to be grounded, 1. On God's appointment, v. 9. if we would trace our salvation to the first cause, that is God's appointment. And the sureness and firmness of the divine appointment are the great support and encouragement of our hope. Were we to obtain salvation by our own merit or power, we could have but little or no hope of it : but seeing we are to obtain it by virtue of God's appointment, which, we are sure, cannot be shaken, on that we build unshaken hope, especially when we consider, 2. Christ's merit and grace, and that salvation is by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us. Our salvation, therefore, is owing to, and our hopes of it grounded on, Christ's atonement, as well as God's appointment: and as we should think on God's gracious design and purpose, so also on Christ's death and sufferings, for this end, that whether we wake or sleep, whether we live or die, for death is but a sleep to believers, (as the apostle had before intimated,) we should live together with Christ, live in union and in glory with Him for ever. And, as the salvation Christians hope for, is, to be for ever with the Lord, so

one foundation of their hope is, their union with Him.

V. 11—15. In these words the apostle exhorts to several duties.

I. Toward those who were nearly related one to another.

1. They must comfort or exhort themselves and one another ; for the original word may be rendered both these ways. And the way to have comfort ourselves, or to administer comfort to others, is, by compliance with the exhortation of the Word. Note, We should not only be careful about our own comfort and welfare, but to promote the comfort and welfare of others also.

2. They must edify one another, by following after those things whereby one may edify another, Rom. 14:19. We should, every one of us, study what is for the edification of those with whom we converse ; please all men for their real profit, communicate our knowledge and experiences one to another, join in prayer and praise one with another, and set a good example one before another : it is the duty of those especially who live in the same vicinity and family, thus to comfort and edify one another ; and this is the best neighborhood, the best means to answer the end of society. This the Thessalonians did, (which also ye do,) and this is what they are exhorted to continue and increase in doing. Note, Those who do good, need further exhortations to do more good.

II. He shows them their duty toward their ministers, v. 12, 13. Though the apostle himself was driven from them, yet they had others who labored among them, and to whom they owed these duties. The apostle here exhorts them to observe,

1. How the ministers of the Gospel are described by the work of their office. Ministers are those who must labor among their people, labor with diligence, and unto weariness, so the original imports ; labor in the Word and doctrine, 1 Tim. 5:17. labor with their people, to instruct, comfort, and edify them. Ministers are to rule their people, also, so the word is rendered, 1 Tim. 5:17. not with rigor, but with love. They are over the people in the Lord, to distinguish them from civil magistrates, and to denote, also, that they are but ministers under Christ, appointed by Him, and must rule the people by Christ's laws, and not by laws of their own. This may also intimate the end of their office and all their labor ; namely, the service and honor of the Lord. They must also admonish the people, and that not only publicly, but privately, as there may be occasion. They must instruct them to do well, and should reprove them when they do ill.

2. What the duty of the people is toward their ministers. They must know them. As the shepherd should know his flock, so the sheep must know their shepherd. They must know him for their pastor, regard his teaching, ruling, and admonitions. They must esteem their ministers highly in love ;

greatly value the office of the ministry, and show all proper esteem and affection for the persons of their ministers, and this for their work's sake, because their business is to promote the honor of Christ, and the welfare of men's souls. Note, The work of the ministry is so far from being a disgrace to them who on other accounts deserve esteem, that it puts an honor on them who are faithful and diligent, which otherwise they could lay no claim to ; and will procure them that esteem and love among good people, which otherwise they could not expect.

III. He gives divers other exhortations touching the duty Christians owe to one another.

1. To be at peace among themselves, v. 13. Some understand this (so some copies) as referring to the people's duty to their ministers, to live peaceably with them ; and ministers and people should avoid everything that tends to alienate their affections one from another. And the people should be at peace among themselves, doing all they can to hinder any differences from rising or continuing among them, and using all proper means to preserve peace and harmony.

2. To warn the unruly, v. 14. There will be in all societies some who walk disorderly, who go out of their rank and station : and it is not only the duty of ministers, but of private Christians also, to warn and admonish them. Such should be put in mind of what they should do, and be reprov'd for doing otherwise.

3. To comfort the feeble-minded, v. 14. By these, are intended the timorous and faint-hearted, or such as are dejected and of a sorrowful spirit : we should not despise them, but comfort them ; and who knows what good a kind and comfortable word may do them ?

4. To support the weak, v. 14. It is the grace of God, indeed, that must strengthen and support such ; but we should tell them of that grace, and endeavor to minister of that grace to them.

5. To be patient towards all men, v. 14. We must bear and forbear. We must be long-suffering, and suppress our anger, if it begins to rise on the apprehension of affronts or injuries ; at least, we must not fail to moderate our anger, and this duty must be exercised towards all men, good and bad, high and low.

6. Not to render evil for evil to any man, v. 15. This we must look to, and be very careful about, that is, we must by all means forbear to avenge ourselves. If others injure us, that will not justify us in doing the same to them. It becomes us to forgive, as those that are, and hope to be forgiven of God.

7. Ever to follow that which is good, v. 15. We must always endeavor to be beneficent, and instrumental to promote the welfare of others, both among ourselves, (in the first place to them that are of the household of

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—11. Curious inquiries about 'times and seasons,' are commonly unprofitable and vain. 'Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation ;' the present time we ought to redeem, the present season of obtaining peace with God by faith in Christ, and of doing his will, we ought to embrace ; and then we shall be safe and happy at all events. No man is sure that death and judgment will not surprise him, unless he continually expect and prepare for those approaching events. 'Numbers, at this very hour, are speaking peace and safety to themselves, over whose heads instantaneous destruction is hovering.' Doddr. And how dreadful will be the astonishment and consternation of the scornful infidel, the careless profligate, the proud Pharisee, or the hardened hypocrite, when sudden destruction shall thus seize on him, and no possible method of escape can be found ! As yet we are in the land of light, of hope, of prayer, of forgiveness, though

whole frame of a heavenly mind. Keep thy heart. Turn not thine eye away ; let it be constantly fixed on that moving thing within thee. Have the arm of thy resolution near thee, to seize it the moment it attempts to fly. If you were set to keep a bird, unfastened upon the palm of your hand, you would know what is meant by keeping the heart with all diligence.

V. 12—15. It is evident that the apostle, either personally, or by Timothy, Titus, and others of his fellow-laborers, used to 'ordain elders in every city ;' Acts 14:21—23, 20:17—28, 1 Tim. 5:21, 22, 2 Tim. 2:1, 2. Ti. 1:5—9. and, though no mention is made of this, either in the brief histo-

ry of his labors at Thessalonica, or in the opening of the epistle, there can be no reasonable doubt, that he had appointed elders over the church in that city also. (12.) Are over you.] 'Preside over, or moderate in, your assemblies ; so the word may signify. Many were endowed with miraculous gifts in this church, and there might have been danger of irregularities, as in the church at Corinth, if some had not been appointed to preside over the rest in the time of public exercises. It is evident, ministers, by virtue of their general office, may be said to preside over Christian assemblies, even though there were no such need of their interposition to

we might justly, long before this, have been 'cast into outer darkness.' Nor are we enveloped with pagan, Mohammedan, or anti-Christian darkness and delusion ; we have the light of the Gospel, and the Holy Scriptures afforded us, and we have been led to pay some attention to them. If then we be yet so in darkness, 'that the day of the Lord would overtake us as a thief,' our guilt must be peculiarly aggravated. Let us, therefore, seriously inquire, whether we really be 'the children of the light, and of the day,' by divine illumination, and by an obedient faith. Let us seek to render this evident, as well as to act consistently with our profession. Thus our evidence will continually increase, that 'God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by the Lord Jesus ;' and that 'whether we wake or sleep, we shall' surely 'live together with Him.' 2 Cor. 5:1—8.

SCOTT.



16 Rejoice <sup>v</sup> evermore.

17 Pray <sup>v</sup> without ceasing.

18 In <sup>v</sup> every thing give thanks : for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19 Quench <sup>v</sup> not the Spirit.

20 Despise <sup>v</sup> not prophesyings.

21 Prove <sup>x</sup> all things ; hold <sup>r</sup> fast that which is good.

22 Abstain <sup>z</sup> from all appearance of evil.

[Practical Observations.]

<sup>a</sup> Phi. 4:4.      <sup>v</sup> Ep. 4:30.      <sup>y</sup> Phi. 4:8.  
<sup>t</sup> Ro. 12:12.    <sup>w</sup> 1 Co. 14:1,39.    <sup>z</sup> Is. 33:15.  
<sup>u</sup> Ep. 5:20.      <sup>x</sup> 1 Jn. 4:1.

faith,) and then, as we have opportunity, unto all men, Gal. 6:10.

V. 16—22. Here we have divers short exhortations.

1. *Rejoice evermore, v. 16.* This must be understood of spiritual joy: for we must rejoice in creature-comforts as if we rejoiced not, and must not expect to live many years, to rejoice in them; but if we rejoice in God, we may do that evermore. If we are sorrowful on any worldly account, yet still we may always rejoice, 2 Cor. 6:10. Note, A religious life is a pleasant life, a life of constant joy.

2. *Pray without ceasing, v. 17.* This is in order to rejoicing evermore. We should rejoice more, if we prayed more. We should keep up stated times for prayer, and continue instant in it. We should pray always, and not faint, till we come to that world where

PRACT. OBS. V. 12—22. Faithful pastors should be carefully distinguished from slothful, ambitious, or mercenary men, who have the name and garb of ministers; and they are highly culpable, who despise the admonitions, reject the authority, and refuse respect and affection to the persons, of faithful ministers; but such as expect the reputation, esteem, authority, or emolument, of the ministry, without a diligent attention to its various and laborious duties, are even still more criminal. Outward respect may indeed be paid them; but it is impossible for intelligent Christians 'to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake;' though they will compassionately mourn over and pray

moderate or direct the exercise of the gifts of those, who were officiating in public. DODDR.

V. 16—22. Many have explained 'quenching the Spirit,' of restraining the exercise of spiritual gifts, in themselves or others; but doubtless it relates principally to the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Spirit, in the hearts of believers, not excluding his strivings and convictions in the hearts and consciences of sinners. These sacred influences tend to kindle a flame of sacred love in the soul; but they may be quenched, by evil tempers, by procrastination, by worldly cares, by inexpedient indulgences, by trifling company, or by negligence. Thus convictions are often finally extinguished, and the Holy Spirit will 'no more strive with me;' Gen. 6:3. and thus believers often greatly damp the holy ardor of their souls, mar their own comfort, and impede their growth in grace, by not giving themselves up without delay to those spiritual affections, which are excited by the Holy Spirit, and by 'quenching' them in the manner before-mentioned; and this is the direct opposite to 'quenching the fiery darts of the wicked one.'—(19) *The Spirit.*] 'That is, the afflatus and light of God shining into our minds. But, some one will say, if that he never extinguished in the elect, this is commanded in vain. This, however, I strenuously deny. Nay, for this reason it is not extinguished in the elect, because they cherish it; and they are induced by these exhortations to cherish it. For He, who hath determined never wholly to extinguish his Spirit in the elect, hath also made known by what means He will cherish it, namely, by the progress of his people in piety.' *Beza.*—(20) *Prophesyings.*] Those instructions, and intimations of the divine will, which were given by the prophets, either in explaining the Scriptures, or from immediate suggestions of the Spirit. (*M. R. c.*—*Notes*, 1 Cor. 14.) The exhortation may also fairly include the more ordinary preaching of God's Word.—Yet, as there would be many false teachers, and erroneous doctrines propagated by them, they must be careful to 'prove,' or try, both the teachers and their instructions, by the Word of God, that they might reject what was spurious, and adhere to what was good and excellent.—No doubt, cases often arise, in which we are required to do those things, that appear evil to misinformed, prejudiced, and unreasonable men, in order to obey the commands of God, and to follow the clear dictates of our own consciences. But these are exceptions to the general rule, which could not be particularized in so compendious an exhortation: and they seem to be the only exceptions. For it is better to avoid what appears evil to others, though lawful in itself, if it can be done with a safe conscience, than, by an uncharitable exercise of our Christian liberty, to cause our weak brother to offend, or to prejudice others against the Gospel.—(21) *Prove, &c.*] 'The apostle does not here bid the guides of the church try all things, and the people hold fast that which they delivered to them, but gives an injunction common to all Christians, having "their senses exercised to discern good and evil;" to all, who are obliged "to hold fast that which is good," and not to believe false prophets; which is a strong argument for the perspicuity and sufficiency of Holy Scripture for this work, and against the necessity of a living judge. For he that must "try all things," must also try the doctrine of this living judge, and therefore till he hath made this trial, must not admit his doctrine as an article of

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prayer shall be swallowed up in praise. The meaning is not, that men should do nothing but pray, but that nothing else we do should hinder prayer in its proper season. Prayer will help forward, and not hinder, all other lawful business, and every good work.

3. *In everything give thanks, v. 18.* If we pray without ceasing, we shall not want matter for thanksgiving, in everything. We should be thankful in every condition; it is never so bad with us, but it might be worse: the apostle says, This is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us, that we give thanks, seeing God is reconciled to us in Christ Jesus; in Him, through Him, and for his sake, He allows us to rejoice evermore, and appoints us in everything to give thanks. It is pleasing to God.

4. *Quench not the Spirit, v. 19.* This Spirit of grace and supplication helpeth our infirmities, and assisteth us in our prayer and thanksgivings. Christians are said to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire. He worketh as fire, by enlightening, enlivening, and purifying the souls of men. We must be careful not to quench this holy fire. As fire is put out by withdrawing fuel, so we quench the Spirit, if we do not stir up all within us, to comply with the motions of the good Spirit; and as fire is quenched by pouring water, or putting a great quantity of dirt on it, so we must be careful not to quench the Holy Spirit, by indulging carnal lusts and affections, or minding only earthly things.

5. *Despise not prophesyings, v. 20.* By

for them.—Our love of 'peace among ourselves,' should not induce us to confine at sin; but we must 'warn,' reprove, and censure 'the unruly,' as well as tenderly soothe and 'comfort the feeble-minded, and support the weak' in body or soul.—Even when we are injured in the most atrocious manner, we must 'see to it, that' we on no account 'render evil for evil to any man;' but must learn 'to follow,' with persevering constancy, 'that which is good' and friendly, 'both among ourselves, and to all men;' as knowing what patience and mercy we have experienced, and still continually need from God. SCOTT.

Christian faith. For these words plainly teach, that what we must hold fast must first be tried. Hearers, says Basil, who are instructed in the Scriptures, ought to try the things spoken by their teachers; . . . and receive those doctrines which are consonant, and reject those things which are alien from the Holy Scriptures. WHITBY. SCOTT.

(16.) 'If our religion does not make us happy, how do we do our duty? We are commanded to rejoice. It is a part of practical Christianity to be happy. It belongs to a doctrine of the Word. Moreover, how are we to have satisfactory evidence, that we possess true religion, if we have not joy in it? Suppose we had not love, would we be Christians then? No, certainly; for without charity a man is nothing. But why can we not be Christians without love? Because it is the fruit of the Spirit. If love is the first named of the nine, joy is the second. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, &c." Gal. 5:22 and 23. And these are not said to be the fruits;—the plural is not used;—they are not distinct productions;—they are all one cluster,—"the fruit of the Spirit." While there are many things that may and do diminish our joy, they do not annihilate it. There was much to interfere in the case of those to whom Peter wrote. They were in "heaviness through manifold temptations;" nevertheless they rejoiced greatly.' Rev. Dr. NEVINS.—'There is a class of Christians who appear taciturn, unsocial, and even sad. This is inconsistent with the spirit of religion. Christians ought to appear cheerful and happy; to appear to receive with pleasure and gratitude all the lawful enjoyments bestowed by their heavenly Father. A gloomy deportment does not honor religion, but causes those whom we wish to win to the ways of pleasantness and peace, to feel, that religion is a melancholy, unsocial, and forbidding subject. All professors of religion should endeavor to have such views of God, his love, providence, and care, and should so live, as to be cheerful and happy, and appear so. But trifling and levity is quite as inconsistent and injurious as the former. Let the Christian distinguish between cheerfulness and levity.'

Rev. Dr. BEECHER.

(17.) *Without ceasing.*] 'Incessantly, i. e. at all proper seasons. So the burnt-offering presented every morning and evening is called perpetual. Lev. 6:20. Comp. Luke 24:53. with Acts 2:46, 47. also John 18:20.' DODDR.—'Prayer is living with God; and, if founded on right principles of religion, puts us on searching the heart, leads us to the knowledge of our wants and weakness, and fixes us in dependence on God. Nothing is more easy, as a bare duty or lip service, and nothing more difficult than the performance of it in truth and sincerity.' ADAMS.—'If persons are much engaged in social religion, and but little in that of the closet; and but little moved when alone with God, there is reason to doubt the reality of their religion.' ENWARDS.—'Does any one, not in the habitual and daily practice of secret devotion, pretend to be a Christian? It is but pretence. He may believe the creed of the Christian, he certainly does not pursue the practice, nor possess the spirit of the Christian. Breathing is essential to living, and prayer is the Christian's vital breath. Does he walk with God who never converses with Him? Oh, how an hour in the morning, spent with God, prepares us pleasantly and profitably to pass the other hours of the day with men, and at night, what so composing as communion with God! Has any one become remiss in



23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless<sup>a</sup> unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Faithful is he<sup>b</sup> that calleth you, who also will do it.

25 Brethren, pray for us.

26 Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

27 I<sup>c</sup> charge you by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

¶ The first epistle unto the Thessalonians was written from Athens.

a 1 Co. 1:8,9. b 1 Co. 10:13. 2 Th. 3:3. c or, adjure

heart, and integrity of life, will dispose men to receive the truth in the love of it. We should, therefore, abstain from evil, and all appearances of evil: he, who, shy of the appearances, shuns not the occasions of sin, and who avoids not the temptations and approaches to sin, will not long abstain from the actual commission of sin.

V. 23—28. These words conclude this epistle.

1. Paul's prayer for them, v. 23. Notice, To whom the apostle prays, namely,

PRACT. OBS. V. 23—28. The exhortations above given, show us what we ought to be and to do; but we must remember, that our hearts are naturally opposite to them; nor can any inward and abiding change be wrought in us, save by a divine power. As, therefore, ministers should pray for their people, as well as exhort them, every individual should turn the precepts and promises of God into prayers, for himself and his brethren; and, while he uses every other mean of grace, and vigilantly shuns all hindrances and temptation, he should still beseech 'the God of peace Himself, to sanctify him wholly, and that his spirit, and soul, and body,

secret devotion? What! tired of God? weary of communion with Him? How sad the state of such a soul! NEVINS.

(22.) 'The very doubtfulness (of propriety) which rests upon so many practical questions of every day occurrence, is an admirable arrangement in the divine economy. It is evidently designed to try men's hearts, and to keep their consciences tender and awake. Could we know precisely, and in all cases, where the line is, there would be little need of caution. It is the danger of treading upon forbidden ground, ere we are aware of it, that makes circumspection so necessary; and who can estimate the value of this habit, in forming a truly virtuous character? Our safety lies in standing off wide from the rocks and quicksands, or in plainer language, in abstaining from all appearance of evil. The text includes two ideas. 1. It requires every person most scrupulously to avoid whatever appears to him sinful, or even of doubtful character. 2. As far as he can to shun whatever may carry the appearance of sin to others, even where the motive is right, and the action, in itself considered, would be entirely unexceptionable.' Rev. Dr. HUMPHREY.

V. 23—28. The apostle subjoined to his exhortations fervent prayers to God, knowing that his efficacious grace alone could produce 'the will and power' to do all the things to which he exhorted them. He besought the 'very God of peace,' 'as, in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself,' and as actually reconciled to believers, and the Author of all their inward and outward peace; that He would sanctify them wholly, and in respect of their entire nature, as consisting of a rational and immortal soul, an animal life, with its various sensitive appetites, and a material body; that every sense, member, organ, and faculty, might be completely purified, and devoted to the service of God; and that thus they might be preserved blameless till the coming of Christ. (M. R. g—i. —Note, 3:11—13.)—He was confident that the church at Thessalonica consisted in general of true believers; and, as he was assured of the Lord's faithfulness to his promises, and covenant engagements to his people, whom He had called by his grace; so he was satisfied that He would fully grant his prayer for them. (M. R. k—n.—Notes, 1 Cor. 1:4—9. 10:13—17. Phil. 1:3—8.)—Having, therefore, desired them also to pray for him, and solemnly charged them, by the authority of the Lord Jesus, to let this epistle be read to all the holy brethren, the saints that formed their church, he concluded with his usual salutations and benedictions. (M. R. o—t.)—(23) The very God of peace.] Notes, 2 Cor.

The very God of peace. He is the God of grace, from whom, as the Author, those things would best be obtained, which he prays for. What he prays for, is, their sanctification, that God would sanctify them wholly: and their preservation, that they might be preserved blameless: we should pray for, and press toward, complete sanctification. Where the good work of grace is begun, it shall be carried on, be protected and preserved; and all those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, shall be preserved to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. His comfortable assurance that God would hear his prayer, v. 24. The kindness and love of God had appeared to them in calling them to the knowledge of his truth, and the faithfulness of God was their security, that they should persevere to the end; therefore, the apostle assures them, God would do what He desired, would effect what He had promised, would accomplish all the good pleasure of his goodness toward them. Note, Our fidelity to God depends on his faithfulness to us.

3. His request of their prayers, v. 25. We should pray for one another; and brethren should thus express brotherly love. Ministers need their people's prayers; and the more people pray for their ministers, the more good may ministers have from God, and the people receive by their ministry.

4. His salutation, v. 26. from himself, Silvanus, and Timotheus; and he would have them salute each other in their names: thus he would have them signify their mu-

tual love and affection to one another by the kiss of charity, 1 Pet. 5:14. here called a holy kiss, to intimate, how cautious they should be of all impurity in the use of this ceremony, then commonly practiced; as it should not be a treacherous kiss like that of Judas, so not a lascivious kiss like that of the harlot, Prov. 7:13.

5. His solemn charge for the reading of this epistle, v. 27. This is not only an exhortation, but an adjuration by the Lord. And this epistle was to be read to all the holy brethren. It is not only allowed to the common people, to read the Scriptures, and what none should prohibit, but it is their indispensable duty, and what they should be persuaded to do. In order to this, these holy oracles should not be kept concealed in an unknown tongue, but translated into the vulgar languages; that all men, being concerned to know the Scriptures, may be able to read them, and be acquainted with them. The public reading of the law was one part of the worship of the Sabbath among the Jews in their synagogues, and the Scriptures should be read in the public assemblies of Christians also.

6. The apostolical benediction, usual in other epistles, v. 28. We need no more to make us happy, than to know that grace which our Lord Jesus Christ has manifested, be interested in that grace which He has purchased, and partake of that grace which dwells in Him as the Head of the church. This is an ever-flowing and over-flowing fountain of grace, to supply all our wants.

may be preserved blameless, until the coming of our Lord Jesus:—The most eminent servants of Christ want and value the prayers of their weakest brethren.—Let us be thankful that these excellent epistles are reserved for our perusal also; and while we remember, that the apostle 'charged' the Thessalonians, by the authority of the Lord Jesus, to let them be read to all the holy brethren, some of whom might not be able to read them for themselves, we may be sure that an Antichrist alone would forbid the laity to read the Scriptures, lest they should lead them into heresy. SCOTT.

5:18—21. 2 Thess. 3:16. Heb. 13:20, 21.—(27) Charge you, &c.] It seems evident, that this was addressed to the pastors of the church, and not to believers in general; else the persons charged, and they for whose benefit the charge was given, would have been precisely the same.—The original is, 'I adjure you.'—The solemn charge implies, likewise, a most decided claim to divine inspiration; for it evidently places this, and consequently the apostle's other epistles, on the footing of the ancient Scriptures, 'the oracles of God,' (Note, Col. 4:15, 16.) It likewise shows, both that oaths and adjurations are in some cases lawful; and that the subject, concerning which the apostle wrote, was considered by him as peculiarly important. This is worthy of the most serious consideration of all those, even among protestants, who do not make the reading of Scripture a part of the service, when they meet in the worship of God, or who read them in a careless and indistinct manner. The advantage to illiterate people, to the multitude who cannot read, or who can read but imperfectly, of an audible, distinct, and emphatical reading of the Scriptures in public, can scarcely be calculated. It will soon render even the best preaching more fully understood, and it will, in some degree, supply the deficiency in other cases. SCOTT.

(23.) Wholly.] 'In all parts of your nature.—Spirit, soul, and body.' Your whole constitution. It signifies, the whole frame of nature allotted to you. The apostle very evidently refers to a notion which prevailed among the rabbies as well as the philosophers, that the person of a man is constituted of three distinct substances, the rational spirit, the animal soul, and the visible body. He seems to suppose, Heb. 4:12. the two former may be separated; and some have thought he intimates, 1 Cor. 14:14, 15. that one may know what the other does not.' DONDR.

(27.) 'It is probable, that, from the beginning of the Christian dispensation, the Scriptures of the O. T. were read in every assembly for divine worship. Paul, knowing the plenitude of the apostolic commission, now demands, that the same respect should be paid to his writings which had been given to those of the ancient prophets. This, therefore, is a proper direction to be inserted in the first epistle written by him.' T. II. HORNE, in Henry, abr.—'This clause is an evidence of the authenticity of the epistle. If it was read in the church of Thessalonica, during Paul's lifetime, no publication could be more authentic. If not read, the existence of this clause would condemn it as not authentic, and be an invincible impediment to its success. See PALEY.' HENRY, abr.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTE.—ROMAN MILITARY DISCIPLINE.

Paul was a prisoner under military care, Ac. 28:16. and whether he was at first, or when more closely confined afterwards, in the pretorian camp, (see plan of Rome, at head of Romans, and comp. cut. Ez. : end.) or under military guard in the prison of the palace, he had frequent opportunity to observe the discipline of the soldiers, as is evident from the metaphors he uses, 1 Thess. 5:6, 8. Eph. 6:10—17, and especially 2 Tim. 2:3, 4, 5. The following account of the Roman military discipline, from Gibbon, will illustrate such allusions.

In the purer ages of the commonwealth, the use of arms was reserved for those ranks of citizens who had a country to love, a property to defend, and some share in enacting those laws, which it was their interest, as well as duty to maintain; but in after ages, though the officers were mostly of liberal birth and education, the common soldiers were drawn from the meanest, and very frequently from the most profligate of mankind.—That public virtue, which, among the ancients, was denominated patriotism, is derived from a strong sense of our own interest in the preservation and prosperity of the free government of which we are members. Such a sentiment, which had rendered the legions of the republic almost invincible, could make but a feeble impression on the mercenary servants of a despotic prince; and it became necessary

to supply that defect by other motives, of a different, but not less forcible nature; honor and religion. The peasant, or mechanic, imbibed the useful prejudice, that he was advanced to the more dignified profession of arms, in which his rank and reputation would depend on his own valor; and that, although the prowess of a private soldier must often escape the notice of fame, his own behavior might sometimes confer glory or disgrace on the company, the legion, or even the army, to whose honors he was associated. On his first entrance into the service, an oath (annually renewed on the 1st Jan.) was administered to him, with every circumstance of solemnity. He promised never to desert his standard, to submit his own will to the commands of his leaders, [2 Tim. 2:3, 4.] and to sacrifice his life for the safety of the emperor and the empire. The attachment of the Roman troops to their standard, was inspired by the united influence of religion and of honor. The golden eagle, [cut, p. 643 or 646, Vol. III.] which glittered in front of the legion, was the object of their fondest devotion; nor was it esteemed less impious, than it was ignominious, to abandon that sacred ensign in the hour of danger. Tacitus calls the Roman eagles, Bellerum Deos [war-gods]. They were placed in a chapel in the camp, and with the other deities received the religious worship of the troops. [Comp. Deut. 28:49. Mat. 24:28, 15.] (Continued on p. 481.)



AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
SECOND EPISTLE OF  
PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. D. Mayo.)

THIS second Epistle was written soon after the former, and seems to be designed to prevent their running into a mistake which might arise from some passages in the former epistle, concerning the second coming of Christ; as if it were near at hand.\* The apostle in this epistle is careful to prevent any wrong use which some among them might make of those expressions of his, that were agreeable to the dialect of the prophets of the Old Test.; and informs them, that there were many intermediate counsels yet to be fulfilled before that day of the Lord shall come, though, because it is sure, he had spoken of it as near. There are other things he writes about, for their consolation under sufferings, and exhortation and direction in duty.

This epistle is commonly supposed to have been written from Corinth, not very long after the foregoing, because Silvanus and Timothy still continued with Paul; but the evidence is not very conclusive, and some difficulties attend this opinion. 1:3, 4. It is, however, certain, that it was not sent from Athens, according to the spurious postscript.—Amidst a number of instructive warnings, exhortations, and encouragements, it contains a most remarkable prophecy, 2:3—12. the exact fulfilment of which is a full demonstration of the divine inspiration, by which the apostle wrote his epistles.—‘ Besides the general marks of its genuineness, and divine authority, which it bears in common with the rest of the epistles, it has one peculiar to itself, from the exact representation it contains of the papal power, under the characters of “the man of sin,” and “the mystery of iniquity.” For, considering how directly opposite the principles here described were to the genius of Christianity, it must appear, at the time when this epistle was written, highly improbable, to all human apprehension, that they should ever prevail in the Christian church; and consequently a prediction like this, which answers in every particular so exactly to the event, must be allowed to carry its own evidence with it, and to prove that the author of it wrote under a divine influence.’ *Doddridge.*

‘This epistle may be regarded as a supplement to the former.’

HENRY.

SCOTT.

BLOOMFIELD.

\* On the genuineness of 2 Thess. the Ed. quotes a passage from Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, (a work which *should be more common*;) to show one specimen of his ingenious method of adding to external and direct testimony, that of undesigned coincidence. ‘From 1 Thess. 4:15, 17. and 5:4. it should seem, that the Thessalonians, or some, however, amongst them, had conceived an opinion (and that not very unreasonably) that the coming of Christ was to take place instantly [*hoti enestēken*, is at hand, i. e. now, this year]; and that this persuasion had produced, as it well might, much agitation in the church. The apostle,

therefore, now writes, amongst other purposes, to quiet this alarm, and to rectify the misconstruction; as 2 Thess. 2:1,2. If he admitted, that this passage in the second epistle relates to the passage in the first, it amounts to a considerable proof of the genuineness of both epistles. I have no conception, because I know of no example, of such a device in a forgery, as first to frame an ambiguous passage in a letter, then to represent the persons to whom the letter is addressed as mistaking the meaning of the passage, and lastly, to write a second letter in order to correct this mistake.’

PALEY.

A. D. 56.

CHAP. I.

1 Paul certifieth them of the good opinion which he had of their faith, love, and patience: 11 and therewithal useth divers reasons for the comforting of them in persecution, whereof the chiefest is taken from the righteous judgment of God.

PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timothy, unto <sup>a</sup> the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Grace <sup>b</sup> unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth:

4 So that we ourselves glory <sup>c</sup> in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye <sup>d</sup> endure:

5 Which is <sup>e</sup> a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also <sup>f</sup> suffer:

a 1 Th. 1:1, &c.      1 Th. 2:19, 20.      f 1 Th. 2:14. He.  
b 1 Co. 1:3.          d Ja. 5:11.            10:32, 33.  
c 2 Co. 9:2.          e Phil. 1:23.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. Here we have the introduction, v. 1, 2. in the same words as in the former epistle, which shows, that ministers ought not so much to regard the variety of expression, and elegance of style, as the truth and usefulness of the doctrines they preach. The high esteem the apostle had for them, is expressed, v. 3, 4. He chooses rather to speak of what was praiseworthy in them, in a way of thanksgiving to God, than by commendation of them; and it is our duty, to be thankful to God for all the good that is found in us or others.

The apostle never flattered, but he took pleasure in commending his friends, and speaking well of them, to the glory of God, and for the excitement and encouragement of others; it all centred here, in the praise and glory of God.

He esteemed them, and thanked God for the increase of their faith, and love, and patience, not only that they were *true* Christians, but *growing* Christians. Note, Where there is the truth of grace, there will be increase of it. The path of the just is as a shining light, which shines more and more, unto the perfect day. The matter of the apostle's thanksgiving and glorying on behalf of the Thessalonians, was, 1. That their *faith grew exceedingly*, v. 3. The growth of their faith appeared by the works of faith; and where faith grows, all other graces grow proportionably. 2. Their *charity abounded*, v. 3. their love to God and

Comfort under persecutions.

man. There were no such divisions among them as in some other churches. 3. Their *patience* as well as faith increased, in *all their persecutions and tribulations*. And then patience has its perfect work, when it extends itself to *all* trials. Many persecutions the Thessalonians endured for the sake of righteousness, as well as other troubles; yet they *endured all these*, by faith seeing *Him that is invisible*, and looking to the *recompense of reward*; and endured them with *patience*, not with an insensibility under them, but with patient bearing them, and that from Christian principles, which kept them quiet and submissive, and afforded them inward strength and support.

V. 5—10. Having mentioned the persecutions and tribulations they endured for the cause of Christ, the apostle proceeds to offer several things for their comfort under them: As,

1. He tells them of the *present happiness* and advantage of their sufferings, v. 5. Their sufferings were a *manifest token*, that they were worthy, or meet to be accounted Christians indeed, seeing they could suffer for Christianity. Besides, from their patient suffering, it appeared that, according to the righteous judgment of God, they should be counted worthy of the heavenly glory: not that they could *merit* heaven, but they were made *meet* for heaven. We cannot by all our *sufferings*, any more than by our *services*, merit heaven as a debt; but by

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 3, 4. The apostle, since he wrote the foregoing epistle, had received further accounts concerning the church at Thessalonica, which were so fully satisfactory that he deemed himself bound to return continual thanks to God in their behalf. 1 Thes. 1:1—8.—This [his glorying in them in the churches] may induce a doubt whether the epistle were written from Corinth or not; for, on that supposition, Paul had visited no other churches since he wrote the former epistle, except such as had been planted in that vicinity; and we can hardly suppose, that he only referred to what Timothy or Silvanus had said of them, if indeed they had left him for a season to visit other churches, and then returned. (*Preface to 1 Thes.*)

SCOTT.

(3.) *We.*] ‘Here, and throughout this epistle, as in the former, to be interpreted of Paul only.’

V. 5—10. He permitted his servants to be afflicted, in order to prove and manifest their faith and grace, and to increase in them all holy dispositions and affections.

(5.) *Token.* ‘A glorious and advancing display of the righteous judgment of God. Perhaps the [original] word may further imply, that the sufferings of good men, and the triumphant prosperity of their persecuting enemies, should not only *terminate* in such a *display* of divine vengeance, but that these seeming irregularities do even *now* declare that there shall be such a day of retribution. DODDR.—‘Suppose God to



6 Seeing <sup>g</sup> it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you ;

7 And to you who are troubled, <sup>h</sup> rest with us ; when the Lord Jesus <sup>i</sup> shall be revealed from heaven with <sup>j</sup> his mighty angels,

8 In <sup>k</sup> flaming fire, <sup>l</sup> taking <sup>m</sup> vengeance on them that <sup>n</sup> know not God, and <sup>o</sup> that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ :

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction <sup>p</sup> from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory <sup>q</sup> of his power ;

10 When he shall come to be <sup>r</sup> glorified in his saints, and to be admired <sup>s</sup> in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

g Re. 6:10.  
h Re. 14:3.  
i 1 Th. 4:16.  
Jude 14.  
] the angels of his power.

k He. 10:27.  
2 Pe. 3:7.  
l or, yielding.  
m De. 32:41, 43.  
n Ps. 79:6.  
Zep. 1:6.

o Ro. 2:8.  
p Phil. 3:19.  
2 Pe. 3:7.  
q Is. 2:19.  
r Mat. 25:31.  
s Ps. 65:35.

our patience under our sufferings, we are qualified for the joy promised to patient sufferers in the cause of God.

II. He tells them next of the *future recompense* that shall be given to persecutors, and persecuted.

1. There will be a punishment inflicted on *persecutors*, v. 6. Nothing more infallibly marks a man for eternal ruin, than a spirit of persecution, and enmity to the name and people of God : as the faith, patience, and constancy of the saints are to them an earnest of everlasting rest and joy, so the pride, malice, and wickedness of their persecutors are to them an earnest of everlasting misery : for every man carries about with him, and carries out of the world with him, either his heaven or his hell. God will recompense, and has sometimes in this world : witness the dreadful end of many persecutors ; but especially this He will do in the other world, where the portion of the wicked must be *weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth*.

2. There is a reward for the *persecuted*, v. 7. a rest remains for the people of God, a rest from *sin and sorrow* ; and the future rest will abundantly recompense all their present troubles. The sufferings of this present

be just, I know no stronger proof of a righteous judgment to come, than the persecutions of good men, and the present triumphs of the wicked.' BENSON, in *Bloomf.*—'If we hold this principle of faith, that God is the just Judge of the world, and that it is his office to reward every one according to his work, this other principle must beyond dispute follow, that the present disorder is proof that there will be a judgment, which does not yet appear. God, therefore, to excite us to the hope of a future judgment, now only judges a portion of the world.'

CALVIN, in *Henry*, *abr.*

(7.) *When the Lord Jesus, &c.* 'That the subject here is the *final advent* of Christ to judgment, appears from a comparison with 1 Thes. 1:10. 3:13. 4:15. seqq. 5:2, and 23. To interpret it, therefore, as some do, of Christ's *advent to destroy Jerusalem*, seems merely a device resorted to, to avoid the difficulties at ch. 2.'

BLOOMF., with *Koppe* and *Rosenm.*

(8.) *In flaming fire.* 'Commentators are not agreed on what is signified here. The ancients and earlier moderns, as Est., think it means the fire of hell, i. e. the fire of conflagration, which shall usher in the day of judgment. Theoph. and others construe the words with *taking vengeance, &c.*, or with *shall be revealed, &c.*, v. 7. but the latter construction is the more natural. Most recent commentators, from Benson downwards, take it to denote the *glory* in which our Lord shall be clothed at the great day. Koppe understands it of awful lightning and thunder ; which is very consistent with the former. Ham. understands it of the angels ; and Grot. sinks it into a sort of rhetorical ornament. On the whole, there is no great objection to the interpretation of Bens. and Kop. but I see no sufficient reason to abandon the common one, which is confirmed by the unanimous authority of the ancients.' BL.—'Them that know not, &c.' 'I see no reason to abandon the common opinion, that all *non-Christians* are meant, of course implying such as have had the means of knowing, and have neglected them, and whose ignorance is voluntary (see Rom 2:16.) ; and by them that obey not, &c., those who, after having embraced the Gospel, do not fulfil its injunctions. It is plain that two sorts of persons are meant.' ID.

(9.) 'It is plain the apostle is speaking of the *general judgment*, and the punishment of *all the wicked*, not merely of those who have persecuted Christians.' ID.—'Everlasting destruction.' 'The very nature

time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed. The meanest Christian shall rest with the greatest apostle: nay, what is far more, if we suffer for Christ, we shall also reign with Him, 2 Tim. 2:12. Concerning this future recompense, we are further to observe,

(1.) The *certainty* of it, proved by the righteousness and justice of God, v. 6. The thought should be terrible to wicked men and persecutors, and a great support to the righteous, and such as are persecuted.

(2.) The *time* when this righteous recompense shall be made, v. 7. When God will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath appointed, even Jesus Christ, the righteous Judge. The Scripture has made known to us the judgment to come, and we are bound to receive the revelation here given concerning Christ. As,

[1.] That He will in that day *appear from heaven*. Now the heavens retain Him, they conceal Him ; but then He will be revealed and made manifest. He will come in all the pomp and power of the upper world, *from whence* we look for the Savior.

[2.] He will be revealed with his *mighty angels*, v. 7. or the angels of his *power* : these will attend on Him, to grace the solemnity of that great day of his appearance ; they will be the ministers of his justice and mercy in that day ; they will summon the criminals to his tribunal, and gather in the elect, and be employed in executing his sentence.

[3.] He will come in *flaming fire*, v. 8. The earth, and all the works that are therein, shall be burnt up, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. This will be a *trying* fire, to try every man's works ; a *refining* fire, to purify the saints ; a *consuming* fire to the wicked.

[4.] The *effects* of this appearance will be terrible to some, and joyful to others.

1st. *Terrible* to some ; He will then take vengeance on the wicked.

1. On those that sinned against the principles of *natural* religion, and rebelled against the light of nature ; *that know not God*, v. 8, though the invisible things of Him are manifested in the things that are seen.

2. On those that rebel against the *light of revelation*, that *obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light.

This is the great crime of multitudes, and to such, the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ will be terrible, because of their doom, which is mentioned, v. 9. Where, Observe,

(1.) They will then be *punished*. Though sinners may be long reprieved, yet they will be punished at last.

(2.) Their punishment will be no less than *destruction*, not of their *being*, but of their *bliss* ; not that of the body alone, but both as to body and soul.

(3.) This destruction will be *everlasting*. They shall be always dying, yet never die. It must needs be so, since the punishment is inflicted by an eternal God, fastening on an immortal soul, set out of the reach of divine mercy and grace.

(4.) This destruction shall come from the *presence of the Lord*, that is, immediately from God Himself. Here, God punishes sinners by creatures, by instruments ; but then He will take the work into his own hands.

(5.) It shall come from the *glory of his power*, or from his glorious power. Not only the *justice* of God, but his almighty power, will be glorified in the destruction of sinners ; and who knows the power of his anger ? He is able to cast into hell.

2dly. It will be a *joyful* day to some, even to the saints, unto them that *believe and obey the Gospel*. And then the apostle's *testimony* concerning this day, will be *confirmed and believed*, v. 10. In that bright and blessed day,

1. Christ Jesus will be glorified and admired by his saints. They shall behold his glory, admire it with pleasure, sing hallelujahs to Him in that day of his triumph, for their complete victory and happiness.

2. Christ will be glorified and admired in them. His grace and power will then be manifested and magnified, when it shall appear what He has purchased *for*, and wrought *in*, and bestowed *upon*, all those who believe in Him. Note, Christ's dealings with those who believe, will be what the world one day shall wonder at. Now, they are a *wonder to many* : but how will they be wondered at in this great and glorious day ; or, rather, how will Christ, whose name is *Wonderful*, be admired, when the mystery of God shall be finished ! Christ will not be so much admired in the glorious esteem of angels that He will bring from heaven with Him ; as in the many saints, *the many sons*, He will bring to glory.

of the expressive [original] term *perdition*, suggests the idea of utter and irrecoverable ruin and destruction. As to *everlasting*, the common device to which the Unitarians and others resort, namely, that of representing the term as meaning no more than *ae*,—*lasting*, is only fit for sciolists, and those who wish to be deceived.' BL.—'From the *presence of the Lord*.' 'The phrase expresses not only that they shall be expelled from that joy and glory which reign in the presence of Christ, but that his *presence* shall appear *active* in the infliction of their punishment, so that they shall, as it were, be blasted by the lightning of his eye.' Bp. HOPKINS, in *Doddr.* Bloomfield, remarks, that no interpretation bears the stamp of truth, but the commonly received one, which is ably supported by Koppe. He adds, that the *from* signifies, 'far removed from the Lord, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.' This he confirms by reference to Gen. 4:14. and Is. 2:10, 19. and remarks, 'that the wicked and reprobate will pass their miserable existence in quite another place from the habitations of the accepted, is the perpetual doctrine of Christ and his apostles, as Mat. 25:41.' ED.—'Everlasting destruction is not annihilation ; for their being continues ; and as the destruction is everlasting, it is an eternal continuance, and presence of substantial evil, and absence of all good. The everlasting destruction of the ungodly, is a subject that should be continually placed before men.' A. CLARKE, in *Henry*, *abr.*—'Some persons endeavor to convince themselves that the doctrine of everlasting punishment is untrue, (contrary to the express declaration of God's Word,) because they cannot see how on human principles it can be just. "But it is murder in a parent to drown his child ; while it was right in God to drown a wicked world. Lot could not lawfully destroy his sons-in-law ; but God did it in righteousness." These things teach us, not to compare God with ourselves ; nor think that He must be governed by our views and feelings.'

REV. DR. CHURCH.

(10.) 'It is well remarked by Benson, that whilst the saints are despised, insulted, and persecuted, Christ is not glorified in them, nor admired for his regard to them. But, when He shall punish their persecutors, raise his saints from the dead, deliver them out of all their troubles, and make them completely glorious and happy ; then He shall be glorious and admirable in the eyes of the whole world.' BLOOMF.—'He will show Himself wonderful in giving rest, joy, glory, and ever-



11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would 'count you worthy' of *this calling*, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his goodness*, and the work of faith with power;

12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### CHAP. II.

<sup>1</sup> He willeth them to continue steadfast in the truth received, <sup>3</sup> sheweth that there shall be a departure from the faith, <sup>9</sup> and a discovery of antichrist, before the day of the Lord come. <sup>15</sup> And thereupon repeateth his former exhortation, and prayeth for them.

**N**OW we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,

2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as <sup>a</sup> that the day of Christ is at hand.

<sup>t</sup> or, vouchsafe. Re. 3:4. a Mat. 24:4-6.  
<sup>u</sup> Col. 1:12. v 1 Pe. 1:7.

V. 11, 12. In these verses the apostle again tells the Thessalonians of his earnest and constant prayer for them. They were much on his thoughts, he wished them well, and could not express his good will and good wishes to them better, than in earnest, constant prayer to God for them. Note, The believing thoughts and expectation of the second coming of Christ, should put us upon prayer to God for ourselves and others, Luke 21:36. Observe,

1. *What* the apostle prayed for, v. 11. (1.) That God would *begin* his good work of grace in them; so we may understand this expression; *That our God would count you* (or, as it might be read, *make you*) *worthy of this calling*. We are called with a high and holy calling; and if so, our great concern should be, to be *worthy* of it; and

**PRACT. OBS.** Those who have already distinguished themselves by 'the work of faith, and the labor of love, and the patience of hope,' are yet capable of 'growing exceedingly' in all these things; for the highest attainments of saints on earth fall far beneath full perfection. *Phil.* 3:12-14.—The patient sufferings of exemplary Christians, and the prosperity of ungodly men and cruel persecutors, fully demonstrate a future judgment; when all shall 'discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not.' *Mal.* 3:13-18, v. 18. This assists us in explaining those mysteries of Providence, which would otherwise greatly perplex us; and we perceive, that the devoted worshippers and beloved children of God are proved and purified in the fiery furnace of tribulation, 'that they may be accounted worthy of that kingdom for which they suffer;' and that wicked men are permitted to prosper, that their rancorous enmity against God may be manifested, and the measure of their crimes filled up, and that all may see the glory of that justice, which consigns them to the punishment intended for them. *2 Pet.* 2:4-9. It must indeed at length appear evident to all rational creatures, that 'it is righteous in God to recompense tribulation to those who trouble' his people, from hatred to his holy truth and service, and that it is honorable to all his perfections to give 'rest' and felicity to those, who have been troubled for his sake, and for their love to his cause and worship. Faith, anticipating the grand decisive day, is enabled by the light of revelation to read, and, in a measure, to understand the book of Providence, and thus to wait with composure and comfort for the coming of the Lord. That will be indeed 'the day of wrath and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God;' then the Savior, once 'a Man of sorrows,' and ge-

lasting blessedness, to all who love his truth, and believe in Him.' Bp. JEWEL.

V. 11. *The good pleasure of his goodness.* [This is the shortest and most charming representation anywhere found of that *infinite goodness*, which surpasses all expression, but was never so happily and properly expressed as here.] BLACKWALL.—'The original seems at once to express that it is *sovereign pleasure*, and also that He feels, as it were, a *sacred complacency* in the display of it.' DODDR.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. It would at least take them off from the duties of their several callings in society, and their conduct, expectations, and disappointment might eventually render them the derision of their unbelieving neighbors. Several learned men would explain this, of our Lord's coming, in providence, to destroy Jerusalem, and terminate the persecutions excited by the Jews; but that coming was very near, and the apostle earnestly warned his readers against supposing, that the coming of which he spake was at hand. If, however, this had not been the case, what could there be, in the near approach of divine judgments on Judea, to excite any extraordinary commotion, among the

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because we have no worthiness of our own, but what is owing purely to the grace of God, we should pray that He would *make us worthy*, and then *count us worthy* of this calling, or, that He would make us meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light, Col. 1:12.

(2.) That God would *carry on* the good work that is begun, and *fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness*. The good pleasure of God, denotes his gracious purposes toward his people, which flow from his goodness, and are full of goodness toward them; and it is from thence that all good comes to us. Several good works of grace are begun in the hearts of God's people, which proceed from this good pleasure of his goodness, and we should desire that they may be completed and perfected. In particular, the apostle prays, that God would fulfil in them the *work of faith with power*. Note, The fulfilling the work of faith is in order to the fulfilling of every other good work, and it is the power of God, that not only begins, but carries on, and perfects, the work of faith.

2. *Why* the apostle prayed for these things, v. 12. *That the name of the Lord Jesus may be glorified*; this end we should aim at in everything we do and desire,—that God and Christ in all things may be glorified. And this is the great end and design of the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, which is manifested to us, and wrought in us; our own happiness and that of others should be subordinate to this ultimate end; or thus, it is according to the grace of God and Christ, it is an agreeable thing, considering the grace that is manifested to us, and bestowed on us, by God and Christ, that we direct all we do, to the glory of our Creator and Redeemer.

CHAP. II. V. 1-3. Some among the Thessalonians had mistaken the apostle's meaning in what he had written in his former epistle about the coming of Christ, by thinking that it was near at hand. Or, it may be, some pretended they had knowledge respecting it, by particular revelation from

the Spirit: hereupon, he is careful to rectify this mistake, and to prevent the spreading of this error. Observe,

I. How very earnest and solicitous he was, to prevent mistakes, v. 1. He *entreats* them as brethren, who might have *charged* them, as a father his children: he shows great kindness and condescension; and insinuates himself into their affections. He *obtests*, and even *conjures* them in the most solemn manner, *By the coming of Christ, &c.* The words are in the form of an oath; and his meaning is, that if they *believed* Christ would come, and if they *desired* He would come, and *rejoiced* in the hope of his coming, they should be careful to avoid the error, and the evil consequence hereof, that he was now cautioning them against. From this form of obtestation used by the apostle, we may observe,

1. It is most certain the Lord Jesus Christ will come to judge the world, that He will come in all the pomp and power of the upper world in the last day, to execute judgment upon all. This has been the faith and hope of all Christians, in all ages of the church; nay, it was the faith and hope of the Old Test. saints, ever since Enoch, the seventh from Adam, who said, *Behold, the Lord cometh, &c.* Jude v. 14.

2. At the second coming of Christ, *all the saints will be gathered together to Him*, which shows, that the apostle speaks of Christ's coming to judgment at the *last day*, and not of his coming to destroy Jerusalem.

(1.) They all shall be gathered together. There will then be a general meeting of all the saints, and none but saints; all the Old Test. saints, and all the New Test. saints, they will all be gathered together.

(2.) They shall be gathered together to Christ. He will be the great Centre of their unity. They shall be gathered together to Him, to be attendants on Him, to be assessors with Him, to be presented by Him to the Father, to be with Him for ever, and altogether happy in his presence to all eternity.

(3.) The doctrine of Christ's coming, and our gathering together to Him, is of

erally despised, rejected, and disobeyed, will 'be revealed, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance,' not only on cruel oppressors, persecutors, and murderers, or on scandalous profligates and depredators, but 'on all who knew not God, and obeyed not the Gospel of his Son,' whether infidels, Pharisees, scoffers, hypocrites, enthusiasts, or antinomians, or however they might otherwise be denominated or distinguished. The majesty of that countenance, which was once defiled with blood and spitting, and the glory of his power, who was once crucified in apparent weakness, shall be intolerable to all the multitudes of the wicked, and they will be wholly incapable of making the least resistance, when with tremendous frown He shall say to them, 'Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!' But, at that awful season, He will come especially 'to be glorified in his saints,' who have here believed the testimony of God by his apostles concerning Him, and thus learned to trust, love, obey, and rejoice in Him whom they have not yet seen; and to know and worship God the Father in and through Him. (Notes, *John* 20:24-29, vv. 28, 29. *1 Pet.* 1:3, 9.) No words can possibly express the admiring and adoring gratitude and love, which will unite with the exulting joy and triumph of that happy period. All hopes and imaginations must fall immensely beneath those unutterable glories, and the holy affections with which they will be contemplated and adored. May we diligently seek to obtain and possess the full assurance, that this shall be our felicity; and may we now do all in our power to promote and recommend the Gospel, and to do good to our fellow-sinners and fellow-Christians. For thus glorifying Him on earth, we may be sure of being for ever glorified with Him in heaven! SEOTT.

converts at Thessalonica, in Macedonia, nearly a thousand miles distant from Judea, and these chiefly from the Gentiles? (1) *By the coming.* *3, 9.* See on *1 Thes.* 5:23. *John* 6:51. *11:4.* *Rom.* 8:26, 31. *1 Cor.* 15:3. *2 Cor.* 7:4. *3:23.* This (original) preposition is never thus used, as implying an adjuration, which some suppose to be here meant. SEOTT.

(1.) *By the coming, &c.* [Concerning the coming. Though the other sense is no unquestionable one, yet, on consideration of the whole passage, taken in connexion with ch. 4. of the former epistle, it appears less suitable here. The apostle is going to speak to them on a subject, concerning which they had been troubled.] SCHOLE, in *Henry, abr.* Howe (in *Doddr.*) takes it in the sense of adjuration; but *Doddr.*, *Bloomf.* and others, as here. The coming, says Bl., all the best commentators, ancient and modern, understand of 'Christ's second advent.' Ep.

(2.) 'Some have thought this verse implies, that epistles had been shown to the Thessalonians, falsely purporting to have been written by Paul. *Paley* does not consider this to have been the case, and states the references which exist to the first epistle, as a considerable proof of the genuineness of both.' HENRY, *abr.*



3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except <sup>b</sup> there come a falling away first, and that man of sin <sup>c</sup> be revealed, the <sup>d</sup> son of perdition:

4 Who opposeth and exalteth <sup>e</sup> himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

[Practical Observations.]

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

b 1 Ti. 4:1. d Jn. 17:12. e Is. 14:13. Re. 13:6.  
c Da. 7:25.

great importance to Christians; otherwise, it would not be the proper matter of the apostle's obtestation. We ought therefore not only to believe these things, but highly to account of them also, and look upon them as things we are greatly concerned in, and should be much affected with.

II. The thing itself the apostle cautions the Thessalonians against, is, that they should not be deceived about the time of Christ's coming, and so *be shaken in mind, or be troubled*. Note, Errors weaken our faith, and cause us trouble; and the weak in faith are often deceived, and fall a prey to seducers.

1. He would not have them be deceived, v. 3. Many lie in wait to deceive, and

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—4. It is peculiarly incumbent on ministers, to caution men against expectations not warranted by Scripture; but grounded on impressions, pretended revelations, and perversions of the Word of God; for Satan makes immense use of these delusions, not only to unsettle men's minds, and fill them with needless apprehensions, but even to shake the foundations of their faith and hope, to draw them off from their duty, and to expose the Gospel itself to ridicule and contempt, from scoffers of all descriptions.—But let us observe, that Satan

V. 3, 4. Doubtless many apostasies occurred, in the primitive ages, under different heresiarchs; but all the circumstances of this prediction were never verified, except in that departure from the faith, and that usurpation and spiritual tyranny connected with it, which took place by means of the church of Rome; and the manifest absurdity of all other interpretations, as clearly shown in the controversies of those who contend for one or another of them against their opponents, abundantly proves this. No apostasy of equal magnitude and duration, no delusions equally pernicious and abominable, have taken place, since the apostle's days. The imposture of Mohammed alone can be at all compared with it, and this could not be here intended; for that impostor and his successors were not placed 'in the temple of God,' the visible church, Rev. 11:1, 2. but *without* it, and, in direct opposition to the very name of Christianity, they propagated their delusions mainly by the sword, and not by 'lying miracles;' 8—12. and indeed the impieties of Mohammed never equalled the blasphemies here predicted.—In connexion with this apostasy 'the man of sin would be revealed.' In the language of prophecy, a king generally signifies a succession of monarchs, of the same family or dynasty, carrying on the same design. Dan. 7:15—27. Thus 'the man of sin' does not mean a single person, but a succession of men, impious in themselves, and conducting the same wicked design of corrupting Christianity, in doctrine, worship, and practice; establishing an intolerable tyranny on religious pretences, and using all kinds of seduction, iniquity, and cruel persecution, to induce mankind to adopt the antichristian system.—(Marg. Ref. i.—Notes, Rev. 13.) This 'man of sin' would be 'the son of perdition,' John 17:12. a genuine descendant of Judas, the apostle and the traitor, who sold his Lord for money, and betrayed Him with a kiss; a peculiar factor and agent of Satan, in destroying the souls of men, and finally sinking himself into perdition as his inheritance. Rev. 17:7—14. It is manifest, that no succession of men have yet appeared on earth, to whom this description fully accords, except that of the Roman pontiffs, as in succession the visible head of the popish church.—This deceiver would 'oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped,' either by Christians or Pagans; thus the Roman pontiffs have opposed the truths, commandments, and disciples of Christ, in every age and by every mean; they have opposed the prophetic office of Christ, by teaching human inventions; his priestly office, by the doctrine of human merits and created intercessors, and his kingly office, by changing and dispensing with his laws. Dan. 11:34—45. 1 Tim. 4:1—5. 1 John 2:18, 19.—They have 'exalted themselves above all that is called God, and is worshipped,' by claiming authority to forgive sins, even in those who manifestly continue impenitent, by granting indulgences to men to break the commandments of God, by dispensing with his laws, and placing their own decrees above them, as if of superior validity, and by presuming to give meaning and authority to the Scriptures themselves; which must not be understood in any other sense, than what they impose on them. (Marg. Ref. k—m.)—Moreover, this 'man of sin' 'sits as God in the temple of God,' and we must therefore look for him within the visible church; there he blasphemously usurps the throne of God, showing himself to be God. Many Roman emperors affected divine honors and demanded adoration; but there was no antecedent 'apostasy,' from Christianity or the worship of JEHOVAH, and they might rather be said to sit in the temple of

have many ways of deceiving, we have reason, therefore, to be cautious, and stand on our guard. Some will pretend new revelations, others misinterpret Scripture, and others be guilty of gross forgeries; divers means and artifices of deceit, men will use; but we must be careful that no man deceive us *by any means*. The particular matter in which the apostle cautions them not to be deceived, is about the near approach of Christ's coming, as if it was to have been in the apostle's days; and harmless as this error might have seemed to many, yet, because it was indeed an error, it would have proved of bad consequence to many persons. Therefore,

2. He warns them, and would not have them soon shaken in mind, or be troubled.

(1.) He would not have their *faith weakened*. There was danger lest the Thessalonians, if they apprehended the coming of Christ was just at hand, on finding they, or others, whom they too much regarded, were mistaken as to the *time*, should thereupon question the truth or certainty of the *thing* itself; whereas, they ought not to waver in their minds, as to this great thing, which is the faith and hope of all the saints. Then,

(2.) He would not have their *comforts lessened*, that they should not be *troubled*, or affrighted with false alarms. It is probable the coming of Christ was represented in so much terror, as to trouble many; though in itself matter of the believer's hope and joy; or many might be troubled with the thought, how surprising this day would be, or with the fear of their unpreparedness, or reflection

on their mistake about the time of Christ's coming: we should always watch and pray, but must not be discouraged, or uncomfortable at the thought of Christ's coming.

V. 3—12. Here the apostle confutes the error he had cautioned them against, and gives the reasons why they should not expect the coming of Christ as just at hand. There were several events previous to the second coming of Christ; in particular, he tells them,

I. There would be a *general apostasy, a falling away first*, v. 3. understand a defection from sound doctrine, instituted worship, and church government, and a holy life. The apostle speaks of some very great apostasy, such as should be very general, though gradual, and should give occasion to the revelation or rise of *antichrist*, that *man of sin*. This, he says, v. 5. he had told them of when with them, with design, no doubt, that they should not take offence or be stumbled at it. And, observe, no sooner was Christianity planted and rooted, than there began to be a defection in the Christian church. It was so in the Old Testament church; soon after the promise, there was revolting; soon after men began to call on the name of the Lord, all flesh corrupted their way; soon after the covenant with Noah, the Babel-builders bade defiance to heaven; soon after the covenant with Abraham, his seed degenerated in Egypt; soon after the Israelites were planted in Canaan, when the first generation was worn off, they forsook God, and served Baal; soon after

does most mischief by those, who, like Judas, profess themselves disciples and apostles, and sell Christ for money; these are emphatically 'sons of perdition,' and 'men of sin.' (Notes, Is. 56:9—12. P. O. 9—14. Mat. 21:12, 13. P. O. 12—16. Rev. 18:11—19. P. O. 9—19.)—Avarice, pride, and ambition are always hateful, but they are most diabolical, when employed about spiritual things; and there have indeed been many antichrists; yet no one has been so mischievous, as he 'who seated himself in the temple of God.'

SCOTT.

Jupiter or Mars, than in that of God, whose temple must be considered to be among his professed worshippers, and not among avowed heathens. But the Roman pontiff, claiming to be the universal head of the whole church of God, called by his flatterers 'Vice-God,' 'a God upon earth,' arrogating the title of 'his Holiness,' boasting of 'infallibility,' claiming a right to depose kings, and bestow kingdoms on whom he pleases, with those impious claims before mentioned, answers so exactly to the description here given, that we cannot reasonably doubt for whom it was designed. While the Roman pontiff opposes the worship of God, by enjoining the worship of images, and of saints and angels, and the authority of his laws, to enforce subjection to his own edicts, he himself may be called the great idol, as well as the great tyrant, of the Romish church: Rev. 13:13—17. as he demands the most abject submission, and prostration from all men, both in body and soul, and pours contempt on all authority human and divine. But particulars cannot here be more fully insisted on. It suffices to show, that the Roman pontiffs answered, and still do answer to this description, as the person intended is the archetype of an excellent portrait, and we may venture to assert, that no other succession of men ever did thus accord to it, perhaps no single individual within the visible church.—The apostles, at least after the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles, never spoke of the temple at Jerusalem as the temple of God, but the Christian church in general, or believers in particular, are always denoted by that phrase.—The striking coincidence of this extraordinary prediction, with many parts of the prophecy of Daniel, and of the revelation of John, may be seen to advantage, by consulting the marginal references, and, as far as the author's views of them are concerned, by examining the notes on the passages referred to in those prophecies.—(4) *Who opposeth, &c.* 'That adversary.' 'Opposed to Christ diametrically.' Bullinger. 'By a determined, perpetual purpose "he opposeth God."' Grotius.—(3) *A falling away.* 'The apostasy.' Acts 21:21. Not elsewhere. 'Neither do I see the necessity for denying, that the article has here its proper force; since apostasy, however long-continued, might fitly be called the apostasy, the several acts marking its progress being considered as one whole.' Bp. Middleton.

(4) *Who opposeth, &c.* 'There seems to be an allusion to him who is called antichrist in the apocalypse.—How closely this [his being called God] corresponds to the Roman pontiffs, every attentive reader of history, ecclesiastical or civil, must perceive.' BLOOMER.—*Above all that is called God.* 'If these words are not applicable to the usurpation of papacy in divine things, it is difficult to say who there ever has been or can be to whom they should belong.'

DODDR.

V. 5—7. The Roman empire, united under one potent government, and extremely jealous of all other power and authority, prevented the establishment of that spiritual tyranny and usurpation, by which Satan was attempting to make his grand effort against Christianity; but it would not have been prudent for the apostle explicitly to mention it, in an epistle for general perusal; nor would it have accorded to the style of prophecy; however, most of the fathers so far understood him, as to declare, that Antichrist would not come, till after the downfall of the Roman empire. Had it not been for this obstacle, the evil would have broken out much sooner; for even when this was written, 'the mystery of iniquity did already work.' But the Roman empire, which then



6 And now ye know what <sup>f</sup> withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time.

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already <sup>g</sup> work: only he who now letteth, *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall <sup>h</sup> consume with the spirit <sup>i</sup> of his mouth, and shall destroy <sup>j</sup> with the brightness of his coming.

9 *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of <sup>k</sup> unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love <sup>l</sup> of the truth, that they might be saved.

<sup>f</sup> or, *holdeth*. <sup>g</sup> 1 Jn. 4:3. <sup>h</sup> Da. 7:10,11. <sup>i</sup> Is. 11:4. <sup>j</sup> Re. 19:15,21. <sup>k</sup> He. 3:13. <sup>l</sup> 1 Co. 16:22.

God's covenant with David, his seed revolted, and served other gods; soon after the return out of captivity there was a general decay of piety, as appears by the story of Ezra and Nehemiah; therefore, it was no strange thing, that after the planting of Christianity, there should [from the selfishness of our nature] come a falling away.

II. There would be a *revelation of that man of sin*, v. 3. antichrist would take his rise from this general apostasy. He *afterward* speaks of the revelation of that *wicked one*, v. 8. intimating the *discovery* which should be made of his wickedness, in order to his ruin: here he seems to speak of his *rise*, which should be occasioned by the general apostasy he had mentioned; and to intimate, that all sorts of false doctrines and corruptions should centre in him. Great disputes have been, who or what is intended by this man of sin and son of perdition;

'letted' or *hindered* its full effect, by keeping the church under persecution, and curbing all authority but its own, would continue to retard this event, until it should be removed out of the way. The conversion of the Roman emperors to Christianity, in the beginning of the fourth century, tended greatly to prepare things for this apostasy, by giving scope to the ambition and avarice of the ecclesiastics, and by multiplying exceedingly merely nominal Christians; but it was not till the subversion of the western empire by the northern nations, and the division of it into ten kingdoms, that way was made for the full establishment of the papal usurpation at Rome, the capital city of the empire. *Rev.* 8:11—14.

(5.) *I told you.* Benson remarks on the propriety with which the apostle here uses the *singular* number; since this was doubtless revealed to him only, and not to Silvanus and Timothy. BLOOMF.—*Paley* shows, that this reference to a conversation the apostle had held with the Thessalonians, but the purport of which is not here explained, is a strong proof of the authenticity of the epistle. HENRY, *abr.*

V. 8—12. The obstacle above mentioned, having been taken out of the way, 'that wicked,' or *lawless one*, would be revealed, and would display the deformity of his character without disguise, by endeavoring to exalt himself above all laws, human and divine. But though this great usurper would 'practise and prosper,' yet the Lord would at length consume him by 'the spirit,' or the breath, of his mouth. (*Marg. Ref. u—y.*—*Notes, Job* 4:7—11. *Is.* 11:2—5. *Rev.* 19:11—16.) According to the predictions of his Word, and by the preaching of his Gospel, attested by the influences of his Spirit. He would gradually waste and consume this antichristian tyranny, and terminate all his corruptions of the Gospel. This He has been accomplishing, during the space of above three hundred years, since the first dawns of the Reformation; He will shortly destroy the whole papal authority, and all obstinately attached to it, 'by the brightness of his coming' to spread the Gospel through the nations; (*Notes, Rev.* 18:—20:1—6.) and He will finally condemn, and punish with everlasting destruction, all the actors in this grand delusion, when He shall come to Judge the world. (*Note, Rev.* 20:11—15.) Such will certainly be the doom of this 'lawless one,' this 'man of sin,' this 'son of perdition,' whose coming would be attended, and whose success obtained, not by open force, but by the deep subtlety and peculiar 'energy of Satan.' It implied, that God would act in this matter, according to the general rule, of giving up those who obstinately hated the truth through love of sin, to be blinded by Satan; and that there would be a remnant, even under the deepest darkness of this impostor's reign, of another character and description.—Nothing can more exactly coincide with the system of popery, as it prevailed in the Roman church, and under the Roman pontiff for many ages, than this passage does. Even their boasted pretensions to miraculous powers, and the imposture or ambiguity of every instance, is the grand proof of all, that they were marked out by the Holy Spirit. And the adherence of the church of Rome, even to the present day, to the gross worship of

and if it is not certain that the papal power and tyranny are principally, or *only* intended, yet this is plain: what is here said does very exactly agree thereto. For, observe,

1. The *names* of this person, or rather the state and power here spoken of. He is called the *man of sin*, to denote his egregious wickedness; not only he practices wickedness himself, but he also promotes, countenances, and commands it in others; and he is the *son of perdition*, because he himself is devoted to certain destruction, and is the instrument of destroying many others, both in soul and body. These names may properly be applied, for these reasons, to the papal state; and thereto agree also,

2. The *characters* here given, v. 4.

Thus have the bishops of Rome not only opposed God's authority, and that of the civil magistrate, who are called *gods*, but have exalted themselves above God, and earthly governors, in demanding greater regard to their commands than to the commands of God or the magistrate. Also, as God was in the temple of old, and worshipped there, and is in and with his church now; so the antichrist, here mentioned, is some usurper of God's authority in the Christian church, who claims divine honors; and to whom can this better apply than to the bishops of Rome, to whom the most blasphemous titles have been given, as, *Our Lord God the Pope; Another God on earth; The dominion of God and the Pope is the same?*

3. His *rise* is mentioned, v. 6, 7. of which, observe two things:

(1.) Something hindered, or withheld, or *let*, until it was taken away. This is supposed to be the power of the Roman empire, which the apostle did not think fit to mention more plainly at that time; and it is notorious, that, while this power continued, it prevented the advances of the bishops of Rome to that height of tyranny, which soon afterward they arrived to.

(2.) This mystery of iniquity was gradually to arrive at its height; and so it was

in effect in the Romish church; and thus the mystery of iniquity did the more easily, and almost insensibly, prevail. The apostle justly calls it a *mystery of iniquity*, because wicked designs and actions were concealed under false shows and pretences, at least they were concealed from the common view and observation. By pretended devotion, superstition and idolatry were advanced; and by a pretended zeal for God and his glory, bigotry and persecution were promoted. And he tells us, This mystery of iniquity did even then begin, or did *already work*; while the apostles were yet living, there were then the *deeds of the Nicolaitans*, persons who pretended zeal for Christ, but really opposed Him. [Selfishness and its forms of] pride, ambition, and worldly interest of church-pastors and church-rulers, as in Diotrefes, and others, were the early working of the *mystery of iniquity*, which, by degrees, came to the prodigious height visible in the church of Rome.

4. The *fall* or ruin of the antichristian state is declared, v. 8. The head is called *that wicked one*, or that lawless person who sets up a human power in competition with, and contradiction to, the divine dominion and power of the Lord Jesus Christ: but as he would thus manifest himself to be the man of sin, so the revelation or *discovery* of this to the world would be the sure presage and the means of his ruin. The consuming of him precedes his final destruction, and that is by the pure Word of God, accompanied with the Spirit of God: this will discover the mystery of iniquity, and make the power of antichrist to consume and waste away; and in due time it shall be totally and finally destroyed, and this will be by the *brightness of Christ's coming*. Note, The coming of Christ to destroy the wicked will be with peculiar glory, and eminent lustre and brightness.

5. The apostle further describes the *reign and rule* of this man of sin. Where, observe,

(1.) The *manner* of his coming or ruling, and *working*: in general, that it is after the

images, saints, and angels, and to the doctrine of authoritative absolutions, dispensations, penances, purgatory, transubstantiation, and the merit of good works, proves that 'the man of sin,' though consuming by the Spirit and the word of Christ, is yet very far from being destroyed 'by the brightness of his coming.'—It is very wonderful, that any reflecting persons should ever think this prophecy applicable to the *antichristian* delusions of modern infidels or atheists, who have apostatized from a profession of Christianity; when the single expression, 'signs and lying wonders,' demonstrates that they could not be meant. Antichrist, indeed, has made strenuous efforts as an *unmasked* infidel; yet these short-lived appearances must not be compared with the permanent and wide-spread mischiefs of one thousand three hundred years. The original words may mean, either false and lying pretences to the power of working miracles, and the impostures by which they are rendered plausible, or they may relate to things really supernatural, when performed in support of false doctrine, and claims to a divine authority, in propagating it. (*Notes, Ex.* 7:11, 12. *Deut.* 13:1—5. *2 Tim.* 3:6—9.) —(12) *Damned.*] The original is *judged*, as in several other places, and, in such awful declarations, a needless and ungrounded asperity of language, in the translation, only gives occasion to objections, and so weakens the general effect. Yet, in this place the meaning is unequivocal, and *judging* such characters, as are here described, at the coming of the Lord, must terminate in their eternal condemnation. But this is not always the case, when the same word is used. (*Note, 1 Cor.* 11:29—34.)

(2.) 'The apostle's principal design, v. 3—12, is, not to give a description of things then existing, but a prediction of some remarkable *future* events. When the obstructing power is taken away, then it shall no longer be a *mystery* of iniquity, or operate secretly; but then shall that wicked one be openly and publicly revealed.' BENSON, in *Bloomf.*

(3.) *Even him.*] 'I. e. that wicked, v. 8.' BLOOMF.—*With all power, &c.*] 'Nothing seems so natural as to refer the whole to the *fictional miracles of the church of Rome*, which have grown to such a degree of extravagance and effrontery, as even to make their own popes ashamed.' DODDR.

(10.) 'Amidst all the variety of shapes which infidelity assumes, that of our times is peculiar. It is not the open, gross, unmasked, and daring infidelity of Voltaire and his day. It is now subtle, and refined,—clothed in all the attractions of taste and eloquence; it even comes to us clothed in the garb of religion and virtue, and is therefore the more to be feared. Some of the most popular novelists, and other writers of the day, sanction profanity, adultery, duelling, revelling, and other vices, not openly and directly, but under peculiar circumstances; yet in such a manner as to break down all the barriers of religion and virtue. What guilt are those men accumulating, who, as booksellers and publishers, are deluging the community with such works,—who are, in effect, bartering the souls of their fellow-men for money!'

Remarks of Rev. Dr. TYNG, at Cincinnati.



11 And for this cause God shall send them strong <sup>m</sup> delusion, that they should believe a lie :

12 That <sup>a</sup> they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

[Practical Observations.]

13 But we <sup>o</sup> are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen <sup>p</sup> you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth ;

14 Whereunto <sup>q</sup> he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory <sup>r</sup> of our Lord Jesus Christ.

15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle.

m Eze. 14:9. o c. 1:3. q 1 Pe. 5:10.  
Ro. 1:24. p Ep. 1:4. 1 Th. r Jn. 17:22.  
n De. 32:35. 1:4. 1 Pe. 1:2.

example of *Satan*, the grand enemy of souls, the great adversary of God and man. More particularly, it is with satanic power and deceit : a divine power is pretended for the support of this kingdom, but it is only after the working of *Satan* ; signs and wonders, visions and miracles, are pretended ; by these the papal kingdom was first set up, and has all along been kept up, but they have false signs to support false doctrines ; and lying wonders, or only pretended miracles that have served their cause, things false in act, and fraudulently managed, to impose on the people : and the diabolical deceits with which the antichristian state has been supported are notorious. The apostle calls it all *deceivableness of unrighteousness*, v. 10. Others may call them *pious frauds*, but the apostle called them unrighteous and *wicked frauds* ; and, indeed, all fraud, being contrary to truth, is an impious thing. Many are the subtle artifices the *man of sin* has used, and various are the plausible pretences by which he has beguiled unwary and unstable souls to embrace false doctrines, and submit to his usurped dominion. [Comp. a terrible instance, Col. : end.]

(2.) The *persons* are described, who are his *willing subjects*, or most likely to become such, v. 10. They are such as *love not the truth, that they may be saved*. They could

not bear sound doctrine, and therefore easily imbibed false doctrines ; had they loved the truth, they would have persevered in it, and been preserved by it ; but no wonder if they easily parted with what they never had any love to [ : true faith includes the heart]. And of these persons it is said, that they *perish*, or are lost : are in a lost condition, in danger to be lost for ever. For,

6. We have the *sin and ruin of the subjects of antichrist's kingdom* declared, v. 11, 12.

(1.) Their *sin* is, *They believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*, did not love the truth, and therefore they did not believe it ; and because they did not believe it, therefore they had pleasure in unrighteousness, or in wicked actions, and were pleased with false notions. Note, An erroneous mind and vicious life often go together, and help forward one another.

(2.) Their *ruin* is thus expressed ; *God shall send them strong delusions, to believe a lie*. Thus He will punish men, for their unbelief and dislike of the truth, and love to sin and wickedness ; not that God is the author of sin, but in righteousness He sometimes withdraws his grace from such sinners as are here mentioned, and leaves them to themselves ; and then sin will follow of course, yea, the worst of wickedness, that shall end at last in eternal damnation. God is just when He inflicts spiritual judgments here, and eternal punishments hereafter, on those who have no love to the truths of the Gospel, who will not believe them, or live suitably to them, but indulge false doctrines in their minds, and wicked practices in their lives and conversations.

V. 13—15. Here observe,

1. The *consolation* the Thessalonians might take against the terrors of this apostasy, v. 13, 14. They were *chosen to salvation*, and called to obtain glory. The apostle reckoned himself *bound in duty* to be thankful to God on this account ; *we are bound to give thanks to God always for you*. This preservation of the saints is owing,

(1.) To the stability of the election of grace, v. 13. God had *chosen them from the beginning*, had *loved them with an everlasting love*. His election was *eternal in its date*,—from the *beginning* ; not of the *Gospel*, but of the *world*, before the foundation of the world, Eph. 1:4. The *end* to which they were chosen was salvation, complete and eternal, from sin and misery, and the full fruition of all good. The *means* in order to obtaining this end,—*sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*. The decree of election therefore connects the end and the

means, and these must not be separated. We are not elected of God, *because we were holy*, but *that we might be holy*. Sanctification is by the operation of the *Holy Spirit* as the Author, and by *faith* on our part. There must be the belief of the truth, without which there can be no true sanctification, or perseverance in grace, or obtaining of salvation. Faith and holiness must be joined together, as well as holiness and happiness ; therefore, our Savior prayed for Peter, that his faith might not fail, Luke 22:32. and for his disciples, John 17:17.

(2.) To the efficacy of the gospel-call, v. 14. As they were chosen to salvation, so they were *called therunto by the Gospel*, Rom. 8:30. The *outward* call of God is by the *Gospel* ; and this is rendered effectual by the *inward* operation of the *Spirit*. It is a call to honor and happiness, even the *glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*, the glory He has purchased, and is possessed of, a glory to be communicated unto them who believe in Him, and obey his Gospel : such shall be with Christ, to *behold his glory*, and they shall be glorified with Christ, and partake of his glory. Hereupon, there follows,

2. An *exhortation* to steadfastness and perseverance, v. 15. Observe, he does not say, 'Ye are chosen to salvation, and therefore ye may be careless and secure ;' but *therefore stand fast*. So the apostle John, having told those whom he wrote to, that they had *received the anointing which should abide in them*, and that they should *abide in Him*, (in Christ,) subjoins this exhortation, *Now abide in Him*, 1 John 2:27, 28. The Thessalonians are exhorted to steadfastness in their Christian profession, or to *hold fast the traditions they had been taught*, the doctrine of the Gospel, which had been delivered by the apostle, by word or epistle. As yet, the canon of Scripture was not complete ; therefore, some things were delivered by the apostles, in their *preaching*, under the guidance of the infallible Spirit, which Christians were bound to observe as coming from God ; other things were afterward by them *committed to writing*, as the apostle had written a former epistle to these Thessalonians ; and these epistles were written, as the writers were moved by the *Holy Ghost*. Note, There is no argument from hence for regarding *oral* traditions in our days, now that the *canon* of Scripture is complete, as of equal authority with the sacred writings. Such doctrines and duties as were taught by the inspired apostles, we must steadfastly adhere to ; but we have no certain evidence of anything delivered by

PRACT. OBS. V. 5—12. Every event takes place in the appointed season, and, after all the mysterious devices of iniquity which Satan or wicked men can frame, 'the counsel of God shall stand, and He will do all his pleasure,' nay, one antichristian power has often been employed, far besides his purpose, to stop the progress of another. still more pestiferous.—It will at last appear that none were deceived by any 'energy of delusion,' who were not, at heart, enemies to the truth and will of God, and who continued to 'take pleasure in unrighteousness ;' He is constantly permitting the devil to seduce persons of this character into the belief of some lie, by which they are held, as with fetters of iron, till

(11.) 'All the best commentators, ancient and modern, are agreed, we are here to resort to that idiom by which God is figuratively said to do a thing, which He only permits to be done.' BLOOMF.—*A lie*.] 'The lie, i. e. that they have taught.' DODDR.—'The monstrous lie of *transubstantiation*.' MACKN.—'The whole system of falsehood, promulgated by the man of sin and his adherents ; though it is true, transubstantiation is the *fundamental "lie,"* from which have proceeded most others of the church of Rome.' BLOOMF.

(12.) *Had pleasure in unrighteousness*.] Doddr. thinks, this 'refers to many of the priests and others in the Romish church, who impose on the people known delusions, merely out of regard to secular interest ;' yet Bloomfield suggests, that 'to others also the words of Peter respecting Balaam may be too applicable: "He loved the wages of unrighteousness." Church-worldliness is not confined to Rome.' ED.

V. 13, 14. Some contend, that the apostle meant, the beginning of the Gospel being preached to them, but he plainly distinguished this *choice* of them, from their *calling*, and spoke of the latter as the effect of the former.—The doctrine of election has been repeatedly considered. (*Marz. Ref. m—p.—Notes. Rom. 8:28—31. 9:10—14. Eph. 1:3—12*) We may here add, that if the 'calling' of the Thessalonians, was the effect of any preceding *choice* of them, it comes to the same thing, whether that choice was made the preceding day, or from 'before the foundation of the world,' or from eternity, except as the immutable perfections and purposes of God and his absolutely perfect prescience are

they receive their merited condemnation. To avoid this fatal doom, men should take heed not to repress their convictions from love of sin, but to reverence the dictates and admonitions of conscience, by which God speaks to them emphatically, and with special application. They should pray earnestly for 'the love of the truth,' and for saving faith as inseparably connected with it ; for many fall away and perish, who have 'the knowledge of the truth,' but 'the love of the truth,' 'accompanies salvation,' and never fails.—They should also use every means of obtaining that humble and spiritual mind, which is the best and the only security against every fatal delusion. SCOTT.

concerned. Otherwise, if He acted wisely and righteously in choosing *them*, rather than their companions in idolatry and vice, it was equally wise and righteous to choose them from eternity, as at the very hour or moment preceding their regeneration.—How wisely and happily does the apostle mingle the views of the grace of God and the duties of men ! while he represents our choice to salvation in a light so worthy of God, since this salvation is still to be obtained, "through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." Doddr.

(13.) *Hath chosen*.] 'The only interpretation that has the stamp of truth is that of the ancients, and almost all the early moderns, who refer it to the eternal purposes of God, in the election and calling of the Thessalonians to the Christian faith.' BLOOMF.

V. 15. Doubtless the apostle's oral 'traditions' were worthy of reverence and obedience, but how should we, at this day, know anything of them, except as they were written for our benefit ? It is therefore a singular instance of the 'deceivableness of unrighteousness' in 'the man of sin,' to attempt the support of his corrupt system, by a single word in that very ch., which most fully exposes his devices. For oral traditions, of equal authority to the written Word, being the rule of its interpretation, and committed to the keeping of the church, (that is, to the Romish clergy,) has been the grand support of popery for ages ; and of this fundamental principle they have no better *scriptural* proof, than this single word, and one or two more of similar import ! Mat. 15:1—20. SCOTT.



16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

### CHAP. III.

1 He craveth their prayers for himself, 3 testifieth what confidence he hath in them, 5 maketh request to God in their behalf, 6 giveth them divers precepts, especially to shun idleness, and ill company, 16 and last of all concludeth with prayer and salutation.

**F**INALLY, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you :

2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men : for all men have not faith.

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

■ Ja. 13:1.            a run.            d Jn. 17:15.  
Re. 1:5.            b absurd.        e 2 Co. 7:16.  
t 1 Pe. 1:3.        c 1 Co. 1:9.

them, more than what we find contained in the Holy Scriptures.

V. 16, 17. Here we have the apostle's earnest prayer for them, *to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father.* We may, and should, direct our prayers, not only to God the Father, through the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself ; and should pray in his name unto God, not only as his Father, but as our Father in and through Him.

He takes encouragement in his prayer,—from the consideration of what God had already done for him and them, v. 16. Where, observe, The love of God is the spring and fountain of all the good we have or hope for ; our election, vocation, justification, and salvation. From this fountain in particular all our consolation flows. And the consolation of saints is an everlasting consolation, founded on the hope of eternal life, that good hope, which is grounded on the love and promise of God, and the experience they have had of the power, goodness, and faithfulness of God ; and it is good hope through grace, the free grace and mercy of God, and not through any worth or merit of their own.

PRACT. OBS. V. 13—17. Many can well remember the time, when they despised or hated the doctrines of Scripture, and preferred soothing errors, nay, some of us seemed awfully to provoke God 'to send us strong delusion to believe a lie,' and we should certainly have held it fast, if we had been left to ourselves. If then it be now otherwise, we may thankfully ascribe it to the love of God, to his special unmerited mercy and grace, who from the 'beginning chose us unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.' But let none conclude themselves chosen and called, who are strangers to the 'sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus.' (Notes, 2 Tim. 1:9. 1 Pet. 1:1, 2.) Let none place saving

V. 16, 17. 'From its simplicity, the Gospel derives advantages in consolation. Grief, whether in the learned or illiterate, is always simple. A man bowed down under calamity, has no relish for investigation. His powers relax. He leans upon his Comforter ; his support must be without toil, or his spirit faints. Conformably to these reflections, we see, on the one hand, that the unlearned compose the bulk of Christians ; the life of whose souls is in the substantial doctrines of the cross,—and on the other, that, in the time of affliction, even the careless lend their ear to the voice of revelation. Precious at all times to the believer, it is doubly so in the hour of trial. These things prove, not only that the Gospel, when understood, gives a peculiar relief in trouble, but that it is readily apprehended ; being most acceptable when we are least inclined to critical research.'

Rev. Dr. J. M. MASON.  
NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1—5. *Unreasonable, &c.*] Perverse and wicked men, such as the Jewish zealots were ; the blind devotees of the pagan idolatry, whom the Jews stirred up to aid their persecutions, may also be intended. Notwithstanding the abundance of miracles, and

He asks of God for them,—that He would comfort their hearts, and establish them in every good word and work, v. 17. It is observable how comfort and establishment are here joined together. Note, Comfort is a mean of establishment ; and our establishment in the ways of God is a likely mean in order to comfort ; whereas, if we are wavering in faith, and of a doubtful mind, or if we are halting and faltering in our duty, no wonder if we are strangers to the pleasures and joys of religion. We must be established in every good word and work, in the word of truth and the work of righteousness: Christ must be honored by our good works and good words ; and they who are sincere will endeavor to do both ; and in so doing they may hope for comfort and establishment, till at length their holiness and happiness be completed.

CHAP. III. V. 1—5. In these words, observe,

1. The apostle desires the prayers of his friends, v. 1. He always remembered them, and would not have them forget him and his fellow-laborers. Note, This is one way the communion of saints is kept up, by their praying with one another, and for one another, when absent one from another : they who are at a great distance, may meet together at the throne of grace ; and they who are not capable of doing or receiving any other kindness, may yet, this way, do and receive real and very great kindness. People should pray for their ministers ; and ministers should desire the prayers of their people, after the humble, engaging example of this great apostle. Observe, what he desires and directs them to pray for.

1. For the success of the gospel-ministry, v. 1. This was the great thing blessed Paul was most solicitous about. All the forces of hell were then, and still are, more or less, raised and mustered to oppose the Word of the Lord ; we should pray, therefore, that oppositions may be removed, that so the Gospel may have free course to the ears, the hearts, and the consciences of men, that it may be glorified in the conviction and conversion of sinners, the confutation of gainsayers, and the holy conversation of the saints. Paul was now at Athens, or, as some think, at Corinth, and would have the Thessalonians pray that he might have as good success there, as he had at Thessalonica, that it might be as well with others even as it was with them.

2. For the safety of gospel-ministers. He asks their prayers, not for preferment, but for preservation, v. 2. Note, They who are enemies to the preaching of the Gospel, and persecutors of the faithful preachers of it, are unreasonable and wicked men. They

act against all the rules and laws of reason and religion, and are guilty of the greatest absurdity and impiety. Faithful ministers need protection as well as assistance ; for standard-bearers are most struck at ; therefore, all who wish well to the interest of Christ in the world, should pray for them. For all men have not faith ; many do not believe the Gospel ; will not embrace it, and are restless and malicious in their endeavors to oppose it, decry the ministry, and disgrace the ministers of the Word : and too many have not common faith or honesty ; we can safely put no confidence in them ; from such we should pray to be delivered. We may sometimes be in as much or more danger from false and pretended friends, as from open and avowed enemies.

II. He encourages them to trust in God. We should not only pray to God for his grace, but also trust and confide in his grace, and humbly expect what we pray for. Observe,

1. The best Christians need establishment and preservation from evil. This the apostle had prayed for on their behalf, ch. 2:17. and now he encourages them to expect this favor : we as much need the grace of God for our perseverance to the end, as for the beginning of the good work.

2. What encouragement we have to depend on the grace of God ; *The Lord is faithful.* When once the promise is made, performance is sure and certain. He is a faithful God, a faithful Friend ; we may depend on his filling up all the relations He stands in to his people. Let it be our care to be true and faithful in our promises, and to the relations we stand in to this faithful God. He adds,

3. A further ground of hope that God would do this for them, seeing they did and would do the things they were commanded, v. 4. The apostle had this confidence in them, and that was founded on his confidence in God ; for there is otherwise no confidence in man : and it is one ground to hope, that whatsoever we ask of God, we shall receive of Him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight, 1 John 3:22.

III. He makes a short prayer for them, v. 5. a prayer for spiritual blessings. Two things of the greatest importance he prays for : 1. That their hearts might be brought into the love of God, as the most excellent and amiable Being, which is not only most reasonable and necessary in order to our happiness, but is our happiness itself ; and this we never can attain, unless God, by his grace, direct our hearts aright, for our love is apt to go astray after other things. Note, We sustain great damage by misplacing our affections on wrong objects. If

faith in anything, but real, efficacious 'belief of the truth,' as revealed in Scripture. This 'belief of the truth' brings the sinner to rely on Christ, and thus to love and obey Him ; it is sealed by the Holy Spirit on his heart, and it prepares him for the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. Let us then stand fast in this doctrine of the apostles, and reject all spurious additions from every quarter ; let us not hesitate to pray 'to our Lord Jesus Himself,' as well as to our loving 'God and Father,' that our interest in his 'everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace,' may be proved, not only by his 'comforting our hearts,' but by his 'establishing us in every good word and work.' SCOTT.

the fulfilment of prophecies, which evinced the truth of the Gospel, 'all men had not faith' to believe it, that being the effect of a divine power on the heart, which overcame the carnal pride, obstinacy, and enmity of fallen nature. Probably, some Judaizing Christians secretly concurred with more open enemies, in attempting the life of the apostle ; and these false brethren, having no real faith in Christ, were also destitute of faithfulness, in their professed friendship to him and his fellow-laborers, so that no confidence could be placed in them. As it is the work of the Holy Spirit, to direct and lead the soul into these holy tempers, and a consistent conduct ; and as 'the Lord' is here mentioned, distinct from God, and from Christ, it has been supposed, with some probability, that the apostle addressed this prayer personally to the Holy Spirit, 'the Lord the Spirit,' the third person in the adorable Trinity. S.

(2.) Faith.] 'That upright and candid disposition which would engage men to receive the testimony of the apostles.' 2:10 12. DODDR.  
(3.) Evil.] 'The evil one, and all his works.' Ib. Sin's rule. ED.  
(4.) 'God will cause that my labor be not in vain.' Bp. JEWEL.



5 And the Lord direct <sup>f</sup> your hearts into the love of God, and <sup>g</sup> into the patient waiting for Christ.

[Practical Observations.]

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye <sup>h</sup> withdraw yourselves from every brother <sup>i</sup> that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us.

7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought <sup>j</sup> with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

9 Not because we have not <sup>k</sup> power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that <sup>l</sup> if any would not work, neither should he eat.

11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are <sup>m</sup> busy-bodies.

12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they <sup>n</sup> work, and eat their own bread.

f 1 Ch. 29:13. i 1 Co. 5:11,13. m 1 Ti. 5:13.  
g or, patience of j Ac. 18:3 20:34. 1 Pe. 4:15.  
Christ. k 1 Co. 9:6. n Ep. 4:23.  
h 1 Ti. 6:5. l Ge. 3:19.

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—5. The success of the Gospel is as really promoted by fervent prayer, as by faithful preaching. — Our whole dependence must be on the faithfulness of God to his promises, who will surely establish those who humbly rely on Him by obedient faith, and preserve them from every fatal snare, to his heavenly kingdom. If, by his special grace, we have that faith, which multitudes have not, our obliga-

(5.) *Patient waiting for Christ.* 'Not the patience itself of Christ, in bearing calamities, but a patient endurance, suffering for righteousness, after the example of Christ; or a patient waiting for Christ.' BLOOMER. So DODDR. ED.

V. 6—9. The church at Thessalonica was in general deserving of high commendation; but the apostle had occasion to speak with authority and implied reproof, in one particular, of which he had before given some intimation. 1 *Thess.* 4:9—12.—(6) *Withdraw.* 'It is taken from sailors, who, by a banded course, avoid a rock. To refrain from that to which the eagerness of the mind carries one forward.' ERAMUS. Thus Joseph, while his heart was full of love to his brethren, refrained himself, and spake roughly to them, for their good.

(8.) 'This declaration is confirmed by the apostle's statement, Phil. 4:15: that he had not received anything from any church of Macedonia, except that of Philippi.' HENRY, *abr.*—*For nought.* 'At free cost.' DODDR. 'Nought, here, denotes "without working for it."' BLOOMER.

(9.) *Follow us.* 'Imitate us in a frugal and industrious life.' DODDR. V. 10—12. Perhaps the apostle had perceived a disposition, in some persons at Thessalonica, to make religion a pretence for indolence, and for subsisting on the hospitality and liberality of their brethren, without working at their own trades or occupations.—How they might fall into this evil is easy to conceive. Persons all alive to God and his Christ, and knowing little of the deceitfulness of the heart, and the crafts of Satan, might find it irksome to attend to the concerns of this life. It was a fault indeed, and very dangerous if persisted in, but as it was soon corrected, in all probability, and in part occasioned by the strength of heavenly affections, one cannot be very severe in censuring it. . . . It may be worth while for those, who feel themselves much irritated against similar evils, attending on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our days, to consider, whether they do not exercise more candor toward the Thessalonians, and respect them as real Christians, while they scorn those, who walk in their steps, as enthusiasts.' JOS. MINOR, *Ec. History.*—The apostle, however, being fully aware of the consequences, had when he was with them commanded them, not to maintain in idleness such as could work and would not, either by private or public charity: that, being left to endure the pinchings of hunger and want, they might be compelled to attend to their proper duty.—God gives everything to man in the way of labor; and, in fact, in all cases, the *industrious* part of every community maintains the *stolthful*. (M. R. c. d.) The words may indeed signify, 'If any man refuse to work, he ought by all means to live without food; but, if that be impossible, let him thence learn to consider how unreasonable and iniquitous idleness is;' by which a man, who cannot but consume, does nothing to replenish the stores, which are thus exhausted. The expression was for substance a proverb among the Jews.—'They state it wrong, who render it, Let him not eat who does not work; for none are more deserving of relief from others, than they, who, through some just and necessary impediment, cannot labor though

God direct our love aright on Himself, the rest of the affections will thereby be rectified. 2. That a *patient waiting for Christ* might be joined with this love of God. *Waiting for Christ* supposes our faith in Him, that we believe He came once in flesh, and will come again in glory: and this we must *expect*, and be careful to get ready for, enduring with courage and constancy all that we may meet with in the mean time: and we *have need of patience*, need of divine grace, to exercise Christian patience, the *patience of Christ*, (so some,) patience for Christ's sake, and after Christ's example.

V. 6—15. The apostle, having commended their obedience for the time past, and mentioned his confidence in it for the time to come, proceeds to command and direct some who were faulty. Observe, The best society may have faulty persons in it: but evil manners beget good laws; the disorders Paul heard of as existing among the Thessalonians, occasioned the good laws we find in these vs., which are of constant use to us, and all others whom they may concern. Observe,

I. What was amiss among the Thessalonians, v. 6. Some were guilty of disorderly walking; not living regularly, or agreeably to their profession of religion. In *particular*, some were *idle*,—*busy-bodies*, v. 11. This the apostle was so credibly informed of, that he had sufficient reason to command and direct, with relation to such, how they ought to behave, and how the church should act toward them.

It does not appear, that they were gluttons or drunkards, but idle, and therefore disorderly. Probably, they had a notion (by misunderstanding some passages in the former epistle) of the near approach of Christ's coming, which served them for a pretence to leave their callings, and live in idleness. Note, It is an abuse of religion, to make it a cloak for idleness, or any other sin. If

we were sure the day of judgment were ever so near, we must, notwithstanding, do the work of the day in its day, that when our Lord comes, *He may find us so doing*. Or, it may be, these disorderly persons pretended, that the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, discharged them from the services and business of their particular callings and employments in the world: whereas, they were to *abide in the same calling wherein they were called of God, and therein abide with God*, 1 *Cor.* 7: 20, 24. Industry in our *particular* callings as men, is a duty required of us by our *general* calling as Christians. Or, perhaps, the general charity that was then among Christians to their poor brethren, encouraged some to live in idleness, as knowing the church would maintain them: whatever was the cause, they were much to blame.

It may seem a contradiction, that the same persons who were idle, were busy-bodies also; but most commonly persons who have no business of their own, or who neglect that, busy themselves in other men's matters. If we are idle, the devil and a corrupt heart will soon find us somewhat to do. The mind of man is a busy thing; if it be not employed in doing *good*, it will be doing *evil*. Note, Busy-bodies are disorderly walkers, curious, and impertinent, meddling with things that do not concern them, and troubling themselves and others with *other men's matters*. The apostle warns Timothy, 1 *Tim.* 5: 13. to beware of such.

II. The good laws occasioned by these evil manners. Concerning which we may notice,

1. *Whose laws they are:* viz. those of *the apostles of our Lord*, given in the name of their Lord and ours, v. 6, 12. The apostle uses words of authority and entreaty; and where disorders are to be rectified or prevented, there is need of both. The authority of Christ should awe our minds to

incline and enable us, perseveringly, and without reserve, to obey all his commands, and that 'the Lord the Spirit' may 'direct our hearts into the love of God, and the patience of Christ,' and persevering diligence in every good work. *Jude* 20, 21. SCOTT.

they greatly desire it.' BEZA.—This venerable reformer here takes occasion to expose the mendicant monks and friars, as exactly answering the character described by St. Paul.—How far relieving vagrant beggars, of whose character or incapacity for labor, we know nothing, can consist with this rule, is worthy of inquiry. Certainly the money might be almost always better employed. *Luke* 13: 35—43.—Whatever rank men sustain, they are mere drones in the hive, unless they fill up the duties of their station for the common benefit. Christians, therefore, should not countenance such evident injustice, especially as this has always been one of the slanders raised against the professed worshippers of God. *Ex.* 5: 8, 9, 15—23. P. O. 1—9.—The kindness required from believers, and to which they are propense, as under the influence of holy love, often gives stoltful persons an opportunity, on various pretences, to seek exemption from labor, by which they become useless and mischievous; they and their families are often reduced to great distress; debts are contracted which they cannot pay; and that bounty is diverted into a wrong channel, which should encourage the industrious poor, and support the sick and afflicted. The apostle therefore reminded his beloved children at Thessalonica of this rule, because he heard, that there were some of these 'disorderly' persons among them, who did not work at their own trades or callings, but expected to be maintained in idleness by their brethren. These would naturally contract a sauntering, gossiping habit, and would indulge a talkative, curious, and conceited temper, and, having much leisure, they would intermeddle with other men's concerns, to the disturbance of families, by exciting suspicions and jealousies among neighbors; and to the injury of men's characters. But the apostle commanded, and charged them, in the name of Christ, and as they would stand accepted before his tribunal, to cease from this officiousness, and to attend to their own labor, with humility, modesty, contentment, and peaceable industry; that, thus subsisting on their own earnings, they might 'eat their own bread,' and not consume what properly belonged to others. *Ex.* 20: 15. *Mat.* 6: 11. The difficulty, which modern missionaries, in most parts of the world, find, in bringing those among whom they labor to habits of regular industry, the absolute necessity of doing this in order to any permanent success, and the very great impediments which indolence, as to regular daily employment, places in their way, well illustrates the necessity and importance of the apostle's charge in this particular. In all places, where missions have permanently succeeded, the converts, however indolent in mind or body before, have become industrious in some regular employment. SCOTT.

(10.) *Not work . . . shall not eat.* See *Wayland's Mor. Sci.* p. 421—7. 'He that doth nothing is ill occupied. Water is clear and fair, fresh and comfortable; yet if it stand still in a hole, or be kept long in a vessel, whence it hath no issue, it will rot and swell, and be unwholesome. Even so it fareth with the souls of Adam; if they have nothing to do, no way to bestow their wit, they will rot and prove unwholesome, and devise mischief all the day long. What else filleth the prisons, and bring-



13 But ye, brethren, ° be not p weary in well-doing.

14 And if any man obey not our word ° by this epistle, note that man, and have ° no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

15 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a ° brother.

16 Now the Lord ° of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.

17 The salutation ° of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle : so I write.

18 The ° grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

¶ The second epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Athens.

o or, faint not.      tlc.      t Ro. 16:20.  
p 1 Co. 15:53.      r Mat. 18:17.      u 1 Co. 15:21.  
q or, signify that      ver. 6.      v Ro. 16:24.  
man by an epis-      s Le. 19:17.

obedience, and his grace and goodness should allure us.

2. What the good laws and rules are. The apostle commands and directs the whole church how they should behave towards disorderly persons, v. 6. We must be very cautious in church-censures and church-discipline. We must Note that man ; that is, have sufficient proof of his fault before we proceed further. Next, we must Admonish him, in a friendly manner, and this privately, Mat. 18:15. Then, if he will not hear, we must Withdraw from him, and not keep company with him; that is, we must avoid his familiar converse and society ; for two reasons, namely, that we may not learn his evil ways ; and may shame, and so reform him. Love should be the motive of our withdrawing ; for if those who are under the censures of the church, be reclaimed and reformed thereby, they will recover their credit and comfort, and right to church-privileges as brethren. The general con-

PRACT. OBS. V. 6—18. Pious men are often betrayed into a disregard to this rule, through humility and tenderness ; by which means the misconduct of one professed believer turns to the scandal of his profession, and he himself is soothed into carnal security, by an ill-judged and unkind lenity.—When difficulties occur respecting public discipline, believers of every denomination might agree, in separating from disorderly walkers, with proper admonitions and exhortations ; that thus being ' put to shame ' they might be brought to repentance.—It is peculiarly incumbent on ministers, to show the tendency of their doctrine in their own conduct, that the people may perceive ' how they ought to imitate them.' It is not, indeed, required, or generally expected, that they should ' labor and toil, night and day, to avoid being chargeable ' to the people. Yet they should be very careful to avoid every appearance of selfishness, indolence, or an encroaching spirit ; and they must

eth to the gallows, and causeth the bewailing of so many untimely deaths ? What causeth so many diseases in the body ? Whereof rise mutterings in the city against magistrates ? Whereof rise rebellions in kingdoms ? You can give no greater cause thereof than idleness. ' Behold (saith the Lord, Ez. 16:49.), this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness.' This called for fire from heaven, and wasted so many cities into ashes. If we shall make account for our idle words, (Mat. 12.) what shall we do for our idle hands, for our idle feet, for our idle body, for our idle soul ? What account for all our idleness, shall we make at the day of judgment ? ' If any will not work, the same shall not eat,' is a hard saying. Yet, saith Paul, I have kept it. He doth not say, If any be sick, or weak, or impotent, and cannot work ; but if any be idle, and froward, and will not work, to such an one give not to eat ; that so he may see the danger of idleness, [and feeling God's punishment for its transgression, may learn his law of labor,] and ' work with his hands, that he may give him that needeth.' (Eph. 4.)—But you will say, kings, and counsellors, bishops, preachers, and all other sorts of learned men, neither plough, nor sow, nor hedge, nor ditch, nor use such painful labor of the body ; they sit at rest and live idly. They that so think are deceived : the toil which princes take, and the great cares wherewith they are occupied, pass all other cares. . . . If a bishop, or minister, study the Scriptures, preach the Gospel, catechize the children, and take a care of the souls of God's people ; if he sow the Lord's field, feed the Lord's flock, thresh the Lord's corn, and walk before the people carefully ; if he have the care of the churches, and can say with the apostle (2 Cor 11.), ' Who is weak, and I am not weak ? who is offended, and I hurt not ? ' any offence that is given to my brother, is to me as a fire, or as a torment : if he be instant in season and out of season ; if he do the work of an evangelist, and make his ministry fully known, he shall find himself occupied. . . . The master of the ship seemeth to be idle, to sit still and do nothing ; he stirreth not the pump, he driveth not the oars, he soundeth not the deep, he rideth not the ropes, he scaleth not the shrouds, he runneth not hither and thither, forward and backward, under the hatches or above ; he

duct and behavior of the church, should accord with the good example which the apostle, and those who were with him, had given them, v. 7. particularly in diligence, so different from the disorderly walkers. He took pains in his ministry to get his own living, v. 8. He might justly have demanded a maintenance, because they who preach the Gospel may of right expect to live by the Gospel, v. 9. but he waived his right from affection to them, and for the sake of the Gospel, and that he might be an example for them, v. 9. that they might learn how to fill up time, and always be employed in somewhat that would turn to good account.

He commands and directs those that lived idle lives, to reform, and set themselves to their business, v. 10. It was a proverbial speech among the Jews, *He who does not labor, does not deserve to eat.* It is the will of God, that every man should have a calling, and make his business of it, and not live like a useless drone in the world. It was not the mere humor of the apostle, but the command of Jesus Christ, that *with quietness we work, and eat our own bread*, v. 12. Men ought, some way or other, to earn their own living, otherwise they do not eat their own bread. Observe, There must be work or labor, in opposition to idleness ; and quietness, in opposition to being busy-bodies in other men's matters. We must study to be quiet, and do our own business. This is an excellent but rare composition, to be of an active, yet quiet spirit ; active in our own business, yet quiet as to other people's. He exhorts those that did well, not to be weary in well-doing, v. 13. ' Go on and prosper. The Lord is with you while you are with Him. See that whatever you do, that is good, you persevere in. You must never give over, or tire in your work. It will be time enough to rest when you come to heaven, that everlasting rest which remains for the people of God.'

V. 16—18. In this conclusion of the epistle we have the apostle's benediction and prayers for these Thessalonians. Let

often give up their own interest, indulgence, and inclination, to make themselves an example to the people, and to give energy to their instructions.—It would indeed be deemed rigorous, should we enforce the apostle's rule, ' that if any willet not to work, neither shall he eat ; ' yet, in fact, it is founded in equity and love. It is injustice to the indigent, the weak, and the industrious, when the bounty of their brethren is wasted on the indolent and extravagant. The greatest kindness, which can be shown to the latter, is to constrain them, if possible, ' to labor, working with their own hands the thing which is good ; ' this alone can preserve them from mischief, temptation, and misery. Eph. 4:28. Persons of this description ought, therefore, to be discountenanced, rebuked, ' commanded from the Lord Jesus, with quietness to labor and eat their own bread,' and, if they refuse, censured, noted, [starved,] and shunned by all believers, till brought to repentance. SCOTT.

sitteth still, holdeth his peace, and looketh upon the loadstar, and in appearance doth nothing. But his labor passeth all the rest ; without it all the pains the other mariners take were lost. Even so fareth it in the state of princes and their counsellors. . . . Bp. JEWELL.

V. 13. As the bad use, which some individuals made of the liberality and hospitality of their brethren, tended to damp the ardor of Christian charity, the apostle thought it necessary to caution them against ' growing weary in well doing,' in this or in any other instance. Gal. 6:6—10. SC. (13.) Not weary, &c. ' Diodati gives this an excellent turn : though some may abuse your liberality, be not deterred thereby from works of charity.' DODD.

V. 14, 15. (14) By this epistle, note that man. ' Signify that man by an epistle.' The article before epistle seems to exclude this construction. ' Set a mark or brand of disgrace on him, that all may know and avoid him,' as the Roman censors used to brand ignominious citizens.—*Have no company.* See on 1 Cor. 5:9.—*That he may be ashamed.* Tit. 2:2. See on Mat. 21:37.—(15) Admonish him as a brother. 1 Thes. 5:12, 14. See on Acts 20:31.—1. These exhortations are evidently addressed to all the brethren in general. . . . 2. The apostle exhorts them to own them as Christian brethren, (which they at present did not,) who by excommunication are excluded from the church. Whit. It indeed is probable, that excommunication was not meant ; but such tokens of general disapprobation, as came short of that solemn exclusion, which was reserved for the public censure of the church by its ministers on more scandalous offenders.—Thus the Corinthians were charged to excommunicate the incestuous person, and him only, though there were others, with whom they were forbidden even to eat. 1 Cor. 5:1—5, 9—13. SCOTT.

(15.) ' Few admonitory precepts better speak the mild, gentle, and forgiving spirit of the Gospel than this.' HEWL.—' The end of excommunication is, not to drive from the church such as have fallen, but to win them to the church by amendment. Bishop's Bible, in HENAY, abr.

V. 16. See this ' peace of God,' explained, in Dwigth. Ser. 84. Ed. V. 17. It is not unlikely, that he dictated his epistles, while laboring at his trade as a tentmaker. SCOTT.



AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
FIRST EPISTLE OF  
PAUL TO TIMOTHY,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

*(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. Atkinson.)*

HITHERTO Paul's epistles were directed to churches; now follow some to particular persons; as Timothy, Titus, and Philemon; all three ministers. Timothy and Titus were evangelists, an inferior order to the apostles, as appears by Eph. 4:11. Their commission and work was much the same with that of the apostles, to plant and water churches; accordingly they were itinerants. Timothy was first converted by Paul, Acts 16:3. therefore Paul calls him his *own son in the faith*.

The scope of these two epistles, is, to direct Timothy how to discharge his office as an evangelist at Ephesus, where he now was, and where Paul ordered him for some time to reside, to perfect the good work he had begun there. As for the ordinary pastoral charge of that church, he had very solemnly committed it to the Presbytery, as appears from Acts 20:28. where he charges the presbyters to *feed the flock of God, which He had purchased with his own blood*. HENRY.

The time, when this epistle was written, constitutes the principal difficulty respecting it. \* It was long the general opinion, that the apostle wrote it soon after he was driven from Ephesus, on account of the tumult excited by Demetrius and his craftsmen. Acts 19:21—40. 20:1. As the difficulties of this ancient opinion seem far less than those of the other, (see note †), I adhere, though with diffidence, to it, and shall comment on the epistle accordingly.—The history, in the Acts of the Apostles, implies, that Timothy continued with the apostle, during his progress through Macedonia, and his abode at Corinth; and that he returned with him through Macedonia into Asia. But Timothy is not afterwards mentioned, as accompanying the apostle, either to Jerusalem, or in his subsequent imprisonment at Cesarea, or in his voyage to Rome; and it is probable, that he abode in Asia; and, accompanying the elders of Ephesus, when they parted from the apostles, he settled at that city for some years, according to the ancient records of the church concerning him.—But, when four years or nearly had passed, it seems that he went to the apostle at Rome, and was imprisoned with him, but was soon set at liberty, and sent to Philippi. (Phil. 2:19. Heb. 13:23.)—In respect to Timothy, it is sufficient to refer to the account before given of his appointment to be Paul's companion in travel. (Notes, Acts 16:1—5.) Having been trained up under the apostle's immediate care, he imbibed, in an extraordinary degree, his spirit and principles, and was peculiarly beloved by him. The apostle, when suddenly driven from Ephesus, had left Timothy behind him to settle the concerns of that church, in the best manner he could; and wrote this epistle to him for his direction in so doing.—Whether the above conjecture (for we have no authentic records to direct us), of Timothy's return to Ephesus, and residence there, be well grounded, or not, these directions would not be in vain; for the substance of them would be equally applicable in any other church, to which he might be sent, or in which he might have resided.—Indeed, it does not appear, that the apostle intended to give Timothy instructions exclusively, or even principally, respecting the Ephesian church; but rather general counsels for his conduct in the churches of Christ; and for that of all others, when called to act in similar circumstances.—'Having done the work for which he was bid to stay at Ephesus, he might go on to other places, doing the work of an evangelist, and settling ordinary church-governors, bishops, presbyters, and deacons, where they were wanting, and doing all other things mentioned in this epistle, as things to be performed in the church of God.' Whit.—The epistle contains cautions against false teachers; directions concerning the worship of God, and behavior of believers; the character and conduct to be required in bishops and deacons, and their families; exhortations to Timothy, concerning his private and public behavior, especially in ordaining ministers, censuring offenders, and settling the other affairs of the church; admonitions against several sins and temptations; solemn charges to faithfulness, and various doctrinal and practical counsels and instructions interwoven with them. This, and the two following epistles, are peculiarly replete with instruction to ministers, and should be continually studied and meditated on, by all who bear that sacred character, or are preparing for the good work of the ministry.—The postscript dates the epistle from Laodicea; but it is almost certain the apostle had never visited that city when he wrote this epistle. Col. 2:1. SCOTT.

\* Respecting its date, *Doddr.*, after Athanasius, Theod., Baronius, Capellus, Blondel, Ham., Grot., Salmassius, Light., and Beason, inclines to the earlier, i. e. 56 or 58; and *Mackn.*, after Le Clerc, L'Enfant, Cave, Fabricius, Mill, Whitby, and others, to the later, i. e. 64 or 65: in which also accords *Ros.*, and *Horne*, whom see; as also Supplement. Ep.

† But several very learned and respectable men have, in moderate times, started objections against this opinion, which they think insurmountable.—There is no reasonable doubt, that the Second Epistle to the Corinthians was written, during the apostle's abode in Macedonia, after he came thither from Ephesus. But it is evident that Timothy was with him when he wrote that epistle; for his name is inserted in the superscription. (2 Cor. 1:1. Note, 2 Cor. 2:12, 12.)—How then, say they, could he have been left at Ephesus, and entreated to abide there? (1:3.)—And as to the only solution of the difficulty, which can be thought of, viz. that Timothy might follow . . . so soon after as to be with the apostle in Macedonia, when he wrote his epistle to the Corinthians, that supposition is inconsistent with the tenor and tenor of the epistle throughout. For the writer speaks uniformly of his intention to return to Timothy at Ephesus; and not of his expecting Timothy to come to him in Macedonia. (3:14, 15. 4:13.)—Therefore I concur with Bp. Pearson, in placing the date of the epistle, and the history referred to in it, at a period subsequent to Paul's first imprisonment, and consequently subsequent to the era, up to which the Acts of the Apostles bring his history. *Paley*. This is a fair statement of the main objection; though some things of inferior moment will require a little attention. It may, however, be questioned, whether the conclusion here deduced, does not lie open to still more insuperable objections. Some regard may be due to the total silence of the Scripture, as to any subsequent visit of the apostle to Ephesus, and his departure thence to Macedonia.—It is, indeed, allowed, that during his imprisonment at Rome, he mentions, in his epistles, a purpose of visiting several places in the eastern regions. (Phil. 2:24. Philem. 22. Heb. 13:19, 23.) And in 2 Tim., it appears, that he had been at several places in the neighborhood of Ephesus. Still, however, there is no intimation that he visited Ephesus. He observes, in the close of this epistle, that he had sent Tychicus to Ephesus; which may imply, he had not gone thither himself.—Indeed, whether it be allowed, according to historical records, which are not very satisfactory, that he hastened from Crete to Rome, hearing accounts which induced him to think his presence there necessary; or whether his persecutors seized on him, and conveyed him to Rome, in an unexpected manner; it seems evident, that he was hurried out of these regions, before he had time to accomplish his purposes, in the manner he wished. (Notes, 2 Tim. 4:12—20.) It might also be brought as an objection to this opinion, that Timothy, after the conclusion of Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, must, on any computation, have been above 39 years of age; and though, at that time of life, the exhortation to flee youthful lusts might not be unseasonable; (2 Tim. 2:22.) yet the caution, 'Let no man despise thy youth,' (4:12.) seems not so consistent.—But the grand difficulty arises from the words of the apostle to the Ephesian

elders at Miletus; 'And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.' It is evident, that the persons present understood this, not as a conjecture, or as a 'desponding inference,' but as a prediction. When the apostle perceived the overwhelming sorrow it had excited in them, he neither retracted nor qualified it; and it seems unquestionable that the historian records it as a prophecy. (Notes, Acts 20:25—27, 36—38.) The words 'Ye all, &c.' confine the interpretation to the persons present; the prediction, therefore, would be exactly fulfilled, though the apostle visited many places in that neighborhood; nay, though he purposed (which is not likely) to visit Ephesus, provided he did not actually go thither, or meet any of the elders to whom he gave the charge at Miletus.—It can hardly be supposed, that after an absence of perhaps rather more than ten years, the apostle, revisiting Ephesus, found, that all the elders whom he addressed at Miletus were dead. But, except on this very improbable supposition, or on that of the words before adduced being a mere conjecture, in which the event proved the apostle to have been mistaken; we must adhere to the old opinion, that this epistle was written immediately after the apostle had left Ephesus to go into Macedonia; because it is, on every other supposition, almost, if not absolutely certain, he never after left Ephesus to go into Macedonia. But let us next consider, whether the objections above so cogently stated, against the ancient opinion, may not be satisfactorily answered.—The apostle must have spent some considerable time in Macedonia, after he left Ephesus, and before he went to Corinth, for 'he went over those parts, and gave them much exhortation.' (Acts 20:2.) Now, it is not in the least improbable, that unforeseen circumstances might induce Timothy to leave Ephesus, sooner than either he or the apostle had intended. The violence of the persecutors might drive him thence, or he might need some counsel and instruction, in respect of the false teachers, or on some special points, which had occurred to him concerning the state of the church.—Various circumstances, indeed, might render it inexpedient for him to continue at Ephesus, according to the plan at first formed. On the other hand, it is probable, the apostle wrote this epistle as soon as he arrived in Macedonia, and at that time he might fully purpose, and confidently hope, to go to Timothy at Ephesus, and yet be disappointed.—Thus, he had 'once and again' purposed to return to Thessalonica; 'but Satan hindered him.' (1 Thes. 2:18.) Thus he had seen cause, to alter his plan, in respect of going to Corinth, even after giving some intimations of it. (Notes, 2 Cor. 1:15—20.)—It may not improbably be conjectured, that when he left Ephesus, he expected Timothy would abide there, till he had accomplished his business in Macedonia and Achaia, and should go to him at Ephesus, as he took his voyage to Jerusalem with the contributions of the churches; but, having been induced, by the malicious designs of the Jews, to go from Corinth through Macedonia, so much time had elapsed, that he found it necessary to sail *past* Ephesus, lest he should not arrive at Jerusalem by the feast of Pentecost. This might derange one part of his plan, and Timothy's departure from Ephesus would defeat another. (Acts 20:1—6, 13—16.) SCOTT.



## CHAP. I.

1 Timothy is put in mind of the charge which was given unto him by Paul at his going to Macedonia. 5 Of the right use and end of the law. 11 Of Paul's calling to be an apostle, 20 and of Hymeneus and Alexander.

**PAUL**, an apostle of Jesus Christ, <sup>a</sup> by the commandment of God our Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ, *which is our* <sup>b</sup> hope;

2 Unto <sup>c</sup> Timothy, *my own son* <sup>d</sup> in the faith: <sup>e</sup> Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went <sup>f</sup> into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

4 Neither give heed <sup>g</sup> to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: *so do*.

5 Now the end <sup>h</sup> of the commandment is charity, out of a pure <sup>i</sup> heart, and *of* a good conscience, and *of* faith unfeigned:

6 From which some <sup>j</sup> having <sup>k</sup> swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

7 Desiring to be teachers of the <sup>l</sup> law; understanding <sup>m</sup> neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

a Ac. 9:15.  
b Col. 1:27.  
c Ac. 15:1.  
d Tit. 1:4.  
e Ga. 1:3.

1 Pe. 1:2.  
f Ac. 20:1,3.  
g c. 6:3,4,20.  
h Ro. 13:8,10.  
i Ga. 5:14.

i 2 Ti. 2:22.  
j or, not aiming at.  
k 2 Ti. 4:10.  
l Ro. 1:22.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. Here is,

1. The inscription of the epistle; from whom it is sent,—*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, constituted an apostle by the commandment of God our Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ; a preacher of the Gospel of Christ, and a minister of the kingdom of Christ.* He calls Timothy his *own son*, because he had been an instrument of his conversion, and he had served with him in the Gospel, Phil. 2:22.

2. The benediction is, *grace, mercy, and*

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. In this address, Paul called himself 'an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior,' by which, in this connexion, the Person of the Father seems intended, as purposing salvation for sinners, forming the plan of it, and giving his own Son to be in human nature their Savior; but the Lord Jesus was joined in granting this commission, as being one with the Father, in essence, authority, and counsel. The apostle called 'the Lord Jesus our Hope,' as all his hope of salvation and eternal happiness was fixed on the Person, righteousness, atonement, and mediation of Christ.—From the exuberance of his love to Timothy, he added the word 'mercy' to his usual salutation, or perhaps because his peculiar trials and services would require peculiar consolations, from the compassion and mercy of the Lord towards him. (*Marg. Ref. e—g.*)—(1) *God our Savior.* 'The Father saves us, as reconciled to Him in the Son, and the Son saves us, as reconciled in his flesh.' *Beza.*

(2.) *My own son.* *Ros.* thinks, from 2 Tim. 3:10. that Timothy had been from his earliest years committed to Paul, to be trained up after his example, which *Bl.* seems to favor, and regards it as an evidence that Timothy was his convert; but *Doddr.* says, it is not certain, from the history, that Timothy was first converted by Paul, and suggests, that he calls him his *son*, chiefly to express the parental affection he had for him, and the complacency he found in that assistance he had received from him in the work of the ministry, and in the *filial* reverence and affection which he expressed to the apostle. *Ep.*

V. 3, 4. The apostle left Timothy at Ephesus, when he went thence into Macedonia; (*Pref.*) that he might solemnly and constantly charge certain persons to teach no other doctrines, than what he had done. (*Note, Gal. 1:6—10.*) The Judaizers would be sure to take the opportunity of Paul's absence to propagate their tenets; and he knew them to be zealous for the traditions and fabulous pretences of the elders and Pharisees, as well as for the Mosaic law. But the Ephesians must be warned not to notice such fables, or their genealogies, relating to their descent from Abraham, or the patriarchs, or from Aaron, or David, by which they imagined themselves entitled to peculiar privileges.—Some imagine, that 'endless genealogies' denote the extravagant and indeed unintelligible notions of the Gnostics and other heretics, [see on the Gospel of John, in Supplement.] about the origin of the world, and various fictions and vain imaginations, *Til.* 3:9. but the context seems to determine in favor of the interpretation before given, and it may well be questioned, whether any of these heretics had, at so early a period, openly propagated their incoherent and profane jargon. *Scott.*

(4.) *Fables.* Both Jews and Gentiles abounded with fabulous

peace, from God our Father. Some have observed, that whereas, in all the epistles to the churches, the apostolical benediction is *grace and peace*; in these two to Timothy, and that of Titus, it is *grace, mercy, and peace*: as if ministers had more need of God's mercy than other men: and if Timothy, so eminent a minister, must be indebted to the mercy of God, and needed the increase and continuance of it, how much more do we ministers, in these times, who have so little of his excellent spirit!

3. Paul tells Timothy what was the end of his appointing him to this office; I besought thee to abide at Ephesus. Timothy had a mind to go with Paul, was loath to go from him; but Paul would have it so, it was necessary for the public service; *I besought thee*, says he. His business was, to fix both the ministers and people of that church.

Ministers must not only be charged to preach the true doctrine of the Gospel, but charged to preach no other doctrine, Gal. 1:8.

In the times of the apostles there were attempts made to corrupt Christianity, 2 Cor. 2:17. otherwise this charge to Timothy might have been spared.

He must not only see to it, that he did not preach any other doctrine, but he must charge others that they might not add anything of their own to the Gospel, or take anything from it, but that they preach it pure and uncorrupt. As among the Jews there were some who brought Judaism into Christianity; so among the Gentiles there were some who brought Paganism into Christianity. These he must guard against. What ministers questions, is not for edifying; what gives occasion for doubtful disputes, pulls down the church rather than builds it up. And I think everything that ministers questions rather than godly edifying, should be disclaimed and disregarded by us, such as an uninterrupted succession in the ministry from the apostles down to these times, the necessity of episcopal ordination, and the intention of the minister to the efficacy and validity of the sacraments he administers. These are as bad as Jewish fables and endless genealogies, for they involve us in inextricable difficulties, and tend only to shake the foundations of a Christian's hope, and to fill his mind with per-

plexing doubts and fears: whereas, godly edifying is the end ministers should aim at in all their discourses, that Christians may improve in godliness, and grow up to a greater likeness to the blessed God. Observe, further, Godly edifying must be in faith: we build on the Gospel; it is by faith we come to God at first, Heb. 11:6. and in the same way, and by the same principle, we must be edified. Again, Ministers should avoid, as much as may be, what will occasion disputes; and would do well to insist on the great and practical points of religion, about which there can be no disputes; \* for even disputes about great and necessary truths draw off the mind from the main design of Christianity, and eat out the vitals of religion, which consist in practice and obedience, as well as in faith, that we may not hold the truth in unrighteousness, but may keep the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

V. 5—11. Here the apostle instructs Timothy how to guard against the judaizing teachers, or others who mingled fables and endless genealogies with the Gospel. He shows the use of the law, and glory of the gospel.

1. The end of the law is to promote love, Rom. 13:8, 10. The main scope and drift of the divine law are, to engage us to the love of God, and one another; and surely the gospel, which obliges us to love our enemies, to do good to them that hate us, Mat. 5:44. does not design to lay aside or supersede a commandment, the end whereof is love; so far from it, that, on the other hand, we are told, that though we had all advantages, and wanted charity, we are but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, 1 Cor. 13:1. John 13:35. Those, therefore, who boasted of their knowledge of the law, but used it only as a color to disturb the preaching of the gospel, under pretence of zeal for the law, dividing the church, and distracting it; defeated the very end of the commandment, *love out of a pure heart*, a heart purified by faith, purified from corrupt affections. Those who are careful to keep a good conscience, from a real belief of the truth of the Word of God, which enjoins it, here called, a *faith unfeigned*; those answer the end of the commandment.

\* What church ever split on a point of pure morality! *Ed.*

tales, connected with their several superstitions.' WILLIAMS.—'These *mythoi* relate to the interpretations of the rabbies.' *BL.—Genealogies.* 'Not sons, as some understand, but tables of lineal descent, by which the Jews endeavored to prove their right as priests and Levites, or their alliance to the house of David.' *Doddr.*—So *Bloomf.* with *Schoettg. Wets.* understands it of Timothy's *own genealogy*; and others still, of *cabalistical fables.* *Ed.*

V. 5. The word rendered 'commandment,' is by some explained of the moral law, the scope and substance of which is 'charity,' or 'love,' towards God and man. Others understand it to mean, the revelation of God to men, by the gospel, the end of which is to restore fallen sinners to the love required by the law; and this latter suits the context. But others explain it of 'the charge' given to Timothy by the apostle, and this seems to be the right interpretation, for thus it had reference both to the law as the rule of duty, and to the grand design of the gospel.—The several characteristics of *love*, here given, admirably distinguish it from the spurious charity which is, in modern time, the favorite virtue of the world. *Scott.*

(5.) *The commandment.* 'The Gospel declaration.' *Doddr.*

V. 6, 7. From this love, and purity, and conscientiousness, some professed Christians had swerved, or deviated, out of zeal for external distinctions, legal observances, and human traditions. Thus they turned aside from the faith also, and got engaged in vain janglings, and angry controversies, about doubtful points of small consequence. For they were desirous of being 'teachers or doctors of the law,' and to exercise that office among Christians, in order to acquire a reputation for learning, and to be called Rabbi. (*Notes, Mat. 23:5—10.*) but they 'neither understood what they said, nor whereof they affirmed,' with full and unqualified confidence. They declaimed, in a perplexed and inconclusive manner, on general topics; not understanding the spiritual nature and uses of the moral law, which they attempted to explain, nor the typical import of those abrogated ceremonies, which they enforced. (*Notes, 8—11. Ex. 20:1. John 1:17.*) *Scott.*

(7.) *Teachers of the law.* 'They could not be the Gnostics, who declared an aversion to the law; not to insist on the argument of Irenæus, Clement, and Jerome, in placing Valentinus, Carpocrates, Basilides, the founders of that sect, much lower.' *Doddr.*—*Ros.* thinks, they were judaizing teachers; and takes to be, in the sense of desiring to be *thought to be*, or *affecting to be*. *Bloomf.* suggests, further, that Christian teachers who united instruction in the law to that of the gospel, may be meant; and the old term be used, because such teachers were 'likely to cling to it.' *Ed.*



8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully ;

9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine ;

11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

[Practical Observations.]

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry :

13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious : but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

m Ro. 7:12. p c. 6:15. t Col. 1:25.  
n Ga. 5:23. q 1 Co. 9:17. u Ac. 8:3.  
o 2 Ti. 4:3. r 1 Co. 15:10. v 1 Co. 15:9.  
Tit. 1:9. s 1 Co. 7:25. w Lu. 23:34.

Here we have the concomitants of that excellent grace, charity ; a pure heart, a good conscience, Acts 24:16. and faith unfeigned. Some swerved from the very end of the commandment : they set up for dis-

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—11. Apostles themselves, as well as the most eminent ministers in every age, who have evidently been commissioned by 'God our Savior, and the Lord Jesus Christ,' have had no other ground of hope, as to the salvation of their own souls, than what they possessed in common with their meanest brethren. He, however, who appointed them, has always been ready to uphold and help them, and his strength is perfected in their weakness.—The design of the Gospel is not answered by speculation, and solving abstract questions, or 'giving heed to fables and endless' disputation ; but when sinners, through 'repentance towards God, and faith towards Christ Jesus,' are brought to the habitual exercise of holy 'love, out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.'—But alas ! in how many ways do men swerve from this plain and simple statement of the truth, and 'turn aside unto vain jangling !' Many, called Christian ministers, 'desire to be teachers of the law, knowing neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm ;' and thus a few fragments of morality are substituted, in the place of the holy Law, and the blessed 'Gospel of God our Savior !' Others know not, or acknowledge not, that the 'law is good when used

V. 8—11. As believers were righteous persons in God's appointed way, both as to their justified state and obedient conduct, the law was not enacted against them. Indeed, laws in general were not made to coerce the well-disposed subject, but the ill-affected ; and the case was the same in respect of the divine law. 'The law is not made against the righteous.' This seems a fair translation, and certainly is the meaning of the words.—'If a man use it lawfully,' 'that is,' says Theodoret, 'if he comply with the scope of it, which is to bring him to Christ. . . The law was not made to condemn the just man ; for against such there is no law condemning them, Gal. 5:23. but it lies against the lawless to condemn them.' Whitby.—After the general terms of 'lawless and disobedient,' which relate to the disregard and contempt of God's commandments, as manifested in the outward conduct, the apostle mentions the 'ungodly and sinners,' or those who neglect their duties to God and their neighbors, and 'unholy and profane,' which may refer to the gross sensuality and debauchery of multitudes, and that daring impiety commonly connected with it. He then enumerates some particular crimes of the most atrocious nature. Doubtless numerous instances of each were found among the Gentiles, and some perhaps among the bigoted Jews, who depended on the law, or on some law, and yet scandalously broke their own rule of conduct. (Rom. 2:12—20.) 'Men stealers' are inserted among these daring criminals, against whom the law of God directed its awful curses. (Note. Ex. 21:15—17.) These were persons who kidnapped men to sell them for slaves ; and this practice seems inseparable from the other iniquities and oppressions of slavery, nor can a slave-dealer by any means keep free from this atrocious criminality, if indeed 'the receiver be as bad as the thief.'—'They who make war for the inhuman purpose of selling the vanquished for slaves, as is the practice among African princes, are really man-stealers. And they who, like African traders, encourage their unchristian traffic, by purchasing that which they know to be thus unjustly acquired, are partakers in their crimes.' Mackn.—The clause should have been, 'know, or have reason to suspect.' This is the only species of theft which is punishable with death, by the law of God. Ex. 21:16.—The apostle did not mean, that none but persons of so infamous a character lay under 'the curse of the law,' but that it was directed against all other practices, which were 'contrary to sound doctrine,' or the salutary nature and tendency of the Christian revelation. (M. R. p.—Note, Tit. 2:1,2.) According

puters, but their disputes proved vain jangling ; set up for teachers, but they pretended to teach others what they themselves did not understand. Observe, men intrude into the ministry while they are yet very ignorant of those things about which they are to speak ; they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm, and are profitless teachers. The law was good, but the Jews used it as an engine to divide the church, a veil to the malicious opposition they made to the gospel of Christ ; they set it up for justification, and so used it unlawfully. We must not therefore think to set it aside, but use it lawfully, for the restraint of sin : when a divine appointment has been abused, call it back to its right use ; the law is still very useful as a rule of life, to teach us what is sin and what is duty. It is not made for a righteous man, it is not made for those who observe it, but for wicked persons, to restrain and check them, and stop vice and profaneness. It is the grace of God that changes men's hearts ; but the terrors of the law may be of use, to tie their hands and restrain their tongues. A righteous man does not want those restraints which are necessary for the wicked ; or at least the law is not made primarily and principally for the righteous, but for sinners of all sorts, whether in a greater or less measure, v. 9, 10. In this black roll of sinners, he particularly mentions breaches of the second table duties ; and then he closes his account with this, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine. Some understand this as an institution of a power in the civil magistrate to make laws against such notorious sinners as are specified, and to see those laws put in execution.

2. He shows the glory and grace of the

lawfully,' and they declaim in so general a manner against the law and good works, that many conclude the commandments of God to be evil, or void of obligation in themselves, or of authority as the rule of a believer's conduct !—It is allowed, that few, in comparison, have been guilty of actual murder, parricide, men-stealing, or perjury ; that many are free from the guilt of adultery, and other still baser practices, and even of fornication. Yet the same corrupt nature is in us all ; and our enmity against God, and ingratitude to Him ; our disposition to disobey and despise parental authority, to hate and quarrel with our neighbors, to please ourselves, regardless of their good and the glory of God, and a variety of polluted thoughts and affections, lying and other vain words, and very many other things 'contrary to sound doctrine,' would expose us to the wrath of God, and justify Him in our final condemnation. Unless, therefore, we are 'made righteous by faith in Christ,' and truly repent, and forsake every sin, we are yet 'under the curse of the law,' even 'according to the gospel of the blessed God,' preached by Paul, and at the same time we are unmeet to share the holy felicity of heaven. SCOTT.

to this, every impenitent sinner, every man who allowed himself in the practice of any known transgression, remained under the covenant and curse of the law. This accorded to 'the gospel of the glory of the blessed God,' (Notes, 2 Cor. 4:5—6) as entrusted to the apostle, by which He displayed all his perfections in the most honorable and harmonious manner, by saving believers from their sins, as well as from wrath ; (Note, Rom. 2:12—16.) for, being 'the blessed God,' the Perfection and Source of felicity, as well as of holiness, He had devised to render fallen men partakers of his happiness, by renewing them to the participation of his holiness. Ps. 119:12. Heb. 12:9—11. SCOTT.

(9.) 'The thought seems evidently to be this : that a law (for there is no article to determine or confine it to the Jews) is chiefly intended to restrain men from actions injurious to the public. What it says, therefore, relates chiefly to crimes and their punishments.' DODD.

(10.) Horsley shows, that the word rendered "men-stealers" means a person who deals in men, literally, "a slave-trader." He maintains, that this text condemns and prohibits the slave-trade, in all its modes. It ranks the slave-trade next after parricide and homicide. BLOOMF. says, that all the crimes here mentioned are of the worst kind, and this seems as put for robbery, of the worst sort. 'Let, then, the slave-traders of our times tremble ; for all who any way participate in that abominable traffic, uphold a system which perpetually engenders man-stealing.' HENRY, abr.

V. 12—14. This was, in all respects, most astonishing grace.—His ignorance and unbelief, indeed, amidst such abundant means of information and conviction, were the result of a self-sufficient, obstinate, and contemptuous prejudice against the truth ; but there were others, who were hurried on by malice, ambition, and selfishness, to act in direct opposition to the dictates of their own consciences, and thus to 'sin against the Holy Spirit,' by maliciously ascribing his undeniable operations to human imposture, or satanical influence. Mat. 12:31,32. Heb. 6:4—6. 10:26—31. 1 John 5:16—18. It is remarkable, that many persons have supposed Paul's proud and wilful ignorance, and his consequent unbelief, (two sins, in themselves deserving of divine wrath, though in his circumstances they just preserved him from the unpardonable sin,) to have been a kind of meritorious cause of his obtaining mercy, especially when joined with his sincerity in opposing the Gospel ! 2 Cor. 1:12—14, v. 12. They imagine that, in some manner or measure,



14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant, with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

w 2 Ti 2:14. y Ro. 15:4. c Ro. 16:27.  
Ti 3:5. z Ps 10:16. d 1 Ch. 29:14.  
x Mat. 9:13. a c 6:15, 16. e c. 4:14.  
Lu. 19:10. b Ju. 1:13.

for which those who are so called ought to give thanks to Jesus Christ. Now, the more to magnify the grace of Christ in putting him into the ministry, he gives an account of his conversion.

1. What he was before his conversion,—a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, Acts 9:1. S:3. Frequently those who are designed for great and eminent services, are left to themselves before their conversion, to fall into great wickednesses; that the mercy of God may be the more glorified in their remission, and the grace of God in their regeneration.

he deserved mercy more than any who are left to perish. This they must mean, if they mean anything to the purpose; for, though his guilt might be less than that of some Jews, who, sinning against clearer light and with more deliberate malice, were given up to final obduracy, yet, those who maintain the doctrine of salvation by grace suppose, that many perish in their sins, whose criminality is far less than his was, that he might most justly have thus been left to perish, and that no reason can by us be assigned for his salvation in preference to others, who had not committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, except the sovereign grace of God, 'who hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth,' and the other reason, which the apostle himself next assigns, namely, 'the praise of the glory of his grace.' Rom. 9:20, 21. 9:15—23. Eph. 1:3—8. For he evidently confesses, that he should have righteously perished, if the Lord had dealt with him according to strict justice, nay, if his grace and mercy had not been 'exceedingly abundant,' beyond all expectation, estimation, or conception, not only, in that He was ready to forgive, bless, and employ him, when he repented, believed, and was prepared for obedience, but, 'in quickening him when dead in sin,' and so working faith and love to Jesus Christ in his heart, that he might be 'found in Him, and be partaker of his righteousness.' "Faith and love," which, by the influence of his Spirit, were implanted in my heart.' Doddr.—(13) A blasphemer.] See on Mat. 12:31. Acts 26:11. 'The word ought to have been rendered defamer.' Campbell. But whom did Saul defame? Did he not speak of Jesus as a deceiver? Did he not do all that he could to induce others to do the same? And is not Jesus 'God manifest in the flesh?' This crime therefore was 'blasphemy,' though not against the Holy Ghost. Sc.

(12.) 'It was not as an apostle, but as a believer, that Paul cherished so triumphant a hope, and sung so sweet a song, in the house of his pilgrimage.'

(13.) Did it ignorantly.] 'I did not therein contradict the sentiments of my conscience: whereas, if I had knowingly opposed what I apprehended to be truth, out of regard to secular [or selfish] interest, I should doubtless have been left to perish under a judicial blindness of mind, and hardness of heart.' Doddr.—'It implies, that, had he done it knowingly, his would have been the unpardonable sin.' WILLIAMS.

V. 15, 16. The conversion, justification, and reconciliation of so virulent a persecutor, might be considered as a most striking illustration of the nature of the Gospel, and of the abundant riches of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. It is indeed 'a faithful saying,' authenticated by every evidence which proves Christianity to be 'the Word of God, who cannot lie,' and it was 'worthy to be received,' with humble and thankful faith and cordial affection, by men of all nations and descriptions, as all are sinners, and none can be saved in any other way, and as none are excluded from salvation who seek it in this way, John 6:36—40. Acts 4:5—12, v. 12. 'that Jesus,' Emmanuel, the Son of God, the Messiah, 'came into the world to save sinners,' voluntarily, with this express design, and for this single purpose. (Marg. Ref. g—i.) 'The Word,' who 'was God, and was with God,' the Creator and Upholder of all worlds, the Lord of all creatures, 'became flesh,' that He might be 'the second Adam,' the Surety of the new covenant, to 'fulfil all righteousness,' and to offer an infinitely valuable atonement for sin, in order that, being risen and ascended, He might be an Advocate and High-

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Observe here, (1.) Blasphemy, persecution, and injuriousness, are very great and heinous sins, and those who are guilty of them are sinners before God exceedingly. (2.) True penitents, to serve a good purpose, will not be backward to own their former condition, before they were brought home to God; this good apostle often confessed what his former life had been, as Acts 22:4. 26:10, 11.

2. See the great favor of God to him; But I obtained mercy. This was a blessed, but, indeed, a great favor, that so notorious a rebel should find mercy with his Prince. Note,

(1.) Ignorance, in some cases, will extenuate a crime, though it do not take it away, Luke 12:40. [For no man can say he has used to the utmost every mean of knowledge which has or might have been in his power; and men are accountable for the state and habits of their conscience.] (2.) Unbelief is at the bottom of what sinners do ignorantly: they do not believe God's threatenings, otherwise they could not do as they do. (3.) For these reasons Paul obtained mercy.

Here he notices the abundant grace of Jesus Christ, v. 14. The conversion and salvation of great sinners are owing to the grace of Christ, his exceeding abundant grace, even that grace of Christ which appears in his glorious Gospel, v. 15. Here we have the sum of the whole Gospel,—that Jesus Christ came into the world, John 1:14. came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, Mat. 9:13. His errand into the world was to seek and find, and so save them that were lost, Lu. 19:10. The ratification of this is, that it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation. In the close of the verse Paul applies it to himself; Of whom I am chief. Paul was a sinner of the first rank; so he acknowledges himself to have been; chief, that is, of pardoned sinners. It is an expression of his great humility; he that

elsewhere calls himself the least of all saints, Eph. 3:8. here calls himself the chief of sinners. Observe, The mercy Paul found with God, notwithstanding his great wickedness before his conversion, he speaks of,

[1.] For the encouragement of others to repent and believe, v. 16: It was an instance of the long-suffering of Christ, that He would bear so much with one who had been so very provoking; and it was designed for a pattern to all others, that the greatest sinners might not despair of mercy with God. Note, Those who obtain mercy, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; for without faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11:6.

[2.] He mentions it to the glory of God: having spoken of the mercy he had found with God, he could not go on with his letter without inserting a thankful acknowledgment of God's goodness to him, v. 17. Observe, The grace we have the comfort of, God must have the glory of. When we have found God good, we must not forget to pronounce Him great; and his kind thoughts of us must not at all abate our high thoughts of Him, but rather increase them. He is supreme, eternal, without beginning of days, or end of life, or change of time; the Ancient of days, Dan. 7:9. He is immortal, and the Original of immortality, 1 Tim. 6:16. for He cannot die. He is invisible, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen or can see. He is, 1 Tim. 6:16. the only wise God, Jude 25. He only is infinitely wise, and the Fountain of all wisdom. 'To Him be glory for ever and ever.' Let me be for ever employed in giving honor and glory to Him, as the thousands of thousands do, Rev. 5:12, 13.

V. 18—20. Here is his charge to Timothy, v. 18. Observe, The Gospel is a charge committed to the ministers of it; committed to their trust, to see that it be duly applied according to the intent and meaning of it, and the design of its great Author. It seems

priest, and reign over all worlds for the benefit of his church and of mankind. 'To save sinners,' of every people and character, from condemnation, sin, Satan, the world, and death, even all, without exception, who came to Him by faith for this salvation, to 'the praise of the glory of God,' was, and is the only end proposed in this grand and most wonderful transaction. Of these sinners, Paul judged himself 'the chief,' the greatest enemy of Christ, and the most deserving of divine vengeance, of all who ever were, or would be saved by Him. (Marg. Ref. k.)—This seems the purport of the expression; but, it is not impossible, that he supposed his actual crimes to be so numerous and enormous, that his guilt even exceeded that of those, who had sinned more entirely against their own convictions, and so had been given up to final impenitency. Instead of imagining, that there was something meritorious in his blind and obstinate sincerity, (as some have maintained, in direct opposition to his own statement) he considered himself as one selected on purpose, because he was more guilty than any other person in the world, (those only excepted, who had committed the unpardonable sin, if even they were excepted,) 'that in him first,' or the chief sinner, 'Jesus Christ might exhibit,' with the greatest luster imaginable, that degree, in which He can bear with and pardon his most violent and enraged enemies, and the most atrociously criminal of mankind. That so it might stand on record to the end of time, for the encouragement of all others, in every age and nation, who believe in Christ, and rely on his merits and grace, for the pardon of their sins, and the gift of eternal life, to prevent their being bowed down in discouragement by a retrospective view of the number, nature, and heinousness of their crimes. (16) Pattern.] 2 Tim. 1:13. Not elsewhere.—It is an information, or demonstration of any thing or doctrine, so clear, so evident, as if it were exhibited by the pencil or colors. A metaphor taken from painters, who draw after a 'pattern, or a carpenter who works by rule.' Leigh. Sc.

(15.) 'We are apt foolishly and impiously to harden ourselves against the comfort of Scripture, by poring over our sins. It is not true that Christ died for sin, as that the wages of sin is death; and it is still as dangerous to disbelieve one as the other!' ADAMS.

V. 17. Some expositors suppose this doxology to be addressed personally to Christ as God, because the apostle had before been speaking of Him, but it seems rather to be addressed to the Godhead, without distinction of persons, 'The Father,' and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,' three Persons in the Unity of the Godhead, 'the God of Salvation,' constitute the Object of all our worship, which Person soever we immediately address. To God, as 'the King eternal,' in every age and under every dispensation, the universal, and everlasting, invisible Sovereign, the inexhaustible Source of all wisdom, he ascribed all the glory of his conversion, salvation, endowments for service, faithfulness, and usefulness; and he desired earnestly, that God might be honored, in all his perfections and wonderful works, by all rational creatures, for ever and ever, Amen.

(17.) Now unto the King eternal, &c.] 'The true construction is, to the eternal King, the immortal invisible, only wise God.' So Bp. Middleton. En.—'When repeating over this passage, Pres. Edwards experienced that birth of which the Savior speaks, Jn. 3:3.' WILLIAMS.

V. 18—20. The apostle here referred to what he had before spoken, 5, 8—11, v. 11. The trust, committed to him by Jesus Christ, as his



19 Holding 'faith, and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck :

20 Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander; whom I have delivered 'unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

### CHAP. II.

<sup>1</sup> That it is meet to pray and give thanks for all men, and the reason why. <sup>9</sup> How women should be attired. <sup>12</sup> They are not permitted to teach. <sup>15</sup> They shall be saved, notwithstanding the testimonies of God's wrath, in childbirth, if they continue in faith.

**I** <sup>a</sup> EXHORT therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men ;

f c. 3:9. g 1 Co. 5:5. a or, desire.

there had been prophecies that he should prove eminent in the work. Observe,

The ministry is a *warfare*, a good warfare against sin and Satan ; in this the Lord Jesus is the Captain, Heb. 2:10. and in his cause, and against his enemies, ministers are in particular engaged. They must, too, execute their office diligently and courageously, notwithstanding oppositions and discouragements. Moreover, the good hopes others have entertained concerning us, should excite us to our duty ; *that thou, by them, mightest war a good warfare.*

V. 19.  *Holding faith and a good conscience ;* those that put away a good conscience, will soon make shipwreck of faith. A renewed, enlightened conscience, a conscience not de-

bauched by any vice or sin, will be a mean of preserving us sound in the faith ; and the mystery of the faith must be held in a pure conscience, *ch. 3:9.* Two, who had made a profession of the Christian religion, had quitted that profession ; and Paul had declared them to belong to the kingdom of Satan ; and, as some think, had, by an extraordinary power, delivered them to be terrified or tormented by Satan, *that they might learn not to blaspheme*, not to contradict or revile the doctrine of Christ, and the good ways of the Lord. Observe, The primary design of the highest censures in the primitive church was, to prevent further sin, and to reclaim the sinner. In this case it was for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. 5:5. Observe,

Those who love the service and work of Satan, are justly delivered over to the power of Satan ; *whom I have delivered to Satan.* God can, if He pleases, work by contraries: Hymeneus and Alexander are delivered to Satan, that they may learn *not to blaspheme*, when one would rather think they would learn of Satan to blaspheme the more. Those who have put away a good conscience, and made a shipwreck of faith, will not stick at anything, blasphemy not excepted. Therefore let us hold faith and a good conscience, if we would keep clear of blasphemy ; for if we once let go our hold of these, we do not know where we shall stop.

### CHAP. II. V. 1—8. Here is,

I. A charge given to Christians, to pray for all men in general, and particularly for

all in authority. Timothy must take care that this was done. Paul does not send him any prescribed form of prayer, as we have reason to think he would, if he had intended ministers should be tied to that way of praying ; but, in general, that they should make *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks ; supplications*, for the averting of evil ; *prayers*, for the obtaining of good ; *intercessions*, for others ; and *thanksgivings*, for mercies already received. Paul thought it enough to give them general heads ; they having the Scripture to direct them in prayer, and the Spirit of prayer poured out on them, needed not any further directions. Observe, the design of the Christian religion is to promote prayer ; and the disciples of Christ must be praying people, Eph. 6:18. we must pray for ourselves ; this is implied ; we must also pray for all men. See how far the Christian religion was from being a sect, when it taught men this diffusive charity. Pray for kings, v. 2. The kings, at this time, were heathens, enemies to Christianity, and persecutors of Christians ; yet they must be prayed for, because it is for the public good that there should be civil government, and proper persons intrusted with the administration of it, whom therefore we ought to pray for, yea, though we ourselves suffer under them. For kings, and all that are in authority, that is, inferior magistrates ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Here see what we must desire for kings,—that God will so turn their hearts, and direct them, and make use of them, that we, under them, may lead a quiet and peaceable life. He does not say,

PRACT. OBS. V. 12—20. It is peculiarly encouraging, to recollect what manner of persons have been converted, pardoned, 'counted faithful, put into the ministry,' eminently qualified for that sacred service, and made instruments of great good to mankind. These, in their day, bare witness to that 'faithful saying,' which we now would earnestly recommend to universal acceptance, even 'that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.' And it always has been greatly encouraging to trembling penitents, when the preachers of this rich grace were themselves evident and affecting illustrations of their own doctrine, 'chief sinners,' yet pardoned and changed, sent to declare to others the long-suffering and mercy of Christ to them, 'as a pattern to all who

should believe on Him to everlasting life.' Indeed, no man, with Paul's example before his eyes, can reasonably question the love and power of Christ to save him, whatever his sins have been, if he really desire and endeavor to trust in Him, as the incarnate Son of God, who once died on the cross, and now reigns on the throne of glory, in order to save 'all who come to God through Him.' Heb. 7:23—25. Let us then seek and hope for this salvation ; and, in humble consciousness of our unworthiness, let us admire and praise the grace of 'God our Savior,' and ascribe to 'the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, all honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.' SCOTT.

apostle, he 'had committed to his son Timothy.' Hymeneus and Alexander, with whom Timothy had doubtless been acquainted, the apostle had found it needful openly to excommunicate, and cast out of the church, into the visible kingdom of Satan ; that they might be instructed by this discipline, 'not to blaspheme' Christ, or disgrace his Gospel by their impious tenets. It does not appear, that either of them were recovered.—It has often been justly observed, that these severe censures, which the apostle inflicted on those, who had once been professors or ministers of Christianity, and publicly recorded with their names annexed, constitute a most conclusive proof, that he had no dread lest they should be provoked to disclose any secret, or give information of evil practices, which they had witnessed among Christians. His conduct implied a public challenge to them, in this respect, and was the genuine expression of conscious integrity, and the courage which springs from it.—Some think, that Timothy was chosen to the ministry, by the prophecies respecting him (18) ; and that this was the way, in which the pastors and teachers, in the newly planted churches, were usually selected ; but this opinion, as to the general plan, does not appear to be supported by sufficient proof (20) *They may learn.* 'Be taught, or disciplined by correction and instruction, as boys are educated.' See on Luke 23:16. SCOTT.

(18.) *Prophecies.* The most approved commentators understand it, in the natural sense, of predictions of holy men, who knew Timothy in younger life, and were inspired to foretell his future usefulness as a Christian minister. May it not argue his *early piety*, and that of his mother and grand-mother, even before they, any of them, embraced the Gospel ? ED.

(19.) *Alexander.* 'Probably mentioned Ac. 19:33.' DODDR.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1. The litany of the church of England accordingly beseeches God 'to have mercy upon all men ;' yet even this scriptural petition has been censured as inconsistent with submission to the sovereignty of God ! But whatever Paul understood by 'all men,' that we understand by 'all men ;' if we pray in respect of them at all ; and we must pray God 'to have mercy on them,' unless we mean to impetrate vengeance on them. The command, to 'love our neighbor as ourselves,' is our rule of conduct, and should dictate our prayers. God will hear our supplications for temporal benefits, or eternal salvation, in behalf of those on whom He sees good in his sovereign wisdom to bestow them ; and in other cases, our 'prayer will return into our own bosom' [by the spiritual benefit attendant on the habitual feeling which gave rise to the prayer]. But how can we pray for enemies and persecutors, (whom we cannot possibly know to belong to 'the election of grace,') without equally appearing to interfere with God's sovereignty ? How can we pray for our children, relatives, or neighbors, or, indeed, for any unconverted person, or for those whom we are not sure are converted, without violating the same *imaginary* rule ? The malignity of an apostate, indeed, may be so excessive, that it would not be proper to pray for him ; (Notes, 2 Tim. 4:14, 15. 1 John 5:16—18.) but such ex-

ceedingly rare exceptions, to a general rule, in no way interfere with our praying even for the salvation of all men, that now are or ever shall live on earth. This is no more than the Lord's prayer teaches us, *Mat. 6:9, 10.* and if there be any individual, for whom we cannot pray, that 'the Lord would have mercy on him,' and convert him, the inability must arise from sin, even the sin of not 'loving our neighbors as ourselves.' Nothing can tend more to perplex theological subjects, to prejudice men's minds against the doctrines of grace, nay, to bring them into odium and contempt ; nothing can more narrow and harden the heart against the human species in general ; than this method of making the *secret decrees* of God, in any degree or way, our rule of conduct, instead of adhering to his revealed will. We know not, and cannot know, who are elect, and who are not ; we are bound to love all men, to pray for them, and to do them good, and then leave it to God to govern the universe in his sovereign wisdom, justice, and mercy, as He sees good. *De. 29:29. Sc.*

(1.) *Supplications be made.* 'That any man should ever have supposed Timothy charged here to *compose a liturgy* for the use of the clergy and people of Ephesus, as Bp. Bull has done, is very surprising, and an instance of weak and pitiable attachment to party prejudices.' DODDR.

(1, 2.) *Supplications* (i. e. deprecations of impending judgments) ; *prayers* (petitions for temporal and spiritual good things) ; *intercessions* (that God would defend and support the faithful, or convert and save their enemies) ; *clothed with authority* (all that are in office, legislative, executive, judicial, civil, or military).—'The early Christians felt this law to be continually binding, and, therefore, scrupulously prayed for all in authority, whether Pagan, Arian, or Christian. The custom is mentioned by many of the fathers ; is mentioned in the early liturgies ; and was referred to by the early apologists, as a proof of loyalty.—Praying for all in authority will contribute to preserve us from sinning against them. *In this country there are peculiar temptations to disrespect and insubordination.* Here the ruler comes not forward with all the venerableness of hereditary honors. Elections are frequent. Yesterday the ruler was himself a subject among us,—to-day he "is the minister of God." The press is licentious, and he comes into office covered with party scandal, and scarce an object of respect. Christians have their political connexions and choice, and are insensibly involved in the feelings of those around them. But let their feelings be constantly drawn forth in prayer to God, in behalf of all rulers, and they will be more sensible of improprieties ; more on their guard against temptation ; and their submission will be more conscientious, cheerful, and exemplary.—Prayer for all in authority will render Christians more punctual and conscientious in the discharge of the elective franchise. *In this country there is less danger of the incapacity than the sins of rulers.* When the Christian has abused his privilege, and retires to pray for the atheist, idolater of this world, or the profane swearer, or the duellist, he feels his inconsistency and presumption.—The discharge of this duty will tend to moderate the spirit of party.—It would also promote in the public mind



2 For <sup>b</sup> kings, and for all that are in <sup>c</sup> authority : that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

3 For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior ;

4 Who <sup>d</sup> will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

5 For *there is* one <sup>e</sup> God, and one mediator <sup>f</sup> between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ;

6 Who gave himself a ransom <sup>g</sup> for all, to <sup>h</sup> be testified in due time.

b Ro. 13:1, &c. d Jn. 3:15, 16. f He. 9:15.  
c or, eminent 2 Pe. 3:9. g Mat. 20:28.  
place. e Ro. 3:30. h or, a testimony.

'get preferments, grow rich, and be in honor and power under them ;' no, the top of the ambition of a good Christian is, to lead a *quiet and peaceable life*, to get through the world unmolested, in a low, private station. We should desire that we and others may lead a peaceable life, *in all godliness and honesty* ; implying that we cannot expect to be kept quiet and peaceable, unless we keep *in all godliness and honesty*. Here we have our duty as Christians summed up in two words ; *godliness*, i. e. the right worshipping of God ; and *honesty*, i. e. a good conduct toward all men.

Here, observe, Christians are to be men much given to prayer. In our prayers we are to have a generous concern for others as

a favorable impression towards Christianity.—When Christians pray to Christ, as King of kings, in behalf of all in authority, they contemplate earthly powers as subordinate, and Christ as Supreme. While the Christian prays thus, he arrests the atheism and disloyalty of a revolted world. Let this spirit pervade the church, and the prayer for all in authority go up from her ten thousand altars, and she will then be indeed the light of the world.

V. 2. It was a proper expression of benevolence, for Christians to pray for all orders and conditions of men ; and to interest themselves in the calamities and deliverances of their neighbors, of the community, and of the human species. This would soften the prejudices, and conciliate the favor of those around them, especially when they persevered in such supplications and thanksgivings, notwithstanding the persecutions which they endured. It would likewise conduce very much to silence the accusations of those, who charged them with disaffection to the civil government, and with being troublers of the city, if they not only behaved with quiet subjection to the laws, in all things consistent with their duty, and conscientiously paid tribute and custom ; but were also known to pray for 'kings, and all in authority' over them, for their preservation, and success in all their lawful undertakings, for the protection and peace of the community, and for all blessings upon their persons and families, and that they opposed no other weapons than these to the injuries which they suffered.—The Ephesians, and others among whom Timothy was called to 'do the work of an evangelist,' were under the Roman emperor, who was a monster of tyranny and cruelty ; the apostle, however, used the word 'kings,' in the plural number, whence we learn, that the Holy Spirit intended this direction for other places and ages, according to the different governments established in Providence. 1 Pet. 2:13—17. All the kings and rulers on earth were at that time strangers or enemies to Christianity ; so that no distinction or exception, in this case, could possibly be intended.—These prayers were to be made ; in order that Christians might 'lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty,' conscientiously attending on all their duties to God and man, without being molested either by public calamities or by persecutions. This object they were to aim at, and with this 'quietness and security' to be satisfied. This differs widely from desiring and praying for the success of those enterprises, which [seem to] serve to aggrandize one country, by the depression and miseries of other countries, [a principle as false in political economy as in morals.] These, indeed, are not lawful undertakings, and we may pray for the peace and welfare of our governors and country, without so much as appearing to favor these measures. The disposition to lead a quiet, peaceable, and pious life, submitting to human authority, as far as consistent with godliness, tends to procure favor to the true worshippers of God, and it may be expected that He will answer their prayers, (so far as good for them,) by inclining their rulers to tolerate, protect, and countenance them. See.

V. 3, 4. As God has provided for the salvation of mankind, without distinction of rank, or nation, or even previous character, and can honorably, and will certainly, save every individual, who comes to Him in his appointed way ; in this sense, He 'willeth that all men should be saved ;' Ez. 18:23. 33:11. 2 Pet. 3:9 and it is his good pleasure, nay, his express and repeated command, that we should do all in our power to bring them 'to the knowledge of the truth.' The Gospel should be 'preached to every creature ;' we are required to assure all whom we can address, that the Lord is able and willing to save any sinner who believes.—But as all men do not in fact 'come to the knowledge of the truth,' which God wills in the same sense as 'that all men should be saved ;' so the difficulty, if there be any, presses equally on Calvinists and Arminians, so called, and even on such as deduce universal, actual salvation, from this text and a few similar ones, for they cannot say, 'that all men,' without exception, actually do 'come to the knowledge of the truth.' If the clause, therefore, be explained to mean anything

well as for ourselves. Prayer consists of various parts,—of supplications, intercessions, and thanksgivings. All men, yea kings themselves, and those who are in authority, are to be prayed for : they need our prayers, for they have many difficulties to encounter, many snares to which their exalted stations expose them. In praying for our governors, we take the most likely course to lead a peaceable and quiet life. The Jews at Babylon were commanded to seek the peace of the city, whither the Lord had caused them to be carried captives, and to pray to the Lord for it ; for in the peace thereof they should have peace, Jer. 29:7. If we would lead a peaceable and quiet life, we must live in all godliness and honesty ; we must do our duty to God and man, 1 Pet. 3:10, 11.

Now the reason he gives for this is, *because this is good in the sight of God our Savior* ; the Gospel of Christ requires this. That which is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, we should do, and should abound in.

II. As a reason why we should, in our prayers, concern ourselves for all men, he shows God's love to mankind in general, v. 4.

1. One reason why all men are to be prayed for is, because there is one God, and that God bears a good will to all mankind. This one God *will have all men to be saved*, v. 5. Ez. 33:11. Not that He has decreed the salvation of all, far then all would be saved ; but He has a good will to the salvation of all, and none perish but by their own fault, Mat. 23:37. He will have all to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth ; to be saved in the way He has appointed, and not

otherwise. It concerns us to get the knowledge of the truth, because that is the way to be saved ; *Christ is the Way, and the Truth, and so He is the Life*.

2. There is one Mediator, and that Mediator gave Himself a Ransom for all. As the mercy of God extends itself to all his works, so the mediation of Christ extends itself thus far to all the children of men, that He paid a price sufficient for the salvation of all men : *He gave Himself a Ransom*. Observe, The death of Christ was a ransom, a counter-price ; He gave Himself a Ransom voluntarily, a Ransom for all ; so that all men are put in a better condition than that of devils. A mediator supposes a controversy. Sin had made a quarrel between us and God ; Jesus Christ is a Mediator who undertakes to make peace, to bring God and man together, in the nature of an Umpire or Arbitrator, Job 9:33. He is a Ransom that *was to be testified in due time* ; i. e. in the O. T. times, his sufferings, and the glory that should follow, were spoken of as things to be revealed in the last times, 1 Pet. 1:10, 11. And they are accordingly revealed, Paul himself having been *ordained a preacher and an apostle*, to publish to the Gentiles the glad tidings of redemption and salvation by Jesus Christ, Mk. 16:15. Besides his general call to the apostleship, he was commissioned particularly to preach to the Gentiles, *in faith and truth*, faithfully and truly.

It is observable, that the unity of God is asserted, and joined with the unity of the Mediator ; and the church of Rome might as well maintain a plurality of Gods as a

more, than the willingness of God to save all, of every description, who truly believe ; and his command, that we should preach to all men, and pray for all men, without distinction ; it must follow, that He wills, or purposes, what He does not effect.—It is, however, equally improper to say, with many expositors, that 'all men,' signifies 'some of all sorts,' because it is obvious to answer, that it may with equal propriety be said, 'He willeth that all men should be damned ;' for, doubtless, some of all nations, ranks, and orders will be left to perish in their sins, 'whereunto also they were appointed.' Jn. 1:29. 3:6. 1 Jn. 2:1, 2. SCOTT.

(4.) 'The meaning seems to be, that God has made *sufficient* provision for the salvation of *all*, and that it is to be considered as the general declaration of his will, that *all* who know the truth themselves should publish it to all around them, so far as their influence can extend.'

DODDR.

V. 5—7. The apostle designed to excite Christians to intercessory prayers ; and he draws one argument for this, from the relation which God Himself, and the great Mediator, bear to those, in behalf of whom these supplications should be offered.—'One God,' in this passage does not denote the Person of the Father *exclusively*, but the Deity ; the manhood, therefore, of Christ intervenes between a just and holy God and us sinners ; but this Manhood is essentially and inseparably united to the Godhead, in the Person of the Son, who thus mediates between God his Father, and men his brethren.—This provision and appointment has been made and revealed, for the common benefit of the human race, both Jews and Gentiles of every nation, that all who are willing may come, in this way, to the mercy-seat of a pardoning God, to seek reconciliation to Him. 3:16. Is. 55:1—3. Jn. 4:10—15. 7:37—39. Rev. 22:16, 17.—No pious and considerate man will assert, that Christ so gave Himself a ransom for all, as actually to *intend* the salvation of all those who never believe in Him ; and that He thus failed of his purpose, and suffered in vain. On the other hand, there are but few, even of those who limit such expressions to 'some of all sorts,' who do not allow the all-sufficiency of Christ's atonement, and admit that all men should be invited and commanded to believe in Him, and that all who do believe will be saved by Him. It is, therefore, important, far beyond the importance of 'doubtful disputations,' to observe carefully, that none will be saved by the ransom of Christ without true faith ; that true faith is 'the gift of God,' and the effect of regeneration, Jn. 1:10—13, v. 13. Eph. 2:4—10. that 'known unto God are all his works, from before the foundation of the world ;' and that all will certainly be saved, who were 'given unto Christ,' and whom He specially intended to save, when He became the Saviour of his people. Jn. 6:36—40. These propositions are capable of clear, scriptural proof ; and when they are established, we may safely leave such expressions, as that here used, to bear their most obvious import. Indeed, divine wisdom and love are peculiarly shown, in this general way of stating the truths of Christianity, as far more suitable to inquirers and unestablished persons, than a systematical arrangement would be.—(6) *A ransom*.] Here only.—Grotius observes, that the preposition *anti*, even in composition, always signifies either *opposition* or *commutation*. As there can be no *opposition*, when Christ is said to have given 'Himself for us,' *antidolon*, it must necessarily signify *commutation*, or *compensation*. When we read *ophthalmon anti ophthalmou*, no one doubts the meaning.—Why, therefore, may we not conclude that Christ was crucified in our place and stead, when He said, that 'He came to give his life,' *lutron anti pollon* ? *Arrowsmith, Tactica sacra*. SCOTT.

(6.) *Who gave Himself*.] *Comp. Mat. 20:28*. This shows the *mode* in which the mediation was effected. BLOOMF.—*The Man, Christ Jesus*.] 'Though the union of the *divine* nature with the *human*, qualified Christ for the office of Mediator, yet this plainly shows, that it is in his *human* nature, we are to consider Him as discharging it.' DODDR.—From this v. it plainly appears, that the principal notion of Mediator, as applied to Christ, is that of atonement.'

HENRY, *abr.*



7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle; (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

[Practical Observations.]

9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with <sup>k</sup>broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression.

i Jn. 4:21. k or, *plaited*. l 1 Co. 14:34.  
j He. 10:22. l Pe. 3:3.

plurality of Mediators. He that is a Mediator in the New Testament sense, gave Himself a Ransom. Vain then is the pretence of the Romanists, that there is but one Mediator of satisfaction, but many of intercession; for, according to Paul, Christ's giving Himself a Ransom, was a necessary part of the

Mediator's office; and, indeed, this lays the foundation for his intercession. Paul was ordained a minister, to declare this to the Gentiles, that Christ is the one Mediator between God and men, who gave Himself a Ransom for all. This is the substance of which all ministers are to preach, to the end of the world; and Paul magnifies his office, as he was the apostle of the Gentiles, Rom. 11:13.

III. A direction how to pray, v. 8.

1. Under the Gospel, prayer is not to be confined to any one particular house of prayer, but men must pray everywhere: no one place is more acceptable to God than another, John 4:21. *Pray everywhere*. We must pray in our closets, in our families, at our meals, when on journeys, and in the solemn assemblies, whether more public or private.

2. It is the will of God, that in prayer we should lift up *holy* or *pure* hands, pure from the pollution of sin, washed in the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, Ps. 26:6.

3. We must pray in charity; *without wrath*, or malice, or anger at any person.

4. We must pray in faith, *without doubting*, Jam. 1:6. or, as some read it, *without disputing*; and then it falls under the head of charity.

V. 9—15. He charges women, who profess the Christian religion, to be modest, sober, silent, and submissive, as becomes their place.

1. They must be very modest in their apparel, not affecting gaudiness, gayety, or costliness; (you may read the vanity of a person's mind in the gayety and gaudiness of their habit;) because they have better ornaments with which they should *adorn themselves, as becomes women professing god-*

*liness, with good works*. Note, Good works are the best ornaments; these are, in the sight of God, of great price. *Those that profess godliness should, in their dress, as well as other things, act as becomes their profession*; instead of laying out their money on fine clothes, they must lay it out in works of piety and charity, which are properly called *good works*.

2. Women must learn,—learn the principles of their religion, learn Christ, learn the Scriptures; they must not think that their sex excuses them from that learning which is necessary to salvation.

3. They must be *silent*, submissive, and subject, and *not usurp authority*. The reason given is, because *Adam was first formed, then Eve* out of him, to denote her subordination to him, and dependence on him; and that she was made for him, to be a *help meet* for him. And *Adam was not deceived*, i. e. not first; the serpent did not immediately set on him, but the woman was first in the transgression, 2 Cor. 11:3. and it was part of the sentence, *Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*, Gen. 3:16.

But it is a word of comfort, v. 15. that they who continue in sobriety, shall be *saved in child-bearing*, or *with child-bearing*. The Messiah, who was born of a woman, should break the serpent's head, Gen. 3:15. or, the sentence they are under for sin, shall be no bar to their acceptance with Christ, *if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness with sobriety*.

Here observe, The extensiveness of the rules of Christianity; they reach not only to men, but to women, not only to their persons, but also to their dress, and outward deportment. Women are to profess godliness as well as men; and, to their honor be

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—8. It is a most important, though much neglected duty, for Christians to pray and return thanks 'for all men,' according to the different relations, in which they stand to them, and as their circumstances require. Thus they may show their love to those whom they cannot otherwise serve, and do them a most important benefit, and also evince, that they interest themselves in the happiness of mankind in general.—In proportion as we learn thus to 'worship in

V. 8—10. (Notes, 1—4.) The expression may indeed include prayers in the closet, in the family, and in social meetings; but the chapter especially relates to the manner of conducting public assemblies, in what place soever these were held; for 'Where two or three are met together, there,' says our Savior, 'I am in the midst of you.' Mat. 18:19, 20. 28:19, 20, *verse* 20. Heb. 10:23—25. 'As the apostle is speaking of public prayer, his meaning, I suppose, is, that the men, and not the women, were to lead the devotion of the assembly (9).' Mackn. The antithesis between the men and the women (9), the word itself, the article, and the connexion, 'in like manner,' combine in establishing this observation.—The Gentiles had priestesses, as well as priests, not only to their goddesses, but to their gods also; but the Israelites were not allowed to conform to this practice. 'In like manner,' women must not be ministers, or preachers, under the Christian dispensation.—In order that men might perform the office allotted to them, with acceptance, they must in reverent adoration 'lift up holy hands;' not satisfied with washing their hands before they worshipped, according to the custom of the Jews, and indeed that of many Gentiles; but taking care to keep them pure from all injustice, and the practice of every sin.—In order to this proper regulation of religious assemblies, as well as the general conduct of Christians, the apostle furthermore enjoined, in the most decided manner, that 'the women should adorn themselves with modest apparel,' suited to their station in life, and becoming that 'bashfulness and sobriety' of manners, which would be expected from them; not copying the vain fashions of those women, whose attire was intended to render their persons attractive to beholders, and was, at once, an indication of the levity of their own minds, and suited to excite the passions of others. He required, therefore, that they should not adorn themselves with broided hair, gold, pearls, or expensive garments. The appearance of women in the places of worship, is especially intended, and the exhortation implied, that whatever garments they wore, they must consider 'good works,' as their peculiar ornament, as 'it became women professing godliness.' (Marg. Refer. k, l.) Yet it doubtless was meant as a general rule, that Christian women should refuse conformity to the foolish fashions of a vain world, in this respect; that they should choose to appear more plain and simple in their attire, than others of their rank; that they should not waste time, or run into needless expense, in these empty decorations, but employ both their time and money in adorning themselves with good works; (Note and P. O. Acts 9:36—43.) that decency, modesty, and sobriety should be consulted in their garments and appearance, rather than elegance and fashion; and finally, that ministers ought to teach these things to their congregations, as of great importance to the honor of the Gospel. (Note, 1 Pet. 3:1—6.)—It has been well observed, that foppery and extravagance, as to dress, in men, are most emphatically condemned by the apostle's silence on the subject, for this intimated, that surely they could be under no temptation to such a childish vanity!—It is worthy to be noted by the women, that this precept ought not to be slighted by them, as of little

spirit and truth,' with awful reverence, Holy love, pure zeal, and lively faith, (John 4:21—24.) we shall find our minds freed from narrow prejudices and resentment, and our benevolence towards all men greatly enlarged, and we shall more fervently and intelligently pray to our heavenly Father, saying, 'Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven;' 'for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.' Mat. 6:9, 10, 13. Sc.

moment, seeing it is so carefully inculcated by the two chief apostles, of the Jew and Gentile, and the contrary is represented as a practice opposite to godliness.' Whitby. Scott.

(8.) *Holy hands*.] The expression may allude to the custom of *washing their hands* before solemn prayer, which has prevailed not only among the Jews, but among heathens and Mohammedans, that they might hereby express their desire of inward *purity*. DODR.

(9.) 'Ancient medals and statues [comp. the cuts of Comy and Supplement] show the costume of those times with respect to the hair, the expensive ornaments then used, and the labored forms in which female tresses were arranged.' HENRY, *abr.—Adorn, &c.*] The apostles both [referring to Pet. 3:3.] mean to admonish Christian women to pay far less attention to external adorning than to internal, and to make virtue their *special* ornament. And upon the whole it appears the direction is intended chiefly (and so Scott) to apply to their dress at the religious assemblies; though it may be extended to their apparel at other times.' BLOOMF. The En., however, sees no restriction in the original.—'Esting very justly observes, that this discourse concludes with yet stronger force against foppery in men.' DODR.—How many dollars are spent for finery, where one is spent for Christ!—The argument some Christians use for disobeying the apostle is, that the poor live by the extravagancies of the rich! But those who get their living by making such things as depend for their value upon the caprices of fashion, are liable at every change of fashion to be thrown out of employment, and being un instructed to make what is permanently and always useful and valuable, they often suffer. Whereas, had their industry been directed to what is of constant demand, it would, according to God's laws, have brought a *certain* living, and saved them from the immoralities and bad influences to which a *precarious* living exposes. See also Wayland's Polit. Economy for other reasons Ed.

V. 11—14. It has been observed, that this rule admitted of an exception, in the case of those, who spoke by the Spirit of prophecy. (M. R. m.—Note, 1 Cor. 14:34, 35.) and it may here be added, that it related to public teaching exclusively, and not to any kind of private instruction, by which no 'authority over the man' is implied. The women were required to 'be silent with all subjection,' in the religious assemblies, for the apostle, as Christ's representative, and declaring his will, would not 'suffer women to teach,' for that would be like 'usurping authority over the man,' and therefore their willing subjection was to be shown, by silently receiving instruction. This humbling consideration [being first in the transgression] was suited to convince the women, that they ought not to affect authority, or presume to be public teachers. Sc.

(14.) *Adam was not deceived*.] I. e. not by the serpent, but by the woman. So Bloomf., and he adds from Theoph. "Eve was brought over by desire; Adam, by the *persuasions of his wife*." The argument, he says, 'is built on the original, and thence derived comparative imbecility and persuasibility of the female sex, and consequent unfitnes for giving public instruction.' En.



15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety.

## CHAP. III.

<sup>2</sup> How bishops, and deacons, and their wives, should be qualified. 14 and to what end Paul wrote to Timothy of these things. 15 Of the church, and the blessed truth therein taught and professed.

**T**HIS is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a <sup>a</sup>bishop, he desireth a good work.

2 A bishop <sup>b</sup>then must be blameless, the husband of one wife; vigilant, sober, of <sup>c</sup>good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach :

<sup>a</sup> Phi. 1:1.      <sup>b</sup> Tit. 1:6, &c.      <sup>c</sup> or, modest.

it spoken, many of them were eminent professors of Christianity in the days of the apostles. Women being more in danger of exceeding in their apparel, it was more necessary to caution them in this respect. The best ornaments, for professors of godliness,

PRACT. OBS. V. 9—15. Whatever renders the Gospel respected in the minds and hearts of those who are without, contributes to its success; and the modest, decent, and sober apparel of 'women professing godliness,' must therefore have this tendency in no ordinary degree. But alas! in this trifling and expensive age, when almost all vie with their superiors in apparel, till distinction of rank itself is nearly lost, we too often find those, who come to the places where the Word of God is preached, decorated as much beyond what they can properly afford, and in as unbecoming a manner, as they who frequent the theatre! It would be well, if the more decided professors of godliness were wholly exempt from this disgraceful vanity; or if they always spent as many hours in visiting the sick and poor, and in labors for their relief, and as much money in relieving their distresses, as they do in uselessly decorating themselves, and their children, after a manner unsuitable to their rank in life, and inconsistent with their profession. These are by no

V. 15. The sorrows and pains attendant on child-bearing, were a peculiar mark of the divine displeasure, against the transgression of the first woman, and suited to bring it to the remembrance of her daughters in every age; yet those who professed the Gospel of Christ might be comforted, by the hope of being supported and preserved, through that trying season, and even of deriving benefit from all their sufferings; at least they might be sure, that there was no curse or wrath in it, provided they continued steadfast in the faith, and in love to Christ and his people, with holiness, purity, sobriety, and modesty. (M. R.)—Some suppose, the apostle to have meant, that, as sin first entered by the woman, whence all the pains and sorrows of child-bearing originated, so, through those sorrows, One had come into the world, 'born of a woman,' by miraculous conception, without man, by whom all those would be saved, who continued in the faith; and indeed the original may well bear that interpretation, which is also very ancient.—Eve, whom the apostle had just before mentioned, was thus addressed by her offended Creator; 'I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception, in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children;' yet the preceding verse implied a promise of salvation through 'the Seed of the woman,' for all believers, both men and women. Gen. 3:14—16. Eve, herself, is generally supposed to have been saved 'through child-bearing,' or, by One descended from her; though the anguish of bearing children was denounced on her, as a peculiar punishment of her atrocious guilt, and thus her sorrow was turned into joy, her curse into a blessing. In like manner, her daughters, though involved with her in the sentence of bringing forth children with sorrow, would also share with her in the same salvation, joy, and blessing, through the promised Seed, if they copied her example of faith and obedience. In child-bearing.] 5:14. The article favors the latter interpretation. SCOTT.

(15.) 'It was promised, that the seed of the woman, and not of the man, should bruise the serpent's head, and therefore through her Progeny it is, that both the female and the male sex shall eventually be saved, if they live in faith and Christian love, and holiness, and sobriety.' SAURFLEWORTH, in Henry, abr.—Pocock understands it, of being carried safely through child-bearing; not as an absolute promise, but as a general intimation; which sense, Br. says, seems to be the least objectionable, though it lies open to the objection of not being confined to Christian or even virtuous women, and is not satisfactory. But R. Hull, in Henry, abr. says, 'there is no reason to doubt, that the true meaning is, "by the child-bearing," referring not to the pains of parturition, but to the extraordinary event of the birth of our Savior in a miraculous manner. . . . The apostle is not adverting to any temporal circumstance; he is speaking of the entrance of sin, by means of the woman, and it is natural to throw in a compensatory circumstance, reminding us, that as the inferior sex had been the source of human perversion, so it had the honor, in compensation, of being the immediate instrument of the production of the Messiah, by whom our recovery was effected. And the condition which follows, "if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness with sobriety," puts this interpretation beyond doubt; as there is the greatest connexion between faith and virtue, without which our faith is vain, but none between perseverance in holiness and exemption from the pains of child-birth.' Yet if the race should obey the laws of conjugal sobriety, and other of God's laws, doubtless, in the course of generations, these pains would mitigate. Gill says: 'The words may be rendered impersonally thus; "Notwithstanding there is salvation through the birth of a Son;" (or child-bearing;) and the sense is, that, notwithstanding the fall of man by the means of the woman, yet there is salvation for both men and women, through the birth of Immanuel, the Child born and Son given.'

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are good works. According to Paul, women must be learners, not public teachers, not usurp authority over the man, but be in silence; notwithstanding, good women may and ought to teach their children at home the principles of religion; so Timothy was taught by his mother and grandmother; 2 Tim. 3:15. Aquila and his wife Priscilla expounded unto Apollos the way of God more perfectly; but privately; they took him unto them; Acts 18:26. The reasons here for the man's authority over the woman, and her subjection to the man, v. 13, 14. 1 Cor. 11:9. are very good; and though the difficulties and dangers of child-bearing are many and great, as they are part of the punishment inflicted on the sex for Eve's transgression, yet here is much for woman's support and encouragement, v. 15. and women under the circumstance of child-bearing should by faith lay hold on this promise for their support in the needful time.

CHAP. III. V. 1—7. The two epistles to Timothy, and that to Titus, contain a scripture-plan of church-government, or a

direction to ministers. Timothy, we suppose, was an evangelist, left at Ephesus, to take care of those whom the Holy Ghost had made bishops there, i. e. the presbyters, as appears by Acts 20:28. where the care of the church was committed to the presbyters, and they were called bishops. It seems, they were very loath to part with Paul, Acts 20:38. their church was but newly planted, they were afraid of undertaking the care of it, therefore Paul left Timothy with them to set them in order.

And here we have the character of a gospel-minister, whose office it is, as a bishop, to preside in a particular congregation of Christians, v. 1. The ministry is a work. However the office of a bishop may be now thought a good preferment, then it was thought a good work. Observe,

(1.) The office of a scripture-bishop is an office of divine appointment, not of human invention; the office of the ministry was in the church before the magistrate countenanced Christianity, for this office is one of the great gifts Christ has bestowed on the church, Ephes. 4:8, 11. (2.) It is a

means trifles, or pharisaical impositions, as some affect to call them, but apostolical injunctions; and it should be considered, that, as raiment was only made needful by sin, so it is peculiarly unsuitable for those, who profess to believe the Bible, to be proud and vain of the very badge of their disgrace.—The original creation of the man, and then the woman, and the entrance of sin by the woman, who 'being deceived was first in the transgression,' concur in showing the reasonableness of that subjection, humility, and teachableness, prescribed in Scripture to the woman, and the impropriety of her usurping authority over the man. But, as the Gospel gives special encouragements to the woman, in respect of those sorrows, which the entrance of sin has entailed on her, provided she continue in faith and love, 'with holiness and sobriety;' so the consideration of those manifold sorrows, to which the female sex is subjected, should teach men to exercise their authority with the utmost gentleness, tenderness, and affection. SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1. It has already been shown, that the word rendered 'bishop,' was at this time of the same import with that translated 'elder,' or 'presbyter,' (Note, Acts 20:17.) for the charge, given by Paul to the Ephesian elders, is here supposed to have been subsequent to the writing of this epistle. The same is also proved, by the silence of the apostle, concerning any other order than bishops and deacons. (Note, Phil. 1:1.) Indeed, it is evident, that the selection or appointment of an individual, to be overseer of the elders or pastors, though very ancient, and probably apostolical, was not at this time in general use. Rev. 2:1. SCOTT.

(1.) Bishop.] 'Whether bishops be understood as prelates, presidents, or pastors, most certainly moral character in either, and to all, is of the first importance.' WILLIAMS.

V. 2. It is manifest, that Timothy was supposed to be principally concerned in the choice of the bishops, being the apostle's deputy and representative, and, accordingly, instructions are here given him, how to fulfil this arduous charge in the proper manner; instructions, no doubt, intended to be useful in the highest degree, if duly regarded, to all others in every age and place, on whom the same most important trust should devolve.—The apostle therefore showed, very particularly, what manner of persons these 'bishops,' or elders ought to be, in order that mercenary, ambitious, and other improper desires after the sacred service might be repressed, and likewise, that those who had been appointed to it might know how to behave in it. Whatever natural abilities, learning, elocution, or spiritual gifts, any man might possess, he must be considered as ineligible to this office, if not of a 'blameless' character, and if he had not avoided scandalous vices, at least since his professed conversion to Christianity.—He ought also to be 'the husband of one wife.' Christ and the apostles expressly condemned polygamy, as well as divorces, except for adultery. (Notes, Mat. 19:3—9. Mark 10:2—12. 1 Cor. 7:1—5.) Yet there was no direct command for a man, who had previously taken more wives than one, to put the others away when he embraced the Gospel, and such a requisition might, in some instances, have produced very bad consequences in domestic life, and increased the opposition of the civil powers to the preaching of Christianity. But the rule, that no man, however qualified in other respects, should be admitted into the pastoral office, who had more than one wife, or who had put away one to take another, tended to show the unlawfulness of polygamy, and divorces on frivolous pretences, and their inconsistency with the Christian dispensation; and concurred with other things to bring them into total disuse in the Christian church, yet without violence and confusion.—To argue hence, as it has been done, that polygamy was lawful for other Christians, else it would not have been needful to restrict pastors from it, would prove, (if it proved anything,) that it was also lawful and common, for them to be drunkards, covetous, brawlers, or strikers.—Some have inferred from this text, that stated pastors ought to be married, as a pre-requisite to their office; but this seems to be a mistake of a general permission, connected with a restriction, for an express command. It is, however, abundantly sufficient to prove, that marriage is entirely consistent with the most sacred functions, and the most exemplary holiness, and to subvert the very basis of the anti-christian prohibition of marriage to the clergy, with all its concurrent, and consequent, and incalculable mischiefs. (Notes, 4:1—5. Heb. 13:4.)—Yet some have even endeavored to infer a part of that system from this clause itself, and have supposed that the apostle meant to prohibit second marriages to the clergy! But this is contrary to the whole tenor of Scripture; it is by no means contained in the meaning of the words, and would certainly bring in a part of those evils, which long experience has proved inseparable from the general



3 Not <sup>d</sup> given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but <sup>e</sup> patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well <sup>f</sup> his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity:

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a <sup>g</sup> novice, lest being lifted up with pride <sup>h</sup> he fall into the condemnation of the <sup>i</sup> devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them <sup>j</sup> which are without;

d or, not ready to quarrel and of fer wrong, as one in wine. e 2 Ti. 2:24. f Ps. 101:2. g or, one newly come to the faith. h Pr. 15:18. i Jude 6. j Ac. 22:12. 1 Th. 4:12.

work, requiring diligence and application; the apostle represents it under the notion and character of a *work*. It is a good work, a work of the greatest importance, and designed for the greatest good; to illustrate the divine perfections in bringing many sons into glory. There ought to be an earnest desire of the office, in those who would be put into it; and this is the question proposed to those who offer themselves to the ministry of the church of England; 'Do you think you are moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office?'

In order to the discharge of this office, the doing of this work, the workman must be duly qualified.

1. A minister must be *blameless*; not lie under any scandal; give as little occasion for blame as can be, because that will prejudice his ministry, and reflect reproach on his office.

2. He must be *the husband of one wife*; not having given a bill of divorce to one, and then taking another, or not having many wives at once, as at that time was too com-

mon, both among Jews and Gentiles, especially Gentiles.

3. He must be *vigilant*, watchful against Satan, over himself, and the souls of those committed to his charge, of whom having taken the *oversight*, he must improve all opportunities of doing them good.

4. He must be *sober*, temperate, moderate in all his actions, and in the use of all creature-comforts. *Be sober, be vigilant.*

5. He must be of *good behavior*, composed and solid, and not light, vain, and frothy.

6. He must be *given to hospitality*; open-handed to strangers, and ready to entertain them according to his ability, as one who does not set his heart on the wealth of the world, and who is a true lover of his brethren.

7. *Apt to teach*. Therefore this is a preaching bishop whom Paul describes, one who is both able and willing to communicate to others the knowledge God has given him; one who is fit to teach, and ready to take all opportunities of giving instruction; who is himself *well instructed in the things of the kingdom of heaven*, and is communicative of what he knows to others.

8. No drunkard: *not given to wine*. The priests were not to drink wine when they went in to minister, Lev. 10:8, 9.

9. No *striker*; one who is not quarrelsome, or apt to use violence to any, but does everything with mildness, love, and gentleness. The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle towards all, &c. 2 Tim. 2:24.

10. One who is *not greedy of filthy lucre*; who does not make his ministry to truckle to any secular design or interest; who uses no mean, base, sordid ways of getting money; who is dead to the wealth of this world, lives above it, and makes it appear he is so.

11. He must be *patient*, and *not a brawler*; of a mild disposition. Christ, the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, is so. Not apt to be angry or quarrelsome, not a braw-

ler with his tongue; for how shall men teach others to govern their tongues, who do not make conscience of keeping them under good government themselves?

12. *Not covetous*. Covetousness is bad in any, but worst in a minister, whose calling leads him to converse so much with another world.

13. He must be one who keeps his family in good order, that he may set a good example to other masters of families, to do so too; and that he may thereby give a proof of his ability to take care of the church of God; the families of ministers ought to be examples of good to all other families. Ministers must *have their children in subjection*; then it is the duty of ministers' children to submit to the instructions that are given them. *With all gravity*. The best way to keep inferiors in subjection, is, to be grave with them. Not having his children in subjection with all *austerity*, but with all *gravity*.

14. He must *not be a novice*; not one newly brought to the Christian religion; or not one who is but meanly instructed in it, who knows no more of religion than its surface, for such a one is apt to be *lifted up with pride*; the more ignorant [proud] men are, the prouder they become. The devils fell through pride, which is a good reason why we should take heed of pride, because it is a sin that turned angels into devils.

15. He must be of good reputation among his neighbors, and under no reproach from former conversation; for the devil will use that to ensnare others, and work in them an aversion to the doctrine of Christ, preached by those who have not had a good report.

Now, on the whole, having briefly gone through the qualifications of a gospel-bishop, we may, with great reason cry out, as Paul does, *Who is sufficient for these things?* 2 Cor. 2:16. *This is a work indeed*. What piety, what prudence, what zeal, what courage, what faithfulness, what watchfulness

prohibition; for as good reasons may very often be given for marrying a second time, as for marrying at all.—The pastor must also be 'vigilant,' a circumspect and attentive man; one who watches carefully over his flock, capable of discerning dangers at a distance, guarding the people against the artifices of false teachers, and the devices of Satan, and prompt to embrace opportunities of usefulness: he must be 'sober,' serious, and temperate; moderate in all his desires and indulgencies, 'of good behavior' in all the transactions of life; showing a meek, kind, equitable, faithful, and prudent disposition towards all men. He should likewise be ready, according to his ability, to relieve the poor, to entertain his brethren without grudging, and with evident cheerfulness and satisfaction, especially, he ought to be hospitable to Christians, who were driven from home by persecution, or who, in any other way, were brought to the place of his residence.—However we understand the word "bishops," it must be allowed, that they ought to be preachers and teachers, and that frequently and promptly, and not unpreaching prelates.' Latimer.

(2.) *Given to hospitality.* 'As there were then, in the Eastern countries, few houses of public entertainment, *hospitality* to strangers was a virtue more peculiarly seasonable and necessary than among us.' Doddr.—Yet, is it not too much neglected? Ed.—*Apt to teach.* 'The Bp. of Winchester, though so candid as to admit that *bishop* and *presbyter* are of the same signification, yet makes it an argument in favor of episcopacy, that *ordination* is not spoken of. But there is nothing said either of *administering the sacraments*, which, with other circumstances, concurs to show how far Paul was from intending a full representation of *all* the pastoral duties. It may be added also, that the directions he afterwards gives to Timothy, on the head of *ordination*, may suggest instruction in this respect to all ministers. And it must be submitted to consideration, whether the omission of any charge to presbyters, enjoining them to obey their bishop, as a person of superior authority, does not weigh much more one way, than the omission pleaded above can avail the other.' Doddr.

V. 3. *Filthy lucre.* 'It is remarkable, that this phrase is seldom or never used in the N. T. to express *any gain*, but that which is made or procured by the *covetousness* of Christian ministers.' In.

V. 4. 'The result of my experience among the deaf and dumb, and also among other children, has long convinced me, that, both in the family and school, *prayer, with the Word of God, applied to the conduct in an appropriate, kind, and solemn manner*, is the great secret of effectual discipline and government. Let parents and teachers put themselves, and their own dignity, and authority, in a far less prominent attitude than is often the case. Let them so speak and act, as to lead those under their care, to regard them as *God's vicegerents*, commissioned and required to enforce *his commands*, and to see that *his authority* is respected and obeyed. Let the Bible be referred to, as the *universal statute book*; the *director and arbiter* of right and wrong; as the *voice of God*. Let the Holy Spirit be sought with earnest and devout supplication, for parent and child, teacher and pupil. Then the reason, the conscience, the heart, the will of children, and youth, will be reached and touched as if by the finger of God. He will honor and prosper our

efforts, *if we thus seek his aid, and use the instruments which He has appointed*. Come, happy time! when the Bible shall be the *great moral guide and helper* in the discipline of families and schools; *prayer* invoke the blessing of God upon its use; and the Holy Spirit be shed down, to crown the whole with his *divinely efficacious influence*! Then the country and church will be safe, because their foundations will rest on the *Rock of ages*. Then the patriot and Christian, may look around with humble exultation on our free institutions, and say, with prophetic truth, "Be ye perpetual!" Rev. T. H. GALLAUDET.

V. 6. It would not be generally expedient, to choose a new convert to the pastoral office, or an inexperienced person, one but superficially acquainted with human nature, and the things of God; lest the distinction of his situation, or the applause bestowed on him, should elate him with pride and ambition, and he should thus fall into a condemnation similar to that of the devil. It is evident from this, that spiritual pride and ambition constituted the beginning of Satan's apostasy. (M. R.) Some have conjectured, that it was revealed to the angels, that the eternal Son would assume a nature inferior to theirs, in which He would rule over them, and be worshipped by them, and that Satan, and the other angels who fell with Him, proudly disdained such subjection. But all our conjectures on this subject must be uncertain, and in a measure presumptuous. The pride, however, and ambition of ministers on account of their office, gifts, popularity, or success, would be of a nature in some respects similar to Satan's pride in heaven, and might involve 'the novice' under a similar condemnation.—It is evident, that some exceptions, to this most important general rule, must have been admitted, in the first formation of newly planted churches, in which the miraculous gifts and endowments conferred by the Holy Spirit, seem to have superseded the necessity of that previous study and experience, which are, in all ordinary cases, indispensable. Ac. 14:21—23. Sc.

V. 7. It is evident, that the apostle did not here at all speak of the several *duties* of ministers, but only of the general conduct and character of those, whose desires after that office were to be countenanced, or the contrary, by Timothy, and by others concerned. Nothing, therefore, can be proved, as some have attempted, from supposed omissions of any duties of ministers, or parts of their office, for this was not the apostle's subject.—*Which are without* [Notes, 1 Cor. 5:9—13. Col. 4:5, 6. *The snare of the devil.*] The singular number, and the prefixed article *tu diabolou*, preclude the interpretation of those, who explain the passage of false accusers, and the snares laid by them. In.

(7.) *Snare of the devil.* 'Some have explained it of some human slanderer, but it seems much more natural in the sense of devil, v. 6. our great *infernal enemy*. And it is easy to see, that Satan might graft many dangerous temptations, on the evil report which a man might have incurred by any scandal, before he entered on the ministry; either attempting to draw him to the repetition of former evils, from an apprehension that he had very little reputation to lose by a new fall, or weakening his hands in efforts of usefulness, by a fear, that the remembrance of those past irregularities would render his attempts less effectual.' Doddr.—*A good report of them which are without.* 'Piety assumes an aspect somewhat different, in different ages and periods of



lest he fall into reproach, and the snare <sup>k</sup> of the devil.

[Practical Observations.]

8 Likewise *must* the deacons <sup>l</sup> be grave, not double-tongued, not <sup>m</sup> given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9 Holding <sup>n</sup> the mystery <sup>o</sup> of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless.

11 Even so *must* their wives <sup>p</sup> be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in <sup>q</sup> all things.

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling <sup>r</sup> their children and their own houses well.

13 For they that have <sup>r</sup> used the office of a deacon <sup>s</sup> well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith <sup>t</sup> which is in Christ Jesus.

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

k c. 6:9.	9. Eze. 44:21.	q ver. 4.
2 Ti. 2:26.	n Ep. 1:9.	r or, ministered.
1 Ac. 6:3.	o ver. 16.	s Mat. 25:21.
m ver. 3. Le. 10:	p Tit. 2:3.	t 2 Ti. 2:1.

over ourselves, our lusts, appetites, and passions, and over those under our charge; I say, what holy watchfulness is necessary in this work! Have not the best qualified and the most faithful and conscientious ministers just reason to complain against themselves, that so much is requisite by way of qualification, and so much work is necessary to be done? And, alas! how far short do the best come of what they should be, and what they should do! Yet let those bless God, and be thankful, whom the Lord has enabled, and counted faithful, putting them into the ministry; if God is pleased to make any, in some degree, able and faithful, let Him have the praise and glory of it.

V. 8—13. 1. We have here the character of deacons. Of the institution of this office,

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—7. The office of a minister is an arduous and laborious, 'but a good work,' in every respect. It is indeed that most honorable, useful, and important employment, in which Emmanuel Himself chose to be occupied, while He refused to assume the office of King, during his abode on earth. But to desire emolument or authority in the church, by intruding into this sacred office, without either qualifications suited to its important duties, or any purpose of performing them, from indolence, ambition, and love of 'filthy lucre,' is the vilest of all prostitutions, and merits the deepest condemnation.—The pastors of the Lord's flock should be continent, vigilant, sober, 'of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach,' and remote from violent passions, and every kind and degree of covetousness. The more extensive the sphere, and the more conspicuous the station, to which any of them are called, the greater measure of all these holy endowments are requi-

sited; but no man can be a meet person for the pastoral office, in the most obscure situation, who is unwatchful, frivolous, licentious, given to wine, greedy of gain, disposed to furious anger, negligent of moral and relative duties, selfish, averse to hospitality, and unable or unwilling to teach the flock.—The folly, ostentation, conformity to the world, extravagance or ungodliness of a minister's family, will inevitably and greatly lessen his influence, and prevent his usefulness, as well as ruin his comfort. It is also very wrong for novices, however eminent for abilities and gifts, to be pushed forward prematurely into this arduous work. This has ruined many promising young men, by puffing them up with pride, and so casting them into 'the condemnation of the devil.' And Satan finds various advantages against such as lose their reputation, and incur the reproach of the enemies of the Gospel, and not only against them, but against the cause of truth and holiness. SCOTT.

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with that which gave occasion to it, you have an account in Acts 6:1—7. It was requisite the deacons should have a good character, because they were assistants to the ministers, appeared and acted publicly, and had a great trust reposed in them. They must be *grave*; gravity becomes all Christians, but especially those who are in office in the church. *Not double-tongued*; [vulnerable;] that will say one thing to one, and another thing to another, according as their interest leads them; flatterers and slanderers are double-tongued. *Not given to much wine*; for that is a great disparagement to any man, especially to a Christian, and one in office, unfits men for business, opens the door to many temptations. *Not greedy of filthy lucre*; this would especially be bad in the deacons, who were intrusted with the church's money, and, if they were covetous and greedy of filthy lucre, would be tempted to embezzle it, and convert that to their own use which was intended for the public service. *Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience*, v. 9. Note, The mystery of faith is best held in a pure conscience. The practical love of truth is the most powerful preservative from error and delusion. *Let these also first be proved*, v. 10. It is not fit that the public trusts should be lodged in the hands of any, till they are first proved, and found [not merely ready of tongue, in prayer, and shrewd, but] fit for the business they are to be intrusted with; the soundness of their judgments, their zeal for Christ, and the blamelessness of their conversation, must be proved.

2. Their wives likewise must have a good character, v. 11. be of a *grave* behavior, not *slanderers*, tale-bearers, carrying stories to make mischief and sow discord; they must be *sober* and *faithful in all things*, not given to any excess, but trusty in all that is committed to them. All who are related to ministers, must double their care to walk as becomes the Gospel of Christ, lest, if they in anything walk disorderly, the ministry be blamed. As he said before of the bishops or ministers, so here of the deacons; [each is to] be *the husband of one wife*, such as had not put away their wives, on dislike, and married others; they must *rule their children and their own houses well*; families of ministers should be examples to other fami-

lies. And the reason why the deacons must be thus qualified, is, v. 13. because, though the office of a deacon be of an inferior degree, yet it is a step toward the higher degree; or it may be meant of the good reputation a man would gain by his fidelity in this office; *they will purchase to themselves great boldness in the faith that is in Jesus Christ*.

Observe, In the primitive church there were but two orders of ministers, or officers, *bishops* and *deacons*, Phil. 1:1. After ages have invented the rest. Clemens Romanus, in his epistle to the Christians, ch. 42, 44, speaks very fully and plainly to this effect, that the apostles, foreknowing, by our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would arise in the Christian church a controversy about the name *Episcopacy*, appointed the forementioned orders, *bishops* and *deacons*. The scripture-deacon's main employment was, to serve tables, and not to preach or baptize. Philip, indeed, did preach and baptize many in Samaria, Acts 8. but he was an *evangelist*, Acts 21:8. and he might preach and baptize, and perform any other part of the ministerial office, under that character; but still the design of the deacon's office was, to mind the temporal concerns of the church, such as providing for the ministers, and the poor.

V. 14—16. He concludes the ch. with a particular direction to Timothy. He hoped shortly to come to him, to give him further directions and assistance in his work; but he wrote *lest he should tarry long, that he might know how to conduct himself* as became an evangelist, and the apostle's substitute. He must know how to behave himself, not only in the particular church where he was now appointed to reside for some time, but in other churches, where he should in like manner be appointed to reside for some time; therefore it is not the church of Ephesus, but the Catholic [or universal] church, which is here called *the house of God, which is the church of the living God*. Observe here,

God is the living God; the church is his house, where He dwells; and this is the great support of the church, that it is the church of the *living God*, the true God in opposition to false gods; *the pillar and ground of truth*; i. e. either,

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15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house <sup>u</sup> of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and <sup>v</sup> ground of the truth.

16 And, without controversy, great is the mystery <sup>w</sup> of godliness: God was <sup>x</sup> manifest in <sup>y</sup> the flesh, justified in the <sup>z</sup> Spirit, seen of <sup>a</sup> angels, preached unto the <sup>b</sup> Gentiles, believed on <sup>c</sup> in the world, received up <sup>d</sup> into glory.

u 2 Ti. 2:20. v or, stay. w 1 Co. 2:7. x manifested. y Jn. 1:14. 1 Jn. 1:2.

z Mat. 3:16. Jn. 16:8,9. Ro. 1:4. 1 Pe. 3:18. 1 Jn. 5:6. a Mat. 4:11.

1 Pe. 1:12. b Ac. 13:46,48. c Col. 1:6. d Lu. 24:51. Ac. 1:9.

1. The church itself. Not that the authority of the Scriptures depends on that of the church, as the papists pretend, for truth is the pillar and ground of the church; but the church holds forth the Scripture and the doctrine of Christ, as the pillar, to which a proclamation is affixed; holds forth the proclamation, Eph. 3:10.

2. Others understand it of Timothy; not he himself only, but he as an evangelist, and other faithful ministers, are the pillars and ground of truth; it is their business to maintain, hold up, and publish, the truths

PRACT. OBS. V. 8—16. The 'mystery of faith' will never appear respectable among men, except it be held in 'a pure conscience.' Professed Christians should therefore be proved, and found blameless, before they are admitted to any office in the church. Time spent in preparation and probation will not be lost, and a precipitate zeal is not one of the prescribed qualifications for the ministry.—This 'doctrine of God our Savior,' will be despised or revered, in great measure according to the conduct of professors of the Gospel, which will be greatly influenced by

Phil. 2:14—18.—Others detach the sentence from this v. and connect it with the following; as if the apostle had meant, that 'the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh,' was 'the pillar and ground of the truth;' but this construction seems inadmissible; for this great mystery is an essential part of the truth, of which 'the church is the pillar and ground.' And as the church is appointed to maintain, hold forth, and 'adorn the doctrine of God our Savior,' in the midst of a dark and wicked world, it was very important, that Timothy should know how to conduct himself, in subserviency to this great design. SCOTT.

(14.) Hoping to come, &c.] 'It seems evident from hence, that Paul intended to have come back to Timothy, at Ephesus, in a little time, but was providentially called another way; but it can by no means be concluded from hence, that Paul wrote this epistle to Timothy, after his first imprisonment at Rome.' DODDR.

(15.) 'No interpretation of this text seems more precarious, than that which refers it to the church. That had just before been called a house, and therefore cannot naturally be called a pillar, or foundation. Yet, if it were to be granted, it would only prove that the church was to support Christianity from age to age,—not that any particular church is infallible. Many good critics refer this descriptive clause to Timothy, agreeably to that figure by which Peter is called a pillar, Ga.2:9. Comp. Rev. 3:12. But I choose to end the sentence with the word God; and begin the next with The pillar, &c.; then the whole system of evangelical truths is considered as resting on this pillar and basis.' DODDR.—Bl. maintains the following as the most natural connexion. 'And great is the dignity and importance of the church universal, as being the depository of the fundamental truths of the Gospel, of which we may undoubtedly say: "Great is the mystery of godliness;" and it is this, &c.' ED.—Some have wished to read "which," or "who," instead of "God," in this verse. The difference, in the original, would be made by a very trifling variation in the characters used. But, as Bloomf. states, the external evidence is decidedly in favor of the word "God," while that in favor of reading "which," or "who," is next to nothing; and the internal testimony against "which," or "who," is not less decisive, while it is objectionable on every ground. Also, J. P. Smith shows, that the reading "which," or "who," would oblige us to understand "the mystery," as a description of Christ, personally, and that such a description is rational and intelligible only on the admission of the Christian doctrine concerning the person of the Savior.' HENRY, abr.—'The apostle is generally supposed to make some allusion to the heathen mysteries, and as those mysteries always have reference to some deity, this greatly favors, or rather confirms the common reading of the text. T. H. HORNE, in Henry, abr.—'Shuttleworth remarks, that the abrupt introduction and detached character of this passage, give it all the appearance of a compressed formula of doctrine. It thus forms an epitome of belief, consisting of the following articles. 1. The Divinity and incarnation of Christ. 2. The separate personality and implied Divinity of the Holy Spirit. 3. The universality of the offer of redemption to the human race. 4. The necessity of faith. 5. The reascension of our Savior into glory, and the consequently implied resurrection of mankind. He would understand the word angels, in this place, to refer to the apostles, as the companions and ministers of our Savior, rather than to the angelic beings, in which sense the word is used at the beginning of the Apocalypse and elsewhere.'

V. 16. That 'Mystery of godliness.' It must be noted, that it 'is the mystery of godliness.' The revelation and belief of it have always

of Christ in the church. It is said of the apostles, that they seemed to be pillars, Gal. 2:9. Let us be diligent and impartial in our inquiries after truth; let us take care to publish it, and to transmit it safe and uncorrupted unto posterity. When the church ceases to be the pillar and ground of truth, we may and ought to forsake her.

Now what is the truth which the churches and ministers are the pillars and grounds of? He tells us, v. 16. that without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. The learned Cameron joins this with what goes before, and then it runs thus, 'The pillar and ground of the truth, and without controversy great, is the mystery of godliness.' He supposes this mystery to be the pillar, &c. Observe,

Christianity is a mystery, a mystery that could not have been found out by reason or the light of nature, and cannot be comprehended by reason, because it is above reason, though not contrary to it. It is a mystery of godliness, designed to promote godliness; and herein it exceeds all the mysteries of the Gentiles. It is a revealed mystery, not shut up and sealed; and it does not, because now in part revealed, cease to be a mystery.

Now what is the mystery of godliness? It is Christ; and here are six things concerning Christ, which make up the mystery of godliness.

(1.) He is God manifest in the flesh.

that of ministers, their families and connexions. (Note, Tit. 2:7—10.) The importance of these things is therefore unspeakable, and our watchfulness ought to correspond with it.—While numbers want a religion 'without mystery,' (which those who worship the incomprehensible God cannot possibly have,) and while many seem to make the very truths of the Gospel 'a mystery of ungodliness,' let us glory in the incontrovertibly 'great mystery of godliness,' and show the sanctifying efficacy of it in our lives. SCOTT.

been and are the beginning, and spring, of all pious dispositions and affections in the hearts of fallen men, and of all the spiritual worship of God in the world.—Had this mystery never been revealed, there would not have been any true 'godliness' among men; none can be found, where this mystery is unknown or rejected, and 'godliness' abounds in proportion, as it is scripturally proposed and received.—By this mystery, men learn the true character of God, as 'a just God and a Savior,' and the way in which sinners may approach and worship Him; they discover their real situation, their danger, and their remedy, and thus they are brought to fear, trust, love, worship, obey, and rejoice in God. The substance and centre of this great mystery is this, 'God was manifest in the flesh;' the divine nature, in the Person of the co-eternal and co-equal Son and Word of God, 'was manifested' to fallen men, as dwelling in the man Christ Jesus, so that whoever saw, or contemplated, by faith, this express 'Image of the invisible God,' saw the Father also. (Is. 7:14. 9:6. Jer. 23:5. 6. Mic. 5:2. Mat. 1:23. John 1:1, 2, 14. Ac. 20:28. Rom. 8:3. 9:5. 1 Cor. 15:47. Gal. 4:4. Phil. 2:6—8. Col. 1:16—18. Heb. 1:3. 2:9—13. 1 John 1:2. Rev. 1:17, 18.—Notes, Is. 7:14. 9:6, 7. Mat. 11:27. John 1:1—18. 14:7—14. 15:22—25. Phil. 2:5—11. Col. 1:15—17. Heb. 1:1, 2.)—Thus sinners 'acquaint themselves with God,' and are reconciled to Him. This high character Emmanuel claimed, when on earth, and the unmeasurable union of the Holy Spirit in his human nature, as demonstrated by his perfect holiness and stupendous miracles, justified his claim.—This most important part of Scripture seems to have been obscured, and confined in the interpretation given of it, by the attempt of some expositors, to reduce the overflowsings of the apostle's fervent spirit to their own ideas of method. But the events referred to cannot be reduced to exact order of time, without evidently doing violence to the meaning of the words.—The construction of the v. necessarily requires, that the first clause should serve as the nominative case to the subsequent verbs.—On the above interpretation, [as in Henry,] the construction is as follows; 'God was manifested in the flesh,' 'God, manifested in the flesh,' was justified by 'the Spirit, was seen of angels, &c.' But many have labored to establish another reading from some manuscripts, ancient versions, and quotations, to this effect; 'the mystery of godliness, which was manifested in the flesh.' (Ho, instead of Theos.) According to this reading, it must follow, 'which' mystery 'was justified in the Spirit,' which mystery 'was seen of angels,' which mystery was 'preached unto the Gentiles,' which mystery 'was believed in the world,' which mystery 'was received up into glory.' The mystery being 'manifested in the flesh,' and 'the mystery being received up into glory,' are not very intelligible propositions; but numbers seem to prefer absurdity to orthodoxy, especially in respect of the person of Emmanuel. Others, on similar authority, substitute 'who.' (Theos for hos.) But there is no antecedent to this relative, except 'God,' in the preceding v. 'The church of the living God, (the pillar, and ground of the truth, and without controversy great is the mystery of godliness,) who was manifested, &c.' This brings in the same doctrine, but with a very unnatural parenthesis.—The authority for either of these readings is by no means satisfactory, and the internal evidence for that adopted in our translation is so strong, that it turns the balance completely on that side, in my judgment at least.

(16.) 'It is no proof that our affections are truly gracious, because they are produced by texts of Scripture, suddenly, and in an extraordinary manner, applied to the mind. Some persons seem to regard this, as a good evidence that their affections are saving, especially if they are



## CHAP. IV.

<sup>1</sup> He foretelleth that in the latter times there shall be a departure from the faith. <sup>6</sup> And to the end that Timothy might not fail in doing his duty, he furnisheth him with divers precepts belonging thereto.

**N**OW the Spirit speaketh expressly, that <sup>a</sup> in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing <sup>b</sup> spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received <sup>c</sup> with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

## [Practical Observations.]

a Da. 11:35.                      2 Pe. 2:1.                      c Ec. 5:18.  
Mat. 24:5-12.                  b Re. 16:14.

of his exaltation, and because not only his ascension is meant, but his sitting at the right hand of God, where *He ever lives, making intercession*, and has all power, both in heaven and earth; and because in the apostasy, of which Paul treats in the following ch., his remaining in heaven would be denied by those who pretend to bring Him down on their altars in the consecrated waters. Observe,

He who was manifest in flesh, was God, really and truly; God by nature, and not only by office, for this makes it to be a mystery. God was manifest in flesh, real flesh, Heb. 2:14. And what is more amazing, He was manifest in the flesh, after all flesh had corrupted his way, though He Himself was ho-

**PRACT. OBS. V. 1-5.** The Scriptures are arranged with such consummate wisdom, that the apostasies of those, who 'give heed to seducing spirits,' and teach 'the doctrine of demons,' introducing idolatry and various dire corruptions into the church, 'turn to a testimony,' to every humble believer, who, reading that 'the Spirit spoke expressly' of these things long before, is thus most fully convinced of the divine authority of the sacred oracles.—Those false teachers, who most neglect the commandments of God, and allow themselves and others in the most atrocious violations of moral and relative duties, are generally very prompt to forbid as evil what God has pronounced innocent and honorable; and to command as a duty what He has left indifferent. But 'the law of the Lord' is 'exceedingly broad;' and we shall find abundant exercise for watchfulness, diligence, self-denial, and mortification of the

hope, or joy, or any other that are pleasing and delightful. What deceives many of the less informed and considerate, seems to be this; the SS. are the Word of God, and therefore contain nothing but what is true and holy; and hence the experience proceeding from the application of passages from them, must be evangelical. But affections may arise from them, not as their genuine fruit, and from a right application, but from an abuse of them. All that can be argued from the veracity and purity of the Word of God, is,—that *that experience which is agreeable to it cannot be wrong*, and not that those affections must be right, which arise in consequence of the Word of God coming to our minds. Is there any proof that the devil cannot bring texts to the mind, and misapply them for the purpose of deceiving? Or are texts of Scripture so sacred that Satan dares not abuse them? He had the temerity to tempt Christ, and to put Him in mind of texts for this purpose, and why may he not put wicked men in mind of texts, to tempt them? We know that the ministers of Satan, heretical teachers, can and do pervert Scripture to their own and others' damnation, 2 Pet. 3:16. and there is no text so precious and sacred, but they may abuse it. When they do this, they do it at his instigation, and doubtless he himself does what he induces others to do.

**NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1-5.** To stir up Timothy, and others by him, to adhere steadfastly to the 'great mystery of godliness,' 3:16. the apostle declared, that the Holy Spirit spake, in the most express and decisive manner, not only by Daniel, and others of the ancient prophets, but to Paul himself by immediate revelation, and perhaps to several of his brethren, concerning certain persons in the latter days, under the Christian dispensation, or in after times, who would apostatize from the true faith of the Gospel. Dan. 7:7, 8, 19-27. 11:31-39. 2 Thes. 2:3, 4. 2 Tim. 3:1-5. Rev. 13:14.—Every one, who is at all acquainted with ecclesiastical history, must know what apostasy and corruption of Christianity has most entirely accorded to this prediction. The Judaizing teachers, and the Gnostics, and others, contended, indeed, for some of these superstitious; 'the mystery of iniquity' in these respects did 'even then work;' but it was reserved for the church of Rome fully to prove the truth of the Scriptures, by accomplishing these predictions in their most detestable enormities. It has been shown, in what manner the errors of the Judaizing teachers, and the traditions of the Pharisees,

ly from the womb. Godliness is a mystery in all its parts and branches, from the beginning to the end, from Christ's incarnation to his ascension. It being a great mystery, we should rather humbly adore, and piously believe it, than curiously pry into, or be too positive in our explications of it, and determinations about it, further than the Holy Scriptures have revealed.

**CHAP. IV. V. 1-5.** We have here a prophecy of the apostasy of the latter times, 2 Thes. 2. He means the Spirit in the O. T. or the Spirit in the prophets of the N. T. or both. The Spirit in both spake expressly of a general apostasy from the faith of Christ, and the pure worship of God. The *latter times* means the Christian dispensation, called also *the latter days*, the following ages of the church. *Some shall depart*, or there shall be an apostasy; *some*, not all; for, in the worst of times, *God will have a remnant, according to the election of grace.* *They shall depart from the faith*, the faith delivered to the saints, Jude 3. delivered at once, the sound doctrine of the Gospel. *Giving heed to seducing spirits*; men who pretended to the Spirit, but were not really guided by the Spirit, 1 Jn. 4:1. Now here observe,

1. One of the great instances of that apostasy, giving heed to doctrines of demons, or concerning demons; doctrines which teach the worship of saints and angels, as a middle sort of deities, between the immortal God and mortal men, such as the heathens called *demons*, and worshipped under [in their *hero worship*] that notion. Now this plainly agrees to the church of Rome, and was one of the first steps toward that great apostasy, the enshrining of the relics of martyrs, paying divine honors to them, erecting altars, burning incense, consecrating images and temples, and making prayers and praises to the honor of saints departed. This demon worship is paganism revived, [see Middleton's Letter from Rome,] the image of the first beast.

flesh, in attending to its holy requirements, without being laid under further restrictions, or tasked to imaginary duties; as if we had at present done *all his will*, and wanted more employment! We should, therefore, be on our guard against impositions of this kind, on whatever pretence they are enforced; and, while we follow after purity, and exercise temperance in all things, according to the will of God; let us disregard such as judge us in those things which He has allowed.—While we are satisfied, that 'every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused;' let us remember, that all should be 'received with thanksgiving, by them who believe and know the truth;' that even the divine allowance will not sanctify an intemperate, inexpedient, extravagant, unthankful, or cruel use of the creatures; and that nothing will be good to us, except we seek, by prayer, the Lord's blessing on our use of it. **SCOTT.**

on the one hand, and the speculations of the heathen philosophers, on the other, corrupted the pure doctrine of Christianity in the primitive times. (Notes, Col. 2:8-23.) But it should not be forgotten, that in subsequent ages, especially in the Roman church, the mythology of the pagans, and the writings of the poets, helped to introduce still further corruptions. For what are the *nuns* of popery, but the *vestal virgins* of the Romans, engrafted on Christianity? The monks, indeed, are [in some respects] an unprecedented addition. Saints and angels, as mediators, answer to the demigods and heroes of the pagans; (Note, 1 Cor. 8:4-6.) and the numerous processions and festivals of the papists, and the method of observing them, answer, with surprising exactness, to those described in Homer and Virgil, especially in the latter. Indeed, it appears to me, that a learned man, who had leisure to compare all the pompous and fascinating, outward services in the church of Rome especially, though not there exclusively, with the Greek and Latin poets, might form, I had almost said, a Rubric and a ritual from the latter. [See this done in Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary, and comp. Middleton's Letter from Rome.] At least, I have never, for many years, opened Virgil to read a few pages but I have met with some things, which cogently reminded me of the popish processions and festivals.—'The third v. contains one of the boldest ellipses in the N. T., where a word is to be understood, contrary to that which is before expressed; but, some of the most celebrated classical writers, and particularly Horace and Cicero, take the same liberty.' *Doctr.* The passage undeniably demands this construction; and all the ancient expositions and versions supply the ellipsis in the same manner, or to the same meaning.—*Devils.* This term, thus used, proves that the worship of saints and angels, as mediators, in the antichristian system, is as much idolatry, and centres as much in the worship of evil spirits, as the pagan worship did; and that it was introduced, and is maintained, by the seduction of 'the devil and his angels,' even as heathen idolatry was. **SCOTT.**

(1.) *Latter times.* 'The whole period or time under the reign of the Messiah.' *Doctr.*—'All the delusions of Satan, by which those persons are carried away who are under the influence of false religion, seem to be formed in the imagination. This is the devil's grand lurking-place. It is probable he cannot come at the soul of man, to excite any thoughts, or produce any effects there, but through his imagination.' **EDWARDS.**



6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

9 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance.

10 For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe.

11 These things command and teach.

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

d Je. 15:16. time. j 2 TI. 1:5.  
1 Pe 2:2. g c 5:6. k c. 1:18.  
e Tit. 1:14. h Ps. 84:11. l Ac. 13:3.  
f or, for a little i Tit. 2:7,15.

ed that this is the most likely to work in us an approbation of what pretends to come from the Spirit. 6. Men must be hardened, and their consciences scared, before they can depart from the faith, and draw in others to side with them. 7. It is a sign that men have departed from the faith, when they will command what God has forbidden, such as saint and angel or demon-worship; and forbid what God has allowed or commanded, such as marriage and meats.

V. 6—10. Savior of all men, &c.] 'The Preserver of all men,' in respect of their lives and temporal concerns, and who will, therefore, take especial care of believers, as interested in his covenanted blessings. Or, who is the Savior of sinners, whether Jews or Gentiles, and of mankind in general; so that none are rejected when they seek to Him for salvation; of which believers are already made partakers by his special grace. Do they, who seem dissatisfied with this interpretation, (as some are,) really intend to maintain, that all men, without exception, will eventually be saved? 'The author of the book, *De Vocatione Gentium*, expounds this very well, telling us, that by saying . . . "He is the Savior of all men," he confirms the general goodness of God towards all men; and by adding, "specially of them that believe," he shows, there is one part of mankind, who, through the benefit of divinely inspired faith, is by special benefits advanced to the highest and eternal felicity.' *Whitby*. (6) *Bodily exercise*.] See on Luke 3:22. *Gymnasia*. Such as the combatants in the public gymnastic games used, 1 Cor. 4:24—27, whose painful exercises the devotees of superstition imitated. SCOTT.

(7.) *Exercise thyself . . . unto godliness*.] A most valuable hint; for one great error of the prevalent system of education, especially female education, is, that it is rather *preceptive* than *practitioner*. Now it is with the mind and heart, the intellect and affections, the sentiments and propensities, as with the bodily muscles, in one sense; the repetition of a thought or desire, renders similar thoughts or desires more easy; and such acts of intellect, feeling, or propensity, more readily suggest themselves again, and again, and, the oftener repeated, the more readily, till habits of thought, feeling, and sensation are formed,—and these habits are *character*, and this character goes into eternity. The apostle then requires Timothy to *exercise* his conscientiousness, his benevolence, his veneration, his love of perfection, his faith; in fine, his love to God, and his law, as holy, just, and good; *exercise* himself unto godliness or godlikeness. And this is the whole business and end of humanity, of our existence in this world, the moulding of our characters to godlikeness, by constant *exercise* of the faculties we are endowed with; and God has fitted this whole world to those faculties, endowing us with a correspondent constitution, to be disciplined to moral excellence by the varied experience of life, by God's physical, organic, moral, and revealed laws, and promising the assistance of his Spirit to help our obedience. —The Germans, in their admirable practical system of common school education, acknowledge this law of exercise in moral perfection, and their schoolbooks have questions of conscience, &c. to exercise the pupil,

Upon occasion of the mentioning of their hypocritical fastings, the apostle lays down the doctrine of the Christian liberty we enjoy under the Gospel, of using God's good creatures; that whereas, under the law, there was a distinction of meats between clean and unclean, (such sort of flesh they might eat, and such they might not eat,) all that is now taken away; and we are to call *nothing common or unclean*, Acts 10:15.

Observe, God's good creatures are *then* good, and doubly sweet to us, when received with thanksgiving, and *sanctified by the Word of God and prayer*, v. 5. It is desirable to have a sanctified use of our creature-comforts.

V. 6—16. *If thou put the brethren in remembrance, &c.* He would have Timothy to instil such notions as these into the minds of Christians, which might prevent their being seduced by the Judaizing teachers. Observe, Those are good ministers of Jesus Christ, who are diligent, not to advance new notions, but to *put the brethren in remembrance of those things which they have received and heard*, 2 Pet. 1:12. 3:1. And, says the apostle Jude, *I will therefore put you in remembrance*, Jude 5.

*Nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.* Observe, Even ministers have need to grow and increase in the knowledge of Christ; they must be nourished up in the words of faith.

I. Godliness is here pressed on him and others, v. 7, 8. Jewish traditions they were to have nothing to do with, but to mind practical religion. Those who would be godly, must exercise themselves unto godliness; *bodily exercise*, abstinence from meats and marriage, and the like, though they pass for acts of mortification and self-denial, yet turn to little account. What will it avail us, to mortify the body, if we do not mortify sin! Observe,

A great deal is to be got by godliness; it will be of use to us in the whole of our life; *for it has the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* Observe, The gain lies much in the *promise*; the promise to the godly, as to the *life that now is*, but especially the *life to come*. If godly people have but little of the good things of the *life that now is*, yet [they are blessed in their spirits, and enjoying the happiness which flows from the

exercise of their better feelings, and] it shall be made up to them in the good things of the life *that is to come*.

II. The encouragement we have to proceed in the ways of godliness, and to exercise ourselves to it, notwithstanding the difficulties and discouragements we meet with in it. Those who labor, and suffer reproach, in the service of God and the work of religion, may depend on the living God, that they shall not lose by it. Let this encourage them; *We trust in the living God*. The consideration of this, that that God who has undertaken to be our Paymaster, is the living God, who does Himself live for ever, and is the Fountain of life to all who serve Him, should encourage us in all our services and in all our sufferings for Him, especially considering that He is *the Savior of all men*, in that He protects their persons and lives; is not willing any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, and much more will be the Rewarder of those who seek and serve Him, who are new creatures, who are born again. He is the Savior of all men, but *especially of those that believe*; and the salvation he has in store for those that believe, is sufficient to recompense them for all their services and sufferings.

Here we see, 1. The life of a Christian is a life of labor and suffering; *we labor and suffer*. 2. The best we can expect to suffer in the present life is, reproach for our well-doing. 3. True Christians trust in the living God; for cursed is the man that trusts in man, or in any but the living God. 4. God is the general Savior of all men, as He has put them into a salvable state; but peculiarly of true believers; there is then a general and a special redemption.

III. He concludes the ch. with an exhortation to Timothy, to *command and teach these things* he had now been teaching him.

He charges him to conduct himself with that gravity and prudence that might gain him respect, notwithstanding his youth; v. 12. to confirm his doctrine by a good example, as is the duty of those who teach; and to study hard, that he might be well furnished for his ministry, v. 13. The exhortation to *reading, &c.* may be meant of private study, or of the public reading of the Scriptures; he must *read and exhort*, that is, read and expound; expound both by way of exhortation, and of doctrine.

and their schoolmasters are required to EXERCISE THE FEELINGS as well as intellects of their pupils, by presenting cases in life and history for judgment, by holding up examples of virtue and vice, and in every way a Christian wisdom can suggest,—and this is one great advantage of their system over our own; for in our 'common schools,' little is done, (except perhaps in a preceptive way,) to aught but the intellect, while the moral sentiments are too much, if not entirely neglected. And the Bible, some think, (how deplorable, if truly,) must not be introduced for fear of sectarianism! Self-discipline, self-examination, self-judgment, self-reproval, self-education, *spiritual* as well as mental, self-exercise unto godliness,—alas, how much neglected in schools, families, and the hearts of individuals! Eo.

(8.) 'Little, may be understood both of degree and duration. "All things," in every way.' BLOOMF.—'Who, of all the numerous retainers of the Christian name, of all the decent professors of godliness, will trust his Redeemer for to-morrow's bread? Who of them would not rather rely upon a respectable signer of a bank note, than upon all the promises of the faithful God? Were it put to the trial, who of them would not grasp the paper, and let go, among the uncertainties of life, the truth and the oath of God, who cannot he?' Dr. J. M. MASON. *The life that now is.*] Notes, Job 34:1. 36:8—14. ED.

(10.) *Savior of all men.*] 'The meaning is, Christ is offered as the Savior of all,—all classes; but He is *actually* the Savior of those only who believe and obey the Gospel: the meaning is the same as in Jn. 3:16.' WILLIAMS.—'Would have,' &c. THEOPH.; and is 'disposed to be,' &c. BENSON. BLOOMF.

V. 11—16. *Give thyself wholly to them.*] 'Be thou in them,' as in thy proper element, thy business, pleasure, and favorite employment.—*Those that hear thee.*] Mat. 17:5. *To hear*, when used concerning God, hearing when they pray, signifies, *accepting and answering* them. 1 Jn. 5:15. When spoken of men, hearing God addressing them, by his beloved Son, or by his ministers, it often means, to hear attentively, in meekness, faith, and obedience. SCOTT.

(12.) *Youth.*] *Aulus Gellius* relates, that among the Roman people, childhood was limited to the age of 17; youth from that time to 46; old age from thence to the end of life. If Timothy had been 20 years old when he became Paul's assistant, about A. D. 50, he would be about 34 when this epistle is supposed to have been written. Timothy, therefore, was then in that period of life, which, both by the Greeks and Romans, was considered youth. HENRY, *abr.*



15 Meditate upon these things ; give thyself wholly to them ; that thy profiting may appear <sup>m</sup> to all.

16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine ; continue in them : for in doing this thou shalt both save <sup>n</sup> thyself, and them that hear thee.

### CHAP. V.

1 Rules to be observed in reproof. 3 Of widows. 17 Of elders. 23 A precept for Timothy's health. 24 Some men's sins go before unto judgment, and some men's do follow after.

**R**EBUKE not an elder, but *en-* treat *him* as a father ; and the younger men as brethren ;

2 The elder women as mothers ; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

3 Honor widows that are widows <sup>a</sup> indeed.

4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show <sup>b</sup> piety at home, and to requite their parents : for that is good and acceptable before God.

5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

<sup>m</sup> or, in all things. <sup>n</sup> Ja. 5:20. a ver. 5:16. <sup>b</sup> or, kindness.

Observe, 1. Ministers must teach and command the things they are taught and commanded themselves, Mat. 28: 20. And this is the best way for ministers to prevent themselves from being despised. 2. Those ministers that are the best accomplished for their work must yet mind their studies, that they may be improving in knowledge ; and they must mind also their work ; they are to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

*Neglect not the gift that is in thee, v. 14.* The gifts of God will wither, if neglected. It may be understood either of the office to which he was advanced, or of his qualifications for that office ; if of the former, it was ordination in an ordinary way ; if of the latter, it was extraordinary. It seems to be the former, for it was by *laying on of hands*, &c. Observe, Timothy was ordained by men in office. It was an extraordinary gift

PRACT. OBS. V. 6—16. They, who would approve themselves to be faithful ministers, must 'put the brethren in remembrance' of all those things, which Christ and his apostles delivered to the church ; and whatever other studies or accomplishments may be supposed requisite, in those intended for the ministry, it is, *above all*, necessary, that they 'be nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine ;' and that they well digest that knowledge of the Scripture to which they have attained.—Instead of amusing ourselves and others, with ingenious fancies and curious speculations, or with enforcing human inventions and superstitions, by imaginary or fallacious explanations of their origin, meaning, and benefit, which are often no better than 'profane and old wives' fables,' we should exercise ourselves, and instruct others, in the substantial duties of godliness.—Young ministers, when called into conspicuous situations, should be doubly careful to 'abstain from all appearance of evil,' and to shun all levity of conduct, as well as whatever is more directly criminal, or leads to criminality. For they will be narrowly observed, and many will be ready to deem them unfit for their arduous services, especially when they are called to instruct or to admonish their seniors and superiors. Ministers should also be careful to confirm and elucidate their instructions by their example ; and thus to lead forward believers to steadfastness in the faith, holiness of conversation and conduct, fervent love, spirituality, fidelity, integrity, and purity. Their time should be employed in reading and meditating on the Scriptures ; in acquiring religious knowledge, and in communicating it, by the public and private

we read of elsewhere, as being conferred on him by the laying on of Paul's hands, but he was invested in the office of the ministry by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

1. Note, the office of the ministry is a gift, the gift of Christ, Eph. 4: 8, 11. a very kind gift to his church. 2. Though there was prophecy in the case of Timothy, (the gift was given by prophecy,) yet this was accompanied with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, i. e. a number of presbyters ; the office was conveyed to him this way ; and I should think here is a sufficient warrant for ordination by presbyters, since it does not appear that Paul was concerned in Timothy's ordination. It is true, extraordinary gifts were conferred on him by the laying on of the apostle's hands, 2 Tim. 1: 6. but if he was concerned in his ordination, the presbytery was not excluded, for that is particularly mentioned ; whence it seems pretty evident, that the presbytery have the inherent power of ordination.

Having this work committed to him, he must *give himself wholly* to it. He was a wise, knowing man, yet he must still be profiting, and make it appear that he improved in knowledge. Ministers are to be much in meditation ; they are to consider beforehand how and what they must speak ; they are to meditate on the great trust committed to them, on the worth and value of immortal souls, and on the account they must give at the last ; and they must be wholly in these things, must mind them as their principal work and business. By these means their profiting will appear in all things, as well as to all persons ; this is the way for them to profit in knowledge and grace, and also to profit others.

He presses it on him to be very cautious, v. 16. Observe, The care of ministers should be, in the first place, to save themselves ; yet they should aim at the salvation of those that hear them, next to the salvation of their own souls ; and the best way to answer both these ends is to take heed to ourselves, &c.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. Here the apostle gives rules to Timothy, and in him to other ministers, in reproof. They must be very tender in rebuking elders, not sharp or magisterial. The younger they must rebuke as brethren ; not as desirous to spy faults, or pick quarrels, but as willing to make the best of them. The elder women must be reproofed, when there is occasion, but as mothers, Hos. 2: 2. the younger women as sisters,

duties of their ministry. This will leave them no leisure for dissipated pleasures, trifling visits, or idle conversation, and but little for amusing and merely ornamental studies. That measure of endowment, which God has given them for the work to which they have been set apart, and to which they solemnly devoted themselves, when ordained by 'the laying on of the hands of the' pastors of the church, must not be neglected, or left to decrease by disuse, but be diligently exercised and improved.—Alas ! we cannot but reflect with grief of heart, that so few of those called ministers seem so much as to have ever seriously read these directions ! and that their method of spending their time, the subjects of their studies, the objects of their pursuits, and the business and pleasure of their lives, form a perfect contrast to what they ought to be. But may the Lord have mercy on each of us, and write these admonitions in our inmost souls ! Let every minister, then, hear the apostle call on him to 'take heed to himself,' as one who must give account ; and let every one persevere in his holy living and faithful preaching, however despised, reviled, opposed, or discouraged he may be ; for in so doing, he shall both 'save his own soul,' and those of his attentive hearers ; while dumb and greedy dogs, blind watchmen or guides, mercenary teachers, and gay triflers in the garb of Christian ministers, in short, all those 'who look every one for his gain from his quarter,' however otherwise distinguished by rank, nobility, learning, or eloquence, can have no reason to expect any other event of their conduct, than that of going before their deluded followers into the pit of everlasting destruction. SCOTT.

(16.) *Save thyself, &c.* 'The thought chiefly referred to here is, the necessity of acting faithfully in the ministry, in order to being entitled to the divine promise of salvation, in which persons who betray so important a trust can have no part.'

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. The connexion of the word translated 'an elder,' in this place, has induced expositors in general to understand it of senior Christians, as well as of pastors. It must, likewise, be supposed that the apostle spoke of such faults, as resulted from infirmity, and were not openly scandalous ; or the counsel would seem inconsistent with a subsequent injunction. 19, 20. (1) *Rebuke.* 'To reproach sharply and severely, as the scourges of the tongue are sometimes metaphorically taken for cruel calumny.' Leigh.

SCOTT.

(1.) *Elder.* 'An aged person.'

(2.) 'The *all* here implies, with every caution, so as not to give the slightest handle for any suspicion.'

V. 3, 4. *To show piety.* 'Kindness.' Marg. Acts 17 23. The Romans called the dutiful conduct of children to their parents, *pietas*. Sc.

(4.) *Nephews* 'Grand-children.' DODDR. and MACKN. 'Descendants.'

V. 5, 6. The 'widow indeed,' whom the apostle peculiarly intended, was one who was 'desolate,' having neither children nor relations able to maintain her ; being destitute of the means of procuring a decent subsistence. But any one, who lived a delicate, luxurious, dissipated life, and perhaps chose to continue unmarried, that she might have less re-

DODDR.

BLOOMF.

BLOOMF.

BLOOMF.



6 But she that liveth <sup>c</sup> in pleasure is dead <sup>d</sup> while she liveth.

7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.

8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially <sup>e</sup> for those of his own <sup>f</sup> house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

[Practical Observations.]

9 Let not a widow be <sup>g</sup> taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, <sup>h</sup>

10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged <sup>i</sup> strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

PRACT OBS. V. 1—8. There is a respect due to the aged, which must not be withheld by their juniors, even when placed in authority over them, or on account of incidental faults.—The greatest caution, as well as purity, is requisite in the conduct of ministers, (especially while in the prime of life,) as to their most needful converse with the younger women in their congregations, neighborhood, and acquaintance; that all occasion, appearance, and suspicion of evil may be prevented; and the neglect of this caution is very frequently productive of lamentable consequences, in various ways; even where direct criminality does not take place, or is indeed designed.—If any who profess the Gospel, through sloth, improvidence, selfishness, or other corrupt principles, wilfully neglect or refuse to provide for their near relatives; they, in the apostle's judgment, virtually 'deny the faith,' and are even in this particular worse than their openly unbelieving neighbors. And may we not, by parity of reason, infer, that they who neglect to instruct their household

11 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;

<sup>c</sup> or, delicately. <sup>e</sup> Is. 53:7. <sup>g</sup> or, chosen. <sup>d</sup> Re. 3:1. <sup>f</sup> or, kindred. <sup>h</sup> Ac. 16:15.

again, v. 8. If any man or woman do not maintain their own poor relations who belong to them, they do, in effect, deny the faith; for the design of Christ was to confirm the law of Moses, and particularly the law of the fifth commandment; so that they deny the faith, who disobey that law, much more if they provide not for their wives and children, which are parts of themselves; if they spend that on their lusts, which should maintain their families, they have denied the faith, and are worse than infidels.

One reason why this care must be taken, that those who were rich should maintain their poor relations, and not burden the church with them, is, v. 16. that it may re-

lieve them that are widows indeed. Observe, Charity misplaced, is a great hindrance to true charity; therefore there should be prudence in the choice of the objects of charity, that it may not be thrown away on those who are [not] properly so, that there may be the more for those who are real objects of charity.

3. None were to be taken into the number, to receive the church's charity, under sixty years old, nor any who had divorced their husbands, or been divorced from them, and married again; she must have been the wife of one man, such as had been a house-keeper, had a good name for hospitality and charity, well reported of for good works. Observe, Particular care ought to be taken to relieve those, when they fall into decay, who, when they had wherewithal, were ready to every good work.

Here are instances of such good works as are proper to be done by good wives, v. 10. Observe, Those who would find mercy when

in religious knowledge, and to do what they can for the salvation of their relatives, act altogether inconsistently with the Christian profession? Gen. 18:18, 19.—It seems the intent of these scriptures to teach us, that every religious society should, as far as it is able, make provision for persons of this description, and not leave them to sordid penury, or to the 'tender mercies of the wicked,' in their old age. But then this provision should be limited to such as give evidence, that they are of a widely different character from those 'who live in pleasure, being dead whilst they live.' Alas! what numbers are there of this latter description, among nominal Christians, even to the latest period of life! And how much does the same heaven work among more decided professors of evangelical truth! These things, however, we must give in charge, that the company of believers may be preserved blameless, or at least that we may deliver our own souls. (Notes, Ez. 3:17—19. P. O. 16—27.) SCOTT.

straint, in this self-indulgent course, must be considered as 'dead in sin,' and alive only to worldly pleasure; so that no honorable attention was due to her from the church. (M. R. s. t.) SCOTT.

V. 7, 8. The heathen, in general, considered children as bound to support their aged parents, and reckoned the neglect of this duty infamous, and fit only to be mentioned along with the most scandalous vices.—The manner in which many covetous persons grievously pervert this text, must not pass unnoticed: while they evidently violate the duties of piety, equity, and charity, as well as that of providing for their indigent relations, yea, while they bring up their children and maintain their families, in a manner utterly unsuitable to their circumstances, from eagerness to amass riches, they often quote this verse, in vindication of their sordid avarice, and imagine, that the apostle commanded men to neglect all other duties, in order to enrich their children! (Note, 16)—'Plending these words, to justify or to excuse their sordid parsimony, and want of charity; . . . whereas, they plainly respect the provision which children should make for their parents, and not that which parents should make for their children.' Whitby. Id.

(8.) Of his own house.] Hallet, in Doddr., and Mackn., understand it of the household of faith, i. e. believing relatives; but Doddr. disallows this, and understands it of domestics; and Bloomf. extends it to embrace all near relatives. En.—Denied, &c. and is worse, &c.] 'The heathens were sensible of the reasonableness and necessity of taking care of near relatives, especially parents in poverty.' Doddr., after Whitby.—Yet see Rom. 1:31. It would seem to be otherwise with modern heathen, as appears from the abundant testimony of missionaries. Id.

V. 9—12. The apostle could not here mean, that no widows were to be relieved by the church, who were under sixty years of age; for the distresses of younger widows, as well as of other poor persons, might be very urgent.—He is, therefore, generally supposed to speak of a certain number of widows, who were discharged from all secular cares, and maintained by the church, of whom such as were able acted as deaconesses, to visit sick and poor women, and to administer relief and counsel to them; to instruct young women, and perhaps children, or to attend on any other concerns of the church, its ministers, and pious strangers, which lay within their province. Though no command is given for such an order of persons in the church, (for many things of this kind seem to have been left discretionary, and to be determined according to circumstances,) yet they might frequently be useful, if properly selected and regulated. Rom. 16:1, 2. In this view the propriety of the rule here given is apparent. As the apostle counsels 'the younger widows to marry,' 13—15. it cannot be imagined, that he would exclude any when grown old, from the number here intended, if otherwise qualified, merely because they had followed his counsel. By 'the wife of one man,' therefore, the apostle did not intend to exclude such as had married a second time, which the Scripture nowhere disallows, or at all discountenances. But shameful and astonishing irregularities, in this respect, were common among the heathen women; they frequently left their husbands to live with other men, and then sometimes returned again to their former husbands; they often, designedly, gave them just cause to divorce them, on purpose that they might take other husbands; nay, they sometimes did what was equivalent to divorcing their husbands; nor were these things deemed scandalous, at least not in that degree, which they would be at present, in countries professing Christianity. If, then, any woman had formerly conformed to these corrupt customs, it would not be consistent with the credit of Christianity, to admit her into this select number of devoted widows, though no other objection lay against her, for it must exclusively consist of those, who had lived virtuously and honorably in the married state. (Marg. Ref. b. c.—Note, 1:2.)—Some expositors, indeed, think, that those who had married again, after being divorced, were intended; but there is not the least intimation

in Scripture, that the divorced should be restrained from marrying again, even if justly put away, and surely then not when unjustly divorced.—The women, however, spoken of, must also be such as had an established character for 'good works,' since they were converted to Christianity. Those were to be preferred, who had charitably educated the children of their poor relatives or neighbors, or who had faithfully done their duty towards their own children, who, when in more prosperous circumstances, had hospitably entertained strangers in their houses, who had willingly stooped to the office of washing the feet of the saints, when wearied with travelling; (Notes, Gen. 18:3—8. Luke 7:44—50. Jn. 13:1—17.) and who had, from love to Christ, readily relieved the afflicted, and diligently 'attended to every good work.' (Marg. Ref. d—k.—Note, and P. O. Acts 9:36—43.) Widows of this character, when grown old and left desolate, were the proper persons for this service.—But the apostle directed Timothy to reject the application of 'younger widows;' for experience showed, that their avowed purpose, of no more entering into the married state, was not to be depended on. After a time, when their grief on account of their loss had subsided, various circumstances might induce them to marry again; and, as their admission into the number of devoted widows implied an engagement to the contrary, and probably was attended by some promise to this effect, so their violation of it might be called 'a waxing wanton against Christ,' leading them to be unfaithful to Him, for the sake of some earthly object. Thus their engagement would tend to their condemnation, by occasioning them to violate that fidelity to Christ, which they had previously promised; the church would see it necessary to censure them, and their sin would expose them to condemnation, if not repented of. They might perhaps be tempted to apostatize from the faith, by marrying heathens, which seems to have been the case with some of this description. For Christians would not be disposed to marry those who had entered into this number, and if their inclinations led them to marry, their situation might expose them peculiarly to this temptation. SCOTT.

(9.) Let not a widow, &c.] 'I. e. be taken upon the list of those to be maintained by the church, and to minister in the office of deaconesses in it.' Doddr.—'Besides general catalogues of all the members of the church, there were others of those attached to the clergy, and to those poorer persons who were maintained at the public expense, including virgins and widows.' ROSENK.—'Shuttleworth notices the wisdom of this injunction, as resolutions to forsake the active duties of life, formed under the momentary operation of some devotional excitement, are often ill adapted to the bodily and intellectual temperament of the persons forming them. He says, had the church of Rome, when she gave her confirmation to the indissoluble obligation of monastic vows, seriously weighed the caution in this passage, how vast a mass of misery, the consequence of [the peevishness of celibacy,] ineffectual regret, and of an alarmed conscience reproaching itself with instinctive, but involuntary recollections of a world it had abjured, would she have removed from many a now blighted victim of ill judging piety, or gloomy superstition.' HENRY, abr.

(9, 10.) Note, Rom. 16:1. Neander suggests, that deaconesses were necessary in the apostolic age, because the free access of men to the female portion of the church, especially as the sexes are so carefully separated in the east, might excite suspicion and give offence. And although women, in conformity to their natural destination, were excluded from the offices of teaching, and governing in the churches, yet in this manner the peculiar qualities of females were brought into demand, as peculiar gifts for the service of the church. By means of the deaconesses, the Gospel might be brought into the inmost recesses of family life, where, from eastern manners, no man could have obtained admittance. Being advanced in life, and experienced, and tried in all the trials of women, they were to uphold the younger women of the church by their counsel and consolation. En. [475]



12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

13 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house: and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not.

14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

15 For some are already turned aside after Satan.

16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

[Practical Observations.]

17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.

18 For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn: And, The laborer is worthy of his reward.

19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

i 2 Ch. 3:11.  
j for their railing.  
k 1 Th. 5:12,13.

l De. 25:4.  
m Lu. 10:7.  
n or, under.

o De. 19:15.  
p Le. 19:17.  
q De. 13:11.

in distress, must show mercy when in prosperity.

4. He cautions them to take heed of admitting into the number those who are likely to be no credit to them, v. 11, 12. You

read of a first love, Rev. 2:4. and here of a first faith, that is, the engagements they gave to the church to behave well, and as became the trust reposed in them: it does not appear that by their first faith is meant their vow not to marry, for the Scripture is very silent on that head; besides, the apostle here advises the younger widows to marry, v. 14. which he would not, if hereby they must have broken their vows. Dr. Whitby well observes, 'If this faith referred to a promise made to the church, not to marry, it could not be called their first faith,' v. 13. Withal they learn to be idle, and not only idle, but tattlers, &c. Observe, Those who are idle, are seldom only idle, they learn to be tattlers and busy-bodies, and to make mischief among neighbors, and sow discord among brethren. Those who had not attained to such a gravity of mind as was fit for the deaconesses, (or the widows who were taken among the church's poor,) let them marry, bear children, &c. v. 14. Observe, If house-keepers do not mind their business, but are tattlers, they give occasion to the adversaries of Christianity to reproach the Christian name, which, it seems, there were some instances of, v. 15.

We learn hence, (1.) In the primitive church there was care taken of poor widows, and provision made for them; the churches of Christ in these days should follow so good an example, as far as they are able. (2.) In the distribution of the church's charity, or alms, great care is to be taken, that those share in the bounty, who most want it, and best deserve it. (3.) The credit of religion, and the reputation of Christian churches, are very much concerned in the character and behavior of those that are taken into any employment in the church, though of a lower nature, or that receive alms of the church. (4.) Christianity obliges its professors to relieve their indigent friends, particularly poor widows, that the church may not be charged with them, that it may relieve them that are wid-

ows indeed: rich people should be ashamed to burden the church with their poor relations, when it is with difficulty that those are supplied, who have no children or nephews, that is, grand-children, who are in a capacity to relieve them.

V. 17—25. Here are directions concerning ministers.

1. Care must be taken that they be honorably maintained, v. 17. count them worthy of double maintenance, double what they have had, or others have. Observe, The presbytery ruled, and the same that ruled were those who labored in the Word and doctrine. Some have imagined, that by the elders that rule well, the apostle means lay-elders, who were employed in ruling, but not in teaching; and I confess this is the plainest text of Scripture that can be found to countenance such an opinion; but it seems a little strange, that mere ruling elders should be accounted worthy of double honor, when the apostle preferred preaching to baptizing, and much more would he prefer it to ruling the church; and it is more strange, that the apostle should not notice them, when he treats of church-officers; but, as it is hinted before, they had not, in the primitive church, one to preach to them, and another to rule them, but ruling and teaching were performed by the same persons, only some might labor more in the Word and doctrine than others. He quotes a scripture to confirm this command concerning the maintenance of ministers, that we would think foreign; but it intimates what a significancy there was in many of the laws of Moses, and particularly in that, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn, Deut. 25:4. We hence learn, that God, both under the law, and now under the gospel, has taken care that his ministers be well provided for. As it is God's appointment, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel, 1 Cor. 9:14. so a comfortable maintenance is their just due, as much as the reward of the laborer; and

PRACT. OBS. V. 9—16. Every one, who is brought forth into notoriety in the church, should, as much as possible, be free from scandal, and many are proper objects of charity, who ought not to be employed in public services.—It is not sufficient to determine, what would be best in itself, apart from all other considerations, in respect of things not absolutely obligatory, or things unlawful; the state of human nature and facts must be attended to, that it may be known what is most generally expedient. It might have seemed plausible to admit the young widows,

(12.) *Having damnation.* 'Exposing themselves to just blame of men, and condemnation from God, because they have disannulled their first faith, and violated their engagement to the church, when it assigned them such an office, to which it would be very inconvenient to admit persons that have any views of catering again into the conjugal state; not to say, that some men have been enticed, by very improper alliances, to throw off even the general profession of Christianity.' DODDR.

V. 13—15. It might likewise be feared, and experience had shown, that there was danger, lest 'younger widows,' being freed from the employments of domestic life, and having much leisure, should neglect to spend it in devotion, and the duties of their station, and so contract habits of idleness, and waste their hours in sauntering from house to house, as trifling visitants, tattling and gossiping about the news of the day, and intermeddling with other people's affairs, spreading slanders, and speaking many things of a mischievous and improper nature. (*Marg. ref. q—t.*—*Note, 2 Thes. 3:10—12.*) The apostle did not mean, that all 'the younger widows,' who were employed in this service, acted in this manner; but it was an evil incident to the practice, and formed a sufficient reason for excluding them. He therefore decided, as one having authority, that it was better to leave them at liberty to marry, if they chose it, and circumstances admitted, that they might be occupied in the useful duties of wives and mothers, and in domestic business; that so no occasion might be given to any adversaries of the Gospel to speak reproachfully of it, through the misconduct of such as professed to be peculiarly devoted to the service of Christ. (*Marg. ref. u—y.*) For indeed, some younger widows, being improperly admitted into this number, had turned aside to follow the suggestions of Satan, had married unbelieving husbands, and so relapsed into idolatry.—'The converting men to the Christian faith being the "turning them from Satan unto God," . . . the casting off the faith may well be styled, "the turning aside after Satan." ' Whitby. The apostle's determination, that no widow under sixty years of age, should be admitted into this select number of devoted women, lest their useless lives and misconduct should occasion scandal, and his counsel that younger widows should marry, conclude with peculiar force against all vows of virginity, taken by young persons, under pretence of more strict religion than can be practised in the married state, and against all censures of second marriages, as such; and, indeed, the silence of the apostle concerning women, who had never been married, in this whole argument, is very expressive. But the pastors of the church, before many ages had elapsed, abundantly made up this supposed deficiency!

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or other young women, to such a service in the church, as implied an entire devoting of themselves to religion, for the rest of their days; yet the apostle, not only with the wisdom derived from deep reflection and extensive observation, but under the influence of the divine Spirit, decided otherwise. Alas! what immense numbers, in every age, have shown their total ignorance of human nature, and have done incalculable mischief, by attempting to improve on his plan, or rather directly to subvert it!

(14.) *Younger women.* 'Younger widows.' So Doddr.; and Bloomf. says, 'both the ancients and almost all the moderns are agreed, it can only mean the younger widows, of whom the context speaks.' Ed.

V. 16. 'In the opinion of Estius, this precept extended to the proprietors of slaves, and bound them to maintain their slaves, when they became incapable of labor.' Mackn. The spirit of it, no doubt, extends to servants of every kind, who have spent their strength in our service, as far as we are able to support them.

V. 17, 18. *Laborer, &c.* 'This, as well as what goeth before, is affirmed by the apostle to be said in the Scripture; yet it is nowhere written in the Jewish Scriptures. It is found only, Mat. 10:10. Luke 10:7. The apostle must therefore have read either Matthew or Luke's Gospel, before he wrote this epistle. And seeing he quotes this saying, as "Scripture," and represents it as of equal authority with the writings of Moses, it is a proof, not only of the early publication of the gospels, but of their authenticity, as divinely inspired "writings." In.

(17.) *Elders.* 'In the first age, the name elder was given to all who exercised any sacred office in the church, as is plain from Ac. 20:28. where the persons are called bishops, who, v. 17. were called elders. The same thing appears from Tit. 1:5. where those are called elders, who, v. 7. are named bishops; and from 1 Tim. 14. where collectively all who held sacred offices in Lystra are called, "The presbytery or eldership," and are said to have concurred with the apostle in setting Timothy apart to the ministry.' Mackn.—*Double honor.* 'It seems only to express a plentiful maintenance given in a liberal and respectful manner.' Doddr.—Bloomf. says, 'no doubt respect is included, as well as provision; and *azionsthsōsan* signifies not merely "let them receive," but also "as their just due." ' To which he adds: 'From the relief of the poor the apostle proceeds to the support of ministers; though with an obscurity of expression (arising from delicacy) which prevents us from acquiring any very exact information. That a stipend was appropriated to the support of the minister, is certain; but on the amount, and the mode of collection, we are left much in the dark.' Ed.

V. 19, 20. In respect of those who were evidently guilty of any scandalous offence, whether elders or others; Timothy, as presiding in the church, was required to 'rebuke them before all' their brethren; not only in order to their being made ashamed, and brought to repentance, but that others might fear the same censure, and so be excited to greater circumspection.

SCOTT.



21 I charge *thee* before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect *angels*, that thou observe these things *without preferring one before another*; doing nothing by partiality.

22 Lay hands *suddenly* on no man, neither be partaker *of other men's sins*: keep thyself pure.

23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine *for thy stomach's sake* and thine often infirmities.

24 Some men's sins are open *beforehand*, going before to judgment: and some *men* they follow after.

25 Likewise also the good works *of some* are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

r 2 Ti. 4:1.      u De. 1:17.      x Pr. 31:6.  
s Re. 12:7-9.    v Ac. 13:3.      y Ga. 5:19.  
t or, *prejudice*.    w 2 Jn. 11.

those who would have ministers starved, or not comfortably provided for, God will require it of them another day.

II. Concerning the accusation of ministers, v. 19. Here is the scripture-method of proceeding against an elder, when accused of any crime. Observe, 1. There must be an accusation, not a flying, uncertain report, but an accusation, containing a certain charge. 2. This accusation is not

PRACT. OBS. V. 17-25. The office of a minister is 'honorable' to all, those alone excepted who are a disgrace to the office; but the most prudent, faithful, and diligent, especially the most 'laborious in the Word and doctrine,' ought to be more honored than others, and best provided for. The reverse proportion, indeed, seems almost everywhere to be adopted in this matter; but the Lord will provide for his faithful servants, whatever method men may follow in disposing of their favors.--All who are employed in important services in the church, especially in admitting men into the ministry, or committing to them the care of immortal souls, or in taking cognizance of their conduct, should consider themselves as most awfully charged by the apostle, 'before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, to observe these things, without preferring one before another.' The neglect of this rule, in the exercise of ecclesiastical authority, has given its opponents one of their most plausible arguments against it. So very much has been done, and is done, out of carnal respects, and 'by partiality' to relatives, friends, and connexions; that the exercise of all authority of this kind has been, and, by numbers at present, is considered as unlawful.--How far those concerned in ecclesiastical matters are culpable, in respect of 'laying hands suddenly' on improper persons, . . . every man's conscience must determine for himself, till Christ shall come to take an account of his servants. But it is certain, that these things involve a responsibility of

V. 21, 22. It is manifest, that Timothy is here and elsewhere supposed to possess great authority in the Ephesian church, both in superintending the elders already ordained, and in ordaining others. It is allowed, that he was an extraordinary person, especially appointed by the apostle to this service, but there is no proof, that he conferred miraculous powers by the imposition of his hands, as the apostles did; and indeed it is altogether improbable. We cannot indeed by any means infer the *divine right* of episcopacy, from the authority exercised by Timothy, Titus, and other evangelists; yet it is at least highly probable, that it was very early found expedient, and conducive to peace, to have a stated presiding inspector, of approved wisdom and piety, who might superintend the pastors and the concerns of a few neighboring churches, as moderator and censor, and be peculiarly attended to in the appointment of church-officers. Hence a moderate episcopacy was very early, probably even while some of the apostles lived, generally prevalent in the church; indeed, this seems to have taken place, between the time when Paul gave his admirable parting charge to the elders, or bishops of Ephesus, and the time when John, from our Lord's own mouth, wrote epistles to the angels of the seven churches in Asia. (*Note, Rev. 2:1.*) And, after all the abuses, usurpations, controversies, and prejudices, which have since been introduced, the time may ere long arrive, when experience will convince pious men of different persuasions, that something of this kind, properly conferred, limited, and exercised, would prove a suitable remedy to those multiplied divisions, which so weaken and disgrace religious societies, which in doctrine, worship, and practice may be considered, in many respects, unexceptionable. SCOTT.

(22.) It has been claimed, that this verse *implys an episcopal authority* and jurisdiction; but DODD. answers, that *to ordain* 'does not appear to be the chief reason of Timothy's being sent to Ephesus, or rather being left there, when Paul went into Macedonia. Various circumstances of this church might require that a person, of Timothy's extraordinary gifts and character, should be left to superintend their affairs; and it might reasonably be taken for granted, that, as he was there by the apostle's special direction, so much regard would be paid to him, that he would be desired to preside in their sacred solemnities, in the same manner as Paul had done when among them. But that no elder could at any time be ordained, without the presence and concurrence of such an extraordinary person, and that such an extraordinary power and influence should afterwards be transferred to others, not in like manner

to be received, unless supported by two or three credible witnesses; and the accusation must be received before them; that is, the accused must have the accusers face to face, because the reputation of a minister is, in a particular manner, a tender thing; 'but, v. 20. *them that sin, rebuke before all*; thou needest not be so tender of other people, but rebuke them publicly.' Or, 'them that sin before all, rebuke before all, but those who are in danger of sinning by the example of their fall, may take warning by the rebuke given them for it, that others, also, may fear.'

III. Concerning the ordination of ministers; v. 22. appears to be meant of the ordaining of men to the office of the ministry, which ought not to be done rashly and inconsiderately, and before due trial made of their gifts and graces, their abilities and qualifications for it.

Some understand it of absolution; implying that those who are too easy in remitting the censures of the church, encourage others in the sins thus connived at, and make themselves thereby guilty. Observe, We have great need to watch at all times, lest we make ourselves partakers of other men's sins.

Here is a caution against rash ordination of ministers, or absolution of those who have been under church-censures. Those who are rash, either in the one case or the other, will make themselves partakers in other men's sins. We must keep ourselves pure, if we will be pure; the grace of God makes and keeps us pure, but it is by our own endeavors.

no ordinary magnitude, and that immense criminality must rest somewhere; as the multitude of ignorant, slothful, ambitious, avaricious, immoral, and heretical clergymen, who remain uncensured, throughout this land, and in every part of the visible church, most manifestly proves. —It is extremely difficult, under any form of church-government, to conduct every particular in such a manner, as to 'do nothing by partiality;' this will require circumspection, firmness, intrepidity, disinterested zeal, and 'the meekness of wisdom;' and these cannot be obtained without much fervent prayer. These things, however, must be carefully observed by those, who would not 'be partakers of other men's sins,' as every person concerned must feel, in proportion to his conscientiousness; but those who honestly desire to do their duty, will generally be directed in it.—Finally, let us observe, that eminent grace will connect the strictest temperance with the most fervent zeal for the liberty of the Gospel; that it is the duty of every one to use proper means for the preservation of his health and life, as a debt which he owes to the church, the community, and his family; and that those who are frequently infirm, who labor abundantly in important services, and whose earnestness, in spiritual things, induces a disregard to animal indulgence, should attend to the advice of those, who give them proper directions for a due regard to their health. SCOTT.

qualified for the management of it, are things neither easy to be proved, nor rashly to be taken for granted, on a question of so great importance.' See also *Dwight's Theol. Sermon*, 150, 1. En.

V. 23. This verse is a remarkable instance of the apostle's neglect of exact method, in inditing his epistles.—It occurred to his mind, when reflecting on Timothy's manifold cares and labors, that his frequent indispositions might be increased by too great abstemiousness, to the prevention of his usefulness, and the shortening of his days. He therefore broke in on his subject, to counsel him, not to drink water any longer, at least as his only liquor; but to use a little wine to strengthen his stomach, and preserve his health.—We may hence form an estimate of the exact temperance, practised by these laborious servants of Christ, who so zealously pleaded the cause of Christian liberty, who placed no dependence on their own works, and who never prescribed their own conduct, in these things, as a rule for other men! SCOTT.

V. 24, 25. (*Note, 21, 22.*) In respect of the choice and ordination of ministers, it might further be observed, that 'some men's sins' were so notorious, and so easily proved, that they lay open beforehand, and anticipated the judgment, which ought to be formed of their conduct and pretensions. In other cases they 'followed after,' so that diligent and impartial investigation would be requisite in order to detect them. In like manner, some persons, applying for admission into the public service of the church, had a sufficient testimonial in their known and abundant good works, which were manifest before any peculiar inquiry was made; and when this was not the case, yet, upon due investigation, Timothy and others might become acquainted with them. So that, in most instances, an impartial attention to the business, without respect of persons, would enable those concerned to know who were, and who were not, eligible to public stations.—'I speak not of men, whose good or bad works are manifest beforehand, for they without further discussion or examination may be admitted, or are to be rejected; but of those whose vices or good works are latent. For they, after examination and inquiry, cannot be long hid. And so, if thou be not hasty in laying on of hands, thou mayest timely discover them. Or if by this mean thou canst not do it, thou wilt not be partaker with the sinner, having done as much as was in thy power to discover them.' *Whitby*. Id.

(24, 25.) 'The judgment, here intended, seems not to be the final day of account, but is to be understood of the judgment that is to be passed, in just and charitable constructions, on persons' characters, with a view



## CHAP. VI.

1 Of the duty of servants. 3 Not to have fellowship with new-fangled teachers. 6 Godliness is great gain, 10 and love of money the root of all evil. 11 What Timothy is to flee, and what to follow, 17 and whereof to admonish the rich. 20 To keep the purity of true doctrine, and to avoid profane janglings.

LET as many servants <sup>a</sup> as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.

2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise *them*, because they are brethren; but rather do *them* service, because they are <sup>b</sup> faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome <sup>c</sup> words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according <sup>d</sup> to godliness;

4 He is <sup>e</sup> proud, knowing <sup>f</sup> nothing, but <sup>g</sup> doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmising,

5 <sup>h</sup> Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such <sup>i</sup> withdraw thyself.

## [Practical Observations.]

a Ep. 6:5. e or, a fool. h or, gallings  
b or, believing. f 1 Co. 8:2. one of another.  
c 2 Ti. 1:13. g or, sick. i 2 Ti. 3:5.  
d Tit. 1:1.

his stomach, and recruit his nature. Observe, It is a *little wine*, for ministers must not be given to much wine. God wills that people should take all due care of their bodies. As we are not to make them our masters, so neither our slaves; but to use them so as they may be most fit and helpful to us in the service of God. Observe, Wine is most proper for sickly and weak people, whose stomachs

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—5. It is most important to the honor of the Gospel, that professed Christians should duly perform their various relative duties. The condition of servants, indeed, in this favored land of liberty, allows them to change one situation for another; but the precepts of Scripture do not at all permit them to behave with disrespect to the persons, or disregard to the lawful commands of those whom they serve; nor yet to return affronting answers, or to speak of their master's faults to others without cause; but rather to weep over them, and pray for them in secret, when they are ungodly and unreasonable. Alas! how grievously are 'the name and Gospel of God blasphemed,' through those servants, who love to discourse and dispute about doctrines and sermons, in families averse to such subjects; and then behave with impertinence in their places, if not with sloth, dishonesty, and unfaithfulness! Thus thousands are fatally prejudiced against

to their admission to the sacred office of the ministry.' GUYSE, in *Henry, abr.*—Bl. adopts this interpretation, i. e. that the reference is to *ordination*, as 'alone bearing the stamp of truth.' Ed.

Concluding Note. V. 14. *Guide the house, &c.*] 'Surely, that woman deserves contempt, who, having consumed the period of youth in frivolous reading, dissipating amusement, and in the acquisition of accomplishments, which are to be considered, immediately after marriage, to entire forgetfulness; enters upon the duties of a wife with [little] other expectation, than that of being an useless or prodigal appendage to a household, ignorant of her duties, and of the manner of discharging them; and with no other conceptions of the responsibilities which she has assumed, than such as have been acquired from a life of childish caprice, luxurious self-indulgence, and sensitive, feminine, yet thoroughly finished selfishness. And yet I fear that the system of female education at present in vogue, is, in many respects, liable to the accusation of producing precisely this tendency.' Wayland.

NOTES. CHAP. VI. V. 1—5. This shows, that Christian masters were not required to set their slaves at liberty, though they were instructed to behave towards them in such a manner, as would greatly lessen and nearly annihilate the evils of slavery. It would have excited much confusion, awakened the jealousy of the civil powers, and greatly retarded the progress of Christianity, had the liberation of slaves by their converts been expressly required by the apostles; though the principles of both the law and the gospel, when carried to their consequences, will infallibly abolish slavery. *Ex. 21:2.*—These things Timothy was directed to teach and enforce, as matters of the greatest importance; and if any person taught otherwise, and consented not to such salutary words, which were indeed the words of Christ 'speaking by him,' and an essential part of 'the doctrine according to godliness;' he must be considered as a self-conceited, ignorant man, who, being puffed up with an opinion of his own abilities, was ambitious of distinction and applause, though entirely unacquainted with the real nature and tendency of the Gospel. 1 *Cor. 3:18—23. 8:1—3.*—It is not absolutely certain, to

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are often out of order, and who labor under infirmities, *Prov. 31:6.* Wine should be used as a help, and not a hindrance, to our work and usefulness.

## CHAP. VI. 1—5. Here is,

I. The duty of servants; they are here said to be *under the yoke*, which denotes both subjection and labor. 'If Christianity finds servants under the yoke, it continues them under it; for the Gospel does not cancel the obligations any lie under, either by the law of nature, or by mutual consent. If servants that embraced the Christian religion should grow insolent and disobedient to their masters, the doctrine of Christ would be reflected on for their sakes, as if it had made men worse liver than they had been before they had received the Gospel. And this is a good reason why we should all conduct ourselves well, that we may prevent the occasion which many seek, and will be very apt to lay hold of, to speak ill of religion for our sakes.'

Or, suppose the master were a believer, and the servant a believer too; would not that excuse him, because *in Christ there is neither bond nor free?* No, by no means; *They that have believing masters, let not them despise them, because they are brethren;* for that brotherhood relates only to spiritual privileges, not to any outward dignity or advantage; nay, *rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved.* They must think themselves the more obliged to serve them, because the faith and love that bespeak men Christians, oblige them to do good; and that is all wherein their service consists. Observe, it is a great encouragement to us in doing our duty to our relations, if we have reason to think they are faithful and beloved, and partakers of the benefit, that is, of the benefit of Christianity. Timothy is appointed to *teach and exhort these things.* Ministers must preach not only the general duties of all, but the duties of particular relations.

II. Paul here warns Timothy to withdraw from those who corrupted the doctrine of Christ, and made it the subject of strife, debate, and controversy, *v. 3—5.* Observe, We are not required to consent to any words as wholesome, except the words of our Lord

Jesus Christ; his doctrine is a doctrine according to godliness, and therefore must be received; it has a direct tendency to make people godly; but he that does not act agreeably, *is proud, v. 4.* contentious, ignorant, and does a great deal of mischief to the church, knowing *nothing.* Observe, Commonly those are most proud who know least; for, with all their knowledge, they do not know themselves. Those who fall off from the plain practical doctrines of Christianity, fall in with controversies which eat out the life and power of religion, and occasion *envy, strife, railings, and evil surmisings.* When men are not content with the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine according to godliness, but will frame notions of their own, and impose them, and that, too, in their own words, which man's wisdom teaches, and not in the words which the Holy Ghost teaches, 1 *Cor. 2:13.* they sow the seeds of all mischief in the church. Hence come *perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, v. 5.* disputes that are all subtlety, and no solidity. Observe, Men of corrupt minds are *destitute of the truth.* The reason why men's minds are corrupt is, because they do not stick to the truth as it is in Jesus: *supposing that gain is godliness,* making religion truckle to their secular interest. From such as these Timothy is warned to withdraw himself.

We observe, (1.) The words of Christ are the best to prevent ruptures in the church; and it has never gone well with the church, since the words of men have claimed a regard equal to his words, and in some cases a much greater. (2.) Paul sets a brand on those who consent not to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ; and when men leave those wholesome words they will never agree in other words, either of their own or other men's inventions, but will perpetually wrangle and quarrel about them: this will produce envy, and be attended with jealousies and suspicions of one another, called here *evil surmisings;* then they will proceed to perverse disputings. Such persons appear to be corrupt, and destitute of the truth, and good ministers and Christians will withdraw themselves from such; 'Come out from

the Gospel.—Indeed, some servants, whose sincerity is unimpeached, through a lamentable mistake, suppose equality in *religious privileges* to imply equality in the family; and thus they act, as if they 'despised their believing masters' and their authority; giving them rude answers, and either neglecting their business, or doing it in their own way, as if this was a part of their Christian liberty! Whereas, they ought to honor and serve them, with the greater diligence and alacrity, because 'they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit.' No doubt there are violations of duty, equally inexcusable, committed by those who stand in the opposite relation; and zealous professors of evangelical doctrines are necessary to believing servants' choosing to live in irreligious families, by behaving in so unchristian a manner to such as have come among them, expecting better treatment. SCOTT.

what set of men the apostle referred to; but, as many of the Jews deemed it unlawful to submit to heathen governors, it is probable, some of the Judaizing teachers inculcated, that the worshippers of God ought not to obey heathen masters, and so paid their court to servants, by persuading them that they ought to assert their liberty. But there might be others also, who disregarded and despised these practical instructions, while their attention was taken up with curious and nice speculations and distinctions. Such persons, however, were to be considered as doting, or talking wildly, like sick and delirious persons, about hard questions and disputes of words, names, forms, or notions, which had no connexion with 'the power of godliness.' . . . Thus they wanted to persuade the Christian servants, that the recovery of their liberty was to be considered as a Christian privilege of great value, which they ought to claim, whatever the consequence might be; and, from the same principle, they sought worldly lure by their religious profession, and as their leading object. (*M. R. p.—s.*) From such men Timothy was exhorted 'to withdraw himself;' and neither have acquaintance with them, nor spend his time in disputing against them. 2 *Thes. 3:6—9.* 2 *Tim. 3:1—5.* SCOTT.

(2.) *Benefit.* I. e. 'Christianity.' WILLIAMS.—'That glorious benefit which the Gospel brings to all its faithful professors, of whatsoever rank or profession in life.' DODDR. 'It may be understood either with reference to the *masters*, I. e. those who receive the benefit (of their service), or to the *slaves*, I. e. those who apply themselves to benefit them. So the ancients and many recent commentators. There is some harshness in both interpretations, but the former seems to be the more natural and agreeable to the context.' BLOOMF. Calvin says, 'united in fraternal love, and partakers of the same grace.' Ed.

(3.) *Words of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 'On this important principle that, what the apostle wrote, as by divine direction, was in effect, the words and commandments of Christ.' DODDR.



6 But godliness <sup>l</sup>with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain <sup>k</sup>we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment, let us be therewith <sup>l</sup>content.

9 But they that will <sup>m</sup>be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For <sup>n</sup>the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have <sup>o</sup>erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But thou, O man <sup>p</sup>of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

<sup>j</sup> Pr. 15:16.    <sup>m</sup> Pr. 23:20.    <sup>o</sup> or, been seduced.  
<sup>k</sup> Ps. 49:17.    <sup>n</sup> Ex. 23:8.    <sup>p</sup> De. 33:1.  
<sup>l</sup> Ge. 23:20.

among them, my people, and be ye separate,<sup>7</sup> says the Lord: from such withdraw thyself.

V. 6—12. From the mention of the abuse which some put on religion, (making it to serve their secular advantages,) the apostle takes occasion to show the excellency of contentment, and the evil of covetousness.

I. The excellency of contentment, v. 6—8. Some account Christianity an advantageous profession for this world; in the sense they mean, it is false; yet it is undoubtedly true, that, though Christianity is the worst trade, it is the best calling, in the world. The truth he lays down is, that godliness with contentment is great gain. Some read it, godliness with a competency; that is, if a man have but a little in this world, yet if he have but enough to carry him through it, he needs desire no more; his godliness,

V. 6—10. Having things barely needful for the present, we ought to be contented and satisfied with them, without indulging any desire of acquiring greater affluence, or being exempted from hard labor and mean fare. For discontent in a lowly situation commonly produces a determination to be rich, if possible, and leads men out of the plain path of honest industry and prudent economy, in dependence on the providence and obedience to the commandment of God.—When once 'the love of money' is allowed to rule in the heart, it becomes the prolific root of all kinds of evil. Impostures, frauds, lies, thefts, robberies, oppressions, murders, ungodliness, hypocrisy, apostasy, contention, lawsuits, wars, cruelty, pride, luxury, sensuality, or penurious avarice, are some of the noxious weeds, of which it daily produces a most abundant increase, according to the different constitutions, habits, and circumstances of mankind. Every species of impiety, iniquity and vice, in one way or another, grows from it; and a large proportion of the miseries, as well as the crimes of mankind, originate from the same source.—It is not to be supposed, that the apostle meant to establish, as a universal proposition, that every kind and every act of wickedness, grew from 'the love of money,' as from their only root; for doubtless, many kinds and innumerable acts of wickedness spring from other roots, which have scarcely any connexion with the love of money; and Cicero, in his Offices, states, that the love of money itself, in many and most insatiable instances, springs from love of power and dominion, for which it is indispensably requisite. But, whoever well considers what influence the desire of riches, not only to hoard them, but to purchase with them the gratification of pride, ambition, sensual inclinations, and even revenge, has on the conduct of mankind, will readily see, that, as a general truth, there is sufficient ground to aver, that 'the love of money is the root of all evil.' The abandoned prostitute, Judas, who sold his Lord, the traitor who sells his country, and the mercenary teacher of religion, combine in spying, 'What will ye give me?' It was the remark of a corrupt, but able statesman in this nation, [the English,] that 'every man has his price;' and it is in some sense, true of every man, who is 'a lover of money,' of pleasure, or of worldly honor, more than 'a lover of God.' The ambitious conquerors and destroyers of mankind, have always loved money, as the means of accomplishing their object; and have extorted it from those in their power, with the most entire disregard to justice, truth, and mercy. Nor did any one ever desire to revenge himself, or remove a rival, by assassination or perjury, but some wretch could be found disposed by love of money to perpetrate the villainy. SCOTT.

(6.) 'If you are ever disposed to envy the great and affluent, and mourn that you may not shine in the circles of fashion, and be arrayed in splendor, and feast at luxurious banquets,—if, with eager and unsatisfied desire, you cry, give, give, as you survey their treasures,—reflect one moment how these bar up their entrance to the kingdom of God,—how they add fuel to their lusts, and furnish excitement to their pride,—how they remove them far from the hopeful means of salvation, and often prove their sure passports to the gates of death. Wealth is a privilege, when enjoyed and used as it should be. But I should fear to pray for wealth either for myself or my children. If I knew I should devote it to God,

with that, will be his great gain, Ps. 37: 16.

We read it, *godliness with contentment*; godliness is itself great gain, and wherever there is true godliness, there will be contentment; but those that are arrived at the highest pitch of contentment with their godliness, are certainly the easiest, happiest people in this world, and are sure to be happy in another world.

Here we have a Christian's gain,—godliness with contentment; this is great, and, not like the little gain of worldlings, it is ever accompanied with contentment in a greater or less degree. Let us all, then, endeavor after godliness with contentment.

He gives the reason, v. 7. We should be content with a little,

(1.) Because we can challenge nothing as a debt due to us, for we came naked into the world; we had our beings, our bodies, our lives, when we came into the world, though we came naked, and brought nothing with us: may we not then be content while our beings and lives are continued to us, though we have not everything we would have? When reduced to the greatest straits, we cannot be poorer than when we came into this world, yet then we were provided for; therefore let us trust in God for the remaining part of our pilgrimage.

(2.) We shall carry nothing with us out of this world; a shroud, a coffin, and a grave, are all that the richest man in the world can have from his thousands. Therefore why should we covet much? Eccl. 5: 15, 16.

Hence he infers, v. 8. if God give us the necessary supports of life, we ought to be content therewith; though we have not dainty food nor costly raiment, if we have but food and raiment convenient for us, and covering, including habitation as well as raiment, we ought to be content: this was Agur's prayer, Prov. 30: 8.

Here we see the folly of placing our happiness in these things, and how the necessities of life are the bounds of a true Chris-

tian's desire, with which, therefore, he will endeavor to be content.

II. The evil of covetousness, v. 9. It is not said, they that are rich, but they that will be rich, that is, that place their happiness in worldly wealth, that covet it inordinately, and are eager and violent in the pursuit of it. They that are such, fall into temptation and a snare, unavoidably; nor will they be safe or innocent, for they will be in danger of ruining themselves for ever. It is good for us to consider the mischievousness of worldly, fleshly lusts. They are foolish, and therefore we should be ashamed of them; hurtful, and therefore we should be afraid of them, especially considering to what degree they are hurtful, for they drown men in destruction and perdition.

The love of money is the root of all evil, v. 10. What sins will not men be drawn to by the love of money? Particularly this was at the bottom of the apostasy of many from the faith of Christ; while they coveted money, they erred from the faith, they quitted their Christianity, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

III. Hence he takes occasion both to caution Timothy against their lusts, and to counsel him to keep in the way of God and his duty, and particularly to fulfil the trust reposed in him as a minister. He addresses himself to him as a man of God. Ministers are men of God, and ought to conduct themselves accordingly in everything; they are men employed for God, devoted to his honor more immediately. The prophets, under the Old Test., were called men of God.

1. He charges Timothy to take heed of the love of money, which had been so pernicious to many; *Flee these things*. It is ill becoming any men, but especially men of God, to set their hearts on the things of this world; men of God should be taken up with the things of God.

2. To arm him against the love of the world, he directs him to follow that which is good; righteousness in his conversation

I should be glad to possess it. But I do not know; and observation shows, that large possessions are much more likely to injure and destroy us, than we ourselves are likely to devote them to God.' Dr. GARDNER SPRING.—*Gain is godliness*.] 'Those professors of religion whose principal object, from month to month, is to get gain, will certainly never obtain a heavenly mind; and if there is any truth in the Bible, they will never reach heaven-itself.' Dr. GRIFFIN.

(8.) 'House-room is not mentioned, being the least of the wants of a man in the East.' BLOOMF.

(9.) *They that will be rich fall into temptation*.] 'If there be a place in our world, where the subtle evasion, and the dexterous imposition, and the sly but gainful concealment, and the report which misleads the inquirer, and the gloss which tempts the unwary purchaser,—are not only currently practised in the walks of merchandise, but, when not carried forward to the glare and the liberality of falsehood, are beheld with general connivance; if there be a place where the sense of morality has thus fallen, and all the nicer delicacies of conscience are overborne in the keen and ambitious rivalry of men *hastening to be rich*, and wholly given over to the idolatrous service of the god of this world,—then that is the place, the smoke of whose iniquity rises before Him, who sitteth on the throne, in a tide of deepest and most revolting abomination.' *Sermon on the Influence of Christianity in augmenting the Mercantile Virtues*. CHALMERS.

(10.) *Pierced, &c.*] 'This, indeed, happily expresses the innumerable outrages done to conscience by those mad men who have taken up this fatal resolution, that they will, at all adventures, be rich.' DODDR. *The love of money is the root of all evil*.] For since in this desire all other appetites and passions concur (as they are bought by money), it is the prevalent form of selfishness, the great antagonist principle of the Gospel of love. Note, Col. 3:5. See 'Mammon, a prize Essay,' in 3 parts, 1. Selfishness the antagonist of the Gospel, with sections respectively entitled, 'the universe, designed to display and enjoy the love of God; sin, as selfishness, is the frustration of the divine plan; all sin is selfishness; the Gospel, as a system of benevolence, opposed to selfishness; selfishness the sin of the world, has long since become the sin of the church; the forms of selfishness in the church. Part 2. Covetousness, the principal form of selfishness, in its nature; forms; prevalence; especially in Britain [&c.]; its disguises; test; guilt and evils; doom; pleas. Part 3. Christian liberality explained; enforced.' *Andrew Fuller* says, 'the love of money will, in all probability, prove the eternal overthrow of more characters among professing people than any other sin, because it is almost the only crime which can be indulged, and a profession of religion at the same time supported.' Ed.

V. 11, 12. According to the language of the Old Test., concerning the ancient prophets, the apostle addressed Timothy as a 'man of God,' one devoted to God, and employed by Him as his messenger to mankind; as one who bore this high and important character, he exhorted him to 'flee' without delay or looking back, to the utmost distance from that destructive whirlpool, in which such immense numbers were continually swallowed up; and to 'follow after' more entire conformity to the per-



12 Fight <sup>a</sup> the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed <sup>r</sup> a good profession before many witnesses.

[Practical Observations.]

13 I give thee charge <sup>s</sup> in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, who <sup>t</sup> before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good <sup>u</sup> confession;

14 That thou keep *this* commandment without spot, <sup>v</sup> unrebukable, until the appearing <sup>w</sup> of our Lord Jesus Christ:

15 Which in his times he shall shew, *who is* the <sup>x</sup> blessed and only Potentate, the <sup>y</sup> King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which <sup>z</sup> no man can approach unto; whom <sup>a</sup> no man hath seen nor can see: to whom <sup>b</sup> be honor and power everlasting. Amen.

17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust <sup>c</sup> in <sup>d</sup> uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to <sup>e</sup> enjoy;

q 2 Ti. 4:7. v Phi. 2:15. a Ex. 33:20.  
r He. 13:23. w 1 Th. 5:23. b Jude 25. Re. 1:6.  
s c. 5:21. x c. 1:17. c Ps. 62:10.  
t Jn. 18:36, 37. y Re. 17:14. d the uncertainty of.  
u or, profession. z Re. 1:16, 17.

toward men, godliness toward God, faith and love as living principles, to support him, and carry him on in the practice both of righteousness and godliness.

Observe, It is not enough that men of God flee evil things, but they must follow after what is directly contrary thereto. Further, what excellent persons men of God are, who follow after righteousness! They are the excellent of the earth, and, being acceptable to God, they should be approved of men.

3. He exhorts him to do the part of a soldier; those who will get to heaven, must fight their way thither; must conflict with corruption and temptations, and the opposition of the powers of darkness: it is a good fight, a good cause, and it will have a good

issue; it is the fight of faith; we do not war after the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, 2 Cor. 10:3, 4.

4. He exhorts him to lay hold on eternal life. Eternal life is the crown proposed for our encouragement, and this we must lay hold on, as those that are afraid of coming short of it, and losing it. We are called to the fight, and to lay hold on eternal life. The profession Timothy, and all faithful ministers, make before many witnesses, is a good profession; for they profess and engage to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold on eternal life; their calling and their own profession oblige them unto this.

V. 13—21. He charges him to keep *this* commandment without spot; that is, the whole work of his ministry, all the trust reposed in him, all the service expected from him, he must keep it without spot, unrebukable; he must conduct himself so in his ministry, that he might not lay himself open to any blame, or incur any blemish.

What are the motives to move him to this?

I. He gives him a solemn charge, v. 13. charges him, as he will answer it at the great day to that God whose eyes are on us all, who sees what we are, and what we do. *This* should quicken us to the service of God, that we serve a God who quickens all things. He charges him before *Christ Jesus*, to whom, in a peculiar manner, he stood related as a minister of his Gospel; and whose good confession before Pilate, *My kingdom is not of this world*, should be effectual to draw off all his followers, both ministers and people, from the love of this world. John 18:36, 37, Christ died as a Martyr, as well as a Sacrifice.

II. He reminds him of the confession he himself had made, v. 12. when ordained by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. The obligation of that was still upon him, and he must live up to it, and be quickened by it, to do the work of his ministry.

III. He reminds him of Christ's second coming; 'Keep this commandment, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; keep it as long as thou livest, till Christ come at death to give thee a discharge. Keep it with an eye to his second coming, when we must all give an account of the talents we have been intrusted with,' Luke 16:2.

Mentioning the appearing of Christ as one that loved it, he loves to speak of it, and loves to speak of Him, who shall then appear. The appearing of Christ is certain; but it is not for us to know the time and

season of it; let this suffice, that in time He shall show it, in the time He thinks fit for it.

Concerning Christ, and God the Father, he here speaks great things. God is the *only Potentate*; the powers that are, are ordained of God, Rom. 13:1. He is the *blessed* and only Potentate, infinitely happy, and nothing can in the least impair his happiness. He is *King of kings, and Lord of lords*. All the kings of the earth derive their power from Him; and He has a sovereign dominion over them. This is Christ's title, Rev. 19:16.

He *only has immortality*; has it in Himself, has it as He is the Fountain of it, for the immortality of angels and spirits is derived from Him. He dwells in inaccessible light; *light which no man can approach unto*: no man can get to heaven, but those whom He is pleased to bring thither, and admit into his kingdom. He is invisible; *whom no man hath seen, nor can see*. It is impossible that mortal eyes should bear the brightness of the divine glory. No man can see God and live.

Having mentioned these glorious attributes, he concludes with a doxology; *To Him be honor and power everlasting. Amen.* God having all power and honor to Himself, it is our duty to ascribe all power and honor to Him.

What an evil is sin, when committed against such a God, the blessed and only Potentate! The evil of it rises in proportion to the dignity of Him against whom it is committed. Similar is his condescension, to notice such mean and vile creatures as we are. What are we, that the blessed God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, should seek after us? Blessed are they who are admitted to dwell with this great and blessed Potentate. Let us love, adore, and praise, the great God; for who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For Thou only art holy, Rev. 15:4. The apostle adds, as a postscript, a lesson for the rich people, v. 17—19. Timothy must charge them that are rich to take care of the temptations, and improve the opportunities, of their prosperous estate. He must caution them,

1. To take heed of pride. That is a sin that easily besets rich people; but they must not think of themselves above what is meet, or be puffed up with their wealth.

2. Not to confide in their wealth. Nothing is more uncertain than the wealth of this world; many have had much of it one

PRACT. OBS. V. 6—12. We cannot look about us at all, without perceiving, that 'they who will be rich, fall into temptation,' are entangled 'in a snare,' and are overcome by many foolish and harmful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.' 'For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil,' in every part of the earth. Many hopeful persons, by allowing themselves to covet something greater, more elegant or affluent, have 'erred from the faith,' have 'made shipwreck' of their religious profession, or have turned out mere thorny-ground hearers; and others 'have pierced themselves through with many sorrows,' to the embittering of all their future lives. No words can express, no description reach, the numberless and horrid evils, which continually flow from this source; especially in a day of outward prosper-

ity, extensive commerce, lavish expense, and loose profession!—Let every Christian flee from this destructive lust; let 'the man of God, especially, avoid every appearance of 'the love of filthy lucre,' or *improvident expense*; let us, on the contrary, 'follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness,' with that assiduity and earnestness, with which worldly men pursue perishing riches; let us fight the noble and profitable fight of faith, and thus 'lay hold on eternal life, to which we also are called;' and strive to act consistently with that good profession, which, in our ministry, we have made of the truth, before many witnesses, who will at last testify against us, if we 'forsake Christ from love of this present world.' SCOTT.

fect rule of universal 'righteousness,' by an upright, faithful conduct towards all men; a proper temper and behavior towards God in everything; a lively faith in Christ, and the divine promises in Him, as well as faithfulness in his stewardship; 'love' to the Lord, to his brethren, and mankind; 'patience' under sufferings, and 'meekness' amidst injuries and provocations.

(12.) *Fight, &c.*] 'It might, perhaps, more literally be rendered, *exercise the good exercise*; but this is a Grecism which the English language will not conveniently allow; nor does the word *exercise* by any means express the force of the original word, which always supposes an opponent to be resisted.'

V. 13—16. The Godhead itself seems to be here adored, without distinction of Persons, of which all these things are properly spoken, whether the Person of the Father, of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit, be mentioned. The invisible God is revealed to us, only in and through the human nature of Christ, as 'the only begotten Son' of the Father. Mat. 11:27. John 1:18. Col. 1:15—17. Heb. 1:3, 4. And this display of the divine glory will be rendered most illustrious, when Christ shall be seen as Man, exercising all the power, authority, and perfections of God, by the whole assembled universe. Mat. 16:24—28. 25:31—46. John 5:20—29. 2 Thes. 1:5—10. Tit. 2:13. Rev. 20:11—15. —'Without spot,' in respect of the commandment itself, and 'unblamable,' in respect of the performance of it, which will contribute to preserve the good

confession in the world, "till the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." MACKN. This is true and important, and indeed implied; but the apostle constantly, in his exhortations, referred to the appearing of Christ; not to establish it as a doctrine, that it was near in respect of time, but to inculcate a continual readiness for it, and an habitual regard to it, in the whole conduct of Christians to the very close of life. SCOTT.

(13.) *Before Pontius Pilate, &c.*] 'We have here another proof that Paul was acquainted with the first three gospels when he wrote his later epistles, and with that of Mat. when he wrote his earlier ones. — The confession here refers to the admission of our Lord, that He was the King of the Jews, and the Son of God. Mat. 27:11. Mark 15:2. John 18:37.' BLOOMF.—'It is perhaps called a *good confession*, not only as in itself noble and generous, but as all our hopes of happiness and salvation are built upon the truth of it.' DODDR.

(15.) 'Now are accumulated the most splendid predicates of the majesty and power of God; and these pave the way for the doxology which closes the passage.' HEINR., in Bloomfield.

V. 17—19. A few rich persons had, it seems, embraced the Gospel at Ephesus, and, as wealth is a comparative thing, some more wealthy than their brethren must be found in other places. Now Timothy and other ministers might be tempted to pay them undue deference, or to be afraid of speaking plainly to them, which would have a very bad effect on their ministry; and it would require much firmness and impartiality to give



18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

21 Which some professing, have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

¶ The first to Timothy was written from Laodicea, which is the chiefest city of Phrygia Paetiana.

e Ec. 5:13,19. g 1 Th. 3:14. i 2 Ti. 2:13.  
f or, sociate. h Tit. 1:14.

day, and been stripped of all the next. Prov. 23:5.

3. He must charge them to trust in God, the living God; to make Him their Hope, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy: many

PRACT. OBS. V. 13-21. The apostle charges each one who ministers in holy things, and not Timothy alone, that we 'keep the commandment of God, without spot and rebukable, till the appearing of Jesus Christ.' Let none suppose, that 'our Lord delayeth his coming.' In his own times, He will be manifested, as 'the Effulgency of the divine glory, the Image of the invisible God.'—While nature prompts us to desire connexion with them; [the rich;] it produces a reluctance to that part of our duty, which relates to them. Even modesty, timidity, gratitude, or supposed prudence, may warp us in this matter; a false apprehension of what may conduce to their best interest, that of our religious society, or of the church at large, and a fear of prejudicing and offending them, and so losing the opportunity of doing good to them, or by them, may easily mislead us in this great concern; not to speak of the dread of their frown, and the credit and advantage of their friendship, both which are very ensnaring to the ministers of the Gospel. But

their proper counsel, caution, and instruction. The apostle, therefore, peculiarly enjoined Timothy, to charge them, in the most plain, authoritative, and solemn manner, to warn them against the danger to which they were exposed, and to call on them to perform the peculiar duties of their station. By relieving the wants of the indigent, and largely contributing to the support and comfort of their poor brethren, and by other pious and charitable actions, they must aim to be 'rich in good works,' the genuine fruits of faith and love.

(17, 18.) 'Our houses are built, our vineyards are planted around the base of a volcano. They may be fair and flourishing to-day,—to-morrow, ashes may be all that remains. Open your hands wide, then, while they contain any blessings to bestow; for of that which you give, you can never be deprived.'

(17-19.) 'If any man take a tenth, or fifth part, from his stock, to give to the poor, the remainder will be a weightier seed for producing an increase, than if the whole had remained untouched. But then this is a delicate affair. To give, chiefly, with an expectation of increase, is traffic, not charity.' ADAMS.—Solomon tells us, that "riches often take wings and flee away;" and truly many times the undue sparing of them, is but letting their wings grow, which makes them ready to fly away; and the contributing a part of them to do good, only clips their wings a little, and makes them stay longer with the owner.' LEITCH.

V. 20, 21. Paul, considering the snares and temptations, the allurements and terrors, which Timothy had to guard against and overcome, in order to the faithful fulfilment of his ministry, and reflecting also on the various species of false religion, which many artfully substituted instead

we riches, but enjoy them poorly, not having a heart to use them, and see God in them.

4. To do good with what they have; that they be rich in good works. Those are truly rich, who are rich in good works. That they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; not only to do it, but to do it willingly, for God loves a cheerful giver.

5. To think of another world, and prepare for that which is to come by works of charity,—laying up in store a good foundation against the time to come, that they may take hold on eternal life. Observe,

Ministers must not be afraid of the rich; be they ever so rich, they must speak to them, and charge them; caution them against pride, and vain confidence in their riches; and stir them up to works of piety and charity, that they do good, &c. Here is a lesson for ministers in the charge given to Timothy; Keep that which is committed to thy trust. Every minister is a trustee; the truths of God, the ordinances of God, are a treasure committed to his trust; keep these, avoiding profane and vain babblings; not affecting human eloquence, which the apostle calls vain babblings, or human learning, which often opposes the truths of God, but keep close to the written Word, for that is committed to our trust. Some who have been

we must break through all these obstacles, if we would be faithful stewards and vigilant watchmen, and 'deliver our own souls.' We must 'charge them in the name of God not to be high-minded, nor to idolize, or at all to trust in uncertain riches;' we must show them the danger to which they are exposed, of being betrayed into pride, avarice, ambition, self-indulgence, and the love of outward splendor; we must point out to them the proper use and improvement of their wealth; we must call on them to provide against the time to come, when it will be said to them, 'Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward.' Luke 16:1-4. P. O. 1-13, 19-22.—But, 'who is sufficient for these things?' Or who can give such charges with energy, that is not himself evidently superior to the love of wealth, or any thing which wealth can purchase? May the Lord help us all to 'keep these things, which are committed to our trust,' and may the grace of the Lord Jesus be with all his faithful ministers and people every where, and at all times! Amen. Sc.

of the haughty, holy Gospel of Christ, again most affectionately and earnestly called upon him to keep inviolable, without shrinking or wavering, the stewardship, or deposit with which he had been entrusted. And he warned him to shun the 'profane and vain babblings' of those, who wanted to impose on Christians the foolish and frivolous traditions and observances of the Jewish scribes, as well as the rites of the Mosiac law. He must turn away from 'the oppositions of science,' or knowledge, 'falsely so called,' such as those, with which the *Gnostics*, or *knowing ones*, afterwards corrupted the Gospel. These speculations were borrowed from the vain philosophy of the Gentiles, and being distorted and mutilated, to suit their purpose, men introduced them into Christianity, to render it more congenial to the heart of man, and especially to gratify their fondness for disputation, and pride of superior penetration and acuteness. Thus, one corrupt system of boasted knowledge was opposed to another; jangling controversies were multiplied and perpetuated; the truth was obscured and overlooked, and the wildest absurdities were substituted in its place. Some, even then, having been seduced into these speculations, had 'erred from the faith' into fatal heresies, and the evil was likely to increase. Having, therefore, given Timothy this warning, the apostle closed this most instructive epistle, with his usual salutation.

(20.) Science] 'The original word here gave rise, in the following century, to a sect famous (or rather infamous) in ecclesiastical history, called *Gnostics*, or knowing ones, because they pretended to know more than other Christians; and, it has been surmised, it was now rising into notice.'

(Note on Roman Military Discipline, Continued from p. 451.)

These motives, which derived their strength from the imagination, were enforced by fears and hopes of a more substantial kind. Regular pay, [1 Cor. 3:7.] occasional donatives, [Rom. 6:23.] and a stated recompense, after the appointed time of service, [Heb. 10:35, 36.] alleviated the hardships of the military life, while, on the other hand, it was impossible for cowardice or disobedience to escape the severest punishment. The centurions were authorized to chastise with blows; the generals had a right to punish with death; and it was an inflexible maxim of Roman discipline, that a good soldier should dread his officers far more than the enemy. From such arts did the valor of the imperial troops receive a degree of firmness and docility, unattainable by the impetuous and irregular passions of barbarians.

And yet so sensible were the Romans of the imperfection of valor without skill and practice, that, in their language, the name of an army [exercitus] was borrowed from the word which signified exercise [ab exercitiis], says Vatro. Military exercises were the important and unremitted object of their discipline. [2 Tim. 4:7, 8.] The recruits and young soldiers were constantly trained, both in the morning and in the evening, nor was age or knowledge allowed to excuse the veterans from the daily repetition of what they had completely learned. [2 Tim. 2:3.] Large sheds were erected in the winter-quarters of the troops, that their useful labors might not receive any interruption from the most tempestuous weather; and it was carefully observed, that the arms destined to this unattractive of war, should be of double the weight which was required in real action. The exercises comprehended whatever could add strength to the body, activity to the limbs, or grace to the motions. The soldiers were diligently instructed to march, to run, to leap, to swim, to carry heavy burdens, to handle every species of arms that was used, either for offence or for defence, either in distant engagement or in a closer onset; to form a variety of evolutions; and to move to the sound of flutes, in the Pyrrhic or martial dance. In the midst of peace, the Roman troops familiarized themselves with the practice of war; and it is prettily remarked by an ancient historian, who had fought against them (Josephus), that the effusion of blood [comp. Heb. 12:4.] was the only circumstance which distinguished a field of battle from a field of exercise. It was the policy of the ablest generals, [comp. Heb. 2:10, 2 Tim. 4:8.] and even of the emperors themselves, to encourage these military studies by their presence and example; and we are informed, that Hadrian as well as Trajan,

frequently condescended to instruct the inexperienced soldiers, to reward the diligent, and sometimes to dispute, with them, the prize [2 Tim. 2:5.] of superior strength and dexterity. Under their reigns tactics were cultivated with success, and, while vigor remained to the empire, their military institutions were the model.

Nine centuries of war had gradually improved the service; Polybius gives the early system, but the following was the constitution of the imperial legion. The heavy armed infantry which composed its principal strength, was divided into 10 cohorts and 65 companies, under the orders of a correspondent number of tribunes and centurions. [Acts 10:1, &c.] The 1st cohort, which always retained the post of honor and the custody of the eagle, was formed of 1035 soldiers, the most approved for valor and fidelity. The remaining 5 cohorts consisted, each, of 555; and the whole body of legionary infantry amounted to 6100 men. Their arms were uniform and admirably adapted to the nature of their service: an open helmet, with a lofty crest [1 Thess. 5:8.]; a breast-plate, or coat of mail; greaves on their legs; and an ample buckler on their left arm. [Eph. 6:14, &c.] The buckler was of an oblong and concave figure, 4 feet in length, and 2 1/2 in breadth, framed of a light wood, covered with a bull's hide, and strongly guarded with plates of brass. Besides a lighter spear, the legionary soldier grasped in his right hand the formidable pila, a ponderous javelin, whose utmost length was about 6 feet, and which was terminated by a massy triangular point of steel, of 18 inches. It was, however, exhausted by a single discharge, at the distance of only 10 or 12 paces. Yet, when launched by a firm and skilful hand, there was not any cavalry that durst venture within its reach, nor any shield or corslet that would sustain the impetuosity of its weight. As soon as the Roman had darted his pila, he drew his sword, and rushed forward to close with the enemy. His sword was a short, well-tempered, Spanish blade, [comp. Eph. 6:17.] that carried a double edge, and was alike suited to the purpose of striking or pushing; but the soldier was always instructed to prefer the latter use of his weapon, as his own body remained less exposed, while he inflicted a more dangerous wound on his adversary. The legion was usually drawn up 8 deep; and the regular distance of 3 ft. was left between the files and ranks; which would facilitate evolutions, and give room to supply the places of the killed or exhausted. The Macedonian phalax trusted in its 16 ranks of long pikes, closely wedged; but reflection and experience proved the strength of the phalax to be no match for the activity of the legion. (Concluded on p. 506.)



AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
SECOND EPISTLE OF  
PAUL TO TIMOTHY,

WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. Atkinson.)

THIS second epistle Paul wrote to Timothy from Rome, when he was a prisoner there, and in danger of his life; this is evident from *ch.* 4:6. It appears that his removal out of this world, in his own apprehension, was not far off, especially considering the rage and malice of his persecutors; and that he had been brought before the emperor Nero, which he calls *his first answer, when no man stood with him, but all men forsook him, ch.* 4:16.—And interpreters agree, that this was the last epistle he wrote.

Where Timothy now was, is not certain. The scope of this epistle somewhat differs from that of the former, not so much relating to his office as an evangelist, as to his personal conduct and behavior. HENRY.

The apostle was evidently a prisoner at Rome when he wrote this epistle; but some suppose, that it was written during his first imprisonment, as the epistles to the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, Philemon, and the Hebrews, were. Others, however, are of opinion, that it was written when he was imprisoned a second time, and not long before he suffered martyrdom; and this appears to me by far the most satisfactory. — [Paley shows this view is strongly supported by the mention that is made of Erastus and Trophimus, and other internal evidence.] Henry, *abr.*—Roscnm. inclines to the opposite. ED.]—‘The ancients from these words . . . “I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand,” (4:6.) do generally conclude, that this was the last of Paul’s epistles. . . . And truly the words of the apostle . . . are not well capable of any other sense; for he says, expressly, (4:6) . . . “I am now offered, and the time of my dissolution is instant. I have finished my course, and henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of glory” (8). Whereas, he not only expected to be delivered from his first bonds, but says, expressly, “I know that I shall abide, &c.” (Phil. 1:25, 26. Philem. 22. Heb. 13:23.) . . . In his first bonds, he was in *libera custodia*, “in his own hired house, receiving all that came to him, none forbidding him.” (Ac. 23:30, 31.) “His bonds were known in Cesar’s palace, and to all others.” (Phil. 1:13.)—Here he is in *arcta custodia* [close confinement]; so that Onesiphorus was forced to “inquire more diligently after him, that he might find him out.” (1:17.) Again, he said, before, “Many of the brethren in the Lord being encouraged by my bonds, were bold to speak the word more abundantly without fear.” (Phil. 1:14.) Here, “all men forsake him.” (4:16.)’ Whitby.—Timothy was with Paul, when he wrote to the Philippians, to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Hebrews. (Phil. 1:1. Col. 1:1. Philem. 1. Heb. 13:23.) Mark was also with him, and joined in saluting the Colossians; but both were absent when this epistle was written, (4:11.)—Should it be argued, that they came to him *before* he wrote the other epistles, what can be said concerning Demas? For he was with the apostle when he wrote to the Colossians, but had forsaken him when he wrote this epistle. (4:10. Col. 4:14.) The supposition, that Timothy and Mark had come to the apostle, before he wrote the other epistles, implies, that this was written a considerable time *before* those; but the assumption, that Demas had repented, and returned to the apostle, when he wrote to the Colossians, implies, that the epistle to Colosse was written some time *after*. Yet, these contradictory suppositions must both be admitted, to support the opinion, that this epistle was written during the apostle’s first imprisonment. Indeed, the language used in it implies, that the apostle considered himself, as one who had finished his ministerial labors, and after a severe imprisonment, perhaps for some time longer, was about to close his testimony by martyrdom. (Notes, 1:15—18. 4:6—8.) Timothy, it is generally thought, now resided at Ephesus; indeed this is probable, though not certain. (Comp. 2:16—18. 4:14. with 1 Tim. 1:20.—See Notes, 4:9—13, 19—22.)—It was evidently the scope of the epistle, to animate Timothy to endure persecutions, with courage and constancy; to caution him and others against false teachers and corrupt professors of Christianity, the increase of whom the apostle predicted, in the most energetic language; and to direct and animate him in fulfilling his ministry, and in following after holiness.

‘The apostle had been for some time under close confinement at Rome, at the mercy of a cruel and capricious tyrant. He had seen himself deserted by his friends, in his greatest extremity, and had nothing before him, but the certain prospect of being called to suffer death, in the same cause to which he had devoted his life. In this situation, how does he behave? Does he seem to look back with concern on his past conduct, or to regret the sacrifice he had made of his worldly interests? Can we discover anything, that betrays a secret consciousness of guilt, or even a suspicion of the *weakness* of his cause? Nay, does he drop a single expression, that can be interpreted as the mark of fear, or discomposure of mind, in the apprehension of those gloomy scenes that lay before him? Surely, if he had been an impostor, or had entertained the least doubt of the doctrines he taught, something of this kind would have escaped him when writing to a friend, with whom he could intrust all the secrets of his breast.—On the contrary, upon the most calm and deliberate survey, he expresses an entire satisfaction, in reflecting on the part he had acted; and earnestly recommends it to his beloved pupil, to follow his example, in maintaining the glorious cause, even at the hazard of his life. He appears, throughout the epistle, to have felt a strong conviction of the truth of those principles he had embraced, and glories in the sufferings he had endured in support of them, triumphing in the full assurance of being approved by his great Master, and of receiving at his hands a crown of distinguished lustre.’ Doddr. SCOTT.

A. D. 67.

CHAP. I.

1 Paul’s love to Timothy, and the unfeigned faith which was in Timothy himself, his mother, and grandmother. 6 He is exhorted to stir up the gift of God which was in him, 8 to be steadfast, and patient in persecution, 13 and to persist in the form and truth of that doctrine which he had learned of him. 15 Phygellus and Hermogenes, and such like, are noted, and Onesiphorus is highly commended.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the <sup>a</sup> promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved—

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1. The Gospel, intrusted to the apostle by the will and appointment of God, was according to ‘the promise of life’ and salvation, made from the beginning, to fallen man, through the predicted Messiah; (*Note, Gen.* 3:14, 15.) all the prophecies to this effect were fulfilled in Christ, and then the promise of life was sent to Jews and Gentiles without distinction. (*M. R.—Note, Rom.* 15:8—13.)—‘Adam brought the sentence of death upon us all, and the promise of deliverance from that death is only made to us, through Jesus Christ, by virtue of that death which He suffered in our stead.’ Whitby.—‘Thus he

ed <sup>b</sup> son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

a Ep. 3:5. b 1 Ti. 1:2.

CHAP. I. V. 1—5. Here is,

1. The inscription of the epistle; Paul calls himself *an apostle by the will of God*, i. e. he was so merely by his good pleasure, and grace, which he professes himself unworthy of; *according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus*, i. e. the Gospel,

*Paul’s affectionate address.*

which is the promise of life in Christ Jesus; life the end, and Christ the Way, John 14:6. He calls Timothy his *beloved son*; Paul felt the warmest affection for him, both because he had been an instrument of his conversion, and because, as a son with his father, he had served with him in the Gospel.

In the former epistle he says, he was an apostle *by the commandment of God our Savior, here by the will of God*; the meaning is, God called him to be an apostle. The Gospel is the promise of life, Ti. 1:2.

shows, that the Gospel is not new, but the very thing which God promised by the prophets. . . . I would again and again admonish the reader, not to pass over the superscriptions to the epistles of Paul, in a slight manner, as he uses in them, with a sort of inimitable brevity, to embrace the sum of the mystery of the Gospel; so that while these are preserved, the church possesses that which she may oppose to all heretics.’ Beza.

SCOTT. (1.) *According to.*] ‘I prefer, in order to; indicating the end and tendency of the apostleship.’ BLOOMF.



3 I thank God, whom I serve<sup>c</sup> from my forefathers with pure<sup>d</sup> conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

4 Greatly desiring<sup>e</sup> to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith<sup>f</sup> that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother<sup>g</sup> Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God,<sup>h</sup> which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of<sup>i</sup> fear; but of<sup>j</sup> power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker<sup>k</sup> of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

9 Who hath saved<sup>l</sup> us, and called<sup>m</sup> us with an holy calling, not<sup>n</sup> according to our works, but according to his own<sup>o</sup> purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before<sup>p</sup> the world began;

[Practical Observations.]

c Ac. 23:1.	i Ro. 8:15.	m Ro. 8:28,30.
d He. 13:18.	j 1 Ju. 4:18.	n Tit. 3:5.
e c. 4:9,21.	k Lu. 24:49.	o De. 7:7,8.
f 1 Ti. 4:6.	l Col. 1:24.	p Ep. 1:9,11.
g Ac. 16:1.	t Mat. 1:21.	p Ep. 1:4.
h 1 Ti. 4:14.		

and this, as all other promises, is in and through Jesus Christ; they all take their rise from the mercy of God in Christ, and are sure in Him. Grace, mercy, and peace, come from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord; therefore, the one, as well as

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—9. The 'promise of eternal life,' to all who believe in Jesus Christ, is the leading subject in the preaching of those ministers, who are employed 'according to the will of God;' and though outward dispensations vary, yet his real people have, in every age, substantially the same religion, and serve God after the manner of their forefathers and predecessors, 'with a pure conscience,' being partakers of the same 'grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.'—The pious instructions and fervent prayers of believing parents, are often the means of conversion to their children; yet, such as enjoy this advantage should be reminded, that they will derive no benefit from 'the unfeigned faith' of the nearest relations, unless the same dwell in them also. We ought to exhort those, of whom we have the best opinion, 'to stir up the gift of God that is in them,' and to occupy with it in the duties of the stations allotted them.—The new nature, communicated in regeneration, leads to true liberty, and victory over the fear of man, and of those reproaches, contumelies, and

V. 3—5. Lois and Eunice seem to have 'waited for the consolation of Israel,' before they heard the Gospel, and thus were prepared to receive it; and having diligently given Timothy a religious education, it greatly conduced to his being made partaker of the same faith, as the apostle was fully persuaded concerning him. (Marg. Ref. h—q.—Note, 3:14—17. Acts 16:1—3.)—It is not unlikely, that Timothy accompanied the apostle to Miletus, and parted with him there, accompanying the Ephesian elders, when they returned to Ephesus. SCOTT.

(3.) From my forefathers.] 'I. e. after their example.' MACKN.

(5.) Lois and Eunice.] 'The pains these worthy persons took to impress the mind of their son in his childhood, with sentiments of piety and virtue, is a fit example for the imitation of all mothers, who, if they take the same pains with their children, may hope that, by the blessing of God, their care will be followed with the same happy effects.' MACKN.—'How powerful is the influence of a mother, and what an opportunity does she enjoy, if she be a Christian, for instilling into the hearts of her children, the principles of religion. If all were like the mother of Timothy, there would be no lack of faithful and devoted ministers to preach the Gospel at home, or of missionaries to carry it to the heathen. Can the reader think of a more perfect image of bliss, than the mother of a glorified spirit?—a spirit that shall have turned many to righteousness, and will be for ever loved and honored by Christ, and the redeemed, for the part which he bore on earth, in the cause of human salvation? If it is seen, that the mother gave such direction to the opening mind of her son, as that his subsequent usefulness can be traced back to her influence, [can woman's ambition aim higher?—surely there will be no crown in heaven, for which that mother would exchange her joy.'

REV. N. ADAMS.

the other, is the Giver of these blessings, and ought to be applied to for them; and they are the best we can ask for our dearly beloved friends, or ourselves.

2. Paul's thanksgiving to God for Timothy's faith and holiness, and that he remembered Timothy in his prayers. Observe, Whatever good office we perform for our friends, God must have the glory of it. He puts it into our hearts to remember such and such in our prayers. Observe, Paul prayed much, night and day, and without ceasing; and he never forgot his friends in his prayers, as we often do. He greatly desired to see Timothy, out of the affection he had for him, that he might have some conversation with him, being mindful of his tears at their last parting; for he perceived by that, what a true affection he had for him. He thanks God, that Timothy kept up the religion of his ancestors, v. 5. Observe, Timothy had a good mother, and a good grandmother: they believed, though his father did not, Acts 16. It is a comfortable thing when children imitate the faith and holiness of their godly parents, and tread in their steps, 3 John 4: Paul had a very charitable opinion of his friends, was very willing to hope the best concerning them; indeed he had great reason to believe well of Timothy, for he had no man like-minded, Phil. 2:10.

Observe, We are, according to Paul, to serve God with a pure conscience; this is to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, Heb. 10:22. The faith that dwells in real believers is unfeigned, a faith that will stand the trial; it dwells in them as a living principle: we should rejoice, moreover, wheresoever we see the grace of God thus manifested; so did Barnabas, Acts 11:23, 24. 2 John 4.

V. 6—14. Here is an exhortation and excitation of Timothy to his duty, v. 6.

I. He exhorts him to stir up the gift of God that was in him. It is meant of all the gifts and graces God had given him, to qualify him for the work of an evangelist, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the extraordinary gifts that were conferred by the imposition of the apostle's hands. These he must stir

up, exercise, and so increase: use gifts and have gifts; to him that hath shall be given, Mat. 25:29.

Whether the gift of God in Timothy was ordinary or extraordinary, (though I incline to the latter,) he must stir it up, otherwise it would decay. Further, you see that this gift was in him by the putting on of the apostle's hands, which I take to be distinct from his ordination, which was performed by the hands of the presbytery, 1 Tim. 4:14. Probably, Timothy had the Holy Ghost, in his extraordinary gifts and graces, conferred on him by the laying on of the apostle's hands, (for I reckon none but the apostles had the power of giving the Holy Ghost,) and afterward, being thus richly furnished for the work of the ministry, was ordained by the presbytery.

The great hindrance of usefulness in the increase of our gifts, is, slavish fear; therefore, he warns him against this, v. 7. it was through base fear the evil servant buried his talent, and did not trade with it, Mat. 25:25. Now God hath therefore armed us against the spirit of fear, by often bidding us fear not. The spirit of love to God will carry us through all opposition we may meet with, and set us above the fear of man, and all the hurt man can do us. The Spirit God gives his ministers, is not a fearful, but courageous Spirit; it is a Spirit of power, for they speak in his name who has all power, both in heaven and earth; a Spirit of love, for love to God and the souls of men, must inflame ministers in all their service; and it is a Spirit of a sound mind, for they speak the words of truth and soberness.

II. He exhorts him to count on afflictions, and get ready for them, v. 8. The Gospel of Christ is what we have none of us reason to be ashamed of. We must not be ashamed of those who are suffering for the Gospel of Christ.

The Gospel is a testimony of our Lord; in and by that He bears testimony of Himself to us, and by professing our adherence to it we bear testimony of Him and for Him: if we are now ashamed of either Christ or those who suffer for Him, He

injuries which may be expected in the path of duty. Whenever, therefore, we find our hearts discouraged, our hands weakened, or our earnestness in the work of the Lord abated, we should ascribe it to the remains of unbelief and a carnal mind, and to the temptations of Satan; and we should strive the more fervently in prayer, for 'supplies of the Spirit of Christ,' to invigorate our faith and hope, to 'shed abroad the love of God in our hearts,' to animate us with zeal and holy affections, and to produce in us a sound mind, and heavenly wisdom.—In proportion as 'the Spirit witnesseth with our spirits, that we are the children of God,' and 'that He hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose, and grace, given us in Christ before the world began,' we shall feel ourselves 'constrained by love,' to devote ourselves and all our talents to his glory. Thus we shall manifest the holy nature of our calling, and of that doctrine which is so much opposed and perverted by the pride and carnality of the human heart. SCOTT.

V. 6—8. Love, zeal, and compassion for souls, being brought into vigorous exercise, Timothy would be animated to improve his talents, and fulfil his ministry, with ardor and effect. The spirit of a lively Christian [is] that of courage, firmness, zeal, and wise consistency of conduct, in the midst of persecutions and temptations. SCOTT.

(6.) Stir up.] 'The metaphor is borrowed from stirring up fire when almost extinct.' DONDR.

V. 9. This calling had not been 'according to their works,' for if God had dealt with them by that rule, they must have been left under condemnation; but it was 'according to his own purpose, and grace, which was given them in Christ before the world began;' that is, his purpose of giving them grace, in and through Christ Jesus, which was engaged to Him, as the appointed Surety of his chosen people, 'from eternal ages.' M. R. h—b.—Note, Tit. 1:1—4. Various ways of setting aside the obvious meaning of the v. as implying personal election 'from the beginning,' or 'before eternal times,' have been proposed: but none of them can be maintained, as it appears to me, without supposing, that all, who live and die impenitent and unbelieving, may nevertheless be said to be 'saved and called with a holy calling,' because a Savior was promised from the beginning of the world. Indeed, 'the purpose of God' is expressly mentioned, as the reason why they, rather than others, were thus 'saved and called.' SCOTT.

(9.) 'Grace was given us in Christ before the world was, i. e. before we or our works could exist. Therefore we ought not to be ashamed of the testimony and cross of Christ. Grace is said to be given us in Christ, because, although we did not yet exist, yet Christ, the appointed Mediator, subsisted from eternity; and He in the covenant of redemption with the Father, before the world was, covenanted for us his elect,



10 But is now made manifest<sup>q</sup> by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished<sup>r</sup> death, and hath brought<sup>s</sup> life and immortality to light through the gospel:

11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless<sup>t</sup> I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have<sup>u</sup> believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have<sup>v</sup> committed unto him against that day.

13 Hold fast<sup>w</sup> the form<sup>x</sup> of y sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

14 That<sup>z</sup> good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

q 1 Pe. 1:20. r 1 Co. 15:54. s Jo. 5:24-29. t Ro. 1:16. u or, trusted. v 1 Co. 1:19. w Re. 2:25. x Ro. 6:17. y 1 Ti. 6:3. z 1 Ti. 6:20.

will be ashamed of us hereafter: 'But let them partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel;' (or, as it may be read, *Do thou suffer with the Gospel;*) 'not only sympathize with those who suffer for it, but be ready to suffer with them, and like them.' If at any time the Gospel be in distress, he who hopes for life and salvation by it will be content to suffer with it.

Mentioning God and the Gospel, he notices what great things God has done for us by the Gospel, v. 9, 10. To encourage him to suffer, he urges two considerations.

1. He shows him the nature of that Gospel which he was called to suffer for, and the glorious and gracious designs and purposes of it; enlarging on them, as usual, so full was he always of that which is all our salvation, and ought to be all our desire.

Observe, The Gospel aims at our salvation; *He has saved us*, and we must not think much to suffer for that which we hope to be saved by. It is designed for our sanctification; *and called us with a holy calling*, called us to holiness; all who shall be saved hereafter, are sanctified now. The rise of it is the free grace and eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus. If we had merited it, it had been hard to suffer for it; but our salvation by it is of free grace, therefore we must not think much to suffer for it. The

Gospel is the manifestation of this purpose and grace, *by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ*, who had lain in the bosom of the Father from eternity, and was perfectly apprised of all his gracious purposes; by his appearing, that gracious purpose was made manifest to us. Did Jesus Christ suffer for it, and shall we think much to suffer for it?

By the Gospel of Christ, death is abolished; *He has abolished death*, not only weakened it, but broken its power over us; by taking away sin He has abolished death, for the sting of death is sin, 1 Cor. 15:56. He has altered the property of it. Death now, of an enemy, is become a friend, and is the gate by which we pass out of a troublesome, vexatious, sinful world, into a world of perfect peace and purity; it comes not now in triumph over those who believe the Gospel, but they triumph over it, 1 Cor. 15:55.

Lastly, *He has brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel*; He has showed us another world, more clearly than it was before discovered under any former dispensation; and the happiness of that world, the certain recompense of our obedience by faith: we all, with open face, as in a glass, behold the glory of God. Let us value the Gospel more than ever, for herein it has the pre-eminence above all former discoveries.

2. Consider the example of blessed Paul, v. 11, 12. He was appointed to preach the Gospel, and particularly to teach the Gentiles. He thought it a cause worth suffering for, and why should not Timothy think so too?

Observe, Good men often suffer many things for the best cause in the world; *for which cause I suffer these things*; that is, 'for my preaching and adhering to the Gospel.' They need not to be ashamed, the cause will bear them out; but those who oppose it, shall be clothed with shame. Observe, Those who trust in Christ, know whom they have trusted. He speaks with a holy triumph and exultation, as much as to say, 'I stand on firm ground. I know I have lodged the great trust in the hands of the best Trustee.' *And am persuaded*, &c. What must we commit to Christ? The salvation of our souls, and their preservation to the heavenly kingdom; and what we so commit to Him, He will keep. There is a day coming, when our souls will be inquired after; 'Man! Woman! thou hadst a soul committed to thee, what hast thou done with it? To whom was it offered, to God or Satan? How was it employed; in the service of sin, or in the service of Christ?'

There is a day coming, and it will be a very solemn and awful day, when we must give an account of our stewardship, Luke 16:2. give an account of our souls: now if by an active, obedient faith we commit it to Jesus Christ, we may be sure He is able to keep it, and it shall be forthcoming to our comfort in that day.

III. He exhorts him to hold fast the form of sound words, v. 13.

1. 'Have a form of sound words;' (so it may be read;) an abstract of the first principles of religion, according to the Scriptures; a brief summary of the Christian faith, in a proper method, drawn out by thyself from the Holy Scriptures for thy own use; or rather, by the form of sound words, I understand the Holy Scriptures themselves.

2. 'Having it, hold it fast, remember it; retain it, adhere to it. Adhere to that, in opposition to all heresies and false doctrine, which corrupt the Christian faith. Hold that fast which thou hast heard of me.' Paul was divinely inspired. But how must it be held fast? *In faith and love*; we must assent to it as a faithful saying, and bid it welcome as worthy of all acceptance. Hold it fast in a good heart; Faith and love must go together; it is not enough merely to assent to sound words, but we must love them, believe their truth, and love their goodness, and we must propagate them in love, Eph. 4:15. Faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; it must be Christian faith and love; faith and love fastening on Jesus Christ, in and by whom God speaks to us, and we to Him. Timothy, as a minister, must hold fast the form of sound words, for the benefit of others. *Of healing words*, so it may read; there is a healing virtue in the Word of God; *He sent his Word and healed them*. To the same purport is v. 14.

The Christian doctrine is a trust committed to us, to Christians in general, but to ministers in particular; it is a good thing, of unspeakable value in itself, and which will be of unspeakable advantage to us; for it discovers to us the unsearchable riches of Christ, Eph. 3:8. It is committed to us, to be preserved pure and entire, and to be transmitted to those who shall come after us, and we must keep it, and not contribute anything to the corrupting of its purity, the weakening of its power, or the diminishing of its perfection; *Keep it by the Holy Ghost that dwelleth in us*. We must not think to keep it by our own strength, but keep it by the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost dwells in all good ministers and Christians; they are his temples,

and afterwards paid the price of redemption, and in our name received the grace by which we might at length be called, justified, and each finally saved.' Dickson.—'The gift of the grace he here commemorates is no other than that predestination, by which we are made the sons of God. God is often said to give us grace, when we experience the effect of his grace. But here Paul speaks of what He had determined with Himself, from the beginning.' CALVIN.—'Here is the divine glory, as set forth, independent of any motive or cause whatever, but God's own sovereign will and pleasure. No moving cause, no procuring cause, no assisting cause. Here is not a word of either. Who hath saved us. It is spoken of us a thing already done. And called us. So then salvation, or the predestinated purpose of God, of the church to salvation in Christ, is before calling. A most plain, palpable, decided proof, that nothing of creature-worth, or creature-ability, is taken into the account.' HAWK.—'If the thing were done before we had a being, how could it depend on our doing?' Rev. B. JONES.

V. 10. Whatever notions, and convictions, any of the Gentiles had concerning the soul's immortality, they knew nothing of the way in which eternal life might be enjoyed by sinful man; they were wholly ignorant of the meaning annexed in the Scripture to the words, 'life and immortality.' Their speculations served only for amusement or disputation, being blended with error and fable, involved in obscurity and uncertainty, and utterly inefficacious on their practice. The Jews indeed had a revelation in the O. T. both of a future state, and of the resurrection of the body. But it was far less full and explicit, than that in the N. T., it was chiefly confined to one small nation, and it was very imperfectly understood and believed, even in that one nation. (*Note, Mat. 22:23-33.*) So that whatever had been conjectured or believed, before the coming of Christ, concerning a future state, it might properly be said, that 'He had brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel;' the doctrine respecting it was placed in the most convincing and interesting light, every proper question about it was satisfactorily resolved, and the whole was suited to answer the most important practical purposes.—Indeed, after all modern improvements and supposed demonstrations,

the influential belief of the immortality of the soul, and a future state of retribution, rests wholly on divine revelation, as well as that of the resurrection of the body, and the way of a sinner's acceptance. If indeed it can be demonstrated, that the soul is naturally capable of immortality, it certainly cannot be proved, except from immediate revelation, that almighty God will not terminate its existence, especially as it is forfeited by sin, or that He will not make every transgressor miserable in immortality; for immortality may be endless misery; but the Gospel, which expressly states this, *Notes, Mat. 25:11-46. Mark 9:43-50.* also clearly connects 'life,' with 'immortality,' in respect of all who believe, *John 11:20-27.* So that it should exceedingly enhance our value for 'the oracles of God,' when we clearly perceive the insufficiency of 'the oracles of reason,' in the most intricate of all concerns.

SCOTT.—V. 12. *That which I have committed.* Here only.—'It signifies both that which is committed to us of God, and that we commit to Him. . . . A thing committed to the trust of any whomsoever, by any whomsoever.' *Leish.* See also 1 Tim. 6:20.

V. 13, 14. After the above animating declaration of his own experience and joyful confidence, in the midst of sufferings, and the near prospect of a violent death, the apostle exhorted his beloved Timothy to 'hold fast,' in a steadfast profession, and by faithful preaching, 'the form of sound words,' the substance of evangelical truth, which he had heard of him; and of which perhaps he had given him some compendious epitome. 'That good thing,' the ministerial charge, or the Gospel committed to his stewardship, Timothy was exhorted thus to retain, observe, and fulfil, without turning aside from it on any account; but he must do this 'by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us,' in dependence on his sacred influences, sought by constant prayer, and by compliance with them. (*M. R. g. h.*)—'Adhering closely to the words and phrases, in which the apostle had taught the doctrines of the Gospel. The teachers, in modern times, who, in explaining the articles of the Christian faith, use phrases different from the scripture-phraseology, would do well to attend to this apostolical injunction.' Mackn. 12.



15 This thou knowest, that all <sup>a</sup> they which are in Asia be turned <sup>b</sup> away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

16 The Lord give mercy unto the house of <sup>c</sup> Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my <sup>d</sup> chain:

17 But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in <sup>e</sup> that day: and in how many things he <sup>f</sup> ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

## CHAP. II.

<sup>1</sup> He is exhorted again to constancy and perseverance, and to do the duty of a faithful servant of the Lord, in dividing the word aright, and staying profane and vain babblings. 17 Of Onesiphorus and Phileas. 18 The foundation of the Lord is sure. 22 He is taught whereof to beware, and what to follow after, and in what sort the servant of the Lord ought to behave himself.

**T**HOU therefore, my son, be <sup>a</sup> strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 And the things that thou hast heard of me <sup>b</sup> among many witnesses, the same commit <sup>c</sup> thou to faithful men, who shall be able <sup>d</sup> to teach others also.

<sup>a</sup> Ac. 19:10. <sup>b</sup> or, by. <sup>c</sup> Mt. 23:34—10. <sup>d</sup> or, by. <sup>e</sup> He. 9:10. <sup>f</sup> 1 Pt. 1:13. <sup>g</sup> c. 4:19. <sup>h</sup> 1 s. 17. <sup>i</sup> Tit. 1:9. <sup>j</sup> Ep. 6:10.

and He enables them to keep the Gospel pure and uncorrupt; and yet they must use their best endeavors; for the assistance and indwelling of the Holy Ghost does not exclude men's endeavors, but they very well consist together.

V. 15—18. Having exhorted Timothy to hold fast, v. 13, 14, he mentions,

**PRACT. OBS.** V. 10—18. We should bless the Lord continually for 'the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ,' for what He has done and suffered to 'abolish death,' and for his Gospel, by which He has 'brought life and immortality to light.' As we have such decisive assurance of a future state, such full information concerning the nature of it, and so clear a prospect of immortal felicity, by faith in Him 'who is the Resurrection and the Life,' let us 'give the more diligence,' in making our personal interest in his salvation sure to our souls; and let such as are appointed to publish these important tidings to mankind, and to instruct the nations in the truths of Christ, prepare for sufferings, knowing that his most honored servants have always been most conformed to Him in this respect.—The hope of the mearest real Christian, rests on the same basis with that of the greatest apostle; and, in order to possess this good hope, we must adhere steadfastly to 'the form of sound words,' which the apostles have taught us; not only rejecting new notions, but new expressions, which are often employed to evade one part of religion, by drawing the attention from others of equal importance. We must also be careful to hold even an orthodox creed 'in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus;' this, as well as ministerial

1. The apostasy of divers from the doctrine of Christ, v. 15. He does not say *from Christ*, (though it should seem they were,) but *from me*; they had turned their backs on him, and disowned him, in the time of his distress. And should we wonder at it, when many turned their backs on a much better than Paul? I mean the Lord Jesus Christ, John 6: 66.

2. He mentions the constancy of one Onesiphorus, v. 16. Observe, What kindness Onesiphorus had showed to Paul, not once or twice, but often; at Rome he took care to seek Paul out very diligently, and found him, v. 17. and at Ephesus he had ministered to him, and been very kind to him; Timothy knew it. Paul returns his kindness, v. 16—18. He that receives a prophet, shall have a prophet's reward. He repays him with his prayers; *The Lord give mercy to Onesiphorus.* It is probable Onesiphorus was now absent from home, and in company with Paul; he therefore prays that his house might be kept during his absence. The papists will have it he was dead; and from Paul's praying for him, they conclude the warrantableness of praying for the dead; but who told them Onesiphorus was dead? And can it be safe to ground a doctrine and practice of such importance on a mere supposition, and very great uncertainty? He prays for Onesiphorus himself, as well as for his house, *that he might find mercy in that day*, in the day of death and of judgment, when Christ will account all the good offices done to his poor members as done to Himself. Observe, (1.) The day of death and judgment is an awful day, which may be emphatically called *that day*; (2.) We need desire no more to make us happy, than to find mercy of the Lord in that day; the best Christians will want mercy in that day, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, Jude 21; if you would have mercy then, you must seek for it now of the Lord, for it is of and from the Lord that we must

have mercy, and unless the Lord has mercy on us, in vain will be the pity and compassion of men or angels; we are to seek and ask for mercy of the Lord, who is the Giver and Bestower of it; for the Lord Christ has satisfied justice, that mercy might be displayed. *Finally*, The best thing we can ask for is, mercy of the Lord in that day, when we must pass out of time into eternity, and appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; the Lord grant unto all of us, that we may find mercy of the Lord in that day!

**CHAP. II.** In this ch., our apostle gives Timothy many exhortations and directions, which may be of great use to others, both ministers and Christians, for whom they were designed as well as for him.

V. 1—7. I. Timothy is encouraged to constancy and perseverance in his work, v. 1. *Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*, may be understood,

1. In opposition to the weakness of grace. Where there is the truth of grace, there must be a laboring after the strength of grace. As our trials increase, we need to grow stronger and stronger in that which is good; in our faith, our resolution, our love to God and Christ.

2. In opposition to our being strong in our own strength; 'Be strong, not confiding in thy own sufficiency, but in the grace that is in Jesus Christ.' Compare Eph. 6: 10. When Peter promised rather to die for Christ than to deny Him, he was strong in his own strength; had he been strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, he had kept his standing better.

There is grace in Christ Jesus, John 1: 17. grace enough for all; and we must be strong in this grace, and not in ourselves. Paul exhorts Timothy with great tenderness and affection; *Thou, therefore, my son, &c.*

Timothy must count on sufferings, even unto blood, therefore,

He must train up others to succeed him in

faithfulness, must be attempted 'by the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us;' and it will never be performed by those, 'who trust in their own hearts,' and 'lean to their own understandings.'—We need not wonder, that self-wisdom, and a contempt of the influences of the Holy Spirit, united with a dislike to the humbling truths of the Gospel, and to bear the cross for Christ's sake, should turn so many, in these latter ages, from regarding the writings of the apostles; for similar causes turned many from them, even while the apostles were living, and confirming their authority and doctrine by the most undeniable miracles! But if others choose to follow the example of Phygellus and Hermogenes, let us copy that of Onesiphorus, by seeking out the afflicted servants of Christ, and refreshing and ministering to them; not being ashamed of their poverty or disgrace, though laid in dungeons or workhouses, and doing them all the good we can, with a constant affection, for the Lord's sake. Then shall we have an interest in their prevailing prayers; (*Note*, 2 Cor. 9:12—15. P. O. 3—15.) then we may thus hope for the mercy of God on our families, and may rest assured of 'finding mercy of the Lord in that day,' when we shall most know its unspeakable value.

SCOTT.

V. 15. Some understand this of those ministers and Christians, who were natives of Asia, professing Christianity, and had been with Paul at Rome; but who had shamefully deserted him in the season of his greatest danger. Others suppose the apostle to mean, that the churches in Asia (or that district of which Ephesus was the metropolis) had withdrawn their regard from him, being perverted by heretical teachers. (*Notes*, Rev. 2:1—7.) Some indeed interpret it of the Judaizing teachers, but those who had always openly opposed the apostle, could not be said to be 'turned away from him.' These, however, and other false teachers, probably had succeeded in alienating many of the apostle's converts. Yet the first interpretation seems to be the true one, and is established by the context. (*Note*, 16—18.)—The expression, 'Thou knowest,' may only mean, 'No doubt thou hast heard;' and to mention two individuals of whom better hopes had been formed, to Timothy while resident in Asia, and witnessing the defection of many churches, would have been wholly unnatural.

(15.) *All they in Asia.* 'The Asiatics were infamous for their cowardice and effeminacy. But Paul probably alludes to their behavior at Rome, ch. 4:16, of which Timothy might have been informed by travellers.'

V. 16—18. Onesiphorus probably resided at Ephesus, where his family then was, and had been at Rome, and still was at a distance from them. [This, Onesiphorus, pains to find Paul] shows, that the apostle's imprisonment was far more close and severe than before; so that Christians in general scarcely knew where he was, and many of them were afraid to inquire after him. (*Preface*, *Note*, Acts 23:30, 31.—The eager manner, in which the papists catch at the unfounded notion that Onesiphorus was dead, because the apostle prayed separately for his household, and yet afterwards prayed for him also, shows how entirely destitute their practice of praying for the dead is of scriptural proof, and how glad they would be to meet with some countenance for it in the Word

of God, if that could be done.—*Very well.* More exactly, than what Onesiphorus had done for the apostle at Rome.

**NOTES.** CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. This does not indeed prove, that the people had no concern in the appointment of their own pastors, or of ministers to preach the Gospel in dark places; but it undeniably proves that Timothy had a superintending authority, and was empowered to take head, that none should be appointed, except 'faithful men, who were able to instruct others also.' It can scarcely be supposed, that there was any competition at that time. The apostles, and those sent by them, would doubtless select the most suitable persons, and the people would cordially acquiesce in the choice. (*M. R.* e.g.—*Notes*, Acts 6:2—6. 14:21—23. 1 Tim. 5:21, 22. Tit. 1:5—9.)—The communication of divine truth to mankind, by a succession of witnesses, from age to age, was thus effectually provided for. In 'Endynamow: (1) cannot mean less than " exert thyself vigorously."'

(2.) *Commit, &c.* 'Some argue hence, that the people were not to choose their own ministers. But if they did choose them, or propose them to Timothy, it might yet be his appropriate office to admit them to the ministry, and solemnly to commit the Gospel to them.' *DODD.*—Eusebius, speaking of the churches founded by Paul and Peter, saith, "But how many, and who, having become genuine imitators of these," (apostles,) "were esteemed fit to feed the churches founded by them, it is not easy to say; unless it is such as any one may easily collect from the writings of Paul."—If in the days of Eusebius, the succession of pastors in the churches, founded by the apostles, was so uncertain, these successions must now be much more uncertain. Nevertheless, as, in Eusebius' time, the authority of the ministry was not called in question, on account of the intrusions of pastors into particular churches without due warrant, so it can as little be called in question now on that account, in regard it is nowhere promised in Scripture, that the succession of pastors should be uninterrupted.

MACKNIGHT.



3 Thou therefore endure <sup>e</sup> hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man that warreth <sup>f</sup> entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

5 And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

6 The husbandman <sup>g</sup> that labor-eth must be first partaker of the fruits.

7 Consider <sup>h</sup> what I say; and the <sup>i</sup> Lord give thee understanding in all things.

8 Remember that <sup>j</sup> Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel:

9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil-doer, *even* unto <sup>k</sup> bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

10 Therefore I endure all things for the <sup>l</sup> elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

11 *It is* a faithful saying: For if <sup>m</sup> we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*:

12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny <sup>n</sup> *him*, he also will deny us:

e c. 4:5. f 1 Co. 9:25,26. g or, laboring first, must be partaker.

the ministry of the Gospel, v. 2. and ordain them, lodge the Gospel as a trust in their hands, and so commit to them the things he had heard. Two things he must have an eye to in ordaining ministers; their fidelity or integrity, Commit them to *faithful men*; and their ministerial ability. They must not only be knowing themselves, but be able and apt to teach others also; must aim at the honor of God and Christ, and the welfare of souls.

11. He must *endure hardness*, v. 3. *Thou therefore, &c.* All Christians, but especially ministers, *are soldiers of Jesus Christ*; they fight under his banner, in his cause, and against his enemies, He is their Captain, Heb. 2: 10. They must approve themselves good soldiers, faithful, resolute, and persevering, till *they are made more than con-*

querors, through Him that loved them, Rom. 8: 37. They must endure hardness; expect it, count on it in this world; endure and accustom themselves to it, and persevere in it.

III. He must not entangle himself in the affairs of this world, v. 4. A soldier, when enlisted, leaves his calling, to attend his captain's orders. If we have given up ourselves to be Christ's soldiers, we must sit loose to this world; and though we must employ ourselves in the affairs of this life while here, yet we must not entangle ourselves with those affairs, so as by them to be diverted and drawn aside from our duty to God, and the great concerns of our Christianity.

IV. We must see to it, that in warring our spiritual warfare we go by rule, observe the laws of war, v. 5. we cannot expect the prize unless we do. Observe here, A Christian is to strive for masteries; he must aim at mastering his own lusts and corruptions. Those who do so, shall be crowned at last, after a complete victory.

V. We must be willing to wait for a recompense, v. 6. It should be read, *The husbandman laboring first, must partake of the fruits*, as appears by comparing it with Jam. 5:7. If we would be partakers of the fruits, we must labor; if we would gain the prize, we must run the race; we must do the will of God, before we receive the promises, for which reason we have need of patience, Heb. 10: 36.

Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things, v. 7. Observe, God gives understanding. The most intelligent men need more and more of this gift. If He who gave the revelation in the Word, does not give the understanding in the heart, we are nothing. Together with our prayers for others, that the Lord would give them understanding in all things, we must exhort and stir them up to consider what we say, for consideration is the way to understand, remember, and practise, what we hear or read.

V. 8—13. 1. To encourage Timothy in suffering, the apostle puts him in mind of the resurrection of Christ, v. 8. This is the great proof of his divine mission, and a great confirmation of the truth of the Christian religion; therefore the consideration of it should make us faithful to our Christian profession, and particularly encourage us in suffering for it. Let suffering saints remember this.

Observe, We are to look to Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, Heb. 12: 2. The incarnation and resurrection of Jesus Christ, heartily believed and rightly con-

sidered, will support a Christian under all sufferings in the present life.

II. Another thing to encourage him was, that he had Paul for an example, v. 9. Paul was a man who did good, and yet suffered as an evil-doer; we must not think it strange, in this world, if the best of men meet with the worst of treatment; but this was his comfort, *that the Word of God is not bound*. Persecuting powers may silence ministers, and restrain them, but they cannot hinder the operation of the Word of God upon men's hearts and consciences. This also might encourage Timothy.

Here we see the good apostle's treatment in the world; how he suffered trouble under pretence and color of an evil-doer, as Christ, John 18: 30. He suffered trouble unto bonds, and afterward resisted unto blood, striving against sin, Heb. 12: 2. Yet he endured for the elect's sake, v. 10. Observe, Good ministers should encourage themselves in the hardest services and sufferings, with this, that God will certainly bring good to his church, and benefit to his elect, out of them; *that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus*. Next to our own salvation, we should be willing to do and suffer anything, to promote the salvation of others.

Observe, further, The elect are designed to obtain salvation, 1 Thess. 5:9. and this is in Christ Jesus, in Him as the Fountain, the Purchaser, and the Giver, of it; and it is accompanied with eternal glory; there is no salvation in Christ Jesus without it. Lastly, The sufferings of our apostle were for the elect's sake, for their confirmation and encouragement.

III. Another thing with which he encourages Timothy, is, the prospect of a future state.

1. Those who faithfully adhere to Christ, and to his truths and ways, whatever it costs them, will certainly have the advantage of it in another world, v. 11. If, in conformity to Christ, we be dead to this world, we shall go to live with Him in a better world, to be for ever with Him. Nay, though we be called to suffer for Him, we shall not lose by that. They who *suffer for Christ* on earth, shall reign with Christ in heaven, v. 12.

2. It is at our peril if we prove unfaithful to Him; *If we deny Him, He also will deny us*, Matt. 10: 33. And that man must needs be for ever miserable, whom Christ disowns at last.

This will certainly be the issue, whether we believe it or no, v. 13. He is faithful to his threatenings, faithful to his promises; neither one nor the other shall fail to the

V. 3.—7. Timothy was again called on to consider himself, as 'a good soldier of Christ.' (Notes, 1 Tim. 1:18—20. 6:11,12.) Having enlisted under his banner, he was bound to follow Him.—(4) *Entangleth, &c.*—It is plain from the apostle's own example, that ministers may, on some occasions, earn their bread by labor; but this widely differs from seeking to grow rich by trade, or such employments as engross the mind and time, and introduce them into such connexions, and involve them in so many pecuniary engagements, as greatly endanger their own characters, and the honor of the Gospel. (Marg. Ref. k—m.)—In the public games, also, the man who strove for mastery was not crowned victor, unless the contest had been managed according to the prescribed rules; it therefore behoved Timothy and his brethren, to regulate their diligence and earnestness by the Word of God, otherwise they could not expect the conqueror's crown. And as the husbandman must 'first labor,' before he partakes of the fruits of the field, so they must *first* diligently and patiently execute their ministry, before they received the gracious recompense. This is the most obvious meaning of the verse; but it may signify, that the laboring husbandman must *first* be supported by the fruits of the earth, or he cannot perform his work; nor can the office of the ministry be duly exercised, except by those who live by faith in Christ themselves, as well as preach Him to others. Timothy ought therefore well to consider these illustrations, and the Lord would give him understanding in all things pertaining to his work and circumstances.

(3.) *Endure, &c.* 'The hardships endured by Roman soldiers were very great. Josephus says, "a Roman foot-soldier is but very little different from a beast of burdea." Adam estimates the load they usually carried as amounting to 60 lbs. weight, besides their arms, which were very heavy.' HENRY, *abr.*—The commentators aptly compare 1 Tim. 1:1, 18, and 6:12. But away are the duties of the soldier, besides fighting; and when we take the admonition, e. 1:3. (*be thou partaker with me, &c.*) in conjunction with this, we shall see that the apostle here adverts to the labors of propagating as well as defending the Gospel.' BL.

(6.) The husbandman must first labor and then partake. So Doddr. (and others.) who remarks, also: 'it was entirely to the apostle's purpose to remind Timothy, that the labor of the husbandman must precede the harvest; but whether he was to receive these fruits first, was not the point in question.'

V. 8—13. Amidst all dangers and sufferings, it behoved Timothy to 'remember Jesus Christ,' the promised Savior, 'of the seed of David, who had been raised from the dead.' This, which is literal, seems the proper translation, for Timothy was not only called on to remember, and preach to others, the resurrection of Jesus, but all the sufferings which preceded this great event, his conduct under them, and the glorious termination of them, in his exaltation as our Prince and Savior. (Marg. Ref. l—v.—Notes, Heb. 12:2, 3.) This could not fail to suggest proper motives, and encouragements, to perseverance and constancy. S.

(8.) *My gospel.* 'It was reported by some that the gospel according to Luke, was commonly meant by Paul, when writing as concerning a gospel of his own, he saith, *according to my gospel.*' [Eusebius, in Macknight.] 'This, however, could not be his meaning, in every instance where he useth that expression; for we find it in some of his epistles, which were written before Luke's gospel was published.' See Rom. 2:16. 15:25.

(9.) 'The mention of bonds, as a malefactor, would imply the apostle's being bound hand and feet, in a close dungeon, a very different condition from that of his first imprisonment.' HENRY, *abr.*—*But the Word of God is not bound.* 'Many of my brethren are at liberty to preach publicly, though I am not; and that is my comfort and yours.' Ed.

(11.) 'Some refer this to the concluding clause of the former verse; but it seems much more reasonable to connect it with what follows, as, generally speaking, this phrase is introductory to the weighty sentence it is intended to confirm. Tillotson thinks, this was a celebrated saying among Christians, either derived by tradition from Christ, or some of the apostles, and it had so powerful a tendency to keep them steady to their religion, that it is no wonder it was in frequent use.' DODDR.



13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

[Practical Observations.]

14 Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness:

17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus;

18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already: and overthrow the faith of some.

[Practical Observations.]

19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this

o Ro. 3:3.	s 2 Pe. 1:10.	w 1 Co. 15:12.
p Nu. 23:19.	t Mat. 13:52.	x Pr. 10:25.
q 2 Pe. 1:13.	u or, gangrene.	y or, steady.
r Tit. 3:9,10.	v 1 Ti. 6:21.	

ground, no not the least jot or tittle of them.

Observe, (1.) Our being dead with Christ, precedes our living with Him, and is connected with it, the one is in order to the other; so our suffering for Him is the way to reign with Him, Matt. 19:28. (2.) This is a faithful saying, and may be depended on, and ought to be believed. But, (3.) If we deny Him, out of fear, or shame, or for the sake of some temporal advantage, He will deny and disown us; and will not deny Himself, but will continue faithful to his

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—13. Both the falls of some, and the good examples of others, should excite us to 'be strong in the grace of Christ,' and zealous in his cause.—None ought to be chosen or appointed to the sacred ministry, who are not 'faithful men, and able to instruct others also;' and all concerned in this most important trust should be careful, to whom they commit the 'stewardship of the mysteries of Christ;' for if they wilfully, negligently, or partially choose or ordain improper persons, they will be condemned for it 'before many witnesses,' however they here concealed their motives, or excused their conduct. 1 Tim. 5:21, 22.—We should also labor in patience and hope, assured 'that in due season we shall reap, if we faint not,' without vainly expecting to receive our reward, till we have given proof of our persevering diligence. Gal. 6:6—10.—In all our hardships, conflicts, and temptations, we must 'remember the Lord Jesus,' and meditate daily on his sufferings, his resurrection, and his subsequent glory. And if 'the mind of Christ' be in us, we shall be willing 'to endure all things for the elect's sake,' and to promote the salvation and eternal glory of those chosen ones, for whom Christ willingly laid down his life.

SCOTT.

PRACT. OBS. V. 14—18. Ministers must 'charge' their flocks 'before the Lord,' with great solemnity and earnestness, 'not to strive about words,' or the *Shibboleths* of a party, Judg. 12:1—7, which tend to no profit, but rather 'to the subverting of the hearers.' In performing this part of our duty, we shall be likely to give much offence; for eager controversy is exceedingly agreeable to the vitiated taste of the carnal mind, which loaths plain, practical instruction. We should there-

(13.) *If we believe not.* 'If we are unfaithful. So I think it should be rendered; and so the words will farther imply, that, whatever we lose by our unfaithfulness, in whatever degree it appears, it is no argument of any unfaithfulness in Him; as his promises are made to faithful servants, and fair warning is given to persons of a different character.' DODDR.—'The unfaithfulness here spoken of, seems to have been, denying the Christian religion, in the times of persecution, in order to avoid suffering.' BLOOMF.—'He cannot deny Himself.' 'He cannot act contrary to his own nature; which consists in this, that it is true,—is essential truth. He may deny us; but He cannot deny Himself, cannot deny that He is Christ, and that the things He has taught us are true.—He cannot,—it is altogether foreign from Him.' ROSENM.

V. 14—18. Timothy was expressly required to remind Christians and ministers of the important practical truths before stated; and to 'charge them' most solemnly, 'as in the presence of the Lord,' not to strive and dispute about words, and those frivolous matters which the love of controversy magnified into important distinctions. These disputes could answer no good purpose; but, on the contrary, they tended to 'subvert the hearers,' perplexing them about empty speculations, feeding their self-conceit and contempt of others, and drawing them off from the simplicity of faith and obedience. (Marg. Ref. n—r.) In this ex-

pression [dividing the word] the apostle is supposed, by some, to allude to the skill, used by the priests and Levites, in cutting in pieces the victims, and dividing them according to the legal prescriptions, and by others to refer to the conduct of those, who carve for a large company, and are peculiarly careful that no one wants what is suitable for him.

V. 14—18. Having thus encouraged Timothy to suffer, he comes in the next place to direct him in his work.

I. He must make it his business, to edify those who were under his charge, to put them in remembrance of those things which they did already know; charging them that they strive not about words. Observe, Those that are disposed to strive, commonly strive about matters of very small moment, and to no profit. Strifes of words are very destructive to the things of God. If people did but consider, of what little use most of the controversies in religion are, they would not be so zealous in their strifes of words, drawing persons away from the great things of God, and occasioning unchristian heats and animosities, by which truth is often in danger of being lost.

Study to show thyself approved unto God, v. 15. Observe, The care of ministers must be, to approve themselves unto God, to be accepted of Him, and to show that they are so approved unto God. In order thereto, there must be constant care and industry; those who mind their business, and keep to their work, are workmen that need not be ashamed. And what is their work? It is rightly to divide the Word of truth. Not to invent a new Gospel, but rightly to divide the Gospel that is committed to their trust: to speak terror to those to whom terror belongs, comfort to whom comfort; to give every one their portion in due season, Matt. 24:25.

Observe here, 1. The Word which ministers preach, is the Word of truth, for the Author of it is the God of truth. 2. It requires great wisdom, study, and care, to divide this Word of truth rightly; Timothy must study in order to do this well.

II. He must take heed of that which would be a hindrance to him in his work, v. 16. The heretics, who boasted of their notions and their arguments, thought their performances such as might recommend

themselves; but the apostle calls them *profane and vain babblings*; when once men take to be fond of such, they will increase unto more ungodliness; when errors or heresies come into the church, the infecting of one often proves the infecting of many, or the infecting of the same person with one error, often proves the infecting of him with many errors. The apostle mentions some who had lately advanced erroneous doctrines. He names them, by which he brands them, to their perpetual infamy, and warns all people against hearkening to them; they have erred concerning one of the fundamental articles of the Christian religion, which is truth. The resurrection of the dead is one of the great doctrines of Christ. Now see the subtlety of the serpent and the serpent's seed. They did not deny the resurrection, but put a corrupt interpretation on that true doctrine, saying, the resurrection is past already; that what Christ spake concerning the resurrection, is to be understood mystically and by way of allegory, that it must be meant of a spiritual resurrection only. It is true, there is a spiritual resurrection, but from thence to infer that there will not be a true and real resurrection of the body at the last day, is to dash one truth of Christ in pieces against another. By this they overthrew the faith of some, took them off from the belief of the resurrection of the dead; and if there be no resurrection of the dead, no future state, no recompense of our services and sufferings in another world, we are of all men the most miserable, 1 Cor. 15:19. What takes away the doctrine of a future state, overthrows the faith of Christians. The apostle had largely disproved this error, 1 Cor. 15, and therefore does not here enter into the arguments against it.

V. 19—21. Here, amid the errors and heresies that both infect and infest the church, we are both comforted and admonished.

It may be a great comfort to us, that the unbelief of men cannot make the promise of God of none effect. Though the faith of

fore 'study to show ourselves approved unto God,' and to obtain his seal to our ministry; we should bestow pains to become *skilful*, as well as *faithful* preachers; 'workmen that need not be ashamed,' instructors, who 'know how rightly to divide the Word of truth,' and to give every man the portion which belongs to him, with close application to his heart and conscience. Mat. 24:45—51. This will lead us to a distance from 'profane and vain babblings, which continually increase to more ungodliness;' for many a specious error is allowed, without notice, to be privily brought in among professed Christians, which gradually eats like a gangrene, and destroys 'the power of godliness,' in an imperceptible manner. 1 Cor. 15:31—34. Gal. 2:1—5. 5:7—12. 2 Pet. 2:1—3.—Scarcely anything has done more mischief within the church, and among those who retain a regard for the Scriptures, than the manner of 'Hymeneus and Philetus,' in allegorizing away its plain doctrines and precepts, and so causing them to evaporate in some visionary, mystical notion. This some call *spiritualizing*; but it well answers the purpose of deceivers, though often used by well meaning, injudicious persons. It excites the wonder of the ignorant, and the disgust of rational men; and thus it takes off the one from the substantial part of religion, to amuse themselves with fancies, and it increases the prejudices of the other against evangelical truth. Nothing can be so crude, so foolish, or so evidently erroneous, but it will subvert the temporary faith of some professors of the Gospel; for of all the numberless delusions, which have been or may be invented, there is not one, but is more congenial to the pride and lusts of men, than the simple truths of the Holy Scriptures. (Note, John, 8:41—47.) SCOTT.

(15.) *Rightly dividing, &c.* 'Let him pass over nothing that should be said, let him add nothing of his own; let him mutilate, tear in pieces, and wrest nothing; finally, let him diligently consider, what the hearers are capable of receiving, and what conduces to edification.' BEZA. SC. (15.) *Rightly dividing.* Some think, (as above,) the allusion is to the Jewish priest or Levite, in dissecting the victim, and separating aright the parts; others, as DODDR. and T. H. HORNE, to the ploughman, in making a straight and even furrow.

(17.) *Canker.* 'Not a cancer, but something very like it.' ROSENM. GANGRENE. MACKN. and DODDR.—Incipient mortification. CASTELL, in Bloomfield; by some, says the latter, called St. Anthony's fire. Id.

V. 19. Some have interpreted this of the doctrine of the resurrection, and others of election; but Christ Himself, or the promise of eternal life to every one who believeth in Him, is doubtless 'the Foundation of God,' which the apostle meant. According to the ancient custom, of sealing the foundation stones of magnificent structures, and en-



seal, The Lord <sup>z</sup> knoweth them that are his. . . And, Let <sup>a</sup> every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels <sup>b</sup> of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor.

21 If <sup>c</sup> a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared <sup>d</sup> unto every good work.

22 Flee <sup>e</sup> also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call <sup>f</sup> on the Lord out of a pure heart.

23 But foolish and unlearned questions <sup>g</sup> avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, <sup>h</sup> patient,

25 In meekness <sup>i</sup> instructing those that oppose themselves; if God <sup>k</sup> peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging <sup>l</sup> of the truth;

26 And <sup>m</sup> that they may recover themselves out of the snare <sup>n</sup> of the devil, who are <sup>o</sup> taken captive by him at his will.

z Na. 1:7.  
Jn. 10:14, 27.  
a Ps. 97:10.  
b Ro. 9:21.  
c Je. 15:19.  
d e. 3:17.

e Ec. 11:9, 10.  
f He. 12:14.  
g 1 Co. 1:2.  
h ver. 16.  
i or, forbearing.  
j Ga. 6:1.

k Ac. 8:22.  
l Tit. 1:1.  
m anake.  
n 1 Pt. 3:7.  
o alive.

some be overthrown, yet the foundation of God standeth sure, v. 19. It is not possible they should deceive the elect. Or it may be meant of the truth itself, which they impugn; that stands firm. The prophets and apostles, that is; the doctrines of the Old and New Test. are still firm. The motto of the seal by which they are ratified is, on one side, *The Lord knoweth them that are his.*

PRACT. OBS. V. 19—26. Amidst all heresies, schisms, and apostasies, 'the Foundation of the Lord standeth sure.' Secure and happy are they who build on it by an obedient faith! These are the 'vessels of gold and silver,' which the Lord has 'before prepared unto glory,' whom He has 'sanctified, and made meet for his own use, and ready for every good work;' and when 'the vessels of dishonor' shall be consigned to destruction, these will be 'filled with all the fulness of God.' Let us then, in dependence on the promises of God, and diligent attendance on every mean of grace, 'cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit;' let young Christians and ministers 'see youthful lusts;' let all 'follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with all them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart;' and let the frequent repetitions of the apostle, teach us the immense importance of avoiding foolish, curious, and frivolous questions, and whatever can produce strifes and angry controversies. Alas! His predilection for controversy, both in teachers and hearers of the Gospel, is one grand hindrance to our 'recovering sinners out of the snare of the devil;' for, to exasperate opposers is by no means the way to convince them.—The artful enemy of our souls knows how to bait his hook and spread his net for men, according to their different tastes, humors, and situations. They do not suspect

graving some inscription on them; this mystical Foundation had the seal of God, and a double inscription, upon it. 'The Lord knoweth them that are his.' This is supposed, by some, to refer to the words of Moses, concerning Aaron and himself, in the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Num. 16:5.

(19.) *Foundation.* 'The religion which has God for its Author. This foundation stands firm. The sense is; certain false teachers would overthrow the faith of some, but the whole edifice, the whole church, they can never overthrow, Mat. 16:18. And this best agrees (respondet) with what follows, having this seal, &c.' ROSENA.—So Bloomfield; except that he thinks the doctrine of the resurrection is particularly had in view. Ep.—*Seal.* 'Inscription. The expression is here used, with peculiar propriety, in allusion to the custom of engraving on stones, laid in the foundation of buildings, the names of persons by whom, and the purposes for which, the structure is raised. Nothing can have a greater tendency to encourage the hope, and at the same time engage the obedience of Christians, than this double inscription.' DODD.

V. 20—22. Still further to show, that the heresies and apostasies of many professed Christians, were entirely consistent with the engagements of God by his covenant to true believers, the apostle observed, that in a great house, the habitation of some wealthy person, there were not only 'vessels of gold and of silver,' but others of baser materials;

This is for our comfort: the Lord knows them that are his; knows them, that is, owns them; so knows them, that He will never lose them, Ps. 1:6. On the other side, the motto speaks our duty; *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*

Those who would have the comfort of the privilege, must make conscience of the duty. If the name of Christ be called upon us, we must depart from iniquity, else He will not own us, Mat. 7:22. Observe, Though the faith of some is overthrown, yet others keep their integrity, and hold it fast, v. 20. If some in that great house, the church of Christ, are like vessels of wood and earth, vessels of dishonor, yet some, at the same time, are vessels of honor, vessels of gold and silver, sanctified and meet for the Master's use. When discouraged by the badness of some, we must encourage ourselves by the consideration of the goodness of others. Now we should see to it that we be vessels of honor: we must purge ourselves from these corrupt opinions, that we may be sanctified for our Master's use.

Observe, Some dishonor the church by their corrupt opinions and wicked lives; others honor and credit it by their exemplary conversation. A man must purge himself from these before he can be a vessel of honor, or meet for his Master's use. Sanctification in the heart is our preparation for every good work. The tree must be made good, then the fruit will be good.

V. 22—26. 1. Timothy must beware of youthful lusts, v. 22. though holy and very much mortified to the world, yet Paul thought it necessary to caution him against youthful lusts. The lusts of the flesh are youthful lusts, which young people must carefully watch against, and the best must not be secure. He prescribes an excellent remedy against youthful lusts; *Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, &c.* Observe,

1. Youthful lusts are very dangerous, for which reason even hopeful young people should be warned of them, for they war against the soul, 1 Pet. 2:11. 2. The exciting of our graces will be the extinguishing of our corruptions. Righteousness, and faith, and love, will be excellent antidotes against youthful lusts. Holy love will cure impure lust. *Follow peace with them that call*

on the Lord. The keeping up of the communion of saints, will take us off from all fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness. See the character of Christians; they are such as call on the Lord Jesus Christ, out of a pure heart. Observe, Christ is to be prayed to. It is the character of all Christians; that they call upon Him; but our prayers to God and Christ are not acceptable or successful, except they come out of a pure heart.

II. He cautions him against contention, and, to prevent that, v. 23. cautions him against foolish and unlearned questions, that tend to no benefit, strifes of words. It is very remarkable how often, and with what seriousness, the apostle cautions Timothy against disputes in religion; which surely was not without some such design as this, to show us that religion consists more in believing and practising what God requires, than in subtle disputes.

Now the servant of the Lord must not strive, v. 24. Nothing worse becomes the servant of the Lord Jesus, (who Himself did not strive or cry, Mat. 12:19. but was a pattern of meekness, and mildness, and gentleness to all,) than strife and contention.

The servant of the Lord must be gentle to all men, and thereby show that he is himself subject to the commanding power of that holy religion which he is employed in preaching and propagating; apt to teach. Those are unapt to teach, who are apt to strive, and are fierce and froward. Ministers must be patient, bearing with evil, and in meekness instructing, v. 25. not only those who subject themselves, but those who oppose themselves. Observe,

Instruction is the scripture-method of dealing with the erroneous, which is more likely to convince them of their errors than fire and fagot; he does not bid us kill their bodies, under pretence of saving their souls. Such as oppose themselves, are to be instructed in meekness, for our Lord is meek and lowly, Mat. 11:29. and this agrees well with the character of the servant of the Lord, v. 24.

This is the way to convey truth in its light and power, and to overcome evil with good, Rom. 12:21. That which ministers must have in their eyes, in instructing those who oppose themselves, must be their recovery;

the deception, till they have swallowed the bait, or are caught in the net; then they are 'taken captive by him at his will,' and they sometimes appear under a kind of necessity of proceeding in their ruinous courses. Yet some are 'recovered out of the snare;' for when 'God gives them repentance,' they come to themselves, they 'acknowledge the truth,' they confess their guilt; they cry for mercy and deliverance, they obtain pardon and grace; they are set at liberty, and 'walk in newness of life;' and Satan can never more regain his dominion over them. There is no 'peradventure,' in respect of the readiness of God to pardon those who do repent, but we cannot tell whether He will 'give repentance' to those who still continue to oppose his will; yet, as He sometimes grants it even to the most obstinate of his enemies, it is our duty to hope and pray for them, and 'in meekness to instruct them,' as long as we have the opportunity. And if any feel themselves 'taken captive by Satan,' and long for deliverance; let them remember, that they can never 'recover themselves out of the snare of the devil,' except by 'acknowledging the truth of God' in the Gospel: that this they never can do without repentance; that repentance is the gift of God; and finally, that they must ask it of Him by earnest, persevering prayer.

SCOTT. The former for honorable, and the other for meaner uses. In like manner, in the visible church, not only true Christians and faithful ministers were found, as willing instruments in the honorable work of glorifying God, and promoting the good of men, but persons also of a different character, whose hypocrisy and iniquity were overruled, contrary to their intentions, to fulfil his righteous purposes, though to their own ruin and 'everlasting contempt.' (Notes, Mat. 13:24—30, 36—43, 47—50, 22:11—14, 25:1—4. Jn. 15:2, 6—8. 1 Cor. 11:17—22. 1 Jn. 2:18, 19.) If then any man, but especially a minister of the Gospel, carefully 'purified himself from these' evil things, and simply adhered to the truth and will of God, he would be 'a vessel of honor, sanctified and prepared' for the service of Christ, and ready to be his willing instrument 'in every good work.'

(22.) *Youthful lusts.* 'Sensual pleasure, or rashness, contention, pride, and vainglory.' DODD.—The age at which Timothy now was (about 38) is commonly remarked to be the time of life when men are most susceptible of ambition, pride, &c. and less of sensual pleasure. Ep. V. 23—26. The apostle saw it necessary again to caution his beloved Timothy, against 'foolish and unlearned questions;' such curious, presumptuous, or useless questions, as often appear to spring from a depth of discernment, reflection, and erudition; but which in fact are suggested by folly, and a want of solid acquaintance with the majesty of



## CHAP. III.

1 He adviseth him of the times to come, 6 describeth the enemies of the truth, 10 propoundeth unto him his own example, 16 and commendeth the Holy Scriptures.

**T**HIS know also, that <sup>a</sup> in the last days perilous times shall come.

<sup>2</sup> For <sup>b</sup> men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

<sup>3</sup> Without natural affection, truce-breakers, <sup>c</sup> false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

<sup>4</sup> Traitors, heady, high-minded, <sup>e</sup> lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God ;

<sup>5</sup> Having <sup>f</sup> a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof : from such turn away.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Ti. 4:1, 2 Pe. 3:3, 1 Jn. 2:13, Jude 17:13. <sup>b</sup> Ro. 1:29-31. <sup>c</sup> or, malefactors. <sup>d</sup> 2 Pe. 2:10, &c. <sup>e</sup> Phi. 3:19. <sup>f</sup> Tit. 1:16.

If God, peradventure, will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. Observe,

Repentance is God's gift, a gift with a peradventure, in the case of those who oppose themselves ; and, therefore, though we are not to despair of the grace of God, yet we must take heed of presuming on it. To the acknowledging of the truth. The same God who gives us the discovery of the truth, does, by his grace, bring us to the acknowledging of it, otherwise our hearts would continue in rebellion against it. Thus sinners recover themselves out of the snare of the devil. And see here, v. 26. the misery of sinners, and the happiness of those who repent ; sinners are in the snare of the devil, as fishes taken in an evil net, and as birds caught in a snare ; they are slaves to him who is but a slave and vassal himself.

Those who repent are as a bird escaped out of the snare ; the snare is broken, and they are free ; and the greater the danger, the greater the deliverance. When sinners repent, they who before were led captive by the devil at his will, come to be led into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and

have their wills melted into the will of the Lord Jesus. The good Lord recover us all out of the snare !

CHAP. III. V. 1-5. Timothy must not think it strange, if there were in the church bad men ; for the net of the Gospel was to enclose both good fish and bad, Mat. 13: 47, 48. and Christ had foretold, Mat. 24. that there would come seducers.

Even in gold ore there will be dross, and a great deal of chaff among the wheat when it lies on the floor. Timothy must know that, in the last days, v. 1. in gospel-times, there would come perilous times, difficult times ; perilous times for such as have the form of godliness, v. 5. shall be corrupt and wicked, and do great damage to the church. Note, Sin makes the times perilous. A general corruption of manners, and of the tempers of men, makes the times dangerous, hard to keep our integrity in.

The coming of perilous times is an evidence of the truth of scripture-predictions ; this we are all concerned to know, believe, and consider, that we may not be surprised when we see the times perilous ; This know also.

Then he tells Timothy what would be the occasion of making these times perilous, or what shall be the marks and signs, whereby these times may be known, v. 2. and following verses.

1. Self-love will make the times perilous ; it is meant of an irregular, sinful self-love. Men love their carnal selves better than their spiritual selves ; love to gratify their own lusts, and make provision for them, more than to please God and do their duty. Instead of Christian charity, which takes care for the good of others, they will mind themselves only, and prefer their own gratification before the church's edification.

2. Covetousness. When every man is for what he can get, and keeping what he has, this makes men dangerous to one another.

3. Pride and vainglory make the times perilous. When men, being proud of themselves, are boasters before men whom they despise, and blasphemers of God, and of his name ; when men do not fear God, they will not regard man, and so vice versa.

4. When children are disobedient to their parents, and break through both in duty and gratitude, and frequently in interest, that makes the times perilous ; for what wickedness will they stick at, who will abuse their own parents, and rebel against them ?

5. Unthankfulness and unholiness make the times perilous, and commonly go together. Why are men unholy, and without the fear of God, but that they are unthankful for the mercies of God ? Unthankful, and impure, defiled with fleshly lusts ; we abuse God's gifts, if we make them the food and fuel of our lusts.

6. The times are perilous when men will not be held by the bonds either of nature or common honesty, v. 3. See what a corruption of nature sin is ; how it deprives men even of that which nature has implanted in them for the support of their own kind. Those who will not be bound by natural affection, no marvel that they will not be bound by the most solemn leagues and covenants. Again, the times are perilous when men are false accusers, and have no regard to the good name of others, or to the religious obligations of an oath, but think themselves at liberty to say and do what they please, Ps. 12: 4.

7. When men have no government of themselves, their appetites, and passions ; and therefore are like a city that is broken down, and are soon fired, on the least provocation.

8. When that which is good, and ought to be honored, is generally despised, and looked upon with contempt ; as persecutors look on good people, though more excellent than their neighbors.

9. When men are generally treacherous, wilful, and haughty, v. 4. when men are traitors, heady, high-minded. Our Savior has foretold, that the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son, Mat. 10: 21. and those are the worst sort of traitors. When men are petulant and puffed up, carrying it scornfully to all about them, and when this temper generally prevails, then the times are perilous.

10. When men are generally lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God. When there are more epicures than true Christians, then the times are bad indeed ; that is a carnal mind, and full of enmity against Him,

God, with man's true condition and character, and with other subjects of the highest importance. . . . Whatever Jewish or Gentile disputers did, 'the servant of the Lord must not strive' in this manner, or with such weapons. 2 Cor. 10:1-6.

(26.) That they may recover, &c.] *Adolescentia cupiditates defervissent.* 'The word properly signifies, to awake from a deep sleep, or from a fit of intoxication, and refers to an artifice of fowlers, to scatter seeds impregnated with some drugs, intended to lay birds asleep, that they might [may?] draw the net over them with the greater security.' Doddr. from *Elser*.

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1-5. The apostle foresaw, and foretold to Timothy, and so to the church in that and in all future generations, that 'in the last days,' or under the Christian dispensation, chiefly in the latter ages, 'perilous' or grievous times would arrive, in which it would be extremely difficult for Christians to escape the contagion of bad examples and corrupt principles, or for ministers to preach the unadulterated truth of the Gospel ; and in which those who retained their integrity would be exposed to the hatred and persecution of their professed brethren.—We need not suppose, that the same individuals would answer to every part of this description ; but men would arise, called Christians, who would be guilty of these vices, some being more notorious in one way, and some in another, even as the heathens were, and differing from them only in name. (Note, Rom. 1:28-32.)—Such persons have always been found within the visible church, in every place, and through all succeeding ages hitherto, and some even among those who have most zealously contended for the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel. Many such were soon perceived in the primitive church, but things grew 'worse and worse' (13), till the grand antichristian apostasy was produced. The selfishness, enormous covetousness, 'high swelling words of vanity,' and blasphemous claims and titles of the church of Rome, have generally been supposed to be pointed at, in an especial manner. 2 Thes. 2:3-12. The practice of that church, in counselling children to 'disobey their parents,' and parents to withdraw their natural affection from their children, in order the more readily to replenish religious houses with monks and nuns ; their disregard of the most solemn leagues and covenants, and want of all faith and mercy towards those whom they falsely accused of heresy, their enmity against true Christians, the licentiousness countenanced by indulgencies and dispensations, their fierce persecutions, their arrogant conduct towards princes and emperors, have certainly exceeded every other corruption of Christianity which has yet appeared ; nevertheless, they have always maintained, and been very exact and pompous in their 'form of godliness.'—It is self-evident, that the apostle foretells what the state of things would be in the visible church, and among the professors and

ministers of Christianity. No doubt, the Jews, just before the destruction of Jerusalem, answered in many things to the description here given, and so do numbers of nominal protestant Christians at this day. There was, however, no occasion to warn Timothy to 'turn away from' persecuting Jews ; but 'the mystery of iniquity was already working,' and it was necessary for faithful ministers to protest against it, in the most decided manner. (3) Without natural affection.] 'The Roman clergy, being forbidden to marry, can neither have wives nor children openly ; so they are without the affections natural to mankind ; at least they dare not avow them.' Mackn. *False accusers.*] The persons intended are the ministers, and as it were the mouth of the grand 'accuser of the brethren,' and the successors of the traitor Judas. Turn away.] 'Shun with decision, and marked aversion.' Here only. Sc.

(2.) Men shall be, &c.] 'The word men includes both teachers and people.' Mackn.—'He speaks only of Christians.' Bloomr.—'I choose to interpret the words of those who not only professed Christianity, but pretended to teach it.' Donn.—who, followed by Bloomfield, refers to *Vitringa*, as proving that there was a great alteration in the face of the Christian church, between the time of Nero and Trajan, within which period, he [*Vitringa*] apprehends great numbers of professors to have departed from the strictness of Christian morals, as well as the purity of the faith.—Mackn. understands the character given of these men here, and onward through v. 4. as descriptive of 'the Romish clergy.'—*Lovers of their own selves.*] Yet was ever a person excommunicated from the church for selfishness ? That modern civilization is founded too much on the lower, animal, or selfish propensities, is an obvious truth, and Paul says, v. 12. they that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer more or less of persecution in the world ; a truth which will also be acknowledged by all who have attempted to carry out Christ's principles in everything ;—though there is a sort of half-way covenant, an expediency morality, a jesuitical smoothness, in which some Christians contrive to slip along easily, remaining, to spectators, very good friends both of God and mammon. Examined however more closely, their whole conduct will be seen to be based on a pennywise selfishness, concealed perhaps even to themselves. And indeed, 'much of the honorable practice of the world, [they love and imitate.] rests on the substratum of selfishness ; society is held together in the exercise of its relative virtues, mainly by the tie of reciprocal advantage ; that a man's own interest bound him to all those average equities which obtained in the neighborhood around him ; and in which, if he proved himself to be glaringly deficient, he would be abandoned by the respect, and the confidence, and the good will, of the people with whom he had to do. . . . And as even the homage rendered to integrity in the world, is due to the operation of selfishness . . . so man is ever prone to estimate the enormity



6 For of this sort are they <sup>g</sup> which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

8 Now as Jannes and <sup>h</sup> Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men <sup>i</sup> of corrupt minds, <sup>j</sup> reprobate concerning the faith.

9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

[Practical Observations.]

10 But thou hast <sup>k</sup> fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience,

11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at <sup>l</sup> Antioch, at <sup>m</sup> Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of *them* all <sup>n</sup> the Lord delivered me.

<sup>g</sup> Tit. 1:11. <sup>ment.</sup> <sup>l</sup> Ac. 13:45,50.  
<sup>h</sup> Ex. 7:11. <sup>k</sup> or, been a dili- <sup>m</sup> Ac. 14:5,6,19.  
<sup>i</sup> 1 Ti. 6:5. <sup>gent follower</sup> <sup>n</sup> Ps. 34:19.  
<sup>j</sup> or, of no judg. <sup>of.</sup>

which prefers anything before Him, especially such a sordid thing as carnal pleasure is.

11. All this notwithstanding, *all these have the form of godliness*, v. 5. are called by the Christian name, baptized into the Christian faith, make a show of religion; but, how plausible soever their form of godliness is, they deny the power of it.

Observe, here, (1.) Men may be very bad and wicked, under a profession of religion; they may be lovers of themselves, &c. yet have a form of godliness. (2.) A form of godliness is a very different thing from the power of it; men may have the one, and be wholly destitute of the other; yea, they deny it, at least practically, in their lives. (3.) From such, good Christians must withdraw themselves.

V. 6—9. Here Paul warns Timothy to take heed of certain seducers.

1. He shows how industrious they were to make proselytes, v. 6. they applied them-

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—9. The descent of a stone to the earth is not more natural, than fallen men's propensity to turn away from God; so that, whatever means are used to bring them to love Him and one another, the end will not be attained unless by the continual influence of his new-creating Spirit.—We need not, therefore, wonder, that, even 'in the last days,' under the fullest external revelation, which God has made to man, 'perilous times soon came;' and professed Christians became 'lovers of themselves,' lovers of money, of honor, 'and of pleasure, rather than lovers of God.' Our land at this day abounds with such nominal disciples of Christ, as are here described. Some are selfish and covetous; others proud boasters and blasphemers; many regardless of their duty to parents or children, relatives and rulers, being 'unthankful and unholy.' Very many are slanderous, treacherous, intemperate, licentious, profligate, 'fierce,' implacable, 'despisers of good men, traitors, heady, high-minded;' and who can number those, 'who are lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God?' Can any man seriously think, that these crimes are less abominable in men called Christians, than they were in heathens? Can any one doubt, but that they will be more terribly punished? In fact, in proportion to the zeal and exactness, with which 'the form of godliness' is retained, when 'the power of it' is denied, the more criminal and dangerous men become, and the more should they be avoided and protested against. For when any form or notion of religion is made a cloak, or an excuse, or a com-

of injustice by the degree in which he suffers from it . . . or to measure guilt by gain, to rate the criminality of injustice by the amount of its appropriations, making it an affair of product, rather than principle. It is the taint of selfishness, then, which has so marred and corrupted the moral sensibility of our world.' CHALMERS. Comp. note, Col. 3:5. Ed.

V. 6. *Creep, &c.* 'Insinuate themselves.' DONDR.—'The term may be best rendered, *wind their way into, wriggle themselves into.*—Though *creep and insinuate* are proper enough.' BLOOMF.—*Silly women.* 'Inconsiderable, of low rank, and mean understandings, yet easily inflamed with passionate zeal.' DONDR.—*Heinr.*, in *Bloomf.*, thinks, it applies chiefly to rich elderly women, who, after having past a life of sin, wished to attain something that should allay the stings of conscience, and reconcile them to themselves. ID.

V. 8. *Jannes and Jambres.* 'It is related in the *Gemara*, that these were those Egyptian magicians, who withstood Moses by their cunning [490]

selves to particular persons, visited them in their houses, not daring to appear openly; for they that do evil, hate the light, John 3:20. And see what sort of people they made *proselytes* of; weak, *silly women*; and wicked, *laden with sins, and led away with divers lusts*; a foolish head and a filthy heart make persons, especially women, an easy prey to seducers.

2. He shows how far they were from coming to the knowledge of the truth, though they pretend to be *ever learning*, v. 7. In one sense we must all be ever learning, growing in knowledge, following on to know the Lord, pressing forward; but these were skeptics, giddy and unstable, who were forward to imbibe every new notion, under pretence of advancement in knowledge, but never came to a right understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus.

3. He foretells the certain stop that should be put to their progress, v. 8, 9. comparing them to the Egyptian magicians who withstood Moses; their names are not met with in the Old Test. yet are found in some old Jewish writers. Moses came with a divine commission, to fetch Israel out of Egypt; these magicians opposed him, and thus those heretics *resisted the truth*, and, like them, were men of *corrupt minds*: men who had their understandings perverted, biassed, and prejudiced against the truth, and *reprobate concerning the faith*, very far from being true Christians; *but they shall proceed no further*; or not much further, as some read it. Observe,

Seducers seek for corners, and love obscurity; attack those least able to defend themselves, and in all ages are much alike, their characters the same, *men of corrupt minds, &c.* and their conduct much the same; they resist the truth, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses; and they will be alike in their disappointment.

Those who resist the truth are guilty of folly, yea, of egregious folly; for, though the spirit of error may be let loose for a time, God has it in a chain. Satan can deceive the nations and the churches no further and no longer than God will permit him; *their folly shall be manifest*; it shall appear that they are impostors, and every man shall abandon them.

V. 10—13. Here the apostle, to confirm Timothy in that way wherein he walked,

I. Sets before him his own example, which

Timothy had been an eyewitness of, having long attended Paul, v. 10. Timothy had known Paul,

1. In the doctrine he preached. Paul kept back nothing from his hearers, but declared to them the whole counsel of God, Acts 20:27. so that if it were not their own fault, they might fully know it.

2. In his conversation; his doctrine and manner of life; his manner of life was of a piece with his doctrine. *Those ministers* [if their doctrine is true] are likely to do good, and leave lasting fruits of their labors, whose manner of life agrees with their doctrine; as, on the contrary, those cannot expect to profit the people at all; that preach well and live ill.

3. Timothy fully knew the great thing Paul had in view, both in his preaching and in his conversation, *his purpose*; he fully knew Paul's good character, for he gave proofs of his faith, that is, of his integrity and fidelity, or his faith in Christ, his faith concerning another world, by which Paul lived, *his long-suffering* toward the churches to which he preached, and over which he presided, his charity toward all men, and his patience. These were graces Paul was eminent for, and Timothy knew it.

4. He knew he had suffered ill for doing well, v. 11. knew what care God had taken of him, and how *the Lord had delivered him*. When we know the afflictions of good people but in part, they are a temptation to us to decline the cause they suffer for; but when we *fully* know the afflictions, not only how they suffer, but how they are supported and comforted under their sufferings; then, instead of being discouraged, we shall be animated by them; especially considering that we are told before, that *all* must count on such things, v. 12. who will live godly in Christ Jesus, that is, according to the strict rules of the Christian religion.

The apostle's life was very exemplary for three things; for his *doctrine*, which was according to the will of God; for his *life*, which was agreeable to his doctrine; and for his *persecutions and sufferings*. Though his life was a life of great usefulness, yet it was a life of great sufferings, in which none, I believe, came nearer to their great Master. Here he mentions his persecutions and afflictions at *Antioch*, at *Iconium*, at *Lystra*, beside what he suffered elsewhere. The apostle mentions the Lord's delivering him out

penetration for wilful transgressions of the divine law, the danger becomes greater, than from men who openly cast off all regard to God. Hypocrisy, superstition, enthusiasm, and antinomianism, are infectious beyond other mental maladies; the poisonous draught is more dangerous, when so mingled as to resemble some valuable medicine, and 'a wolf in sheep's clothing,' is most dreadful to the unsuspecting flock. (*Notes, Mat. 7:13—20.*) Of this *genus*, (which is divided into various *species*, popish and protestant, ancient and modern, learned and unlearned,) there have ever been artful men, who have insinuated themselves, by pompous or plausible pretensions and flatteries, into the favor and confidence of the weakest, most credulous, most ignorant, and imaginative of the human species, and who have taken them captive, by soothing them into quietness, 'when laden with sins, and led away with divers lusts.' Those weak and deluded persons, who want a *safe and comfortable* religion, without self-denial, humiliation, and mortification of their lusts, 'are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth,' and readily fall in with artful and interested deceivers of any description. But, though it is grievous to perceive, that 'evil men and seducers grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived;' we may yet rejoice that they cannot exceed their limits; that they cannot fatally delude the upright believer, and that, at length, 'their folly will be made manifest to all men,' as that of their predecessors, during a long succession of ages, has uniformly been. SCOTT.

slights, in the hall of Pharaoh. They are spoken of by Numenius, the Pythagorean philosopher, and Artabanus, the historian, who calls them "the priests of Memphis." *Jambres*, some write *Mambres*.' ROSENM.

V. 10—12. As a contrast to the base spirit of the deceivers before mentioned, the apostle reminded Timothy of his own conduct and industry.—It is highly probable, that Timothy was converted to Christianity, during the apostle's first progress through the cities of Asia Minor, and that he was an eyewitness of Paul's sufferings at that time. This satisfactorily accounts for his mentioning the persecutions he endured at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, rather than more recent ones which Timothy had not witnessed.—Antioch in Pisidia is evidently meant. Acts 13:49—52. 14:5—7, 19, 20. 16:1—3.—Indeed, it was a general rule, that if any man was determined to live a godly life, in dependence on the atonement and grace of the Lord Jesus, and according to his precepts, he would certainly be exposed to persecution. A 'form of god-



12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and ° being deceived.

14 But continue <sup>p</sup> thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them* ;

15 And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which <sup>a</sup> are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All <sup>r</sup> Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and <sup>s</sup> is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ;

17 That the man of God may be <sup>t</sup> perfect, <sup>u</sup> thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

o 2 Th. 2:11. r 2 Pe. 1:21. t Ps. 119:93—100.  
p c. 1:13. s Ro. 15:4. u or, perfected.  
q Ju. 5:39.

of all, for Timothy's and our encouragement under sufferings. We have also the practice and treatment of true Christians; they live godly in Jesus Christ, that is their practice; and they shall suffer persecution, that is the usage they must expect in this world.

II. He warns Timothy of the fatal end of seducers, as a reason why he should stick close to the truth as it is in Jesus, v. 13. Observe, As good men, by the grace of God, grow better and better, so bad men, through the subtlety of Satan, and the power of their own corruptions, grow worse and

PRACT. OBS. V. 10—17. In order to escape and expose every seduction, we ought to get well acquainted with the doctrine and example of the apostle, and to copy his 'manner of life,' his 'purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, and patience.' Let us then frequently reflect on his persecutions, supports, and deliverances; let us count our cost, and know assuredly, that, 'if any man determine to live godly in Christ Jesus, he must suffer persecution' in one way or other, as far as Providence will permit the enmity of men's hearts to break forth against him. Let us 'continue in the things which we have learned,' and professed to believe; endeavoring to get further acquaintance with 'the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation, by faith in Jesus Christ,' who is the principal Subject both of the Old and New Test. And let us learn to reverence the whole Bible, as every sentence in it was 'given by inspiration from God,' and all religious error springs from ignorance, perversion, or misunderstanding of the Scriptures. The way therefore to oppose error, is by promoting the solid knowledge of

liness,' without any direct connexion with the doctrine of faith in a crucified Savior, or a profession of that faith, without the example of a godly life, might be endured and tolerated; but the open profession of 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' and a resolute attention to all the duties of vital godliness, would excite the scorn and enmity of mankind, nor could any abilities, wisdom, amiability, or beneficence, secure a man from all the effects of their persecuting animosity. SCOTT.

V. 13. Instead of matters taking a more favorable turn, the apostle predicted, that 'wicked men and seducing teachers' would grow more and more subtle, daring, callous, malicious, cruel, covetous, and ambitious; deceiving others, and being themselves deceived, by their own delusions, and by Satan's wiles. Ez. 14:9—11.—The history of the Christian church, through all the subsequent ages, forms an awful demonstration, that he 'spoke as he was moved by the Holy Spirit;' so that all the declamations of infidels against the impostures, persecutions, wars, and massacres, occasioned by Christianity, are only so many attestations to the truth of the religion contained in the Holy Scriptures, and in the profession and lives of a remnant through every age, and they bear against nothing, but that spurious Christianity, which was long before predicted and condemned by the Spirit of prophecy.—The original word for 'seducers,' signifies *magicians, or enchanters*, such as Jaanes and Jambres had been; that is, men who, by lying pretences to miraculous powers, opposed that Gospel, which had been confrmed by real and indisputable miracles. 6—9. Now it scarcely admits of a doubt, what company of men, since the apostle's days, have most exactly answered this description. 2 Thes. 2:3—12. Rev. 13:11—17. In.

(13.) 'The scope of the apostle is this: v. 12. he speaks for the warning, and in some measure, comfort of all true Christians, of all ages. Here he speaks further for their comfort, by checking that spirit of murmuring, which even the righteous are too apt to fall into, on comparing their own afflictions with the seeming happiness of the wicked. To which the answer is, that this world is a scene of trial; and moreover, that the wicked do in reality *deceive themselves*, when they deceive others, and will suffer what they inflict.' BLOOMER.

V. 14—17. The apostle, applying what he had before stated, called on Timothy diligently to maintain and persevere in the profession and preaching of that doctrine, which he had learned and assuredly believed,

worse. Those who deceive others, do but deceive themselves; those who draw others into error, run themselves into more and more mistakes, and they will find it so at last, to their cost.

V. 14—17. He directs him to keep close to a good education, and particularly to what he had learned out of the Holy Scriptures, v. 14, 15. Note, It is not enough to learn what is good, but we must continue in it, and persevere in it unto the end. John 8:31.

We ought not to continue in any errors and mistakes we may have been led into, in our childhood and youth, but this makes nothing against our continuing in those things which the Holy Scriptures plainly assert, and which he that runs may read.

If Timothy would adhere to the truth as he had been taught it, that would arm him against the snares and insinuations of seducers. It is a great happiness to know the certainty of the things *wherin we have been instructed*, Luke 1:4. and this Timothy was assured of. What we have learned, we must labor to be more and more assured of; certainty in religion is of great importance and advantage; *Knowing*,

1. That thou hast had good teachers; consider of *whom thou hast learned them*; not of evil men and seducers, but good persons, [of thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice.]

II. He knew, especially, the firm foundation on which he had built, namely, that of the Scripture, v. 15. [which he had been taught from his childhood.]

Observe, Those who would acquaint themselves with the things of God, and be assured of them, must know the Holy Scriptures, for those are the summary of divine revelation. Observe, It is a great happiness to know the Holy Scriptures from our

childhood: and children should betimes get the knowledge of the Scriptures. The Scriptures are holy; they came from the holy God, were delivered by holy men, contain holy precepts, treat of holy things, and were designed to make us holy, and to lead us in the way of holiness to happiness; being called the *Holy Scriptures*, they are by that distinguished from profane writings of all sorts, and from those that only treat of morality, and common justice and honesty, but do not meddle with holiness. If we would know the Holy Scriptures, we must read and search them daily, as the noble Bereans did, Acts 17: 11.

Now here observe, 1. The excellency of the Scripture. It is given by inspiration of God, v. 16. and therefore is his Word. The same Spirit that breathed reason into us, breathes revelation among us. That the Scripture was given by inspiration of God, appears by the majesty of its style; from the truth, purity, and sublimity, of its doctrines; from the harmony of its several parts; from its power and efficacy on multitudes that converse with it; from the accomplishment of many prophecies relating to things beyond all human foresight; and from the uncontrollable miracles that were wrought in proof of its divine original, Heb. 2: 4.

2. Its use to us.

(1.) It is able to make us wise to salvation; that is, It is a sure guide in our way to eternal life. Note, Those are wise indeed, who are wise to salvation. Observe, The Scriptures are able to make us wise to salvation through faith, not otherwise, Heb. 4: 2. For if we do not believe their truth and goodness, they will do us no good.

(2.) It is profitable to us for all the purposes of the Christian life, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. It answers all the ends of divine revelation.

the Word of truth, especially by the faithful preaching of the Gospel; and the greatest kindness which we can do our children, is to bring them early acquainted with the Bible. 'For it is evident, that the pious endeavors of Lois and Eunice, in bringing young Timothy acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, laid the foundation of all his subsequent eminence and usefulness, in which he was inferior to none but the apostles. It is probable, that, while they were teaching the child to read, and treasure up in his memory "the Oracles of God," they little thought what a harvest in future life would spring from the seed thus sown. But the Scripture warrants high expectations in this respect; and it may fairly be said, that the education of women in useful knowledge and genuine piety, in order that they might be qualified and disposed to instil good principles into the tender minds of children, would have the happiest effects towards reforming mankind, and diffusing the light of the Gospel in the world.' *Memoir of Rev. Jerem. Newell, annexed to his funeral sermon by the author.* SCOTT.

knowing that, through his affinity, he had received it from God Himself, and remembering, that it accorded to the Holy Scriptures, with which he had from his childhood been acquainted.—Doubtless this is still more emphatically true of the sacred Scriptures, now the canon of the New Test. also is completed.—The Old Test., almost entirely in its present form, was called by the Jews, 'The Scriptures,' or 'The Oracles of God;' now, if everything which Christ and his apostles spoke on the subject, was exactly calculated to confirm them in this opinion, and to discredit all traditional revelations, and if the apostle here expressly declares, that the whole was divinely inspired, what are they doing, who, as professed friends to Christianity, and holding the office of pastors, nay, rulers of the Christian church, labor to persuade men, that the books of Moses, and other parts of the Old Test., are *genuine and authentic* indeed; but speak so ambiguously on the point of their being divinely inspired, as to leave their readers in general to suppose, that they do not believe them to be so, or that this is a matter of subordinate consequence? Rom. 15:4—7.—(15) *A child.* Gr. *an infant.*—Children may then very early and profitably be made acquainted with the Scriptures. SCOTT.

(15.) 'The apostle calls the Old Test. *sacred*, because of its divine inspiration, v. 16. Timothy's mother and grandmother, being Jewish women of great piety, had trained him from his childhood, in the knowledge and belief of the writings of Moses and the prophets. And their care in thus instructing him being commended by the apostle, it shows that little children ought to be made acquainted with the Scriptures, as early as possible; and that they may derive much benefit, [nay, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, experience true piety,] from that imperfect knowledge of the Scriptures and the principles of religion, which they are capable of attaining in their tenderest years.' MACKEN.—'Little children ought to be early initiated into the study of the sacred letters; directly contrary to what the church of Rome teaches.' DODD.

(16.) 'The communicating from God, to a mortal, the knowledge which could not be, or had not been obtained in any other way, by his immediate influence on the human mind, is *revelation*. The qualifying one who receives revelation to communicate the revealed knowledge to his fellow-creatures, with perfect certainty and accuracy, is *inspiration*.' J. P. SMITH, in *Henry*, abr.



## CHAP. IV.

1 He exhorteth him to do his duty with all care and diligence, 6 certifieth him of the nearness of his death, 9 willeth him to come speedily unto him, and to bring Marcus with him, and certain other things which he wrote for, 14 warneth him to beware of Alexander the smith, 16 informeth him what had befallen him at his first answering, 19 and soon after he concludeth.

**I CHARGE** <sup>a</sup> thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge <sup>b</sup> the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, <sup>c</sup> rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto <sup>d</sup> fables.

5 But watch <sup>e</sup> thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, <sup>f</sup> make full proof <sup>g</sup> of thy ministry.

6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure <sup>h</sup> is at hand.

a 1 Ti. 5:21, 6, 13. d 1 Ti. 1:4. g 1 Ti. 4:12, 15.  
b Re. 20:12, 13. e c 2:3. h Phi. 1:23.  
c Tit. 2:15. f or, fulfil. 2 Pe. 1:14.

It instructs in what is true, reproves for what is amiss, directs in what is good. It is of use to all, and specially to ministers. *That the man of God may be perfect, v. 17.* The Christian, the minister, is the man of God. That which finishes a man of God in this world, is, the Scripture. Whatever duty we have to do, whatever service is required from us, we may find enough in the Scriptures to furnish us for it.

The Scripture has various uses, and answers divers ends and purposes; it is a perfect rule of faith and practice; follow its directions, and we shall be made men of God, *perfect and thoroughly furnished to every good work*: there is no occasion for the writings of the philosopher, for rabbinical fables, popish legends, or unwritten traditions, to make us perfect men of God, since the Scripture answers all these ends and purposes. Oh, that we may love our Bibles more, and keep closer to them than ever! and then shall we find the benefit and advantage designed thereby, and shall at last attain the happiness therein promised and assured to us.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—7. Here we have Paul's charge to Timothy; where, Observe,

I. How awfully it is introduced, v. 1. Note, The best of men need to be awed into the discharge of their duty. The work of a minister is not an indifferent thing, but

(17.) *Man of God.*] 'The teacher of the Gospel.' *Thoroughly furnished.*]—'I. e. with all that is necessary for his evangelical office.'—*Every good work.*] 'Every duty of a good minister.' BLOOMF.

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1—5. These repeated, solemn charges of the apostle, to so zealous and faithful a minister as Timothy, most emphatically show, how difficult it is to fill up this important office, in a proper manner, to the end of life, especially in dangerous times.—Timothy, to whom this exhortation was given, had an infirm constitution; so that this excuse for remissness should not be too readily admitted. 1 Tim. 5:23.—Timothy is said in the postscript, to have been 'ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians;' but it seems, to me, at least, that the office of an evangelist was superior to that of a diocesan bishop, as exercised in the earliest ages of Christianity. Those, however, who think otherwise, and consider Timothy as a bishop, should not forget the apostle's charge to bishops, to 'preach the Word, instant in season, out of season.' For this too many seem to disregard. The evangelists appear to have been extraordinary assistants to the apostles, exercising great authority, in their absence, over the several churches which they visited: perhaps when that extraordinary office began to cease in the church, diocesan episcopacy was substituted; but it can only answer the same end in a smaller degree, and in one place: while

absolutely necessary. Woe be to him if he preach not the Gospel, 1 Cor. 9:16. To induce him to faithfulness, he must consider,

1. That the eye of God and Jesus Christ was upon him; *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ*; that is, 'As thou tenderest the favor of God and Jesus Christ,' &c.

2. That he will answer it at the great day: *at his appearing and his kingdom*, that is, when the Lord Jesus appears in his kingdom. It concerns all, both ministers and people, seriously to consider the account they must shortly give to Jesus Christ of all the trusts reposed in them. Christ shall judge *the quick and the dead*, that is, those that at the last day shall be found alive, and those who shall be raised to life out of the grave.

II. The matter of the charge, v. 2—5.

1. To preach the Word. That is ministers' business; a dispensation is committed to them. It is not their own notions and fancies they are to preach, but the pure, plain Word of God; and they must not corrupt it, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, they speak in Christ, 2 Cor. 2:17.

2. To urge what he preached with all earnestness on his hearers. He must do his work with all fervency of spirit. 'Call on those under thy charge to take heed of sin, to do their duty: call on them to repent and believe, and live a holy life, and this *both in season and out of season*. In season, when they are at leisure; nay, *out of season*, even when there is no apparent probability of fastening anything on them, because thou dost not know but the Spirit of God may fasten on them; for the wind bloweth where it listeth, Eccl. 11:6.'

3. He must tell people of their faults; *Reprove them, rebuke them*. Convince wicked people of the evil and danger of their wicked courses. Rebuke them with gravity and authority, in Christ's name, that they may take thy displeasure against them as an indication of God's displeasure.'

4. He must direct, encourage, and quicken those who began well. *Exhort them*; persuade them to hold on, and endure to the end, and this *with all long-suffering and doctrine*. He must do it very patiently, *with all long-suffering*; do it rationally, not with passion, but *with doctrine*, that is, 'In order to reduce them to good practices, instil into them good principles.'

5. He must watch in all things; 'Seek an opportunity, and let no fair occasion slip through negligence: watch to work, watch against temptations, and over the souls of those committed to thy charge.'

6. He must count on afflictions, and endure them; make the best of them. Endure them *patiently*, be not discouraged, but bear them with an even spirit.

7. He must remember his office, and discharge that; *Do the work of an evangelist*. The evangelists were as the apostles' deputies, to water the churches they planted, to reside in, and preside over, them, till they

were settled under a standing ministry. This was Timothy's work.

8. He must fulfil *his ministry*; *Make full proof of it*. A great trust was reposed in him, therefore he must answer it, and perform all the parts of his office with diligence and care.

III. The reasons to enforce the charge.

1. Because errors and heresies were likely to creep into the church, by which the minds of many professing Christians would be corrupted, v. 3, 4. People must hear, and ministers must preach, for the time to come, and guard against the mischiefs likely to arise hereafter, though they do not yet arise. They will *turn away their ears from the truth*, grow weary of the plain Gospel of Christ, and then be greedy of fables, and take pleasure in them; and God shall give them up to those strong delusions, because they received not the truth in the love of it, 2 Thess. 2:11, 12. Observe,

These teachers were of their own heaping up, and not of God's sending; but they chose them, to gratify their lusts, and to please their itching ears. People do so when they will not endure sound doctrine, that preaching which is searching, plain, and to the purpose. There is a wide difference between the Word of God and the words of such teachers. God justly suffers *those* to turn to fables, who grow weary of the truth, and gives them up to be led aside from the truth by fables.

2. Because Paul for his part had almost done his work, v. 6.

When laborers are removed out of the vineyard, it is no time for *them* to loiter, that are left behind, but to double their diligence. Paul's comfort and cheerfulness, in the prospect of his approaching departure, might encourage Timothy to the utmost industry, diligence, and seriousness in his work. The courage and comfort of dying saints and ministers, and especially dying martyrs, are a great confirmation of the truth of the Christian religion, and a great encouragement to living saints and ministers in their work. Here,

(1.) He looks forward, upon his death approaching; *I am now ready to be offered*. The Holy Ghost witnessed in every city, that bonds and afflictions did abide him, Acts 20:23. He was now at Rome, and probably had particular intimations from the Spirit, that there he should seal the truth with his blood; and he looks upon it now as near at hand; *I am already poured out*; so it is in the original, that is, I am already a martyr in affection. It alludes to the pouring out of the drink-offerings; for the blood of the martyrs, though it was not a sacrifice of atonement, yet it was a sacrifice of acknowledgment to the honor of the grace of God, and his truths. Observe, With what pleasure he speaks of dying. He calls it his *departure*; though probably he foresaw he must die a violent, bloody death, yet he calls it his *departure*, or his release. Death to a good man is his release from the imprisonment of this world, and his depart-

the missionary part of an evangelist's office continues essential to the promulgation of the Gospel in every age.—'The twelve, after Christ's departure, had others whom they sent into some part of their charge.—These, when they were employed in preaching the Gospel, to them that had not yet received it, the Scripture calls evangelists.' HAMMOND. Sc.

(2.) *Long-suffering.*] 'This virtue the apostle often recommended to Timothy, 2 Tim. 2:20. 3:16. but never this or patience either, to Titus. Perhaps Timothy, being younger than Titus, was of a more ardent spirit, which needed to be restrained; or, as Benson suggests, difference of character in the persons they had to do with, might occasion this difference in the apostle's exhortations.' MACKN. 'What would a physician who had a sovereign cure for all diseases, be accounted, if he kept it a secret, or was slothful in dispensing it, or mixed poison with it? How much more criminal is a minister of the Gospel, who thinks himself entrusted with an infallible medicine for all the disorders of the soul, if he adulterates it, or is unfaithful and inactive in applying it?' ADAMS.

(3.) *The time will come.*] 'Another hint of the great apostasy.' BENSON, in Bloomf.—*Heaping &c.*] 'The expression implies, that they would be desirous of such, and that they should meet with many of that character.' DODDR.

(4.) 'Hinting at false doctrine and mythical discourse.' BLOOMF.



7 I have fought <sup>1</sup> a good fight, I have finished <sup>1</sup> my course, I have kept <sup>k</sup> the faith :

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown <sup>1</sup> of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day : and not to me only, but unto all them <sup>m</sup> also that love his appearing.

[Practical Observations.]

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me :

10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved <sup>n</sup> this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia

11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee ; for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

12 And <sup>o</sup> Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

13 The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil : the Lord <sup>p</sup> reward him according to his works.

i 1 Ti. 5:12.      l 1 Co. 9:25. l Pe.      n 1 Ju. 2:15.  
j Ac. 20:24.      m 5:4. Re. 2:10.      o Tit. 3:12.  
k Pr. 23:23.      m 1 Co. 2:9.      p Ps. 28:4.  
Re. 5:10.

ture to the enjoyments of another world ; he does not cease to be, but is only removed from one world to another.

(2.) Observe with what pleasure he looks back on the life he had lived, v. 7. He therefore did not fear death, because he had the testimony of his conscience, that, by the grace of God, he had, in some measure, answered the ends of living. As a Christian, as a minister, he had fought a good fight. His life was a course, and he had now finished it ; as his warfare was accomplished, so his race was run.

Note, The life of a Christian, but espe-

cially of a minister, is a warfare and a race. It is a good fight, a good warfare. We must fight this good fight, must not give over till we are made more than conquerors through Him who hath loved us, Rom. 8:37. It is a great comfort to a dying saint, when he can look back on his past life, and say, as our apostle does, *I have fought*, &c. Toward the end of our days, to be able to speak in this manner, what comfort, unspeakable comfort, will it afford ! Let it then be our constant endeavor, by the grace of God, that we may finish our course with joy, Acts 20:24.

(3.) With what pleasure he looks forward to the life he was to live hereafter, v. 8. Let this encourage Timothy, that there is a crown of life before us, the glory and joy of which will abundantly recompense all the hardships and toils of our present warfare. Observe, It is called a *crown of righteousness* ; because it will be the recompense of our services, which *God is not unrighteous to forget* ; and because our holiness and righteousness will there be perfected, and that will be our crown.

God will give it as a *righteous Judge*, who will let none lose by Him.

And yet this crown of righteousness was not peculiar to Paul, as if it belonged only to apostles, and eminent ministers and martyrs, but to all them also that love his appearing. Observe, It is the character of all the saints, that they love the appearing of Jesus Christ : they loved his first appearing, they love to think of it ; they love his second appearing at the great day, love it, and long for it : and with respect to those who love the appearing of Jesus Christ, He shall appear to their joy ; there is a crown of righteousness reserved for them, which shall then be given them, Heb. 9:28.

We learn, hence, The Lord is the righteous Judge, for his judgment is according to truth. The crown of believers is a crown of righteousness, purchased by the righteousness of Christ, and bestowed as the reward of the saints' righteousness. This crown, which believers shall wear, is laid up for them ; they have it not at present, for here they are but heirs ; they have it not in possession, yet it is sure, for it is laid up for them. The righteous Judge will give it

to all who love, prepare, and long for, his appearing ; *Surely I come quickly ; Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus.*

V. 9—15. Here divers particular matters Paul mentions to Timothy, now at the closing of the epistle.

1. He bids him hasten to him, if possible, v. 9. Timothy was an evangelist, not a fixed pastor, but attended the motions of the apostles ; Paul wanted his company and help ; and the reason he gives, is, several had left him, v. 10. One, from an ill principle, *Demas*, who abides under an ill name for it : fear of suffering, or interest, called him off from his ministry. Note, Love to this present world is often the cause of apostasy from the truths and ways of Jesus Christ. He is gone, *is departed to Thessalonica* ; called thither, perhaps, by trade, or other worldly business. *Crescens* is gone one way, *Titus* another way, and only *Luke* was with Paul, v. 11, 12. Was not that enough ? Paul did not think it so ; he loved the company of his friends.

2. He speaks respectfully of *Mark* : supposed the Mark about whom Paul and Barnabas contended, Acts 15:39. Paul, it appears, was now reconciled to him, and had a better opinion of him than he had had formerly. This teaches us to be of a forgiving spirit ; those that are profitable and useful, though they may have done amiss, we must not therefore disclaim for ever making use of them.

3. Paul orders Timothy to come to him, bids him as he came through Troas to bring with him from thence those things he had left there, v. 13. the cloak, it may be, Paul had the more occasion for in a cold prison. Probably it was his usual habit, a plain dress. Some read it the *roll of parchment* ; others, the *desk* I left. Paul was guided by divine inspiration, yet would have his books with him. As he had exhorted Timothy to give attendance to reading, so he did himself, though now ready to be offered. As long as we live, we must be still learning. *But especially the parchments*, the originals of his epistles, so some ; others, the skins he made his tents of, whereby he got a livelihood, working with his own hands.

4. He mentions *Alexander*, and the mischief he had done him, v. 14, 15. He is

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—8. The importance of the work of ministers, the peculiar temptations to which they are exposed, and the multiplied evil effects of their unfaithfulness or negligence, concur in rendering it needful, most solemnly and repeatedly, to charge the most zealous of them, as 'in the presence of God and of the Lord Jesus,' before whom they must shortly appear, to give an account of their stewardship, that 'they preach the Word, instant in season, out of season,' to few or many, as opportunities offer, like men engaged in the work, who make it their one great business and pleasure, without consulting their own ease, interest, or reputation, or shrinking from hardship, reproach, or persecution ; and that they 'reprove, rebuke, exhort,' with forbearance and perseverance, with plain instructions, and close application. This is the more indispensable, as the time is indeed now *come*, when even a large majority of professed Christians 'will not endure sound doctrine ; they are offended by the humbling truths of the Gospel, or by the heart-

searching, distinguishing, practical truths of Scripture, which detect their sins, and show the necessity of mortifying their peculiar lusts ; and they desire to be soothed and flattered in the indulgence of them, and to have 'teachers according to them.' This should induce those who love souls, 'to watch in all things,' to venture and endure all painful effects of faithfulness, to take every opportunity of preaching the pure Gospel, and to 'make full proof of their ministry,' that they may do all the good in it which they possibly can. In doing this, they should be quickened by the consideration, that their brethren, one after another, are taken away, or laid aside, and that their own term of usefulness will soon expire.—In proportion as the duties of a man's place and station are neglected, his evidence of an interest in Christ must be obscured, and uncertainty and discouragement may probably distress his closing scene. SCOTT.

V. 7, 8. 'The whole passage is beautifully allusive to the celebrated games and exercises of those times.' T. HORNE.—This shows that the apostle looked upon his death as at hand, and evidently it was written under different prospects from those described in his first epistle. HENRY, *abr.*

V. 9—13. Of Demas, he seems before to have judged very favorably ; but he had forsaken him in his perilous situation, 'having loved this present world.' He had not courage to venture his life, by continuing with the apostle under his persecutions : he loved the world too much to give up all for Christ ; and perhaps some prospect of secular advantage offered itself, with which he was caught. Whether he finally apostatized or not, we cannot certainly tell ; but the apostle 'stood in doubt of him.' *Prof. Col. 4:14. Notes, 1 John 2:15—17.* He also informed Timothy, that 'he had sent Tychicus to Ephesus.' This has been deemed a *decisive* proof, that Timothy was not at Ephesus, at that time, and, indeed, it greatly favors that conclusion : but, *possibly*, Tychicus might be sent by another way, than the bearer of this epistle, and calling at other places, might not arrive till afterwards ; and the apostle might mean, that he had sent Tychicus, to supply Timothy's place at Ephesus, that he might come to him the sooner.—Among these informations and directions, we find Paul desiring Timothy, to bring his cloke to him. If the word means a cloke, or upper garment, (as it seems to do.) which he supposed he might want at the approach of winter, it is a remarkable proof of his poverty to the end of his life, that he should need to send so far for a garment to keep him warm during the remnant of his days ! 1 Cor. 4:9—13. 2 Cor. 6:3—10. 11:24—27.—What books and parchments

were meant, Timothy would know ; but it is in vain for us to conjecture. As Troas was not in the direct road from Ephesus to Rome, this may be urged as a proof that Timothy was not then at Ephesus ; but it is not certain, that he might not go by another way, to call on some of the churches with which he was connected.—These directions favor the opinion, that the apostle had been hurried away, by his persecutors, from these eastern regions ; without being allowed leisure, either to accomplish his plans, or to take with him those things which he intended. SCOTT.

(11.) *Only Luke* ] 'The apostle meant of his fellow-laborers ; for from p. 21. where the salutations of some of the Roman brethren, by name, are mentioned, it appears he had many friends still in Rome, with whom he had intercourse.' MAERN.

V. 14, 15. It is not certain, though highly probable, that this was the same Alexander, of whom we have before read. *Acts 19:33. 1 Tim. 1:20.—We cannot certainly know, who are given up to final obduracy ; and must therefore persevere in praying for our enemies and persecutors. Mat. 12:31,32. Heb. 6:4—6. 10:26—31. 1 John 5:16—18.*—It is worthy of special notice, that all those passages in the book of *Psalm*, which, as containing predictions or imprecations on the enemies of David, or rather of Christ the Antitype, are considered, even by many pious persons, inconsistent with the Christian dispensation, are exactly, for substance, the same as the language of the apostle in this place ; that is, of one speaking by the Spirit of prophecy. Did the Spirit of God, who spake by David, 2 Sam. 23:3,4. dictate to him a vindictive language, contrary to that which He dictated to the apostles of Christ ? Is not this



15 Of whom be thou ware also ; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all <sup>r</sup> men forsook me : I pray God that it may not be laid <sup>a</sup> to their charge.

17 Notwithstanding the Lord <sup>t</sup> stood with me, and strengthened me ; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear : and I was delivered out of the mouth <sup>n</sup> of the lion.

18 And the Lord <sup>v</sup> shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom : to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

20 Erastus abode at Corinth : but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

21 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

22 The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

¶ The second *epistle* unto Timothy, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before <sup>w</sup> Nero the second time.

q or, *preachings*.  
r c. 1:15.  
s Ac. 7:60.  
t Mat. 10:19.

Ac. 23:11.  
u Ps. 22:21.  
v Ps. 121:7.

w *Cesar Nero,*  
or, *the Emperor Nero.*

spoken of Acts 19: 33. It should seem, he had been a rather forward professor, for he

was there particularly maligned by the worshippers of Diana, yet he did Paul much evil. Paul was in as much danger from false brethren, 2 Cor. 11 : 26. as from open enemies. Paul foretells that God would reckon with him. It is a prophetic denunciation of the just judgment of God that would befall him. He cautions Timothy to take heed of him. It is dangerous having anything to do with those who would be enemies to such a man as Paul. Observe,

Some, who were once Paul's hearers and admirers, did not give him reason to remember them with much pleasure ; yet others did, as *Timothy, Titus, Mark,* and *Luke*. On two, he has left a brand ; one, *Demas*, who forsook him, the other, *Alexander*, who greatly withstood his words.

V. 16—22. Here he gives Timothy an account of his own present circumstances. He had lately been called to appear before the emperor, on his appeal to Cesar ; and then *no man stood with him*, v. 16. but *all men forsook him*. Strange, so good a man should have nobody to own him, even at Rome, where were many Christians, whose faith was spoken of throughout all the world, Rom. 1:8. But men are but men. And see what distinction is put between sins of presumption and sins of infirmity. Alexander the coppersmith, who maliciously withstood Paul, he prays against him ; *The Lord reward him according to his works* ; but of these Christians, who through weakness shrunk from Paul in time of trial, he says, *The Lord lay it not to their charge*. Here we see that Paul had his trials, in his friends forsaking him, and enemies opposing him.

*Notwithstanding this, God stood by him*, v. 17. gave him extraordinary wisdom and courage ; *that by me the preaching might be fully known*, that is, that I might preach the Gospel, which is my business. Nay, it should seem he might preach the Gospel at that time ; preach it at the bar as well as in the pulpit ; *and that all the Gentiles might hear* ; the emperor himself, and the great men who would never have heard Paul

preach, if he had not been brought before them. *And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion*, that is, of Nero, or some other judge, so some ; or, it is only as a proverbial form of speech, so some, to signify that he was in imminent danger. *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work*. See how Paul improved his experiences. From past deliverances, he trusted for future and eternal deliverance. And for this he gives glory to God, rejoicing in 'hope of the glory of God. If the Lord stands by us, He will strengthen us, in a time of difficulty and danger, nay, his presence will more than supply every one's absence ; so we ought to give God the glory of all past, present, and future deliverances ; *To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

He sends salutations to *Aquila and Priscilla, and the household of Onesiphorus*, v. 19. He mentions his leaving *Trophimus sick at Miletum*, v. 20. by which it appears, that though the apostles healed all manner of diseases miraculously, for the confirmation of their doctrine, yet they did not exert that power on their own friends, lest it should have looked like a collusion.

He hastens Timothy to *come to him before winter*, v. 21. because he longed to see him, and because in the winter the journey or voyage would be more dangerous.

He sends commendations to him from *Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia*, and all the brethren. One [*Martial*, in *Scott*] of the heathen writers at this time mentions one *Pudens*, and his wife *Claudia*, and says, that *Claudia* was a Briton ; whence some have gathered, that it was this *Pudens*, and that *Claudia* here was his wife, and that they were eminent Christians at Rome.

He concludes with a prayer, that the *Lord Jesus would be with his spirit*. We need no more to make us happy, than to have the Lord Jesus Christ with our spirits ; for in Him all spiritual blessings are summed up.

*Grace be with you. Amen.* This was our apostle's token in every epistle ; so he wrote ; *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.* 2 Thess. 3: 17, 18.

PRACT. OBS. V. 9—22. There are various characters in the visible church, and various changes take place among ministers. Some, who have apparently 'run well, are hindered,' and forsake the Lord and his faithful servants, 'loving this present world ;' others are recovered from grievous backslidings, and become 'profitable for the ministry ;' and not a few turn open apostates or virulent opposers, 'doing much harm' to the servants of Christ, and greatly withstanding their words, whom 'the Lord will reward according to their works.' Others bring their characters into doubt, or incur disgrace, by their cowardice in times of danger ; and their brethren are called on to pray for them, that 'the Lord would not lay that sin to their charge.' But a few proceed with

diligence and courage in every circumstance ; though 'no man stands with them, the Lord is with them' to strengthen and comfort them, He 'gives them a mouth and wisdom, which all their enemies cannot gainsay ;' (*Note, Luke 21:12—19, v. 15.*) He delivers them from outward dangers and enemies, as long as it is good for them ; He 'preserves them from the mouth of the lion,' which would destroy their souls, and He 'keeps them from every evil work, even unto his heavenly kingdom.' Unnumbered multitudes are now before the throne, giving glory to his name ; may we be followers of them, may 'the Lord Jesus be with our spirits,' to comfort and sanctify them, and may his grace be with all his disciples and ministers in every place ! Amen. SCOTT.

supposition highly dishonorable both to the Word of God, and to the Spirit which inspired it ? *Deut. 27:15. Ps. 69:22—23. 109.6—20.*—Timothy was moreover warned to beware of the malignant and subtle machinations of this wicked man, as he would do as much to injure him, and withstand his words, as he had done in opposing the apostle and his doctrine.

V. 16—19. The cruel persecutions of the Christians at Rome, under Nero, seem to have preceded the writing of this epistle. Numbers had then been put to death, in the most dreadful manner, or driven from the city, and the rest seem to have been greatly intimidated ; so that on this important occasion none were found, who ventured to attend the apostle to the tribunal. This was a very criminal weakness, the effect of unbelief ; but the apostle prayed that it 'might not be laid to their charge.' 14, 15. *Luke 22:21—23, 31—34.*—*Mouth of the lion.*] Perhaps the apostle had in view, that 'adversary, who goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour,' and who was not entirely without hope, that the fear of death would induce Paul to renounce the faith, and that he should thus seize upon his soul. 1 *Pet. 5:8, 9.* The apostle did not expect to escape martyrdom ; but he was confident that 'the Lord would deliver him from every evil work,' not suffering Satan to prevail against him, to induce him to do anything inconsistent with the honor of the Gospel, or the benefit of his soul, and 'that He would preserve him to his heavenly kingdom.' *Gen. 48:16. Mat. 6:13.* Instead therefore of complaints or despondency, he was ready to ascribe 'glory to the Lord for ever and ever,' or to 'ages of ages,' that is, to eternal ages. 'Amen.'

(16.) Many circumstances make it astonishing Paul should have been deserted by the Christians at Rome in this extremity. . . . But one material circumstance, seldom taken notice of in this connexion, accounts in a great measure for what might otherwise appear so strange. Clement, the companion of Paul, informs us, that he suffered martyrdom under the governors, i. e. when Nero was gone into Greece, and had left the government of the city to Tigellinus and Sabinus, prefects of the prætorian guard, and that monster Helius. This fixes Paul's death to [494]

A. D. 66 or 67. But the cruel persecution of Nero against the Christians at Rome was, according to Tacitus, at least two years before this. It is probable, therefore, many might have suffered death, or, according to our Lord's advice, Mat. 10:23. have retired from Rome. DONBR.—Yet Bloomf. observes ; on vs. 20—22. that 'by "all the brethren," we may suppose the persecution had not entirely dispersed the Christians, but that some vestiges of a congregation still remained.'

V. 19—22. Prisca, or Priscilla, and Aquila were near to the place where Timothy resided ; but, as they frequently changed their abode, this does not determine where he then was. *Acts 18:1—6, 18—23. Rom. 16:3, 4.* The same remark may be made concerning the family of Onesiphorus. 1:16—18. The apostle had probably been attended by Erastus and Trophimus, when he last parted with Timothy ; but the former abode at Corinth, and the latter was left sick at Miletum.—Surely, every reader must be fully satisfied, from reading the close of this epistle, that Peter was not at Rome when it was written ; if therefore, he suffered martyrdom, at the same time when the apostle Paul did, according to ancient tradition, he must have arrived at that city after this epistle had been sent. Timothy accompanied the apostle from Corinth, through Macedonia, probably to Miletum, when he went to Jerusalem before his first imprisonment at Rome. *Ac. 20:4—16.* It would therefore have been wholly superfluous to inform him concerning Erastus, if that voyage had been spoken of ; and Trophimus accompanied the apostle to Jerusalem. 21:29.—Some, indeed, suppose Miletum in Crete, mentioned by Homer, to be intended ; but, in that case, Paul must have left Trophimus there, at sometime subsequent to the voyage towards Rome, in which he suffered shipwreck ; for no intimation of such an event is given in that narrative.—(22) *The Lord Jesus be with thy spirit.*] What would a well-informed protestant think of a similar prayer, in which the name of any saint, any mere man, or created being was inserted, instead of 'the Lord Jesus ?' Would it not be considered as an act of idolatry, and that justly ? And would not papists bring it as a voucher for their worship of saints, with much plausibility ?—But Jesus is 'Emmanuel, God with us.' *Mat. 1:22, 23. 28:19, 20.* SCOTT.



AN EXPOSITION  
OF  
PAUL'S EPISTLE TO TITUS,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. J. Smith.)

THIS Epistle of Paul to Titus, is much of the same nature with those to Timothy; as they both stood in nearly the same relation to the apostle. We read much of this Titus, his titles, character, and active usefulness, in many places: he was a Greek, Gal. 2:3. Paul called him *his son*, Tit. 1:4. *his brother*, 2 Cor. 2:13. *his partner and fellow-helper*, 2 Cor. 8:23. *one that walked in the same Spirit, and in the same steps with himself*. He went up with the apostles to the church at Jerusalem, Gal. 2:1. was much conversant at Corinth, for which church he had *an earnest care*, 2 Cor. 8:16. Paul's second epistle to them, and probably his first, also, was sent by his hand, 2 Cor. 8:16—18, 23. 9:2—4. 12:18. He was with the apostle at Rome, and thence went into Dalmatia, 2 Tim. 4:10. after which no more occurs of him in the Scriptures. So that by them he appears not to have been a fixed bishop; if such he were, and in those times, the church of Corinth, where he most attended, had the best title to him. In Crete (now called *Candia*, formerly *Hecatompolis*, from its hundred cities), a large island at the mouth of the Ægean sea, the Gospel had got some footing; and here were Paul and Titus, in one of their travels, cultivating this plantation; but the apostle of the Gentiles, having on him the care of all the churches, could not himself tarry long at this place; he therefore left Titus some time there, to carry on the work which had been begun; wherein, probably, meeting with more difficulty than ordinary. Paul wrote this epistle to him; and yet, perhaps, not so much for his own sake, as for the people's, that the endeavors of Titus, strengthened with apostolic advice and authority, might be more significant and effectual among them. He was to see all the cities furnished with good pastors; to reject and keep out the unmeet and unworthy; to teach sound doctrine, and instruct all sorts in their duties; to set forth the free grace of God in man's salvation by Christ; and withal to show the necessity of maintaining good works by those who have believed in God, and hope for eternal life from Him.

HENRY.

It is remarkable that Titus, of whom the apostle repeatedly speaks in terms of the highest approbation and most cordial affection in his epistles, is not once mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles.\* 2 Cor. 2:1, 2, 13. 7:5—7. 8:16—24. 12:17—21. Gal. 2:1—5. Nor is anything recorded concerning Paul's labors in Crete. It is indeed probable, the Gospel was made known there, at an early period; as there were Cretes present on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:11. If, however, any then converted, on their return home, made known the Gospel to their neighbors; the joyful report from them would reach none but the Jews and proselytes. But no information is given us of what passed in that island, at that time, or afterwards; except as this epistle shows, that Paul had labored there. Probably, this was subsequent to his first imprisonment at Rome, and before his second. He seems to have had very great success in his ministry, in that island; but, by some means, to have been hurried thence, before he could order the state of the churches, in a regular manner. 2 Tim. 4:9—13. He, therefore, left Titus there, to settle the churches in the several cities of the island, according to the apostolical plan in other places.—Tradition, and ecclesiastical records, have made Titus bishop of Crete: and, because so large an island was an extensive charge, some have conferred on him the title of *archbishop*. But I am by no means convinced, that even this title would not have been a derogation from his real dignity, as an evangelist.—'If, by saying Timothy and Titus were bishops, the one of Ephesus, the other of Crete, we understand that they took on them these churches, or dioceses, as their fixed and particular charge, in which they were to preside for the term of life; I believe that Timothy and Titus were not thus bishops: for both Timothy and Titus were evangelists.—Now the work of an evangelist, says Eusebius, was this, to lay the foundation of churches in barbarous nations, to constitute them pastors; and, having committed to them the cultivating of those new plantations, they passed on to other countries.—As to Titus, he was only left in Crete, "to ordain elders in every city, and to set in order the things that were wanting." Having therefore done that work, he had done all that was assigned him in that station, and, therefore, Paul sends for him the very next year to Nicopolis.' *Whitby*. It is, however, recorded, that he afterwards returned to Crete, and died there, when 94 years of age.—Dr. Whitby never doubted, nor does the author of these notes at all doubt, that diocesan episcopacy was generally introduced into the churches, even during the lives of some of the apostles. But the office of an evangelist of old, and that of a true missionary at present, should be considered as perfectly distinct from that of a *bishop*; and, in some respects, (especially as a general commission, to preach the Gospel to the nations,) superior to it.—The postscript states that the epistle was written from Nicopolis in Macedonia: but, had this been the case, the apostle would have said, 'I have determined *here* to winter,' not '*there* to winter.' 3:12. There were several cities called Nicopolis; and it is not certain which is here meant.

SCOTT.

\* 'The earliest account we have of Titus is in Gal. 2:1. It appears the apostle had a great regard for him.—This epistle was most probably the last of Paul's epistles, except the second to Timothy; but nothing can be certainly determined, either as to its date, or the place from which it was sent.—Upon the review of this and the two epistles to Timothy, it is natural to reflect how much they tend to illustrate and confirm the internal evidence of Christianity. Nothing sets the characters of great men in so true a light, as their letters to particular friends. In their familiar correspondence, they open their minds with freedom, and throw off all reserve. Yet in these epistles to his friends, as in his other epistles to whole churches, we find Paul the same man, actuated by the same principles, and having in view the same object; free from all dis-

guise, and no less free from all cunning designs of worldly advantage and personal ambition. The instructions he gives his friends for the exercise of their office, have nothing of art or subtlety, but are plain and simple, and centre in that grand design of advancing the interests of religion, and the happiness of mankind, which ever lay near his heart: and so far is he from flattering them with the prospect of any worldly advantage, that he exhorts them to be ready, after his example, to sacrifice every temporal interest, and even life itself, in the cause they had undertaken to support. Hence we may infer, that the Christian religion is not a cunningly devised fable, formed to answer the ambitious or interested views of its authors; but that it is indeed the power of God, and the wisdom of God.'

DODDR.

A. D. 66.

CHAP. I.

<sup>1</sup> For what end Titus was left in Crete. <sup>6</sup> How they that are to be chosen ministers ought to be qualified. <sup>11</sup> The mouths of evil teachers to be stopped: <sup>12</sup> and what manner of men they be.

PAUL, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which <sup>b</sup> is after godliness;

<sup>a</sup> 2 Ti. 2:25.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Ti. 6:3.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. Here is,

1. The writer of this epistle, Paul, a Gentile name, taken by the apostle of the

Gentiles, Acts 13: 9, 46, 47. When the Jews rejected the Gospel, and the Gentiles received it, we read no more of this apostle by his Jewish name *Saul*, but by his Roman one, *Paul*.

Here he is described by his relation and office; *a servant of God*, not in the general sense only, as a man and a Christian; but especially as a minister, *servant of God in the Gospel of his Son*, Rom. 1:9. He is described more especially as a chief minister, *an apostle of Jesus Christ*; one who had seen the Lord, and was immediately called and commissioned by Him, and had his doctrine from Him. Observe, The highest officers

Introduction to the epistle.

in the church are but servants, yet they were so according to the faith of God's elect. Their doctrine agreed with the faith of all the elect from the beginning of the world, and was for propagating and promoting of the same. Observe, There are elect of God, 1 Pet. 1:2. and in these the Holy Spirit works precious, divine faith, proper to those who are chosen to eternal life, 2 Thess. 2: 13, 14. Faith is the first principle of sanctification. *And the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness*. The Gospel is truth; great, sure, saving truth, Col. 1:5. truth after godliness, of a godly nature and tendency, pure, and purifying the heart of

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1—4. The expression, 'God our Savior,' seems here to relate to the Godhead without distinction of persons; and in some places it refers to the person of the Father, as saving us by his beloved Son. 3:4—7. 1 Tim. 1:1,2.—Some explain the words render-

ed, 'before the world began,' to relate to the promise made to Adam, or to Abraham, before the promulgation of the Mosaic law. But I must think, that the interpretation above given is far more obvious. If indeed Christ be 'the Chosen of God,' the Surety and Representative of 'all



2 <sup>c</sup> In hope of eternal life, which God, that <sup>d</sup> cannot lie, promised before the <sup>e</sup> world began;

3 But <sup>f</sup> hath in due times manifested his word through <sup>g</sup> preaching, which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Savior;

4 To Titus, *mine* own son <sup>h</sup> after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order <sup>i</sup> the things that are <sup>j</sup> wanting, and ordain <sup>k</sup> elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

<sup>c</sup> or, For. <sup>f</sup> 2 Ti. 1:10. <sup>i</sup> 1 Co. 11:34.  
<sup>d</sup> 1 Sa. 15:29. <sup>g</sup> Ro. 10:14,15. <sup>j</sup> or, left undone.  
<sup>e</sup> Mat. 25:34. <sup>h</sup> 1 Ti. 1:1,2. <sup>k</sup> Ac. 14:23. 2 Ti. 2:2.

the believer; truth not only to be known, but *acknowledged*, and held forth in word and practice, Phil. 2: 15, 16. Rom. 10: 10. To bring to this *knowledge* and *faith*, and to the *acknowledging* and *profession* of the *truth which is after godliness*, is the great end of the gospel-ministry. In (or for) *hope of eternal life*, v. 2. This is the further intent of the Gospel, to beget *hope* as well as *faith*; to take off the mind and heart from the world, and to raise them to heaven and the things above. The faith and godliness of Christians lead to eternal life, and give hope and well-grounded expectation of it; for God, that cannot lie, hath promised it.

But, How is He said to promise before the world began? Some understand his decree, He purposed it in his eternal counsels, which was, as it were, his promise in *embryo*; or rather, say some, *before ancient times*, or many ages ago, referring to the promise darkly delivered, Gen. 3: 15. Here is the stability and antiquity of the promise of eternal life to the saints. But it hath been in *due time manifested*, v. 3. that is, He hath made his promise, so darkly delivered of old, *in due time*, (the proper season before appointed,) more plain *by preaching*; that which some called *foolishness of preaching*, has been thus honored. *Which is committed unto me*. The ministry is a trust; and whoso is appointed and called, must preach the Word, 1 Cor. 9: 16. Unpreaching ministers are none of the apostle's successors. *According to the commandment of God our Savior*; preaching is a work appointed by God as a Savior. See a proof here of Christ's deity, for by Him was the Gospel committed to Paul when he was converted, Acts 9: 15, 17. and *ch. 22: 10, 14, 15*. and again when Christ appeared to him, v. 17—21. The Father saves by the Son, through the Spirit, and they concur in sending ministers.

2. Here is the person written to, described;

*Titus*, a Gentile Greek, yet called both to the faith and ministry. Observe, The grace of God is free and powerful. He is described by his spiritual relation unto the apos-

tle; *Mine own* (or *my genuine*) son, not by nature, but by grace, 1 Cor. 4: 15. *Mine own son after the common faith*; so called to distinguish Titus from hypocrites and false teachers, and to recommend him to the regard of the Cretians, as being among them a lively image of the apostle himself, in faith, and life, and heavenly doctrine.

3. Paul's salutation and prayer, wishing all blessings to Titus. Here are the blessings wished; *Grace, mercy, and peace*. *Grace*, the free favor of God, and acceptance with him. *Mercy*, the fruits of that favor, in pardon of sins, and freedom from all miseries by it, both here and hereafter. And *peace*, the positive effect, and fruit of mercy. Observe, Grace is the fountain of all blessings. Mercy, and peace, and all good, spring out of this. Get into God's favor, and all must be well; for,

These blessings are wished. *From God the Father*, the Fountain of all good. *And the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior*, as the way and means of procurement and conveyance.

Thus far the preface to the epistle; then follows,

The entrance into the matter, by signifying the end of Titus' being left in Crete.

V. 5. Here is the end expressed,

I. More generally. *To set in order*, or *to order* after another; so the word imports. Titus was to go on in settling what the apostle himself had not time for, in his short stay there. Observe the apostle's great diligence in the Gospel; he labored to spread the Gospel as far as he could. His faithfulness and prudence too. He neglected not the places he went from; but left some to cultivate the young plantation, and carry on what was begun. Observe his humility; he disdained not to be helped, and that by such as were not of so high a rank in the ministry; a fit example for exciting zeal and industry, and engaging to faithfulness and care of the flock, and, present or absent, living and dying, for ministers, as much as in them lies, to provide for the spiritual edification and comfort of their people. Here also, Observe, Titus, though inferior to an apostle, yet was above the ordinary fixed pastors or bishops, who were to tend particular churches as their peculiar stated charge; Titus was to ordain such ordinary pastors where wanting, and settle things in their first state and form, and then to pass to other places for like service, as there might be need. Where an apostle could act as an apostle, an evangelist could as an evangelist; for they worked the work of the Lord, as they did, 1 Cor. 16: 10. in a like unfixed and itinerant manner.

Here at Crete Titus was but occasionally, and for a short time; Paul willed him to despatch business, and come to him at Nicopolis, where he purposed to winter; after this he was sent to Corinth, was with the apostle at Rome, and was sent thence into Dalmatia, which is the last we read of him in Scripture, so that from thence no fixed episcopacy in him does appear; he left Crete, and we find not in Scripture that he returned thither any more.

But, What power had either Paul or Titus here? Was not what they did, an en-

croachment on the rights of civil rulers? No, they came not to meddle with the civil rights of any, Luke 12: 14. Their work was spiritual, to be carried on by conviction and persuasion, no way interfering with, or prejudicing, or weakening, the power of magistrates, but securing and strengthening it rather; the *things wanting* were not such as civil magistrates are the fountains or authors of, but divine and spiritual ordinances, and appointments for spiritual ends, derived from Christ, the King and Head of the church; for settling these was Titus left. And observe, No easy thing is it to raise churches, and bring them to perfection.

II. In special; *To ordain elders in every city*, that is, ministers, who were mostly out of the elder, and most understanding and experienced Christians; or if younger in years, yet such as were grave and solid in their deportment and manners. These were to be set where there was any fit number of Christians, as in larger towns and cities was usually the case; though villages too might have them where there were Christians enough. These presbyters or elders were to have the ordinary and stated care and charge of the churches. The word is used sometimes more largely for any who bear ecclesiastical function in the church; so the apostles were *presbyters* or *elders*, 1 Pet. 5: 1. but here it is meant of ordinary fixed pastors, who *labored in the Word and doctrine*, and were *over the churches in the Lord*; such as are described here throughout the ch. Some use *presbyter* in the same sense as *sacerdos*, and translate it *priest*; a term not given to gospel-ministers, unless in a figurative or allusive way, as all God's people are said to be made *kings and priests unto God*, to offer up spiritual sacrifices of prayers, praises, and alms. But properly we have no priests under the Gospel, except Christ alone, *the High Priest of our profession*, Heb. 3: 1. Presbyters here therefore are not proper priests, to offer sacrifices, either typical or real; but only gospel-ministers, to dispense Christ's ordinances, and to *feed the church of God, over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers*. 1. Observe, A church without a fixed and standing ministry in it, is imperfect and wanting. 2. Where a fit number of believers is, presbyters or elders must be set, their continuance in churches is as necessary as their first appointment, *for perfecting the saints, and edifying the body of Christ, till all come to a perfect man in Christ*, till the whole number of God's chosen be called and united to Christ in one body, and brought to their full stature and strength, and that measure of grace that is proper and designed for them, Eph. 4: 12, 13. What praise is due to God for such an institution! What thankfulness from those that enjoy the benefits of it! What pity and prayer for such as want it! Ignorance and corruption, decays of good and increase of all evil, come by want of a teaching and quickening ministry. On such accounts therefore was *Titus left in Crete, to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders in every city*; but this he was to do, not according to his own will or fancy, but according to apostolical direction. This is,

who were given to Him, John 6: 36—40. 17: 1—3. eternal life was promised to Him, in behalf of his people, of all who in every age should believe in Him, 'before the world was;' in consequence of his engagement to become incarnate, and to be obedient even to the death on the cross. 'Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world.' Allow this, (and who will venture to deny it?) and then the promise of eternal life to the divine Looos, in behalf of all his people, is clear, and the meaning satisfactory; which, in my judgment at least, the other interpretations by no means are.—(2) *Cannot lie*.] Surely this was not from want of liberty or power, but through the *moral inability* of perfect holiness. 2 Tim. 2: 8—13, v. 13. SCOTT.

V. 5. *Crete*.] Crete, one of the largest islands in the Mediterranean, lies to the south of the Archipelago, and is about 250 miles long, 50 broad, and 600 in circuit. According to ancient authors it was peopled from Palestine. This people were great archers. In 1204 the Venetians took Candia, the second greatest city in Crete, and with it the whole island. But in 1645 the Turks almost entirely expelled the Venetians [496]

and have kept possession ever since. In respect to climate and soil, as well as size, Crete is one of the finest islands in the Mediterranean, and with proper cultivation would produce all the necessaries and luxuries of life in the greatest abundance. MACKN.—A son of the *Ed.* lately visited this delightful island, now in the hands of the viceroy of Egypt, and remarks upon its soil, scenery, and capability, as well deserving the praise that has been lavished upon them. What a station for a Christian colony, filled with American enterprise! This stepping-stone and key to the east, would soon become the staple of the commerce of the E. and W. Ep.—*Set in order, &c.*] *Ordain, &c.* 'There were "100 cities" in Crete, but every considerable town was called a *city* by the ancients. Most likely, some congregations were settled under proper ministers, while Paul was among them, but others were not so provided, and the interposition of so wise and good a man as Titus, probably moved with extraordinary gifts, would, no doubt, have great weight on such an occasion.' DODDR.—Might he not have said, that Titus, as an evangelist (of that peculiar character, as evangelists, which is conceded to Timothy



6 If any be <sup>1</sup>blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly.

7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good <sup>m</sup>men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

9 Holding <sup>n</sup>fast the faithful word, <sup>o</sup>as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

10 For there are many unruly and vain <sup>p</sup>talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

1 1 Ti. 3:2, &c.    n 2 Th. 2:15.    p Ja. 1:26.  
m or, things.    o or, in teaching.

III. The rule of his proceeding; *As I had appointed thee*, probably when he was going from him, and in the presence and hearing of others; which now he may refer to, not so much for Titus' own sake as for the people's, that they might the more readily yield obedience to Titus, knowing and observing that in what he did he was warranted and supported by apostolic injunction and authority. Human traditions and inventions may not be brought into the church of God. If an evangelist might not do anything but by appointment, much less may others.

The apostle next gives Titus directions about ordination, showing whom he should ordain, and whom not.

Of those whom he should ordain, he points out the qualifications and virtues; such as respect their life and manners, and such as relate to their doctrine: the *former* in the sixth, seventh, and eighth verses, and the *latter* in the ninth.

V. 6—9. 1. Their qualifications respecting their life and manners are,

1. More general; *If any be blameless*; not absolutely; but the meaning is, not under an ill character; but rather of good report, even *from those that are without*; he must not bring reproach on the holy function.

2. More particularly:

(1.) He must be of conjugal chastity; *the husband of one wife*. The church of Rome says the husband of *no* wife, but from the beginning it was not so; marriage is an ordinance from which no profession or calling is a bar, 1 Cor. 9:5. *Forbidding to marry* is one of the erroneous doctrines of the antichristian church, 1 Tim. 4:3. Not that ministers *must* be married; that is not meant; but *the husband of one wife*, may be either not having divorced his wife and married another, or having but *one wife* at one and the same time, no bigamist; he might be married to more than one wife successively; but, being married, he must have but one wife at once. Polygamy is scandalous in any, as also having a harlot or concubine with his lawful wife; such sin, or any wanton libidinous carriage, must be very remote from such as would enter into so sacred a function. And as to his children, *having faithful children*, obedient and good, brought up in the true Christian faith, and living according to it, at least as far as the

and Titus), was to exercise a discretionary and deciding influence in the ordination of these elders, &c., agreeably to the suggestion of Scott, and the opinion of Whitby, quoted by Scott? See Preface to Titus; also below, v. 7. on *bishop*.

V. 6, 7. *Riot.*] *Asotias*: Eph. 5:18. 1 Pet. 4:4. *Asotos*: Lu. 15:13. Excess in expenses, or in animal indulgence. *Self-willed.*] 2 Pet. 2:10. One who makes his own inclination the measure of his conduct, in what regards others. Lu. 18:1—8. 2 Pet. 2:10, 11. [Note, 2 Tim. 3:2.] Scott.

(7.) *Bishop.*] 'If the bishop Paul speaks of, had been invested with an office *distinct* from, and *superior* to, the *elder*, v. 5. there could have been no room to conclude, that an *elder must be blameless*, be-

endeavors of the parents can avail. *Not accused of riot, or unruly*; not justly so accused; otherwise the most innocent may be falsely so charged; they must look to it, therefore, that there be no color for such censure.

The ground of this qualification is shown from the nature of his office, v. 7. Those before termed *presbyters*, or *elders*, are here styled *bishops*; and such they were, having no ordinary fixed and standing officers above them. Titus' business here, it is plain, was but occasional, and his stay short, as before noted. Having ordained elders, and settled things in their due form, he went and left all (for aught that appears in Scripture) in the hands of those elders whom the apostle here calls *bishops*, and *stewards of God*. We read not in the sacred writings of any successor he had in Crete; but to those elders or bishops was committed the full charge of feeding, ruling, and watching over, their flock; they wanted not any powers necessary for carrying on religion and the ministry of it among them, and deriving it down to succeeding ages. These are the qualifications, relatively, with the ground of them.

(2.) The more absolute ones are expressed:

[1.] Negatively, showing what an elder or bishop must not be; *not self-willed*. The prohibition is of large extent, excluding self-opinion, or overweening conceit of parts and abilities, self-love, and self-seeking, making *self* the centre of all; also self-confidence and trust, and self-pleasing, little regarding or setting by others; not proud, stubborn, froward, inflexible, set on one's own will and way; or churlish, as Nabal: such is the sense expositors have affixed to the term. *Not soon angry, not one of a hasty, angry temper*, soon and easily provoked and inflamed. The minister must be meek and gentle, and patient towards all men. *Not given to wine*; there is no greater reproach on a minister than to be a wine-bibber, one who loves it, and gives himself undue liberty this way. Seasonable and moderate use of this is not unlawful, 1 Tim. 5:23. But excess therein is shameful in all, especially in a minister: take heed, therefore, of going too near the brink. *No striker*, in any quarrelsome or contentious manner, not injuriously or out of revenge, with cruelty or unnecessary roughness. *Not given to filthy lucre*; not greedy of it, as 1 Tim. 3:3. whereby is not meant refusing a just return for their labors, in order to their necessary support and comfort; but not making gain their first or chief end; entering into the ministry, or managing of it with base worldly views. It is called *filthy lucre*, from its defiling the soul that inordinately or greedily looks after it, as if it were any other wise desirable than for the good and lawful uses of it. Thus of the negative part of the bishop's character. But,

[2.] Positively he must be, v. 8. *A lover of hospitality*, as an evidence that he is not given to filthy lucre, but is willing to use what he has to the best purposes, not laying up for himself, so as to hinder charitable laying out for the good of others; *receiving and entertaining strangers*, (as the word imports,) a great and necessary office of love, especially in those times of affliction and distress, when Christians were made to fly and wander for safety from persecution and enemies, or in travelling to and fro where there were not such public houses for reception as in our days; nor, it may be, had many poor

saints sufficiency of their own for such uses; then to receive and entertain them was good and pleasing to God. *A lover of good men, or of good things*; ministers should be exemplary in both; this will evidence their open piety, and likeness to God, and their Master, Jesus Christ. *Sober, or prudent*, as the word signifies; a needful grace in a minister, both for his ministerial and personal carriage and management. *Just*, in things belonging to civil life, and moral righteousness and equity in dealings, giving to all their due. *Holy*, in what concerns religion; one who reverences and worships God, and is of a spiritual and heavenly conversation. *Temperate*; it comes from a word that signifies *strength*, and denotes one who has power over his appetite and affections, or, in things lawful, can, for good ends, restrain and hold them in. And thus of the qualifications respecting the minister's life and manners; what he must not, and what he must, be and do. Now,

II. As to doctrine:

1. Here is his duty, v. 9. keeping close to the doctrine of Christ, *the word of his grace*; holding it fast in his own belief and profession, and in teaching others. Observe, The Word of God, revealed in the Scripture, is a true and infallible Word, which ministers must hold fast, and hold forth, in their teaching and life. *I have kept the faith*, was Paul's comfort, 2 Tim. 4:7. and *not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God*; there was his faithfulness, Acts 20:27.

2. Here is the end, v. 9. to persuade and draw others to the true faith, and convince the contrary minded. We see here summarily the great work of the ministry,—to exhort those who are willing to know and do their duty; and to convince them that contradict; both which are to be done by *sound doctrine*, in a rational, instructive way, by scripture-arguments and testimonies, which are the infallible words of truth, what all may and should rest and be satisfied in and determined by. And thus of the qualifications of the elders whom Titus was to ordain.

The apostle's directory shows whom he should reject or avoid,—men of another character, the mention of which is brought in as a reason of the care he had recommended about the qualifications of ministers, why they should be such, and only such, as he had described. The reasons he takes both from bad teachers and hearers among them, from v. 10. to the end.

V. 10, 11. 1. Those false teachers are described. They were *unruly*, headstrong, and ambitious of power, refractory and untractable, (as some render it,) and such as would not bear or submit themselves to the discipline and necessary order in the church, impatient of good government and of sound doctrine. Many such there were, *especially* pretended converts from the Jews, who yet were for mingling Judaism and Christianity together, and so making a corrupt medley. These were the false teachers. And,

2. There is the apostle's direction how to deal with them, v. 11. *Their mouths must be stopped*; not by outward force, but by confutation and conviction, showing them their error, *not giving place to them even for an hour*. In case of obstinacy, indeed, breaking the peace of the church, and corrupting other churches, censures are to have place; the last means for recovering the faulty, and preventing the hurt of many. Observe, Faithful ministers must oppose seducers in good

cause a bishop must be so, though the argument would have held strongly in an inverted order.' Doddr.—*Self-willed.*] Obstinate, morose, and arrogant. *Id.* after *Raphchilus*.

V. 10—13. They [the Creteans] united the subtlety of the fox, the venom of the serpent, or the fierceness of wolves and tigers, with the greediness and inactivity of swine.—It is not easy to determine, from what concurrence of circumstances the Creteans obtained so odious and contemptible a national character; but the inspired apostle attested the truth of this testimony; and the effects of it appeared in the conduct of many false teachers and professors of Christianity.—Timothy had been taught to instruct opposers with *meekness*, and to rebuke with long-



11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

12 One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

13 This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply; that they may be sound in the faith,

14 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

q Mat. 23:14. t 1 Ti. 1:4. w or, void of  
r Ac. 17:28. u Ro. 14:14,20. judgment.  
s 2 Ti. 4:2. v 2 Ti. 3:5,7.

time, that, their folly being made manifest, they may proceed no further.

3. The reasons for this. (1.) From the pernicious effects of their errors; *They subvert whole houses, teaching things they ought not*; the necessity of circumcision, and of keeping the law of Moses; so subverting the Gospel and souls of men; not some few only, but whole families. (2.) Their base end in what they do; *for filthy lucre's sake, serving a worldly interest under pretence of religion; love of money is the root of all evil.* Most fit it is, that such should be resisted, confuted, and put to shame, by sound doctrine, and reasons from the Scriptures. Thus of the grounds respecting the had teachers.

In reference to their people or hearers, who are described from ancient testimony given of them:

V. 12—14. I. Here is the witness, v. 12. one of the Cretians, not of the Jews, Epimenides, a Greek poet, likely to know, and

unlikely to slander them: a prophet of their own; so their poets were accounted writers of divine oracles. These often witnessed against the vices of the people: Aratus, Epimenides, and others among the Greeks; Horace, Juvenal, and Persius, among the Latins: much smartness did they use against divers vices.

II. Here is the matter of his testimony,—*The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies*; to a proverb they were infamous for falsehood and lying. To play the Cretian, or to lie, is the same; and they were compared to evil beasts, for their sly hurtfulness and savage nature; and called slow bellies, for their laziness and sensuality, more inclined to eat than to work, and live by some honest employment. Observe, Such scandalous vices as were the reproach of heathens, should be far from Christians. And,

III. Here is the verification of this by the apostle himself, v. 13. The apostle saw too much ground for that character. The temper of some nations is more inclined to some vices than others. The Cretians were too generally such as here described, slothful and ill-natured, false and perfidious, as the apostle himself vouches. And thence,

IV. He instructs Titus how to deal with them; *Wherefore rebuke them sharply.* When Paul wrote to Timothy, he bade him *instruct with meekness*; but now, when he writes to Titus, he bids him *rebuke them sharply.* The reason of the difference may be taken either from the different temper of Timothy and Titus; or rather, it was from the difference of the ease and people. Timothy had a more polite people to deal with, and therefore he must *rebuke them with meekness*; Titus a more rough and uncultivated people; and therefore he must *rebuke them sharply.* There must, in reproving, be a distinguishing between sins and sins, and between sinners and sinners. Wisdom, therefore, is requisite to temper and manage reproofs aright, as may be most likely to do good, Jude 22: 23. The Cretians' sins and corruptions were many, great, and habitual; therefore they must be rebuked sharply. But that such direction might not be misconstrued,

V. Here is the end of it noted, v. 14. that they may be, and show themselves, truly and effectually changed from such evil temper

and manners as those Cretians in their natural state lived in, and might not adhere to or regard (as some might be too ready to do) the Jewish traditions, and superstitions of the Pharisees, which would be apt to make them disrelish the Gospel, and the sound and wholesome truths of it. Observe, The sharpest reproofs must aim at the good of the reprov'd: soundness in the faith is most desirable and necessary; and a special mean thereto is, to turn away the ear from fables and the fancies of men, 1 Tim. 1: 4. *such*: 4: 7. Fancies and devices of men in the worship of God, are contrary to truth and piety. Observe, A fearful judgment it is, to be turned away from the truth. *Who hath bewitched you, said Paul to the Galatians, ch. 3: 1. that ye should not obey the truth? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye made perfect by the flesh?*

VI. He gives the reason for all this, from the liberty we have by the Gospel, from legal observances, and the evil and mischief of a Jewish spirit under the Christian dispensation, in the two last verses.

V. 15, 16. To good Christians, sound in the faith, and thereby purified, *all things are pure*; meats and drinks, and such things as were forbidden under the law, in these there is now no such distinction, *all are pure*, lawful and free in their use; *but to them that are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure*: things lawful and good they abuse and turn to sin, because their mind and conscience, those leading faculties, are defiled; a taint is derived to all they do, Prov. 15: 8. and ch. 21: 4. *The ploughing of the wicked is sin, not in itself, but as done by him*; the earliness of the mind and heart mars all the labor of the hand.

Objection. But are not these Judaizers, as ye call them, men who profess religion, and speak well of God and Christ, and righteousness of life, and should they be so severely taxed? Answer, v. 16. There are many who in word and tongue profess to know God, and yet in their lives and conversations deny and reject Him: their practice is a contradiction to their profession, Ezek. 33: 31. The apostle, instructing Titus to rebuke sharply, does himself rebuke sharply; he gives them very hard words; yet, doubtless, no harder than their case warranted, and their need required. *Being abom-*

PRACT. OBS. All, who are not the slaves of sin and Satan, are 'the servants of God': 'this honor have all his saints,' and this dignifies their meanest employments, Is. 54:15—17. John 12:23—25. Rom. 6:16—19. Col. 3:22—25, though the office of ministers is confined to a few, and that of apostles and evangelists to a very small number.—When a multitude of captives are brought forth, from the dark dungeon of Satan, into the glorious light and liberty of the Gospel; many things will be wanting, and much will require to 'be set in order,' before their worship and service can be performed in a suitable manner, the best methods used for their edification, and the most effectual defense made against the assaults of their spiritual enemies. Then the presence, counsel, and influence of experienced and faithful servants of God will be peculiarly useful; especially in respect of the choice and ordination of pastors, to preside over them and teach them.—It is peculiarly incumbent on ministers to educate their children with diligence and piety, and to rule them with prudence and firmness: and the children of ministers should consider what a dreadful account must be rendered by them, if their unbelief, riot, and unruly behavior bring an imputation on

suffering; 1 Tim. 5:1,2. 2 Tim. 2:23—26. but Titus was ordered to rebuke with sharpness. Some have conjectured, that Timothy was too vehement in his natural spirit, and Titus too timid and pliant: others ascribe the difference to the opposite characters of the persons to be rebuked. But, in fact, Christian meekness is as distant from pusillanimous connivance at sin and error, as from impetuous anger and impatience. This, the apostle's conduct, and even that of our Lord Himself, fully demonstrate. Jam. 3:17,18.

(10.) Bl. understands this of Judaizers, and adds, 'that Crete, standing midway between Palestine and the civilized world, and so opportune for both, should swarm with Jews, were of itself probable, and it is confirmed by Josephus and Philo.' Ed.

(12.) 'To Cretise, or imitate the Cretians, was a proverbial expression among the ancients for lying. The words poet and prophet were often used promiscuously by the Greeks and Romans. Some fragments of Epimenides, have come down to us, among which is what is here quoted from a work entitled, concerning oracles; and he seems to have been regarded as a prophet rather than a poet. Patey notices the similarity of making this quotation from a Cretian poet, to the apostle's quoting a poet of their own at Athens.' HENRY, a'v.—*Evil beasts, slow bellies.* It is evident the poet here suggested a remarkable contrast, to shew what a mixture there was of fierceness and luxury in the character of the Cretians. Savage beasts are generally nimble and active; but these men, while they had the fury of lions and tigers, indulged so much in

the character of their fathers, interfere with their usefulness, and thus occasion the ruin of immortal souls.—In all ages, there have been 'unruly and vain talkers and deceivers,' by whom Satan sows tares in the Lord's field: and this should teach and induce the servants of God to be vigilant and diligent, that they may counteract the enemy.—The true Christian learns to exercise his liberty in a pure and holy manner; all things are 'pure to him,' and grace teaches him 'to eat, and to drink, and to do all to the glory of God'; and when he fails, he has humble recourse to the purifying blood and sanctifying grace of Christ. But unbelievers are 'defiled in their minds and consciences'; their ordinary notions and religious duties are unclean to them: whether they riot in licentiousness, as if that were liberty; or whether they enslave themselves to superstitious observances. For alas! numbers, of various descriptions, 'profess to know God, but in works deny Him; being abominable, disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.' But at last 'the tree will be known by its fruit; and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire.' SCOTT.

the most sordid idleness and intemperance; that they grew (as it were) all belly: and, like a breed of swine common in the eastern countries, were often so burdened with fat, that they could hardly move.' DODDR. The Egyptians represented a man who thus made a god of the alimentive propensity, as an unwieldy, big-bellied swine, waddling upon his hind feet. Ed.

(13.) *Rebuke them sharply.* On the difference between Paul's instruction here to Titus, and his instruction to Timothy, see on 2 Tim. 4:2. to which may be added here, from Doddr., that 'there is a degree of long-suffering and gentleness, very consistent with all that severity which faithfulness requires; which is not that of boisterous passion, ill-nature and scurrility, but of meek, though resolute zeal for God, and friendship for the offender, which yet will not be silenced by trifling excuses, nor fail seriously to represent the fatal consequences that may attend the evil reprov'd.' Id.

V. 14—16. The unbelieving Jews seem to have been primarily intended; but the Judaizing teachers were purposely included as unbelievers, also, though they professed to believe.—(14) *Turn from the truth.* Some render it *pervert or subvert the truth*: yet the word occurs in a like construction in the text referred to, where it evidently means *turn away from*. SCOTT.

(15, 16.) *In works deny God.* Paul is speaking of a class which contains many grades, from the openly licentious, to the honorable in the eyes of the world. 'Amid the manifold varieties of human charac-



## CHAP. II.

1 Directions given unto Titus both for his doctrine and life.

9 Of the duty of servants, and in general of all Christians.

**B**UT speak thou the things which become sound doctrine :

2 That the aged <sup>a</sup> men be <sup>b</sup> sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh <sup>c</sup> holiness, not <sup>d</sup> false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things ;

4 That they may teach the <sup>e</sup> young women to be <sup>f</sup> sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

a Pr. 15:31. c or, holy women. e 1 Ti. 5:14.  
b or, vigilant. d or, make-bates. f or, wise.

inable, deserving that God and good men should turn away their eyes from them as nauseous and offensive. *And disobedient, unpersuadable and unbelieving.* They might do divers things ; but it was not the obedience of faith, not what was commanded, or short of the command. *To every good work reprobate, without skill or judgment [or will] to do anything aright.* See the miserable condition of such as have a form of godliness, but not the power ; yet let us not be so ready to fix this charge on others, as careful that it agree not to ourselves ; that there be not in us *an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God ;* but that we be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God, Phil. 1:10, 11.

CHAP. II. V. 1. Here is the third thing in the matter of the epistle. In the ch. foregoing, the apostle had directed Titus about matters of government, and to set in order the things that were wanting in the churches. Here he exhorts him,

1. Generally, to a faithful discharge of his own office. The adversative particle (*but*) here, points back to the corrupt teachers : in opposition to them, says he, *'But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine, what is agreeable to the Word, which is pure and uncorrupt, healthful and nourishing to eternal life.'* Observe, The true doctrines of the Gospel are *sound doctrines*, and ministers must be careful to teach only such. If the common talk of Christians must be uncorrupt to the use of edifying, such as may minister grace to the hearers, Eph. 4:29. much more must ministers' preaching be such. Thus the apostle exhorts Titus generally ; and then,

2. Specially and particularly, he instructs him to apply this sound doctrine to several sorts of persons, from v. 2—10. Here is an excellent Christian directory, accommodated to the old and to the young ; to men and women ; to the preacher himself, and unto servants.

V. 2. By aged men some understand *elders by office*, including deacons, &c. But it is rather to be taken of the aged in years. Old disciples of Christ must conduct themselves in everything agreeably to the Christian doctrine. *That the aged men be sober ;* not thinking the decays of nature will justify them in any intemperance to repair them ; they must keep measure in things, both for health and for fitness, for counsel and example to the younger. *Grove ;* levity is unbecoming in any, but especially in the aged ; they should be composed and staid, grave in habit, speech, and behavior ; gaudiness in dress, levity and vanity in the behavior, how unbecoming in their years ! *Temperate ;* moderate and prudent, one who governs well his passions and affections, so as not to be hurried away by them to anything evil or indecent. *Sound in the faith ;* sincere and steadfast, constantly adhering to the truth of the Gospel, not fond of novelties, or ready to run into corrupt opinions or parties. Those who are full of years should be full of grace and goodness, the inner man renewing more and more as the outer decays. *In charity, or love ;* this is fitly joined with faith, which works by, and must be seen in, love, love to God and men, and soundness therein : it must be sincere love, without dissimulation. And *in patience.* Aged persons are apt to be peevish, fretful, and passionate ; and therefore need to be on their guard against such infirmities and temptations. Faith, love, and patience, are three main Christian graces, and soundness in these is much of gospel-perfection. There is *enduring and waiting patience ;* both must be looked after ; to bear evils becomingly, and contentedly to want the good till we are fit for it, and it for us, being followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Thus as to the aged men.

V. 3. Aged women, also, must be instructed and warned. Some by these understand the *deaconesses*, mostly employed in looking after the poor and tending the sick ; but it is rather to be taken (as we render it) of all aged women professing religion, they must be in behavior as becometh holiness ; both men and women must accommodate their behavior to their profession ; those virtues before recommended to aged men, are not proper to them only, but applicable to both sexes, and to be looked to by aged women as well as men ; women are to hear and learn their duty from the Word, as well as the men : there is not one way of salvation for one sex or sort, and another for another ; but both must learn and practice the same things, both as aged and as Christians ; the virtues and duties are common. *That the aged women likewise,* as well as the men, be in behavior as becometh holiness ; or as becometh and is proper for holy persons, such as they profess to be, and should be ; keeping a pious decency and decorum in clothing and gesture, in looks and speech, and all their deportment ; and this from an inward principle and habit of holiness, influencing and ordering the outward conduct at all

times. Observe, Though express scripture do not occur, or be not brought, for every word, or look, or fashion in particular ; yet general rules there are, according to which all must be ordered, 1 Cor. 10:31. Phil. 4:8. Whatsoever things are beseeching or unbecoming holiness, form a measure and rule of carriage to be looked to. *Not false accusers, no calumniators or sowers of discord, slandering and backbiting their neighbors, a great and too common fault.* A slanderer is one whose tongue is set on fire of hell : so much, and so directly, do these do the devil's work, that for it the devil's name is given to such. *Not given to much wine ;* the word denotes such addictedness thereto, as to be under the power and mastery of it. How immodest and shameful, corrupting and destroying purity both of body and mind ! Of what evil example and tendency, unfitting for the next thing, which is a positive duty of aged matrons, to be teachers of good things. Not public preachers, that is forbidden, 1 Cor. 14:34. but otherwise, by example and a good life : besides, they may and should, also, teach by doctrinal instruction at home, and in a private way. Prov. 31:1, 26. Teachers of good things are opposed to teachers of things corrupt, or to what is trifling and vain, of no good use or tendency ; old wives' fables, or superstitious sayings and observances ; in opposition to these, their business is, and they may be called on to it, to be teachers of good things. For,

There are lessons for young women, also, which the aged women must teach, and instruct and advise them in, the duties of religion according to their years.

V. 4, 5. For teaching such things, aged women have often better access than the men, even than ministers have ; therefore, they must improve it in instructing the young women, especially the young wives ; for he speaks of their duty to their husbands and children. These young women, the more aged must teach,

1. To bear a good personal character ; *To be sober and discreet,* contrary to the vanity and rashness which younger years are subject to : *discreet and chaste* stand well together ; many expose themselves to fatal temptations, by that which at first might be but indiscretion, Prov. 2:11. *Chaste and keepers at home,* are well joined too. *Diinah,* when she went to see the daughters of the land, lost her chastity : there are occasions for going abroad, but a gadding temper for merriment and company sake, to the neglect of domestic affairs, or from meanness at being in her place, that is the opposite evil intended, and is commonly accompanied with, or draws after it, other evils, 1 Tim. 5:13, 14. As their business, they should guide the house, and give no occasion to the enemy to speak reproachfully. *Good,* generally, in opposition to all vice ; and specially, in her place, kind, helpful, and charitable ; as *Doreas, full of good works and almsdeeds.* Also, it may have, so some, a more particular sense, one of a meek, and yet cheerful

ter, and the number of constitutional principles which enter into its composition, might there not be an individual, in whom the constitutional virtues so blaze forth, and have the ascendancy, [Mar. 10:21, &c.] as to give a general effect of gracfulness to the whole of this moral exhibition ; and yet, may not that individual be as unmindful of his God, as if the principles of his constitution had been mixed up in such different proportion, as to make him an odious and a revolting spectacle ? In a word, might not Sensibility shed forth its tears, and Friendship perform its services, and Liberality impart of its treasures, and Patriotism earn the gratitude of its country, and Honor maintain itself entire and untainted, and all the softening of what is amiable, and all the glories of what is chivalrous and manly, gather into one bright effulgency of moral accomplishment on the person of him, who never, for a moment, subordinates one habit, or one affection, to the will of the Almighty ; [who hath not God in all, or any of his thoughts ;] who is just as careless and as unconcerned about God, as if the native tendencies of his constitution had compounded him a monster of deformity ; and who just as effectually realizes [total depravity] this attribute of rebellion against his Maker, as the most loathsome and profligate of his species, that he walks in the counsel of his own heart, and after the sight of his own eyes ? [For in the same showing out of natural inclinations] you may also observe among the brutes, the gentleness [and benevolence] of one,

the affectionate fidelity of another, the cruel and unrelenting ferocity of a third, [parental love, providence, &c.] and you never question the propriety of language, when some of these instinctive tendencies [note, end of Rom. 7.] are better reported of than others, as more or less amiable and endearing. But it does not once occur to you, that, even in the very best of these exhibitions, there is any sense of God, or that the great master-principle of his authority is at all concerned in it. *Mere Virtue without Christianity.*

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. To mark the difference between false teachers, and the servants of Christ, the apostle exhorted Titus to 'speak such things as became sound doctrine,' or the salutary, healing truths of the Gospel, from which all the motives and encouragements to holy obedience must be deduced ; and it 'became sound doctrine,' that preachers should inculcate on their hearers the practice of their various duties, from evangelical [not selfish] motives. It does not appear, that the elders or pastors of the church were exclusively intended. The original word is different from that translated *elders*, and signifies men advanced in years. The apostle had before spoken of the elders. 1:5—9. S.

V. 3—6. They must not be 'enslaved to much wine ;' some of them might have been accustomed to this, when heathens, and it would need great self-denial to acquire victory over the habit, and liberty from the thralldom, of this infatuating vice. (3) *Behavior.* Here only. 'It sig-



5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.

7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

8 Sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

9 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

g or, discreet. 1 1 Ti. 6:3. k'or, gainsaying.  
h 1 Ti. 4:12. j Ep. 6:5, &c.

spirit and temper, not sullen, or bitter, or taunting, or fretting and galling any; not of a troublesome or jarring disposition, uneasy in herself and to those about her; but of a good nature, and pleasing conversation, and likewise helpful by her advice and pains: thus building her house, and doing her husband good, and not evil, all her days. Thus, in their personal character, sober, discreet, chaste, keepers at home, and good: and,

2. In their relative capacities, to love their husbands, and to be obedient to them: and where there is true love, this will be no difficult command. God, in nature, and by his will, hath made this subordination, 1 Tim. 2: 12. Gen. 3: 16. It is therefore doubly enjoined: first in innocency, when was settled a subordination of nature, Adam being first formed, and then Eve, and the woman out of the man: and then upon the fall, the woman being first in the transgression, and seducing the man; here now began to be a subjection not so easy and comfortable, being part of the penalty in her case; yet through Christ is this nevertheless a sanctified state, Eph. 5: 22. God would have a resemblance of Christ's authority over the church, held forth in the husband's over the wife. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be unto their own husbands, as is fit in the Lord, Col. 3: 18. as stands with the law of Christ, and is for his and the Father's glory. It is not, then, an absolute, or unlimited, or a slavish subjection that is required; but a loving subordination, to prevent disorder or confusion, and to further all the ends of the relation. Thus, in reference to the husbands, wives must be instructed in their duties of love and subjection to them. And to love their children, not with a natural affection, only, but a spiritual; a love springing from a holy, sanctified heart, and regulated by the Word; not a fond, foolish love, indulging them in evil, neglecting due reproof and correction where necessary; but it must be a regular Christian love, showing itself in their pious education, forming their life and manners aright, taking care of their souls as well as of their bodies, of their spiritual welfare as well as of their temporal; of the former, chiefly, and in the first place. The reason is added,

nifies the raiment, the gait, and the whole demeanor. The physicians used the word for habit of body, or constitution. Leigh. SCOTT.

(5.) Obedient to their own husbands.] 'As in all societies there may be differences of opinion, even where the harmony of feeling remains unimpaired, so there may be differences of opinion here [in the married state]. Where such differences of opinion exist, there must be some ultimate appeal. In ordinary societies, such questions are settled by a numerical majority. But as, in this case, such a decision is impossible, some other principle must be adopted. The right of deciding, must rest with either the one or the other. As the husband is the individual who is responsible to civil society; as his intercourse with the world is of necessity greater; the voice of nature and of revelation unite in conferring the right of ultimate authority upon him. By this arrangement, the happiness of the wife is increased no less than that of the husband. Her

—that the Word of God may not be blasphemed. Failures in such relative duties would be greatly to the reproach of Christianity. The Word of God and Gospel of Christ are pure, excellent, and glorious, in themselves; and their excellency should be expressed and shown in the lives and conduct of their professors, especially in relative duties; failures here bring disgrace, Rom. 2: 24. Thus would Christ be wounded in the house of his friends. Thus of the duties of the younger women.

Here is the duty of young men.

V. 6. They are apt to be eager and hot, thoughtless and precipitant; therefore must be earnestly called on and exhorted to be considerate, not rash; advisable and submissive, not wilful and headstrong; humble and mild, not haughty and proud; more young people are ruined by pride than by any other sin. The young should be grave and solid in their deportment and manners, joining the seriousness of age with the liveliness and vigor of youth. This will make even those younger years to pass to good purpose, and yield matter of comfortable reflection, when the evil days come; it will be preventive of much sin and sorrow, and lay the ground for doing and enjoying much good. Such shall not mourn at the last, but have peace and comfort in death, and after it a glorious crown of life. With these instructions to Titus, respecting what he should teach others,—the apostle inserts some directions to himself.

V. 7, 8. 1. Here is direction for his conversation; In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works. Observe, Preachers of good works must be patterns of them also; good doctrine and good life must go together. In all things; some read above all things, or above all men. Instructing and informing others in the particulars of their duty, is necessary, and, above all things, example, especially that of the teacher himself, is needful; hereby both light and influence are more likely to go together. Ministers must be examples to the flock, and the people followers of them, as they are of Christ. And here is direction,

2. For his teaching and doctrine, as well as for his life; In doctrine, showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned. They must make it appear that this office was not entered into, or used, with secular views, but from a pure aim at the spiritual ends of its institution: therefore, the display of wit, or parts, or of human learning or oratory, is not to be affected; but sound speech must be used, which cannot be condemned; scripture-language, as far as well may be, in expressing scripture-truths. This is sound speech, that cannot be condemned. We have more than once these duties of a minister set together, 1 Tim. 4: 12, 16. 2 Tim. 3: 10. Their teaching must be agreeable to the Word, and their life with the teaching. This is the true and good minister, 1 Thess. 2: 9, 10. The next words show:

3. The reason, both for the strictness of the minister's life, and the gravity and soundness of his preaching. Adversaries would be seeking occasion to reflect, and would do so, could they find anything amiss in doctrine or life; but if both were right and good, such ministers might set

calumny itself at defiance. Observe, Faithful ministers will have enemies watching for their halting, who will endeavor to find or pick holes in their teaching or behavior; the more need, therefore, for them to look to themselves, that no just occasion be found against them. This is the direction to Titus himself, and so of the duties of free persons, male and female, old and young. Then follow the directions respecting servants.

V. 9, 10. In this direction to Titus, there are the duties themselves, to which he must exhort servants, and a weighty consideration, wherewith he was to enforce them.

1. The duties themselves are these:

(1.) To be obedient to their own masters. This is the prime duty, that by which they are characterized, Rom. 6: 16. There must be inward subjection, and dutiful respect and reverence in the mind and thoughts. This must be in servants; their will must be subject to their master's will, and their time and labor at their master's disposal and command, 1 Pet. 2: 18. The duty results from the will of God, and the relation in which, by his providence, He has put such; not from the quality of the person. Servants, therefore, are to be exhorted to be obedient to their own masters. And,

(2.) To please them well in all things, in all lawful things, and such as belong to them to command; or, at least, are not contrary to the will of their great and superior Lord. If his command and the earthly master's come in competition, we are instructed to obey God rather than man; but servants, then, must be on good grounds in this, that there is an inconsistency, else are they not held to be excused. And not only must the will of God be the measure of the servant's obedience, but the reason of it also; all must be done with a respect to Him, in virtue of his authority, and for pleasing Him primarily and chiefly, Col. 3: 22—24. In serving the earthly master according to Christ's will, He is served; and such shall be rewarded by Him accordingly.

But how are servants to please their masters in all things, and yet not be men-pleasers? Answer, Men-pleasers, in the faulty sense, are such as eye men alone, or chiefly, in what they do, leaving God out, or subordinating Him to man; this is sinful man-pleasing, which all must take heed of, Eph. 6: 5—7. Observe, therefore, Christian liberty stands well with civil servitude and subjection. Persons may serve men, and yet be the servants of Christ; these are not contrary, but subordinate; so far as serving men is according to Christ's will, and for his sake. Servants, therefore, should be faithful and cheerful in the station wherein God hath set them; striving to please their masters in all things. Hard it may be, under some churlish Nabals, but it must be endeavored, all that they are able.

(3.) Not answering again; not contradicting, or disputing; not giving any disrespectful or provoking language. When conscious of a fault, to palliate or stand in justification of it, doubles it. Yet this not answering again, excludes not turning away wrath with a soft answer, when season and circumstances admit. Good and wise masters will be ready to hear and do right; but answering unseasonably, or in an unseemly

power is always greatest in concession. She is graceful and attractive, while meek and gentle; but when angered and turbulent, she loses the fascination [and with it the influence] of her own sex, without attaining to the dignity of the other. "A woman moved, is like a fountain troubled, muddy, ill-seeming, and bereft of beauty." Shakespeare. Law of Marriage; in Elts. Mor Sci. WAYLAND.

V. 9, 10. Eph. 6: 5—9. Col. 3: 22—25. 1 Tim. 6: 1—5. 1 Pet. 2: 18—25. 'Purloining,' or pillering, in the absence of their masters, such things as were put under their care, or within their reach; either to apply them to their own use, or to bestow them on their companions. This species of stealing was so common among the heathen servants, that the same word sometimes signifies a slave, which is generally rendered a thief; and it is to be apprehended, that it is extremely common, even among servants who are called Christians, few of whom are scrupulous about



10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.

11 For the grace<sup>m</sup> of God that bringeth salvation<sup>n</sup> hath appeared to all men,

12 Teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly<sup>p</sup> lusts, we<sup>q</sup> should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

1 Mat. 5:16. hath appeared. p 1 Pe. 2:11.  
m Ro. 5:15. o Ro. 8:13. q Lu. 1:75.  
n or, to all men,

manner, or, where the case admits not excuse to be pert or confident, shows a want of the humility and meekness, which such relation requires.

(4.) *Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity.* This is another great essential of good servants, to be *honest*; never converting that to their own use, which is their masters', nor wasting the goods they are intrusted with: that is *purloining*. They must be just and true, and do for them as they would or should for themselves, Prov. 28:24. Having light thought of taking beyond what is right, though it be from a parent or master, is likely to harden conscience to go further; it is both wicked in itself, and tends to more; servants must not be their own carvers, or go about by theft to right themselves; they must commit their cause to God for righting and providing for them, except for preserving life, the necessities for which the servant has a right to. Faithfulness in a servant, lies in the ready, punctual, and thorough execution of his master's orders; keeping his secrets and counsels, despatching his affairs, and managing with frugality, and to as much just advantage for his master as he is able; looking well to his trusts, and preventing, as far as he can, all spoil, or loss, or damage. This is a way to bring a blessing on himself, as the contrary often brings utter ruin, Luke 16:12. Thus of the duties themselves, to which servants are to be exhorted. Then,

2. Here is the consideration with which Titus was to enforce them; *That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things*; recommend the Gospel to the good opinion of them *that are without*, by their meek, humble, obedient, and faithful conduct in all things. Servants may think, such as they, so low and inferior, can do little to bring repute to Christianity; yet, if careful to do their duty, it will redound to the glory of God, and the credit of religion. The unbelieving masters would think the better of that despised way, when they found their servants who were Christians, better than their other servants, more obedient, submissive, just, faithful, and diligent. Thus of the apostle's directions to Titus, about the discharge of his office, in reference to several sorts of persons. Next follow,

3. The grounds or considerations on which all the directions are urged, taken from the nature and design of the Gospel, and the end of Christ's death.

V. 11—14. 1. Here are motives from the nature and design of the Gospel. Let young

and old, men and women, masters and servants, and Titus himself; let all sorts do their respective duties, for this is the very aim and business of Christianity, to instruct, help, and form persons, under all distinctions and relations, to a right frame and conduct. For this,

(1.) They are put under the dispensation of the *grace of God*, so the Gospel is called, Eph. 3:2. It is *grace* in respect of the spring of it, and as the means of conveying and working grace in the hearts of believers. Grace is obliging and constraining to goodness, Rom. 6:12—14. *The love of Christ constrains us* not to live to self, but to Him, 2 Cor. 5:14, 15. without this effect, grace is received in vain.

(2.) This gospel-grace brings salvation; it reveals, offers, and ensures it to believers; salvation from sin and wrath, from death and hell; whence it is called the *Word of life*; it brings to faith, and so to life; the life of holiness now, and of happiness hereafter. And more inexcusable will the neglecters of this grace of God bringing salvation, now be, since,

(3.) *It hath appeared*, or shone out, more clearly and illustriously than ever before. The old dispensation was comparatively dark and shadowy; this is a clear and shining light; and as it is now more bright, so more diffused and extensive also. For,

(4.) *It hath appeared to all men*; not to the Jews only, as the glory of God appeared at mount Sinai to that particular people, and out of the view of all others; but to all, Gentiles as well as Jews. The publication of it is free and general; *Disciple all nations; Preach the Gospel to every creature.* The pale is broken down; there is no such inclosure now as formerly, Rom. 16:26. The doctrine of grace and salvation by the Gospel is for all ranks and conditions of men; therefore engaging and encouraging all to receive and believe it, and walk suitably to it, adorning it in all things.

(5.) This gospel-revelation is to *teach*, and not by way of information and instruction only, as a schoolmaster does his scholars; but by way of precept and command, as a sovereign who gives laws unto his subjects. The Gospel is not for speculation only or chiefly, but for practice, and right ordering of life. It teaches,

[1.] To abandon sin; *Denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts*; to renounce, and have no more to do with these, as we have had; an earthly, sensual conversation suits not a heavenly calling. *They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.* They have done it by covenant-engagement and promise, and have initially and prevailingly done it in act; they are going on in the work, cleansing themselves more and more from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. Thus the Gospel first teaches that which is evil, to abandon sin; and then,

[2.] To make conscience of that which is good; *To live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.* Religion is not made up of negatives only; there must be doing good as well as eschewing evil; in these conjunctly is sincerity proved, and the Gospel adorned. Living *soberly*, with respect to ourselves, in the due government of our

appetites and passions; *righteously*, towards all men, injuring none, but doing good to others, according to *our* ability and *their* need. *We are members one of another, and must seek every man another's wealth*, 1 Cor. 10:24. 12:25. The public, especially, which includes the interest of all, must have the regards of all. *Selfishness* is a sort of *unrighteousness*; it robs others of that share in us which is their due. Live *righteously*, therefore, as well as *soberly*. And *godly* toward God, in the duties of his worship and service. Regards to Him, indeed, should run through all, 1 Cor. 10:31. Personal and relative duties must be done in obedience to his commands, with due aim at pleasing and honoring Him, from principles of holy love and fear of Him. This is *godliness*, looking and coming to God, as our state now is, not immediately, but as He has manifested Himself in Christ; so does the Gospel direct and require. To go to God any other way, that is, by saints or angels, is unsuitable, yea, contrary to the gospel-rule and warrant. See in how little a compass our duty is comprised; it is put into few words, *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.* The Gospel teaches us not only how to *believe* and *hope* well, but also to *live* well, as becomes that faith and hope, *in this present world*, but as expectants of *another and better*. There is the *world that now is*, and that *which is to come*: the *present* is the time and place of our trial, and the Gospel teaches us to live well *here*, but not as our final state, but with an eye chiefly to a *future*. For,

[3.] It teaches in all to look for the glories of another world, to which a sober, righteous, and godly life in this is preparative; *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.* Hope, by a metonymy, is put for the thing hoped for, that is, heaven, called emphatically *that hope*, because it is the great thing we look, and long, and wait for; and a *blessed hope*, because, when attained, we shall be completely happy for ever. *And the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.* This denotes both the time of the accomplishing our hope, and the sureness and greatness of it. It will be at the second appearing of Christ, when He shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels, Luke 9:26. His first coming was in *meanness*, to satisfy justice, and purchase happiness; his second will be in *majesty*, to bestow and instate his people in it, Heb. 9:28. *The great God and our Savior* (or *even our Savior*) *Jesus Christ*; for they are not two subjects, but one only, as appears by the single article, and so 1 Cor. 15:24. *When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.* Christ, then, is the *great God*, not figuratively, as magistrates and others are sometimes called *gods*, or as appearing and acting in the name of God, but properly and absolutely *the true God*, 1 John 5:20. *The mighty God*, Isa. 9:6. *Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God*, Phil. 2:6. In his second coming, He will reward his servants, and bring them to glory with Him. At, and in, the glorious appearing of Christ will the

using or disposing of the provisions of the family, contrary to the intentions and interests of their masters; nay, frequently they affect the praise and pride of generosity, by giving away the property of their masters to dishonest hangers on, who acknowledge the obligation by reciprocal favors. But Christian servants must be taught strict honesty in these things.

(10.) *Purloining.* [No term better represents the sense than *purloining*, which, though it designates theft of every kind, especially adverts to that too common form of it, by which servants defraud their masters in buying or selling, or such other frauds as are denoted by the Latin *antevertere*.] BLOOMF.—'The term is used of Ananias' *secretly a part, where the whole was pretended to be returned*; which *servants*, at least among the heathens, might probably do when employed by their masters to vend commodities.' DODDR.—'Unfaithfulness in that which is little, and unfaithfulness in that which is much, are very far from being regarded, as they were by our Great Teacher of righteousness, Lu.

16:10. under the same aspect of criminality. For a master will bear with all the less liberties of his servants, so long as he feels them to be harmless; and it is not till he is awakened to the apprehension of personal injury from the amount or frequency of the embezzlements, that his moral indignation is at all sensibly awakened. How much of mercantile righteousness is of such filthy rags; how much is founded on the idolatry of self; how vast a majority of all equitable dealing is on the principle of selfishness!' CHALMERS.

V. 11, 12. The holy law of God, indeed, teaches men to love God and each other; but, requiring perfect obedience, it gives sinners neither injunction nor encouragement to repentance, and to 'works meet for repentance,' or to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. It shuts them up under sin, and leaves them in that state, without hope or help; for every command, counsel, and encouragement to a sinner, properly belongs not to the law, but to 'the saving grace of God,' according to the gos- SCOTT. pel. 3:6—14, 19—22.



13 Looking <sup>r</sup> for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing <sup>s</sup> of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;

14 Who gave <sup>t</sup> himself for us, that he might redeem us from all <sup>u</sup> iniquity, and purify <sup>v</sup> unto himself a peculiar <sup>w</sup> people, zealous <sup>x</sup> of good works.

15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let <sup>y</sup> no man despise thee.

r 2 Pe. 3:12.  
s Re. 1:7.  
t Ep. 5:2.

u Ps. 130:8.  
v He. 9:14.  
w De. 7:6.

1 Pe. 2:9.  
x Ep. 2:10.  
y 1 Ti. 4:12.

blessed hope of Christians be attained; for their felicity will be that, *To be where He is, and to behold his glory*, John 17:24. The glory of the great God and our Savior will then break out as the sun. Though, in the exercise of his judiciary power, He will appear as the *Son of Man*, yet will He be mightily declared to be the *Son of God* too. Christians are marked by this,—*expecting their Master's coming*, Mat. 24:45. *Loving his appearance*, 2 Tim. 4:8. Let us, then, look to this hope; the day or hour we know not, but *He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10:37. Observe, The comfort and joy of Christians are, that their Savior is the great God, and will gloriously manifest Himself at his second coming. Were He not thus the great God, and not a mere creature, He could not be their Savior, or their Hope. Thus of the considerations to enforce the directions for all sorts, to their respective duties, from the nature and design of the Gospel, which is to teach and persuade to those things. And herewith is connected another ground:

2. From the end of Christ's death, v. 14. To bring us to holiness and happiness was the end of Christ's death, as well as the scope of his doctrine. Here we have,

(1.) The Purchaser of salvation; Jesus Christ, that great God, and our Savior, who saves not simply as God, much less as Man alone; but as God-man, two natures in one Person; Man, that He might obey, and suffer, and die, for man; and God, that He might support the manhood, give worth and efficacy to his undertakings, have due regard to the rights and honor of the Deity,

PRACT. OBS. It 'becomes sound doctrine,' and it is indispensably incumbent on ministers, to teach all Christians their several relative duties, in connexion with evangelical principles.—In proportion as Christians advance in years, they are supposed to understand better what behavior, appearance, attire, and language 'become holiness.'—The excellence of true religion is manifested, when every one is taught and induced by it to attend on the duties of their several situations, and elderly persons are under strong obligations to be teachers of good things to their juniors, by word and deed.—Uncorrupt doctrine, even 'the Word of the truth of the Gospel,' should be manifestly made the basis of practical exhortations, which ought to be delivered with gravity, as well as with sincerity, and wholly remote from all levity, or affectation of wit and humor, that 'sound speech, which cannot be condemned,' may put to shame and silence captious and malicious opposers. 1 Cor. 14:20—25.—As no rank in the community raises men above the minister's admonition, so none places them beneath his attention. The conduct of the [lowest] servant may disgrace, or it may 'adorn, the doctrine of God our Savior.'—The divine law teaches us godliness, righteousness, temperance, and universal holiness; but the 'grace of

as well as the good of his creatures, and bring about the latter to the glory of the former. Such a one became us, and this was,

(2.) The price of our redemption; *He gave Himself*; the Father gave Him, but He gave Himself too, John 10:17, 18. so John 17:19. The human nature was the offering, and the divine the altar, sanctifying the gift, and the whole the act of the Person. He who was God, suffered, though not as God. The acts and properties of either nature are attributed to the person. *God purchased his church with his own blood*, Acts 20:28. 1 Tim. 2:6. He was the Priest and Sacrifice too. *We are redeemed, not with silver and gold, but the precious blood of Christ*, 1 Pet. 1:18, 19. called *the blood of God*, Acts 20:28. of Him who is God.

(3.) The persons for whom: *For us*, poor perishing sinners, gone off from God, and turned rebels against Him; *for us*, not only for our good, but in our stead, 1 Pet. 3:18. 2 Cor. 5:21. Wonderful condescension and grace! *He loved us, and gave Himself for us*; what can we do less than love and give up ourselves to Him? Especially considering,

(4.) The ends of his giving Himself for us, [1.] *That He might redeem us from all iniquity*. To love and live in sin, is to trample under foot redeeming blood, to despise and reject one of the greatest benefits of it, and to act counter to its design. Happy end and fruit of Christ's death, redemption from all iniquity! Christ died for this; and,

[2.] *To purify to Himself a peculiar people*. Christ died to purify, as well as to pardon; to obtain grace, to heal the nature, as well as to free from guilt and condemnation. He gave Himself for his church, *to cleanse it*. Thus does He make *to Himself a peculiar people*, by purifying them. Observe, Redemption from sin, and sanctification of the nature, go together, and both make a peculiar people unto God: freedom from guilt and condemnation, and from the power of lusts, and purification of soul by the Spirit.

[3.] *Zealous of good works*. This peculiar people, as they are made so by grace purifying them, so must they be seen to be so, by doing good, and a zeal therein. Observe, The Gospel is not a doctrine of licentiousness, but of holiness and good life. Let us see, then, that we do good, and have zeal in it;

only looking that zeal be guided by knowledge and spirited with love, directed to the glory of God, and always in some good thing. And thus of the motive to the duties directed, from the end of Christ's death. Then,

[4.] The apostle closes the ch., as he began it, with a summary direction to Titus on the whole.

V. 15. Here is the matter and manner of ministers' teaching, and a special instruction to Titus in reference to himself.

1. The matter of ministers' teaching; *These things*, that is, the before-mentioned; not Jewish fables and traditions, but the truths and duties of the Gospel, of *avoiding sin, and living soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world*. Observe, Ministers, in their preaching, must keep close to the Word of God, 1 Pet. 4:11. *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God*, and not the figments and inventions of his own brain.

2. The manner; by *doctrine, and exhortation, and reproof with all authority*, 2 Tim. 3:16. Here is what will furnish for all parts of his duty, and the right discharge of them. The great and necessary truths and duties of the Gospel, especially, these *speak and exhort, press with much earnestness*. Ministers must not be cold and lifeless in delivering heavenly doctrine and precepts, as if they were indifferent things or of little concern; but must urge them with earnestness suitable to their nature and importance. And *rebuke*; convince and reprove such as contradict or gainsay, or neglect and receive not the truth, as they should, or retain it in unrighteousness, who hear it not with such a believing and obedient mind and heart as they ought. *Rebuke with all authority*, as coming in the name of God, and armed with his threatenings and discipline, which whoever make light of it, at their peril it will be.

3. Here is a special instruction to Titus in reference to himself; *Let no man despise thee*; give no occasion to do so, nor suffer it without reproof, considering that *he who despiseth, despiseth not man, but God*. Or thus: *Speak and exhort these things*; press them on all, as they may respectively be concerned; with boldness and faithfulness reprove sin; and carefully look to thyself and thy own conduct, and then none will despise thee.

Perhaps, too,—an admonition might be

God which bringeth salvation' alone 'teaches us' sinners, 'to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live 'soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.' How greatly then are they mistaken, who would inculcate these practical subjects, without leading men's attention primarily to the mercy and grace of God in Christ, for instruction, motives, help, and encouragement; thus vainly expecting good fruit from the ungrafted crab-stock!—The more evidently we are 'redeemed from all iniquity, and purified' unto Christ 'as a peculiar people, zealous of good works,' the clearer will our evidence be of an interest in his righteousness and atonement; and the brighter our hope of eternal felicity, and the further we are removed from boasting, or trusting in imaginary good works, that we may glory in Christ alone; the more zealous shall we become, of abounding in real good works; performed in an upright, humble, believing manner, to the glory of our Lord, and the benefit of his people, and of mankind. May all ministers speak these things decidedly, enforce them with earnestness, and 'rebuke' opposers and perverters of the Gospel, and also negligent Christians, 'with all authority;' and may their doctrine and example secure them from the contempt of all, except that of the avowed despisers of Christ and his salvation! Sc.

V. 13. *The great God and our Savior Jesus Christ*. 'The most natural and obvious interpretation is surely that of the ancients (except the Arians, &c.) and all the earlier moderns, (except the heterodox, and also Erasm. and Grot., who appeal to Hilary and Ambros.) namely, "the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." And surely, if the doctrine of the article, propounded by the learned prelate [Bp. Middleton] have any truth, (as it undoubtedly has some,) no other version can be admitted. But, waving that argument, great weight ought, in this case, to be ascribed to the opinion of the Greek heathens, certainly the best judges of the nice proprieties of their language. The argument used by Beza and Whitby, that *appearing* [the original *epiphaneia*] is nowhere used in the New Test. of God, but of Christ, has never been answered, and is, I think, *unanswerable*. For it is in vain to urge, that not God, but the glory of God is spoken of; since glory is there, by a common Hebraism, put [as in the English translation] for the adjective *glorious*, and belongs to *appearing*. This too is fully supported by the authority of Greek fathers; and Theoph. observes, that this is called his *glorious advent*, (as Mat. 25:31.) in opposition to his *first advent* in humility (in the flesh). Comp. 2 Tim. 4:9. . . I cannot but suspect that all our translators, have been influenced more than

they were aware, by an *argument*, specious, indeed, and employed by the maintainers of the new version, namely, that Jesus Christ is nowhere styled *the great God*. To which I would answer, that the *great*, belonging to both *God and Savior*, alters the ease, and removes the objection. The sense is plainly this: "the glorious appearance of that GREAT BEING, who is our GOD AND SAVIOR." I cannot omit to observe, that the *who*, just after, countenances this version; since, had two persons been spoken of, it would have been harsh to have suspended on that sentence a clause, in which one only was meant.' BLOOMF.—'This interpretation, [that set forth above,] was the only one ever set forth in all the ancient churches.' WADSWORTH, in *Henry, abr.*

V. 14. Surely these vs. are calculated, in the most conclusive and affecting manner, to lead us to the confession of Christ by Thomas, 'My Lord, and my God!'—The view of Christ, as Judge, in the preceding v., and in this v., as He, to whom all believers are devoted, 'to live no longer to themselves but to Him,' as 'a peculiar people, zealous of good works,' concur to establish this conclusion; for 'JEHOVAH will not give his glory to another.' 2 Cor. 5:13—15.

V. 15. *Authority*.] 1:3. Rom. 16:26. 1 Cor. 7:6, 25. 2 Cor. 8:3. 'Not as a counsel, but with all the peremptoriness of command.' Leigh. Sc.



## CHAP. III.

1 Titus is yet further directed by Paul, both concerning the things he should teach, and not teach. 10 He is willed also to reject obstinate heretics: 12 which done, he appointed him both time and place, wherein he should come unto him, and so concludeth.

**P**UT them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,

2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.

3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, de-

here intended to the people; that Titus, though young, and but a substitute of the apostle, yet should not be contemned by them, but considered and respected as a faithful minister of Christ, and encouraged and supported in his work and office, 1 Thes. 5: 12, 13. Mind the teaching of such, respect their persons, support them in their function, and, what in you lies, further their endeavors for the honor of God and the salvation of souls.

CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. Here is the fourth thing in the matter of the epistle. The apostle had directed Titus in reference to the particular and special duties of several sorts of persons; now he bids him exhort to what concerned them more in common; to quietness and submission to rulers, and readiness to do good, and to equitable and gentle behavior towards all men; things comely and ornamental of religion; he must therefore put them in mind of such things. Ministers, as they are remembrancers for the people to God in prayers, Isa. 62: 6. so are they from God to them in preaching, 2 Pet. 1: 12. Forgetfulness of duty is a common frailty; there is need, therefore, of reminding and quickening them thereto. Here are the duties themselves, and the reasons of them.

I. The duties themselves.

1. Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates. The Christian religion was misrepresented by its

adversaries, as prejudicial to the rights of princes and civil powers, and tending to faction and sedition, and to rebellion against lawful authority; therefore, to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and stop the mouths of malicious enemies, Christians must be reminded to show themselves examples rather of all due subjection and obedience to government. Natural desire of liberty must be guided and bounded by reason and Scripture. Spiritual privileges do not make void or weaken, but confirm and strengthen, their obligations to civil duties: remind them, therefore, to be subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates. And,

2. To be ready to every good work. Some refer this to such good works as are required by magistrates, and within their sphere; but though this be included, if not first intended, yet is it not to be hereto restrained. It regards doing good in all kinds, and on every occasion that may offer, whether respecting God, ourselves, or our neighbors; what may bring credit to religion in the world, Phil. 4: 8. Mere harmlessness, or good words and good meanings only, are not enough without good works. Not only take, but seek, occasion for doing good; keep fitness and readiness that way; put it not off to others, but embrace and lay hold on it thyself; delight and rejoice therein; put all in mind of this. And,

3. To speak evil of no man; to revile, or curse, or blaspheme none; or (as our translation more generally) to speak evil of none, unjustly and falsely, or unnecessarily, without call, and when it may do hurt, but no good, to the person himself or any other: rather than speak evil unnecessarily, say nothing. We must never take pleasure in speaking ill of others, or make the worst of anything, but the best we can. Misrepresentations, or ill insinuations of bad intent, or of hypocrisy in what is done, things out of our reach or cognizance, these come within the reach of this prohibition. As this evil is too common, so it is of great malignity, Jan. 1: 26. loose, uncharitable talk is displeasing to God, and hurtful among men, Prov. 17: 9. This is among the sins to be

put off, Eph. 4: 31. remind them, therefore, to avoid this. And,

4. To be no brawlers; no fighters, either with hand or tongue, no quarrelsome, contentious persons, apt to give or return ill and provoking language. A holy contending there is for matters good and important, and in a manner suitable and becoming, not with wrath or injurious violence. Christians must follow the things that make for peace, and that in a peaceful, not a rough and boisterous and hurtful way, but as becomes the servants of the God of peace and love, Rom. 12: 19. this is the Christian's wisdom and duty. The glory of a man is to pass over a transgression: it is the duty of a reasonable, and therefore certainly of a Christian man, whose reason is improved and advanced by religion; such may not, will not, presently fall foul on one who has offended him; but, like God, will be slow to anger, and ready to forgive. Wherefore it follows,

5. But gentle; equitable and just, or candid and fair in constructions of things, not taking words or actions in the worst sense; and, for peace, sometimes yielding somewhat of strict right. And,

6. Showing all meekness to all men. We must be of a mild disposition, and not only have meekness in our hearts, but show it in our speech and conduct. All meekness; meekness in all instances and occasions, not toward friends only, but to all men, though still with wisdom, as James admonishes, ch. 3: 13. Thus of the duties themselves, which Titus was to put people in mind of; for which,

II. He adds the reasons:

V. 3. 1. The reasons are derived from their own past condition. Consideration of men's natural condition is a great mean and ground of equity and gentleness, and all meekness toward those who are yet in such a state. This has a tendency to abate pride, and work pity and hope in reference to those who are yet unconverted. Their past natural condition is set forth in divers particulars. We ourselves also were sometimes,

(1.) Foolish; without true spiritual understanding and knowledge, ignorant of heavenly things. And,

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. 'Principalities and powers,' or civil governors.] These were idolaters, and generally oppressive and injurious; yet the apostle, during his short abode in Crete, had taught an unreserved subjection to them, except in matters of conscience towards God. But, as the Cretians would be apt to forget his admonitions, they were to be 'stirred up in the way of remembrance,' that so no disgrace might be brought on the Gospel, by the turbulent spirits and conduct of professed Christians.—It signifies promptitude in obeying superiors. Magistrates are not mentioned, yet they are primarily, but not exclusively intended; husbands, parents, and masters seem also included. See

(1.) To obey magistrates.] Every individual, by entering society, promises, 1. That he will abstain from every violation of the law of reciprocity, which, if universally permitted, would destroy society. For, if he be allowed to violate it, the allowance to violate it must be extended to all, since all are equals in rights; and thus society would be destroyed. 2. To surrender to society the right of self-protection, and 3. the right to redress his own wrongs. On the other hand, society promises, 1. To protect the individual in the enjoyment of all his rights; i. e. to enforce upon every individual, within certain limits, obedience to the law of reciprocity. 2. To redress wrongs, either by obliging the offender to do justly, or else by inflicting such punishment as may be most likely to prevent a repetition of the injury, either by the offender or by others.—These obligations are on both parts mutual and universal; one wholly and entirely surrenders the right to defend or redress himself,—the other guarantees to defend and do him justice to the utmost, i. e. in no matter how small a right, and no matter at how great an expense. Hence the obligation of every one to exert himself to the uttermost, in order to enforce the execution of the laws, no matter in how small a matter, or in the case of how obscure an individual. If laws are not executed, i. e. if individuals are not protected, and wrongs are not redressed by society, the individuals will [attempt to] redress themselves, and thus society will be dissolved. The occurrence of mobs, i. e. of extra legal modes of redress for supposed grievances, are among the most decisive indications of a state of society verging towards dissolution. . . . When conscience does not forbid, it is the business of a good citizen to obey the laws; and the faithful obedience to an unwise law, is generally the surest way of working its overthrow. The cause of civil liberty has always gained more by martyrdom than war; and the best course, when society exerts its power beyond its constituted limits, is, suffering in the cause of right. Passive obedience would in some cases be wrong, for we must obey God at all hazards; resistance by force destroys the social fabric, is of uncertain success, and civil war is, of all evils, the most horrible which men inflict upon themselves. Passive obedience may arise from servile fear; resistance from vainglory, ambition, or desire of revolution. But suffering for the sake of right,

can arise only from a love of justice, and hatred of oppression. The real spirit of liberty can never exist, in any remarkable degree, in any nation where there is not this willingness to suffer in the cause of justice and liberty. Ever so little of the spirit of martyrdom, is always a more favorable indication to civilization, than ever so much dexterity of party management, or ever so turbulent protestation of immaeulate patriotism.

WAYLAND.

(1, 2.) 'That hatred of despotism, and those insurrectionary movements of volcanic power to throw off the incumbent mass, in other countries, would in ours be turned against law and order, and terminate in anarchy and despotism. It must never be forgotten, that INSURRECTIONS AGAINST ARBITRARY POWER, TEND TO LIBERTY, BUT INSURRECTIONS AGAINST LAW, TO DESPOTISM; and that all the tendencies of a republic, are to the deterioration of efficient government, from the numerous encroachments of the popular will upon law,—as in monarchies, the tendencies are to despotism from the ascendancy of aristocratic power. The one accumulates personal liberty, till the restraints of law fail before it, and anarchy enters. The other accumulates and combines governmental influence and force, till liberty falls in the streets, and equity cannot enter. This tendency of personal liberty, to the subversion of the laws, is with us the epidemic of the day. Our politicians have so long and so constantly assured the sovereign people of their power, that they have taken it into their heads to be above not only their rulers, but above themselves, as acting by their own officers and laws; so that, by the deceitful influence of our institutions, that efficiency of government, and those habits of subordination, so indispensable to qualify us for a spontaneous obedience to law, are fast falling; and the law is called to disclose its impotency, to control a population from abroad and at home, furious in passion, baughty in pride, and indomitable in will. The result is, brawls, assaults and batteries, in high places and low, duels, assassinations, robberies, conflagrations, and mobs, and all the symptoms of a fast approaching dissolution. We are fast going down stream, with all the accelerating power of passion, wind, and tide; and, unless the nation can be awakened, we shall go down. The greatest practicable liberty, lies on the perilous edge of a precipice,—a yawning gulf beneath. The youth of our land, are the chosen band, which heaven has brought into being in this eventful day, to see to it that no ruthless hand, in the hour of our thoughtless security, shall thrust us over. I commit my country, young men, to you. Be watchful, be faithful to yourselves, your country, and your God; and let the motto, "LIBERTY AND LAW," in letters of fire, blaze on the walls of every college in the land, and all will be well.'

Dr. REECHER.

V. 3. Hateful.] Stugétoi: 'hateful as hell, from Stux, the Styx, [abled to be the sluggish river of Hades.] Leigh.

SCOTT.



ceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared,

5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

6 Which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior;

d or, pity. e Ep. 2:4,8,9. f or, richly.

(2.) *Disobedient*; heady and unpersuadable, resisting the Word, and rebellious even against the natural laws of God, and those which human society requires. Well are these set together, *foolish* and *disobedient*. For what folly like this, to disobey God and his laws, natural or revealed?

(3.) *Deceived*, or wandering; that is, out of the ways of truth and holiness. Man, in this his degenerate state, is of a straying nature, thence compared to a *lost sheep*, Ps. 119: 176. He is weak, and ready to be imposed on by the wiles and subtleties of Satan, and of men lying in wait to seduce and mislead.

(4.) *Serving divers lusts and pleasures*; as vassals and slaves under them. Observe, Men deceived are easily entangled and ensnared. See here too what a different notion the Word gives of a sensual and fleshly life from what the world generally has of it. Carnal people think they enjoy their pleasures; the Word calls it *servitude* and *vassalage*; they are very drudges and bond-slaves unto them. Observe, It is the misery of the servants of sin, that they have many masters; one lust hurrying them one way, and another another. What vile slaves are sinners, while they conceit themselves free!

(5.) *Living in malice*; one of those lusts that bear rule in them. Malice desires hurt to another, and rejoices in it.

(6.) *And envy*; which grudges and repines at another's good, frets at his prosperity and success in anything; both roots of bitterness, whence many evils spring; evil thoughts and speeches, tongues set on fire of hell, detracting from, and impairing, the just and due praises of others. *Their words are swords*, wherewith they slay the good name and honor of their neighbor; the sin of Satan, and of Cain, who was of that evil one, and slew his brother. These were some of the sins in which we lived in our natural state. And,

(7.) *Hateful*, or odious; deserving to be hated.

(8.) *And hating one another*. Observe, Those that are sinful, living and allowing themselves in sin, are hateful to God and all good men. It is the misery of sinners, that they hate one another, as it is the duty and happiness of saints to love one another. The consideration of its having been thus with us, should moderate our spirits, and dispose us to be more equal and gentle, meek and tender-hearted, toward those who

are such. This is the argument from their own past condition here described. And he reasons,

2. From their present state. We are delivered out of that our miserable condition by no merit or strength of our own; but only by the mercy and free grace of God, and merit of Christ, and operation of his Spirit; therefore we have no ground, in respect of ourselves, to contemn those who are yet unconverted, but rather to pity them, and cherish hope concerning them, that they, though in themselves as unworthy and unmeet as we were, yet may obtain mercy, as we have; and so on this occasion the apostle again opens the causes of our salvation, v. 4—7.

V. 4—7. 1. Here is, The prime Author of our salvation; God the Father, therefore termed here *God our Savior*. God, the Father, is a Savior by Christ, through the Spirit, John 3: 16. Eph. 1: 3. Rom. 5: 11.

2. The spring and rise of it; the divine *philanthropy*, or *kindness and love of God to man*. By grace we are saved, from first to last; this is the ground and motive; God's pity and mercy to man in misery were the first wheel, or rather the Spirit in the wheels, that sets and keeps them all in motion. God is not, cannot, be moved by anything out of Himself; the occasion is in man, his misery and wretchedness. God, knowing how to adjust all with his own honor and perfections, would pity and save rather than destroy. We read of *riches of goodness and mercy*, Rom. 2: 4. Eph. 2: 7. Let us acknowledge this, and give Him the glory of it, not turning it to wantonness, but to thankfulness and obedience.

3. The means, or instrumental cause; the shining out of this love and grace of God in the Gospel, after it appeared, that is, in the Word; [also in the incarnation, obedience, death, and resurrection of the eternal Son of God, so Scott.] The appearing of *love and grace* has, through the Spirit, great virtue to soften, and change, and turn to God, and so is *the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth*. Thus, having asserted God to be the Author, his free grace the spring, and the manifestation of this in the Gospel the mean, of salvation; that the honor of all still may be the better secured to Him,

4. False grounds and motives are removed, v. 5. Works must be in the saved, but not among the causes of his salvation; they are the way to the kingdom, not the meriting price of it; all is on the foot of undeserved favor and mercy, from first to last. Election is of grace; we are chosen to be holy, not because it was antecedently seen that we should be so, Eph. 1: 4. It is the fruit, not the cause, of election, 2 Thess. 2: 13. So effectual calling, in which election breaks out, and is first seen, 2 Tim. 1: 9. We are *justified freely by grace*, Rom. 3: 24. and *sanctified and saved by grace*, Eph. 2: 8. Faith and all saving graces are God's free gift and works. Thus the true cause is shown, and the false removed.

5. The formal cause of salvation, or that wherein it lies, the beginnings of it at least, —in *regeneration* or *spiritual renewing*, as it is here called. A new prevailing principle of grace and holiness is wrought, which inclines and sways, and governs, and makes

the man a *new man*, a *new creature*; new thoughts, desires, and affections, a new and holy turn of life and actions; the life of God in man, not only from God in a special manner, but conformed and tending to Him. Let us look to this therefore without delay; we must be initially saved now, by regeneration, if on good ground we would expect complete salvation in heaven; the change then will be but in degree, not in kind; grace is glory begun, as glory is but grace in its perfection. How few mind this! Most act as if afraid to be happy before the time; they would have heaven at last, yet care not for holiness now; that is, would have the end without the beginning; so absurd are sinners. Here then is formal salvation, in the new divine life wrought by the Gospel.

6. The outward sign and seal thereof in baptism, called therefore *the washing of regeneration*. The work itself is inward and spiritual; but this is outwardly signified and sealed in this ordinance. Water is of a cleansing and purifying nature, does away the filth of the flesh, and so was apt to signify the doing away of the guilt and defilement of sin by the blood and Spirit of Christ; though that aptness alone, without Christ's institution, had not been sufficient. This it is that makes it of this signification on God's part, a seal of righteousness by faith, as circumcision was, in the place of which it succeeds; and on ours, an engagement to be the Lord's. Thus baptism saves figuratively, and sacramentally, where it is rightly used, Acts 22: 16. So Eph. 5: 26. Slight not this outward sign and seal, where it may be had according to Christ's appointment; yet rest not in the outward washing only, but look to the *answer of a good conscience*, without which the external washing will avail nothing.

This is the outward sign and seal of salvation, baptism, called here *the washing of regeneration*.

7. The principal efficient; the Spirit of God, it is the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*; not excluding the Father and the Son, who in all works without themselves are concurring; nor the use of means, the Word and sacraments, by which the Spirit works; through his operation it is that they have their saving effect. In the economy of our salvation, the applying and effecting part is especially attributed to the *Holy Spirit*. Earnestly therefore is He to be sought, and greatly to be heeded by us, that we quench not his holy motions, nor resist and oppose Him in his workings. *The Spirit is a tender thing*; as we act toward Him, so may we expect He will to us; if we slight and resist, and oppose his workings, He will slacken them; if we continue to vex Him, He will retire. *Grieve not therefore the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed to the day of redemption*, Eph. 4: 30. The Spirit seals by his renewing and sanctifying, his witnessing and assuring work; He distinguishes and marks out for salvation, fits for it; it is his work; we could not turn to God by any strength of our own, any more than we can be justified by any righteousness of our own.

8. The manner of God's communicating this Spirit in the gifts and graces of it; not with a scanty and niggardly hand, but most freely and plentifully; *which He shed on us*

V. 4—7. The miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit are not so much as alluded to in this place; and nothing induces more confusion and perplexity into the expositions given of the Scripture by commentators of different descriptions, than the neglect of distinguishing between those communications which constituted men prophets or apostles, and those which were, still are, and ever must be, indispensably necessary to render them true Christians.—The expression, 'shed,' or 'poured' 'on us,' in this manifest allusion to the sacrament of baptism, may properly be noted. as an intimation, that the pouring of water on any person, 'in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,' is baptism, equally with immersion. *Mat. 28: 19, 20.—Appeared.*] It implies, to be illustriously or gloriously manifested.

SCOTT.

(5.) *Not by works, &c.*] 'Paul here speaks to believers, and describes the manner in which they come into the kingdom of God. He

denies that they have in anything been meritorious by works, that they should be partakers of salvation, or be reconciled to God by faith; but they have obtained the blessing, he says, by the sole mercy of God. Therefore from these words, we infer, that we bring nothing to God, (*nihil nos afferre Deo*) [i. e. to recommend ourselves to Him]; 'but that we are prevented (*præveniri*)' [or anticipated in becoming believers] 'by his mere grace, without respect to works. Finally, that we, rather than others, are chosen to a participation of Christ; this, also, Paul refers entirely to the mercy of God.' CALVIN.—Baptism is a sign of our regeneration, which is wrought by the Holy Ghost. *Bp.'s Bible*, in *Henry, abr.*—On the subject of baptismal regeneration *Dodd.* has this remark, that 'it is not by washing the infant, that the birth is produced;' which is intended to be conclusive against it, so far as any argument from the figure is concerned.

Ed.



7 That, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

8 *This is* a faithful saying; and these things I will that thou affirm constantly; that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

10 A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject;

g Ro. 3:24. h ver. 1,14. i 2 Ti. 2:23. j Mat. 13:17.

abundantly. More of the Spirit in its gifts and graces is poured out under the gospel than was under the law; whence it is eminently styled *the ministration of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. 3: 8. Is. 44: 3. Joel 2: 28. Ac. 2:17,18, 33. 10:44, 45. Our condemnation will but be aggravated the more, if under such a dispensation of grace we remain void of grace. *Be filled with the Spirit*, says the apostle; it is duty as well as privilege, because of the means which God in the Gospel is ready to bless and make effectual; this is the manner of God's communicating grace and all spiritual blessings under the Gospel, *plentifully*; He is not straitened towards us, but we toward Him and in ourselves.

9. The procuring Cause of all, namely, Christ; *Through Jesus Christ our Savior*. He it is who purchased the Spirit and his saving gifts and graces; all come through Him, and through Him as a Savior, whose undertaking and work it is to bring to grace and glory; He is our Righteousness and Peace, and our Head, from whom we have all spiritual life and influences. Let us praise God for Him above all; let us go to the Father by Him, and improve Him to all sanctifying and saving purposes.

10. The ends why we are brought into this new spiritual condition, namely, justification, and heirship, and hope of eternal life; *That, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life*. Justification, in the gospel-sense, is the free remission of a sinner, and accepting him as righteous through the righteousness of Christ received by faith. In it there is removing guilt that bound to punishment, and accepting and dealing with the person as one that now is righteous in God's sight. This God does freely as to us, yet through the intervention of Christ's sacrifice and righteousness laid hold on by faith, Rom. 3: 20, &c. God, in justifying a sinner in the way of the gospel, is gracious to him, and yet just to Himself and his law; forgiveness being through a perfect righteousness, and satisfaction made to justice by

Christ, who is the propitiation for sin, and not merited by the sinner himself. So it is here; *Not by works of righteousness, &c.* It is by grace, as the spring and rise, (as was said,) though *through the redemption that is in Christ*, as making the way, God's law and justice being thereby satisfied; and by faith applying that redemption. Acts 13: 39. Let us not trust therefore in our own righteousness, or merit of good works, but in Christ's righteousness alone, received by faith for justification and acceptance with God. Observe, Our justification is *by the grace of God*, and our justification by that grace is necessary in order to our being made *heirs of eternal life*; without such justification there can be no adoption and sonship, and so no right of inheritance. John 1: 12. Eternal life is set before us in the promise, the Spirit works faith in us, and hope of that life, and so are we made heirs of it, and have a kind of possession of it even now; faith and hope bring it near, and fill with joy in the well-grounded expectation of it. The meekest believer is a great heir; though he have not his portion in hand, he has good hope through grace, and may bear up under all difficulties; there is a better state in view, he is waiting for an *inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for him*. And now all this gives good reason why we should *show all meekness to all men*, because we have experienced so much benefit by the kindness and love of God to us, and many hope that they, in God's time, may be partakers of the like grace as we are. And thus of the reasons of equal and gentle, meek and tender behavior towards others; from their own bad condition in time past, and the present more happy state into which they are brought, without any merit or desertings of their own, and whereinto by the same grace others may be brought also.

The apostle, having opened the duties of Christians in common, with the reasons respecting themselves, adds another from their goodness and usefulness to men.

V. 8. 1. Observe, When he has opened the grace of God toward us, he immediately presses the necessity of good works; for we must not expect the benefit of God's mercy, unless we make conscience of our duty, v. 8. This is a true Christian doctrine of highest importance, and which ministers must most earnestly and constantly press and inculcate; *that they who have believed in God*, do not think that a bare naked faith will save them; but it must be an operative, working faith, bringing forth the fruit of righteousness. *These things are good and profitable unto men*; these good works, say some, or the *teaching of these things*, rather than idle questions, as follow. These things are good in themselves, and the teaching of them useful to mankind, making persons a common good in their places.

2. Observe, Ministers, in teaching, must see that they deliver what is sound and good in itself, and profitable to them that hear;

all must be to the use of edifying both persons and societies.

Here is the fifth and last thing in the matter of the epistle; what Titus should avoid in teaching; how he should deal with a heretic; with some other directions.

V. 9. 1. That the apostle's meaning here might be more clear and full, and especially fitted to the time and state of things there, and the many judaizers among them, he tells Titus what, in teaching, he should slun. Needful questions are to be discussed and cleared; but idle and foolish inquiries, tending neither to God's glory nor the edification of men, must be shunned; avoid these. *And genealogies of the gods*, say some, those the heathen poets spake of; or rather those the Jews were so curious in; some lawful and useful inquiries might be made into these things, to see the fulfilling of the Scriptures in some cases, and especially in the descent of Christ the Messiah; but all that served to pomp only, and to feed vanity, in boasting of a long pedigree, and much more the Jewish teachers were ready to busy themselves in, and trouble their hearers with, even since Christ was come, and that distinction of families and tribes had been taken away; these Titus must withstand as foolish and vain. *And contentions, and strivings about the law*. There were those who would have the Mosaic rites and ceremonies continued in the church; though by the Gospel and coming of Christ they were done away. Titus must give no countenance to these, but avoid and oppose them; *for they are unprofitable and vain*; so far from instructing and building up in godliness, that they are hindrances of it rather. Observe, Ministers must not only teach things good and useful, but slun and oppose the contrary, what would corrupt the faith, and hinder godliness and good works; nor should people have itching ears, but love and embrace sound doctrine, which tends most to the use of edifying.

2. But because, after all, there will be *heresies and heretics* in the church, the apostle next directs Titus what to do in such a case, and how to deal with such.

V. 10, 11. He who forsakes the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and broaches false doctrines, and propagates them, to the corrupting of the faith in weighty and momentous points, and breaks the peace of the church about them, let such a one be rejected, after due means used to reclaim him. Those who will not be reclaimed by admonitions, but are obstinate in their sins and errors, *are subverted and self-condemned*; they inflict that punishment on themselves that the governors of the church should inflict on them; they throw themselves out of the church, and throw off its communion, and so are self-condemned. Observe, 1. How great an evil proper heresy is, not lightly therefore to be charged on any, though greatly to be taken heed of by all. Proper heretics have seldom been recovered to the true faith; not so much defect of judgment,

V. 9. It was incumbent on Titus, to insist on the grand peculiarities of the Gospel — The contrast between those things which 'are good and profitable to men' (8), and 'those which are unprofitable and vain,' is worthy of observation.

V. 10, 11. A heretic, in St. Paul's sense, seems to denote a professed Christian, who obstinately denies and opposes some fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, as taught by the apostles, especially if he were earnest to propagate his notions, from a vain desire of being the head of a party, and so made divisions in the church. Gal. 5:19—21. The Scriptures (Mat. 25:26—28. Lu. 7:30. 19:22. Jn. 3:18. Acts 13:46. Rom. 3:19.) show, that when a man's own words suffice for his condemnation, without further evidence, he may be said to be 'condemned of himself;' nor does any great difficulty appear in this much disputed text, except in explaining it in a manner consistent with the systems of contending zealots.—In subordinate matters the apostle inculcated mutual forbearance; but all his epistles show, that he supposed some errors to be fundamental, and absolutely inconsistent with faith in Christ. For pertinaciously maintaining these errors, men ought to be excommunicated, as much as for gross immoralities; and were things restored to their primitive state in the church of Christ, there can be no doubt, that those who deny the ruined estate of man by nature, the Deity of Christ, the real atonement of his death, justification by faith in the merits of Christ, of grace and not of works; the need of sanctification by the Ho-

ly Spirit, and of obedience to God's commandments, as the effect and evidence of justifying faith, with other doctrines of similar importance, would, after proper admonition, be rejected by the pastors of the church, and excluded from the communion of believers. No doubt would remain in their minds, that such heretics were subverted, and sinned, and their profession of tenets so destructive of Christianity, would be deemed a kind of 'self-condemnation,' without considering them as less sincere in opposing the truth, than Saul of Tarsus was. They would not judge them proper persons to associate with those who believed the doctrines of Christianity; but yet they would not do them any injury in their temporal concerns, or refuse to aid them in distress, or neglect to pray for 'God to give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth.' The connexion, which has so long subsisted, between excommunication and persecution, has aided in giving occasion to a latitudinarian candor, and a laxity of discipline, to associate with men's ideas of toleration. But the fullest toleration does not imply, that all opinions should be regarded as alike right or probable; nor does excommunication imply, that any alteration should be made in men's civil circumstances. Mat. 18:15—18. 1 Cor. 5:1—5, 9—13. 2 John 7—11. Rev. 2:20—23. Some learned and ingenious men have indeed at length discovered, that it is no sin to treat the Word of God with neglect, contempt, or proud opposition, and that it is of little consequence what doctrines men believe! No wonder, then, that they cannot explain the Scripture into an agree-



11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

12 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

13 Bring Zenas the lawyer, and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.

14 And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

15 All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

¶ It was written to Titus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Cretians, from Nicopolis of Macedonia.

<sup>k</sup> or, profess honest trades. 1 ver. 8.

as perverseness of the will, being in the case, through pride, or ambition, or self-willedness, or covetousness, or such like corruption, which therefore must be taken heed of. 2. Pains and patience must be used about those that err most grievously. They

FRACT. OBS. It has at all times been necessary, to remind Christians 'to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates,' and 'to submit to one another in the fear of God;' Eph. 5:21. 1 Pet. 5:5-7, but it is peculiarly so at present, when most valuable privileges and liberties in this favored land, which ought to have rendered cheerful subjection and peaceable obedience universal, among all who 'name the name of Christ,' have given occasion to a contrary spirit and conduct in numbers, who seem to forget, that most express precepts to this effect are found in the Scriptures.—We shall not, when really humbled and enlightened, disdain, or be wearied out by the misconduct of, the most unreasonable enemies, because we shall well remember, that we ourselves were formerly 'foolish, disobedient, and deceived, slaves to divers' base lusts, and a fondness for carnal pleasures, 'that we lived in malice and envy,' and in short were hateful to God, and disposed to hate one another, and thus 'vessels of wrath fitted for destruction,' till divine

ment with these tenets, or bring the Word of God to declare its own insignificance. But those who believe, that 'men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil,' and treat the truth of God as a lie, because it opposes their pride or lusts, will not find much difficulty in understanding, why such heretics should be separated from the society of believers; and they will chiefly lament, that it is not more generally practised, and more easily practicable, seeing it is evident, 'that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump,' in many churches which once seemed to flourish. Lev. 13:40-44. Rom. 16:17-20. 1 Tim. 1:13-20. 2 Tim. 2:14-18. 2 Pet. 2:1-3. 1 John 5:9, 10.—(10) Heretic.] It is vain to seek the meaning of this word from profane writers, or from etymology; the New Test. itself must explain it.—Now it is manifest, that there were important differences in opinion, between the Pharisees and Sadducees, as well as a division into sects; and, it appears to me, that fundamental errors in doctrine, rather than divisions into parties, are intended, when heresies are mentioned, by the sacred writers.—Rejct.] 1 Tim. 4:7. 'Refuse to employ, to countenance, to retain him, or to associate at all with him.—(11) Condemned of himself.] Here only. 1 John 3:13-21. It may mean, that, professing heretical doctrines, no other witnesses were useful for his conviction and censure. 1 Tim. 5:19, 20.

(10.) Heretic.] A sectarian whose errors are chiefly of the will; notes, 1 Cor. 11:13, 19.—Intellectual unity is more difficult and less important than spiritual unity. All real Christians have sympathy of feeling. 'The object of a Christian church is, the promotion of holiness in the souls of its members, and in the souls of others,—to advance the kingdom of Christ, and prepare themselves and others the better for the day of judgment. Now, though each man enters voluntarily, and all are under law, yet they have no right whatever to make laws for themselves; they

(Note on Roman Military Discipline, Concluded from p. 451.)

'The cavalry, without which the legion would have been imperfect, was divided into 10 troops, or squadrons; the 1st, as the companion of the 1st cohort, consisted of 132 men; while each of the other 9 amounted only to 65. The whole formed a regiment of 725 horse, naturally connected with its respective legion, but occasionally separated to act in the line, and to compose a part of the wings of the army. The cavalry of the ancient republic was made up of the noblest youths, who, by the service, prepared for the offices of senator and consul; and solicited, by deeds of valor, the future siffages of their countrymen; but the emperor's cavalry had officers from those of the equestrian rank, who joined the army. They despised the complete armor, with which the cavalry of the East (cul, Jer. 6:23.) was encumbered. Their more useful arms consisted in a helmet, an oblong shield, light boots, and a coat of mail. A javelin and a long broadsword, were their principal weapons of offence. The use of lances and iron maces they seem to have borrowed from the barbarians.

'Among the auxiliaries, about equal in numbers to the legionaries, the bravest and most faithful were placed under the command of prefects [Act. 28:16.] and centurions, and severely trained in the Roman discipline; the others retained their national arms, and thus the army was prepared to meet all enemies and all weapons. Each legion, too, had 10 of the largest, and 55 smaller engines, which discharged stones and darts with irresistible violence.

'The camp of a Roman legion presented the appearance of a fortified city. As soon as the space was marked out, the pioneers carefully levelled the ground, and removed every impediment that might interrupt its perfect regularity. Its form was an exact quadrangle; and we may calculate, that a square of about 7000 yards was sufficient for the encampment of 20,000 Romans; though a similar number of our own

are not easily and soon to be given up and cast off, but competent time and means must be tried for their recovery. 3. The church's means even with heretics are persuasive and rational; so much the word imports. 4. Upon continued obstinacy and irreclaimableness, the church has power, and is obliged to preserve its own purity, by severing such a corrupt member; which discipline may, by God's blessing, become effectual to reform the offender, or leave him the more inexcusable in his condemnation.

The apostle subjoins some further directions.

V. 12, 13. Here are two personal things enjoined:

1. That Titus should hold himself ready to come to Paul at Nicopolis, (a city of Thrace, as is reckoned, on the borders of Macedonia,) so soon as Artemas or Tychicus should be sent to Crete, to supply his place, and take care of the churches there when he should leave them. Titus, it seems, was not their ordinary fixed bishop\* or pastor, but an evangelist, otherwise Paul would not have called him so much from his charge. Of Artemas we read little, but Tychicus is mentioned on many occasions with respect. When Paul says to Titus, Be diligent to come to me to Nicopolis, for I have determined there to winter, it is plain the epistle was not written from Nicopolis, as the postscript

\* See note on episcopacy, 1 Pet. 5:2.

Ed.

would have it, for then he would have said, I determined here, not there, to winter.

2. The other personal charge to Titus, is, that he would bring two of his friends on their journey diligently, and see them furnished. This was to be done, not as a piece of common civility only, but of Christian piety, out of respect both to them and the work they were sent about, probably to preach the Gospel, or to be some way serviceable to the churches. Zenas is styled the lawyer, whether in reference to the Roman or the Mosaic law, is doubtful. Apollos was an eminent and faithful minister. He repeats here,

V. 14, 15. Let Christians, those who have believed in God, learn to maintain good works, especially such as these, supporting ministers in their work of preaching and spreading the Gospel. That they be not unfruitful. Christianity is not a fruitless profession; it is not enough that the professors of it be harmless, but they must be profitable, doing good, as well as eschewing evil. 'Let ours maintain some honest employment, to provide for themselves and their families, that they be not unprofitable;' so some. To maintain good works for necessary uses; not living like drones, on the labors of others, but themselves fruitful to the common benefit.

The apostle concludes with salutations and benedictions, as usual in other epistles, v. 15.

grace effected the blessed change. Let us then often contemplate the discoveries, which have been made of the 'kindness and love of God our Savior,' towards our fallen, apostate race, in 'giving his Son to be the propitiation for our sins,' his patience in sparing us, during the years of our foolishness and rebellion; his goodness in sending us the Word of salvation, and to crown the whole, his mercy in causing us to partake of the 'washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he poured upon' our souls, of his plenteous grace, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Having been therefore brought into a state of safety, and made partakers of a joyful hope, by the mercy of God the Father, through the redemption of his incarnate Son, and by the new creation of the Holy Spirit, it certainly behooves us to 'take the lead in every good work,' by which we can glorify God our Savior, or benefit mankind. Phil. 4:8, 9.

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must both form and govern the association, by the laws which Christ has made for them. A willingness to obey his laws, gives a man a right to admission. So long as this willingness continues, he has a right to remain. No one but Christ has any right to impose laws upon him. So long as he obey Christ, he is free of his brethren, as much as they are of him. Men, by uniting in a church with their fellow-disciples, promise merely to obey Christ. They surrender to each other no right to make laws for each other. They claim no right to enforce any laws, but the laws of Christ; and to attempt to enforce any other, is to violate the spirit of the association. . . . A temper of heart, then, to obey Christ in all He has revealed, makes one a member of the holy catholic church. But, besides this, there are various points of practical obedience, in respect to which real disciples may differ; and this difference, though it do not designate a different temper of heart, yet may nevertheless render it suitable and proper, that those who think alike should associate more especially with each other. . . . Hence arises the division of the church into different sects, as the natural and healthy result of that freedom of opinion, which springs from Protestantism. Practically, then, he who possesses such temper of mind as Christ has commanded, and such harmony of views in regard to external rites and minor observances, as may enable men to unite in the ordinances they feel bound to observe, is qualified for admission to a church of any sect in particular. . . . But, if I show myself destitute of love to God and man by a life of sordid selfishness, I ought to be excluded; while, so long as I do not evince that I am destitute of the right temper of heart, I am held guiltless.' Wayland. Ed.

V. 12-15. There were several cities called Nicopolis, (the city of victory,) especially one in Macedonia, and another in Epirus, and it is not certain which was here meant; but it hence appears that Paul was at this time at liberty.

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troops would expose to the enemy a front of more than treble that extent. In the midst of the camp, the pætorium, or general's quarters, rose above the others; the cavalry, the infantry, and the auxiliaries, occupied their respective stations; the streets were broad and perfectly straight, and a vacant space of 200 feet was left on all sides, between the tents and the rampart. The rampart itself was usually 12 feet high, armed with a line of strong and intricate palisades, and defended by a ditch of 12 feet in depth as well as in breadth. This important labor was performed by the hands of the legionaries themselves; to whom the use of the spade and pick-axe was no less familiar than that of the sword or pila. Active valor may often be the present of nature; but such patient diligence can be the fruit only of habit and discipline.

'Whenever the trumpet [1 Cor. 14:3.] gave the signal for departure, the camp was almost instantly broken up, and the troops fell into their ranks without delay or confusion. Beside their arms, which the legionaries scarcely considered as an incumbrance, they were laden with their kitchen furniture, the instruments of fortification, and the provision of many days. [Note, end of Jer.] Under this weight, which would oppress the delicacy of a modern soldier, they were trained by a regular step to advance in about 6 hours, near 29 miles. [Comp. Paul's phrase, 'endure hardness as a soldier,' 2 Tim. 2:3.] On the appearance of an enemy, they threw aside their baggage, and, by easy and rapid evolutions, converted the columns of march into an order of battle. The slingers and archers skirmished in the front; the auxiliaries formed the first line, and were seconded or sustained by the strength of the legions; the cavalry covered the flanks, and the military engines were placed in the rear.

'Such were the arts of war, by which the Roman emperors defended their extensive conquests, and preserved a military spirit, at a time when every other (?) virtue was oppressed by luxury and despotism.'



AN EXPOSITION  
OF  
PAUL'S EPISTLE TO PHILEMON,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. J. Smith.)

THIS epistle to Philemon is placed the last of those with the name of Paul to them, perhaps because the shortest, and of an argument peculiar and different from all the others; yet such as the Spirit of God, who indited it, saw would, in its kind, be very instructive and useful in the churches. The occasion of it was this,—Philemon, one of note, and probably a minister in the church of Colosse, a city of Phrygia, had a servant named *Onesimus*, who, having purloined his goods, ran away from him, and, in his rambles, came to Rome, where Paul was then a prisoner for the Gospel; and providentially coming under his preaching there, was, by the blessing of God, converted by him; after which, he ministered awhile to the apostle in bonds, and might have been further useful to him; but he, understanding him to be another man's servant, would not, without his consent, detain him, but sends him back with this letter commendatory, wherein he earnestly sues for his pardon and kind reception.

Observe, here, 1. The goodness and mercy of God to a poor, wandering sinner, bringing him by his gracious providence under the means, and making them effectual to his conversion.

2. The great and endeared affection between a true convert and him whom God used to be the instrument of his conversion.

3. The tender and good spirit of this blessed apostle Paul. How pathetic a letter does he here write in *Onesimus'* behalf! Scarcely any argument is forgotten, that could possibly be used in the case; and all pressed with such force, that had it been the greatest favor to himself that he was asking, he could not have used more.

4. The remarkable providence of God in preserving such a short writing as this, that might be thought of little concern to the church, being not only a letter to a particular person, but of a private, personal matter, namely, the receiving of a poor fugitive servant into the favor and family of his injured master. What in this is there that concerns the common salvation? And yet over this has there been a special divine care, it being given (as the other scriptures were) by *inspiration of God*, and, in some sort, as they are, *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness*. God would have extant a proof and instance of his rich and free grace, for the encouragement and comfort of the meanest and vilest of sinners, looking to Him for mercy and forgiveness; and for instruction to ministers and others not to despise any, as if they were utter cast-aways; but rather to attempt their conversion, hoping they may be saved; likewise how to behave toward them. And on their part, how they must be humble and grateful, acknowledging God and his instruments, in what good they have received, ready to all suitable returns, making what reparation they can in case of injuries, and living a life of thankfulness and obedience. To such purposes may this epistle have been written and preserved. HENRY.

Philemon seems to have been a Christian of some eminence, residing at Colosse, 1, 2. *Col. 4:9, 17*, who had been converted under Paul's ministry, 19.; perhaps during his abode at Ephesus. *Acts 19:10*.—The most competent judges have given it [this letter] a decided preference, as a model of good writing in the epistolary kind,\* to the most admired remains of antiquity. [Comp. Suppl. on Philemon.] Indeed, we can scarcely conceive, how such a cause, as that of *Onesimus'*, could have been pleaded in a more interesting, obliging, prudent, pathetic, and masterly manner. It is also very replete with useful instruction.—The apostle entertained no doubt of Philemon's compliance with his request; and expected that he would do more than he said. It is therefore probable, that *Onesimus* was not only received into favor, but set at liberty; and it is generally thought, that he became afterwards a minister of the Gospel. *Onesimus* accompanied *Tychicus* to Colosse, and it may be concluded, that the apostle wrote to Philemon at the same time; and that *Onesimus*, having delivered the letter to his master, and obtained his forgiveness, joined with *Tychicus*, in executing the apostle's commission to the Colossians. SCOTT.

\* *Paley* remarks on the singular correspondence between this epistle and that to the Colossians. Though the subject did not lead to treat so directly of the doctrines or precepts of Christianity in this as in the other epistles, yet we meet with several allusions to different parts of the Christian plan, interwoven in an easy and natural manner with the rest of the letter. HENRY, *abr.*—It is impossible to read over this admirable epistle without being touched with the delicacy of sentiment, and the masterly address that appear in every part of it. We see here, in a most striking light, how perfectly consistent true politeness is, not

only with all the warmth and sincerity of the friend, but even with the dignity of the Christian and the apostle. And if this letter were to be considered in no other view than as a mere human composition, it must be allowed a master-piece in its kind. Compare *Pliny's* epistle; which, though written on a similar occasion, and by one reckoned to excel in the epistolary style, and though it has many beauties, yet must be acknowledged, by every impartial reader, vastly inferior to this animated composition of the apostle. DODDR.

A. D. 64.

<sup>4</sup> He rejoiceth to hear of the faith and love of Philemon, 9 whom he desireth to forgive his servant *Onesimus*, and lovingly to receive him again.

PAUL, a prisoner <sup>a</sup> of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and <sup>b</sup> fellow-laborer,

2 And to our beloved *Apphia*, and *Archippus* <sup>c</sup> our fellow-soldier, and to the church <sup>d</sup> in thy house:

<sup>a</sup> Ep. 3:1. <sup>b</sup> Phi. 2:25. <sup>c</sup> Col. 4:17. <sup>d</sup> Ro. 16:5.

V. 1, 2. In these two vs. of *preface* are the persons from and to whom it is written, with some annexed note or title, implying somewhat of argument to the purpose of the letter.

1. *The persons writing*: Paul the principal, and Timothy as second, or concurring. Paul calls himself a *prisoner of Jesus Christ*, i. e. for Jesus Christ. A petition from such petitioners, surely, would be tenderly regarded by a believer and minister of Christ. What could be denied them?

2. *The persons written to*, *Philemon*, *Apphia*, and *Archippus*, with the church in *Philemon's* house. Philemon, to whom the letter is inscribed, was the *head* of the family, in whom were the authority and power of taking in or shutting out, and whose property *Onesimus* was; with him, therefore, chiefly lay the business: a good man, and probably a minister, and on both accounts dearly beloved by Paul. With *Philemon*, *Apphia* is joined, probably his yoke-fellow; and having a concern in the domestic affairs, the apostle directs to her likewise. She was a party offended and injured by *Onesimus*, and therefore proper to be noticed in a letter for reconciliation and forgiveness. Justice and prudence would direct Paul to this express notice of her, who might be helpful in furthering the good ends of his writing. She is set before *Archippus*, as more concerned, and having more interest. These are the principal parties written to. The less principal are, *Archippus*, and the church in *Philemon's* house. *Archippus* was a minister in the church of Colosse, *Philemon's* friend,

*Paul addresses Philemon.*

and probably co-pastor with him; Paul might think him one whom *Philemon* would advise with, and, therefore, fit to put in the inscription of the letter, with the adjunct of *fellow-soldier*. To these it is added, *And to the church in thy house*, his whole family, in which the worship of God was kept up, so that he had, as it were, a church in his house. Observe, Families which generally may be most pious and orderly, may yet have one or other in them impious and wicked. This was the aggravation of *Onesimus'* sin, that it was where he might and should have learned better; it is likely he was secret in his misconduct, till his flight discovered him. No doubt *Philemon* had taught him better. For the religious worship and order kept up in it, his house is called a church; and such should all families be,—nurseries of religion, societies where God is called on, his Word read, sabbaths observed, and the members instructed in the knowledge of Him, and of their duty to Him; neglect of this is followed with ignorance and all corruption.

NOTES. V. 1, 2. The apostle did not intend to write *authoritative* to *Philemon*, and therefore he only styled himself 'a prisoner of Jesus Christ;' 8—11. *Eph. 3:1—7. 4:1—6.* Though *Philemon* is called a 'fellow-laborer,' it is not certain he was a minister; perhaps he served the

cause of Christ by active diligence in another manner. (Note, *Phil. 4:1—3.*) The beloved *Apphia* is generally supposed to have been his wife, though some think she was his sister. *Archippus*, *Col. 4:17.* is thought to have been the son or near relation of *Philemon*. SCOTT.



3 Grace <sup>a</sup> to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I thank <sup>f</sup> my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

5 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

6 That <sup>g</sup> the communication of thy faith may become effectual <sup>b</sup> by the acknowledging of every <sup>i</sup> good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed <sup>j</sup> by thee, brother.

8 Wherefore, though <sup>k</sup> I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient,

9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech <sup>l</sup> thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ;

10 I beseech thee for my son <sup>m</sup> Onesimus, whom I have begotten <sup>n</sup> in my bonds:

11 Which <sup>a</sup> in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:

a Ep. 1:2.	1 Phi. 4:8.	k 1 Th. 2:6.
f Ep. 1:16.	2 Pe. 1:5-8.	l Col. 4:9.
g Phi. 1:9-11.	j 2 Co. 7:13.	m 1 Co. 4:15.
h Ja. 2:14,17.	2 Ti. 1:16.	n 1 Pe. 2:10.

Philemon's house was a church: and Paul, for some concern all might have in this matter of Onesimus', directs to them all; that their affection, as well as Philemon's, might return to him; and that in their way and place they might further, and not hinder, the reconciliation wished and sought. Desirable it is, that all in a family be well affected towards one another, for furthering their particular and the common good and benefit of all. Next to this inscription is, the apostle's salutation of those named by him.

V. 3. This is the token in every epistle; so the apostle writes. And in this is summarily all good, and from this one Fountain, God, the Father, Son, and Spirit, all comes; for the Holy Spirit also is understood, though not named. After this salutation of the apostle to Philemon, and his friends and family, for better making way still for his suit to him,

He expresses the singular affection he had for him, by thanksgiving and prayer to God in his behalf, and the great joy for the many good things he knew and heard to be in him, in the four next following verses.

V. 4-7. The apostle's thanksgiving and prayer here for Philemon, are set forth by the object, circumstance, and matter of them, with the way whereby much of the knowledge of Philemon's goodness came to Him.

1. Here is the object of Paul's praises and

prayers for Philemon. Observe, It is the privilege of good men, that in their praises and prayers they come to God as their God: *Our God, we thank thee*, said David; and *I thank my God*, said Paul. We should offer prayer and praise, not for ourselves only, but for others, also; we must be affected with joy and thankfulness for any good in them, or done by them, or bestowed on them, as far as is known to us, and seek for them what they need. In this lies no little part of the communion of saints. Paul, in his private thanksgivings and prayers, was often particular in remembering his friends; and this is a mean of exercising love, and obtaining good for others. *Strive with me, by your prayers to God for me*, said the apostle: and what he desired for himself he surely practiced on behalf of others; so should all. *Pray one for another*, says James, 5: 16.

2. Here is the circumstance; *Always making mention of thee*. Always, usually, not once or twice only, but frequently. So must we remember Christian friends, much and often, as their case may need, bearing them in our thoughts, and on our hearts, before our God.

3. Here is the matter both of his praises and prayers, in reference to Philemon.

(1.) Of his praises.

He thanks God for the love which he heard Philemon had toward the Lord Jesus, and for his faith in Christ, also. He praises God likewise for his love to all the saints. And the two must go together. Thus he joins them, in Col. 1:3, 4. Different sentiments and ways in what is not essential, will not make difference of affection, as to the truth; though difference in the degrees of love will be according as more or less of that image is discerned. Mere external differences are nothing here. Paul calls a poor converted slave *his bowels*. We must love, as God does, *all saints*. This was what he inquired after concerning his friends, the truth, and growth, and fruitfulness of their graces, their faith in Christ, and love to Him and to all the saints. Therefore,

(2.) The apostle joins prayer with his praises, that the fruits of Philemon's faith and love might be more and more conspicuous, so as that the communication of them might constrain others to the acknowledgment of all the good things that were in him and in his house toward Christ Jesus, v. 6.

4. He adds a reason, both that of his prayer and praises, v. 7. The good thou hast done and still doest, is abundant matter of joy and comfort to me and others, who therefore desire ye may continue and abound in such good fruits more and more, to God's honor and the credit of religion, 2 Cor. 9: 12.

Thus far, the preface. Now comes the main business,—to plead with Philemon in behalf of Onesimus, to receive him and be reconciled to him. Many arguments he urges to this purpose, from v. 8. to 21. inclusive.

V. 8, 9. Here, the

1st Argument, from what was before noted, is carried in the illative *wherefore*, v. 8. 'Seeing so much good is reported of thee, and found in thee, especially thy love to all saints, now let me see it on a fresh and further occasion, in forgiving and receiving him who is now a convert, and so a saint indeed, and meet for thy favor and love. Observe, A disposition to do good, together with past instances and expressions of it, is a good handle to take hold on for pressing unto more.

2d Argument, is, from the authority of him now making this request, *I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient*. The apostles had, under Christ, great power in the church over the ordinary ministers, and were to be obeyed; which Philemon should consider; but the apostle would not in this instance act up to it. Observe, Ministers, whatever their power, are to use prudence in the exercise of it, godly wisdom and discretion. Wherefore, this may be a

3d Argument, Waving the authority, he chooses to entreat, v. 9. Observe, It is no disparagement for those who have power, sometimes even to beseech, where, in strictness of right, they might command; so does Paul, here, which doubtless must carry engaging influence with it. And especially which may be a

4th Argument, When any circumstance of the person pleading gives additional force to his petition, as here; *Being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ*. Years bespeak respect; and the motions of such, in things lawful and fit, should be received with regard. The request of an aged apostle, and now suffering for Christ and his Gospel, should be tenderly considered. He makes also a

5th Argument, from the spiritual relation now between Onesimus and himself.

V. 10. 'Though of right, and in civil respect, he be thy servant; yet in a spiritual sense he is now a son to me, God having made me the instrument of his conversion, even here where I am a prisoner for Christ's sake.' The apostle lays an emphasis here: *My son whom I have begotten in my bonds*; he was dear to him, and he hoped would be so to Philemon, under that consideration. And a

6th Argument, is, from Philemon's own interest.

V. 11. (1.) Observe, Unsanctified persons are unprofitable persons; they answer not the great end of their being and relations. Grace makes good for somewhat. There seems an allusion to the name Onesimus, which signifies profitable. Now he will answer to his name. It may be noted also how softly Paul here speaks! Not that Onesimus' sin was small, or that he or any would take it so; but, having been humbled for it, the apostle now would not sink his spirit by continuing to load and burden him therewith, but speaks thus tenderly with Philemon, not to make severe reflections on his servant's misconduct, but to forgive. (2.) Observe, What happy changes conver-

V. 3. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Rom. 1:5-7) 'Hence it appears, that the nature of the Father, and of the Son, is the same; seeing the Son can do that which the Father doeth, and the Father is said to do that which the Son doeth.' Jerome.

V. 4-7. The obvious meaning of the passage requires a transposition of the words, which arise from an arrangement, not at all unsuitable to the Gr. language, though it appears rather harsh in an English tr. The apostle also prayed, 'that the communication of Philemon's faith might become effectual, &c.' Some explain this of his liberal communication from his temporal affluence, being made 'effectual' for the relief of the saints, and for the evident demonstration of his faith, from which it sprung. Others suppose the apostle to mean, that his communion or participation of faith in Christ might be effectual in regulating his own temper and conduct. But, though both these senses may be contained in the words, they seem to have a still further meaning. The apostle probably prayed, that Philemon's endeavors to 'communicate' his faith in Christ to those around him, might be rendered effectual, through the evident excellency of his own example, and that of his family; so that men might be induced to acknowledge the reality and value 'of every good thing which was in them,' by means of their relation to Christ, and thus to entertain a favorable opinion of that religion,

which produced such beneficial effects on the conduct of those who embraced it. Mat. 5:14-16. 1 Pet. 2:12. This he trusted would be the case, for he 'had great joy' and comfort, in the accounts that he heard of his liberal love, by which the urgent necessities of Christians and ministers were supplied; so that, while their bodies were refreshed at his expense, their hearts were also rejoiced by his good example and pious conversation; and therefore the apostle cordially owned him, and greatly loved him, as his brother in the Gospel. The word 'brother,' placed thus at the end of a sentence, is peculiarly emphatical, and expressive of the most entire cordiality.

V. 8-11. In the original (10) Onesimus is mentioned at the close of the sentence, that the suspense and most affectionate introduction might prepare Philemon to read a name, which could scarcely fail of being associated in his mind with unfavorable ideas. 'Onesimus' signifies, profitable; in allusion to which, the apostle allowed, that he had not formerly deserved that name, having been 'unprofitable;' probably he had been unfaithful, dishonest, and unruly, perhaps addicted to other vices. This the apostle seems to have known from his confession. Id.

(9.) Paul the aged.] About 53; so Doddr. Whitby says, about 63. And Doddr. adds, that the reader, if not satisfied with either, may take any medium between the two, as he pleases.



12 Whom I have sent again : thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels ;

13 Whom I would have retained with me, that ° in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel :

14 But without thy mind would I do nothing ; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but <sup>p</sup> willingly.

15 For <sup>q</sup> perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him for ever ;

16 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother <sup>r</sup> beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the <sup>s</sup> flesh, and in the Lord ?

17 If thou count me therefore a <sup>t</sup> partner, receive him as myself.

18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth *thee* ought, put that on mine account ;

19 I Paul have written *it* with mine own hand, I will repay *it* : albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.

o 1 Co. 16:17. r Ge. 45:5,8. s Col. 3:22.  
 Phi 2:30. t Mat. 23:3. 1 2 Co. 8:23.  
 p 2 Co. 9:7. 1 Ti. 6:2.

sion makes; of evil, good; of unprofitable, useful! Religious servants are a treasure in a family. Such will make conscience of their time and trusts, promoting the interests of those whom they serve, and managing all they can for the best. This then is the argument here urged; 'It will now be for thy advantage to receive him; thus changed, as he is, thou mayest expect him a dutiful and faithful servant, though in time past he was not so.' Whereupon, as a

7th Argument, He urges Philemon from the strong affection he had to Onesimus. He had mentioned the spiritual relation before, *my son begotten in my bonds*; and now he signifies how dear he was to him.

V. 12. 'I love him as I do myself, and have sent him back to thee for this end, that thou shouldst receive him; do it therefore for my sake, receive him as one thus dear to me.' Observe, Even good men may sometimes need great earnestness and entreaty to lay their passions, let go their resentments, and forgive those who have injured and offended them. Some have thought Philemon, being a Phrygian, might perhaps be naturally of a rough and difficult temper, and thence need no little pains in touching all the springs that might move him to forgiveness and reconciliation; but rather should we strive to be like God, who is *slow to anger, and ready to forgive, and abundant in pardons*. And again, an

8th Argument, is, from the apostle's denying himself in sending back Onesimus; though he might have presumed on Philemon's leave to detain him longer, yet he would not.

V. 13, 14. Now in prison, Paul wanted a friend or servant to assist him, and therefore would have detained Onesimus; Philemon himself, he might have presumed, had he requested it, would not have refused; much less would he be unwilling his servant

should assist him in his stead; yet Paul would not take this liberty. Observe, Good deeds are most acceptable to God and man, when done with most freedom. And Paul herein, notwithstanding his apostolical power, would show what regard he had to civil rights, which Christianity does by no means supersede or weaken, but rather confirm and strengthen. He might indeed have presumed on Philemon's willingness; but, notwithstanding his need, he would deny himself rather than take that way. And he argues further;

9th Argument, That such a change was now wrought in Onesimus, that Philemon needed not fear his ever running from him, or injuring him any more. There are those of whom Solomon says, *If thou deliver them, thou must do it again*, Prov. 19:19. but the change wrought in Onesimus was such, that he would never again need one thus to intercede for him.

V. 15. Charity would so hope, yea, so it would be; yet the apostle speaks cautiously, that none might be bold to make another such experiment, in expectation of a like gracious issue. Observe, In matters that may be wrested to ill, ministers must speak warily, that kind providences of God towards sinners be not abused, to encouragements to sin, or abatements of just abhorrence of it; *Perhaps he therefore departed from thee for a season, &c.* Observe, How softly still the sins of penitents are spoken of; he calls it a *departure for a season*, instead of giving it the term it deserved. When we speak of the nature of any sin or offence against God, the evil of it is not to be lessened; but, in the person of a penitent sinner, as God covers it, so must we. Such as are true penitents will not *return to folly*. Observe, The wisdom, goodness, and power of God, in causing that to end so happily, which was begun and carried on for some time so wickedly; thus working so good and great a change in a poor vassal, who was so far gone in evil ways, who had wronged a master so good, had run from a family so pious, from the means of grace, *the church in his house*; that he should be led into the way of salvation, who had fled from it, and find means made effectual at Rome, who had been hardened under them at Colosse. What riches are here of divine grace! None so low, or mean, or vile, as utterly to be despaired of. God can meet with them when running from Him; can make means effectual at one time and place, which have not been so at another. So was it in this instance of Onesimus. So God often brings gain to his people out of their losses. And beside interest, a

10th Argument is taken from the capacity under which Onesimus now would return, and must be received by Philemon.

V. 16. 'Not now as a servant, that is, not merely or so much, but above a servant, in a spiritual respect, a brother beloved, one to be owned as a brother in Christ, and to be loved as such, on account of this holy change wrought in him, and one therefore who will be useful unto thee, on better principles and in a better manner, than before. Observe, There is a spiritual brotherhood between all true believers, however differenced in civil and outward respects; they all are children of the same heavenly Father, have a right to the same spiritual privileges and benefits, must love and do all good offices to and for one another as brethren, though still in the same rank, and de-

gree, and station, wherein they were called. Observe, Religious servants are more than mere ordinary servants; they have grace in their hearts, and have found grace in God's sight, and so will in the sight of religious masters. Good ministers love not so much according to the outward good they receive, as the spiritual good they do. Paul called Onesimus *his own bowels*, and other converts his *joy and crown*. This argument is strengthened by another, the

11th Argument, From the communion of saints.

V. 17. There is a *fellowship* among saints; they have interest one in another, and must love and act accordingly.

But why such concern and earnestness for a servant, a slave, and such a one as had misbehaved? Answer, Onesimus being now penitent, it was doubtless to encourage him, and to support him in returning to his master. Wise and good ministers will have great and tender care of young converts, to encourage and hearten them to their duty. Objection, But Onesimus had wronged as well as offended his master. The answer to this makes a

12th Argument, A promise of satisfaction to Philemon.

V. 18, 19. Here are three things:

(1.) A confession of Onesimus' debt to Philemon; *If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought*. It is not an *if* of doubting, but of illation and concession; seeing *he hath wronged thee*, and thereby is become indebted to thee; such an *if* as Col. 3:1. and 2 Pet. 2:4. &c. Observe, True penitents will be ingenuous in owning their faults, as doubtless Onesimus had been to Paul, on his being awakened, and brought to repentance; especially is this to be done in cases of injury to others. Onesimus, by Paul, owns the wrong. And,

(2.) Paul here engages for satisfaction; *Put that on my account*. Whence, [1.] Observe, The communion of saints does not destroy distinction of property: Onesimus, now converted, and become a *brother beloved*, is yet Philemon's servant still, and indebted to him for wrongs he had done, and not to be discharged but by free and voluntary remission, or on reparation made by himself, or some other in his behalf; which part, rather than fail, the apostle undertakes for him. Upon which, [2.] Observe, Suretyship is not, in all cases, unlawful, but in some, is a good and merciful undertaking. Only know the person and case; be not *surety for a stranger*, Prov. 11:15. and go not beyond ability. And how happy for us, that Christ would be made the Surety of a better covenant, Heb. 7:22. that He would be made *Sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him!* And, [3.] Observe, Formal securities by writing, as well as by word and promise, may be required and given. Persons die, and words may be forgotten or mistaken; writing better preserves right and peace, and has been in use with good persons, as well as others, in all ages, Jer. 32:9. &c. Luke 16:5-7. It was much that Paul, who lived on contributions himself, would undertake to make good all loss by an evil servant to his master; but hereby he expresses his real and great affection for Onesimus, and his full belief of the sincerity of his conversion: he might also hope, that, notwithstanding this generous offer, Philemon would not insist on it, but freely remit all; considering,

V. 12-16. Onesimus was Philemon's legal property, and Paul had required and prevailed with Onesimus to return to him, having made sufficient trial of his sincerity; and he requested Philemon to receive him, with the same kindness, as he would the aged apostle's 'own son according to the flesh'; being equally dear to him, as his spiritual child. He would gladly have kept him at Rome, but would not do anything of this kind without his consent, lest he should seem to extort the benefit, and Philemon should appear to act from 'necessity,' rather than 'from a willing mind.' 2 Cor. 9:1-7.

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V. 17-21. It is generally observed, that this is a plain instance of a

debt, being imputed to one, which was contracted by another; and of one by a voluntary engagement becoming answerable for the misconduct of another, that the latter might be exempted from the punishment due to his crimes, and partake of benefits to which he had no right. This accords to the doctrine of Christ's voluntary bearing [of] the punishment of our sins, that we might receive the reward of his righteousness, by a reciprocal imputation.—Perhaps the apostle understood, that Philemon had expressed some sharpness concerning Onesimus' conduct, or suspicion of his sincerity in his professed repentance; or knowing him to be naturally somewhat severe in his temper, he might fear lest he should



20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh <sup>u</sup> my bowels in the Lord.

21 Having confidence <sup>v</sup> in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

22 But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I <sup>w</sup> trust that through <sup>x</sup> your prayers I shall be given unto you.

23 There salute thee <sup>y</sup> Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus;

24 <sup>z</sup> Marcus, <sup>a</sup> Aristarchus, <sup>b</sup> Demas, Lucas, my fellow-laborers.

25 The <sup>c</sup> grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

¶ Written from Rome to Philemon, by Onesimus a servant.

<sup>u</sup> ver. 7.                    <sup>x</sup> 2 Co. 1:11.                    <sup>r</sup> Ac. 19:29.  
<sup>v</sup> 2 Co. 7:16.                <sup>y</sup> Col. 1:7.                        <sup>b</sup> 2 Ti. 4:11.  
<sup>w</sup> Phi. 2:24.                <sup>z</sup> Ac. 12:12,25.                <sup>c</sup> 2 Ti. 4:22.

(3.) The reason of things between him and Philemon; '*Albeit*,' &c. Modesty in self-praises is true praise. The apostle glances at the benefits he had conferred on Philemon; and intimates, that what he asked in behalf of Onesimus, would be as nothing in return. Observe, How great the endearments are between ministers and those toward whom their endeavors have been blessed to their conversion, or spiritual edification! Gal. 4:15. so, 1 Thes. 2:8. By way of allusion, this may illustrate Christ's undertaking for us: we were revolted from God, and by sin had wronged Him, but Christ undertakes to make satisfaction, *the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us unto God.* Farther, a

13th Argument is, from the joy and comfort the apostle thereby would have on Philemon's own account, as well as that of Onesimus, in such a seasonable and acceptable fruit of Philemon's faith and obedience.

V. 20. Philemon was Paul's son in the faith, yet he entreats him as a brother; Onesimus, a poor slave, yet he solicits for him as if he were seeking some great thing for himself. How pathetic is he! '*Yea, brother, or O my brother*; (it is an adverb of wishing or desiring;) *let me have joy of thee in the Lord.* Thou knowest that I am now a prisoner of the Lord, for his sake and cause, and need all the comfort and support that my friends in Christ can give me; now this will be joy to me; *I shall have joy of thee in the Lord,* as seeing such an evidence and fruit of thy own Christian faith and love, and on Onesimus' account, who hereby will be relieved and encouraged.' *Refresh my bowels in the Lord.* No carnal, selfish respect actuates me, but that which is pleasing to

Christ, and in which He may have honor. His last, and

14th Argument, lies in his good hope and opinion which he expresses of Philemon.

V. 21. Good thoughts and expectations of us more strongly move and engage to do the things expected from us. Observe, Good persons will be ready for good works, and not narrow and pinching, but abundant in them, Isa. 32:8.

Now he comes to the conclusions; where,

1. He signifies his good hope of deliverance, through their prayers, and that shortly he might see them, desiring Philemon to make provision for him.

V. 22. *But withal, or moreover.* He comes to another thing, yet, as may seem, not without some eye to the matter he had been upon, that might be furthered by this intimation, that he hoped he should himself soon follow, and know the effect. (1.) *Prepare a lodging*; under this all necessities for a stranger are included. Hospitality is a great Christian duty, especially in ministers, and towards ministers, such as the apostle was, coming out of such dangers and sufferings for Christ and his Gospel. It is an honorable title he gives Gaius, Rom. 16:23. Onesiphorus he also affectionately remembered on this account, 2 Tim. 1:16. (2.) The ground of the apostle's request; *For I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.* The benefit of prayer he had often found, and hoped he should again, for deliverance and liberty to come to them. Our dependence is on God for life and liberty, and opportunity of service; yet this must be with the use of means, prayer especially, though no other should be at hand. *The fervent effectual prayer of the righteous availeth much.* Prayer of people for ministers, especially when in distress and danger, is their great duty; ministers need and request it. Paul, though an apostle, did so [often] with much earnestness, Rom. 15:30. 2 Cor. 1:11. Eph. 6:18, 19. 1 Thess. 5:25. The least may this way be helpful to the greatest. In praying for faithful ministers, people in effect pray for themselves. '*I trust I shall be given unto you*; for your service, and comfort, and edification in Christ,' see 2 Cor. 4:5.

2. He sends salutations from a fellow-prisoner, and four more, his fellow-laborers:

V. 23, 24. *Saluting is wishing health and peace.* Christianity is no enemy to courtesy, but enjoins it, 1 Pet. 3:8. It is a mere expression of love and respect, and a mean of preserving and nourishing it. *Epaphras* was of Colosse, and so countryman and fellow-citizen with Philemon; by office, he seems to have been an evangelist, who labored among the Colossians, if not the first converter of them, for whom he had special affection. A very eminent person therefore this

was, who, being at Rome, perhaps accompanying Paul, and laboring in the same work, was confined in the same prison, and for the same cause. God sometimes lightens the sufferings of his servants by the communion of saints, the sweet fellowship they have one with another in their bonds. Never more enjoyment of God have they found, than when suffering together for God. So Paul and Silas, when in the stocks. *Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-laborers.* The mention of these seems in a manner to interest them in the business of the letter. *Marcus* was cousin of Barnabas, and son of Mary, who was so hospitable to the saints at Jerusalem, Col. 4:10. Acts 12:12. and whose house was the place of meeting for prayer and worship of God. Some failing seems to have been in him when Paul and he parted, yet with Barnabas he went on with his work; and here Paul and he, we perceive, were reconciled, and differences forgotten, 2 Tim. 4:11. *Aristarchus* is mentioned with *Marcus*, Col. 4:10. and, speaking there of *Marcus*, he adds, *touching whom ye received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him*; an evidence that he himself had received him, and was reconciled to him. Next is *Demas*, who, hitherto, it seems, appeared not faulty, though, 2 Tim. 4:10. he is censured as having forsaken Paul, from love of this present world. But how far his forsaking was, whether total from his work and profession, or partially only; and whether he repented, and returned to his duty, Scripture is silent, and so must we be: no mark of disgrace lay on him here, but he is joined with others who were faithful, as he is also in Col. 4:14. *Lucas* is the last, that beloved physician and evangelist, who came to Rome companion with Paul, Col. 4:14. 2 Tim. 4:11. He was Paul's associate in his greatest dangers, and his fellow-laborer.

3. The closing prayer and benediction.

V. 25. *Your spirit*; not Philemon's only, but of all who were named in the inscription. *With your spirit* with you; the soul or spirit being the immediate seat of grace, whence it influences the whole man, and flows out in gracious and holy actings. All the house saluted are here joined in the closing benediction, the more to remind and quicken all to further the end of the epistle.

*Amen* is added, not only for strong and affectionate summing up the prayer and wish, *so let it be*; but as an expression of faith that it will be heard, *so shall it be.* And what more than the *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* would sweeten and mollify their spirits, Philemon's especially, and take off too deep and keen resentments of injuries, and dispose to forgive others as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us!

PRACT. OBS. Faithful ministers have great joy and comfort in that little company of affluent Christians, whose 'love abounds' in liberality to all men; and when 'the bowels of the saints are refreshed by them,' and their wants generously supplied.—It is by no means proper to exercise authority on every occasion, even when ministers may be 'bold to enjoin what is convenient.' It is frequently far more prudent, for love's sake, to beseech even juniors and inferiors, especially when it may be supposed, they will be reluctant to what is required, and when it may be difficult to convince them of its indispensable obligation. In such circumstances, wisdom and humility will teach the aged and experienced to become willingly the obliged parties, when they might assume a higher tone.—In speaking to persons about their sins, for their humiliation, the heinous nature and manifold aggravations of them should be insisted on; but in mentioning them to others, who are disposed to severity or resentment, we should soften and extenuate as far as truth will permit; and the subject ought to be introduced with all the tenderness

and caution imaginable, that everything may tend to conciliate, and nothing to exasperate, [or excite selfishness, as pride, triumph, &c.]—No prospect of usefulness should induce ministers to allow their converts to neglect relative obligations, or to fail of obedience to their superiors. One great evidence of true repentance consists in returning to the practice of those duties which had been neglected; and even liberty to engage in other services should be sought from those concerned; not as it were of necessity, but by their willing consent. We know not for what services God may intend those, whom He has marvellously converted; having, therefore, given our judgment, and used proper means, we should leave all things to his determination, in whose hand are the hearts of all the children of men. Had not the Lord overruled some of our ungodly projects, the writer and many readers may say, with humble gratitude, our destruction must have been the inevitable consequence; though, through that gracious interposition, they eventually proved the occasion of our being brought into the way of salvation and of usefulness. Sc.

punish him, as the laws permitted masters to do [to] their slaves in such cases, which would not only have been grievous to Onesimus, but disgraceful to the Gospel, and to Philemon himself.—We can hardly doubt, that Philemon, on this, forgave Onesimus, received him with kindness, remitted what he owed to him, and afterwards gave him his liberty, that he might attend on the apostle. His appointment with Tychicus to deliver the epistle to the Colossians seems to intimate, that Paul meant to employ him as a minister, which probably was afterwards done. Sc.

(20) *Refresh my bowels.* The original is wonderfully emphatic, signifying to *appease or quiet*, which strongly intimates the commotion he felt, through the ardor of his concern for Onesimus. Comp. v. 7. where the same word is used, and seems to be referred to here with pe-

culiar beauty and propriety.' Doddridge. And he adds, on the whole passage from v. 8. to the end of the epistle, 'How amiable is the condescension of the holy apostle! How charming and delicate his address! Let his example be imitated by those in superior stations and relations in life [and especially by those who hold the fearfully responsible station of masters]; and let them learn, from the tenderness such a man expresses for this poor slave, in whom he traced the appearance of a truly Christian temper, [their duty] to interest themselves in the happiness of those whose rank is far beneath their own. Well may such a care be expected, when we can look upon such as brethren beloved in the Lord, and partakers with us in the same Savior and hope of the Gospel.' Ed.



AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
**EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS,**  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. W. Tong.)

CONCERNING this epistle we must inquire,

I. *Into the divine authority of it*; this has been questioned by some, as the Arians, who deny the *Godhead* and *Self-existence* of Christ; and the Socinians, who deny his *Satisfaction*: but, after all the attempts of such men to disparage this epistle, the divine original of it shines forth with those strong and unclouded rays, that he who runs may read it as an eminent part of the canon of Scripture. The divinity of the matter, the sublimity of the style, the excellency of the design, the harmony of this with other parts of Scripture, and its general reception in the church of God in all ages,—these are the evidences of its divine authority.

II. As to the *divine amanuensis*, or penman of this epistle, we are not so certain; it does not bear the name of any, as the rest of the epistles do, and there has been some dispute among the learned to whom they should ascribe it. Some have assigned it to Clemens of Rome; others to Luke; and many to Barnabas; but it is generally assigned to the apostle Paul.\* In the primitive times it was generally ascribed to him, and the style and scope of it very well agree with his spirit. Some think Peter refers to it, and proves Paul to be the penman of it, by telling the Hebrews, to whom he wrote, of Paul's having written to them, 2 Pet. 3:15. We read of no other epistle he ever wrote them but this. And though it has been objected, that, since Paul put his name to all his other epistles, he would not have omitted it here; yet others have well answered, that he, being the *apostle of the Gentiles*, who were odious to the Jews, might think fit to conceal his name, lest their prejudices against him might hinder them from reading and weighing it as they ought to do.

III. As to the *scope* and *design* of this epistle, it is very evident, that it was clearly to inform the minds, and strongly to confirm the judgment of the Hebrews in the transcendent excellency of the *gospel* above the *law*, and so to take them off from the ceremonies of the law, to which they were so wedded, of which they were so fond, that they even doted on them. Those of them who were Christians, retained too much of the *old leaven*, and the design of this epistle was, [further,] to persuade and press them to a constant adherence to the Christian's faith, and perseverance in it, notwithstanding all sufferings in so doing. In order to this, he speaks much of the excellency of the *Author* of the Gospel, the *glorious Jesus*, whose honor he advances, and whom he justly prefers before all others, showing Him to be All in all, and this in lofty strains of holy rhetoric. It must be acknowledged, that there are many things in this epistle hard to be understood, but the sweetness we shall find herein will make us abundant amends for all the pains we take to understand it. And, indeed, if we compare all the epistles of the N. T. we shall not find any of them more replenished with divine, heavenly matter, than this to the Hebrews.

HENRY.

Origen and some others were of opinion, that the epistle was written in the Hebrew or Syriac language; and translated into Greek by Clement, or Luke: but, if this had been the case, it can hardly be supposed, that no one copy of the Hebrew epistle should be mentioned as extant in their days, and as seen by them.—The quotations from the O. T. are generally taken from the Sept., even where that version in some degree varies from the Heb.: but this would scarcely have taken place, had the epistle been written in Heb.—The Heb. names are interpreted also in Greek, in a manner, that is not at all like the addition of a translator. The apostle, doubtless, supposed that the epistle would circulate widely among his countrymen, who spoke Greek; and among Christians in general, as well as among the Hebrews; and therefore, probably, he wrote in Greek, as more generally in use at that time, than any other language in the world: and, as it seems to have been written principally for the more learned of the Hebrews, and the teachers in the first instance; the circumstance, that the unlearned in Judea could not read it, would not counterbalance the advantages of its being legible by such numbers in every other place. For even in Judea the teachers would make it known to the common people: and the time was at hand when both Jews and Christians would be removed from the settlements in that country.—The Hebrews were the Jews in Judea, and those who spoke a dialect of the Heb.: and to such of them, as professed Christianity, the epistle was addressed; and probably sent to Jerusalem, to the rulers and pastors of the church in that city: yet the writer evidently expected, that the unconverted Jews, also, would read it; and their conviction and instruction seem to have been a leading part of his object in writing it.—It opens with a declaration of the personal and mediatorial dignity of Christ, and proofs from the O. T. that the Messiah was to be far greater than the angels. It then shows his superiority to Moses and other eminent men of the nation; proves, by the most unanswerable arguments, that in Him the types of the law had their full accomplishment; that He was the substance of all those shadows; and that the ancient Scriptures taught Israel to expect an entirely new dispensation, priesthood, and covenant, under the reign of the Messiah. These reasonings are interspersed and closed with most solemn and affectionate warnings and exhortations, addressed to different descriptions of persons. At length, the writer shows the nature, efficacy, and triumphs of faith; by which all the saints in former ages had been accepted by God, and enabled to obey, suffer, and do exploits in defence of their holy religion: after which, he adds various instructions, admonitions, encouragements, and exhortations; and then concludes with the customary salutations and benedictions.

\* The general testimony of antiquity, the current tradition of the church, and the judgment of the most competent modern critics, determine this epistle to have been written by Paul; though some, both in former and latter times, have thought otherwise. "The epistle of Paul." Thus we find it written in all our manuscripts, one only excepted, in which it is only, "The epistle to the Hebrews." *Beza*.—It is evident, that this epistle was generally received in ancient times, by those Christians who used the Greek language, and lived in the eastern parts of the Roman empire. In particular, Clement of Alexandria, before the end of the 2d century, received this epistle as St. Paul's, and quoted it frequently, and without any doubt or hesitation.—It is not expressly quoted as St. Paul's, by any of the Latin writers in the first three centuries. However, it was known to Irenæus and Tertullian.—It is manifest, that it was received as an epistle of St. Paul, by many Latin writers in the 4th, 5th, and 6th centuries. *Lardner*.—Origen, who held some peculiar notions concerning it, says, "The ancients did not rashly hand it down as St. Paul's."—It is very certain, that the churches and writers, who were ancients with respect to Origen, must have conversed with the apostles themselves, or at least with their successors.—Since this tradition was ancient, in the times of Clement of Alexandria and Origen, about 130 years after the epistle was written; it must have had its rise in the days of Paul himself, and so cannot reasonably be contested. *Hallet*, in *Mackn*.—The doubts, which have been entertained on this subject, seem principally to have arisen from the circumstance, of the apostle's name not being affixed to it, according to his custom in all his other epistles.—But, on the contrary, I contend, from this very circumstance, that it belongs to Paul rather than to any other person. For why should any other person have omitted his name? Paul, however, knew that *his* name was hated at Jerusalem. *Beza*.—The apostle intended to prove the doctrines of Christianity, and

the changes which it had introduced, and would introduce, to be entirely consistent with 'the oracles of God,' as received by the Jews: and either clearly predicted, or evidently typified, or at least sufficiently intimated, by them; so that any man, who fully understood the O. T., must have expected the substance of what was taught by Christ and his apostles, and the events which had occurred. It is, therefore, highly probable, that he expressly aimed to write an epistle, which might be put into the hands either of Judaizing Christians, or unbelieving Jews, and read by them, without any prejudice, on account of the person who wrote it: let them impartially consider his arguments. *Pref. to Est*. It is however evident, that he supposed some of the Hebrews would know from whom it came. 10:34. 13:19, 23, 24. But these intimations are not given till the argumentative part of the epistle is ended; and they would not be clearly understood by any but the apostle's friends.—The writer's connexion with Timothy, and his residence in Italy, tend to confirm the ancient tradition: and the other objections, as the supposition that the style is more elegant than Paul's; and that he uses expressions, which imply that he received his doctrine from those who heard Christ, and not by immediate revelation, &c. appear very vague and frivolous. He might, perhaps, bestow more pains in this epistle, concerning the style, than he did when he wrote to other churches: but, in fact, many competent judges are of opinion, that it is not more elegant. Certainly the internal evidence, arising from the writer's manner of expressing himself, and his reasoning, and things of a similar nature, corroborate the opinion, that Paul was the author: and if he thought it prudent to write, as a converted Jew to his countrymen, and not as an apostle, who insisted on his authority; he must of course join himself with the other Jewish converts, and not distinguish himself from them, as having received his doctrine immediately from Christ. (Comp. 2:4. with 1 Pet. 4:3.)

SCOTT.



—The internal excellency of this epistle, as connecting the O. Test. and the New in the most convincing and instructive manner, and elucidating both more fully than any other epistle, or perhaps than all of them, added to other arguments, puts the divine inspiration of it beyond doubt. We here find the great doctrines, which we have elsewhere been considering, stated, proved, and applied to practical purposes, with peculiar animation, energy, and persuasion. It is supposed to have been written at the close of the apostle's first imprisonment at Rome, when he either was set at liberty, or daily expected it.\*

SCOTT.

\* Some of Professor Stuart's conclusions respecting the epistle are the following: that it is an *epistle*, and not an *essay* or *homily*; that it was inscribed to some particular church, and that not the church in Galatia, nor that at Thessalonica,—that it was addressed, not to the sojourners in Asia Minor, nor to the church at Corinth,—nor was it sent to Spain, nor to Rome,—nor to the church in general in Palestine,—but probably to the church at Cesarea. That it was by Paul, and not by Barnabas, Luke, Clement of Rome, or Apollon, he argues from circumstances mentioned in the epistle, from similarity of sentiment and doctrine with the known epistles of Paul, also from the form, method, style, and diction of the composition. As to the language in which it was written, he concludes in favor of the Greek. Ep.—“If then Paul was the author of this epistle, the time when, and the place where, it was written, may be easily ascertained; for the salutation from the saints in Italy, ch. 13:24. and his promise of seeing the Hebrews shortly, v. 23. plainly intimate, that his first imprisonment at Rome was then terminated, or on the point of being so. Consequently it was written from Italy, perhaps from Rome, soon after the epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon, either at the end of A. D. 62. or more probably in the beginning of the year 63.” GREENF.—“Hales considers this epistle a masterly supple-

ment to the epistles to the Romans and Galatians, and a luminous commentary on them; showing, by a connected chain of argument, that all the legal dispensation was originally designed to be superseded by the new and better covenant of the Christian dispensation. And, as Stuart observes, while it contains many things appropriate to the Hebrews of early times, it also contains many which can never cease to interest the church of God, while Christianity exists in the world.” Henry, *abr.*—Shuttleworth says, “The tendency of the apostle's reasoning is to show, that no Jew who really believes in the authority of his own sacred books, (the Old Testament,) if he reasons consistently, and adopts the inferences necessarily deducible from them, could ultimately refuse his assent to the truth of the Christian dispensation, or fail of perceiving, that in the person of the Redeemer, all the types and prophecies of the Jewish writings, had effectually found their final completion. The point at issue is established by an appeal to those very peculiar opinions and principles, which the parties to be convinced have, above all others, the most imperative obligation to admit. The great and primary truth which it is the object of this epistle to enforce, is, the Divinity of our blessed Savior, with the obvious inference deducible from that doctrine, namely, the complete sufficiency of his one great expiation for sin.” HENRY, *abr.*

## CHAP. I.

1 Christ in these last times coming to us from the Father,  
4 is preferred above the angels, both in person and office.

**G**OD, who <sup>a</sup> at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days <sup>b</sup> spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir <sup>c</sup> of all things, by whom <sup>d</sup> also he made the worlds;

<sup>a</sup> Nu. 12:6,8. <sup>b</sup> De. 13:15. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 2:8. <sup>d</sup> Jn. 1:3.

CHAP. I. V. 1—3. Here the apostle begins with a general declaration of the excellency of the gospel-dispensation above that of the law, which he demonstrates from the different way and manner of God's communicating Himself and his mind and will to men, in the one and in the other. Observe,

How God communicated Himself and his will to men, I. Under the O. T. 1. The persons by whom God spake his mind under the O. T.; that is, the prophets, persons chosen of God, and qualified by Him, for that office of revealing the will of God to men. 2. The persons to whom God spake by the prophets; *to the fathers*, to all the Old Test. saints. 3. The order in which God spake to men in times before the Gospel; He spake at sundry times and in divers manners. (1.) *At sundry times*, or by several parts, as the word signifies, which may refer either to the several ages of the O. T. dispensation,—the patriarchal, the Mosaic-

al, and the prophetic; or to the several gradual openings of his mind concerning the Redeemer: to Adam, Abraham, Jacob, David, Micah, and Isaiah. (2.) *In divers manners*, according to the different ways in which God thought fit to communicate his mind to his prophets, by the *illapses* of his Spirit, by *dreams*, by *visions*, by an *audible voice*, and by *legible characters* under his own hand, as when He wrote the ten commandments. Of some of these different ways God Himself gave an account in Num. 12:6, 7. Observe,

II. Under the *New Test. dispensation*, these *last days*, as they are called, i. e. either toward the end of the world, or the end of the Jewish state. The times of the Gospel are the *last times*, the gospel-revelation is the *last* we are to expect from God: now we must expect no new revelation, but only more of the Spirit of Christ to help us better to understand what is already revealed. And herein consists the excellency of the gospel-revelation above the former:

1. *It is the final, the finishing revelation*, so that now we may rejoice in a complete revelation of the will of God, both *preceptive* and *providential*, so far as is necessary for us to know, in order to our direction and comfort.

2. It is a revelation *God has made by his Son*, the most excellent Messenger ever sent into the world, far superior to all the ancient patriarchs and prophets, by whom God communicated Himself to his people in former times. Here we have an account of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(I.) *The glory of his office*, and that in three respects:

*God hath appointed Him to be Heir of all things*; i. e. to be the sovereign Lord of all, the absolute Disposer, Director, and Governor of all persons and of all things, Ps. 2:6, 7. Mat. 28:18. John 5:22. *By Him God made the worlds*, both visible and invisible, the heavens and the earth; not as an instrumental Cause, but as his essential Word and Wisdom. *He upholds all things by the Word of his power*; He keeps the world from dissolving, *by Him all things consist*; the weight of the whole creation is laid on Christ, He supports the whole and all the parts.

(2.) From hence the apostle passes to the *glory of the person of Christ*, who was able to execute such an office, v. 2. He is, in person, the *Son of God*, the *only-begotten Son of God*, and, as such, must have the same nature. This *personal distinction* always supposes one and the *same nature*. Every son of man is man; were not the nature the same, the generation would be monstrous. The person of the Son is the *glory of the Father*, shining forth with a truly divine splendor, God manifest in the flesh. The person of the Son is the *true image and character of the person of the Father*; being of the same nature, He must bear the same *image and likeness*. *He that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father*; i. e. the *same Being*. He that hath known the Son, hath known the Father, John. 14:7—9. For the Son is in the Father, and the Father in the Son; the personal distinction is no other than will consist with essential union. This is the *glory of the person of Christ*; the *fulness of the Godhead dwells*, not typically, but really, in Him.

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. The Hebrews allowed the divine authority of the O. T.; and therefore the writer of this epistle waved the mention of his apostolical authority, and reasoned with them principally from their own scriptures: and he thought it best to conceal his name; that none might be deterred by it from reading his arguments, or induced to receive them with prejudice. He therefore entered on his subject without any introduction.—“By the prophets,” were men of the same fallen nature with their brethren.—“By his Son.”—The eternal Word, or Son of God, who had at length “become flesh, and dwelt among” men, and among the Jews almost exclusively, to fulfill ancient prophecies and promises, and to give the most complete and explicit revelation of God, and of his truth and will, to mankind; as well as to procure salvation for them.—This glorious Person the Father had appointed “Heir of all things.” As the co-equal Son of God, the government of all worlds by original right was vested in Him—possessing the essential perfections of the Deity, He was capable of exercising universal authority, which no mere creature could have done; and He had been appointed by the Father, in respect of his assumed manhood, to rule over all worlds on the mediatorial throne, with uncontrolled dominion and unrivalled glory. Thus He inherited all things; and no creature could have any inheritance of power, honor, or felicity, except as derived from Him, and held in subordination to Him. 2:5—9. Ps. 2:7—12. Is. 9:6,7. Matt. 28:18. John 5:20—24. Rom. 14:10—12. 1 Cor. 15:20—28. Eph. 1:15—23. Phil. 2:9—11. This appointment had the more evident propriety, in that “by Him also God made the worlds:” being One with the Father and the eternal Spirit, in essence, power, and counsel, He had been the immediate Creator of the heavens and the earth, and of every order of beings in the universe. Prov. 8:22—30. John 1:1—3. 1 Cor.

8:4—6. Col. 1:15—17. The idea of a created agent, by whom God made all things, which some have endeavored to support from this text, is so absurd in itself, as well as contrary to other scriptures, that it is astonishing it could ever have been adopted. Is. 44:24. 45:12,13. The apostle evidently meant, that God now spake to men, by that same glorious Person, who had been the immediate Creator of the world, and who was also exalted to the mediatorial throne, as “Heir of all things.” “I believe, it is as impossible to understand, how a man should have this empire over all things in heaven and earth, and over death itself, and yet be a mere man; as it is to understand any mystery of the sacred Trinity.” Whitby.—*Sundry times*. (1.) Here only. One part of the O. T. was given at one time, and another at another time.—*In divers manners*.] Here only. Referring to different methods of communication.

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(1.) *Divers manners*.] Mackn. refers this, not to the different manners in which God revealed Himself to the prophets, such as dreams, &c. but to the different ways in which the prophets communicated the different revelations they received, *to the fathers*, in types and figures, significant actions, &c. as well as in plain language. Ed.

(2.) *By his Son &c.*] “This is no argument, that God did not speak by Christ before; but only that it was not in so clear and express a manner.” DODDR. Stuart says, “not by his Son *incarnate*, as possessing our nature and addressing us in it. As the *Logos*, or in his *divine nature*, He did make revelations to the ancient church, as may be inferred from John 12:41. 1 Cor. 10:4—9.” Ep.—*Worlds*.] “There seems a great preponderance of evidence, in favor of the common interpretation, “the whole material world,” rather than “periods of time.”

J. P. SMITH, in Henry, *abr.*



3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

6 And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

7 And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

e	Jn. 1:14.	Ep. 1:20,21.	bringeth again.
Col. 1:15-17.	h Ps. 2:7.	k Ps. 97:7.	
f c 7:27. 9:12-14.	l 2 Sa. 7:14.	l unto.	
g Ps. 110:1.	j or, when he	m Ps. 104:1.	

(3.) From the glory of the person of Christ, he proceeds to mention the glory of his grace; his condescension itself was truly glorious. His sufferings had this great honor in them, to be a full satisfaction for the sins of his people; by Himself He purged away our sins, i. e. by the proper innate merit of his death and bloodshed, by their infinite intrinsic value; Himself, the glory of his person and nature, gave to his sufferings such merit as was a sufficient reparation of honor to God, who had suffered an infinite injury and affront by the sins of men.

(4.) From the glory of his sufferings we

are at length led to consider the glory of his exaltation; when by Himself He had purged away our sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, at his Father's right hand. As Mediator and Redeemer, He is invested with the highest honor, authority, and activity, for the good of his people; the Father now does all things by Him, and receives all the services of his people from Him. Having assumed our nature, and suffered in it on earth, He has taken it up with Him to heaven.

Now it was by no less a Person than this, that God has in these last days spoken to men; the dignity of the Messenger gives authority and excellency to the message; therefore, the dispensation of the gospel must needs very far exceed the dispensation of the law.

V. 4-9. The apostle having proved the pre-eminence of the gospel above the law, from the pre-eminence of the Lord Jesus Christ above the prophets, now proceeds to show, that He is not only much superior to the prophets, but to the angels themselves. In this he obviates an objection the Jewish zealots would be ready to make, that the law was not only delivered by men, but ordained by angels, Gal. 3:19. the hosts of heaven having been drawn forth to attend the Lord Jehovah on that awful occasion. Now the angels are very glorious beings, and we know of no being but God Himself that is higher than they; therefore that law that was ordained by angels, ought to be held in great esteem.

To weaken this argument, the writer proceeds to state the comparison between Jesus Christ and the holy angels, both in nature and office, and to prove that Christ is vastly superior to the angels themselves. Here, observe,

I. The superior nature of Christ is proved from his superior name. The Scripture does not give high and glorious titles without a real foundation and reason in nature;

nor when it is said, Christ was made so much better than the angels, are we to imagine He was a mere creature, as the angels are; the original word, when joined with an adjective, is nowhere to be rendered created, and here may very well be read, being more excellent, as the Syriac version hath it. We read, as we read it elsewhere, let God be true, not made so, but acknowledged to be so.

II. The superiority of the name and nature of Christ above the angels is declared in the Holy Scriptures, and to be deduced from thence. We should know little or nothing of Christ or angels, without the Scriptures; and we must therefore be determined by them in our conceptions of the one and the other.

Here, several passages of Scripture are cited, in which things are said of Christ that were never said of the angels. Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee, Ps. 2:7. which refers either to his eternal generation, or to his resurrection, or to his solemn inauguration into his glorious kingdom at his ascension and session at the right hand of the Father. Now this was never said of angels; therefore, by inheritance, He has a more excellent nature and name than they. Again, Of Christ, but never of angels, it is said, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son; taken from 2 Sam. 7:14. Not only, 'I am his Father, and He is my Son by nature and eternal promanation;' but, 'I will be his Father, and He shall be my Son, by wonderful conception, and this his Sonship shall be the fountain and foundation of every gracious relation between Me and fallen man.'

It is said of Christ, When God bringeth his First-begotten into the world, let all the angels of God worship Him: i. e. either at his nativity, or at his ascension, or when God shall bring Him again into the world, to judge the world, then let the highest creatures worship Him. The proof of this is

V. 3, 4. The essence of the Deity is, and must be, invisible to man: John 1:18. 1 Tim. 6:13-16. but 'the only begotten Son,' of whom the writer spoke, had been appointed to make known his glory and perfections: being 'one with the Father,' and equal to Him in the divine nature; and being also distinct from Him, as to his personal subsistence. By assuming human nature He became 'the brightness of the divine glory,' or the shining forth of the glory of God to mankind; and He so made known the perfections of the Godhead to them, that 'He who saw the Son saw the Father also.' John 5:17-19. 10:26-31,32-39. 12:44-50. 14:7-14. 17:20,21. For the Son was 'the express Image,' or the character of the Father's Person, or subsistence; and showed every part of the nature and perfections of God to man, with the greatest exactness, and in the most effectual manner possible; so that, in proportion as any man knows Christ, in his Person, character, and salvation, he knows the Father also; and he that knows not Christ, has no real knowledge of God. Mat. 11:27. Lu. 10:21,22. 2 Cor. 4:3-6. Col. 1:15-17. 1 John 2:20-25. ... This interpretation coincides with that, which has already been given of similar passages; but it differs, in some degree, from that of several eminent evangelical expositors: for they suppose that the expressions, 'the Brightness of his glory,' and 'the character of his subsistence,' are illustrations, taken from external objects, of the eternal generation of Christ, and his equality with the Father in the Godhead. But though the author is decidedly of opinion, that Christ is called the only Son of God, in respect of his divine nature; and therefore allows the eternal generation, as well as the equality of the Son with the Father: yet he does not think that the Scripture contains any illustrations of these mysteries; or that we are taught to form any ideas of the manner, in which they subsist; but rather to receive them in implicit faith, as the revelation of God, and to adore them as absolutely incomprehensible by us in our present state. He, therefore, supposes these expressions to signify the manifestation of the glory, character, and perfection of 'the invisible God' to man, in and by the Person of his incarnate Son; whose original equality with the Father in his divine nature, and his voluntary assumption of the human nature, concurred in rendering Him the proper medium, so to speak, through which we might see the 'effulgency,' or shining forth of the divine glory; and become acquainted with the perfections and subsistence of God, in the best manner, of which in our present condition we are capable. He is also confirmed in this view of the passage, by finding, that the venerable reformer, Beza, interprets it in the same manner, and makes the same objections to the other interpretations: except, that he translates the word *hypostasis*, *persona*, 'person;' I think, improperly, for the subsistence of the Deity, not the personal distinction of the Father and the Son, seems to be intended.—The brightness.] *Apauasma*: here only. This seems to be what renders the person of Christ the *Eikōn* or Image of the invisible God to men; in whose person (*prosōpō*) the glory of God is seen. 2 Cor. 4:6. Express Image.] *Charactēr*: here only. From *charassō*, to engrave. *Charagma*, Acts 17:29. Rev. 13:16, 17. Sc. (3.) Express Image.] 'Delineation, i. e. answering to the divine perfections, as the impression of the wax does to the engraving of the seal.'

DODD., after LEIGH.

V. 5-7. In the preceding vs. the apostle had stated the outlines of that doctrine, on which he meant more largely to discourse; and, having declared the personal and mediatorial superiority and high pre-eminence of 'the Son of God' above angels, he proceeded to show, that the O. T. prophecies spoke of the promised Messiah in similar language. As we are satisfied, by abundant evidence, that the writers of the N. T. were equally inspired with those of the Old; their expositions are to us of equal authority with the original passages, which they adduce. But when the apostle reasoned with the Hebrews out of their Scriptures, he doubtless quoted them in that sense, in which most of them had been used to understand them, or in which it might be proved they ought to be understood. Had not the more learned Jews, at the time when the epistle was written, been accustomed to understand the texts here brought forward, in the sense which the apostle affixes to them, he would scarcely have adduced them, as proofs of his doctrine, without hesitation, in an argumentative treatise, which he knew must pass the ordeal of the strictest examination, by the most prejudiced and hostile persons. Now, if they were sufficient proofs to the persons immediately addressed, they must be sufficient for all, who consider the writer as fully knowing, by divine inspiration, both the doctrine of Christ, and the true meaning of the Scriptures; though the context might otherwise, in some instances, have led us to suppose them instructive accommodations; and though the Jews, in subsequent ages, to evade the writer's conclusion, have (as it might previously have been expected) attempted to put another construction on them.—We have before briefly considered the Scriptures quoted; yet it is necessary here again to examine them. The first is brought from an evident prophecy of the Messiah's kingdom. JEHOVAH had in it addressed the Messiah, in such language, as had never been used to any angel. The words quoted were spoken above a thousand years before the birth of Jesus, and were the declaration of a preceding decree; they must therefore relate to his Sonship, or eternal generation; for the subsequent production of his human nature, by the power of the Holy Spirit, would not give Him that essential and original superiority to the angels, which the argument here evidently required. Nor could his appointment to the office of Messiah be meant by the words, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee;' as that appointment was the consequence, rather than the cause, of his superiority to the angels; He was advanced above them, 'as He had inherited a more excellent name than they;' and his Sonship is plainly denoted to be a participation of the Father's nature, and not merely a communication of existence by an act of creating power, or adoption by an act of special grace. Ps. 2:7-12. Acts 13:24-37.—The next quotation appears primarily to have been meant of Solomon, 2 S. 7:12-16. but Solomon was a most remarkable type of the Messiah, as the Jews in general must know; so that when JEHOVAH said of Him, in so peculiar and distinguishing a sense, 'I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son,' it must be obvious that this, in its fullest meaning, was to be understood of the Antitype rather than of the type.—'Worship Him, all ye gods.' Ps. 97:3-7. Though the magistrates and grandees of the earth might be included, yet all the angels of God were evidently intended also. But JEHOVAH had never ... commanded other



8 But unto the Son *he saith*,  
 "Thy throne, O God, is for ever  
 and ever: a sceptre of righteousness  
 is the sceptre of thy kingdom:

9 Thou hast loved righteousness,  
 and hated iniquity; therefore God,  
 even thy God, hath anointed thee  
 with the oil of gladness above thy  
 fellows.

10 And, Thou, Lord, in the be-  
 ginning hast laid the foundation of  
 the earth: and the heavens are the  
 works of thy hands:

11 They shall perish, but thou  
 remainest: and they all shall wax  
 old as doth a garment;

12 And as a vesture shalt thou  
 fold them up, and they shall be  
 changed: but thou art the same,  
 and thy years shall not fail.

n Ps. 45:6,7. o rightness, or, straitness. p Ps. 102:25.

Ps. 97:7. And, once more, God has said  
 of Christ, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and  
 ever, &c. v. 8—12.* But of the angels He  
 has only said, *that He hath made them spir-  
 its, and his ministers a flame of fire, v. 7.*  
 How vast, then, the inferiority of the angels  
 to Christ! What does God say here of the  
 angels? They are *his ministers*. We have  
 it, Ps. 104:4. where it seems to be more im-  
 mediately spoken of the *winds and lightning*,  
 but is here applied to the *angels*, whose  
 agency the Divine Providence makes use of  
 in the winds, and in thunder and lightning.  
 In office, angels are God's ministers, or ser-  
 vants, to do his pleasure; it is his glory that  
 He has such servants; yet more so that He  
 does not need them. In qualifications, He  
 makes them what they are, He endows them  
 with *light and zeal, with activity and ability,  
 readiness and resolution* to do his pleasure:  
 they are no more than what God has made  
 them to be, and they are servants to the *Son*  
 as well as to the *Father*. But,

Observe, How much greater things are  
 said of Christ by the Father. Two passages  
 are quoted, one, Ps. 45:6, 7. where God  
 declares of Christ, 1. His true and real  
 divinity, calling Him God, *O God*. 2. His  
 dignity and dominion, as having a *throne*, a  
*kingdom*, and a *sceptre* of that kingdom. 3.  
 The *eternal duration* of the dominion and  
 dignity of Christ, founded on the *divinity* of  
 his Person. This distinguishes Christ's throne

from all earthly thrones; they are tottering,  
 and will at length tumble down; but the  
 throne of Christ shall be as the days of heav-  
 en. 4. *The perfect equity of his administra-  
 tion*, and of the execution of his power,  
 through all the parts of his government, v. 8.  
 He came righteously to the sceptre, and He  
 uses it in perfect righteousness; the right-  
 eousness of his government proceeds from an  
 essential, eternal love of righteousness and  
 hatred of iniquity, not merely from consid-  
 erations of prudence or interest, v. 9. Christ  
 came to fulfil all righteousness, to bring in  
 an everlasting righteousness. 5. How He  
 was qualified for the office of Mediator, and  
 was installed and confirmed in it, v. 9.

(1.) Christ has the name *Messiah* from  
 his being anointed. God's anointing of  
 Christ signifies both *his qualifying of Him*  
 for the office of the Mediator with the Holy  
 Spirit, and likewise *his inauguration of Him*  
 into the office, as prophets, priests, and kings  
 were, by anointing. *God, even thy God*,  
 imports his confirmation in office by the  
 covenant of redemption and peace, that was  
 between the Father and the Son. God is  
 the God of Christ, as Christ is Man and  
 Mediator.

(2.) This anointing of Christ was with  
 the oil of gladness, which signifies both the  
 gladness and cheerfulness with which Christ  
 undertook and went through the office of Medi-  
 ator, and also that joy which was set before  
 Him, as the reward of his service and suffer-  
 ings; that crown of glory and gladness which  
 He should wear for ever, after the suffering  
 of death.

(3.) This anointing of Christ was above  
 the anointing of his fellows; *God, even thy  
 God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of glad-  
 ness above thy fellows*. Who are Christ's  
 fellows? Has He any equals? Not as God,  
 except the *Father and Spirit*, but these are  
 not here meant. As Man, He has his fel-  
 lows, and as an anointed Person; but his  
 unction is beyond all theirs, whether *angels* or  
*prophets, priests, and kings*, above saints, who  
 are his brethren, above any ever anointed  
 with oil, to be employed in the service of  
 God on earth. All God's other anointed  
 ones had only the Spirit in a certain meas-  
 ure; Christ had the Spirit above measure,  
 without any limitation. None therefore goes  
 through his work as Christ did, none takes  
 so much pleasure in it as Christ does; for  
 He was anointed with the oil of gladness  
 above his fellows.

The other passage of Scripture, in which  
 [appears] the superior excellence of Christ

to the angels, is taken out of Ps. 102:25—  
 27. and is thus recited here:

V. 10—12. In these vs. the omnipotence  
 of the Lord Jesus Christ is declared, as it  
 appears both in creating the world, and in  
 changing it.

1. In creating the world, v. 10. The Lord  
 Christ had the original right to govern the  
 world, because He made the world in the  
 beginning; his right, as Mediator, was by  
 commission from the Father; his right, as  
 God with the Father, was absolute, result-  
 ing from his creating power. This power  
 He had before the beginning of the world,  
 and He exerted it in giving a beginning and  
 being to the world. He must therefore be  
 no part of the world Himself, for then He  
 must give Himself a beginning. He was  
 before all things, and by Him all things con-  
 sist, Col. 1:17. He was not only above all  
 things in condition, but before all things in  
 existence; and therefore must be God, and  
 self-existent. He not only founded the earth,  
 but the heavens, too, are the work of his hands  
 both the habitation and the inhabitants, the  
 hosts of heaven, the angels themselves; therefore  
 He must needs be infinitely super-  
 prior to them.

2. In changing the world He has made; and  
 here the mutability of this world is  
 brought in to illustrate the immutability of  
 Christ.

(1.) This world is mutable; all created  
 nature is so; this world has passed through  
 many changes, and shall pass through more;  
 all these are by the permission and under  
 the direction of Christ, who made the world,  
 v. 11, 12: Not only men and beasts and  
 trees grow old, but this world itself grows  
 old, and is hastening to its dissolution. But  
 then its dissolution shall not be its utter de-  
 struction, but its change. Christ will fold it  
 up as a garment not to be abused any longer,  
 not to be any longer used so as it has been.  
 We look for new heavens and a new earth,  
 wherein dwelleth righteousness. Let the con-  
 sideration of this wean us from the present  
 world, and make us watchful, diligent, and  
 desirous of that better world; and let us  
 wait on Christ, to change us into a meetness  
 for that new world that is approaching; we  
 cannot enter into it till we be new creatures.

(2.) Christ is immutable. Thus the Fa-  
 ther here testifies of Him, *Thou remainest,  
 thy years shall not fail*. Christ is the same  
 in Himself, the same yesterday, to-day, and  
 for ever; and the same to his people in all the  
 changes of time. This may well support all  
 who have an interest in Christ, under all the

rational creatures to worship them, nay, He had most peremptorily for-  
 bidden the worship of any creature; yet He required the most exalted  
 of them to worship his Son, even when brought into this world to dwell  
 in human nature! A most decided proof of an infinite disparity between  
 Christ and the highest angels. Rev. 19:9, 10.—'When He introduceth  
 the First-born into the world, He saith, "Let all God's messengers wor-  
 ship Him; whereas, concerning messengers He saith, "Who maketh  
 winds his messengers, and framing fire his ministers." Campbell.—This  
 construction, indeed, accords to the scope of the passage in the Psalms,  
 as describing the different parts of the creation, executing the Creator's  
 mandates; yet the apostle's quotation requires us to explain the pas-  
 sage of the ministrations of angels. The learned writer supposes the  
 apostle's argument to rest, in part, on the difference between messenger,  
 and Son; the former term being used even of inanimate beings; the lat-  
 ter appropriate to the divine Savior.—The first and second quotations  
 are exactly from the Sept., which accords to the Heb. 2 Sam. 7:14. Ps.  
 2:7. The third is nearly from the Sept. only changing the second person  
 into the third, and putting 'the angels of God,' instead of 'his angels';  
 and it varies from the Heb. Ps. 97:7.—The very words of the apostle  
 occur in the Sept. Deut. 32:41. but there is nothing answering to them  
 in the Heb. The last quotation is nearly from the Sept. which accords  
 to the Heb. Ps. 104:4.

(5.) *Thou art my Son, &c.* [It is evident that this and the rest of the  
 passage here quoted, must refer to Christ in their original sense, and in  
 the strictest propriety of interpretation.]

V. 8, 9. Some suppose, that angels were meant by Christ's fellows,  
 because the apostle was proving his superiority to angels; but He never  
 bore 'the nature of angels,' and partaking of the same nature seems to  
 be the meaning of the expression. 2:16—18. The quotation was full to  
 the apostle's purpose, by proving that JEREMIAH spoke of the Messiah, in  
 such language, as He never used concerning angels; and the Psalmist,  
 from whom he adduced his proof, spoke of the Messiah as incarnate, of  
 his espousing the church to Himself, and of believers as the companions  
 of the glorious King. They were indeed 'anointed with the oil of glad-  
 ness,' for his sake; but He far more than they all, even as his excellency

and dignity exceeded theirs. Ps. 45:—'They, who imagine this Ps. is  
 an epithalamium, on Solomon's marrying Pharaoh's daughter, must sup-  
 pose, that it is foretold, . . . that Solomon was to have a numerous pro-  
 geny by her, whom he would set up for princes and rulers, up and down  
 the world (16). But this cannot be true; for, beside that we read not of  
 any children Solomon had by Pharaoh's daughter, . . . Rehoboam, who  
 succeeded him, was the son of Naamah, an Ammonitess. And so far  
 was he from being able to set up his sons to rule over other countries,  
 that it was with great difficulty, his successors kept two tribes of the  
 twelve steadfast to them.—Certainly, "a greater than Solomon was  
 here." Bp. Pierce. (?)—Very many other suppositions, by which the  
 prophecies, concerning Christ, are explained away, or evaded, by men  
 called Christians, might be shown to be equally absurd.—The quotation  
 is nearly from the Sept. which accords to the Heb.

(3.) *Hast loved righteousness.* [I think it refers to the unparalleled  
 instance of the love of moral rectitude, which Christ hath given in be-  
 coming a sacrifice for sin, by his atonement; doing more [to evince  
 that love] than ever did any other rational agent.]

V. 10—12. Ps. 102:25—28. The Ps. whence these vs. are quoted,  
 seems to be a prayer of the afflicted church of Israel, for the coming of  
 her expected Deliverer; yet we might not have discovered, that the Son  
 'of God' was personally addressed, had not the apostle led our atten-  
 tion to it in this view. But, considering it in connexion with other  
 scriptures, and remembering that the ancient prophets continually  
 spoke of their expected Messiah, as their great Deliverer from all en-  
 emies and troubles, we shall perceive a propriety in the church, under  
 affliction, addressing herself to Him, as her unchangeable Friend.—  
 Probably, the Hebrews in general were prepared to understand this  
 Psalm, as well as the others, of the Messiah; it is, however, to us a  
 most explicit testimony to the Deity of Christ, as One with the Father,  
 the Creator of all things. (10) *Thou, Lord, &c.* The quotation is  
 taken from the Sept. which exactly accords to the Heb.; except that  
 the word, rendered in our version, 'change,' is translated *elizeis, fold  
 up*; but the Alexandrian copy of the Sept., and some copies of the N.  
 T., read, *allazeis, change*.



13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, <sup>a</sup> Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

14 Are they not all ministering <sup>r</sup> spirits, sent forth <sup>s</sup> to minister for them who shall be heirs <sup>t</sup> of salvation?

## CHAP. II.

<sup>1</sup> We ought to be obedient to Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup> and that because He vouchsafed to take our nature upon Him, <sup>14</sup> as it was necessary.

**T**HEREFORE we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should <sup>a</sup> let them slip.

<sup>2</sup> For if the word spoken by <sup>b</sup> angels was steadfast, and <sup>c</sup> every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

<sup>3</sup> How <sup>d</sup> shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which <sup>e</sup> at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;

<sup>q</sup> Ps. 110:1.      <sup>p</sup> Ps. 34:7.      <sup>r</sup> Ac. 7:53.  
<sup>r</sup> Ps. 103:21.    <sup>t</sup> Ro. 8:17.      <sup>c</sup> Nu. 15:31.  
<sup>Da.</sup> 7:10      <sup>a</sup> *run out as leaking vessels.*    <sup>d</sup> e 4:1,11.  
<sup>s</sup> Ge. 19:15,16.      <sup>e</sup> Ma. 1:14.

changes they meet with in the world, and under all they feel in themselves.

V. 13, 14. This concludes the comparison between Christ and the angels, and the preference of Christ to them; God never said to the angels what He has said to Christ:

1. To Christ He has said, *'Sit Thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.'* Ps. 110:1. Receive Thou glory, dominion, and rest; and remain in the administration of thy mediatorial kingdom, until all thine enemies shall either be made thy friends by conversion, or thy footstool.<sup>2</sup> Note, Christ Jesus has his enemies, enemies even among men; enemies to his sovereignty, to his cause, to his people. Let us not think it strange if we have our enemies. Yet all Christ's enemies shall be made his footstool, either by *humble submission*, or by *utter destruction*. God the Father has undertaken for this; and, though it be not done *presently*, it shall *certainly* be done. Christ shall go on to rule and reign till this is done; and it becomes his people to go on in their duty, being what He would have them to be, doing what He would have them to do, avoiding what He would have them to avoid, bearing what He would have them to bear, till He makes them conquerors, and more than conquerors, over all their spiritual enemies.

2. God has said of the angels, *They are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be the heirs of salvation.* Note, Angels, in their nature, are *spirits*, without bodies or inclination to bodies; yet can assume bodies, and appear in them, when God pleases: in *office*, they are *ministering spirits*.

PRACT. OBS. We can never sufficiently bless our God, that He has, in so many ways, and with such increasing clearness, spoken, concerning salvation, to us wretched sinners; and especially that He has sent the message of mercy to us, by his 'well-beloved Son,' whose dignity gives peculiar authority to every appointment, and certainty to every

Christ, as-Mediator, is the great *Minister* of God in the great work of redemption. The Holy Spirit is the great *Minister* of God and Christ in the application of this redemption. - Angels are *ministering* spirits under the blessed Trinity, to execute the divine will and pleasure; they are the *ministers* of Divine Providence, ministers to them *who shall be the heirs of salvation*. Here observe, (1.) The description given of the saints; *they are heirs of salvation*; at present they are under age, heirs, not inheritors. (2.) The dignity and privilege of the saints; the angels are sent forth to *minister* for them. Bless God for the ministration of angels, keep in God's way, and take the comfort of this promise, that He will *give his angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. They shall hear you up in their hands, lest you dash your feet against a stone,* Ps. 91: 11, 12.

CHAP. II. V. 1—4. Here we have the application of the truths before asserted and proved; this is brought in by the illative particle *therefore*. The application is both by way of exhortation and argument.

I. By way of exhortation, v. 1. The great concern of every one under the Gospel is, to give the most earnest heed to all gospel-discoveries and directions; to *embrace them in our hearts and affections, to retain them in our memories, and finally to regulate our words and actions according to them.*

II. By way of argument, he adds strong motives to enforce the exhortation:

1. From the great loss we shall sustain, if we do not take this earnest heed to the things we have heard; *we shall let them slip.* They will leak, and run out of our heads, lips, and lives, and we shall be great losers by our neglect. This consideration should be a strong motive both to our *attention* to the Gospel, and our *retention* of it; and, indeed, if we do not well attend, we shall not long retain, the Word of God; slight hearers will soon be forgetful hearers, [for *memory* is the daughter of *attention*.]

2. Another argument is taken from the dreadful punishment we shall incur, if we do not do this duty; a more dreadful punishment than those fell under who neglected and disobeyed the law, v. 2, 3. Here observe,

(1.) How the law is described: it is said to be the word *spoken by angels*, because given by the ministration of angels, they sounding the trumpet, and perhaps forming the words according to God's direction; as they shall sound the trumpet a second time, and gather all to his tribunal at last. *And this law is declared to be steadfast*; like the promise, it is truth and faithfulness, and will abide and have its force, whether men obey it or no; *for every transgression and disobedience will receive a just recompense of reward.* Observe, The severest punishment God ever inflicted on sinners is no more than what sin deserves, a *just recompense of reward*; punishments are as just, and as much due to sin, as rewards are to obedience, yea, more due than rewards are to imperfect obedience.

truth and promise. ... Let us not then perversely and ungratefully refuse Him our adorations, whilst 'all the angels of God worship Him.' For our salvation He abased Himself, that He might 'redeem us to God with his blood,' and shall we, on that account, refuse to adore and 'honor Him, even as we honor the Father that sent Him?' SCOTT.

V. 14. 'How different the station and employment of angels, from that of the Messiah! They, however, are here evidently regarded as real intelligent beings. Far to have instituted a comparison between the Son of God, and mere *abstract qualities*, or *imaginary beings* would seem inapposite to any serious purpose; and how could such be represented as worshipping the Son of God, or ministering to the saints?' SR.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1—4. The apostle, in the midst of his argument, paused, as it were, after the proof of Christ's pre-eminent dignity, to make some application of his doctrine. The Hebrews, and all to whom the Gospel came, 'ought to give the more earnest,' believing, and obedient attention to what they had heard, because of the majesty of the Speaker, and the gracious nature of his words. *Mat. 17:5—8. Acts 3:22—23.*

SCOTT.

(2.) How the Gospel is described: *it is salvation, a great salvation; so great salvation, that no other can compare with it; so great, that none can fully express, no, nor yet conceive, how great it is.* It discovers a *great Savior*, shows how we may be saved from *great sin* and *great misery*, and be restored to *great holiness* and *so to great happiness*. It discovers a *great Sanctifier*, to qualify us for salvation, and to bring us to the Savior; the Gospel unfolds a *great and excellent dispensation of grace*, a new covenant, secured to all who come into the bond of it.

(3.) How sinning against the Gospel is described; it is declared to be a *neglect of this great salvation*, it is a contempt put on the saving grace of God in Christ, *making light of it*, not caring for it, not thinking it worth their while to acquaint themselves with it; not regarding either the *worth* of gospel-grace, or their own *want* of it, and undone state without it; not using their endeavors to discern the *truth* of it, and assent to it, nor to *discern the goodness* of it, so as to approve of it, or apply it to themselves.

(4.) How the misery of such sinners is described; it is declared to be unavoidable, v. 3. Despisers of this salvation are condemned already, under arrest, and in the hands of justice. So they were by the sin of Adam; and they have strengthened their hands by their personal transgression, John 3:18. nor is there any escape, but by accepting the great salvation discovered in the Gospel; as for those who neglect it, the *wrath of God is upon them, and it abides upon them.* And there is a yet more aggravated curse and condemnation waiting those who despise the grace of God in Christ, the unavoidableness of whose misery is here expressed by way of question; *How shall we escape?* It is an appeal to universal reason, to the consciences of sinners themselves; and it intimates, that the neglecters of this great salvation will be left not only *without power*, but *without plea and excuse*, at the judgment-day; if they be asked, what they have to say, that the sentence should not be executed on them, they will be *speechless*, and self-condemned by their own consciences, even to a greater degree of misery than those fell under who neglected the authority of the law, or sinned without the law.

3. Another argument, to enforce the exhortation, is taken from the *dignity and excellency of the Person* by whom the Gospel began to be spoken, v. 3. that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Jehovah, *the Lord of life and glory, Lord of all*: this great Lord of all was the first who began to speak it *plainly and clearly, without types and shadows*, as it was before He came. Now, surely, it may be expected that *all will reverence this Lord*, and take heed to a Gospel that began to be spoken by One who *spoke so as never man spoke*.

4. Another argument is taken from the character of those who were witnesses to Christ and the Gospel, v. 3, 4. Observe, (1.) The promulgation of the Gospel was continued and confirmed by those who heard Christ, by the *evangelists* and *apostles*, who

(1.) *Abresch*, in *Bloomf.*, thinks ch. I ought to end with v. 4. which *Bloomf.*, after *Chrys.*, approves. Ed.—*Let them slip.* Pass by, or neglect,—not attend to diligently: comp. *transgression*, v. 3.—*So great.* Can we conceive of a stronger appeal to the moral constitution of man, than the atonement! 'The whole warning, vs. 1—4, is, "Beware ye do not slight the gospel, whose threatenings are more to be dreaded than those of the law; inasmuch as the Gospel is a revelation of a higher nature, [appealing to love, &c. rather than fear,] and has been confirmed by more striking and more abundant miracles wrought by divine power.'" STUART. To resist (after God has put a man into a highly favorable condition) strong spiritual influences, is a greater sin than to resist weaker ones, exhibited in a less favorable state of the individual.

Ed.

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4 God <sup>f</sup> also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and <sup>g</sup> gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

5 For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.

6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, <sup>h</sup> What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or <sup>i</sup> the son of man, that thou visitest him?

7 Thou madest him <sup>j</sup> a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

9 But we see Jesus, who <sup>k</sup> was made a little lower than the angels, <sup>l</sup> for the suffering of death, crowned <sup>m</sup> with glory and honor; that he <sup>n</sup> by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

10 For it became <sup>o</sup> him, for <sup>p</sup> whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain <sup>q</sup> of their salvation <sup>r</sup> perfect through sufferings.

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all <sup>s</sup> of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren;

f Ac. 14:3. g or, distributions. h Ps. 8:4, &c. i or, a little while inferior to. j 1 Co. 15:24. k Phil. 2:3,9. l or, by. m Ac. 2:33. n Ju. 3:15. o Lu. 24:26,46. p Ro. 11:35. q Is. 55:4. r Lu. 13:32. s Ju. 17:21.

were eye and earwitnesses of what Jesus Christ began both to do and to teach, Acts 1: 1. (2.) God Himself bore witness to those who were witnesses for Christ; He testified that they were authorized and sent by Him to preach Christ, and salvation by Him, to the world. And how did He bear them witness? Not only by giving them great peace in their own minds, great patience under all their sufferings, and unspeakable courage and joy; but by signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his will: by signs, signs of his gracious presence

with them, and of his power working by them: by wonders; works quite beyond the power of nature, and out of the course of nature: by divers miracles, mighty works, in which an almighty agency appeared beyond all reasonable controversy: and by gifts of the Holy Ghost, qualifying, enabling, and exciting them to do the work to which they were called; divisions or distributions of the Holy Ghost, diversities of gifts, 1 Cor. 12: 4. &c. And all this according to God's own will. It was the will of God we should have sure footing for our faith, and a strong foundation for our hope, in receiving the Gospel. As at the giving forth of the law there were signs and wonders, by which God testified the authority and excellency of it; so He witnessed to the gospel by more and greater miracles, as to a more excellent and abiding dispensation.

V. 5—9. The apostle having made this serious application of the doctrine of the personal excellency of Christ above the angels, now returns to that pleasant subject again, and pursues it further, v. 5.

1. Here the apostle lays down a negative proposition, including a positive one; that the state of the gospel-church, which is here called *the world to come*, is not subjected to the angels, but under the special care and direction of the Redeemer Himself. God does not make that use of the ministration of angels, to give the gospel as He did the law, which was the state of the old or antiquated world. This new world is committed to Christ, and only put in absolute subjection to Him in all spiritual and eternal concerns. Christ has the administration of the gospel-church, which at once speaks Christ's honor, and the church's happiness and safety. It is certain that neither the first creation of the gospel-church, nor its after-edification or administration, nor its final judgment and perfection, is committed to the angels, but to Christ. God would not put so great a trust in his holy ones; his angels were too weak for such a charge.

II. We have a scripture-account of that blessed Jesus, to whom the gospel-world is put into subjection, taken from Ps. 8: 4—6. These words are to be considered both as applicable to mankind in general, and as applied here to the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. As applicable to mankind in general; where we have an affectionate, thankful expostulation with the great God concerning his wonderful condescension and kindness to the sons of men; in remembering them in the counsels of divine love; in visiting them with purposes of favor; in making man the head of all the creatures in this lower world; in crowning him with glory and honor, the honor of having noble

powers and faculties of soul, excellent organs and parts of body, whereby he is allied to both worlds, capable of serving the interests of both worlds, and of enjoying the happiness of both; and, finally, in giving him right to and dominion over the inferior creatures, which continued so long as he continued his allegiance and duty to God.

2. This is here plainly applied to the Lord Jesus Christ; and the whole that is here said, can only be applied to Him, v. 8, 9. The moving cause of all the kindness God shows to men, in giving Christ for them and to them, is the grace of God: God was mindful of Christ for us in the covenant of redemption, and visited Him on our account; in order to which, God had made Him a little lower than the angels, that He might suffer and humble Himself to death, and so by his sufferings make satisfaction, tasting death for every man, sensibly feeling and undergoing the bitter agonies of that shameful, painful, and cursed death of the cross, hereby putting all mankind into a new state of trial; and thus accomplishing that ancient scripture, in Christ, that He was crowned with glory and honor, which never was so accomplished or fulfilled in any mere man that ever was upon earth. And now, having mentioned the death of Christ, the apostle proceeds.

V. 10—13. The apostle here prevents and removes the scandal of the cross, by showing both how it became God, that Christ should suffer, and how much man should be benefited by those sufferings.

1. How it became God, that Christ should suffer, v. 10. Where, 1. God is described as the final End and first Cause of all things, and as such it became Him to secure his own glory in all that He did, not only to act so that He might in nothing dishonor Himself, but that He might from everything have a revenue of glory. 2. He is declared to have acted up to this glorious character in the work of redemption, as to the choice both of the end and of the means.

(1.) In the choice of the end; and that was, to bring many sons to glory; to present glory in enjoying the glorious privileges of the Gospel, and to future glory in heaven, which will be glory indeed, an exceeding, eternal weight of glory.

(2.) In the choice of the means; i. e. in finding out such a Person as should be the Captain of our salvation, and in making this Captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings. God the Father made the Lord Jesus Christ the Captain of our salvation; i. e. He consecrated, appointed Him to that office, gave Him a commission for it; and He made Him perfect in it, perfect in wisdom, courage, strength, and sufferings. The

V. 5—9. The argument concerning the Messiah's superiority to the angels, is here resumed. 'The world to come' is supposed to have been a phrase in use among the Jews, denoting the times of the Messiah. This period began at the first coming of Christ, and will continue till his second coming. The words, however, do not occur elsewhere; and some think, that the apostle alludes to the words of the prophet, concerning 'new heavens and a new earth.' Is. 65:17—19. This includes the dispensation of the Messiah, and the millennium, as connected with heavenly happiness.—(9) A little lower.] Many expositors suppose the original to mean, 'lower for a short time,' i. e. during the term of our Lord's humiliation on earth; but the use of the same word in v. 7, determines its sense here, and there it can have no reference to time, unless we explain the Ps. as a prophecy of Christ exclusively, without allowing that either Adam, or his posterity, were at all intended. It is indeed argued, that Jesus was made, in human nature, immensely lower than the angels, 'being despised and rejected of men,' and considered as one of the most abject of the human race. This objection, however, seems to be of no validity, for his real dignity and excellency as man, and not the opinion of others concerning Him, are meant. He was, in human nature, as the 'first Adam' had been, 'a little lower than the angels;' and, being made like us in all things, sin alone excepted, He became capable of suffering and death, from which angels are exempted. In these respects He was 'made a little lower than the angels;' but in all other things, He, even as man in his lowest humiliation, was little lower than they, being immensely superior to all others of the human race, not excepting Adam himself before the fall.—Taste death.] Some explain these words as signifying the pain our Lord endured in dying; and others, as marking the short time He continued dead; but the expression seems to have been in use among the Jews, as merely denoting to die. (M. R. a.) The quotation is from the Sept.; but that entirely corresponds with the [516]

Heb., except as it tr. *Elohim*, (often rendered *gods*.) by the word 'angels,' as it does in many other places; and the word God is substituted, in the tr. of the last quotation, for *Jehovan* in the Hebrew. SCOTT.  
(5.) World to come.] Doddr. explains this of 'the kingdom of the Messiah, which extends not only to earth, but to heaven.' ED.  
(6.) One in a certain place.] 'It is evident there is nothing in the 8th Ps. by which, independent of the apostle's authority, it could be known to belong to the Messiah. I, therefore, choose to understand this as an allusion to what in its original intent is a description of the dignity and glory of human nature, and not a prophecy of the Messiah.' Doddr.—Stuart takes the same view of the Ps.—Bp. Middleton, in *Bl.*, and *Bl.* after him, understand it in a 'twofold sense,' first of Adam and next of Christ, in which last sense it applies here. —Mackn. understands it primarily and wholly of Christ, and refers to Mat. 21:15, 16. 15.  
(9.) Stuart tr. 'But we see Jesus, who was made but little inferior to the angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of the sufferings of death, after that He had, by the grace of God, tasted death for all, i. e. for Jew and Gentile.' ID.  
V. 10—13. Whatever the Jews might object to the sufferings and crucifixion of Him, who was preached to them as the Messiah; yet it certainly 'became' the eternal God, for whose glory, and by whose power, all things were created, and are upheld and governed, to adopt this method. It had not only pleased Him as a Sovereign to do this; but it was admirably suited to manifest the glory of all his perfections; yea, it was necessary for the harmonious display of them, [and to make the most effectual, and controlling, and exciting impression on humanity, as God had constituted it.] Having, therefore, purposed to predestinate to the adoption of children an innumerable company of Adam's fallen race, (*Note*, Eph. 1:3—8.) He was pleased, in his infinite wisdom and love, to appoint them 'a Captain,' who should call them forth out of



12 Saying, 'I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

13 And again, 'I will put my trust in him. And again, 'Behold I and the children which ' God hath given me.

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he \* also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death ' he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them who ' through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

16 For verily ' he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

17 Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a ' merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people:

t Ps. 22:22. y 1 Co. 15:54. but of the seed  
u Ps. 138:2. Is. 12:2. z Lu. 1:74. of Abraham he  
v Is. 8:18. a he taketh not taketh hold.  
w Ju. 17:6-12. hold of angels, b c. 4:15,16.  
x Ju. 1:14.

excellent Dr. Owen observes, that the Lord Christ, being consecrated and perfected through suffering, has consecrated the way of suffering for all his followers to pass through unto glory; and hereby their sufferings are made necessary and unavoidable, they are hereby made honorable, useful, and profitable.

II. He shows how much they would be benefited by the cross and sufferings of Christ; as there was nothing *unbecoming* God and Christ, so there was that which would be very *beneficial* to men, in these sufferings. Hereby they are brought into a *near union* with Christ, and into a *very endearing relation*.

I. Into a *near union*, II. Observe, Christ is *He that sanctifieth*; He has purchased and sent the sanctifying Spirit; He is the Head of all sanctifying influences. The Spirit sanctifieth as the Spirit of Christ. In the work of sanctification, *Christ* the Agent, and Christians the recipient subjects, are *all of one*: all are of *one heavenly Father*,

their state of sin and misery, and lead them through life and death, to his eternal glory; for the word rendered 'in bringing,' agrees with that tr. 'Captain.'—Many things; in Is. 8: are evidently prophetic of the Messiah, and, as such, are quoted repeatedly in the N. T., and, no doubt, the text here adduced was understood of Him, by the learned Jews. For the apostle was well acquainted with their sentiments, and would not have quoted it, in a sense different from the usual interpretation, in an argumentative discourse, without attempting to establish the new interpretation by cogent reasonings. (Note, 1:5-7.—The quotations are all from the Sept., which does not materially vary from the Heb. S.

(10.) *It became.*] 'It was worthy of God; consistent with his attributes.' ROSENA. 'It seems to signify, not only that the course He took was well worthy of God, but that, in order to act worthy of Himself, it was expedient He should take this method.' DONDR.

(12.) *Saying.*] 'The whole object of this quotation is merely to show, that Christ is exhibited in the Jewish scriptures, as having recognised men as his brethren.' STUART.

V. 14, 15. Whatever pride, ambition, and desperate passions, united with unbelief, may sometimes effect or perpetrate, the fear of death is universal, and, in some degree, enslaves all mankind; the juster apprehensions men have of God and eternal things, the greater must be their dread of death, and its awful consequences, except as faith in Christ deliver them. Many of those, who have been enslaved by it, during the former part of their lives, or at least from the time when they began seriously to reflect on the subject, are actually delivered from their terror by the Gospel, and habitually think of dying with great composure and satisfaction. Many, who do not before rise superior to their terrors, are entirely freed from them at that critical season; and even those believers, who fear death to the last, (as some perhaps do, will be the more amazed at their deliverance, when, by the stroke, which they dreaded all their lifetime, they find themselves perfectly freed from all which they groaned under and hated, and admitted to a felicity exceeding their largest expectations.—(15) *Through death.*] 'Had not this been added, the apostle might have seemed to speak very absurdly; for must God become Man, in order to conquer the devil? Assuredly, here was

and that is God; and of one earthly father, Adam. Christ and believers are of one Spirit, a holy and heavenly disposition; of the same mind, though not in the same measure; the same Spirit informs and actuates the Head and all the members.

2. Into an *endearing relation*. This results from the union. And here first he declares what this relation is, and then he quotes three texts out of the O. T. to illustrate and prove it.

(1.) He declares *what this relation is*; He and believers being all of one, He therefore is not ashamed to call them *brethren*. Observe, Christ will never be ashamed of any that are not ashamed of Him, and who take care not to be a shame and reproach to Him and to themselves.

(2.) He illustrates this from three texts of Scripture. The first is Ps. 22:22. In this Psalm it is foretold, that Christ should have a church, or *congregation*, in the world, and that these should not only be brethren to one another, but to Christ Himself. To these He would declare his Father's name, that is, his nature and attributes, his mind and will: this He did in his own Person, while He dwelt among us, and by his Spirit poured out on his disciples, enabling them to spread the knowledge of God in the world from one generation to another, to the end of the world, and to the praise and glory of his Father.

The second scripture is, Ps. 18:2. That Ps. sets forth the troubles David, as a type of Christ, met with, and how he in all his troubles put his trust in God. Christ suffered and trusted as our Head and President. His brethren must suffer and trust too.

The third scripture is, Is. 8:18. This proves Christ really and truly Man, for parents and children are of the same nature; children were given Him of the Father, in the counsel of his eternal love, and that covenant of peace that was between them. And they are given to Christ at their conversion. When they take hold of his covenant, then Christ receives them, rules over them, rejoices in them, perfects all their affairs, takes them up to heaven, and there presents them to his Father; Behold, I and the children which Thou hast given Me.—

V. 14-18. Here the apostle proceeds to assert the incarnation of Christ, as taking on Him not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; and he shows the reason and design of his so doing.

I. The incarnation of Christ is asserted, v. 16. Though as God He pre-existed from all eternity, yet in the fulness of time He

took our nature into union with his divine nature, and became really and truly Man. He did not lay hold of angels, but He laid hold of the seed of Abraham. The angels fell, and He let them go, and lie under the desert, defilement, and dominion of their sin, without hope or help; but resolving to recover the seed of Abraham, and raise them up from their fallen state, He took on Him the human nature from one descended from the loins of Abraham; that the same that had sinned, might suffer, to restore human nature to a state of hope and trial; and all that accepted of mercy, to a state of special favor and salvation. Now there is hope and help for the chief of sinners in and through Christ. Let us all then know the day of our gracious visitation, and improve that distinguishing mercy which has been shown to fallen men, not to the fallen angels.

II. The reasons and designs of Christ's incarnation are declared, v. 14, 15. No higher nor lower nature than man's that had sinned, could so suffer for the sin of man as to satisfy the justice of God, and raise man up to a state of hope, and make believers the children of God, and so brethren to Christ. So He became Man, that He might die; as God, He could not die, therefore He assumes another nature and state. Here the wonderful love of God appeared, that, when Christ knew what He must suffer, in our nature, and how He must die in it, yet He so readily took it upon Him. And it was, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, v. 14. The devil was the first sinner, the first tempter, sin was the procuring cause of death; so he may be said to have the power of death, as he draws men into sin, the ways whereof are death, and as he is often permitted to terrify the consciences of men with the fear of death, and as he is the executioner of divine justice, halting their souls from their bodies to the tribunal of God, there to receive their doom; and then being their tormentor, as he was before their tempter; in these respects he may be said to have had the power of death. But now Christ has so far destroyed him, that he can keep none under the power of spiritual death; nor can he draw any into sin, nor require the soul of any from the body, nor execute the sentence on any, but those who choose and continue to be his willing slaves, and persist in their enmity to God.

Christ came, that He might deliver his own people from the slavish fear of death that they are often subject to. This may refer to the Old Testament saints, who were more under

need rather of strength than of weakness. The apostle therefore declares, that to render this victory the most glorious, it was peculiarly suitable, that Satan, the conqueror of man, should be laid prostrate by a Man; and so, by the very death of a Man, he might be destroyed, as by his own weapons.—Understand death, as joined with the wrath of God, which, without Christ it must necessarily be; nor can anything be conceived more miserable, than to be under the perpetual slavery of this dread and horror.' BEZA.

SCOTT. (14.) *Him that had the power of death.*] I. c. 'who has a deadly power; comp. 1 Cor. 15:24-26. 2 TIM. 1:10.' STUART.—'Who, by divine permission, had the empire of death.' DONDR.—'The existence of a malignant being, called the devil, is evident from this passage.' HOLDEN.

(15.) *Fear of death.*] 'Fear of that condemnation or punishment, to which sin exposes men; not the fear of natural death; an evil from which no precautions can deliver us, and which Christians, as well as others, must suffer, notwithstanding the death of Christ.' STUART.

V. 16-18. The introductory words of this passage are differently interpreted. Our tr. explains them of our Lord's assuming, not 'the nature of angels,' but our nature, in order to be our Brother, Surety, and Savior; and the mention of the seed of Abraham, from whom He descended, favors this interpretation; but the margin, and indeed a great majority of commentators, suppose the apostle to mean, that the eternal Son of God, when angels sinned, did not 'take hold' of them, to preserve them from final perdition; but He 'took hold' of fallen man, to rescue him from this dreadful doom; and this, indeed, lays the firmer foundation for the subsequent inference. 'The seed of Abraham' however, on this interpretation, cannot mean all the natural descendants of Abraham, nor any of them exclusively; but must be understood of Abraham's believing seed, whether Jews or Gentiles; and this, though it accords to the apostle's manner in other places, Rom. 4:11-25. Gal. 3:26-29. is not thought a natural exposition in his present argument.—The difference, indeed, is not great, between the two interpretations.—The ends of Christ's humiliation, death, and exaltation, are set forth in this ch.—To 'taste death for every man,' to 'become the Captain of our salvation,' and to 'lead us to glory,' to 'sanctify us,' to 'destroy



18 For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.

### CHAP. III.

<sup>1</sup> Christ is more worthy than Moses, & therefore if we believe not in Him, we shall be more worthy punishment than hard hearted Israel.

**WHEREFORE**, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest <sup>a</sup> of our profession, Christ Jesus;

<sup>2</sup> Who was faithful to him that <sup>b</sup> appointed him, as also Moses <sup>c</sup> was faithful in all his house.

<sup>3</sup> For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded <sup>d</sup> the house hath more honor than the house.

a c. 4:14. b made. c Nu. 12:7. d Zec. 6:12,13.

a spirit of bondage, because *life and immortality were not so fully brought to light as now they are by the Gospel*. Or it may refer to all the people of God, whether under the O. T. or the New, whose minds are often in perplexing fears about death and eternity. Death now to them is not Satan's servant, but Christ's servant. Lastly, Christ must be made like unto his brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to the justice and honor of God, and to the support and comfort of his people. He must be faithful to God, and merciful to men.

1. In things pertaining to God; to make all the attributes of the divine nature, and all the Persons subsisting therein, harmonize in man's recovery, and fully to reconcile God and man.

2. In things pertaining to his people, to

**PRACT. OBS.** The judgments of God under the new dispensation are chiefly spiritual; but they are on that account the more to be dreaded for character is all we carry out from this world into eternity; and 'if they who despised Moses' law died without mercy,' 'how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation,' as that which Christ has wrought for us, and revealed in his gospel? Blessed be God, this salvation is so great and perfect, that nothing, except our neglect of it, in one way or another, can exclude us from its eternal advantages; so that the trembling penitent, who is ready to think himself too criminal to be pardoned, or too polluted to be cleansed, may come to Christ with cheerful confidence, and expect from Him the free gift of all which can be needful for him; and even those who are conscious of having hitherto neglected so great salvation, may hope for the pardon of that atrocious guilt in the same manner, being assured, that 'where sin hath abounded, grace shall much more abound.'—The glorious God has done wonderful things for us, in creation and providence, for which, alas! we have made the basest returns; but He was 'mindful of us, and visited us,' in the most surprising manner, when He gave his own Son, to be 'made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death,' in our nature and for our salvation; that, being 'crowned with glory and honor,' and having all 'power given to Him in heaven and earth,' He might rescue every man, who believes in Him, from all the effects of original and actual sin, and raise him to far higher dignity, than what was lost by Adam's transgression. *Rom. 5:12—19. 8:32—34. 1 John 4:9—12*

death, and him that had the power of death,' to deliver us from the bondage of the devil, and the fear of death, to become our 'High Priest, to make reconciliation for our iniquity,' having 'by Himself purged our sins.' (1:3.) What unutterable blessings are these, flowing to us from 'the grace of God, in Christ our Lord?' and what do they imply concerning the natural state of fallen man?—(17) *It behooved Him.* He ought, or owed, as having undertaken to be our Surety. *Philim. 17—21.* Sc.

(16.) *He took not, &c.* He did not extend aid at all to the angels. —*He took, &c.* He came to the aid of man.—The writer here does not deny Christ's assumption of an angelic nature; but if the argument be, that Jesus assumed the human nature, because He was to aid men and not angels, then this v. contains a reason why the Savior did and should take on Him the nature of man, viz. that it was altogether accordant with the great object of his mission. **STUART.**

**NOTES.** CHAP. III. V. 1—6. From what had been advanced and proved, concerning the superiority of the Messiah to the angels, and his dignity as the incarnate Son of God, the apostle next took occasion to call the attention of the Hebrews to the offices, which He performed for the benefit of his church.—As 'every house' is contrived, erected, furnished, and prepared for a habitation, by some person, whose skill and intelligence are visible in it; so 'He, who built all things,' as Creator, and arranged all things in the church of Israel, could be no other than God Himself. This honor the Messiah possessed: *Acts 7:37—43.* and this glorious Person had at length appeared in human nature, as the Apostle, or Prophet, of the Father, to introduce a new dispensation, and terminate the old one.—The words tr. 'made all things,' may rather

their support and comfort, v. 18. He is a sympathizing Physician, tender and skilful; He knows how to deal with tempted, sorrowful souls, because He has been Himself sick of the same disease, not of sin, but of temptation and trouble of soul; and He is ready and willing to succor those who apply themselves to Him.

**CHAP. III. V. 1—6.** In these vs. we have the application of that doctrine laid down in the close of the last ch., concerning the priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ. And observe,

I. In how fervent and affectionate a manner the apostle exhorts Christians to think closely and seriously of this High Priest; and surely no one deserves our consideration more than He. That this exhortation might be made the more effectual, observe,

1. The honorable compellation used toward those to whom he wrote; *Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling.* *Brethren*, not only my brethren, but the brethren of Christ, and in Him brethren to all the saints. *Holy brethren*; holy not only in profession and title, but in principle and practice, in heart and life. This has been turned by some to scorn; but let those thus despised labor to be holy brethren indeed, and they need not to be ashamed of the title, nor dread the scoffs of the profane. The day, alas! for them, is coming, when those that scorn would count it their greatest honor and happiness to be taken into this sacred brotherhood. *Partakers of the heavenly calling*; partakers of the means, and Spirit of grace, from heaven, and by which Christians are effectually called out of darkness into marvellous light; that calling which [through Christ's clothing Himself with humanity for our Redemption] brings down heaven into the souls of men, raises them up to a heavenly temper and conversation, and prepares them to live for ever [in Christ] with God in heaven.

2. The titles he gives to Christ, whom he would have them consider,

(1.) As the Apostle of our profession, the prime Minister of the gospel-church, a Messenger, and a Principal Messenger, sent of God to men, on the most important errand, the great Revealer of the faith we profess to hold, and of the hope we profess to have. (2.) Not only the Apostle, but the High Priest too, of our profession, the Chief Officer of the O. T. as well as the New, the Head of the church in every state, and under each dispensation, on whose satisfaction and intercession we profess to depend for pardon of sin, and acceptance with God. (3.) As Christ, the Messiah, anointed and every way qualified for the office both of Apostle and High Priest. (4.) As Jesus, our Savior, our Healer, the Great Physician of souls, typified by the brazen serpent Moses lifted up in the wilderness, that those who were stung by the fiery serpents, might look to Him, and be saved.

II. We have the duty we owe to Him who bears all these high and honorable titles, and that is, to consider Him as thus characterized. Consider what He is in Himself, what He is to us, and what He will be to us hereafter and for ever; consider Him, fix your thoughts on Him with the greatest attention, and act toward Him accordingly, look unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of your faith. Many profess faith in Christ, who have not a due consideration for Him. Close and serious consideration of Christ would increase our acquaintance with Him, and engage our love and our obedience to Him, and reliance on Him. Even holy brethren, and partakers of the heavenly calling, need to stir up one another to think more of Christ than they do; the best of his people think too seldom and too slightly of Him. We must consider Christ as He is described to us in the Scriptures, and form our apprehensions of Him from thence, not from any vain conceptions and fancies of our own.

Whatever the proud, carnal, and unbelieving may imagine or object, the spiritual mind will perceive peculiar glory in the cross of Christ, and be satisfied, that 'it became Him,' (who in all things makes the manifestation of the glory of his own perfections his chief end,) 'in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.' And what advantages may we not expect, from so powerful and gracious a Friend and Brother? *Mat. 12:16—50. John 15:12—16.*—Let sinners, who dread death, and use a variety of methods to banish their terrors, no longer attempt to outrave or repress them; let them not grow outrageous or licentious, through despair; nor let them expect help from the world or human inventions; but let them seek pardon, and peace, and grace, and lively hope of heaven, by faith in Him who died and rose again. *Col. 1:9—14.* Let the trembling believer frequently meditate on the love of Christ, and on his cross, his sepulchre, his resurrection, and his glory; and thus, in simple dependence and obedience, let him wait for more complete deliverance 'from the fear of death,' and from that last enemy himself, in the Lord's appointed time. And let the afflicted and tempted, instead of yielding to despondency, or giving place to the devil, (as if their harassing temptations rendered it improper for them to come to the Lord with their prayers,) remember, that the Savior 'suffered being tempted,' in order that He might be 'able to succor them that are tempted,' that He has infinite power and compassion, and that He only waits to be called in to their help, by fervent, persevering prayer. **SCOTT.**

relate to the formation of the church, than to the creation of the world; yet there can be no reasonable doubt, that the apostle purposely intimated, that He who formed the church, also created the world; and certainly He asserted that Christ, whether as Former and Ruler of the church, or Creator of all things, is God. **SCOTT.**

(1.) 'The transition here from one topic to another, is almost insensible, under the form of a deduction from the preceding discussion.' **STUART.** 'Nothing could better suit the apostle's design of establishing the Hebrew Christians, than to compare together the respective founders of the O. T. dispensations. He consequently observes, vs. 1—4. that both Christ and Moses were faithful to God in the discharge of their offices; but that Christ was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as the founder, and ruler of the house, or church, hath more honor than the house, or any eminent servant in it, such as Moses was. For He that hath formed the church, and ordered all things relative to it, is God. He adds, v. 5, 6. that Moses indeed was faithful in all things relative to God's house, the Jewish church: but it was as a servant, and in a typical economy, designed for a testimony of the things afterwards to be revealed; but that Christ was faithful as a Son over his house, the gospel-church; of whose house we who believe are members, whether Jews or Gentiles, if we hold fast our confidence and the rejoicing of the Christian hope firm unto the end.' **M'LEAN**, in *Williams*. So, in the main, *Stuart* and *Bl.*—*Apostle and High Priest.* 'Both are properly mentioned, as the author was to show that, as an Apostle, Christ was superior to Moses, and as an High Priest, to Aaron.—Apostle signifies Messenger.' **DODD.**



4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

5 And Moses <sup>e</sup> verily was faithful in all his house, as a <sup>f</sup> servant, for a testimony of <sup>g</sup> those things which were to be spoken after;

6 But Christ as a Son <sup>h</sup> over his own house; whose house <sup>i</sup> are we, if <sup>j</sup> we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

[Practical Observations.]

7 Wherefore, (as the Holy Ghost saith, <sup>k</sup> To-day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness;

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years:

10 Wherefore, I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

11 So I swear in my wrath, <sup>l</sup> They shall not enter into my rest,)

12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil <sup>m</sup> heart of unbelief, in departing <sup>n</sup> from the living God.

13 But exhort <sup>o</sup> one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

e Nu. 12:7. f Jos. 1:2. g De. 13:15-19. h Ps. 2:7,12. i 1 Pe. 2:5. j Mat. 10:22. k Ps. 38,39. c. 10:38,39. l Ps. 95:7. m Ma. 7:21-23. n Je. 2:13. o c. 10:24.

III. We have several arguments drawn up to enforce this duty of considering Christ the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. The first is taken from his fidelity, v. 2. He was faithful to Him that appointed Him, as Moses was in all his house. God the Father has sent and sealed Him to the office of Mediator, and He is faithful to that appointment, punctually and fully executing the trust reposed in Him by his Father and by his people. He is as faithful to Him that appointed Him, as Moses was in his office to the Jewish church in the O. T.; and this was a proper argument to urge on the Jews,

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-6. All who hear and profess the Gospel should be 'holy brethren;' and all who are 'partakers of the heavenly calling' will be sanctified, and united in love, [if not in opinion,] according to their measure of faith.—The stewards and servants of God are required to be faithful in all things intrusted to them, and many have been approved as such by their common Lord. 1 Cor. 4:1, 2. 1 Tim. 1:12-14. But the eternal Son of God is 'counted worthy of more honor,' than any or all of his servants. . . . As therefore they are most absurd, who allow 'every house to be builded of some man,' and yet atheistically ascribe the glorious creation around them to chance or necessity,

(4.) *Doddr.* understands this in relation generally to 'the works of creation and providence.' *Bl.* gives the sense thus: 'Every family has its head, or master, who provides for its welfare. But God is the supreme *Paterfamilias*, to whom his people, whether under the old or the new covenant, owe their origin, and who sent both Christ and Moses.' *Stuart* understands the *all things* of 'dispensations, i. e. both Jewish and Christian,' which sense he thinks demanded by the context. Ed.

(5.) *For a testimony, &c.* 'I. e. to make disclosures to the Israelites, of things to be revealed during the Mosaic period; or he was to be the instrument of delivering to the people divine communications, or, he was to teach them in matters of religion.' *STUART*.—'A testimony of things afterwards to be mentioned;' namely, by Christ and his apostles'. WILLIAMS.

V. 7-13. This address was directed to those professed Christians, who were in danger of apostatizing, or who did not seem in earnest in their religion, but it was likewise peculiarly suited to excite the attention of such Jews, also, as might read it. The example of their unbelieving progenitors, and the words of their own Scriptures respecting them, were adduced with great propriety, and power of conviction, on this occasion. Ps. 95:7-11.—'Seeing Moses, the servant, could not be despised with impunity, let them consider what punishment they must endure, if they despised the Son of God, to whom Moses himself invites them.' *Beza*. The apostle's reasoning, like that of Stephen, (*Notes*,

who had so high an opinion of the faithfulness of Moses, and yet his faithfulness was but typical of Christ's. Another argument is taken from the superior glory and excellence of Christ above Moses, v. 3-6. Christ was a Maker of the house, Moses but a member in it. By the house we understand the church of God. Christ is the Maker of this house of the church in all ages; He is the Maker of all things; for He is God, and no one less than God could build the church, either lay the foundation, or carry on the superstructure. Christ was the Master of this house, as well as the Maker, v. 5, 6. This house is styled *his house*, as the Son of God. Moses was only a faithful servant, for a testimony of those things that were to be spoken after; Christ, as the eternal Son of God, is the rightful Owner and Sovereign Ruler of the church; therefore Christ is worthy of more glory than Moses, and of greater regard and consideration. This argument the apostle accommodates to himself and all true believers, v. 6. *whose house we are*; each of us *personally*, as we are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and Christ dwells in us by faith; He characterizes the persons who constitute this house; *they are those who confide, and rejoice to the end*; maintain a bold and open profession of the truths of the Gospel, and live upon and up to their hopes of grace and glory, built upon them, so as to have a holy rejoicing in them to the end, notwithstanding all they meet with in so doing. So you see there must not only be a setting out well in the ways of Christ, but steadfastness and perseverance to the end. Those who would partake of the dignity and privileges of the household of Christ, must receive the truths of the Gospel into their heads and hearts, build their hopes of happiness upon them, and make an open profession of them. They must so live up to them as to keep their evidences clear, and rejoice in hope, and then they must in all persevere to the end.

V. 7-19. Here the apostle proceeds, pressing on them serious counsels and cautions, to the close of the ch.; and he recites Ps. 95:7, &c. where observe,

I. He counsels them to give a speedy, present attention to the call of Christ, v. 7.

II. He cautions them against hardening their hearts, turning the deaf ear to the calls and counsels of Christ, v. 8.

III. He warns them, by example of the Israelites, their fathers, in the wilderness, v. 8, 9, referring to that remarkable passage at Massah Meribah, Ex. 17:2-7. Observe, Days of temptation are often days of

so they reason little, if at all better, who allow Christ to be the Author of life, holiness, wisdom, strength, and salvation, to the multitudes of his people, and yet deny his real Deity.—All prophets and apostles acted as servants 'in the house' of another, to bear testimony to Christ, and to honor Him; but He appeared, to direct and govern all things, with unlimited sovereignty, as 'a Son over his own house.' May we then belong to this spiritual building, and manifest that we do so, by 'holding fast our confidence, and the rejoicing of our hope' in Christ, steadfast, through all trials, even to the end! Eph. 2:19-22. 1 Pet. 2:4-6. SCOTT.

(7.) *Wherefore.* 'I. e. because Christ is superior to Moses, and has higher claims upon us, hearken, Christian brethren, to the admonitions I give you.' *STUART*.—'This passage is properly adduced to prove the personality of the Holy Spirit.' *VALBY*, in *Henry, abr.*—'It involves the idea, that the Holy Scriptures are given by divine inspiration.' *STUART*.

(9.) *When.* 'Where, &c. So the Syr. and Vulg. more justly than our Eng.'

(11.) 'The passage exhibits God as speaking after the manner of men, and affected, like them, with feelings of indignation.' *STUART*.

provocation. To provoke God, when He is trying us, and letting us see that we entirely depend and immediately live on Him, is a provocation with a witness. The hardening of our hearts is the spring of all our other sins. The sins of others, especially our relations, should be a warning to us. As to the sin of the fathers of the Jews, here reflected on, it was very aggravated: they were now delivered from Egypt, though not yet in Canaan; and they were immediately dependent on God, from day to day, in the wilderness; yet they tempted, provoked, and distrusted God, and murmured against Moses; and thus they continued to do forty years: these were heinous aggravations, the source and spring of which were, they erred in their hearts, [their wills or affections were not in order, and so they] did not know God's ways, though He had walked before them; they did not observe either his providences or his ordinances in a right manner. At these sins God had just and great resentment, and yet He exercised great patience toward them, v. 10. Note, God is loath to destroy his people in or for their sin, He waits long to be gracious to them; yet He keeps an exact account of the time people go on sinning against Him, and at length, if they continue to grieve the Spirit of God, their sins shall be made grievous to themselves, in judgment or mercy. Observe, God's wrath will discover itself in its righteous resolution to destroy the impenitent; He will swear in his wrath, not rashly, but righteously, and his wrath will make their condition a restless condition; there is no resting under the wrath of God.

IV. What use the apostle makes of their awful example, v. 12, 13, &c. He gives the Hebrews,

1. A proper caution; the word is, *Take heed, look to it*; 'For see, Christ is Head of the church, a much greater person than Moses, and your contempt of Him must be a greater sin than their contempt of Moses; so you are in danger of falling under a severer sentence than they.' Observe, The ruin of others should be warnings to us; Israel's fall should for ever be a warning to all who come after them, 1 Cor. 10:11. Take heed; all who would get safe to heaven must look about them.

2. He enforces the admonition with an affectionate compellation; 'Brethren, not only in the flesh, but in the Lord; brethren whom I love, and for whose welfare I labor and long.' And here he enlarges on the matter of the admonition; *Take heed, &c.* Where observe, A heart of unbelief is an

Acts 7:37-53.) was suited to show, that the fathers of the Jewish nation had, in every age, been prone to 'resist the Holy Spirit,' and those who spake by Him. This had excluded the generation which came out of Egypt from Canaan, in the days of Moses; David, many ages after, was inspired by the Holy Spirit, to warn the Israelites against imitating their unbelieving progenitors, and forfeiting spiritual blessings; and the writer of the epistle warns his contemporaries, not to exclude themselves from heaven, in the same manner, as their ancestors were excluded from Canaan. In this view, there is a vast energy in the warning and exhortation.—(7) *As the Holy Ghost saith.* How decidedly this attests the book of Psalms to be the Word of God, and not merely of David, or any other man! (*Notes*, 2 Sam. 23:1, 2. Mark 12:35-37. The quotation is almost *verbatim* from the Sept., which well tr. the Heb. Ps. 95:7-11. SCOTT.

(7.) *Wherefore.* 'I. e. because Christ is superior to Moses, and has higher claims upon us, hearken, Christian brethren, to the admonitions I give you.' *STUART*.—'This passage is properly adduced to prove the personality of the Holy Spirit.' *VALBY*, in *Henry, abr.*—'It involves the idea, that the Holy Scriptures are given by divine inspiration.' *STUART*.

(9.) *When.* 'Where, &c. So the Syr. and Vulg. more justly than our Eng.'

(11.) 'The passage exhibits God as speaking after the manner of men, and affected, like them, with feelings of indignation.' *STUART*.



14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if <sup>p</sup> we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

15 While it is said, <sup>a</sup> 'To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

16 For <sup>r</sup> some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? *was it* not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses <sup>s</sup> fell in the wilderness?

18 And to whom sware <sup>t</sup> he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

19 So <sup>q</sup> we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

#### CHAP. IV.

<sup>1</sup> The rest of Christians is attained by faith. <sup>12</sup> The power of God's word. <sup>14</sup> By our high priest, Jesus the Son of God, subject to infirmities, but not sin, <sup>16</sup> we must and may go boldly to the throne of grace.

LET us <sup>a</sup> therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

<sup>p</sup> ver. 6.            <sup>a</sup> Nu. 26:64,65.    <sup>u</sup> c. 4:6.  
<sup>q</sup> ver. 7.            <sup>s</sup> Jude 5.            <sup>a</sup> c. 12:15.  
<sup>r</sup> Nu. 14:2, &c.    <sup>t</sup> De. 1:34,35.

evil heart. Unbelief is a great sin, it vitiates the heart. An evil heart of unbelief is at the bottom of all our sinful departures from God; it is a leading step to apostasy; if once we allow ourselves to distrust God, we may soon desert Him. Christian brethren have need to be cautioned against apostasy. *Let them that think they stand, take heed lest they fall.*

3. He subjoins good counsel to the caution, and advises them to that which would be a remedy against this evil heart of unbelief,—that they should *exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day*, v. 13. Ob-

PRACT. OBS. V. 7—19. Alas! what numbers of professed Christians are as far from the power of true religion, as the Israelites were in the days of Moses, or the Jews in those of Paul! The Holy Spirit therefore still says to them; 'To-day, if ye will hear the voice of God,' and 'submit to his righteousness, and authority, do not harden your hearts.'—While sinners are procrastinating, God may be about to say, 'This night shall your souls be required of you.' *Luke 12:15—21. 13:22—30.* How infatuated then must they be, to close their eyes and harden their hearts against conviction, to run into dissipation and worldly lusts, to yield to selfishness and sloth, and to make delays, in such a perilous situation! *Prov. 6:1—5.* Let such triflers and loiterers, on the brink of the bottomless pit, look well to themselves, for evil is be-

V. 14—19. Contemplating the immense advantages of perseverance, and the tremendous consequences of apostasy, they should consider the words of the Holy Spirit as addressed immediately to themselves. For, though the whole nation of Israel had been brought out of Egypt, to hear the will of God from Moses, yet some of them, (how vast a proportion it was not necessary to state,) provoked God to exclude them from Canaan. *1 Cor. 10:1—10. Jude 5—8.* Yet God had not failed of performing his promises, when He excluded that generation from Canaan, neither was this inconsistent with his justice; for 'with whom was He grieved,' but with those obstinate transgressors who always rebelled against Him? He therefore cut them off, while his promises were performed to the remnant of believers, and to the children of the rebels, as they would also be in the present case. *Ps. 90: Title. 7—17.* In that particular instance, when 'He sware in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest,' the tremendous sentence included none but the unbelievers; so that they could not enter into Canaan 'because of their unbelief;' nor could the Hebrews, whom the writer addressed, by any possible means enter heaven, unless they believed in Jesus Christ.—(15) *While it is said, &c.* [This sentence is noble, from which we learn, that the words of the prophets did not pertain to that one time, but that God, even at this day, invites us to Himself, by setting the writings of the prophets before us.] *Beza.* This is directly opposite to the conduct of many modern expositors and theologians, who labor strenuously to prove, that the language of the sacred writers, in many places, was intended for certain descriptions of persons in their own time, and is but little, if at all, applicable to us, who are placed in very different circumstances. But, in reality, it is of comparatively small importance to us, as to religion, what the meaning of any passage in Scripture may be; if we are not concerned in it, and can, in our situation, derive no instruction, encouragement, or warning from it; and the grand use of both exposition and preaching, is, to show how we may apply each part of Scripture *warrantably* to our own cases, according to

serve, We should be doing all the good we can to one another while we are together, which will be but a short and uncertain time; since to-morrow is none of ours, we must make the best improvement of this day; if Christians do not exhort one another daily, they will be in danger of being hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Note, There is great deceitfulness in sin; it appears fair, but is filthy; pleasant, but is pernicious; it promises much but performs nothing. The deceitfulness of sin is of a hardening nature to the soul; one sin allowed, prepares for another; every act of sin confirms the habit; sinning against conscience is the way to sear the conscience; therefore it should be the great concern of every one to exhort himself and others to beware of sin.

4. He comforts those who not only set out well, but hold on well, and hold out to the end, v. 14. The saints' privilege is, they are made partakers of Christ, that is, of the spirit, nature, graces, righteousness, and life of Christ; they are interested in all that is Christ's, in all that He is, in all that He has done, or can do. The condition on which they hold that privilege is, their perseverance in the bold and open profession and practice of Christ and Christianity unto the end. Not but they shall persevere, being kept by God's power, but to be pressed thus to it, is one mean by which Christ helps his people to persevere. This tends to make them watchful and diligent, and so keeps them from apostasy. Here observe, Many who in the beginning of their profession show a great deal of courage and confidence, do not hold it fast to the end. Perseverance in faith is the best evidence of the sincerity of our faith.

5. The apostle resumes what he had quoted before from Ps. 95:7, &c. and applies it close to those of that generation, v. 15, 16, &c. He tells them, that though some who had heard the voice of God, did provoke Him, yet all did not; some there were who believed, which, if they would do, they must hear his voice without delay. God will have a remnant that shall be obedient to his voice, and He will take care of such,

and make mention of them with honor; but disobedient hearers shall perish for ever.

6. And *Lastly*, The apostle puts some queries upon what had been before mentioned, and gives proper answers, v. 17—19. From whence, observe, God is only grieved with those of his people who sin against Him, and continue in sin. God is grieved and provoked most by sins publicly committed, by the generality of a nation; God grieves long, and bears long, when pressed with the weight of general and prevailing wickedness; yet He will at length ease Himself of public offenders by public judgments. Unbelief (and rebellion which is the consequent of it) is the great damning sin of the world, especially of those who have a revelation of the mind and will of God. This sin shuts up the heart of God, and the gate of heaven; it lays them under the wrath and curse of God, and leaves them there; so that in truth and justice to Himself, [and his universe,] He is obliged to cast them off for ever.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—10. Here, 1. The apostle declares our privileges by Christ under the gospel not only as great, but greater than those enjoyed under the Mosaic law. He specifies, that we have a promise left us of entering into his rest; i. e. of entering into a covenant relation to Christ, and a state of communion with God through Christ, and of growing up therein, till made perfect in glory.

2. He demonstrates the truth of his assertion, that we have as great advantages as they had, v. 2. The best privileges the ancient Jews had, were, the sacrifices and ceremonies of the O. T. the Gospel of that dispensation; and whatever was excellent in it, was, the respect it had to Christ. Now if this was their highest privilege, we are not inferior to them; for we have the Gospel as well as they, and in greater purity and perspicuity than they had.

3. He assigns the reason why so few of the ancient Jews profited by that dispensation of the Gospel which they enjoyed, and that was their want of faith, v. 2. Observe, The Word is preached to us, that we may

fore them.—We all, however, have need to exhort one another daily, or while the day of life and grace continues, lest sin should first deceive, and then harden us; till negligences and offences, in lighter things, terminate in more daring crimes, or open apostasy.—The happiness of being 'partakers of Christ,' as our complete Salvation and eternal Portion, and the fear of God's wrath and eternal misery, combine to put us on our guard against hypocrisy and apostasy, and to excite us to persevere in the life of obedient faith. Let us then beware of trusting to outward privileges or profession; remembering that unbelief and disobedience will exclude men from God's promised rest, and that nothing else can do it.

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the circumstances in which we are placed. (13) *To them that believe not.* 11:31. *John 3:36. Acts 14:2. Rom. 10:21. 11:30. 15:31. 1 Pet. 2:7, 8. 3:1, 20. Rom. 11:32. Eph. 2:2. 5:6. Col. 3:6.* *Disobedient, and disobedience,* are used in several places in the tr., and properly. Unbelief is an act of disobedience, and is inseparable from farther disobedience; and the connexion of *faith* and *obedience*, [*John 7:17.*] *unbelief and disobedience,* is thus strongly inculcated. SCOTT.

(15) *While it is said.* [Forasmuch as, &c. i. e. in the passage above quoted.] DODDR.—'As ye may know by the saying, *To-day, &c.*' MACKN.—'In respect to what is said, or, in regard to the declaration, viz. that which follows, or, the quotation before cited.' STUART.

(16) *For some.* [This is altogether inapposite. The true rendering I take to be: *Who now were they that when they heard did provoke?* The design is to lead the minds of the readers, to consider the specific sin of unbelief, which occasioned the ruin of the ancient Israelites, and would involve their posterity in the same condemnation.] STUART.—MACKN. renders it, 'Many.'—Ep.—*Howbeit, &c.* [Rather, were they not all who came, &c. See *Luke 17:8.*] STUART.—'Their little ones, i. e. all under 20 yrs. of age were excepted, Num. 14:31.' WILLIAMS.—'Some think, some of the Levites were not included.' DODDR.

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1, 2. The awful justice of JEREMIAH towards his ancient people, when they 'believed not,' 3:14—19, called emphatically on their descendants 'to fear,' with a humble and jealous distrust of their own hearts, a diligent, self-examining attention to every mean of grace, and a careful watchfulness against temptation, lest they should fall under a still more terrible condemnation.—'He proves . . . that the promise, to give Abraham and his Seed the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, was really a promise to give believers, of all nations, the everlasting possession of the heavenly country, of which Canaan was the emblem; and that the oath which excluded the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness from Canaan, likewise excluded from the heavenly country all that continue in their sins. So that, in this



2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word <sup>b</sup> preached did not profit them, <sup>c</sup> not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest; as he said, <sup>d</sup> As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, <sup>e</sup> And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they <sup>f</sup> to whom <sup>g</sup> it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

7 (Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time; as it is said; <sup>h</sup> To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

8 For if <sup>i</sup> Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

<sup>b</sup> of hearing. <sup>d</sup> Ps. 95:11. <sup>g</sup> or, the gospel.  
<sup>c</sup> or, because they <sup>e</sup> Ge. 2:2. <sup>h</sup> Ps. 95:7.  
were not united <sup>f</sup> c. 13:19. <sup>i</sup> That is, Joshua.  
by faith &c.

profit by it, may gain spiritual riches by it; yet there have been, in all ages, many unprofitable hearers. What is at the bottom

of all our unprofitableness under the Word is our unbelief; we do not mix faith with what we hear; it is faith in the hearer that is the life of the Word. Though the preacher believes, and endeavors to speak as one who does so; yet, if the hearers have not faith to mix with the Word, they will be never the better for it.

4. On these considerations the apostle grounds his repeated, earnest counsel, that they who enjoy the Gospel should maintain a holy fear, lest latent unbelief should rob them of the benefit of the Word, and of that spiritual rest tendered in the Gospel, v. 1. Observe, Grace and glory are attainable by all under the Gospel; yet those who may attain them may also fall short by unbelief. This is a dreadful thing, and one good mean to prevent it is, to maintain a holy and a religious fear lest we should fall short. This will make us vigilant and diligent, sincere and serious; this will put us on examining our faith, and exercising it; whereas, presumption is the high road to ruin.

5. The apostle confirms the happiness of all who truly believe the Gospel; and that, (1.) By asserting so positively the truth of it, from the experience of himself and others, v. 3. 'We who have believed, do enter into rest; into a blessed union with Christ, and into a communion with God through Christ; in this state we actually enjoy many sweet communications of pardon of sin, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and earnestness of glory, resting from the servitude of sin, and reposing ourselves in God till we are prepared to rest with Him in heaven.' (2.) He illustrates and confirms it, that they who believe, are thus happy, and do enter into rest; from God's finishing his work of creation, and so entering into his rest, v. 3, 4. appointing

our first parents to rest also the seventh day in God; from his continuing the observance of the Sabbath, after the fall, and the revelation of a Redeemer; from his proposing Canaan as a typical rest for the Jews, into which those who believed, Caleb and Joshua, did actually enter; and from the certainty of another rest besides that seventh day of rest instituted and observed both before and after the fall, and besides that typical Canaan,—rest which most of the Jews fell short of by unbelief; for the Psalmist has spoken of another day and another rest. From whence it is evident, that there is a more spiritual and excellent Sabbath remaining for the people of God, than that into which Joshua led the Jews, v. 6—9. a rest of grace and comfort, and holiness, in the gospel-state, and a rest in glory; the everlasting sabbatism of heaven, which is the repose and perfection of nature and grace too, where the people of God shall enjoy the end of their faith, and the Object of all their desires. The whole is further proved from the glorious Forerunners who have actually taken possession of this rest,—God and Christ. It is certain, God, after creating the world in six days, entered into his rest; and Christ, when He had finished the work of our redemption, entered into his rest; and these were not only examples, but earnestness, that believers shall enter into their rest, v. 10. Every true believer hath ceased from his own works of sin, from relying on his own works of righteousness, and from the burdensome works of the law; as God and Christ have ceased from their works of creation and redemption.

6. The apostle confirms the misery of those who do not believe; they shall never enter into this spiritual rest, either of grace here or glory hereafter. As sure as God is

ancient oracle, a future state, with its rewards and punishments, was actually made known to the Jews.' Mackn. (1) Rest.] 3, 5, 10, 11. 3: 11, 18. Acts 7:49. 4, 8, 10. Acts 14:18. Gen. 2:2 Sept. 'Cessation from labor or disquietude, with satisfaction and complacency in that cessation, and the event of the labor.'

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(1—9.) 'The writer having appealed to the example, and consequences of unbelief among the Israelites of old in the wilderness, proceeds now to confirm the application of what he had been saying, and to remove objections; one, that the rest spoken of in the O. T., meant only the quiet possession of Canaan; the other, that the ancient Israelites were excluded from the promised rest, on account of murmuring and rebellion, crimes not charged on those whom he addressed. He asserts that the promise of entering into the rest, still remains addressed to the Hebrew Christians, as it was to the Israelites of old. This he repeats, v. 2. and adds, that the ancient Hebrews failed to obtain the proffered blessings through unbelief. In v. 3. he says, believers now enter into the same kind of rest as was anciently proffered, and that such as God enjoyed, after He had completed the creation of the world; consequently spiritual, heavenly rest. This is plain, (he goes on to show, v. 4.) from Scripture, from Gen. 2:2. and Ps. 95:11. where it is involved in the very form of expression, viz. MY rest, v. 5. Now since God would not provide a rest altogether in vain, and some must enjoy it, and they to whom it was proffered, lost it through unbelief,—[it follows that believers only can attain it.] This last is not expressed, but left to be supplied by the reader, from v. 2, 3. The object of v. 6. is, to intimate, that unbelief was the sin which excluded from the rest. But some might still doubt. He therefore, v. 7. appeals to David, (who lived nearly 500 yrs. after Canaan had been occupied by Israel,) speaking of a definite time, then present, in which he warns his contemporaries against losing the rest God had promised to the believing and obedient. "Now," adds he, "if Joshua, who gave Israel Canaan, had given them the rest to which the Scripture refers, where it speaks of God's rest," [my rest, v. 3.] "then David could not have spoken, so long after, of a rest still proffered to Israel, from which the unbelieving would be excluded, v. 9." Hence he concludes, that the rest spoken of is not of a temporal but spiritual nature, and that there remains a rest for the people of God, i. e. believers. V. 10. states, that the main object of the writer in vs. 1—9. is, to prove the spiritual and abiding nature of the proffered rest; "For," says he, "he who enters into his [God's] rest, rests from his own labors, as God did from his." That is, he who attains to the rest proffered in the time of David, and to the more ancient Israelites in the wilderness, attains to a rest like that of God, Gen. 2:2. i. e. he will rest from the toils, and trials, and sorrows of a probationary state, and enjoy a happiness heavenly and divine, in a better world above. As to the mode of reasoning, if any should think the argument from the O. T. less forcible to establish promises of rest in a future world, than are supplied perhaps by his own mind from the N. T., let him remember, the N. T. was not then in hand to be appealed to,—not to say, that, to Hebrew Christians, the argument from the O. T. was the more appropriate, the O. T. being peculiarly their Scriptures. The whole argument is, indeed, in some sense *argumentum ad hominem*; but there is nothing of allegorizing, and the writer plainly labors to show, that rest in the land of Canaan could not possibly have been meant by the Psalmist. The future punishment of the unbelieving Israelites is clearly intimated, by the exclusion from heavenly, spiritual rest, which is threatened.'

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(2.) 'A church-going man, who is not also a man of prayer, has no better reason to expect spiritual benefit, than a husbandman has to expect a harvest, who plants his grain and leaves his field an unfenced common. It is he who enters his closet before he comes to the house of God, and prays in secret before he takes his place in the public assembly, and keeps still praying while the Word is sounding powerfully in his ear, and forgets not another retreat to his private chamber, after dismissal from the courts of the Lord,—this is the man who grows, and thrives, under the ministration of the Word.' Rev. Dr. SKINNER.

V. 3—11. The apostle laid it down as a principle, that 'those who believe,' and they only, 'enter into rest,' even that rest which was especially intended.—It was evident that more than 'the rest of Canaan' was meant, in the Scriptures to which he referred; as God had said, 'If they shall enter into my rest,' with allusion to the Sabbath; though the works of creation from which He ceased, and in which He rested with infinite satisfaction, as being 'very good,' had been 'finished from the foundation of the world;' above 2500 years before He spake thus of the unbelieving Israelites: for it was thus written in a passage of Scripture, well known to the Hebrews, concerning the original institution of the Sabbath. Gen. 2:1, 2. Ex. 20:11. 31:13—17. And yet God said, so many ages after, that they 'should not enter into his rest.' Num. 14: 27—30. This implied that the rest of Israel, in Canaan, was a type of a more spiritual and sacred rest, satisfaction, and felicity, in Him and his glory, (in some degree resembling his own complacency in the perfect work of creation,) which would be conferred on his believing people. The exclusion of the generation from Canaan, implied that it remained for some others to enter in, which their posterity accordingly did; and the language denoted, that, while, through unbelief, numbers came short of the better rest of heaven, yet it was purposed that some should enter into it by faith. In confirmation of which, another day was limited, 'by the Holy Spirit in David,' many ages afterwards, during which believers would 'enter into rest,' but after which unbelievers would be irrevocably excluded. 3:7—13. This was addressed to those, who were actually in possession of the promised land, and at the height of their prosperity as a nation; it therefore evidently related to another and better rest than that of Canaan; from which unbelief would exclude even the inhabitants of that good land. For if 'Jesus,' (or Joshua, as it would have been better rendered, to prevent mistake and ambiguity,) had given Israel the true rest intended for believers; God would not so long after have spoken 'of another day.' Joshua had indeed given Israel rest, from the fatigues and wanderings of the desert, and from the hardships and perils of war, by their settlement in Canaan; Josh. 23:1. yet there evidently 'remained for the people of God' another and better rest, even the keeping of a perpetual and most blessed Sabbath; for the word is changed, to express the idea the more strongly. This was reserved for them in heaven, where they have done with sin, temptation, pain, conflict, fear, death, labor, and disappointment; and enjoy uninterrupted, unalloyed, ineffable, and eternal delight in God, and [undisturbed activity in] his holy worship and service.—This point the apostle argued from the O. T. so carefully, because the Sadducees entirely denied, that any better recompense than temporal prosperity was to be expected; and the Jews in general were prone to overlook the spiritual blessings proposed to them, in the promises made to their fathers, and to confine their thoughts wholly to the temporal sanctions of the national covenant, made with them at Sinai. Ex. 19:1.—The application, (v. 11.) by the singular pronoun, is rendered a warning to



9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his :)

11 Let <sup>k</sup> us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of <sup>l</sup> unbelief.

[Practical Observations.]

12 For the word <sup>m</sup> of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged <sup>n</sup> sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerners of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight : but all things are naked <sup>p</sup> and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

J or, keeping of a Sabbath. k 2 Pe. 1:10. l or, disobedience. m Is. 49:2. n Re. 1:16. o Ps. 139:2. Je. 17:10. Re. 2:23. p Pr. 15:11.

entered into his rest, so sure obstinate unbelievers shall be excluded; as sure as the unbelieving Jews fell in the wilderness, and never reached the Promised Land, so sure unbelievers shall fall into destruction, and never reach heaven; as sure as Joshua, the great captain of the Jews, could not give them possession of Canaan, because of their unbelief, notwithstanding his eminent valor and conduct, so sure even Jesus Himself, the Captain of our salvation, notwithstanding all that fulness of grace and strength that dwells in Him, will not, cannot, give to final unbelievers either spiritual or eternal rest: it remains only for the people of God; oth-

ers, by their sin, abandon themselves to eternal restlessness.

V. 11—16. In this latter part of the ch. the apostle concludes, first, with a serious, repeated exhortation, and then with proper and powerful motives.

1. A serious exhortation, v. 11. Observe, 1. The end proposed,—rest spiritual and eternal; the rest of grace here, and glory hereafter; in Christ on earth, with Christ in heaven. 2. The way to this end prescribed,—labor, diligent labor; this is the only way to rest; they who will not work now, shall not rest hereafter. Thus should Christians call on themselves, and one another, to be diligent in duty; and so much the more as we see the day approaching.

11. Here we have proper and powerful motives to make the advice effectual, which are drawn,

1. From the dreadful example of those who have already perished by unbelief, *lest any man fall*, &c. To have seen so many fall before us, will be a great aggravation of our sin, if we will not take warning by them.

2. From the great help and advantage we may have from the Word of God, to strengthen our faith, and excite our diligence, that we may obtain this rest, v. 12. By the Word of God, understand either the *essential* or the *written* Word: the *essential* Word, as John 1:1. indeed, what is said in this verse is true of the Lord Jesus Christ; but most understand it of the written Word, the Holy Scriptures, which are the Word of God. That is *quick*; very lively and active, in seizing the conscience, cutting the sinner to the heart, comforting him, and binding up the wounds of the soul. They know not the Word of God, who call it a dead letter; it is not only *quick*, but *quickening*; it is a vital light, a *living* word. It is *powerful*. When God sets it home by his Spirit, it convinces powerfully, converts powerfully, comforts

powerfully. It is *sharper than any two-edged sword*; it is the *sword of the Spirit*, Eph. 6:17. the two-edged sword that cometh out of the mouth of Christ, Rev. 1:16. it enters where no other sword can, and makes a more critical dissection. It *pierces to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit*, the soul and its habitual prevailing temper; it makes a proud soul humble, a perverse spirit meek and obedient. Those sinful habits that are become, as it were, natural to the soul, and in a manner one with it, are separated and cut off by this sword. It cuts off ignorance from the understanding, rebellion from the will, enmity from the mind, which, when carnal, [or selfish,] is enmity itself against God. This sword divides between *the joints and the marrow*, the most secret, close, and intimate parts of the body; this sword can cut off the lusts of the flesh, as well as the lusts of the mind, and make men willing to undergo the sharpest operation to mortify sin. It is a *discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, even the most secret and remote thoughts and designs. It will discover to men the variety of their thoughts and purposes, the vileness of them, the bad principles they are actuated by, the sinister [selfish] and sinful ends they act to. The Word will turn the inside of a sinner out, and let him see all that is in his heart. Now such a Word as this must needs be a great help to our faith and obedience.

3. From the perfections of the Lord Jesus Christ, both of his person and office. (1.) His Person, particularly his omniscience, v. 13. *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight*. This is agreeable to what Christ speaks of Himself, Rev. 2:23. The motions and workings of our heads and hearts may be called creatures of our own; but these are open and manifest to Him with whom we have to do, as the Object of our worship, and the High Priest of our profes-

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—11. Blessed be God, that 'the Gospel is preached to us,' even as to the primitive Christians, and far more clearly than to Israel of old. 'Exceedingly great and precious promises' are 'given to us,' of entering into 'the heavenly rest;' yet we should 'rejoice with trembling,' in our outward advantages, lest any of us should be found at last to come short of the blessing, and to sink under proportionably deeper condemnation, through unbelief. Nay, it is a very dreadful consequence of a wavering profession, or an inconsistent or negligent conduct, that it often causes men to 'seem to come short,' even when they are launching into eternity; they leave the world in gloomy doubt, and their survivors in distressing uncertainty, whether they are gone to heaven or to hell. Let us then 'give diligence, that we may have an abundant entrance ministered to us into the everlasting

kingdom of our Lord.' (Note, 2 Pet. 1:10, 11.)—Under every dispensation, God has declared man's rest to be in Him, and in his love, as the only suitable and sufficient happiness of the soul, and faith in his promises, through his Son, as the only way of 'entering into that rest.'—Let sinners then 'labor to enter into this rest,' lest they should fall after the example' of ancient unbelievers, and perish with heaven before their eyes; let believers abide in Christ by faith and obedience, and learn to delight in his holy day, and sacred ordinances, as earnest of their expected eternal Sabbath, and preparations for it; let them bear up under fatigues and hardships, in the prospect of heavenly rest; and, if ever drawn aside, let them recollect these things, and say to themselves, 'Return unto thy rest, O my soul.' Ps. 116:7. P. O. 1—9.

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each individual.—The apostle's reasoning, from the O. T., concerning another rest, entirely distinct from the rest in Canaan; even 'the keeping of a Sabbath reserved for the people of God,' which unbelievers even in Canaan came short of, is conclusive against all those moderns, who labor to prove, that the doctrine of a future state of righteous retribution was no part of the religion of Israel, as well as against the ancient Sadducees. The proof of this doctrine, from comparing two passages in the books of Moses, with one in the Psalms, is as clear and conclusive, as our Lord's proof of the resurrection, by what JENOVAN said to Moses from the bush: (Note, Mat. 22:22—33.) and probably the apostle knew the Pharisees in general would have allowed, that all who rejected it 'erred, not knowing the Scriptures.'

SCOTT.

(9, 10.) 'I am of opinion, with some eminent critics, that we have in these vs. direct intimation and express authority, for the change of the Sabbath, (from the 7th to the 1st day of the week.) "There remaineth therefore a sabbatism (or the keeping of a Sabbath) to the people of God; for he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." The word in the original, translated rest, is *sabbatismos*, being different from the word so translated throughout the whole of the preceding and subsequent context,—which is *anapausis*. I am perfectly satisfied as to the meaning of the passage, as an intended and explicit declaration of the change of the Sabbath.' Rev. Dr. WARDLAW.

(10.) *His rest.*] 'I. e. God's rest. There is no more dilleulity in calling that rest, which is promised to believers, *the rest of God*, than there is in saying, that man "was formed in his image;" that Christians "are made partakers of the divine nature;" or, that "we shall be like Him, when we shall see Him as He is." *The rest of God*, is rest like that which God enjoys.'

STUART.

(11.) 'What doctrine (than that of future punishment) can better alarm the careless professor? How much will the fear of his Father's wrath, quicken the child of God in making his calling and election sure! The more he is afraid of God's righteous judgments, the more will he strive, with a filial spirit, to work out his salvation. What like this doctrine can impress on saints their everlasting obligations to Christ? Can they feel that He has redeemed them from endless perdition, and not abound in love and praise? And what can make them so deeply anxious for sinners, as the sense of eternal misery which awaits the impenitent? What fervent prayers must it excite for their conversion! Who can realize their danger, and yet do nothing for their salvation? [522]

The doctrine of endless punishment is, therefore, of great practical influence.' Rev. Dr. CHURCH.

V. 11—13. 'The writer now proceeds in his usual manner to close the topic,' [see on vs. 1—9, 10.] 'by exhortations and warnings.' Sr.

(11.) 'Lest any one [of us] perish, in the same manner, by unbelief and contumacy.'

BLOOMER.

V. 12, 13. It has been greatly controverted, whether the Holy Scriptures, or the personal 'Word of God,' be spoken of in these vs., but Paul never calls our Lord by that title, and it appears to me, that the apostle meant the written Word; and that he made a gradual transition from the word spoken, to Him who spake it.—By exhibiting the glory of the divine perfections, men's relations and obligations to the great Creator, the spirituality, extent, excellency, and sanction of the law, the evil and desert of sin, and the depravity of the human heart, in a variety of ways, and a multiplicity of experiments, it forces conviction of guilt and danger on the sinner, and compels him, as it were, to condemn himself and seek deliverance; nor can any kind of delusion or hypocrisy stand before its penetrating energy, when experimentally and fully preached, and applied to the hearts of men according to their various characters: being, in plain language, a 'discerner' of men's most secret thoughts and intentions, so that it often shows them their most hidden purposes, and makes them afraid of being openly named and exposed, as if the preacher knew their hearts, far better than they did themselves, and had a register before him even of those sins which they have forgotten. Mat. 7:23, 29. John 8:3—11. 1 Cor. 14:20—25. 2 Cor. 4:1, 2. 10:1—6.—The expressions 'naked and opened,' are supposed to refer to the sacrifices, which were flayed, and opened, and left down the spine; [note, Gen. 15:10.] and then every part of the body and of the intestines which were before concealed, was exposed to the exact inspection of the priest. Sc.

(12.) *Dividing, &c.*] 'Allusion is rightly recognised here to the priests (in sanctification) cutting the victim down to the back-bone, so as to search every bone and part, that all might be found pure before the sacrifice. At the same time, it is not improbable there may be allusion to that most horrible exercise of the *machaira distomos*, by which (as we find from classical writers) a man was sometimes absolutely cut in two, down the back-bone.' BLOOMER.—The most approved commentators generally understand by *Word*, in this verse, not the *Logos*, or *Son of God*, but the *Word of God*, i. e. the *Bible*, and especially the *commination* or *threatening* of God.

ED.



14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

CHAP. V.

The authority and honor of our Savior's priesthood. 11  
Negligence in the knowledge thereof is reprov'd.

FOR every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins :

2 Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way ; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

1 Jn. 3.5. / b or, reasonably bear with.  
a Ep. 3:12. / c. 7.23.  
c. 10:19-22. / c. 7.23.  
s Ho. 11:3. / n c. 8:3.  
t 1 Pe. 2:22.

sion ; and as the high priest inspected the sacrificed beasts, cut them up, [directly through the back-bone, from end to end,] to see whether they were sound at heart ; so all things are thus dissected, and lie open to the piercing eye of our great High Priest. Some read the words, to whom with us there is an account or reckoning. This omniscience of Christ, and the account we owe of ourselves to Him, should engage us to persevere in faith and obedience till He has perfected all our affairs. (2.) We have an account of the excellency and perfection of Christ, as to his office, and this particular office of our High Priest. The apostle first instructs Christians in the knowledge of their High Priest, what kind of Priest He is, and then puts them in mind of the duty they owe on this account.

[1.] What a kind of High Priest Christ is, v. 14. that is, 1st. A great High Priest, much greater than Aaron, or any of the priests of his order. The greatness of our High Priest is set forth, 1. By his being passed

PRACT. OBS. V. 12-16. Instead of objecting to a heart-searching ministry, and choosing such lifeless, feeble instructions, as are more like a shaken reed, than 'a two-edged sword,' let us lay open our inmost souls to the piercing strokes of the distinguishing Word of God, that we may learn our need of that great High Priest, even the Son of God, who now pleads for us before his Father's throne in heaven. In proportion as we know and condemn ourselves, and abhor our sins, He will become more and more precious to our souls, and we shall cleave to Him more constantly. Let us then approach continually to 'the throne of grace,' where our reconciled God deems it his peculiar honor to pardon rebels.

(11.) 'The writer now proceeds to the consideration of a subject introduced, ch. 5:1. where he calls Christ the High Priest of the Christian religion. As apostle and perfect of God's house, he had already compared Him with Moses, 3:2-6. and grounded on the result a very solemn and affectionate warning against unbelief, 3:7-19. To encourage the Hebrew Christians, he had spoken also of the rest [see on 4:1-3.] which remains for the people of God, and warned them in view of that against the same penalty. 4:11-13. Now, therefore, having completed the former comparison, he proceeds to the latter, and compares Christ as High Priest with the Levitical order of priesthood, which comparison extends to 10:13. the end of the doctrinal part of the epistle.—The comparison of Christ with angels, ch. 1. is short ; that with Moses, ch. 3. still shorter ; but this, with the Aeronical priesthood, makes up the body of the epistle ; not because the Jews exalted the High Priest above Moses, for this they did not, though they held the office sacred ; but because Christ, in the office of High Priest, performed that peculiar duty, which of all others made Him what He was, the Savior of sinners, the REDEEMER of lost men ; because, as Priest, He offered an expiatory sacrifice, which takes away the sins of the world and makes Him the propitiator of their offences.—No part of the Scriptures explain the nature and object of the Jewish ritual, in a manner so spiritual, so satisfactory, so clear, so worthy of God, and so profitably to us, as chs. 5-10. of this epistle. As a key to the O. T. they deserve the most attentive and thorough study, by all who would understand the Bible. As a

into the heavens. The high priest under the law, once a year, went out of the people's sight, into the holiest of all, where were the sacred signals of the presence of God ; but Christ once for all is passed into the heavens, to take the government of all on Him, to send the Spirit to prepare a place for his people, and to make intercession for them. 2. By his name, Jesus ; a Physician and a Savior, and one of a divine nature ; and, therefore, having divine perfection, able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by Him. 2lly. He is not only a great, but a gracious High Priest, merciful, compassionate, and sympathizing with his people, v. 15. Though so great, He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities in such a manner as none else can be ; for He was Himself tried with all the affliction and trouble incident to our nature in its fallen state ; and this, not only that He might be able to satisfy for us, but to sympathize with us. But, then, 3lly. He is a sinless High Priest. He was in all things tempted as we are, yet without sin. We seldom meet with temptations but they give us some shock ; but our great High Priest came off clear in his encounter with the devil, who could neither find any sin in Him, nor fix any stain on Him. He was tried severely by the Father. It pleased the Lord to bruise Him ; yet He sinned not ; He was holy, harmless, and undefiled ; and such a High Priest became us. Having thus told us what a one our High Priest is, the apostle proceeds to show us,

[2.] How we should demean ourselves toward Him,

1st. Let us hold fast our profession of faith in Him, v. 14. never deny Him, never be ashamed of Him before men. Let us hold fast the enlightening doctrines of Christianity in our heads, the enlivening principles of it in our hearts, the open profession of it in our lips, and our practical and universal subjection to it in our lives.

2lly. We should encourage ourselves by the excellency of our High Priest, to come boldly to the throne of grace, v. 16. A throne speaks authority, awe, and reverence ; a throne of grace, great encouragement, even to the chief of sinners. There grace reigns, and acts, with sovereign freedom, power, and bounty. It is our duty and interest to be often found before this throne of grace, waiting on the Lord in all the duties of his worship, private and public. Our business and errand there should be, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. And, beside the daily

and to answer the prayers of those who supplicate his favor in the name of his beloved Son ; let us improve the day of his patience, and approach in his appointed way ; let us come with believing boldness, as well as with adoring reverence and humble repentance ; let us seek for mercy to pardon our sins, to compassionate our miseries, and to supply our necessities ; and let us supplicate grace sufficient for us, in all our trials and temptations, and to enable us for the service of every day ; thus waiting, as humble penitents, at 'the throne of grace,' which is our best preparation for appearing before the tribunal of our omniscient and holy Judge.

statement and vindication of the great work of Christ, and the atonement He made for sin, they stand in the first rank of all the scriptural writings. As adapted to the wants and condition of those whom the apostle addressed, they are a consummate specimen of skillful argument, and of powerful persuasion and remonstrance.' STUART.—Into the heavens [Through the heavens, i. e. the air, &c. to the throne of God ; in allusion to the high priest going yearly through [by lifting up and passing behind] the veil which screened the holy of holies.' OWEN. See also Roscumb., Stuart, and Bloomf. ED.]

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1-4. (2) Can have compassion. [Can reasonably bear with.' Marg. Here only. To feel moderately, so as to make proper allowances, without conniving at wilful sins. SCOTT.]

(1.) Every high priest. [All the following discourse, is intended to moderate their regards for the Levitical priesthood, and to give them more exalted notions of Christ, that they might be more resolute in adhering to Him.' DONNE.—The high priest was to act the part of a Mediator, between God and men ; i. e. he was to aid men in regard to their spiritual or religious concerns.' STUART.]

(2.) 'The priest, that was appointed to minister in holy things, was to form his judgment concerning sins, done through ignorance by any of the people, and appoint a suitable sacrifice accordingly. See Lev. 4. Num. 15:21-29. And in like manner concerning presumptuous sins. Lev 6. Num. 15:30.' HAWKER.



3 And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so <sup>d</sup> also for himself, to offer for sins.

4 And <sup>e</sup> no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was <sup>f</sup> Aaron.

5 So also Christ <sup>g</sup> glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, <sup>h</sup> 'Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.

6 As he saith also in another place, Thou <sup>i</sup> art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up <sup>j</sup> prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able <sup>k</sup> to save him from death, and was heard <sup>l</sup> in that he feared;

8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience <sup>m</sup> by the things which he suffered:

d Le. 9:7.  
e 2 Ch. 26:18.  
f Ex. 28:1.  
Nu. 16:40.

g Jn. 8:54.  
h Ps. 2:7.  
i Ps. 110:4.  
j Mat. 26:39-44.

k Mat. 26:53.  
l or, for his piety.  
m Phil. 2:8.

hands, as the great agent between God and man. (2.) That he might offer sacrifices for sin; that is, the offerings appointed to make atonement. Thus Christ is constituted a High Priest for both these ends. Our good deeds must be presented by Christ, to render ourselves and them acceptable; and our ill deeds must be expiated by the sacrifice of Himself, that they may not condemn and destroy us.

4. How this high priest must be qualified, v. 2. (1.) He must be one that can have compassion on two sorts of persons; the ignorant, or those guilty of sins of ignorance; and those that are out of the way, the way of truth, duty, and happiness; he must have pity to intercede with God for them, and a divine tenderness and patience to instruct and lead them back into the right way. (2.) He

must also be compassed with infirmity; and so be able to sympathize with us. Thus Christ was qualified; and this gives us great encouragement to apply ourselves to Him under every affliction; for in all the afflictions of his people He is afflicted.

5. How the high priest was to be called of God; he must have both an internal and an external call; for no man taketh this honor to himself, v. 4. that is, no man ought to do it, no man can do it legally; if any does it, he must be reckoned an usurper, and treated accordingly. Here, observe, It is a very great honor to be employed to stand between God and man, one while representing God and his will to men, at another time representing man and his case to God; and dealing between them about matters of the highest importance, intrusted on both sides with the honor of God, and the happiness of man. Observe, God is the Fountain of all honor, especially true spiritual honor; also of true authority, whether He calls any to the priesthood in an extraordinary way, as He did Aaron, or in an ordinary way, as He called his successors. Those only can expect assistance from God, and acceptance with Him, that are called of God; others may expect a blast instead of a blessing.

6. How this is brought home and applied to Christ, v. 5. Observe, here, Though Christ reckoned it his glory to be made a High Priest, yet He would not assume that glory to Himself. He could truly say, *I seek not mine own glory*, John 8:50. As God, He was not capable of any additional glory, but as Man and Mediator He did not run without being sent; and if He did not, surely others should be afraid to do it.

7. The apostle prefers Christ before Aaron, both in the manner of his call, and in the holiness of his person. In his call God said unto Him, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee*, Ps. 2:7. referring both to his eternal generation as God, his wonderful conception as Man, and his perfect qualification as Mediator. Now God never said thus to Aaron. Another expression God used in the call of Christ, we have Ps. 110:4. here, v. 6. God the Father ap-

pointed Him a Priest of a higher order than that of Aaron; the priesthood of Aaron was to be but temporary; that of Christ, perpetual; Aaron's successive; Christ's, after the order of Melchisedec, personal, and perpetual, He being without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, as more largely, ch. 7. Christ is here preferred to Aaron in the holiness of his Person. Other priests were to offer up sacrifices, as for the sins of others, so for themselves, v. 3. But Christ needed not to offer for sins for Himself, for He had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his mouth, Is. 53:9. And such a High Priest became us.

8. We have an account of Christ's discharge of this his office, and of the consequences of that discharge, v. 7-9.

(1.) The discharge of his office, v. 7. For a time He took to Himself flesh, that He might suffer and die for us; in which He prayed, especially in his agony, and was heard, *heard in that He feared*. His human nature was ready to sink, and would have sunk, had He been quite forsaken in point of help and comfort from God; but He was heard in this, He was supported under the agonies of death, carried through death; and they that are thus saved from death shall be fully delivered at last by a glorious resurrection, of which the resurrection of Christ was the earnest and first-fruits.

(2.) The consequences of this discharge of his office, v. 8, 9, &c. By these, his sufferings, He learned obedience, though a Son, v. 8. though never disobedient, yet He never performed such an act of obedience as when He became obedient to death, even to the death of the cross. Here, as in prayer and supplication, He has left us an example, that we should learn by all our afflictions a humble obedience to the will of God. We need affliction, to teach us submission. By these, his sufferings, He was made perfect, and became the Author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, v. 9. Christ, by his sufferings, was consecrated to his office, consecrated by his own blood. By his sufferings He consummated that part of his office which was to be performed on earth, making

(3.) 'On the particulars of both kinds of sacrifices, [i. e. for the people and for himself, the priest,] see Lev. 4:9 and 16.' BLOOMF.—'See the superiority of Christ represented, in respect to the point here suggested, in 7:26-28.'

V. 5, 6. The Jews had paid far more regard to the predictions of his kingdom, than to those of his priesthood, through their prejudices of the Levitical law.—Some expositors, interpreting the expression, 'This day have I begotten Thee,' of Christ's resurrection, (though that was only the proof, and not in any sense the cause or origin of his Sonship, Acts 13:24-37.) have argued, that He did not officiate as a Priest, till after He arose from the dead, as if offering Himself as a Sacrifice for sin was no part of his priestly office! But the typical meaning of the legal ceremonies, will sufficiently expose the gross absurdity of this supposition, as we proceed with the subject.—The quotations are from the Sept., which accords to the Heb. Ps. 2:7. 110:4.

(5.) *Christ glorified not, &c.* [He did not assume the mediatorial office without divine authority, nor affect to appear, before his time, in the pomp and splendor of it.]

(6.) *Another place.* [Ps. 110:4. The object of the quotation is simply to prove, that the office of high priest was conferred on Christ by divine appointment. Comp. v. 4. The particulars of the comparison, in respect to the priesthood of Christ and Melchisedec, are suspended, till the writer has introduced other considerations relative to Christ, as a Priest, 5:7-9. and given vent to his feelings of concern for those whom he addressed, by suggesting various considerations, adapted to reprove, 5:11-14. to warn, 6:1-9. as well as to excite and animate them, 6:10-20.]

V. 7-10. Our Lord, though perfectly free from all sin, came as near to the condition of a sinner as He possibly could. This was 'in the days of his flesh,' subsequent to his incarnation, and previous to his exaltation; when his human nature became incapable of suffering, and was made inconceivably glorious. 1 Cor. 15:50-51. Phil 3:20, 21. 'Was heard, &c.' 'Because of his piety,' his reverence of the divine Majesty, his love, and his zeal for the glory of the Father; or, as many commentators explain it, 'He was heard, and delivered from his fear.' No doubt the most distressing dread of that awful wrath of God against our sins, which He had undertaken to endure, was one cause of our Lord's agony in the garden. This might well oppress his human soul, without his having the least apprehension, that He should finally sink under it, or come short of 'the joy set before Him;' or the least distrust of the Father's faithfulness to his engagement,—without any defect in his patience and submission, or any degree of sin. For the prospect of the temporary and even transient enduring of such a load of guilt and wrath was sufficient to excite the most overwhelming consternation. John 12:27-33. Thus, it appeared, that He had communion with his brethren in the passion, or feeling, most foreign to the divine nature, even fear,

which is never ascribed to God, as many others are; and that He could sympathize with them in it, and deliver them from it. And, indeed, though He was not delivered from dying, but willingly submitted to it; yet He was delivered from that agonizing terror, which dictated his 'supplications with strong crying and tears,' and was afterwards calm and composed under his heaviest sufferings.—Learned men have clearly shown, by pertinent examples, that the words may well bear this sense; and it seems more exactly to suit the apostle's argument. Our Lord was not indeed spared, or exempted from any part of his expiatory sufferings, concerning which He said, notwithstanding the strong reluctance of his holy human nature to such exquisite and complicated sufferings, 'Thy will be done;' knowing that it was 'not possible for that cup to pass from Him,' consistently with the glory of the Father, and the salvation of his people. Yet the horror of his mind was allayed; He was strengthened to support the immense weight of suffering which was laid upon Him; his sacrifice was accepted for his people; He was raised from the dead, exalted to the mediatorial throne, and invested with the power of 'saving to the uttermost all who come to God through Him.' Even when 'the Son of God' Himself was appointed to the high priesthood, He learned the difficulty of obeying the divine commandments, in the present circumstances of human nature, amidst the temptations and trials to which men are exposed; of this He acquired an experimental knowledge, as far as could consist with sinless perfection, and even his perfect obedience became more exalted and honorable, through his whole life, by the enlargement of his human powers, and by the things which He suffered; so that his zeal and love were never so admirable and astonishing, as when He agonized in the garden, and hung upon the cross.—It is observable, that Melchisedec is never mentioned in the Old Test. after the account of his meeting with Abraham, as recorded in Genesis; except in Ps. 110. and never in the New Test. except in the apostle's argument in this epistle concerning the high priesthood of Christ; a subject of infinite importance, and proved beyond all reasonable doubt, by this single argument. 7:1-22. How much may depend on a detached testimony of Scripture, which superficial readers pass over unobserved, and to which perhaps very few carefully attend! Sc.

(7.) *Strong crying and tears.* [The words are by some thought to refer to the Passion, at which it is said, He prayed yet more earnestly. By others, to his exclamation on the cross.] BLOOMF.—Ros. thinks, it may rightly be referred to both, to which Bl. also accords.—Stuart remarks, that the evangelists do not mention the weeping of the Savior. Eo.—'Was heard in that He feared.' [If we turn to Luke 12:50. we shall see that a view of sufferings then future, produced in the mind of Jesus, an oppressive anticipation, a sensation of distress and dread. As the scene of crucifixion approached nearer, these sensations were evidently increased, until they became almost overwhelming. See Mat. 26:36-39. Luke 22:40-44, Mark 14:34-36. What agonies Jesus endured on



9 And <sup>9</sup> being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

10 Called of God an high priest, <sup>10</sup> after the order of Melchisedec.

11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of <sup>12</sup> milk, and not of strong meat.

13 For every one that useth milk <sup>13</sup> is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are <sup>14</sup> of full age, *even* those who by reason of <sup>14</sup> use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

n. c. 2:10. o ver. 6. p 1 Co. 3:t-3. q hath no experience. r or, perfect. s or, a habit, or, perfection.

reconciliation for iniquity; and in this sense He is said to be *made perfect*, a perfect Propitiation. Hereby He is become the Author of eternal salvation to men; He has, by his sufferings, purchased a full deliverance from sin and misery, and a full fruition of holiness and happiness for his people. Of this salvation, He has given notice in the Gospel; and on all who obey, though on them only, this salvation is actually bestowed. To those who obey Him, devoting themselves to Him, denying themselves, and taking up their cross, and following Him, He will be

PRACT. OBS. Fallen men cannot approach God, except on 'a mercy-seat' through a high priest, and by a sacrifice for sin; but 'a priest, who was encompassed with infirmity,' and needed to offer sacrifice for himself, however he might compassionate the ignorant and transgressors, could never be an effectual advocate with God for them. Indeed, in the more ordinary work of the ministry, the consciousness of our own sinfulness and unworthiness is well suited to render us tender to the weak, the erroneous, the tempted, and the fallen, 'seeing we ourselves are compassed with infirmity;' and, though this service differs widely from that of the priests under the law, yet no man should take it upon him, till it appear to other competent persons, as well as himself, that 'he is called of God' to it.—Christ alone is qualified and authorized to be our High Priest his dignity and excellency, as the Son of God, and his appointment by the Father to that office, give efficacy to his ministrations. . . . His obedience in our nature encourages our attempts to obey, and our expectations of support and comfort, under all the temptations and sufferings to which we are exposed; for 'being made perfect' for this great work, 'He is become the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him.' But do we obediently receive his instructions as our Prophet, trust in his sacrifice and intercession as our Priest, and make his commandments the rule of our conduct, as the

the Author,—the grand Cause of their salvation, and they shall own Him as such for ever.

V. 10—14. Here the apostle returns to what he had, in v. 6. cited out of Ps. 110. concerning the peculiar order of the priesthood of Christ, that is, the order of Melchisedec. And here,

1. He declares he had many things he could not say to them concerning this mysterious person called *Melchisedec*, whose priesthood was eternal; and therefore the salvation procured thereby should be eternal also. Some think, he means, that the things hard to be uttered, were not so much concerning Melchisedec himself, as concerning Christ, of whom Melchisedec was the type.

2. He assigns the reason why he said not the things he had to say, concerning Christ, our Melchisedec, and what it was that made it so difficult for him to utter them, and that was, the dulness of the Hebrews to whom he wrote; *Ye are dull of hearing*. There is a difficulty in the things themselves, and ministers may be weak to speak clearly about them; but generally the fault is in the hearers; dull hearers make preaching difficult, and even those who have some faith, may be dull hearers.

3. He insists on the faultiness of this infirmity of theirs; it was not a mere natural infirmity, but a sinful infirmity, and more in them than others, by reason of the singular advantages they had enjoyed for improving in the knowledge of Christ, v. 12. Proficiency might have been reasonably expected from these Hebrews, and from those to whom much is given, much is expected. Observe, the sad disappointment of those just expectations; *Ye have need that one should teach you again*, &c. Some persons, instead of going forward in Christian knowledge, forget the very first principles they had learned long ago; and, indeed, they that are

not improving under the means of grace, will be losing. It is a sin and shame for persons that are men, for their age and standing in the church, to be children and babes in understanding.

4. The apostle shows how the various doctrines of the Gospel must be dispensed to different persons. There are in the church babes, and persons of full age, v. 12—14. and there are in the Gospel, milk, and strong meat. Observe, Babes, unskilful in the Word of righteousness, must be fed with milk, the plainest truths, and these in the plainest manner, Isa. 28:10. Christ despises not his babes; He has provided suitable food for them. It is good to be babes in Christ, but we should endeavor to pass the infant state; we should always remain in malice children, but in understanding we should grow up to a manly maturity. There is strong meat for those that are of full age, v. 14. The deeper mysteries of religion belong to those who have learned first principles, and well improved them. Observe, There have been always in the Christian state children, young men, and fathers. Every true Christian, having received a principle of spiritual life from God, stands in need of nourishment to preserve that life. The Word of God is food and nourishment to the life. It is the wisdom of ministers rightly to divide the Word of truth, and to give to every one his portion; milk to babes, and strong meat to those of full age. There are spiritual senses, as well as those that are natural; and it is by use and exercise that these are improved, made more quick and strong to taste the sweetness of what is good and true, and the bitterness of what is false and evil. Not only reason and faith, but spiritual sense, will teach men to distinguish between what is pleasing and what is provoking to God, between what is helpful and what is hurtful to our own souls.

the cross, we can never fully know; but we may conclude they were very dreadful, from the complaint forced from Him. Mat. 27:46. Mark 15:34. It is indeed unaccountable by any ordinary principles, applicable to virtuous sufferers, that a character such as that of Jesus, pure, unmoved by opposition and continually, and persecution, and unawed by threatening and danger, should exhibit such an oppressive, overwhelming sense of pain and distress; while thousands of men, nay, thousands of the more delicate sex, in prospect of like or apparently greater sufferings, have been perfectly calm, collected, and even triumphant.—Who then can regard Jesus as a simple sufferer in the ordinary way, on the cross, and explain the mysteries of his dreadful horror, before and during the hours of crucifixion? And what was it, in respect to which He was *heard, or delivered*? Not the sufferings of the cross, for these He endured.—The context necessarily limits the *hearing, or deliverance*, to something in his petitions which appertained to *suffering*, which was an object of *deal*. What could it be but the dread of sinking under the agony of being deserted by his Father? Mat. 27:46. STUART.—“If it be possible!” and thus hath He left us an example, to pray for nothing absolutely, but what we *know* to be agreeable to the divine will,—namely, our salvation.”

WILLIAMS. (3.) *Being made perfect*.] ‘Being thus consecrated to God by his own blood, in virtue of which He was installed in his priestly office.’ DODDR.—‘Having attained the end of his race through sufferings, i. e. passed through them to consummate glory.’ AHP. TILL., in *Doddr.*—‘Being consecrated.’ DR. JACKSON. *Same*.—‘A complete High Priest by consecration.’ WILLIAMS.—‘When exalted to glory. *Perfect*, here, undoubtedly refers to the exaltation or kingly dignity of Christ; conveying also by v. 9. an intimation, that his very sufferings stand in an intimate and necessary connexion with the same, so that He is a kingly

subjects of his kingdom? To those who thus come to Him, and yield themselves to Him, and to those alone, He will be ‘the Author of eternal salvation.’ Of this great High Priest, and of his merits, grace, and authority, ministers have many things to say, which they will not be able to utter in a proper manner, unless ‘He give them a month and wisdom,’ for that purpose; and men’s prejudices are so many and so strong, that they are generally more ready to take offence, than to receive instruction. Nor are professed Christians, even old professors of evangelical doctrine, so docile as might be expected; many are far from that spiritual maturity, which is proportioned to the time, during which they have attended to the Gospel. These things are very discouraging; but we should still exercise patience and meekness, and ‘seek out acceptable words,’ in which to convey instructions in the best manner we can.—We ought indeed to begin with simpler truths, and so gradually proceed to such as are more deep and perplexing; and to employ ourselves peculiarly about first principles, by an experimental and practical improvement of the truth; thus we shall gradually be matured in judgment, and enabled to digest strong meat; and our spiritual senses will be habituated to a just and exact discernment of good and evil, which will greatly tend to our stability, comfort, and fruitfulness in the faith of Christ. Phil. 1:9—11. SCOTT.

Priest as Melchisedec was. See on ch. 2:10. where is the same sentiment as here. STUART.—*Became the Author*.] ‘I. e. the meritorious and efficient Cause of eternal salvation.’ McLEAN.

(10.) *Called of God, &c.*] ‘I. e. greeted, or saluted by name.’ So *Cosaub., Bloomf., and Stuart.* ED.

V. 11—14. Every man, who could only receive the simpler and more common truths of religion, without applying his mind to the more experimental and exalted parts of it, must be considered as a babe in Christ, how long soever he had professed the Gospel, being evidently ‘unskilful in the Word of righteousness.’ But the more sublime doctrines of Christianity, which immediately related to the counsels of God for his own glory, and the display of his perfections by the redemption of Christ, and which indeed were obscurely intimated in the ceremonies of the Mosaic law, were as ‘strong meat’ for those who were matured in knowledge, judgment, and experience, being the proper nourishment of their faith, hope, love, and spiritual affections.—(12) *Principles*.] ‘The elements of the beginning of the oracles of God,’ a contrast to ‘the elements of this world,’ ‘the beggarly elements’ of human traditions, and abolished ceremonies.—(13) *Word of righteousness*.] Or that Word, by which men are shown the way of righteousness, both ‘the righteousness of faith’ for justification, and ‘the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience.’ SCOTT.

(12.) *Oracles of God*.] ‘I should refer it to those parts of the O. T. which respect the Christian religion, and especially to the Messiah, were it not that in ch. 6:1—3. the writer has shown that he means the rudiments of Christian doctrine, in its appropriate sense.’ The phrase must mean here *doctrine, or communications of God, viz. which God has revealed under the Gospel, i. e. divine doctrines, or doctrines of divine original.* STUART.



## CHAP. VI.

1 He exhorteth not to fall back from the faith, 11 but to be steadfast, 12 diligent, and patient to wait upon God, 13 because God is most sure in his promise.

THEREFORE, <sup>a</sup> leaving <sup>b</sup> the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from <sup>c</sup> dead works, and of faith <sup>d</sup> toward God,

2 Of the doctrine of <sup>e</sup> baptisms, and of laying on <sup>f</sup> of hands, and of <sup>g</sup> resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

3 And this will we do, if <sup>h</sup> God permit.

a Phi. 3:12—14. c c. 9:14. f Ac. 8:17.  
b or, the word of d c. 11:6. g Ac. 17:31. 26:8.  
the beginning of e Ac. 19:4,5. h Ja. 4:15.  
Christ.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—8. 1. We have here the apostle's advice to the Hebrews to go on and make progress in their spiritual life; and for their greater encouragement, he puts himself with them, *Let us go on*. But how, in order to growth, must Christians leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ? they must not lose, despise, forget them; no, they must lay them up in their hearts, as the foundation of all their profession and expectation; but they must not rest in them, not be always laying the foundation, they must go on, and build upon it. Some were but weak, yet others had gained more strength; and they must be provided for suitably. Grown Christians must be willing to hear the plainest truths preached, for the sake of the weak; so the weak must also be willing to hear the more difficult and mysterious truths preached, for the sake of those who are strong. He hoped they would be growing in their spiritual strength and stature, and so be able to digest stronger

meat. The apostle mentions several foundation-principles, which must be well laid at first, and then built upon; these are six.

(1.) Repentance from dead works, that is, conversion and regeneration, repentance from a spiritually dead state and course; as if he had said, 'Your minds were changed by conversion, and so were your lives. Take care that you return not to sin again, for then you must lay again the foundation; there must be a second conversion; a repenting not only of, but from, dead works.'

(2.) Faith toward God; a firm belief of his existence, nature, attributes, and perfections, the trinity of persons in the unity of essence, the whole mind and will of God as revealed in his Word, particularly what relates to the Lord Jesus Christ. Observe, Repentance from dead works, and faith toward God, always go together. Both are foundation-principles, which should be once well laid, but never pulled up, so as to need to be laid over again; we must not relapse into infidelity.

(3.) The doctrine of baptisms, that is, of being baptized by a minister of Christ with water, in the Name of the Trinity, as the initiating sign or seal of the covenant of grace; and of an inward baptism of the Spirit sprinkling the blood of Christ on the soul, for justification, and the graces of the Spirit for sanctification. This is a foundation to be rightly laid, and daily remembered, but not repeated.

(4.) Laying on of hands; either on persons passing solemnly from their initiated state by baptism to the confirmed state, by returning the answer of a good conscience toward God, and sitting down at the Lord's table. This passing to complete church-membership, was performed by laying on of hands, which the extraordinary conveyance of the gift of the Holy Ghost continued. This once done, all are obliged to abide by,

and not to need another solemn admission, as at first, but to go on, and grow up, in Christ. Or by this may be meant, ordination to the ministerial office, by fasting and prayer, with laying on of the hands of the presbytery; and this is to be done but once.

(5.) The resurrection of the dead, that is, of dead bodies; and their re-union with their souls, to be eternal companions in weal or woe, according as their state was toward God when they died, and the course of life they led in this world.

(6.) Eternal judgment, determining the soul of every one, when it leaves the body at death, and both soul and body at the last day, to their eternal state.

These are the great foundation-principles ministers should clearly and convincingly unfold, and closely apply. In these the people should be well instructed and established, and from these they must never depart; without these, the other parts of religion have no foundation to support them.

2. The apostle declares his readiness and resolution to assist the Hebrews in building themselves up on these foundations till they arrive at perfection, v. 3. hereby teaching them, that resolution is very necessary, in order to progress in religion, and that made in the sincerity of our hearts, and in a humble dependence on God, both for strength, assistance, and righteousness; acceptance, time, and opportunity. Ministers should not only teach people what to do, but go before them, and along with them, in the way of duty.

3. He shows that this spiritual growth is the surest way to prevent apostasy. And here,

(1.) He shows how far persons may go in religion, and, after all, fall away, and perish for ever, v. 4, 5. They may be *enlightened*. Some of the ancients understand this of their being baptized; but it is rather

NOTES. CHAP. VI. V. 1—3. *Dead works.*] Such as are done by men dead in sin, and which expose them to the condemnation of eternal death. — *Baptisms.*] Either the various legal washings, whether by immersion, ablution, or sprinkling, or John's baptism, and that of Christ, which were distinct from each other, or the traditional baptisms of the Pharisees, 9:8—10. *Mat.* 3:5, 6. 15:1, 2. *Mark.* 7:3, 4. *John* 2:22—26. — *Some* expositors explain these 'principles of the doctrine of Christ,' as relating wholly to instructions contained in the Old Test., concerning the Messiah's kingdom; and some confine them exclusively to the new dispensation. Others, favoring the former scheme, interpret 'the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands,' to signify the legal purifications, and the laying on of the hands of the offerer on the head of the sacrifice, as typical of repentance and faith, including the words in a parenthesis. But, understanding by 'principles,' not the most fundamental truths, or parts of Christianity, but the introductory elements, the lower and easier beginnings of it, as letters are the first principles, or elements, or beginning of learning, we may see a propriety in the interpretation above given. Some of the things mentioned were, though most important in themselves, yet the more obvious and simple parts of Christianity, and the others were external, connected with the first profession of it, on which the Jews were apt to lay far more stress than they ought to have done; and it was obvious for the apostle to mention those, when he would call them off from the introductory elements of Christianity, to its more sublime and spiritual doctrines. — (2) *Eternal judgment.*] *Mat.* 25:46. 25:41—46. 'Interpreters observe, that the doctrine of Origen, touching the period of the torments of the damned, is here condemned; and indeed the primitive fathers, not Origen himself excepted, taught the contrary. — If we do not the will of Christ, says Clemens Romanus, nothing will deliver us from eternal punishment. ... The punishment of the damned, says Justin Martyr, is endless punishment, and torment in eternal fire. Irenaeus, in his symbol of faith, makes this one article, That Christ would send the ungodly and unjust into everlasting fire. — Tertullian declares, that all wicked men are appointed to eternal torments; and if any man, says he, thinks the wicked are to be consumed, and not punished, let him remember, that hell-fire is styled eternal, because designed for eternal punishment, and their substance will remain for ever, whose punishment doth so. Cyprian saith, that the souls of the wicked are kept, with their bodies, to be grieved with endless torments. There is no measure nor end of their torments, saith Minutius. Lastly, Origen reckons this among the doctrines defined by the church; That every soul, when it goes out of this world, shall either enjoy the inheritance of eternal life and bliss, if its deeds have rendered it fit for life; or is to be delivered up to eternal fire and punishment, if its sins have deserved that state.' *Whitby.* *Scott.*

(1.) *Perfection.*] 'More eminent degrees of improvement in the doctrine of Christ.' *Donnr.* And so *Owen*, substantially, referring to 1 Cor. 2:6. *Ed.* — A maturer state, compared with the state of immaturity complained of, eh. 5:12—14. in which sense and connexion the reasoning is plain. *STUART.* — *Bloomf.* understands it of 'the doctrine of justification by faith, as the word of righteousness, eh. 5:13.' *Grotius* (also *Rosenm.*) 'of the interpretation of the figures of the O. T., which, by the dispensation of God, had all a bearing on the Gospel; and *Carpzov.* and *Dwidorf,* 'of Christ's priesthood, like that of Melchisedec.' —

*Dead works.*] 'The sins of unregenerate persons, called *dead* in respect of their nature and their end. — The expression is peculiar to this epistle.' *OWEN.* — 'Works producing death.' *ROSEN.* And so *Stuart*; or, as it may be, he says, 'vicious and sinful works.' — *Calvin* understands it of 'a formula of confession among catechumens when admitted to baptism, in which they acknowledged, they had formerly been strangers and aliens.' *Ed.*

(1—3.) *Leaving, &c.*] The connexion of argument here, *Prof Stuart* takes to be as follows: 'Christian brethren, who ought by this time to be qualified to be teachers, remain no longer in your present ignorance of religion; and let it be no longer necessary to teach you the first rudiments of Christian doctrine. God willing, we must make progress. Stationary we cannot remain; we must advance or recede. But guard well, I beseech you, against receding; for it is impossible, &c., v. 4—8.' *Baptisms.*] See note, at end of Heb.

(2.) *Doctrine of baptisms.*] 'Those instituted under the Mosaic dispensation, to inculcate moral purity on all who would draw near to God with acceptance; or that appointed by Christ, as the rite by which we enter into the church.' *DODDR.* So *Rosenm.*, but with particular reference to 'the baptism of proselytes.' — *Bloomf.* sees no ground on which to form a decided opinion between this and other interpretations. — *Calvin* takes the words as 'in apposition,' and gives the sense thus: 'Not laying again the foundation of penitence and faith in God, and the resurrection of the dead; which is the doctrine of baptism and the imposition of hands. Therefore,' says he, 'if you include in a parenthesis the two members, "the doctrine of baptisms and the imposition of hands," the context flows better.' — *Stuart* takes the plural, *baptisms*, to be used for the singular, and refers to *Jn.* 1:13. 1 Cor. 7:2. 2 Cor. 7:3. for a similar use of other words. *Storr*, he says, supposes the term to be used in a kind of distributive sense; so the sentiment is, 'the doctrine that every believer must be baptized.' — The *Syr.* here, has the singular. — *Lord Barrington* understands the phrase of, 'the baptism of water and the effusion of the Holy Spirit, by which the first disciples among the Jews, and the first converts among the devout and idolatrous Gentiles, were initiated. He also explains, the laying on of hands, as referring to the immediate communication of spiritual gifts by means of the apostles, (and so *Stuart*, in this particular.) These, he thinks, were first principles, (in which also *Stuart* accords,) as baptism was the first entrance into the church, and laying on of hands, the great evidence of it, as faith and repentance are the substance of Christianity, and a resurrection and eternal judgment, the great motives leading men to embrace it. *Ed.* — *The doctrine.*] 'I. e. which is emblematically represented or signified in baptism, namely, our communion with, and conformity to Christ, in his death and resurrection, by the remission of sins, and the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit.' *M'LEAN*, in *Henry, abr.*

(3.) *This will we do, &c.*] 'I. e. explain the more sublime doctrines of the Gospel, especially as they regard the O. T. and its accommodation to Christ, or the comparison of the history and economy of the old covenant with those of the new.' *BLOOMF.* — *We.*] 'The frequency with which the writer uses the first person plural, is worthy of remark. It gives a more delicate cast to his reproofs, and to his comminations.' *STUART.*



4 For *it is impossible* for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame.

[Practical Observations.]

i Mat. 5:13, 12; c. 10:26, 2 Pe. 2:20, 21, 31, 32, Jn. 15:6.

J Is. 1:28.

PRACT. OBS. V. I.—6. The first principles and 'rudiments of the doctrine of Christ,' should be accurately understood, before men attempt to learn the sublimer mysteries of the Gospel; yet they must not always be confined to them, but should be 'led on towards perfection,' both in knowledge, experience, and holiness.—We cannot but lament to see those, who once made a credible profession of the Gospel, turn back into the world and sin, and thus in a measure 'crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame;' as if, on trial, they found nothing in his salvation worthy of their constant regard! In general, we should warn and pray for such persons; but there are cases, in which we must let them alone, as having no prospect of their being 'renewed to repentance.' We should beware, and we ought to caution others, of every approach to so tremendous a precipice; yet in doing this, we should keep close to the Word of God, and be careful not to wound and terrify the weak, or discourage the fallen and penitent.—The

V. 4—6. It was the more proper to write, in the manner proposed, to the Hebrews, as those who adhered to Christianity had been sufficiently for a long time instructed in the introductory lessons; and those who had renounced it were in a most hopeless condition.—These vs. have caused immense perplexity and distress to many timid and conscientious Christians; and they have been supposed to contain a cogent objection to the doctrine of the believer's final perseverance. These things must be in a measure adverted to, in our examination of them. It should be remembered, that the apostle wrote in an age of miracles; and to the Hebrews, among whom the Holy Spirit was first poured out, in his extraordinary operations, as well as his renewing influences. *Acts* 2:37—40, 5:32, 6:8, 8:14—17, 10:44—48, 19:1—4. The persons whose case is described, had been 'once enlightened,' and had obtained that measure of knowledge concerning the truth and nature of Christianity, which enabled them to make a satisfactory profession of it, in order to their admission into the church; 'they had tasted the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost;' being at their baptism, or afterwards, by the laying on of the apostles' hands, endued with some measure of spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers; such as speaking with tongues, or discoursing with supernatural fluency on divine subjects; so that, in this respect, 'they had tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit,' and their own experience proved to them the truth of the Gospel. They had moreover 'tasted of the good Word of God,' and their convictions, impressions, and affections, made them sensible that it was a 'good Word,' of a holy and salutary tendency, and that it was for their good to attend to it; and their purposes of doing so had produced such hopes and joys, as have been described in the case of the stony-ground hearer. *Mat.* 13:20—22, *Mark* 6:15—23. Thus they had tasted of 'the powers of the world to come,' in their temporary, realizing apprehensions of a future state, and of its happiness or misery; or, they had experienced the powers communicated, under the dispensation of the Messiah. All these things, except miraculous gifts, often take place in the hearts and consciences of men, in these days, who yet continue unregenerate. They have knowledge, convictions, fears, hopes, joys, and seasons of apparent earnestness, and deep concern about eternal things; and they are endued with such gifts as often make them acceptable and useful to others; but they are not truly *humbled*; they are not *spiritually minded*; religion is not their element and delight; they do not cordially receive Christ in all his offices, or sincerely love the spiritual excellency of his people, his ordinances, and commandments. In short, the old nature, the principle of selfishness, is impressed, affected, interested, alarmed, or pleased; but a new nature is not produced, and, therefore, 'in time of temptation they fall away.'—In respect of spiritual gifts, or the miraculous 'powers of the Holy Ghost,' our Lord most expressly declares, that He will reject many who had been partakers of them, saying to them, 'I never knew you.' *Mat.* 7:21—23, *1 Cor.* 13:1—3.—Yet those who received gifts of this kind from Christ, through the laying on of the hands of his apostles, had a personal demonstration of the truth of Christianity, which the most enlightened apostates, in these days, can scarcely be supposed to have had; and, therefore, but few instances now occur, in which a conclusion concerning their state can be unreservedly drawn in the apostle's awful words, though the case of some may be nearly similar, and they alone are immediately concerned in them. *10:26, 27, 2 Tim.* 4:14, 15, *1 John* 5:16—18. If the persons, whom the apostle had thus characterized, (for he spake of none else,) had totally apostatized from Christianity, and were become its avowed enemies, it was not the minister's duty to bestow pains about them; it was found 'impossible to renew them to repentance,' and thus to 'restore them in the spirit of meekness.' For, considering the clear light against which they sinned in so desperate a manner, it might be concluded, that they had committed 'the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit,' and had ascribed his operations, and the miracles wrought, by themselves and by others, as well as the holy joys and experience of true believers, to a satanical influence. *Mat.* 12:31, 32. In fact, as far as they could, 'they crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh;' despitefully showing that they approved the conduct of those who nailed Him to the cross; they assented to their deed, and apparently wished it in their power to repeat his ignominy and torture; and they 'put Him to an open shame,' by renounc-

to be understood of notional knowledge and common illumination, of which persons may have a great deal, and yet come short of heaven, as *Balaam*, *Numb.* 24:3. They may *taste of the heavenly gift*, feel something of the efficacy of the Holy Spirit in his operations on their souls, causing them to taste something of religion, and yet be like persons in the market, who taste of what they will not come up to the price of, and so but take a taste, and leave it. They may be *made partakers of the Holy Ghost*, that is, of his extraordinary and miraculous gifts; they may have cast out devils in the name of Christ, and done many other mighty works. Such gifts in the apostolical age were sometimes bestowed on those who had no true saving grace. They may *taste of the good*

*Word of God*; they may have some relish of gospel-doctrines, may hear the Word with pleasure, remember it, and talk well of it, and yet never be cast into the form and mould of it, nor have it dwell richly in them. They may have *tasted of the powers of the world to come*, may have been under strong impressions concerning heaven and hell; have felt some desires of heaven, and dread of going to hell. These lengths hypocrites may go, and, after all, turn apostates. And, observe, It is not here said of them, that they were truly converted, or justified; there is more in true saving grace than in all here said of apostates. This therefore is no proof of the final apostasy of true saints. These indeed may fall frequently and foully, but yet not totally nor finally from God.

general invitations and promises of the Gospel include all, who are humbly willing to embrace them; humiliation and self-condemnation, when united with some hope and cries for mercy, are such tokens of God's 'renewing a man to repentance,' as should be pointed out to him, for his encouragement in expecting forgiveness. On the other hand, the self-confident should be taught, that knowledge, gifts, terrors, subsequent joys, and high affections, are no certain evidence of a man's conversion, without brokenness of heart, hatred of sin, a spiritual mind, and 'faith which worketh by love.' But those whom it is indeed 'impossible to renew unto repentance,' are commonly the last to think themselves in so awful a state; and such as are most harassed by fears of this kind, may generally be assured that this is not their case, whatever they have been, or done; unless they actually run into ungodliness and wickedness, through total desperation. SCOTT.

ing his religion, blaspheming his name, joining his enemies, and doing evil to his disciples. They were, therefore, to be considered, as given up to final obduracy, and left to the awful judgment of God.—This conclusion, however, by no means authorized ministers finally to exclude from the communion of the church, those apostates, who professed repentance, and appeared to be true penitents, much less did it warrant such rigor in less aggravated cases. In general, encouragement should be held forth to all, who appear penitent; nay, to induce the most obdurate to repentance; and means are in most cases to be used for the recovery of such as have most lamentably turned aside; though ill success will often discourage the benevolent endeavor. The very words, however, of this awful passage prove, that all who 'are renewed unto repentance' shall be pardoned; and that God leaves all to final impenitence, whom He determines not to save. *Tim.* 2:23—26. So that the trembling sinner, who pleads guilty, and cries for mercy, can have no ground for discouragement from this passage, fairly interpreted, whatever his crimes have been; for all who are 'renewed to repentance' are saved, and none else. Neither does it prove that any one, who is 'in Christ a new creature,' ever becomes a final apostate from Him. 3, 10.—(4) *Impossible.*] If God 'swear in his wrath that any man shall not enter into his rest,' *3:17—19*, he is so given up to hardness of heart, that his case resembles that of fallen angels, or the damned; and the same impossibility of repentance takes place as exists in respect to them.—*Enlightened.*] *10:32, Lu.* 11:36, *Jn.* 1:9, *Eph.* 1:18, *3:9, 2 Tim.* 1:10, *Rev.* 12:1, 21:21—23, 22:5.—There is no scriptural ground for the ancient opinion, that *baptism* is meant; and most mischievous conclusions naturally are deducible from it; especially as to the state of those, who have sinned grievously after baptism. SCOTT.

(4, 5) *Impossible.*] A popular hyperbole, *extreme difficulty.* BL. 'But this is far alien from the signification of the word,' CALVIN. 'Such an explanation cannot be admitted; comp. *Heb.* 6:12, 10:4, 11:6, &c.' STUART.—*Those who were once enlightened, &c.*] The description of character here is thus summarily given by Stuart, mostly after Rosenm. 'They had been taught the principles or doctrines of Christianity.—They had enjoyed the privileges or means of grace which the new religion afforded.—They had experienced, in general, various gifts and graces,—extraordinary influences,—bestowed by the Spirit.—They had cherished the hopes which the promises of the Gospel inspire.—They had witnessed, (and perhaps he means to say, some had experienced,) those special, miraculous powers, by which the Gospel was fully shown to be a religion from God; comp. 2:4. Thus they had the fullest evidence, internal and external, of the divine origin and nature of the Christian religion. Consequently, if they apostatized from it, there remained no hope of their recovery.'—Calvin seems to consider the several forms of expression here used, as descriptive rather of a single state of mind or experience. Hence he speaks of the apostle as calling 'the knowledge of the Gospel,' which these persons have, 'illumination,' 'taste of the heavenly gift,' &c. *Tasted the good word.*] Note, *2 Pet.* 2:20, 21. Ep.

(4—6.) 'These verses are closely united; but their connexion with the preceding is not of easy determination.' Bloomf. But see above on v. 1—3.—'We have nothing here,' says McLEAN, 'but what may be found in the stony-ground hearers, *Lu.* 8:13, in those destitute of Christian love, *1 Cor.* 13:1—3, and in such as Christ shall at last disown, as workers of iniquity. It is a distinguishing trait in God's children that they draw not back unto perdition, but believe to the saving of the soul, *Heb.* 10:39, and endure to the end, *Mat.* 24:13, *Jn.* 10:15, 17, 28, 29.'—Owen also is full to the same point, and that nothing can hence be concluded concerning real believers. So, in effect, *Doddr.*, *Rosenm.*, *Bloomf.*, *Diod.*, and *Ernesti*, nearly.—Rosenm. refers to *Heb.* 10:26, for an example of such as are here spoken of; understands the apostle as saying, he would not for such repeat the first elements of religion, presuming it would be in vain, such men being like bad ground, on which whatever is sown, is thrown away. This makes the connexion with v. 9, easy and natural. Stuart, however, and Calvin, apparently, understand the apostle as though he thought real Christians might thus fall away. 'For,' says Calvin, 'if any one ask, why the apostle makes mention of such apostasy, when he addresses believers,—*fideles*,—I answer, that, hereby, their danger may be seasonably pointed out, so that they



7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them <sup>k</sup> by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing <sup>l</sup> from God :

8 But that which beareth <sup>m</sup> thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

10 For <sup>n</sup> God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the <sup>o</sup> full assurance of hope unto the end :

12 That ye be not <sup>p</sup> slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

[Practical Observations.]

<sup>k</sup> or, for. <sup>m</sup> Is. 5:6. <sup>o</sup> c 3:6,14.  
<sup>l</sup> Ps. 65:10. <sup>n</sup> Mat. 25:40. <sup>p</sup> Pr. 15:19. 2 Pe. 1:10.

(2.) The apostle describes the dreadful ease of such as fall away after they had gone so far in the profession of religion. They declare that they approve of what the Jews did in crucifying Christ, and that they would be glad to do the same thing again, if in their power. This is the nature of apos-

tasy. It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; very few instances can be given of those who have gone so far and fallen away, and yet ever have been brought to true repentance, such a repentance as is indeed a renovation of the soul. Some have thought this is the sin against the Holy Ghost, but without ground. The sin and misery of apostates is exemplified by a proper similitude, taken from the ground that after much cultivation brings forth nothing but briars and thorns, v. 8. To give this the greater force, here is observed the difference between good ground and bad. The good ground *drinketh in the rain that cometh often upon it*. Believers not only taste of the Word of God, but drink it in; and this good ground bringeth forth fruit answerable to the cost laid out, for the honor of Christ, and the comfort of his faithful ministers, who are, under Christ, dressers of the ground. But the bad ground *bears briars and thorns*; it is not only barren of good fruit, but fruitful in bad; unbelievers are fruitful in sin and wickedness; then such ground is rejected. God will concern Himself no more about such wicked apostates; will command the clouds that they rain no more upon them; such ground is *nigh unto cursing*; and its end is to be burned. Apostasy will be punished with everlasting burnings, the fire that shall never be quenched.

V. 9—20. The apostle, having applied himself to the fears of the Hebrews, to excite their diligence, and prevent their apostasy, now applies himself to their hopes, declares the good hope he had that they would persevere, and proposes the great encouragements they had in the way of their duty.

I. The good hope he had that they would

endure to the end, v. 9. Observe, 1. There are things that accompany salvation, that are never separated from it; things that show the person to be in a state of salvation, and will issue in eternal salvation. 2. These things are better things than ever any hypocrite or apostate enjoyed. 3. It is our duty to hope well of those in whom nothing appears to the contrary. 4. Ministers must sometimes caution those of whose salvation they have good hopes. And those who have such hopes should yet consider seriously how fatal a disappointment it would be if they should fall short. Thus they are to work out their salvation with fear and trembling.

II. Arguments and encouragements to go on in the way of their duty. 1. That God had wrought a principle of holy love and charity in them, which had discovered itself in suitable works which would not be forgotten of God, v. 10. what is done to any in the name of God, shall not go unrewarded. 2. Those who expect a gracious reward for their labor of love, must continue in it as long as they have ability and opportunity. 3. Those who persevere in a diligent discharge of their duty, shall attain to the full assurance of hope in the end. Observe, Full assurance is a higher degree of hope; and is attainable by great diligence and perseverance.

III. Caution and counsel how to attain this full assurance of hope to the end. They should not be slothful; must not love their ease, nor lose their opportunities, but follow the good examples of those who had gone before, v. 12. Where learn, There are some who from assurance are gone to inherit the promises, are got safe to heaven. The way they came to the inheritance, was that of faith and patience. If we ever expect to

PRACT. OBS. V. 7—12. A negligent and unfruitful profession of the Gospel, tends directly to the brink of that dreadful precipice above described.—Let us then fear, with humble caution and watchful prayer, in respect of ourselves, and let us hope the best of others that the case will admit of. Whilst we warn such as are in evident danger, we should encourage those, in whom we judge that the 'things which accompany salvation' are found. Ministers should frequently specify these, in an experimental and distinguishing manner; and, in respect of them, all should examine themselves, frequently and seriously, instead

may take heed to themselves.' And Stuart answers to the same question, by saying, 'Because God treats Christians as free, rational agents; and guards them against defection, not by physical power, but by a moral mean adapted to their natures.' He adds, 'Whatever views may be adopted in explanation of this subject, there can be no doubt, that Christians are to be solemnly and earnestly warned against the danger of apostasy, and consequent final perdition.'

(6.) *If they shall fall away.* 'And have fallen, &c.' STUART.—'But have,' &c. ROSENM.—'And yet have,' &c. MACKN.—'If they fall totally away; which must certainly be the sense, or it would prove, contrary to the plainest fact, that it is impossible to recover Christians who have fallen into great and wilful sins.'

V. 7, 8. This was a solemn warning to professed Christians to beware, that they were not left to apostatize, as the punishment of their unfruitfulness.—(7) *Herbs.* Here only. All vegetable productions are included. SCOTT.

V. 9, 10. While the apostle spoke such awful and alarming truths, with reference to the case of those, to whom he knew them to be reasonable, he would not have it thought, he had an unfavorable opinion of the Hebrew Christians in general, or those whom he immediately addressed in particular. The expression [*We are persuaded,* &c.] is remarkable and emphatical; the things before spoke of (*Note*, 4—6.) might, or they might not, 'accompany,' or be inseparably connected with 'salvation'; but those things of which he now spoke, were always found in true converts, and never in any others.—'Nothing availeth in Christ . . . but faith which worketh by love,'—'but a new creation.' 'Hereby we know, that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.'—'To be spiritually minded is life and peace.' *Mat.* 5:3—12. *Rom.* 8:5—9. *2 Cor.* 5:17. *Gal.* 5:1—6. 6:15, 16. *Eph.* 2:4—10. *1 John* 3:13—15. There is no intimation in the whole Bible, that any one, who ever had these things, came short of eternal salvation, or that any apostate ever possessed them. *Labor of love, &c.* The apostle especially referred, in this, to those Jewish converts, who had manifested their love to the name of God, as revealed in Christ, by their works, yea, their laborious services, and 'in ministering to the saints' for his sake. *10:32—34. 1 Thes.* 1:1—4. Of this, a most admirable specimen had been given, after the day of Pentecost; and many of them still continued the same disinterested, self-denying conduct. ID.

(9.) May not this suggest, that the apostle had spoken to the possibility, and fear, perhaps, of there being among the Hebrews some hypocrites, or deceived persons, of the character described; and that he would not be understood as having implied, that 'real Christians' or true believers could thus fall away, even though it should be natural to address them *as if in danger*; and they are so addressed here and elsewhere in the sacred Scriptures? ID.

V. 11, 12. The apostle and his brethren earnestly desired and longed, that every one of those whom he addressed might thenceforth show the

of perplexing themselves about those texts, which were inserted to serve as beacons, to warn the presumptuous against fatal rocks, and not to affright the humble and cautious.—We should earnestly desire, that we, and all who are called Christians, may 'give the same diligence' in such good works, as the most eminent saints in the primitive ages did. This is the scriptural way of acquiring and preserving 'the full assurance of hope,' to the end of our lives. Many have thus 'by faith and patience inherited the promises,' but no slothful professor of Christianity has any evidence that he is following them to heaven. SCOTT.

same attentive and disinterested 'diligence' in good works, which some had heretofore shown; that so evidencing his faith to be genuine, beyond all reason for doubt or hesitation, he might obtain and possess the 'full assurance of hope' in respect of his final salvation, to comfort him under all trials, even to the end of life. Thus the whole company would be distinguished from 'slothful,' unfruitful professors of Christianity, and be approved as 'imitators' of their pious progenitors; and of those Christians, who, by faith in the promises of God, and 'patient continuance in well-doing,' and in waiting his time of deliverance from trials, had at length entered into rest, and were actually enjoying that perfect felicity, in which all the promises of God to his people centered. *10:35—39.*—This is a conclusive proof of the *immediate* happiness of believers after death, if the above be the true interpretation; and, after having maturely considered the other interpretations of the passage, which some learned men have given, the author hesitates not to say, that he considers them as absurd. He has no doubt the apostle meant to lead his readers to meditate on the happiness of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, and Job, and all others, who had on earth lived by faith in the promises of God, especially the great promise of a Savior, and eternal salvation by Him; had patiently waited, labored, and suffered, in the obedience of faith; and in consequence were, *at the time* when the apostle wrote this, inheriting the promises of God, of eternal blessings through Christ to all believers.—'Assurance of hope' (11) should be distinguished from 'the assurance of understanding,' *Col.* 2:1—4. and from 'the assurance of faith,' *10:19—22.* He who so understands the Gospel, as to perceive the relation of each part to all the rest, and its use as a part of one grand design; in something of the same manner, that a skillful anatomist understands the use and office of every part of the human body, in relation to the whole, has 'the full assurance of understanding'; and those things which appear inconsistent, useless, or superfluous to others, he perceives essentially necessary to the system, or great design. The man who is fully convinced, that this consistent and harmonious, though complicated design, is the work and revelation of God, and has no doubt the things testified are true, that the promises and threatenings will be fulfilled, and that Christ will certainly save all true believers, has 'the full assurance of faith'; though he may, through misapprehension, or temptation, or other causes, doubt of his own personal interest in this salvation. But he who, beyond doubt or hesitation, is assured, that he himself is a true believer, interested in all the precious promises, sealed by the sanctifying Spirit, and 'a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed,' has 'the full assurance of hope.'—'The full assurance of faith' is the duty of every one; for he who doubts the truth of the testimony, or the faithfulness of the promises of God, questions his veracity; *1 Jn.* 5:9, 10. but 'the full assurance of hope' must be obtained and preserved by diligence; and, though the want of it may generally be traced to a criminal source, it is not the *proximate* duty of every one, in fact of a very few. *1 Pet.* 3:13—16. *2 Pet.* 1:10, 11. A man may



13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

14 Saying, 'Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath;

18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

#### CHAP. VII.

I Christ Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchisedec, 11 and so, far more excellent than the priests of Aaron's order.

FOR this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high

q Ge. 22:16,17. u interposed x Le. 16:15.  
r Ex. 22:11. himself. y c. 4:14.  
s Ro. 8:17. c. 11:9. v Tit. 1:2. z c. 7:17.  
t Ro. 11:29. w 1 Ti. 6:12. a Ge. 14:18, &c.

inherit as they do, we must follow in the same way: those who thus follow, shall overtake them at the end, and be partakers of the same blessedness.

IV. A clear, full account of the assured truth of the promises of God, v. 13. to the end. They are all confirmed by the oath of God, all founded in the eternal counsel of God, therefore may be depended on.

1. They are all confirmed by the oath of God. And here observe, he specifies the oath of God to Abraham; which, being sworn to

PRACT. OBS. V. 15—18. The privileges of the Gospel belong to the diligent and fruitful, who walk in the steps of Abraham, to whom the promises were made. These obtain an inward testimony, by the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, and give abundant proof in their lives, that they are 'the children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise.' Because their infirmities are many, and their trials great, their condescending and compassionate Father is 'willing more abundantly to show them the immutability of his counsel,' that, by his faithful Word and irrevocable oath, 'they might have a strong consolation, having fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them.' Indeed the Lord, having 'sworn by Himself, that He hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but that he should repent and live,' holds out abundant encouragement to all, whom He 'warns to flee from the wrath to come,' and invites to 'lay hold for refuge on the hope set before them.'

question, whether the paper in his possession be a *genuine bank-bill*, or a counterfeit; and yet have no doubt, either of the ability or willingness of the Directors of the Bank, to honor every genuine bank-bill.—'The full assurance of hope,' in the highest meaning of the words, is attained by comparatively few, and is seldom if ever preserved, without some degree of diminution or variation, through the remainder of life; but a prevailing assurance of acceptance, and of final salvation, is the privilege of all diligent and consistent Christians, and is, in them, seldom greatly interrupted, except by misapprehension, or by peculiar temptations and conflicts, or by their being betrayed into sin. SCOTT.

V. 13—15. The quotation is not made exactly from the Sept. nor does it entirely accord with the Heb. Gen. 22:16, 17. but it gives the general meaning, in words suited to the occasion. Id.

V. 16—20. No anchors can at all times secure the ship from driving, or being wrecked; but this hope in the divine promise, oath, and covenant, was so 'sure' in itself, and kept the possessor so 'steadfast' in his adherence to the truth and cause of God, that it always secured him from final ruin, and, in proportion to its vigorous exercise, from temporary failures also, and against the storms of incumbent temptations. Id.

(18.) 'By the two immutable things, the best commentators, ancient and modern, understand the promise of God, of itself immutable (see Rom. 11:29.) and the oath of God, added in condescension to human in-

him as the father of the faithful, remains in full force to all true believers. Abraham, in due time, obtained the promise; it was made good to him after he had patiently endured; and so it will be to them. There is always an interval, sometimes a long and trying one, between the promise and the performance; but those who patiently endure, shall assuredly obtain the blessings promised, as sure as Abraham did. The end and design of an oath is, to make the promise sure, and to encourage those to whom it is made, to wait with patience till the time for performance comes, v. 16. So men swear by the greater, not by creatures, but by the Lord Himself, to end all dispute, either within our own breasts, or with others, especially with the Promiser. Now if God would condescend to take an oath to his people, He will surely remember the nature and design of it.

2. The promises of God are all founded in his eternal counsel. The promise of blessedness God has made to believers, is not a rash and hasty thing, but the result of his eternal purpose, a purpose agreed on in council, and settled there between the eternal Father, Son, and Spirit. These counsels of God can never be altered; for nothing new can arise to Him who sees the end from the beginning.

3. The promises of God, founded on these immutable counsels of God, and confirmed by the oath of God, may safely be depended on; for here we have two immutable things, the counsel and the oath of God, in which it is impossible for God to lie, contrary to his nature, as well as to his will. Here observe,

(1.) Who they are, to whom God has given such full security of happiness. The heirs of the promise, by inheritance, by virtue of their new birth, and union with Christ. We are all by nature children of wrath; it is by a new and heavenly birth that any are born heirs to the promise. They are such as have fled for refuge to the hope set before them; not to the cities of refuge, provided for persons pursued by the avenger of blood, but to a much better refuge prepared by the Gospel; a refuge for all sinners who shall have the heart to flee to it; yea, though they have been the chief of sinners.

(2.) What God's design toward them is, in giving them such securities,—that they might have strong consolation. Observe, God is concerned for the consolation of believers, as well as for their sanctification;

the comforts of this world are too weak to bear up the soul under temptation, persecution, and death; but the consolations of the Lord are neither few nor small.

(3.) What use the people of God should make, of that most refreshing and comfortable hope of eternal blessedness that God has given them. This is, and must be, unto them, for an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, &c. v. 19. Here, we are as a ship at sea, in danger of being cast away. Our souls are the vessels; the comforts, expectation, graces, and happiness of our souls the precious cargo; heaven is the harbor to which we sail; the temptations, persecutions, and afflictions we encounter, are the winds and waves that threaten our shipwreck. We have need of an anchor to keep us sure and steady, and that anchor is our gospel-hope; as in our day of battle it is our helmet, so in our stormy passage through this world it is our anchor. It is sure and steadfast; sure in its own nature, steadfast as to its Object, an anchor cast on the rock, the Rock of ages; not in the sands, but within the veil, and upon Christ. As He is entered within the veil, to intercede with God, in virtue of that sacrifice which He offered up without the veil, hope fastens on his sacrifice and intercession. As He is the Forerunner of his people, He is the Earnest and First-fruits of believers, both in his resurrection and in his ascension. And He abides there, a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec; whose priesthood shall never fail, till it has accomplished its whole work and design, which is the full and final happiness of all who have believed on Christ. This should engage us all to clear up our interest in Christ, that we may fix our hopes in Him as our Forerunner. Let us then love heaven the more on his account, and long to be there with Him, where we shall be for ever safe, and for ever satisfied.

CHAP. VII. The doctrine of the priestly office of Christ is so excellent in itself, and so essential a part of the Christian faith, that the apostle loves to dwell upon it. Nothing made the Jews so fond of the Levitical dispensation, as the high esteem they had of their priesthood; and it was doubtless a sacred and most excellent institution; but here the apostle assures them, that by receiving the Lord Jesus they would have a much better High Priest, a priesthood of a higher order, and consequently a better dispensation or covenant, a better law and testament.

Let then such as have fled to Christ, and have their hope sealed to them, 'by the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit,' rely confidently on the power, truth, mercy, and covenant of God, amidst all the opposition of earth and hell. Rom. 5:3—5. 8:15—17, 28—39. Let them pray for faith and hope equal to their security, staying their souls on the Word of God, and on the mediation of their great High Priest, in all dangers, afflictions, and temptations; let them follow the steps, as well as trust in the merits, of the great Forerunner of his people; for, while those who go before on earth, to prepare the way and make all ready for others, are commonly in many respects greatly their inferiors; our 'Forerunner,' is the 'Lord of hosts, the King of glory,' 'God manifested in the flesh.'—Let us, therefore, 'set our affections on things above,' and wait patiently for his appearance, when we also shall most certainly 'appear with Him in glory.' Col. 3:1—4. SCOTT.

firmity.' BLOOMF.—Stuart says, they are 'the oath of God that Abraham should have a son, the Messiah, Gen. 22:18. and the oath that He should be a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, Ps. 110:4.' Ep.

(18.) 'No real misery can be removed, or benefit conferred, by doctrines which want the seal of certainty. And were the Gospel a human invention, or checked by any rational suspicion, that it may turn out a fable; it might retain its brilliancy, its sublimity, and even some portion of its interest, but the charm of its consolation would be gone. Nay, it would add gall to bitterness, by fostering a hope that the next hour might laugh to scorn. But we may dismiss our anxiety. The promises, no man can deny, are exceeding great; yet they derive their value from assurances, which, by satisfying the hardest condition of evidence, render doubt not only inexcusable, but even criminal. Oh, it is this which makes Christianity glad tidings to the depressed and perishing!'

Rev. Dr. J. M. MASON.

(19, 20.) Anchor.] 'With respect to the metaphor, nothing is more frequent among classical writers. From this, however, it must not be inferred that Paul had read Greek classics, for the expression seems to be proverbial.'

NOTES. CHAP. VII. V. 1—3. The apostle had repeatedly referred to the prophecy, that the Messiah should be 'a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec,' signifying, that his priesthood would resemble



God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.

4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

6 But he, whose descent is not counted from them, received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

b pedigree. d pedigree. f Ro. 9:4.  
c Nu. 18:21-26. e Ge. 14:30.

V. 1-3. The ch. foregoing ended with a repetition of what had been cited once and again before, out of Ps. 110: 4. This ch. is as a sermon on that text; here the apostle sets before them some of the strong meat he had spoken of before, hoping they would by greater diligence be better prepared to digest it.

The great question that first offers itself, is, Who was this Melchisedec? All the account we have of him in the Old Test., is in Gen. 14: 18, 19, &c. and in Ps. 110: 4. but the opinions concerning him, that are best worthy our consideration, are these three:

1. The rabbins, and most of the Jewish writers, think he was Shem the son of

that of Melchisedec, and not that of Aaron. (6:20. Notes, 5:5-10. Ps. 110:4.) He therefore next proceeded to illustrate that prophecy, and argue more explicitly from it, as compared with the scriptural account of this extraordinary person. Gen. 14:18-20. 'Salem' probably means Jerusalem; 'Priest of the most high God,' i. e. by an appointment of which we have no information.—The union in Melchisedec, of royal authority with the priestly office, (which were divided between the family of Aaron and that of David, in the case of Israel,) plainly pointed to the Messiah, as 'a Priest on his throne.' Zech. 6:12, 13.—It is not so much as known from which of Noah's sons Melchisedec descended. Moreover, nothing was recorded of Melchisedec respecting the 'beginning of his life, or the end of his days,' and priesthood. In all these respects the silence of the Scripture, being intentional, and referring to the great Antitype, is mentioned in language taken from the instruction to be conveyed, rather than from historical fact, of which learned men have brought instances from other writers of antiquity.—Without genealogy.] Not elsewhere. No genealogy is given of Melchisedec; and those of Christ lead back, not to Aaron, but to David and Judah. (6:14.) Made like.] Here only. 2:17.—The composition is probably intended to add energy. Made very like.

(1.) Melchisedec.] Henry's view, 3. is the one, substantially, of which Stuart says, it 'lies on the face of the sacred record, Gen. 14. and Heb. 7. and is the only one which can be defended on any tolerable grounds of interpretation.' Of the other most popular opinion, that Melchisedec was Christ, he observes, that 'it forces the interpretation that "Christ is like unto Himself;" or, that a formal comparison is here instituted between Christ and Himself.' Ep.—'The design of the apostle in this ch. is, not to declare the nature or exercise of Christ's priesthood; the former he had spoken of, ch. 5. and of the latter he speaks, ch. 9. but here he speaks of its excellence and dignity, and that not absolutely, but in comparison with the Levitical priesthood.' OWEN.—Having reproved them for the little progress they had made in Christian knowledge, 5:11. 6:3. warned them against the dreadful consequences of abandoning the Christian religion, 6:4-8. and encouraged them to hold fast their faith, and hope, even to the end, by the example of Abraham, and the oath of God to assure them of an adequate reward, 6:9-19 the writer now returns to make the comparison of Christ, as High Priest, with Melchisedec, whose name, with that of Christ, had been already more than once introduced, 5:6, 10. The subject he pursues to the end of 7:25. where he resumes the topic broken off at 5:10. and completes what he had to say concerning it, 7:26-28.

(2.) Gave a tenth.] 'That this was far different from an interchange

Noah, who was king and priest to those they descended from, after the manner of the other patriarchs; but it is not probable he should thus change his name. Besides, we have no account of his settling in the land of Canaan.

2. Many Christian writers have thought him to be Jesus Christ Himself, appearing by a special dispensation and privilege to Abraham in the flesh, and who was known to Abraham by the name Melchisedec, which agrees very well to Christ, and to what is said, John 8: 56. Much may be said for this opinion, and what is said in v. 3. does not seem to agree with any mere man; but then it seems strange to make Christ a type of Himself.

3. The most received opinion is, that he was a Canaanite king, who reigned in Salem, and kept up religion and the worship of the true God; that he was raised to be a type of Christ, and was honored by Abraham as such.

But we shall leave these conjectures, and labor to understand, as far as we can, what is here said of him by the apostle, and how Christ is represented thereby, v. 1-3.

(1.) Melchisedec was a king, and so is the Lord Jesus; a King of God's anointing; the government is laid on his shoulders, and He rules over all for the good of his people.

(2.) He was king of righteousness; his name signifies the righteous king. Jesus Christ is a rightful and a righteous King; rightful in his title, righteous in his government.

(3.) He was king of Salem, that is king of peace; first king of righteousness, and after that, king of peace. So is our Lord Jesus; He by his righteousness is peace. Christ speaks peace, creates peace, He is our Peace-Maker.

(4.) He was priest of the most high God, qualified and anointed in an extraordinary manner to be his priest among the Gentiles. So is the Lord Jesus; He is the Priest of the most high God, and the Gentiles must come to God by Him; it is only through his priesthood that we can obtain reconciliation, and remission of sin.

(5.) He was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, v. 3. This must not

be understood according to the letter; but the Scripture has chosen to set him forth as an extraordinary person, without giving us his genealogy, that he might be a fitter type of Christ, who as Man was without father, as God without mother; whose priesthood is without descent, did not descend to Him from another, nor from Him to another, but is personal and perpetual.

(6.) He met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him. The incident is recorded Gen. 14: 18. &c. Thus our Lord Jesus meets his people in their spiritual conflicts, refreshes them, renews their strength, and blesses them.

(7.) Abraham gave him a tenth part of all, v. 2. that is, as the apostle explains it, of all the spoils; and this Abraham did, either as an expression of his gratitude, or as a testimony of his homage and subjection, or as an offering vowed and dedicated to God, to be presented by his priest. Thus are we obliged to make all possible returns of love and gratitude to the Lord Jesus, to pay our homage and subjection to Him as our King, and to put all our offerings into his hands, to be presented by Him to the Father, in the in-eense of his own sacrifice.

(8.) Lastly, This Melchisedec was made like unto the Son of God, and abideth a priest continually. He bore the image of God in his piety and authority, and stands on record as an immortal high priest; the ancient type of Him who is the eternal and only begotten of the Father, who abideth a Priest for ever.

V. 4-10. Let us now consider, as the apostle advises, how great Melchisedec was, and how far his priesthood was above that of the order of Aaron, v. 4, 5, &c. The greatness of this man and his priesthood appear,

1. From Abraham's paying the tenth of the spoils unto him; and it is well observed, that Levi paid tithes to Melchisedec in Abraham, v. 10. Now Levi received the office of the priesthood from God, and was to take tithes of the people, yet even Levi paid tithes to Melchisedec, as to a greater and higher priest than himself; therefore that High Priest who should afterward appear, of whom Melchisedec was a type, must be much superior to any of the Levitical priests, who paid tithes, in Abraham, to Melchisedec. By this argument of persons' doing things

of courtesy, is plain from the apostle, and that the tenth was not accidental, is evident from the extreme antiquity of the custom, in all nations, of making these grateful offerings, and that in this very proportion.' BL.

(3.) Without father, &c.] The commentators generally agree that what is meant, is, that his name was not preserved, or the names of his parents, in the sacred genealogies. Stuart suggests, that it may mean, that his parents were not of 'kingly rank.' Ed.—Made like, &c.] 'The apostle is not laboring to show that Melchisedec, in respect to his priesthood, was made like to Christ; but vice versa. Ps. 110:4 compares the Son of God as Priest, to Melchisedec; and this is the order of nature and propriety.' STUART.—Doddr. suggests, it may refer to lack of 'priestly ancestors.' Ed.

V. 4-10. The argument, arising from the fact, that one of Abraham's contemporaries was in some things superior to him, as here stated, served to introduce with great advantage a most conclusive argument against the perpetual obligation of the Levitical law, and the continuance of the Aaronic priesthood, and that of the covenant made with the nation of Israel at Sinai. Ex. 19:5. The apostle, therefore, exhorted the Hebrews to 'consider how great' a person their inspired lawgiver had represented Melchisedec to be, not so much in respect of his regal authority, as of his priesthood; when even 'the patriarch Abraham,' the honored father of their whole nation, who was not one of Melchisedec's subjects, or in any other way connected with him, owned his superiority, and paid him tithes, as the representative 'of the most high God.' The Levites, indeed, were ordered in the law, as the Lord's tribe, 'to take tithes of their brethren,' the descendants of Abraham, of which the priests had a tenth part for their portion; Lev. 27:30-33. Num. 18:21-32. but Melchisedec, who was not of Abraham's family, received tithes of that patriarch himself. Nay, as 'the priest of the most high God,' he pronounced a solemn benediction upon him, to whom the promises, concerning the Messiah, and 'all nations being blessed in him' were made. Now it was well known, and certain beyond 'all contradiction,' that the inferior character was to be blessed, in this authoritative manner, by the superior and more honorable; as children by their parents, and the people by the priests. 11: 20, 21. Num. 6:24-27. So that, some One higher than Abraham, or Aaron, or any mere man of his race, was evidently to be expected, as 'a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.' Under the law, indeed, mere sinful, dying men took tithes of their brethren, and so one generation after another rose up to receive them; but, in the case of Melchisedec, one, concerning whom it was only 'witnessed that he liveth,' (that is, nothing is said either of his birth or his death,) received tithes of



8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he *receiveth them*, of whom <sup>e</sup> it is witnessed that he liveth.

9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.

11 If <sup>b</sup> therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

13 For he of whom these things are spoken, pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar.

14 For *it is evident* <sup>i</sup> that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.

15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

17 For he testifieth, <sup>j</sup> Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.

18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the <sup>k</sup> weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

[Practical Observations.]

g c. 5:6. Re. 1:13. i Is. 11:1. Mat. j Ps. 110:4.  
h Ga. 2:21. v. 18, 1:3. Re. 5:5. k Ac. 13:39.  
19. c. 8:7.

that are matters of right or injury in the loins of their predecessors, we have an illustration how we may be said to have sinned in Adam, and fallen with him in his first transgression, [and how we may be saved by Christ.

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—18. Every part of Scripture was intended, in one way or other, to honor our 'King of righteousness and peace,' our glorious High Priest and Savior; and the more accurately we examine it, the fuller will be our conviction, that 'the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.' *Luke 24:25—31, 44—49. John 5:33—44. 1 Pet. 1:10—12. Rev. 19:9, 10.* May we then learn in simplicity to trust in Him, and submit to Him, to copy his righteousness, to seek the peace of his kingdom, to devote all that we are and have to his service, and to expect blessings from Him alone!—No further change shall now take place in the priesthood, or the worship of the church, by any future rev-

Abraham, as the representative of his posterity, by which it was intimated, that a Priest should arise, to whom the whole Israel of God would pay their devoted homage, and from whom they would receive the blessing. So that, 'to speak it in a word,' the apostle might say, that even Levi, and all the priests descended from him, paid tithes to Melchisedec, 'for they were in the loins of their father,' and representative, 'when Melchisedec met him.' This incontestably proved the inferiority of the Levitical priesthood to that of the Messiah, yea, its absolute dependence on Him, and subserviency to Him.—Indeed, it may be said, that CHRIST also 'was in the loins of Abraham;' but his divine nature, his miraculous and immaculate conception, and his being the intended and predicted Antitype, sufficiently show that He was excepted, as the Seed to whom especially the promises were made.—This argument of the apostle, illustrates the nature of our union with Adam, and representation by him, and our participation of the consequences of his apostasy; as also the method of our recovery by 'the second Adam, the Lord from heaven.' *Gen. 2:16, 17. 3:17—19. Rom. 5:12—19.* SCOTT.

(4.) 'This was a severe stroke on the Jews, not only as it proves the superior dignity of Christ above the Aaronical priesthood, but shows, also, that God had of old a people among the Gentiles, and that there was a person among them superior to Abraham himself.' DODDR.

(8.) *Here.* 'I. e. under the institution of Moses.'—*Men that die.* The priests of that dispensation.—*But there.* I. e. in the case of Melchisedec, he receiveth them, of whom it is only testified in Scripture, that he liveth, but of whose death we have no account; and in that re-

Scott.] We were in Adam's loins when he sinned, and the guilt and depravity contracted by the human nature when it was in our first parents, are equitably imputed and derived to the same nature, as it is in all other persons naturally descended from them. They justly adhere to the nature, and it must be by an act of grace if ever they be taken away.

2. From Melchisedec's blessing of Abraham, *who had the promises, v. 6, 7.* Where, (1.) Observe Abraham's great dignity and felicity,—that he had the promises. (2.) Melchisedec's greater honor, in that it was his place and privilege to bless Abraham; and it is an incontestable maxim, *that the less is blessed of the greater, v. 7.* He who gives the blessing, is greater than he who receives it; therefore Christ, the Antitype of Melchisedec, the Meritor and Mediator of all blessings to the children of men, must be greater than all the priests of the order of Aaron.

V. 11.—28. Observe, the necessity there was of raising up another priest, after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron, by whom that perfection should come, which could not come by the Levitical priesthood; which therefore must be changed, and the whole economy with it, v. 11, 12, &c. Blessed be God, we may have perfect holiness and perfect happiness by Christ in the covenant of grace, according to the Gospel, for we are complete in Him. It is asserted, that, the priesthood being changed, there must of necessity be a change of the law; there being so near a relation between the priesthood and the law, the dispensation could not be the same under another priesthood; a new priesthood must be under a new regulation, managed in another way, and by rules proper to its nature and order. It is not only asserted, but proved, that the priesthood and law are changed, v. 13, 14. The priesthood and law by which perfection could not come, are abolished, and a Priest is risen, and a dispensation now set up, by which true believers may be made perfect. Now, that there is such a change, is obvious,

1. There is a change in the tribe of which the priesthood comes: before, it was the tribe of Levi; but our great High Priest sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood, v. 14. This change of the family shows a real change of the law of priesthood.

2. There is a change in the form and order of making the priests: before, in the

Levitical priesthood, they were made after the law of a carnal commandment, or law of primogeniture; but our present High Priest was made after the power of an endless life; the life and immortality He had in Himself, were his right and title to the priesthood, not his descent from former priests. This makes a great difference in the priesthood, and in the economy too, and gives the preference infinitely to Christ and the Gospel. The very law which constituted the Levitical priesthood, supposed the priests to be weak, frail, dying creatures; but the High Priest of our profession holds his office by that innate power of endless life which He has in Himself, not only to preserve Himself alive, but to communicate spiritual and eternal life to all those who duly rely on his sacrifice and intercession. Some think *the law of the carnal commandment* refers to the external rites of consecration, and the carnal offerings that were made; but *the power of endless life*, to the spiritual living sacrifices proper to the Gospel, and the spiritual and eternal privileges purchased by Christ, who was consecrated by the eternal Spirit of life that He received without measure.

3. There is a change in the efficacy of the priesthood: the former was weak and unprofitable, made nothing perfect; the latter brought in a better hope, by which we draw near to God, v. 18, 19. The Levitical priesthood could not justify men's persons from guilt; could not sanctify them from inward pollution; could not cleanse the consciences of the worshippers from dead works; all it could do, was, to lead them to the Antitype. But the priesthood of Christ carries in it, and brings along with it, a better hope; it shows us the true foundation of all the hope we have toward God for pardon and salvation; it more clearly discovers the great objects of our hope; and so it tends to work in us a more strong and lively hope of acceptance with God. By this hope we are encouraged to draw nigh unto God; to enter into a covenant-union with Him; to live a life of converse and communion with Him.

4. There is a change in God's way of acting in this priesthood. He has taken an oath to Christ, which He never did to any of the order of Aaron. God never gave them any such assurance of their continuance, never engaged Himself by oath or promise that theirs should be an everlasting priesthood, and therefore gave them no reason to expect the perpetuity of it, but rather to

relation from God; but He will 'overturn, overturn, overturn' the kingdoms of the earth, till that of our Melchisedec be everywhere established. *Ez. 17:22—24. 21:25—27. Hag. 2:20—23.* As 'the Surety of a far better covenant' than that connected with the Levitical priesthood, He has given his church, and every believer, the greatest advantages for following after perfection. May He stir up the hearts of his ministers and people, and pour out his Spirit, throughout all his church; that spiritual worship and holy obedience may everywhere abound, and that the congregations and services of his saints on earth, may more resemble those of heaven!

SCOTT.

respect, he may be said to bear some resemblance to the ever living and ever blessed Jesus.'

DODDR.

V. 11. *Perfection.* 'Ch. 9:9. it is said, the Levitical sacrifices could not make him that did the service perfect, i. e. could neither purify, nor deliver from the burden of sin, and the apprehension of punishment. Christ did both; and this is the perfection here spoken of, which He accomplished, and the law could not accomplish.'

STUART.

V. 12. *Law.* 'I. e. the law regulating the priesthood, the Jewish dispensation, the Mosaic law.'

IN.

V. 17. 'Here the reader is left to supply the conclusion. In v. 11. the Levitical priesthood, and the law, had been connected. In v. 12. the connexion is recognised as so intimate, that whatever affected one, would affect the other; and consequently, that if the priesthood be changed, the law must be so too. "But the priesthood is changed," is the next proposition, which he establishes, vs. 13—17. It follows, therefore, and this is the conclusion to be supplied, that the law is also changed.'

IN.

V. 18, 19. The concluding words may be rendered, 'The bringing in of a better hope is that, by which we draw near to God.'—The original word signifies more, than simply 'bringing in,' and implies, that this 'better hope' was brought in, even under the old dispensation, by the promises and prophecies of the Messiah, and by the types of the law; though more fully and clearly, when Christ had actually come, and finished his work on earth, and entered into his glory.—The weakness and unprofitableness of the ceremonial 'law,' either to justify or sanctify



19 For the law <sup>1</sup>made nothing perfect, but <sup>m</sup>the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which <sup>n</sup>we draw nigh unto God.

20 And inasmuch as not without an oath *he was made priest*:

21 (For those priests were made without <sup>o</sup>an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, <sup>p</sup>The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)

22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better <sup>q</sup>testament.

23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:

24 But this *man*, because he continueth ever, hath <sup>r</sup>an unchangeable <sup>s</sup>priesthood.

25 Wherefore he is able <sup>t</sup>also to save them <sup>v</sup>to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession <sup>w</sup>for them.

26 For such an high priest became us, *who is* <sup>x</sup>holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first <sup>y</sup>for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

l Ro. 3:20.	q c. 8:6.	u or, evermore.
m or, but it was.	r or, which pass-	v Ro. 8:34.
n Ro. 5:2.	eth not from	w I Jn. 2:1.
o or, swearing of	s one to another.	x c. 4:15.
an oath.	t I Sa. 2:35.	y I Pe. 2:22.
p Ps. 110:4.	u Jude 24.	x Le. 9:7.

look upon it as a temporary law. But Christ was made a Priest with the oath of God, *v. 21*. Here God has, on oath, declared the immutability, excellency, efficacy, and eternity, of the priesthood of Christ.

5. There is a change in that covenant of which the priesthood was a security, and the priest a surety; that is, a change in the dispensation of that covenant. The gospel-dispensation is more full, free, perspicuous,

spiritual, and efficacious, than that of the law. Christ is, in this gospel-covenant, a Surety for us to God, and for God to us, to see that the articles be performed on both parts. He pleads with men to keep their covenant with God, and with God that He will fulfil his promises to men; which He is always ready to do in a way suitable to his majesty and glory, that is, through a Mediator.

6. There is a remarkable change in the number of the priests under these different orders. In that of Aaron there was a multitude of priests, of high priests, not at once, but successively; but in this of Christ there is but one and the same. The reason is plain,—The Levitical priests were many, because *not suffered to continue by reason of death*. But this our High Priest continues for ever, and his priesthood is *unchangeable*, always in the same hand; there can be no vacancy: and this is our safety and happiness, that this everlasting High Priest is able to save to the utmost, in all times, in all cases, in every juncture, all who come to God by Him, *v. 25*. So that here is a manifest alteration much for the better.

7. There is a remarkable difference in the moral qualifications of the priests; those who were of the order of Aaron were not only *mortal*, but *sinful*; they needed to offer up sacrifices first for their own sins, and then for the people. But our High Priest, who was consecrated by the word of the oath, needed only to offer up once for the people, never at all for Himself; for He has not only an immutable consecration to his office, but an immutable sanctity in his person. He is *such a High Priest as became us, holy, harmless, and undefiled*, &c. *v. 26—28*.

Here observe, Our case, as sinners, needed a high priest to make satisfaction and intercession for us. No priest could be suitable or sufficient for our reconciliation to God, but one perfectly righteous in his own person; for otherwise he could not be a propitiation for our sin, or our advocate with the Father. The Lord Jesus was exactly such a High Priest. Observe the description we have of the personal holiness of Christ, expressed in various terms; some learned divines think they all relate to his perfect purity.

[1.] He is holy, perfectly free from all the habits or principles of sin, not having the least disposition to it in his nature, not the least sinful inclination.

[2.] He is harmless, perfectly free from all actual transgression, never did the least wrong to God or man.

[3.] He is undefiled, was never necessary to other men's sins; though He took on Him the guilt of our sins, yet He never involved Himself in the fact and fault of them.

[4.] He is separate from sinners, not only in his present state, having entered as our High Priest into the holiest of all, into which nothing defiled can enter; but in his personal purity, He has no such union with sinners, either natural or federal, as can derive on Him original sin; though He took a true human nature, yet the miraculous way in which it was conceived, set Him on a separate foot from all the rest of mankind.

[5.] He is made higher than the heavens. Most expositors understand this of his state of exaltation in heaven, at the right hand of God, to perfect the design of his priesthood. But Dr. Goodwin thinks it may be very justly referred to the personal holiness of Christ, which is greater and more perfect than the holiness of the hosts of heaven, that is, the holy angels themselves, who, though free from sin, yet are not in themselves free from all possibility of sinning. Therefore we read, *God putteth no trust in his holy ones, and He chargeth his angels with folly*, Job 4:18. that is, with weakness and peccability. They may be angels one hour, and devils another, as many of them were; and that the holy angels shall not now fall, does not proceed from any indefectibility of nature, but from the election of God; they are elect angels.

It is very probable this explanation of the words, *made higher than the heavens*, may be thought too much strained, and that it ought to be understood of the dignity of Christ's state, and not the perfect holiness of his Person; and the rather because it is said, He was *made* higher; but it is well known that the [original] word is used in a neutral sense, as where it is said, *Let God be true*.

The other characters in the verse plainly belong to the personal perfection of Christ in holiness, as opposed to the sinful infirmities of the Levitical priests; and it seems congruous to think this must do so too, if it may be fairly taken in such a sense; and it appears yet more probable, since the validity and prevalency of Christ's priesthood, in *v. 27*, are placed in the impartiality and disinterestedness of it. He needed not to offer up for Himself; it was a disinterested mediation: had He needed mercy Himself, He

those who rested in the outward observance of it, and who did not by faith look to the things prefigured by it, was exactly parallel to the Christian sacraments, when the *opus operatum*, the mere attendance on the 'outward and visible sign,' is depended on, while 'the inward and spiritual grace,' the things signified in them, are disregarded. To such persons they are 'weak and unprofitable,' but to believers, they are means of grace, and solemn and acceptable acts of spiritual worship. *Rom. 2:25—29. 3:1, 2.*

(18.) 'Another reason for a change in the law as connected with the priesthood, the insufficiency of the whole legal institution, in respect to spiritual pardon and sanctification.'

V. 20—22. (22) *Surety*.] The word signifies a person who is bound with another for the payment of a debt, or the performance of an engagement. Jesus, 'the Surety' of his people, became answerable for their debt of sin, and engaged to satisfy divine justice, and magnify the holy law, as their Representative: *Is. 53:7*, and also to bring them to that repentance, faith, and holiness, which are requisite to their participation of the blessings of his covenant. By entering into this engagement, and fulfilling it in their behalf, He became the Surety of the Father to them, for the performance of all the promises of the covenant; being authorized, and exalted, in human nature, to confer on them all the blessings stipulated in it. The word rendered *testament*, is commonly translated *covenant*; its import has been repeatedly considered, and we shall have occasion shortly to speak of it again. (*Notes, 9:15—23. Preface to the New Testament*) The better covenant, of which Jesus is the Surety, is not here contrasted with the covenant of works, by which every transgressor is shut up under the curse, but distinguished from the Sinai-covenant with Israel, and the legal dispensation under which the church had so long continued; for the covenant of works had no connexion with the Aaronic priesthood, or the ceremonial law, which exhibited in shadows the blessings of the covenant of grace. *2:7—13*. But the covenant, of which Jesus was Surety, was far better than that, of which the high priests of Israel were typical sureties, and brought the church, and every believer, into far clearer light, more perfect liberty, and more abundant privileges, than that could do. *SCOTT.*

(20—22.) 'The very use of an oath, implies something of high importance, and therefore shows the august dignity of Christ's priesthood.'

V. 24. *Continueth ever*.] 'I. e. ever a priest.' STUART.—'He holds his priesthood in eternal continuity.'

V. 25. *Save, &c.*] 'Some include temporal salvation, but probably it was not in the mind of the apostle.' BLOOMF.—'Ever liveth.'] 'The mere continual existence of Christ, is not at all the question here, but the perpetuity of his priesthood.' STUART.—'To make intercession.'] 'Or rather to interpose. Here, it is plainly in the sense of *aiding, defending, or delivering*; as the preceding, *to save*, clearly indicates. He is able to *save*, because He is a perpetual Priest, i. e. can *interpose in their behalf, to procure for them such aid as they may need.*' *SR.*

V. 26—28. The considerate inquirer into this most interesting subject, would perceive, that 'such a High Priest' as had been described exactly suited the case of sinners, who were to be restored to the favor and image of a holy God, in a manner consistent with the glory of his name, and peculiarly suited to display that glory, and that He alone could suit it.

(26.) 'The writer having now commented on the priesthood of Christ, as compared with that of Melchisedec, and having also made some deductions from the nature of Christ's priestly office, as thus exhibited, resumes the subject he had dropped at 5:10, and had first proposed, 5:2, 3. In 5:7—9, he had shown the similarity between Christ and the Jewish priests, in regard to the power of sympathizing with the sufferer, inasmuch as both He and they were sufferers themselves. But, to limit the parallelism, as not holding in *all* respects, he here resumes the topic, and shows how far superior the Priest of the new covenant is, in a *moral* respect, to the priests of the old. They were "compassed with infirmities," but He was spotless; if they were ceremonially undefiled, He was morally so; if they were exalted in station, He was infinitely above them; being, like Melchisedec, King as well as Priest, inasmuch as He was raised to the throne of God above the heavens, 1:3. To finish the comparison, he goes on to say, that, in consequence of his perfect purity, He needed no expiatory offering for Himself, as the Jewish priests did.'

(27.) *Daily*.] 'That the high priest afflicted, not only on the great day of atonement, but daily, may be seen by consulting *Lev. 6:19—22. Num. 28:3, 4*. Also Philo, who was contemporary with the apostles, says, "the high priest, agreeably to the laws, makes daily supplications and sacrifices."



23 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is <sup>3</sup> consecrated for evermore.

## CHAP. VIII.

<sup>1</sup> By the eternal priesthood of Christ, the Levitical priesthood of Aaron is abolished. <sup>7</sup> And the temporal covenant with the fathers, by the eternal covenant of the Gospel.

NOW of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who <sup>2</sup> is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

<sup>2</sup> A minister of <sup>b</sup> the <sup>c</sup> sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

<sup>3</sup> For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to <sup>d</sup> offer.

<sup>4</sup> For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that <sup>e</sup> there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

<sup>5</sup> Who serve unto the example and shadow <sup>f</sup> of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, *See*, <sup>g</sup> saith he, *that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.*

<sup>y</sup> or, perfected. <sup>c</sup> c. 9:8, 12, 24. <sup>f</sup> Col. 2:17. c. 10:1.  
<sup>a</sup> Ep. 1:5. <sup>d</sup> Ep. 5:2. c. 9:14. <sup>g</sup> Ex. 25:40. 26:30.

<sup>b</sup> or, holy things. <sup>e</sup> or, they.

had been a party, and could not have been a Mediator; a criminal, and could not have been an Advocate for sinners. Now to ren-

der his mediation the more impartial and disinterested, it seems requisite, not only that He had no present need of that favor for Himself, which He mediated for in behalf of others, but that He never could need it. Though He needed it not to-day, yet, if He knew He might be in such circumstances as to need it to-morrow, or in any future time, He must have been thought to have had some eye on his own interest, and therefore could not act with impartial regard and pure zeal for the honor of God on one hand, and tender, pure compassion for poor sinners on the other. I pretend not here to follow the notes of our late excellent expositor; into his labors we have entered, but have taken the liberty to vindicate this notion of the learned Dr. Goodwin from the exceptions that I know have been made to it; and I have the rather done it, because, if it will hold good, it gives us further evidence how necessary it was that the Mediator should be God, since no mere creature is of himself possessed of that impeccability, which will set him above all possible need of favor and mercy for himself.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. Here is a summary of what had been said before of the excellency of Christ's priesthood, showing both what we have in Christ, where He now resides, and of what sanctuary He is the Minister. 1. We have in Christ a High Priest; such a High Priest as no other people or church ever had, of which all others were but types and shadows. 2. He now resides on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty on high, that is, of the glorious God of heaven. There He is possessed of all authority and power, both in heaven and on earth; this is the reward of his humiliation; this authority He exercises for the glory of his Father, for his own honor, and for the happiness of all who belong to Him; and He will, by his Almighty power, bring every one of them in their own order to the right hand of God in heaven, as members of his mystical body, that

where He is they may be also. 3. That sanctuary of which He is a Minister, is the true tabernacle, which the Lord hath pitched, and not man, v. 2. the holy of holies, the true tabernacle in heaven; there He is Minister, taking care of his people's affairs, interceding with God for them, that their sins may be pardoned, and their persons and services accepted, through the merit of his sacrifice. He is not only in heaven, enjoying great dominion and dignity, but, as the High Priest of his church, executing this office for them all in general, and every member of the church in particular.

V. 3—5. Here the apostle sets before the Hebrews the necessary parts of Christ's priesthood, or what it was that belonged to that office, in conformity to what every high priest is ordained to. 1. Every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices, whatever was brought by the people to be presented to God, whether expiatory sacrifices, or peace-offerings, or thank-offerings; so, then, it necessarily belongs to the priesthood of Christ, that He should have somewhat to offer; and He, as the Antitype, had Himself to offer, his human nature on the altar of his divine nature, as the great atoning Sacrifice that finished transgression, and made an end of sin once for all; and He has the increase of his own righteousness and merits too, to offer with all that his people offer up to God by Him, to render them acceptable. We must not dare to approach to God, or to present anything to Him, but in and through Christ, depending on his merits and mediation; for if we are accepted, it is in the Beloved. 2. Christ must now execute his priesthood in heaven, in the holy of holies, the true tabernacle which the Lord hath fixed. Thus the type must be fully answered; having finished the work of sacrificing here, He must go into heaven, to present his righteousness, and to make intercession there. For, (1.) if Christ were on earth, He should not be a Priest, v. 4. that is, not according to the Levitical law, as that

PRACT. OBS. V. 19—23. It becomes us to aspire after a degree of spirituality and holiness, as much superior to those of Old Test. believers, as our advantages exceed theirs. No man who knows God, and his holy law of love, and who understands the evil of sin, and the difficulty of saving sinners to the glory of God, could desire the continuance of a priesthood, which appointed those to that office, who were themselves sinners; and now, that the Son of God is made High Priest, we may well rejoice that He is 'consecrated for evermore,' and has an unchangeable priesthood. As 'He is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God through Him,' let the vilest of sinners approach in this way to the mercy-seat of our forgiving God, seeing 'He ever liveth to

make intercession for them.' None need be dismayed, but those who will not 'come unto God,' or who will not come in the name of his beloved Son; and the case of those will soon become hopeless, how great soever their present presumption may be. But, let believers meditate on the power and grace of their great High Priest, and on his universal and absolute sovereignty, and let them copy his 'holy, harmless, and undefiled' conduct, and 'his separation from sinners.' Then they may confidently expect, that He will 'save them to the uttermost,' and 'deliver them, in all time of their tribulation, in all time of their wealth, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment.' SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. Some explain 'the true tabernacle' of heaven, exclusively, as signifying the same with 'the sanctuary;' others interpret it of the human nature of Christ, in which He 'tabernacled' among men, and in which He officiates as High Priest, in the holy of holies above; yet, as his human nature is needful to constitute his Person as High Priest, rather than to be the place of his ministrations, the figure is harsh. But, as the whole tabernacle comprised the inner and outer sanctuary; and, as the high priest alone went into the former, while the other priests officiated in the latter, in subordination to him, whose typical services rendered theirs accepted; and as the tabernacle was an emblem of the whole church of God, though it typified the human nature of Christ, also: it seems most obvious to explain 'the true tabernacle,' to signify the whole church of the redeemed on earth and in heaven, as one by its union with Christ Jesus; for believers, separately and collectively, 'are the habitation of God through the Spirit.' Ex. 26:7—29. P. O.—Note, Eph. 2:19—22. Christ ministers personally in the holy place above, as sole High Priest, He presides over the whole true tabernacle, and so the prayers and services of the spiritual priesthood, on earth, are rendered acceptable and efficacious, through his meritorious intercession in heaven. Luke 1:8—10. SCOTT.

(1.) *The sum.* 'The most important thing in regard to what we are now treating; not sum in the sense of *summary*.' So *Stuart*, *Bloomf.*, and the commentators generally; also the *Syr.* and the *VULG.* *Stuart* adds: 'What follows is no *recapitulation*, but a new topic, exhibiting a different view of Christ's priesthood.' Ed.—'The apostle had spoken of its superiority as to duration and succession: of Christ's being made Priest with an oath, while the Levites were not; also of the perpetuity of his priesthood, while theirs, in consequence of their frailty, was subject to vicissitude and interruption; and finally, how they, because of their imperfection and sin, needed to sacrifice for themselves, while He was holy, and for ever secure from all sin, so that his sacrifice would avail solely to the benefit of sinful men. Thus much he had already said on his office, and his qualifications for it. He comes now, ch. 8—10. to consider the duties of the office themselves, viz. the nature of the sacrifice Jesus offers; the place where He offers it; the efficacy it has to atone for sin; and the difference, in regard to all these points, between the sacrifice offered by Christ, and that presented by the Jewish priests, —a different topic from that discussed ch. 7.' STUART.

(2.) 'In this explanation of the symbolical representations by which it pleased the Holy Spirit, under the former dispensation, to prefigure the blessings of Christianity, the interior sanctuary, or holy of holies, seems to be put as the sign of the heavenly state; and the outer tabernacle, as that of the flesh or human nature of the Messiah.'

J. P. SMITH, in *Henry*, *abr.*

V. 3—6. The various particulars respecting Christ and his salvation, which were typified by the tabernacle, its furniture, and worship, have already been explained. Ex. 25.—31. — Instead of interfering with the priests in the typical services of the temple, Christ 'had obtained a more excellent ministry,' of real value and efficacy, in the heavenly sanctuary; in which He was as much superior to the priests after the order of Aaron, as the covenant of which He was the Mediator, was 'a better covenant,' founded and established 'on better promises,' than the Sinai covenant with Israel. — It has repeatedly been observed, that all unbelievers continued *personally* under 'the covenant of works,' and that believers were *personally* interested in 'the covenant of grace,' by faith in the Messiah who was to come. Ex. 19:5. The Mosaic dispensation contained in it a typical Gospel, and its ordinances were to believers 'means of grace,' as well as acts of worship. But the covenant here referred to was that made with Israel as a nation, securing the possession of Canaan, and various temporal benefits to them, on prescribed conditions; and the promises of all spiritual blessings, and of eternal life, to believers of all nations, and through all succeeding ages, which were openly revealed by the Gospel, and ratified through Christ, are of infinitely greater value, than any temporal advantages to a single nation could be.—(5 See, &c.) The quotation is not exactly according to the Sept., but gives the sense of the Hebrew. Sc.

(3.) *This man.* 'I. e. High Priest: supply from the preceding clause.' MACKN.—Have somewhat also to offer.' 'What the oblation made by Christ is, he tells us more fully, ch. 9:—14. 25 26.' STUART.

(4.) 'No argument can hence be drawn against the reasonableness of considering Christ's death as a sacrifice, according to the express declaration of Scripture; since it is plain, that, under the Jewish economy, though none but priests ever ministered in the tabernacle, yet others, not of that order, might, by special appointment, offer sacrifices, and be accepted.' DODDR.

(5.) 'Comp. v. 2. and 9:24. The earthly tabernacle is but a shadow,'



6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent <sup>h</sup> ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better <sup>i</sup> covenant, which was established upon better promises.

[Practical Observations.]

7 For if <sup>j</sup> that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

8 For finding fault with them, <sup>k</sup> he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will <sup>l</sup> put my laws into their mind, and write them <sup>m</sup> in their hearts: and <sup>n</sup> I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all <sup>o</sup> shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

h 2 Co. 3:6-9. j c. 7:11. m or, upon. c. 7:22. k Je 31:31-34. n Ho. 2:23. Zec. 8:8. i or, testament. l give. o Is. 54:13.

being of the line of that priesthood. (2.) All the services of the priest, under the law, and everything in that tabernacle which was framed according to the pattern in the mount, were only exemplars and shadows of heavenly things, v. 5. Christ is the Substance and End of the law of righteousness. Something, therefore, there must be in Christ's priesthood, that answers to the high priest's entering within the veil to make intercession, and what is that but the ascension of Christ into heaven, and his appearance there in the

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-6. While we bless God, that, of his plenteous mercy, He has provided for us, ruined sinners, 'such a High Priest' as suited our helpless condition; that He has accepted his 'one oblation of Himself,' that He has exalted Him to 'the right hand of his Majesty in the heavens,' to be 'a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle;' and that He has made a better covenant with Him, in behalf of his true people, and with them through Him, and established it on better promises, than those given to Israel; let us see to it, that we draw nigh to Him in this appointed way, as spiritual worshippers, in humble faith, and submission to his righteousness, relying on his mercy and truth, and praying for all his promised blessings.—If it were dangerous for those,

who had 'the example and shadow of things,' to deviate in the least from the divine prescriptions, how can they escape condemnation, who have the clear discovery of the heavenly things themselves, yet worship other mediators, prefer human traditions, come to God in their own name, as if righteous persons, or refuse to come at all, as if independent of Him, under no obligations to Him, and sufficient for their own felicity?—In every part of our worship and obedience, we should keep close to the only and perfect standard of Scripture, and every deviation must be proportionably injurious: mistakes, in the way of a sinner's access and acceptance, cannot but prove fatal in the end, if not previously discovered and rectified. Rom. 9:24-29. 10:1-4. Gal. 1:6-10. 5:1-6. Sc.

n mere imperfect effigy, of the heavenly one. Consequently, the office of priest, in the latter, is far more elevated than the like office in the former. STUART.

(6.) Better promises.] 'These follow, vs. 8-13. The imperfection of the first covenant, and the perfection of the second, is further disclosed, 9:9-14. 10:1-22. 13:9-14. From these passages, it appears, that the first covenant promised only external purification, and the civil or ecclesiastical pardon of an offender who complied with the rites it enjoined; but, under the new covenant, real pardon of sin, by God, is obtained, with purification, peace of conscience, the hope of eternal life, and union at last with the assembly of the redeemed, in a better world.' ID.

V. 7-13. The words tr. from the Heb., 'Although I was a Husband unto them,' are here rendered, as given from the Sept., 'And I regarded them not.' From this one clause, as it appears to me, the whole passage is generally spoken of by some learned men, as quoted from the Sept.; but it varies from that version in several immaterial particulars, and, except in the above clause, it accords to the Heb.—This prophecy was fulfilled in the conversion of multitudes of Judah and Israel, in the primitive times of the Gospel, and it foretells the future conversion and restoration of that people; but it is also fulfilled to all the spiritual Israel, who are really 'a holy nation,' as Israel, according to the flesh, was relatively. And as it can be said of no other company, that they 'all know the Lord,' it must be meant of them especially.—It is undeniable, that the national covenant with Israel at Sinai, and not the 'covenant of works' with men in general, or the Abrahamic covenant, is spoken of. SCOTT.

(7.) 'The fault of the first covenant was, that it made nothing perfect. See ch. 7:19.' WILLIAMS.—'The meaning is, not that the Mosaic economy had positive faults, viz. such things as were palpably wrong or er-

sight of God for his people, to present their prayers, and plead their cause? So that if He had still continued on earth, He could not have been a perfect Priest; and an imperfect one He could not be.

V. 6-13. In this part of the ch. the apostle illustrates and confirms the superior excellency of the priesthood of Christ above that of Aaron, from the excellency of that covenant, or that dispensation of the covenant of grace, of which Christ was the Mediator, v. 6. His ministry is more excellent, by how much He is the Mediator of a better covenant. Now observe,

I. What is here said of the old covenant, or rather of the old dispensation of the covenant of grace: 1. It was made with the fathers of the Jewish nation at mount Sinai, v. 9. and Moses was the Mediator. God there took them by the hand, to lead them out of the land of Egypt, which speaks his great affection, condescension, and care of them. 2. It was not found faultless, v. 7, 8. it was a dispensation of darkness and dread, tending to bondage, and only a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; it was perfect in its kind, but very imperfect in comparison of the Gospel. 3. It was not sure or steadfast, for the Jews continued not in that covenant, and the Lord regarded them not, v. 9. God will regard those who remain in his covenant, but will reject those who cast away his yoke from them. 4. It is decayed, grown old, and vanisheth away, v. 13. Some think the covenant of peculiarity did not quite decay till the destruction of Jerusalem; though it was forfeited at the death of Christ, and was made old, and was now to vanish and perish, and the Levitical priesthood vanished with it.

II. What is here said of the New Test. dispensation, to prove the superior excellency of Christ's ministry. 1. It is a better covenant, v. 6. a more clear and comfortable dispensation and discovery of the grace of God to sinners, bringing in holy light and liberty to the soul; and is without fault, well ordered in all things. 2. It is established on better promises, more clear and express, more spiritual, more absolute; the promises of spiritual and eternal blessings are absolute, those of temporal blessings with a wise and kind proviso, as far as shall be for God's glory and his people's good.

3. It is a new covenant, even that new covenant that God long ago declared He would make with the house of Israel, that is, all the Israel of God, Jer. 31:31, 32. and accomplished in Christ. It will always be new, and all who truly take hold of it, shall be always found preserved by the power of God; it is God's covenant; his mercy, love, and grace moved for it; his wisdom devised it; his Son purchased it; his Spirit brings souls into it, and builds them up in it. 4. The articles of this covenant are very extraordinary, and are sealed between God and his people by baptism and the Lord's supper; whereby they bind themselves to their part, and God assures them He will do his part.

(1.) God articles with his people, that He will put his laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts, v. 10. that is, will give them understanding to know and to believe his law, memories to retain them, hearts to love them, consciences to recognise them, courage to profess them, and power to put them in practice; the whole habit and frame of their souls shall be a table and transcript of the law of God. This is the foundation of the covenant; and when this is laid, duty will be done wisely, sincerely, readily, easily, resolutely, constantly, and comfortably.

(2.) He articles with them to take them into a near and very honorable relation to Himself. He will be to them a God; will be all that to them, and do all that for them, that God can be and do. They shall be to Him a people, to love, honor, observe, and obey Him in all things; this those must and will do, who have God for their God; for God will enable them to do it, as an evidence that He is their God, and they his people; God Himself first founds the relation, and then fills it up with grace suitable and sufficient, and helps them in their measure to fill it up with love and duty; so that God engages both for Himself and themselves.

(3.) He articles with them, that they shall grow more and more acquainted with their God, v. 11. Here, observe, In the want of better instruction, one neighbor should teach another to know the Lord, as they have ability and opportunity for it. This private instruction shall not be so ne-

cessary; but, that it did not contain in itself all the provision necessary for pardon of sin, and the rendering of the conscience peaceful and pure; which the Gospel does effect. STUART.

(8.) Finding fault with them.] I. e. with the Jews. So Doddr. Yet, as others, 'Finding fault with them, i. e. it, the first covenant,—He saith to them, viz. the Jews.' Most recent commentators prefer the latter, which, Bloomf. says, is required by the words following. Respecting these, i. e. Jer. 31. Stuart remarks, that 'the passage is made up of consolation and promise, instead of reproof or finding fault; so that the imputed defect must be such, in this case, as may be understood accordingly; i. e. the old covenant had failed to accomplish the objects desired,—it was defective; [whereas, the new covenant, or gospel-dispensation, should accomplish its object, and secure pardon and sanctification.] The apostle evidently understands the passages quoted as originally having respect to the gospel-dispensation.' ED.

(10.) House of Israel.] 'The Jews in general,—the Israelitish nation; so the whole is often named in the Old and New Test.' I will put my laws, &c.] 'I will give them a lasting spirit of obedience to my laws, so that they shall no more violate them, as they have done.' SR.

(11.) 'He does not mean, that religious instruction will be altogether superseded; but none will be ignorant of God and his law, as in former times. The words are not to be urged to a literal explanation. The meaning of the whole plainly is, that the knowledge of true religion, or of God, should become universal, under the new covenant, so that no one might be found, who could properly be addressed as knowing nothing of the true God. The implication, moreover, contained in this, is, that, under the old covenant, many had been thus ignorant; a fact highly credible, considering the frequent lapses of the Jews into a state of idolatry.' ID.



12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

13 In that he saith, A new <sup>p</sup> *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away.

### CHAP. IX.

<sup>1</sup> The description of the rites and bloody sacrifices of the law, <sup>1</sup> far inferior to the dignity and perfection of the blood and sacrifice of Christ.

**T**HEN verily the first *covenant* had also <sup>a</sup> ordinances of divine service, and a worldly <sup>b</sup> sanctuary.

2 For there was a tabernacle <sup>c</sup> made; the first, wherein <sup>d</sup> was the candlestick, and the <sup>e</sup> table, and the <sup>f</sup> shew-bread; which is called <sup>g</sup> the Sanctuary.

3 And, after the second <sup>h</sup> veil, the tabernacle, which is called the Holiest of all;

4 Which had the golden <sup>i</sup> censer, and the ark <sup>j</sup> of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein <sup>k</sup> was the golden <sup>l</sup> pot that had manna, and Aaron's <sup>m</sup> rod that budded, and the <sup>n</sup> tables of the covenant;

<sup>p</sup> 2 Co. 5:17. <sup>e</sup> Ex. 25:30. <sup>j</sup> Ex. 16:33.  
<sup>a</sup> or, ceremonies. <sup>f</sup> or, holy. <sup>k</sup> Nu. 17:10.  
<sup>b</sup> Ex. 25:8. <sup>g</sup> Ex. 16:31,33. <sup>l</sup> Ex. 34:29.  
<sup>c</sup> Ex. 29:1,35. <sup>h</sup> 1e. 16:12. <sup>m</sup> 40:20.  
<sup>d</sup> Ex. 40:4. <sup>i</sup> Ex. 25:10, &c.

cessary under the New Test. as under the Old; under the new dispensation there shall be such plenty of public qualified preachers of the Gospel, and dispensers of ordinances stately in the solemn assemblies, and so great a flocking to them, and such a plentiful effusion of the Spirit of God, to make the ministration of the Gospel effectual, that there shall be a mighty increase and spreading of Christian knowledge in persons of all sorts, of each sex, and of all ages. Oh that this promise might be fulfilled in our days, that the hand of God may be with his ministers, that a great number may believe, and be turned to the Lord!

(4.) God articles with them about the pardon of their sins, as what always accompanies the true knowledge of God, v. 12. Observe, The freeness of this pardon; it

PRACT. OBS. V. 7—13. We should often inquire, whether 'the new covenant' be really sealed and ratified to us; for, though the gospel-dispensation is 'faultless;' and though the Lord has, as it were, 'taken us by the hand,' to lead us forth from pagan and antichristian idolatry; yet He will have no special 'regard to us' at last, unless He now 'put his laws into our minds, and write them in our hearts,' as the principle of genuine repentance and willing obedience; unless we expect our happiness from Him as our God, and worship Him spiritually as his people; and unless we are taught by his Holy Spirit, to know Him in such a manner, as uprightly to fear, love, trust, and obey Him.

NOTES. CHAP. IX. 'The writer proceeds to consider the manner and design of the sacerdotal service, and the ends which could be accomplished by it.' STUART.—'It will now, according to the primary purpose of the epistle, be shown, that all that splendor and magnificence of the Jewish *leitourgia*, which so dazzled, nay, blinded the eyes of the Jews, and which therefore they were so unwilling to lay aside, is, in the new religion, far more august. From different parts of Ex. 25—27. Paul shows, that the whole Jewish worship was indeed splendid, but only respected what was external, and was to be repeated, again and again. By the divine counsel, then, it was only to last for a time, till the *perfect* one was to be introduced, which was done by Jesus Christ.'

Bloomf., after JASPIS.

V. 1—5. The apostle, knowing the excessive and dangerous attachment of the Hebrews to the legal ceremonies, proceeded more particularly to show their typical reference to Christ. (1) *Ordinances.* It is used in different senses; but *ritual observances* seems the meaning here. Luke 1:5—7. (4) *Wherein, &c.* 'The rod of Aaron, and the golden pot that had manna,' were *within* 'the holy of holies,' and *by or near* the ark, as the word may be rendered, but they seem not to have been put *within* it. 1 Kings 8:7—9. (1) *The first.* Many copies add *tabernacle*; but it appears to me, that some transcriber erroneously inserted that word, to supply the ellipsis; and that our version more properly substitutes *covenant*, as directly connected with the preceding v. 8:13. Sc.

(1—5.) 'The priests performed daily service in the outer temple, 9:6. the high priest entered the inner (where God dwelt) *once* a year, 9:7. permission to enter only so seldom, showed, that free access to

does not result from merit in man, but from mercy in God; He pardons for his own name's sake. The fulness of this pardon; it extends to their unrighteousness, sins, and iniquities; to all kinds of sin, to sins highly aggravated. The fixedness of this pardon; it is so final, and so fixed, that God will remember their sins no more; He will not only forgive their sins, but forget them, treat them as if He had forgotten them. This pardoning mercy is connected with all other spiritual mercies, and opens a wide door to all spiritual blessing. This is the excellency of the new dispensation, and these the articles of it; therefore, we have no reason to repine, but great reason to rejoice, that that former dispensation is antiquated and vanished away.

CHAP. IX. The apostle, having declared the Old Test. dispensation antiquated and vanishing away, proceeds to let the Hebrews see the correspondence there was between the Old Test. and the New; and that whatever was excellent in the Old, was typical and representative of the New; which, therefore, must as far excel the Old, as the substance does the shadow. The Old Test. was never intended to be rested in, but to prepare for the institutions of the Gospel.

V. 1—5. The apostle gives an account, here, of the tabernacle, that place of worship which God appointed to be pitched on earth, called *worldly*, because wholly of this world, as to its materials, and a building that must be taken down; a *sanctuary*, because the court and palace of the king of Israel. God was their King, and, as other kings, had his court or palace of residence, and attendants, furniture, and provision, suitable thereto. This tabernacle, of which we have the model, Ex. 25—27. it is said here was divided into two parts, called a *first* and a *second* tabernacle, an inner and an outer part; representing the two states of the church militant and triumphant, and the two natures of Christ, human and divine. We are told what was placed in each part.

In the outer part were several things of which you have here a sort of schedule.

1. The candlestick, where the lamps were always burning, there being no windows in the sanctuary; and this was to convince the Jews of the darkness and mysterious nature of that dispensation. Their light was only candle-light, in comparison of the fulness

of light which Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, would bring along with Him, and communicate to his people.

2. The table and the shew-bread set upon it. This was directly opposite to the candlestick, which shows, that by light from Christ we must have communion with Him and with one another. On this table were placed twelve loaves, a loaf for a tribe, which stood from sabbath to sabbath, and on that day were renewed. This shew-bread may be considered either as the provision of the palace, in resemblance of the palaces of earthly kings, or the provision made in Christ for the souls of his people, suitable to the wants and to the relief of their souls. He is the Bread of life; in our Father's house is bread enough and to spare; we may have fresh supplies from Christ, especially every Lord's day. This outer part is called *the sanctuary* or *holy*, because erected to the worship of a holy God, to represent a holy Jesus, and to entertain a holy people, for their further improvement in holiness.

We have an account of what was in the inner part of the sanctuary, which was within the second veil, and is called *the holiest of all*. This second veil, which divided between the holy and the most holy place, was a type of the body of Christ; by the rending whereof, not only a view, but a way, was opened for us into the holiest of all, the type of heaven itself. Now in this part were,

1. The golden censer, to hold the incense, or the golden altar to burn the incense on, both typical of Christ, of his pleasing and prevailing intercession, grounded on the merits and satisfaction of his sacrifice, on which we are to depend for acceptance, and the blessing from God.

2. The ark of the covenant overlaid round about with pure gold, v. 4. typifying Christ, his perfect obedience to the law, and his fulfilling of all righteousness for us. Now here we are told both what was in this ark, and what was over it.

(1.) What was in it. [1.] *The golden pot that had manna*, which, being by God's appointment deposited here, was kept from putrefaction; and this, to teach us, that it is only in Christ that our persons, graces, performances, are kept pure; it was also a type of the bread of life we have in Christ, and a memorial of God's miraculously feeding his people in the wilderness. [2.] *Aaron's rod that budded*; and thereby showed

1 Chr. 22:6—10. Jn. 17:1—3. 2 Cor. 4:3—6. 1 Jn. 2:3—6. Thus all true Israelites, 'from the least to the greatest,' are 'taught of God,' and sealed as his people; and thus they are become satisfied, that He 'hath been merciful to their sins, and will remember their iniquities no more.' This 'righteousness shall be for ever, this salvation shall not be abolished,' and the blessings of this irrevocable covenant will be the eternal portion of every true believer. But all other things, whether they be worldly vanities, external privileges, or forms and notions of religion, will soon 'decay, wax old, vanish away,' and leave those who have trusted in them most miserable for evermore. 1:10—12. 2 Pet. 3:5—13. SCOTT.

God was not yet disclosed under the first dispensation, v. 8. indeed all these rites were merely a symbol of what was to be effected under the Gospel, vs. 9, 10. Christ, on the other hand, the heavenly High Priest, entered the eternal sanctuary with his own blood, procuring everlasting redemption for sinners, vs. 11, 12. The blood of bulls and goats, presented by the Jewish high priest, effected nothing more than ceremonial, external purification, v. 13. while the blood of Christ purifies the conscience, and renders the worshipper truly acceptable to God, v. 14. the efficacy of the sacrifice extending back to the sins of former ages, so that all who are called of God to partake of the blessings of the Gospel, attain through his *death* to a heavenly inheritance, v. 15. Here occasion is taken to compare the new *covenant*, ratified by the death of Christ, with the *covenants* ratified by the death of testators. Such, says he, is the custom among men, that the death of the testators must supervene, in order to confirm and give full effect to their *testaments*, v. 16, 17. Even the first covenant, though not so appropriately called a *testament*, was sanctioned much as was the new covenant; for *blood* (the emblem of death) was applied to almost everything which pertained to the ancient covenant, in order either to ratify or to consecrate it, vs. 18—22. Now, since this was so extensively done in regard to these more resemblances or types of heavenly things, these heavenly things themselves, being of a nature so much more exalted, must be consecrated by a corresponding sacrifice, of a higher nature than any offered in the earthly temple, v. 23. For it is in the heavenly temple, Christ discharges the functions of his priestly office, v. 24. yet not, like the Jewish priests, repeating expiatory offerings, but once for all performing this sacred



5 And over it the cherubims<sup>m</sup> of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests<sup>n</sup> went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

7 But into the second<sup>o</sup> went the high priest alone<sup>o</sup> once every year, not without blood, which he offered for<sup>p</sup> himself, and for the errors of the people:

8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way<sup>q</sup> into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not<sup>r</sup> make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the<sup>s</sup> conscience;

m De. 10:2,5.      Le. 16:2, &c.      r Ps. 40:6,7.  
Ex. 15:18,22.    p c. 5:3.            Ga. 3:21.  
n No. 28:3        q Ju. 14:6.        c. 10:1,11.  
o Ec. 30:10.        c. 10:19,30.      s Ps. 51:16-19.

that God had chosen him, of the tribe of Levi, to minister before Him, of all the tribes of Israel, and so an end was put to the murmuring of the people, and to their attempt to invade the priest's office, Numb. 17. This was a type of Divine Justice, by whom Christ the Rock was smitten, and from whom the cool refreshing waters of life flow into our souls. [3.] *The tables of the covenant*, in which the moral law was written, signifying the regard God has to the preservation of his holy law, and the care we all ought to have, that we keep the law of God; that this we can do only in and through Christ, by strength from Him, nor can our obedience be accepted but through Him.

(2.) What was over the ark, v. 5.

[1.] *The mercy-seat*, the covering of the ark, called *the propitiatory*, and of pure gold, as long and as broad as the ark; it was an eminent type of Christ, and of his perfect righteousness, ever adequate to the dimensions of the law of God, and covering all our transgressions, interposing between the She-

rite, vs. 25, 26. As men die but once; and Christ, in his human nature, and by doing in it, made an expiatory offering; so He could make this but once; therefore, when He shall make his second appearance, it will not be to repeat his sin-offering, but for the deliverance of all who wait for his coming, v. 27, 28.<sup>2</sup>

(2.) *First.*] 'The ancients and best moderns agree it refers to *place*, not *time*.' BLOOMER.—Yet see on v. 1-5, and *Stuart* here further compares 8:6, 7.

(1.) *Golden censor.*] 'Some think, the *golden altar* may be comprehended in the word rendered *censer*.' DONDR.—*Ros.* understands, *hilasterion*, the mercy-seat, or the lid or covering of the ark. ED.—'It is evident it was covered with thin gold plates: a very ancient custom, and of which vestiges are found in the temples of Mexico, Peru, and elsewhere in America.'

5.] 'On supposition the Mosaic tabernacles were a representation of the universe, they were probably set in order, to teach us that the whole universe is the temple of God: that in this vast temple there is the *most holy place*, where He resides, and manifests Himself to angelic hosts around; and that all intelligent beings, who inhabit this vast temple, are placed in it to be happy, by worshipping the Creator, each kind according to the faculties they possess. Ps. 143.—That God resides in a particular part of the universe, where He makes his presence known by some visible glory, is a notion which has prevailed among all nations,—a proof that it is derived from tradition, or that it is a dictate of reason: either supposition shews its truth; and, being confirmed by revelation, why should it be called in question?' MACKN.

V. 6, 7. Some commentators mention carrying the blood of the sacrifices, in general, into the temple, to sprinkle it before the veil, as one of the services performed by the ordinary priests; but it was evident that no blood was carried into the tabernacle, except that of sin-offerings for the high priest or for the congregation, and this was done by this high priest himself. In other cases, when some of the blood had been sprinkled about the altar of burnt-offering, the residue was poured out at the bottom of it. 13:9-14. Lev. 1:5-9. 4:4-7, 22-35. 6:30. 16:11-19. (7.) *Errors.*] Here only, N. T.—*Gen.* 43:12. *Sept.*—*Ignorances.* It seems to denote all those sins, for which sacrifices were appointed; indeed all, but those presumptuous sins which were punished by death. Lev. 4:5: 6:2-7. Ps. 19:12-14.

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chinal, or symbol of God's presence, and our sinful failures, and covering them.

[2.] *The cherubims of glory* shadowing the mercy-seat, representing the holy angels, who take pleasure in the great work of redemption, and are ready to perform every good office, under the Redeemer, for those who are the heirs of salvation. The angels attended Christ at his birth, in his temptation, under his agonies, at his resurrection, and in his ascension, and will attend his second coming. God manifest in the flesh, was seen, observed, visited, by the angels.

V. 6, 7. From the description of the place of worship in the Old Test. dispensation, the apostle proceeds to speak of the duties and services performed in those places, v. 6.

1. The ordinary priests went always into the first tabernacle, to accomplish the service of God. Observe, Persons not qualified, not called of God, must not intrude into the office and work of the ministry; it would have been fatal presumption in the ordinary priests to have gone into the holiest of all; and this teaches us, that even ministers themselves must not presume to usurp the prerogative of Christ, by offering up incense of their own, or adding their own inventions to his ordinances, or larding it over men's consciences. These ordinary priests were to enter into the first tabernacle always; that is, they were to devote themselves and all their time to the work of their office, in the first tabernacle, that they might there accomplish the service of God, and fulfil their ministry.

2. Into the second, the interior part, went the high priest alone, v. 7. an emblem of heaven, and Christ's ascension thither. Observe, (1.) None but the high priest must go into the holiest; so none but Christ could enter into heaven in his own name, by his own right, and by his own merits. (2.) In entering into the holiest, the high priest must first go through the outer sanctuary, and through the veil; signifying that Christ went to heaven through a holy life and a violent death; the veil of his flesh was rent asunder. (3.) The high priest entered but once a year into the holiest, and in this the Antitype excels the type, (as in everything else,) for He is entered once for all, during the whole dispensation of the Gospel. (4.) The high priest must not enter without blood; signifying that Christ, having undertaken to be our High Priest, could not have been admitted into heaven without shedding

his blood for us; and that none of us can enter either into God's gracious presence here, or his glorious presence hereafter, but by the blood of Jesus. (5.) The high priest, under the law, entering into the holiest, offered up that blood for himself and his own errors first, and then for the errors of the people, v. 7. This teaches us, that Christ is a more excellent Person and High Priest than any under the law, for He has no errors of his own to offer for; and that ministers, when in the name of Christ they intercede for others, must first apply the blood of Christ to themselves for their pardon. (6.) When the legal high priest had offered for himself, he must not stop there, but must also offer for the errors of the people. Our High Priest, though He needs not to offer for Himself, yet forgets not to offer for his people; He pleads the merit of his sufferings for the benefit of his people on earth. Observe, Sins are errors, great errors, both in judgment and practice; they leave guilt on the conscience, not to be washed away but by the blood of Christ; and the sinful errors of priests and people must be all done away by the same means; we must plead this blood on earth, while He is pleading it in heaven for us.

V. 8-14. In these vs. the apostle undertakes to deliver to us the mind and meaning of the Holy Ghost, in all the ordinances of the tabernacle and legal economy, comprehending both place and worship. Several things are mentioned, and certified hereby.

1. The way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while the first tabernacle was standing, v. 8. This was one lesson; the way to heaven was not so clear and plain, nor so much frequented, under the Old Test. as under the New. There was not that free access to God then that there is now.

2. The first tabernacle was only a figure for the time then present, v. 9. a dark dispensation, of short continuance, only designed for a while to typify the great things of Christ and the Gospel.

3. None of the gifts and sacrifices there offered could make the offerers perfect, as pertaining to conscience, v. 9. that is, they could not take away either the desert, or defilement, or dominion, of sin; they could not deliver conscience from a dread of the wrath of God; they could neither discharge the debts, nor resolve the doubts, of him who did the service.

(7.) *Once.*] 'It means simply *once*, as *once and again*; or it means *once only*, *once for all*; which is the meaning of it here, and in several other passages of this epistle.'

V. 8-10. By all those restrictions and limitations, which kept even the worshippers of JENOVAH at so awful a distance, 'the Holy Spirit,' by whose inspiration they were revealed and recorded, conveyed this important instruction, viz. that 'the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest.'—A few believers, indeed, under the divine teaching, discerned something in these rites concerning the way of access to God, of communion with Him, and of admission into heaven, through the promised Redeemer; but the Israelites in general looked no further than the external forms, and scarcely any person conceived an idea, that sinners of every nation should have that freedom and boldness of access to God through Christ, and all the privileges and hopes, which believers enjoy under the Christian dispensation. The difficulty of guilty, polluted rebels, being thus admitted into the presence and favor of a holy God, was fully declared by those appointments; but the sacrifice and priesthood of the incarnate Son of God at once disannulled them all. When He hung on the cross, the veil of the temple was rent. (*Notes, Mat.* 27:51-53.) His ascension into heaven, and intercession there, opened the way to the mercy-seat; by his doctrine 'the way into the holiest was made manifest,' and thenceforth it was only necessary, that sinners should be made willing by regenerating grace, to avail themselves of such an invaluable privilege. (*Note*, 10:19-22.) The legal ordinances, therefore, especially those of the great day of atonement, were figures 'for the time then present;' (or, as some render it, *of the present time*, the happy period thus prefigured being at length arrived;) in which were offered various gifts and sacrifices, that could not give the worshippers genuine, solid peace of conscience, or make a perfect reconciliation between the sinner and the offended Judge. The offerers who rested in them, and did not by faith rely on the promised Savior, could not obtain forgiveness of sins, or spiritual blessings; but were only exempted from temporal punishment, and admitted to external privileges, as members of the kingdom and church of Israel, which was in a peculiar sense under the government of JENOVAH. (11:14.) The other ordinances of that covenant, which were connected with its sacrifices, consisted principally of regulations concerning meats and drinks, the latter especially in respect of the priests, and the Nazarites,



10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh;

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself with-

15 c Isa. 11:2, &c. u Nu. 19:7, &c. v or, rites, or, ceremonies. w Ep. 2:15. x c. 3:1. y c. 10:1. z c. 8:2. a c. 10:4. b Ac. 20:28. 1 Pe. 1:13, 19. Re. 1:5. c c. 10:19. d Nu. 19:2-17. e 1 Pe 3:15.

4. The Holy Ghost hereby signifies, that the Old Test. institutions were but external, carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation, v. 10. Their imperfection lay in three things. (1.) Their nature; they were but external, carnal meats, drinks, and divers washings; bodily exercises, which profit little; they could only satisfy the flesh, or at best sanctify to the purifying of the flesh. (2.) They were imposed by grievous corporal punishments, and this on purpose to make them look more to the promised Seed, and long more for Him. (3.)

and divers baptisms, or washings with water, or in water, as typical of sanctification, and such like institutions which were carnal in themselves, though for wise purposes they were imposed till the coming of the Messiah, which was to be a time of reformation, by the introduction of a more simple and spiritual worship. (Note, John, 1:21-24.) They could therefore be of no use to those Jews, who rejected Christ out of zeal for them, and it was absurd for the Heb. Christians to adhere so pertinaciously to them. (8) The Holy Ghost, &c.] This is a most express attestation to the divine inspiration of Moses, which should not pass without special notice, in these days of skepticism on that subject. (3) Standing.] Retained its station. The temple which succeeded to the tabernacle, and must be included in all this argument along with it, was standing when the apostle wrote; but after the introduction of the Gospel, it virtually lost its station and use, in true religion.—Made perfect.] 7:19. 11:40. Something further was wanted, even the thing signified by all these types.—10) Divers washings.] Different baptisms; that is, differing from each other. 6:2. Mark 7:4, 8. Rom. 12:6. This fully proves, that other uses of water, besides immersion, were called baptisms in Scripture. SCOTT.

(9.) 'This, in few words, expresses what I take to be of the greatest importance for understanding the Mosaic sacrifices; which is, that they were never intended to expiate offences to such a degree, as to deliver the sinner from the final judgment of God in another world; but merely to make his peace with the government under which he then was, and to furnish him with a pardon, pleadable against any prosecution which might be commenced against him in their courts of justice, or any exclusion from the privilege of drawing near to God, as one externally at peace with Him, in the solemnities of his temple worship.' DOUGL.—'The verse shows plainly, that our epistle was written while the temple rites were still practised; consequently before A. D. 70.'—'Perfect, as pertaining to the conscience.' 'The meaning is, to render the mind of the worshipper secure of pardon for sin, and to produce that quiet which is connected with a well-grounded persuasion of this, and that moral purification which must accompany it.' STUART.

(10.) Carnal ordinances.] 'Ordinances of an external nature.'—'Imposed.' 'Enjoined.' STUART.—'Time of reformation.] 'This is explained by the best commentators, "the period which should introduce a reformation of religion, by the change of external and corporal into internal and mental worship."' BLOOMF.

V. 11-14. (11) Greater and more perfect tabernacle.] This may be explained, either of his holy human nature, in which He tabernacled on earth, and officiated as Priest in heaven, John 1:14. or rather of the heavens themselves, where 'He appears in the presence of God for us.' 24-26. His divine nature, the entire purity of his human nature, the exalted dignity of his person, as EMMANUEL; the honor put on the law of God by his most perfect obedience, and the voluntary offering of Himself, under the immediate influences of 'the eternal Spirit,' as a spotless sacrifice to divine justice in the stead of sinners, concurred to render it glorious in God, for his sake, fully to pardon, and freely to accept, all who were interested in Him by faith. If, then, there was the least efficacy in external expiations and purifications, through the appointment of God, and because they showed the guilt and pollution of sin, and typified the method of its removal, so that it became proper for God through them to confer temporal benefits on criminals, how much more

These were never designed for a perpetuity, but only to continue till the time of reformation, till gospel-times, times of reformation, of clearer light, of greater love, liberty and freedom both of spirit and speech, and of a more holy living according to the rule of the Gospel.

5. The Holy Ghost signifies to us hereby, that we never make the right use of types but when we apply them to the Antitype; and whenever we do so, it will be very evident that the Antitype (as in reason it should) greatly excels the type, which is the main drift and design of all that is said. And as he writes to those who believed that Christ was come, and that Jesus was the Christ; so he very justly infers, that He is infinitely above all the legal high priests, v. 11, 12. and he illustrates it very fully. For,

(1.) Christ is the High Priest of good things to come, by which may be understood, (1.) All the good things to come during the Old Test. and now come under the New; the New Testament is the accomplishment of the Old. (2.) All the good things yet to come and to be enjoyed in a gospel-state, all these depend on Christ and his priesthood, and shall be fulfilled. (3.) Of all the good things to come in the heavenly state, which will perfect both the Testaments; as the state of glory will perfect the state of grace, this state will be in a much higher sense the perfection of the New Test. than the New Test. was the perfection of the Old. Observe, All good things past, present, and to come, were, and are, founded on, and flowing from, the priestly office of Christ.

(2.) Christ is a High Priest by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, v. 11. a tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, but his own body, or rather human nature, conceived by the Holy Ghost

overshadowing the blessed virgin. This was a new fabric, a new order of building, infinitely superior to all earthly structures, not excepting the tabernacle or the temple itself.

(3.) Christ, our High Priest, is entered into heaven, not as their high priest entered into the holiest, with the blood of bulls and of goats, but by his own blood typified by theirs, and infinitely more precious. And this,

(4.) Not for one year only, which showed the imperfection of that priesthood, that it did but typically obtain a year's reprieve or pardon. But our High Priest entered into heaven once for all, and has obtained not a yearly respite, but eternal redemption, and so needs not to make an annual entrance. In each of the types there was something that showed it was a type, and resembled the Antitype, and something that showed it was but a type, and fell short of the Antitype, and therefore ought by no means to be set up in competition with the Antitype.

(5.) The Holy Ghost further signified and showed what was the efficacy of the blood of the Old Test. sacrifices, and thence [he] infers the much greater efficacy of the blood of Christ. The legal sacrifices extended to the purifying of the flesh, v. 13. it freed the outward man from ceremonial uncleanness, and from temporal punishment, and entitled him to, and fitted him for, some external privileges. He infers very justly from hence the far greater efficacy of the blood of Christ, v. 14. Here observe,

[1.] What gave such efficacy to the blood of Christ. It was his offering Himself to God, the human nature on the altar of his divine nature, He being both Priest, Altar, and Sacrifice, his divine nature serving for the first two, and his human nature for the last; now such a Priest, Altar, and Sacrifice, could not but be propitiatory. It was his offering up Himself to God through the

efficacious must the blood of Christ be, 'to purge the believer's conscience from dead works,' from the guilt of those evil works, which were committed by such as were dead in sin, and deserved death; or which really and deeply polluted the soul, even as the touch of a dead corpse ritually did the body! As, therefore, it was abundantly suited to render the exercise of mercy consistent with the most perfect justice and holiness, and honorable to God to accept the services of sinners who believed; so, when apprehended by faith, it effectually removes the burden of guilt from the conscience, and gives the trembling sinner peace, confidence, and comfort, in approaching, worshipping, and obeying the living God. Christians, therefore, could have no occasion to cleave to the abrogated typical expiations of the Mosaic law.—Some expositors, by 'the eternal Spirit,' suppose the Deity of the Son to be meant; but this seems rather to be implied in the word CHRIST. The holiness and obedience of our Savior, his miraculous powers, and the supports given to his human nature, are constantly ascribed to the Holy Spirit, 'with which He was anointed without measure,' sealing his appointment to his mediatorial offices, and as He was carried through his last scene of sufferings, by his most perfect zeal and love, which also gave value to his sacrifice. 1:3, 9. Ps. 45:6, 7. Is. 11:2-5. 42:4-4. 59:20, 21. 61:1-3. Mat. 3:16, 17. John 3:27-36. Acts 1:1-3. 10:36-43. The Holy Spirit, therefore, seems to be intended, whose eternal Deity, (as well as the everlasting value and efficacy of Christ's atonement,) is attested by the epithet here employed. The Levitical services were all 'shadows of heavenly things;' the expiations were, therefore, types of some real expiation. 'Now what expiation is there in the whole universe, if the Sacrifice of Christ is excluded?' Mackn.—(12) Eternal redemption.] Luke 1:68. 2:38. The word is sometimes used for temporal deliverances from bondage, or captivity, but the redemption which Christ effected is distinguished as 'eternal redemption.' 15-17. 5:7-10. 10:11-13. Eph. 1:3-8. Tit. 2:14. 1 Pet. 1:17-21. Rev. 5:8-10. Sc.

(11) A high priest of good things to come.] 'The high priest who procures future blessings; as the God of peace, is the God who procures or bestows peace.—The antithesis between the old and new tabernacles, their services, and the respective efficacy of them, is carried on, through the remainder of ch. 9. and down to ch. 10:19.' STUART.

(14.) Through the eternal Spirit.] 'Most of the ancients and earlier moderns, understand it of the divine nature of Christ. And this interpretation is ably supported by Grotius, Limborch, Wolf, Schoettig, Vitruv., Ernesti, Cramer, Storr, and Cranz. Others, as Abp. Tillots., and Drs. Owen, and Doddr., interpret it of the Holy Spirit. I confess, I see no interpretation so safe as the common one, first mentioned.' BLOOMF.—'An eternal spiritual nature, &c.' 'Although the offering of Christ might be rendered of the highest value, on account of the dignity of his Person, in consequence of the higher nature which dwelt in Him; yet the sacred writers represent Him as having made atonement in his human nature, not in his divine. Heb. 2:14, 17, 18. Col. 1:21, 22. Phil. 2:6-8. Heb. 10:5, 10. 1 Pet. 2:24. In 1 Cor. 15:45, the last Adam, i. e. Christ, is called a quickening Spirit, in distinction from the living soul attributed to the first Adam. This could not be because Christ had an immortal soul, and Adam had only a living animal soul; for Adam, too, was immortal. It would seem, here, that spirit and soul both designate a spiritual or immortal nature; but spirit, here, designates such a nature, of a higher order; and the antithesis is more fully made by quicken-



out 'spot to God, purge <sup>5</sup> your conscience from dead works to serve <sup>b</sup> the living God ?

[Practical Observations.]

15 And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity <sup>i</sup> be the death of the testator.

17 For a testament is of force after men are dead : otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

f or, fault. h 1 Pe. 4:2. i or, be brought in. g c. 10:22.

eternal Spirit, not only as the divine nature supported the human, but the Holy Ghost,

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—14. 'The ordinances of divine service, and the worldly sanctuary' of the Mosaic covenant, point out to us Christ as the Light of the church and of the world, and 'the Bread of life' to our souls, *Jn.* 1:4—9. 6:30—35, 47—52. *P. O.* 30—35, 47—53, and remind us of his divine Person, his fruitful priesthood, which flourishes for ever, his perfect righteousness, and his all-prevailing intercession; 'which things the angels desire to look into' with adoring praise and adoration.—At what a distance has sin placed us from our holy Creator, when all the preparatory sacrifices of the law still left the worshippers secluded, and in a sense banished, even from the presence of God on his mercy-seat! All these sacrifices and services could no more purge the guilty conscience, than distinctions in meats, and divers 'baptisms,' could cleanse the polluted heart, or new create the fallen nature of man.

*ing* or *life-giving*, and *living*. If v. 14. contains substantially a recognition of the same or the like sentiment, (which it seems to do,) then *through the eternal Spirit*, may well refer to the *eternal spiritual nature or condition of the Savior in glory*, who presented Himself in the heavenly temple, with such a nature, as a spotless offering to God, and procured that pardon and purification which the sinner needs.' STUART. —'What strange *servants* some Christians are!—always at work for themselves, and never doing anything for Him whom they call their Master! And what *subjects*!—ever desiring to take the reins into their own hands!'

V. 15—17. Because of the unceasing and inexhaustible efficacy of his sacrifice, Christ was appointed to be 'the Mediator of the new covenant.' He had undertaken the cause of sinners, which must otherwise have been relinquished as desperate; as He alone was capable of offering a sacrifice of sufficient value to make a real atonement; and He had come into the world, in human nature, for that purpose, in order, by means of his death, to pay a ransom to God, for the transgressions which had been committed by believers, under the old covenant, or the legal dispensation; even those who lived before his coming, as well as all others who were called by the grace of God to faith in Him, 'might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.' *Rom.* 3:21—26. For the temporal inheritance alone was secured to the Israelites, by their observance of the legal expiations, and those of them who sought and obtained spiritual and eternal blessings, were made partakers of them through the anticipated efficacy of Christ's redemption. That grace was finally confirmed to them by his death; so that, in this respect, the covenant He mediated might also be considered as a testament, by which a man bequeaths certain legacies to persons specified in it, to be given to them in consequence of his death. Thus Christ might be considered, as having acquired, in his mediatorial office, a conditional right to dispose of spiritual and eternal blessings, as by his will and testament. These He bequeathed to all such as should apply for them by faith; and though, as a special favor, some were, before his coming, made partakers of them, in consequence of his unfulfilling engagements to assume human nature, and make redemption for their transgressions, yet even their right was incomplete till after his death, and all others must be admitted to claim them on that ground only. For when 'a testament is made,' 'the death of the testator must' of necessity take place, before the legacies can be claimed. It is of no validity till He be dead; for, as He may change it at pleasure while He lives, it has no force till afterwards. Thus Christ died, not only to obtain the blessings of salvation for us; but to give efficacy to his testamentary disposal of them; though He is different from all other testators, in that He rose again; and ever liveth to be the Executor of his own testament, for the benefit of all who are interested in it.—Thus the passage has generally been interpreted; but this is the only place, in which the original word is *expressly* used in Scripture for a testament, or the will of a dying person. The change of the meaning, also, from covenant to testament, seems unprecedented; 'the Mediator of a testament,' and 'the blood of a testament,' are expressions, to which it is difficult to annex any precise ideas, and the Sinai-covenant can hardly in any sense be called 'a testament.' Several modern expositors have therefore endeavored to establish another interpretation.—'For this reason, . . . of the new covenant He is the Mediator, or High Priest, by whom its blessings are dispensed, and also the Sacrifice, by which it is procured and ratified; that, his death, being accomplished, for obtaining the pardon of the transgressions of the first covenant, b' lievers of all ages and nations, as the called seed of Abraham, . . . may receive the promised eternal inheritance. For . . . where a covenant is made by sacrifice, there is a necessity, that the death of the appointed sacrifice be produced. For, according to the practice of God and man, a covenant is made firm over dead

which He had without measure, helping Him in all, and in this great act of obedience offering Himself. It was his offering Himself to God *without spot*, without any sinful stain, either in his nature or life; this was conformable to the law of sacrifices, which were to be without blemish. Now, further observe,

[2.] How great the efficacy of Christ's blood is; it is sufficient to purge the very soul and conscience; sufficient to enable us to serve the living God, not only by purging away guilt, but by sanctifying and renewing the soul through the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, purchased by Christ for this purpose, that we might be enabled to serve the living God in a lively manner.

V. 15—22. Here,

1. The Gospel is considered as a testament, the new and last will and testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The solemn transactions that pass between God and man are sometimes called a covenant, here a testament. A covenant is an agreement between two or more parties about things in their own power, or that may be

so; and this either with or without a mediator; this agreement takes effect at such time, and in such manner, as is therein declared. A testament is a voluntary act and deed of a single person, duly executed and witnessed, bestowing legacies on such legatees as are described and characterized by the testator, and which can only take effect on his death. Now observe,

Christ is the Mediator of a new testament, v. 15. and for several ends and purposes here mentioned. (1.) To redeem persons from their transgressions committed against the law or first testament, which makes every transgression a forfeiture of liberty, and makes men debtors, and slaves or prisoners, who need to be redeemed. (2.) To qualify all those that are effectually called, to receive the promise of an eternal inheritance. These are the great legacies that Christ, by his last will and testament, has bequeathed to the truly characterized legatees.

2. To make this new testament effectual, it was necessary Christ should die; the legacies accrue by means of death. This he

'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' that 'the Way into the holiest' is now manifested, by the coming, sacrifice, and ascension of our great High Priest! Now we 'sinners of the Gentiles' may come with far more 'boldness to the throne of grace,' than Israel's pontiff himself could; and now the gate of heaven is thrown open to all believers. Eternal redemption, and the promise of eternal inheritance, are purchased for us by 'the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God.' This effectually purges the most guilty 'conscience from dead works to serve the living God.' whilst the grace, which seals the pardon, new creates the polluted soul. May we then be made 'partakers of this heavenly calling,' and seek remission of our sins, only through the shedding and sprinkling of 'the blood of the New Test.,' which God has enjoined unto us! 13:20,21. Se.

sacrifices; seeing it never hath force, whilst the goat, calf, or hulloek, appointed as the sacrifice of ratification, liveth. Because, from the beginning, God ratified his covenants by sacrifice, to preserve among men the expectation of the Sacrifice of his Son; hence, not even the covenant at Sinai was made without sacrifice.' *Mackn.* 18—23. *Gen.* 15:7—21. *Jer.* 34:18, 19.—It appears to me, that the original will admit of this interpretation, but the nature of this work does not allow of my enlarging on the criticisms by which it is supported. On the one hand, the evils, which have been raised against the apostle's reasoning as inconclusive, if the first interpretation be adopted, and on the other hand, the venerable names, which have sanctioned it, with other circumstances of a similar nature, render me afraid of too confidently preferring either interpretation. I cannot, however, on the whole, but think, that the latter exposition is the most obvious, and consonant to the apostle's general way of reasoning.

SCOTT.  
(15.) *Scholfield* says: 'The question is, whether the word here rendered "testament," should not be rendered covenant. In ch 7:22. also *Mat.* 26:28. it is rendered "testament." All through ch. 8. and here, v. 4. it is rendered "covenant;" but in these vs. 15, 16, 17. it is changed back to "testament,"—of course in the sense of a will. Comp. especially ch. 12:24. Waiving the question, whether the more general term, "dispensation," do or do not better express the meaning of the word, the inquiry is, whether the dispensation is to be regarded as a testament, or as a covenant, so as to comprehend rightly the apostle's argument. *Scholfield* came to the conclusion, that the word ought to be rendered "covenant," though there are difficulties in the way of this interpretation. He renders the passage, "And for this end He is the Mediator of the new covenant, that, his death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, they that are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a covenant is, there must, of necessity, be brought in the death of the mediating sacrifice. For a covenant is valid over dead sacrifices, since it is never of any force while the mediating sacrifice continues alive." *Scholfield* adds: 'In one sense, Moses was the mediator of the old covenant, and so a type of Christ; but not in that sense which required the death of the Mediator, which is clearly the sense required, v. 15. In that sense the sacrifices were the types of Christ.'—*Faber*, on this passage, shows, that the rules of composition require, that the word, here in question, is used by the apostle, in the same sense as the same word is used in the context, both before and after it, i. e. to denote a covenant. The sum of this reasoning is,—All covenants are ratified over a sacrifice, and are valid only over dead victims; for they are no way binding while the ratifier is living. But the Levitical and Christian dispensations are each a covenant between God and man. Therefore, each of those covenants must have been ratified over a sacrifice.—*Slade* would consider, that the apostle takes advantage of the twofold sense of the word, intimating it as applicable to the Christian dispensation, not only as denoting a covenant, but also in its general acceptation of a testament. In *Henry, abr., Bloomf.* thinks *Slade's* view the least exceptionable. But see on vs. 1—5. from *Stuart.* Ep.—[For this cause.] 'I understand it as referring to the sentiment, v. 14. The sentiment stands thus: "As Jewish sacrifices rendered the offerer externally clean; so the blood of Christ purifies the moral or internal man, and removes the consequences of sin. On this account (for this cause), i. e. because the sacrifice of Christ produces an effect such as the Jewish sacrifices did not. He may be justly called the mediator of a new covenant, differing greatly from the old." Comp. *Heb.* 8:6—8, 13, 7:15—19.'—'The sentiment which this verse contains, respecting the efficacy of atoning blood in regard to the sins of preceding ages, has an exact parallel in *Rom.* 3:25. Both passages compared, form a striking coincidence of a peculiar sentiment, nowhere else so clearly and directly asserted.' STUART.



18 Whereupon neither the first testament was <sup>1</sup> dedicated without blood.

19 For <sup>2</sup> when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and <sup>1</sup> scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

20 Saying, 'This is the blood <sup>m</sup> of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

21 Moreover <sup>n</sup> he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood <sup>o</sup> is no remission.

23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear <sup>p</sup> in the presence of God for us:

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

27 And as it is appointed <sup>q</sup> unto men once to die, but after this <sup>r</sup> the judgment;

j or, purified.	n. Mat. 26:28.	p Ro. 8:34.
k Ex. 24:6, &c.	n Ex. 29:12, 35.	q Ge. 3:19.
l. c. 14 & 16.	o Le. 17:11.	r Ec. 12:11.
l or, purple.		

proves by two arguments, from the general nature of every will or testamentary disposition, v. 16. none ever taking effect till the death of the testator; and from the particular method taken by Moses in the ratification of the first testament, which was not

done without blood, v. 18, 19, &c. The method is here particularly related, v. 19. This blood and water signified the blood and water that came out of our Savior's pierced side, for justification and sanctification; and also shadowed forth the two sacraments of the New Test.,—Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; with scarlet wool, signifying the righteousness of Christ, with which we must be clothed; the hyssop signifying that faith by which we must apply all. And the sprinkling of both the book and the people signified the mutual consent of both parties; God and man, and their mutual engagements to each other in this covenant through Christ; Moses at the same time using these words, 'This is the blood of the Testament which God hath enjoined unto you.' This blood, typifying the blood of Christ, is the ratification of the covenant of grace to all true believers. He sprinkled the tabernacle, and all the utensils of it, intimating, that all the sacrifices offered up, and services performed there, were accepted only through the blood of Christ, which procures the remission of that iniquity that cleaves to our holy things, which could not have been remitted but by that atoning blood.

V. 23—28. In this last part of the ch. the apostle goes on to tell us what the Holy Ghost has signified to us by the legal purifications of the patterns of the things in heaven; inferring from thence the necessity of better sacrifices to consecrate the heavenly things themselves.

1. The necessity of purifying the patterns of the things in heaven, v. 23. This arises both from the divine appointment, and from the reason of that appointment. It is observable here, that the sanctuary of God on earth is a pattern of heaven, and communion with God in his sanctuary is to his people a heaven on earth.

2. The necessity that the heavenly things themselves should be purified with better sacrifices than of bulls and goats; the things themselves are better than the patterns, and must therefore be consecrated with better sacrifices. These heavenly things are the privileges of the gospel-state, begun in grace, perfected in glory; these must be ratified by a suitable sanction or consecration; and that was the blood of Christ. Now it is very evident that the sacrifices of Christ are infinitely better than those of the law. (1.) From the places in which the sacrifices under the law, and those under the gospel, were offered. Those under the law were the holy places made with hands, which are but figures of the true sanctuary, v. 24. Christ's sacrifice, though offered on earth, was by Himself carried up into heaven, and

is there presented in a way of daily intercession; for He appears in the presence of God for us. (2.) From the sacrifices themselves, v. 26. Those under the law were the lives and blood of other creatures, of a different nature from the offerers,—blood of small value, and indeed of none at all in this matter, had it not had a typical respect to the blood of Christ; but the sacrifice of Christ was the oblation of Himself; He offered his own blood, truly called, by virtue of the hypostatical union, the blood of God; and therefore of infinite value. (3.) From the frequent repetition of the legal sacrifices. This showed the imperfection of that law; but it is the honor and perfection of Christ's sacrifice, that, being once offered, it was sufficient to all the ends of it; and, indeed, the contrary would have been absurd; for then He must have been still dying and rising again, and ascending and then again descending and dying; and the great work had been always a doing, and always to do, but never finished; which would be as contrary to reason as it is to revelation, and to the dignity of his Person; but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. The Gospel is the last dispensation of the grace of God to men. (4.) From the inefficacy of the legal sacrifices, and the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice: the legal sacrifices could not of themselves put away sin; neither procure pardon for it, nor power against it. Sin would still have laid on us, and had dominion over us; but Jesus Christ, by one sacrifice, has made an end of sin; He has destroyed the works of the devil.

3. The apostle illustrates the argument from the appointment of God concerning men, v. 27, 28. and observes something like it in the appointment of God concerning Christ.

(1.) Men must once die, or, however, undergo a change equivalent to death; and then, after death, they shall come to judgment, to a particular judgment, immediately after death; to the general judgment, at the end of the world. This is the unalterable decree of God concerning men: they must die, and they must be judged. It is appointed for them, and it is to be believed and seriously considered by them.

(2.) Christ must be once offered, to bear the sins of many, of all the Father had given to Him, of all who should believe in his name. He shall appear the second time without sin, to the salvation of those who look for Him. At his first appearance, though He had no sin of his own, yet He stood charged with the sins of many; He was the Lamb of God that bore on Him the

V. 18—23. To prefigure the necessity of the blood-shedding of Christ, even the Sinai-covenant had not been dedicated, or ratified, without blood.—The apostle specified some particulars, not found in the history; probably taking them from the usages of his people, on some occasions. To prevent the blood from coagulating, it was customary to mix it with water, that it might sprinkle the better, which was an apt emblem of the twofold benefit of Christ's atonement.—The Hebrews also knew, that Moses had afterwards sprinkled the tabernacle and all its furniture with blood, to consecrate them for the worship of God. (M. R. n.—Notes, 8—10. Lev. 16:18—22.) In short, it was a general rule, that 'almost every thing was by the law purified with blood;' which showed, that nothing could be clean to a sinner, not even his religious duties, except as his guilt was expiated by the death of a sacrifice of sufficient value for that end, and unless he continually depended on it. And, indeed, it was absolutely a universal rule, that, 'without the shedding of blood,' no kind or degree of sin was ever pardoned, or the punishment due to it remitted. (10 3, 4.—20) This, &c.] The quotation is not from the Septuagint, but agrees in meaning both with that and the Hebrew. Ex. 24:3.—22. Shedding of blood.] Here only. The pouring out of blood, that is, from the body of the animal.

(19.) Precept.] Commandment. The reference is to Ex. 20—23.—The blood, &c.] 'Though Moses, in the history Ex. 24. has said nothing of these things, yet that they were not matters of new revelation to the writer, seems pretty evident; for he plainly makes an appeal to circumstances, which, he takes it for granted, are well known to the Hebrews, whom he addresses, and about which, if he were to commit an error of statement, all his readers would be revolted.' STUART. Bloomf. takes the same view, and adds: 'These particulars are supposed to have been derived from tradition.'

(21.) 'In the Mosaic account of this dedication, we do not read, that the tabernacle, with all its vases, was sprinkled with blood; although this circumstance is also mentioned by Jos. and Philo.' BL., after Diod.

(23.) 'Now follows the conclusion.—These.] I. e. the blood of bulls and goats. It was enough for the patterns, the shadow of heavenly things, to be consecrated by these. But the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices, i. e. with the sacrifice of Christ alone.' BL.

V. 24. Figures.] 1 Pet. 3:21. It is used in a sense contrary to that which is common at present, denoting the pattern, not the thing represented by it.—Appear.] 11:14. Mat. 27:53. Jn. 14:21, 22. Acts 23:15, 22. 24:1. 25:2, 15. From *emphanēs*, Acts 10:40. Rom. 10:20.—To appear openly, and avowedly, or conspicuously. SCOTT.

(21.) 'The high priest is said to appear before God, when he stands at the ark. Then it is announced, that the solemn expiation is made. So Christ has entered heaven, and is at the right hand of the Father. Now, therefore, it is declared, that the whole expiation is made, and that pardon is obtained for men through the death of Christ. See ch. 7:25.'

V. 26. 'Christ is here said to have been revealed at the confines of the ages; where the end of this age or world, and the beginning of that to come, as it were, touch one another. A phrase which most exactly describes the time of the coming of the Messiah.' J. P. SMITH.

V. 27, 28. It is generally supposed, that some of the expressions, in the latter part of this ch., allude to the ceremonies, used on the great day of atonement; particularly, 'the scape-goat bare,' or carried away, the sins of the people into the wilderness, and the high priest, when he had entered into the holy of holies, in linen garments, came forth to the people in his splendid sacerdotal robes, to pronounce the blessing on them. Lev. 16:20—25.—'Did He not appear the first time without sin? Yes, certainly, as to any inherent guilt, for the Scripture says, "He had no sin." What then is the meaning of this opposition, that at his first coming "He bare our sins," but at his second coming "He shall appear without sin unto salvation?" These words can have no other imaginable sense but this, that at his first coming He sustained the person of a sinner, and suffered instead of us; but his second coming shall be our sin-



28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.

CHAP. X.

<sup>1</sup> The weakness of the law sacrifices. <sup>10</sup> The sacrifice of Christ's body once offered, <sup>14</sup> for ever hath taken away sins. <sup>19</sup> An exhortation to hold fast the faith, with patience and thanksgiving.

FOR the law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Pe. 3:21. <sup>2</sup> Pe. 3:12. <sup>a</sup> Col. 2:17.  
<sup>3</sup>:18. 1 Jn. 3:5. <sup>v</sup> Ac. 1:11. <sup>b</sup> Or, they would  
<sup>t</sup> Is. 53:12. <sup>Re.</sup> 1:7. <sup>have</sup>  
<sup>Mat.</sup> 25:28. <sup>w</sup> Is. 25:9. <sup>c</sup> Le. 13:34.  
<sup>u</sup> Tit. 2:13.

PRACT. OBS. V. 15—23. We must never presume to approach God, except on a mercy-seat, and in the name of our great High Priest, who is 'entered into heaven to appear in his presence for us.' All our hopes and blessings must be sought as the fruit of his agonizing, yet voluntary death, the legacy of his dying love, and the gift of his royal munificence to rebellious creatures. We must ascribe even our sanctification, and all our real good works, to the same all-procuring Cause; and attend on divine ordinances, and offer our spiritual sacrifices, as 'sprinkled with his blood,' and so purified from their defilement. Nay, we must expect admission into heaven, as the place which He has prepared for

other account, and He shall appear, not as a Sacrifice, but as a Judge.' Abp. Tillotson.

(27, 28.) 'The apostle shows, by a new argument, derived a *simili*, that Christ ought *once* only to offer Himself, namely, because his sacrifice and death were one and the same. Nor does he properly intend to affirm, that all men must die, but that it is appointed for them *once* to die, and after death nothing shall remain but judgment.' Bloomer. See on vs. 1—5. from Stuart, who adds here, on v. 27. 'The implication contained in this v. viz. that a state of trial in a future world, like to that which is allowed men in the present world, is not to be expected, seems to be plain.' Ed.

NOTES. CHAP. X. 'Having compared various particulars in the Aaronic priesthood to those which relate to the priesthood of Christ, the writer comes at last to treat more fully of the inefficacy of the Jewish sacrifices, and of the perfect and everlasting efficacy of the propitiatory offering made by Christ.—at which indeed he had hinted several times before, 7:11, 19. 8:7, 13. 9:2—10, 13, 14. He begins by declaring, that the rites of the law were designed to be *typical*, and that the yearly sacrifices offered under it, never could quiet and purify the consciences of men, 10:1. otherwise, the offerings had not been continually repeated, v. 2. The remembrance of sin is constantly renewed by them, v. 3. Indeed, it is plainly impossible the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin, i. e. remove the penalty of it, or lessen its power, v. 4. Hence the Scripture (Ps. 40.) represents the Savior, when entering on his work, as saying, sacrifices and offerings are of no value in the sight of God, v. 5, 6. The Messiah represents Himself as doing what God requires, in order that He may exercise his clemency, v. 7. Of course, (so our author,) sacrifices and offerings are rejected, in respect to making real propitiation, while the obedience of Christ unto death is accepted instead of them, vs. 8, 9. This sacrifice is truly efficacious for moral purposes, v. 10. The Jewish priests continually repeated their sacrifices; but the offering of Christ, *once* made, is of everlasting efficacy, vs. 11, 12. Having once made this, He may expect the cause on account of which it was made to be victorious, v. 13. for one offering, *once* made by Jesus, is all sufficient, its effects are never to cease, v. 14. To such an efficacy of Christ's offering, the Holy Spirit has testified in the Scriptures, by declaring, that under the *new* covenant sin should be forgiven, and iniquity no more remembered, vs. 15, 16. Consequently, offering for sin needs not be repeated, after pardon is actually obtained, v. 17, 18. With this consideration, the comparison of Jesus, as a Priest, with the Jewish priests under the Levitical priesthood, closes, occupying, however, most of the epistle, viz. from 4:14. to 10:13. The writer then proceeds to exhortations, warnings, and various arguments from different sources, in order to urge on his Hebrew brethren the importance of persevering in the Christian faith.' SEWALL.—'This ch. is not connected with the words immediately preceding, nor contains the reason of them; but relates to what was said on the entering of the priest to the *sanctum sanctorum* every year, with the blood of another; whereas Christ offered Himself. The cause he deduces from the variety of sacrifices, and the nature of the law.'

BLOOMER, after Diot.  
 V. 1, 2. (2) 'Would they not, &c.?' Some render this, 'They would not have ceased to be offered.' That is, they would have continued to be offered, being efficacious and adequate. But it is plain, from the apostle's previous reasoning on several things contained in the Old Test. that this was never intended. The reading with an interrogation seems to be founded on the best authority, and is most satisfactory.—If any sacrifice had been offered, of sufficient efficacy to atone for sin, there would have been no need for a continual repetition of it; and [540]

sins of the world; and then He appeared in the form of sinful flesh; but his second appearance will be without any such charge on Him, He having fully discharged it before; and then his visage shall not be marred, but shall be exceedingly glorious. This will be to the salvation of all who look for Him; He will then perfect their holiness, their happiness; their number shall then be accomplished, and their salvation completed. Observe, It is the distinguishing character of true believers, that they are looking for Christ; they look to Him by faith, for Him by hope and holy desires, for Him in every duty, in every ordinance, in every providence now; and they expect his second coming, and are preparing for it; and though it will be sudden destruction to the rest of the world, who scoff at the report of it, it will be eternal salvation to those who look for it.

CHAP. X. V. 1—6. Here the apostle, by the direction of the Spirit of God, sets himself to show the weakness and imperfection of the Levitical dispensation; which he does effectually, from several arguments. As,

1. The law had but a shadow of good things to come; and who would dote on a shadow, though of good things, especially when the substance is come? Observe, The

things of Christ and the Gospel are good things; the best things, best in themselves, and best for us; they are realities of an excellent nature. These good things were, under the Old Test., good things to come, not clearly discovered, nor fully enjoyed. The Jews then had but the shadow of the good things of Christ, some adumbrations of them; we under the Gospel have the substance.

2. The law was *not the very image* of the good things to come. An image is an exact draft of the thing represented thereby. The law did not go so far, but was only a shadow, as the image of a person in a looking-glass is a much more perfect representation than his shadow on the wall. The law was a very rough draft of the great design of divine grace, and therefore not to be so much doted on.

3. The legal sacrifices, being offered year by year, could never make the comers thereunto perfect; for then there would have been an end of offering them, v. 1, 2. But no, after one day of atonement was over, the sinner would fall again into one fault or other, and so there would be need of another day of atonement, and of one every year, beside the daily ministrations. Whereas now, under the Gospel, the atonement is perfect, and not to be repeated; and the sin-

us, through the presenting of his blood, for the ransom of our souls, and which would otherwise have been contaminated by our entrance into it. Thus we should in all things learn the inestimable value of the 'one sacrifice,' which Christ once appeared on earth to offer for us, that we may know our interest in his covenant, and be 'constrained by his love,' to the most devoted and unreserved obedience. 2 Cor. 5:13—15. In this manner we shall be reconciled to the appointed stroke of death, and look forward to judgment with cheerful hope; and so wait prepared for his coming the second 'time without sin' to perfect our salvation.

SCOTT.

that repetition showed the inefficacy of the most solemn legal sacrifices. On the contrary, when the one sacrifice of Christ had been offered, the legal sacrifices were virtually abolished; no other sacrifice was required; no repetition was necessary; the end was fully answered; nothing, except faith in Him, was needful; and the appointed ordinances were no longer *prefigurations*, but *memorials*, of his one all-sufficient atonement.

SCOTT.

V. 3, 4. The apostle's argument implied, that no sacrifice could really atone for sin, or bring sinners into a state of acceptance with God unto eternal life, which did not make full satisfaction to his offended justice, and render it honorable to Him to remit the punishment of it.—The same argument equally proves, that the blood of a mere man, or of a mere creature, 'cannot take away sin.' A guilty creature deserves wrath for his own crimes. If a perfectly holy man had the full disposal of his own life and soul, and could be willing to devote them to destruction, in the stead of a single guilty person; his life might be an adequate ransom for the other's life, his soul for the other's soul; but this must be all: and, even in this case, we cannot conceive that God would appoint, allow, or accept such a substitution. If the most exalted of mere creatures should willingly assume our nature, and suffer temporal death, in its most horrible forms, for our salvation; we may easily perceive that the atonement, or compensation to justice, would be very small, when compared with the guilt to be pardoned, and the punishment to be remitted, for the sake of it: nor could this render it consistent with the perfect justice of God, to pardon the atrocious and innumerable rebellions of unnumbered millions, and to give them eternal life, in consideration of it. . . . But, when 'God manifested in the flesh' became the Sacrifice, and his death upon the cross the Ransom; when 'God purchased the church with his own blood;' the Sufferer being of infinite dignity, his voluntary sufferings were of infinite value. The perfect justice and holiness of God, and the honor of his law, are as legitimate in the cross of Christ, as his love to sinners: his infinite purity, and infinite mercy, unite in perfect and eternal harmony; while unnumbered millions of rebels, who deserve the final wrath of God, are pardoned, and made heirs of eternal felicity, through this satisfaction of inestimable value. We may perceive, that this was an expedient *adequate* to its object; and that such a sacrifice would suffice for the sins of the whole world, if all men actually came to God through it. It is necessary for us to insist on this, not only as comprising an unanswerable argument for the real Deity and the proper atonement of Christ, but because many, who profess to believe both these truths, under color of blaming metaphysical exactness in stating doctrines, and affecting to treat the orthodox reformers, doctrinal Puritans, and modern preachers of the Gospel, as men of narrow minds, advance many things contrary to the apostle's reasoning in this passage: as if Christ's sacrifice derived *all* its efficacy from the appointment of God, and not from his personal Deity and excellency; (which was 'the altar that sanctified the gift;') and as if, had the Lord so pleased, an *inferior* sacrifice might have equally answered the purpose. But surely they forget, that God appointed the sacrifices of bulls and goats, as well as that of his Son: yet 'it was not possible' for the former to take away sin, but the latter at once effected it, because of its intrinsic value.—'Divine acceptance must not be assigned as the only cause, that the oblation of our Savior's body was thus available for the expiation of the guilt of sin; for then no reason can be given why He might not have accepted of the blood of bulls and goats, and much more of the sufferings of any ordinary man. . . . But the great reason, why "the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sins" is this, that they could never answer the great ends of



4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away <sup>d</sup> sins.

[Practical Observations.]

5 Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, 'Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body <sup>f</sup> hast thou prepared me :

6 In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure :

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.

8 Above, when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt-offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law ;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

<sup>d</sup> Mt. 6:6-8. <sup>e</sup> Ps. 40:6-8. <sup>f</sup> or, thou hast fitted.

ner, once pardoned, is ever pardoned as to his state, and only needs to renew his repentance and faith, that he may have a comfortable sense of a continued pardon.

4. As the legal sacrifices did not of them-

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-4. The righteousness brought in by Christ, and the sacrifice once offered by Him, are of infinite and eternal efficacy, and 'his salvation shall never be abolished.'—Most certain it is, from these chs., that God will not pardon any transgression, without such a sacrifice, as can really expiate the guilt of it. And if those sacrifices, which were of his own appointment, 'could not take away sin,' be-

punishment, and thereby render it consistent with the honor of the Governor, and with the ends of government, to admit the substitution of them in our stead. . . . By the obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ unto the death, in our stead, these ends of punishment are very signally obtained, and that with more advantage to God's glory, than if the punishment of our offences had been inflicted on us; and so God, by it, may be truly said to have been satisfied, seeing that justice . . . is truly satisfied, when all those ends for which the punishment of the offender could be desired, are obtained. . . . 1. God, by this dispensation, hath given us the best and most effectual *example*, to deter us from sin. . . . If He, who was the well beloved Son of God, found it so dreadful to lie under the burden for some hours; to lie exposed for ever to it must be far more intolerable. . . . If, on this account, "God spared not his own Son," we may be sure He will not spare his stubborn enemies. . . . 2. God, by this method, hath taken a most excellent way for *reformation* of the sinner. . . . 3. God, by this dispensation, hath sufficiently consulted the preservation of his honor, and secured the reverence and observation of his laws. . . . seeing He hath, by this example, let all men know, that, though He be a God of great long-suffering and mercy, He will by no means clear the sinner, or suffer sin to go unpunished. . . . But that none of these ends could be at all obtained, by the substitution of a bull, or goat, or ram, to suffer in our stead, must be extremely evident; . . . for this would rather tempt men to conceive that God's displeasure against sin could not be great, . . . and that He was not much concerned for any satisfaction for the violations of his law, when such slight matters were by Him thought sufficient expiations for them.' *Whitby*. *Scott*.

(3.) *Remembrance*.] This 'remembrance of sin,' pervades all the appointed ordinances of worship, since the fall of Adam; including baptism, the Lord's supper, prayer, and thanksgiving. 1 *Kings* 17:18. *Jo*.

V. 5-10. To prove his doctrine in the most manly manner, the apostle referred the Hebrews to a remarkable prophecy of the Messiah; which showed that his coming was the necessary consequence of the inefficiency of the legal sacrifices, and of the Lord's purpose of saving sinners. (*Note*, Ps. 40:6-8.) The Messiah, speaking concerning his 'coming into the world,' remarked, that Jehovah had no delight in the sacrifices of the law; (*Notes*, Ps. 50:7-15. *Is*. 1:10-15.) but 'that He had prepared a body for Him.'—When Jehovah received no satisfaction from the legal sacrifices, not merely because the people rested in them after a formal and self-righteous manner, but especially because they did not sufficiently display the honor of his justice in pardoning sinners; the eternal Son declared his readiness to come into the world in human nature for that purpose, according as it had been written of Him in 'the volume of the book,' or in opening the roll of prophecy, in which He had been promised as 'the Seed of the woman.' (*Note*, *Gen*. 3:14, 15.) Now the apostle argued from this, that the evident contrast in the prophecy quoted, between 'the sacrifices, in which Jehovah had no pleasure,' and the obedience of the Messiah to his whole will, in which He would be fully satisfied, was an evident intimation, that He intended to remove the former, in order to establish the latter in its full glory, and as the only ground of sinners' being pardoned and saved. By this will of God, perfectly performed by Christ in his obedience unto the death on the cross, Christians were 'sanctified' and consecrated to God, as accepted and spiritual worshippers; 'through the offering of his body once for all,' with which his mediatorial obedience had been completed. (*Note*, 13:9-14.)—From this memorable passage of the fortieth Psalm, we learn, that the only expiation for sin, which God ever appointed, is the sacrifice of his Son in the human nature; that all the sacrifices, which He appointed to the Israelites, were nothing but emblems of the sacrifice of Christ; and that the sacrifice of Christ being offered, the emblems of it are now fitly laid aside; that, under the gos-

selfs take away sin, so it was impossible they should, v. 4. There was an essential defect in them. They were not of the same nature that offended, and so could not be suitable. They were much less of the same nature that was offended; and nothing less than that could make the sacrifice a full satisfaction for the offence. The beasts offered up under the law could not consent to put themselves in the sinner's room and place. The atoning sacrifice must be one capable of consenting, and must voluntarily substitute himself in the sinner's stead; Christ did so.

5. There was a time fixed and foretold by the great God, and that time was now come, when these legal sacrifices would be no longer accepted by Him, or useful to men. God never did desire them for themselves, and now He abrogated them; and therefore to adhere to them now, would be resisting God and rejecting Him. This time of the repeal of the Levitical laws was foretold by David, Ps. 40:7. and is recited here as now come. Thus industriously does the apostle lay low the Mosaic dispensation.

V. 7-18. Here the apostle exalts the Lord Jesus Christ as high, as he had laid the Levitical priesthood low. He recommends Christ to them as the true High Priest, the true atoning Sacrifice, the Antitype of all the rest; and this he illustrates,

1. From the purpose and promise of God

because they could not satisfy the demands of his justice; let none suppose, that human inventions, self-imposed penances, prayers, tears, amendments, moral virtues, almsdeeds, or any other device or performance, can avail in the behalf of those, who substitute them in the stead of the sacrifice of the Son of God; 'for if righteousness,' in any way or degree, 'come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.' *Scott*.

pel-dispensation, there might remain to mankind no sacrifice, having pretension to take away sin, but the sacrifice of Christ, expressly established by God Himself, as the meritorious Cause of our pardon.' *Maacknight*. *A body, &c.*] The words in the Psalm are, 'Mine ears hast Thou opened,' or 'bored.' *Ex*. 21:3-6. and it has perplexed many expositors to determine why the apostle, writing to the Hebrews, should quote from the Sept., where that translation evidently differs from the Heb. But he probably supposed that the words conveyed the general meaning of the passage: and that the production of the holy human nature of Christ was that preparation for his mediatorial obedience, which was intended by that expression, 'Mine ears hast Thou opened.' The quotation, however, is not exactly from the Sept., which seems to have been made from some other reading, than that found in our present copies. The meaning, however, and the apostle's argument, are not at all affected by the variation. *Scott*.

(5.) 'The apostle opening the great plan of redemption, introduces the Savior as thus addressing his Father. See Ps. 40:6. et seq. which is a prophecy of Christ, upon the assumption of his human nature.' *Valpy*, in *Bloomf.*—*Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not.*] I.e. 'Not absolutely, but they were, in a comparative sense, of little value.' *Stuart*. *A body hast Thou prepared Me.*] 'The discrepancy here between the Heb. and the Sept. [*Kennicott* thinks the Heb. once read as the Greek now does] the most judicious are of opinion may best be removed [accounted for] by supposing the Sept. have translated *freely*, giving the real, though not the literal sense; explaining it, as Mr. *Slade* says, in the way of paraphrase, to those for whom they translated. See *Rom*. 3:12. *Bloomf.*—*Saurin* ingeniously conjectures, that the Heb. originally read: 'My ears hast Thou opened,' or bored, in allusion to *Ex*. 21:6. He conceives that the LXX., considering that idea unintelligible in Greek, changed the allusion to a custom familiar to themselves, namely, the marking the bodies of their soldiers and slaves, that they might claim them as their own, and therefore rendered the original, 'My body hast Thou prepared,' meaning marked, according to their custom: and *Wilkins* adds, (in reference to *Gal*. 6:17.) *Rev*. 13:16, 17. But *Stuart* has well shown, that the apostle's use of the phrase from the Sept. may be regarded as rather *incidental*; the apostle found it in the Sept., and, as being to his purpose, he used it accordingly.—'There can be no doubt,' *Bloomf.* says, 'but the phrase must be understood of Christ's being clothed and fitted with a human body for the purpose of making the sacrifice in question.' *Ros*. gives the sense thus: "'Thou hast created Me a body, that I might use it to the purpose of obeying [ad obedientiam], that I might make it what Thou wouldest have it to be made, and that I might yield it up to death.' What the apostle wished (he says) to show, was, that, since the sacrifices by the law of Moses could not take away sin, Christ was pleased to offer up Himself; and by this sacrifice to make expiation and bring us to be saved.' *Ed*. 'Christ's coming into the world, in scripture-phrase, means, his descending from heaven to be with us, *John* 16:23. and his going hence to heaven, is styled his leaving the world, *John* 13:1. 16:28. 17:11. The connexion of it here with the time when a body was prepared for Him, will not suffer us to doubt, that it imports his assumption of the human nature, and his being born into the world.' *Whitby*, in *Henry*, *abr*.

(7.) *Volume of the book.*] The Pentateuch. So *Stuart*, *Doddr.*, and *Bloomf.* *Stuart* adds, 'and perhaps the book of Joshua;' though *Doddr.* thinks the Pentateuch 'the only book containing prophecies of the Messiah written before David.'

(3, 9.) *Ros*. here gives the sense from v. 5-9 thus: 'Obedience is better than external sacred rites; but this Christ rendered while He willing- and promptly underwent death, to this end, that we might be purified from sin and obtain pardon.'—'That is,' says *Stuart*, 'doing the will



10 By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins :

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God ;

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us : for after that he had said before,

16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord ; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them ;

17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

[Practical Observations.]

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh ;

g Jn. 17:19. h c. 9:12. i Nu. 28:3. j Ps. 50:3-13. k Col. 3:1. l Ps. 110:1. m ver. 1. n Je. 31:33,34. o Some copies have, Then he

said, And their p oc, liberty. q c. 9:8,12. r Jn. 14:6. s or, new ma.le.

in two instances. In taking away the first priesthood, which God had no pleasure in; and in establishing the second, that is, his own priesthood, and the everlasting Gospel, the most pure and perfect dispensation of the covenant of grace; this is the great design on which the heart of God was set from all eternity; and it is not more agreeable to the will of God, than it is advantageous to the souls of men; for it is by this will that we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all, v. 10. Observe, What is the fountain of all that Christ has done for his people—the sovereign will and grace of God. How we come to partake of what Christ has done for us—by being sanc-

tified, converted, effectually called, wherein we are united to Christ, and so partake of the benefits of his redemption; and this sanctification is owing to the oblation He made of Himself to God.

5. From the perfect efficacy of the priesthood of Christ, v. 14. He has and will perfectly deliver those that are brought over to Him, from all the guilt, power, and punishment of sin, and will put them into the sure possession of perfect holiness and felicity. This is what the Levitical priesthood could never do; and if we indeed are aiming at a perfect state, we must receive the Lord Jesus as the only High Priest that can bring us to that state.

6. From the place to which our Lord Jesus is now exalted, the honor He has there, and the further honor He shall have, v. 12, 13. Here observe, (1.) To what honor Christ, as Man and Mediator, is exalted,—to the right hand of God, the seat of power, interest, and activity; the giving hand; all the favors God bestows on his people, are handed them by Christ; the receiving hand; all the duties God accepts from men, are presented by Christ; the working hand; all in the kingdoms of providence and grace, is administered by Christ; and therefore this is the highest post of honor. (2.) How Christ came to this honor,—not merely by the purpose or donation of the Father, but by his own merit and purchase, as a reward due to his sufferings; and as He can never be deprived of an honor so much his due, so He will never quit it, nor cease to employ it for his people's good. (3.) How He enjoys this honor,—with the greatest satisfaction and rest; He is for ever sat down there; here He will dwell; for He hath both desired and deserved it. (4.) He has further expectations, which shall not be disappointed; for they are grounded on the promise of the Father, who hath said unto Him, Sit Thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool, Ps. 110:1. One would think such a Person as Christ could have no enemies, except in hell; but He has enemies on earth, very many, and very inveterate ones. But Christ's enemies shall be made his footstool; some by conversion, others by confusion; and which way soever it be, Christ will be honored; of this Christ is assured, this He is expecting; and his people should rejoice in the expectation of it; for when his enemies are subdued, their enemies, that are so for his sake, shall be subdued also.

7. And lastly, The apostle recommends Christ, from the witness the Holy Ghost has given in the Scriptures concerning Him; this relates chiefly to what should be the happy fruit and consequence of his humiliation and sufferings, which in general is that

new and gracious covenant that is founded on his satisfaction, and sealed by his blood, v. 15. The passage is cited from Jer. 31:31. in which covenant God promises, (1.) That God would pour out his Spirit on his people, so as to give them wisdom, will, and power, to obey his Word; He will put his laws in their hearts, and write them in their minds, v. 16. This will make their duty plain, easy, and pleasant. (2.) Their sins and iniquities He will remember no more, v. 17. which will alone show the riches of divine grace, and the sufficiency of Christ's satisfaction, that it needs not be repeated, v. 18. For there shall be no more remembrance of sin against true believers, either to shame them now, or to condemn them hereafter. This was much more than the Levitical priesthood and sacrifices could effect.

And now we have gone through the doctrinal part of the epistle, in which we have met with many things dark and difficult to be understood, which we must impute to the weakness and dullness of our own minds. The apostle now proceeds to apply this great doctrine, so as to influence their affections, and direct their practice, setting before them the dignities and duties of the gospel-state.

V. 19—39. Here the apostle sets forth, I. The dignities of the gospel-state. It is fit believers should know the honors and privileges Christ has procured them, that, while they take the comfort, they may give Him the glory of all. They have access to God, light and liberty, a right to the privilege, and a readiness for it; assistance to use and improve it, and assurance of acceptance and advantage. They have a High Priest over the house of God, even this blessed Jesus, who presides over the church militant, and every member thereof on earth, and over the church triumphant in heaven. God is willing to dwell with men on earth, and to have them dwell with Him in heaven; but fallen man cannot dwell with God, without a High Priest, who is the Mediator of reconciliation here, and of fruition hereafter.

II. The apostle tells us the way and means by which Christians enjoy such privileges, and, in general, declares it to be by the blood of Jesus, by the merit of that blood which he offered up to God as an atoning sacrifice. This, being sprinkled on the conscience, chases away slavish fear, and gives the believer assurance both of his safety, and his welcome into the divine presence. Now the apostle having given this general account of the way by which we have access to God, enters further into the particulars of it, v. 20. It is the only way; there is no other but this. It is a new way,

PRACT. OBS. V. 5—13. When the eternal Son of God saw the hopeless condition of fallen man, for whom no sacrifices even of divine appointment, and no contrivances of man's devising, could in the least avail, He, according as it had been written of Him in 'the volume of the Book,' from the beginning, with infinite compassion towards our

of God, or obedience to Him, even unto death, or the offering up of his [Christ's] body, is represented by the Psalmist as a substitute for legal sacrifices, and an arrangement which would supersede them.' Ed.

V. 11—13. By his one oblation, He had provided effectually for the perfect justification, unto eternal life, of all those who should ever receive his atonement, by faith springing from regeneration, and evidenced 'by the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience,' and who were thus set apart and consecrated to the service of God. To this the Holy Spirit had borne testimony in the Scripture, which had been before quoted. 8:7—13. According to the covenant, there spoken of, when the laws of God are written in the heart, every kind and degree of sin is for ever pardoned: for Christ 'by his one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;' and where such perfect remission is vouchsafed, there needs no more sacrifice for sins. For though justified persons continually contract new guilt, and their best services need forgiveness; yet the sacrifice of Christ continually applied to, in the exercise of penitent faith, preserves their peace; and if the exercise of repentance and faith he at any time intermitted, through temptation and sin; corrections, rebukes, and terrors bring them back again to the same remedy and thus their justification is, as it were, a permanent act of God, continued in their daily pardon and acceptance for Christ's sake, through life even unto death, and so in judgment and to eternity. (15.) Holy Ghost.] How marked an attestation of the inspiration of the Psalmist!

deserved misery, came in human nature, to accomplish the will of the Father, and to 'bear our sins in his own body on the tree.' Gen. 3:14, 15. What then remains, but that we seek an interest in this sacrifice by faith, and the seal of it to our souls by 'the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience?' SCOTT.

(18.) 'The writer next proceeds to show, for what purpose this quotation is here made, i. e. to express the sentiment, that, under the new covenant or gospel-dispensation, absolute and final pardon is to be obtained.—No more, here, is a circumstance which makes a great difference between the new covenant and the old one. . . Well might the apostle call it a new covenant.' STUART.

V. 19—22. (20) New way.] The original way of acceptance and communion with God, through 'the righteousness of works,' had been finally shut up by the entrance of sin. Gen. 3:22—24. The typical sacrifices could not open another way, as the restrictions and exclusions, before stated, evidently showed: while even the admission of the high priest, on the day of atonement, only, being preceded with recent sacrifices and blood newly shed, signified that the way into the holiest was not yet manifested.' But the blood of Jesus is always, as it were, 'newly shed;' it never loses its efficacy, and may at any time, and by any sinner, be presented in faith before the mercy-seat; and it never fails to procure, to all who thus plead it, a free and acceptable access to God. JENOVAN displayed his glory above the mercy-seat, in the holy of holies, before the coming of Christ; but this glory was covered and concealed by the veil; that is, the harmony of infinite holiness with pardoning mercy, in the divine conduct and character, was not clearly discovered or understood. 9:1—10. Ex. 26:31—33. But when the human nature of Christ, the Son of God, was wounded and bruised for our sins; and when He expired on the cross, 'the veil was rent from top to



21 And *having* an high priest 'over the house of God ;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart, in <sup>a</sup> full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled <sup>v</sup> from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering ; (for he <sup>v</sup> is faithful that promised ;)

24 And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works :

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is* ; but exhorting *one another* : and so much the more as <sup>x</sup> ye see the day approaching.

[Practical Observations.]

t c. 4:14—16. v Eze. 36:25. x Ro. 13:11.  
u Ep. 3:12. w 1 Th. 5:24.

both in opposition to the covenant of works, and to the antiquated dispensation of the Old Test. ; it is *the last way* that will ever be opened to men ; they who will not enter in this way, exclude themselves for ever ; it is a way that will always be effectual. It is a living way. It would be death to attempt to come to God in the way of the covenant of works ; but this way we may come to

PRACT. OBS. V. 19—25. Having 'access with boldness into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,' by 'the new and living way which He hath consecrated for us,' let us not stand at a distance, or turn away from Him who 'beseeches us to be reconciled.' *Is. 55:6, 7. 2 Cor. 5:18—21. Jam. 4:7—10.* Let us, in the first place, beware of hypocrisy, that we may 'draw near with a true heart ;' let us watch and pray against unbelief, that we may come 'in the full assurance of faith,' knowing this to be the appointed and only way of acceptance and salvation ; let us apply his blood to purge us from guilt, and seek for his promised grace, to cleanse us from all our filthiness ; that so, our 'hearts being sprinkled from an evil conscience,' we may 'lay aside the body of the sins of the flesh,' and 'henceforth walk in newness of life.' Thus we

bottom.' (*Note, Mat. 27:51—53.*) The obscurity was then removed, and 'a just God and a Savior' was openly revealed to mankind ; displaying his glory from the mercy-seat, and exercising most abundant grace even to the chief of sinners, in a manner most honorable to his infinite purity.—They might indeed very properly examine themselves, whether they were true believers or not ; and so admit a doubt of their own sincerity, or personal acceptance ; and therefore 'the full assurance of hope' could not always be a *duty*, any more than always attainable : yet they must never allow themselves to doubt of the truth of the testimony of God, or his faithfulness to his promises ; so that 'the full assurance of faith' was always their duty ; though in that, as in other things, they would come short of it. *Note, 6:11, 12.*—As the priests were washed with water, before they were admitted to enter on their office, and continually washed themselves, in some measure, before they officiated ; and as divers baptisms were appointed to the worshippers by the law, 9:8—10. *Ez. 29:1—7. 30:12—21.* so the use of water in baptism was to be a constant memorial to Christians, that their outward conduct should be pure and holy before men, as well as their hearts and consciences cleansed in the sight of God. (*Notes, Zech. 13:1. Mat. 3:5, 6. 28:18—20. John 3:4, 5. 1 Cor. 6:9—11. Eph. 5:22—27. Tit. 3:4—7. 1 Pet. 3:19—22. Rev. 7:13—17.*) Thus they would approve themselves to be spiritual worshippers ; and whilst they derived comfort and grace from their reconciled Father, they would 'adorn the doctrine of God their Savior in all things.'

(19.) The writer having gone through with a comparison of the new dispensation with the old, and having shown, that whether Christ be compared with angels, or Moses, or the high priest of the Hebrews, He holds a rank far above them ; having shown, also, that whether the temple in which He ministers be compared with that at Jerusalem, or the sacrifice He offers be compared with those sacrifices presented by the Jewish priests, either as to its exalted nature, its spiritual efficacy in respect to procuring pardon for sin, or the duration and extent of its effects, the Mosaic institutions are nothing more than the *shadow*, of which Christian ones are the *substance* ; he now proceeds to the hortatory and admonitory part of his epistle.

(20.) 'New and living way,'—i. e. *new*, not only as lately opened, but also because those who draw nigh to God in it, have liberty of access in their own persons, and obtain pardon by means of a sacrifice altogether different from that which was offered for worshippers by the Jewish priests :—*living*, i. e. *leading to life or happiness, or conferring it.*—*Through the veil.*—In John 1:14. Rom. 1:4. 9:5. Phil. 2:6. the human nature or body of Christ seems to be regarded as a kind of temporary tabernacle, or *veil* of the divine nature which dwelt in Him. May not this be the sense here ? The idea would be : "As the veil of the temple concealed the glory of Jehovah, in the holy of holies, from the view of men ; so Christ's flesh or body screened or concealed the higher nature from our view (which dwelt within this veil, as God did of old within the veil of the temple)." If on this account the apostle calls Christ's flesh a *veil*, then we may easily make out the sense of the verse before us. It would stand thus : "As God dwells behind the veil, in the earthly temple, so God dwells behind the veil of Jesus' body, in his spiritual temple, i. e. He can be approached only through the medium

God, and live. It is a way Christ has consecrated for us through the veil, that is, his flesh. The veil in the tabernacle and temple, signified the body of Christ ; when He died, the veil of the temple was rent in sunder, and this was at the time of the evening sacrifice, and gave the people a surprising view into the holy of holies, which they never had before. Our way to heaven is by a crucified Savior ; his death is to us the way of life ; to those who believe this, He will be precious.

III. The apostle proceeds to show the Hebrews the duties they were obliged to, on account of these privileges conferred on them in such an extraordinary way, v. 22, 23, &c.

1. They must draw near to God, and that in a right manner. They must draw near to God by conversion, and by taking hold of his covenant ; in all holy conversation, like Enoch walking with God ; in humble adorations, worshipping at his footstool ; in holy dependence, and a strict observation of the divine conduct toward them ; in conformity to God, and communion with Him, living under his blessed influence, still endeavoring to get nearer and nearer, till they come to dwell in his presence ; but they must see to it, that they make their approach to God after a right manner. (1.) With a true heart, without any allowed guile or hypocrisy. (2.) In full assurance of faith ; with a faith grown up to a full

shall be enabled to 'hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering,' whatever temptations or seducing examples we may meet with, knowing that 'He is faithful who hath promised ;' and, with composed and cheerful minds, we shall be enabled to consider the cases of our brethren, that we may animate and 'stimulate them to love and good works.'—But, if they were not to be excused who, in the time of severe persecution, forsook the assembling of themselves together ; how shall we answer it to God, if, in these favored days, we indolently absent ourselves from the assemblies of his saints, and neglect to honor Him by attendance on his ordinances ? Against such evils we should warn others most earnestly, and ought ourselves gladly 'to suffer the word of exhortation,' as knowing the day of death and judgment speedily approaches. Sc.

of this, or by means of this." The comparison is, in most respects, without grounds of analogy, and the two things widely dissimilar ; yet there is as much congruity in it, as there is in the comparison between the *physical* death of Christ in Rom. 6. and the *moral* death of believers to sin, to which the former is there compared.

(22.) 'There is an allusion to the sacrificial rite, by which the mind as well as the body of the worshipper was required to be pure.' *Bl.*—The washing with pure water, he, with *Doddr.* and others, understands of the daily washings of the priests. *Ex. 29:4. Lev. 16:4.* *Stuart* thinks there 'is a plain allusion to the use of water in the initiatory rite of Christian baptism ;' and its connexion with *sprinkling* may also be noticed in this respect.

V. 23—25. This epistle was written only a few years before that event, (Jerusalem's desolation,) and as this would be a critical deliverance of Christians from the persecutions of the Jews, so it would be peculiarly terrible to apostates.—(23) *Faith.*] *Hope* is the general and approved reading. 3:1—6, 14—19. 6:11, 12. 1 *Pet.* 1:13—16. *Scott.*

(23.) *The profession of our faith.*] 'The profession of the religion which bids us hope.' *Bloomf.*—The Eng. translators, on the authority of one MS. only, read here *faith*, instead of *hope*,—the true reading to *Mill*, who is followed by *Doddr.*, *Mackn.*, *M'Lean*, &c. *Williams.*

(25.) *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.*] How important this precept to the maintenance of piety ; and yet how little regarded by multitudes of professors of religion in our country, who voluntarily place themselves and their families in situations in which they cannot enjoy the privilege of assembling with their brethren on the Sabbath, and at other times, for social and public worship, and attendance on the preaching of the Gospel. The following forcible remarks upon this subject, are from Dr. Alexander's Sermon, on the duty of *Growing in Grace*. 'There is a prevalent evil in our country, so common that it seems to be but little noticed. It is the practice of many professors, of leaving places where Christian society and the ordinances of the Gospel are enjoyed, to dwell in the new settlements, without making any provision for the supply of their spiritual wants ; influenced altogether by a regard to worldly profit. Often months and years pass without their hearing a single gospel-sermon, (or once assembling with their brethren.) Their children grow up, nearly as wild and irreligious as their heathen neighbors. How will such persons answer for the irreparable injury done to their families, by removing far from the house of God, and all the public means of grace ? The question may be asked, whether a man who happens to reside where evangelical preaching is not heard, ought to change his residence so as to live under its sound ? I answer, *assuredly* ; unless he has reasonable ground of hope that he can be personally useful to the people where he dwells, or instrumental in (soon) procuring the establishment of the means of grace among them. For what is the body to the soul ? Growth in riches to growth in grace ? And who can be excused for exposing, to eternal death, the souls of his family, for the sake of procuring for them a larger share of earthly property ? If we would grow in grace, we must live within the reach of the means of grace.' *Rev. Dr. ALEXANDER.* 'No efficacious mode of general religious instruction was ever devised, but that which by divine appointment is associated with the Sabbath. Throughout the



26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses :

γ Nu. 15:30. z Zep. 1:13. 3:8. a De. 17:2-13. c. 6:4, &c.

apostasy. They who begin to waver in matters of Christian faith and practice, are in danger of falling away. (3) The motive or reason enforcing this duty,—*He is faithful, that hath promised.* God has made great and precious promises to believers, and his faithfulness should excite and encourage us to be faithful; and we must depend more on his promises to us, than on ours with Him, and we must plead with Him the promise of grace sufficient.

IV. We have the means prescribed for preventing our apostasy, and promoting our

world, where no Sabbath convenes the population to receive instruction, the character and government of God, and the retributions of eternity, fade from the mind, and cease to operate as principles of action. Blot out the Sabbath, and in half a century [men would forsake the assembling of themselves together for religious worship, and] the intelligent worship of God would be nearly obliterated, and the land covered with every form of superstition and crime. Where the Sabbath does not give presence and energy to the divine government, the moral law is without effect; parents are without natural affection; children are dissolute and disobedient; and the family a scene of turmoil and wretchedness.' Rev. Dr BEECHER. 'That they spend so much time in reading, praying, singing, hearing sermons, &c. has been urged against some professors. But it is clear from Scripture, that true grace very much tends to produce delight in such exercises. This was the case with Anna the prophetess, Lu. 2:37. with the primitive Christians, Ac. 2:46, 47. Daniel, David, and others. But, on the other hand, such a disposition is no certain proof of grace, because it is found in many persons who are evidently not gracious, Is. 1:12-15. 53:2, 4. Ez. 33:31, 32. Mark 6:20. John 5:20. Experience shows that persons, from the influence of false systems, may be induced to devote much time to the external services of religion.' EDWARDS. Ep.

V. 26, 27. The whole argument shows, that the apostle principally intended a wilful, deliberate, and pertinacious apostasy; not the effect of ignorance or sudden surprise; but against the convictions of their own consciences, and in a presumptuous and obstinate manner; though he expressed himself in such language, as might also warn the readers against every kind of wilful, deliberate, and presumptuous sin. The persons spoken of were such as had 'received the knowledge of the truth,' and were so enlightened, in respect of the evidences and doctrines of Christianity, as to make a *credible* and intelligent profession of it, even in the time of the apostles. When this had preceded, a wilful renunciation of Christianity to return to Judaism, either from a determined purpose of escaping persecution, or from proud and carnal enmity to the humiliating and spiritual truths of the Gospel, would generally be fatal. In respect of such apostates, 'there remained no more sacrifice for sin.' Nor could it be expected, that they would ever be 'renewed to repentance' of this atrocious and presumptuous wickedness; for they must have witnessed so many miracles, and some of them even have exercised such gifts of the Holy Spirit themselves, that it might be supposed, they had committed the blasphemy against that divine Agent, by ascribing his operation to satanical influence, and that they would be given up to final impenitence and unbelief, and be wholly excluded from the benefit of Christ's efficacious sacrifice. Mat. 12:31, 32.—There seems in this awful passage to be a peculiar reference to the unexampled miseries, which came soon after on the Jewish nation, and to their desperate rage and fury in the midst of them. This horror of conscience, connected with desperation, and all its tremendous effects, (as in the case of Judas,) might be expected to be the most common among *apostates* from Christianity, who had done violence to their own convictions, and sinned against their better knowledge, with presumptuous enmity, when they saw matters evidently coming to those extremities which Christ had predicted. But this horror and despair were only a shadow of the unspeakable anguish, to which they would at length be reduced, when the insulted Savior should proceed to execute vengeance upon them, from which they would see, that it was impossible to escape.—Sometimes apostates have perceived their desperate condition before death; and, in all the horrors and blasphemous rage of damned spirits, have served as beacons to warn others not to imitate their conduct. Probably, there were few or no instances of such *enlightened and deliberate* apostates being restored; perhaps several of them had been known to be given up to the most tremendous horrors of conscience; and it was peculiarly proper to state this matter in such strong language, for the benefit of others. (Notes, Mat. 12:43-45. 2 Tim. 2:23-26. 4:14, 15. 2 Pet. 2:20-22. 1 Jn. 5:16-18.) Yet this did not imply, that any penitent would fail of obtaining mercy, or that any one would be excluded from the benefit of the Savior's sacrifice, who humbly, earnestly, and perseveringly sought it, into whatever sins he had been betrayed. The persons spoken of are considered as 'adversaries,' which cannot properly be applied to the case of any trembling, weeping, praying penitent. It was not probable, that such apostates, as were described, would, in the peculiar circumstances of those times, return to seek forgiveness by faith in the blood of Christ; and their danger consisted in being given up to final obduracy, or desperation. The passage, therefore, can have

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fideliy and perseverance, v. 24, 25, &c. He mentions several; as,

1. That we should consider one another, to provoke to love and to good works. Christians ought to have a tender consideration and concern for one another; they should affectionately consider what their several wants, weaknesses, and temptations are; and this, not to reproach one another, not provoke one another to anger, but to promote love and good works, calling on themselves and one another to love God and Christ more, to love duty and holiness more, to love their brethren in Christ more, and to do all the good offices of Christian affection, both to the bodies and the souls of each other. A good example given to others, is the best and most effectual provocation to love and good works.

2. Not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, v. 25. It is the will of Christ, that his disciples should assemble themselves together, sometimes more privately for conference and prayer, and in public for hearing and joining in all the ordinances of gospel-worship. The communion of saints is a great help and privilege, and a good mean of steadiness and perseverance;

hereby their hearts and hands are mutually strengthened.

3. To exhort one another; to exhort ourselves and each other; to warn ourselves and one another of the sin and danger of backsliding; to put ourselves and our fellow-Christians in mind of our duty, of our failings and corruptions; to watch over one another, and be jealous of ourselves and one another with a godly jealousy. This, managed with a true gospel-spirit, would be the best and most cordial friendship.

4. That we should observe the approaching of times of trial, and be thereby quickened to greater diligence; *so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.* Christians ought to observe the signs of the times, such as God has foretold. There was a day approaching, a terrible day to the Jewish nation, when their city should be destroyed, and the body of the people rejected of God for rejecting Christ. There is a trying day coming on us all, the day of our death, and we should observe all the signs of its approaching, and improve them to greater watchfulness and diligence in duty.

V. After having mentioned these means of establishment, the apostle proceeds, in

nothing to do with the case of persons, called Christians, in these days, who had not previously received the knowledge either of the evidences or doctrines of Christianity; but who, through ignorance, or the artifices of wicked men, have been led to doubt or deny the truth of the Scriptures, without any of the peculiar aggravations of these primitive apostates. Some of these persons, being afterwards 'renewed to repentance,' have assuredly believed the Gospel, experienced the power of its truth in their hearts, and produced the fruits of it in their lives; yet Satan has taken advantage of the sound of this and similar passages, and of some unguarded things which expositors or preachers have said on the subject, to harass them with perpetual apprehensions, that there remained no benefit for them in the sacrifice of Christ, because they once doubted the truth of Christianity, though they now value that salvation more than all the world.—Cases of this kind have fallen under the writer's cognizance, and, in this day of skepticism and infidelity, in which multitudes aspire to the reputation of *free thinkers*, by never thinking seriously at all, there may be many of the same kind. For when Satan can no longer buoy up men in unbelieving presumption, he endeavors to drive them into unbelieving desperation, and he never fails to harass those to the utmost, whose destruction he cannot compass. Even when the Gospel has been renounced, after far clearer knowledge, and with much greater malignity, than in the case before stated, the apostasy cannot be *fatal* unless it be *final*. It is the peculiar honor of the mercy of God, and of the redemption of Christ, that none are excluded, who are willing to accept of them in the prescribed manner; 'Him that cometh unto Christ, He will in no wise cast out,' whatever he has before been guilty of (Note, Jn. 6:36-40.); but when professed Christians are tempted to apostasy, they may well fear, lest God should be provoked to give them up to final obduracy, and a reprobate mind; and then, while living on earth, their doom is as irreversibly fixed as that of devils or damned spirits.—The apostle lays it down as certain, that God will not pardon sinners, without some sacrifice or satisfaction. For, otherwise, it would not follow, from there remaining to apostates no other sacrifice for sin, that there must remain to them a dreadful expectation of judgment.' Mackn.—(26) *The knowledge of the truth.* He does not say, 'The love of the truth.'

SCOTT.

(26.) *Sin wilfully.* Calm. understands the apostle to speak of those as sinning, 'not who are delinquent through any particular sin, but who, the church being deserted altogether, are quite alienated from Christ.'—'To sin wilfully is to sin deliberately and knowingly, and neither through ignorance nor fear. *Wilfully*, I apprehend, is not to be construed here with *metaphysical* exactness, but has reference to the common and acknowledged distinction in the Jewish law, between the sins of oversight or inadvertence, and those of presumption. For the first class, see Lev. 4:2, 13, 22, 27. Num. 15:27-29. for the second, Num. 15:30:31. where the presumptuous offender is described by the expression, 'There remaineth, &c.' I. e. the Jewish sacrifice being abolished, and that of Christ rejected, of course there remains no other. "I was lately," observed Mr. Gim, "called to attend the death-bed of a young man at Horton. I found him in the greatest horror of mind: I pointed him to Jesus, the sinner's only Friend, and to the glorious promises of the Gospel; when, with an agonizing look of despair, he replied, 'Ah! Sir, but I have rejected the Gospel. Some years since, I read Paine's Age of Reason,—it suited my corrupt taste; I inhibited its principles: after this, wherever I went, I did all in my power to hold up the Scriptures to contempt; by this mean I led others into the fatal snare, and made proselytes to infidelity. Thus I rejected God, and now He rejects me.' I offered to pray with him, but he replied, 'Oh, no,—it is all in vain to pray for me.' Then, with a dismal groan, he cried out: 'Paine's Age of Reason has deceived my soul!' and expired.'" WILL.

V. 28-31. The sacrifices of the law were principally appointed for 'sins of ignorance, infirmity, or inadvertency; but presumptuous transgressors were excluded from that benefit. (Notes, Lev. 4:5:6:1-7. Num. 15:22-31. 1 Sam. 2:23-25, 29. 3:14. Ps. 19:12-14. 51:16.) 'He,' therefore, 'who despised the law of Moses,' and deliberately violated its plain commands, in contempt and defiance of the authority and vengeance of God, was punishable with death, and excluded from mercy, when the fact had been legally proved, even though the crime were such, as might otherwise have been pardoned through a trespass-offering. (Notes, 2:1-4. 12:15-17, 22-25. Num. 15:32-36. Mat. 3:7-10.) But 'of how much severer' vengeance would they be adjudged deserving, who renounced the Gospel, in that wilful, contemptuous, and presumptuous manner, which had been described! They had, indeed, as



29 Of <sup>b</sup> how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit <sup>c</sup> of grace ?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance <sup>d</sup> *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And <sup>e</sup> again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions ;

33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock, both by reproaches and afflictions ; and partly, whilst ye became <sup>f</sup> companions of them that were so used.

34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing <sup>g</sup> in yourselves that ye have in heaven <sup>h</sup> a better and an enduring substance.

b c. 2:3. f 1 Th. 2:14. or, for yourselves.  
c Mat. 12:31, 32. g or, that ye have  
d De. 32:35, 36. in yourselves ; h Lu. 12:33.  
e Ps. 135:14.

the close of the ch. to enforce his exhortations to perseverance, and against apostasy, by many very weighty considerations, v. 26, 27, &c.

1. From the description he gives of the sin of apostasy : *sinning wilfully* against that truth we have had convincing evidence of. This text has been the occasion of great distress to some gracious souls ; they have been ready to conclude that every wilful sin, after conviction, and against knowledge, is the unpardonable sin ; but this has been their infirmity and error. The sin here mentioned is a total and final apostasy, when men, with a full and fixed will and resolution, despise and reject Christ, the only Savior ; despise and resist the Spirit, the only Sanctifier ; and despise and renounce the Gospel, the only way of salvation, and the words of eternal life ; and all this, after they have known, owned, and professed, the Christian religion, and continue to do so obstinately and maliciously. This is the great transgression : the apostle seems to refer to the law concerning presumptuous sinners, Num. 15:30, 31. They were to be cut off.

it were, 'trampled upon the Son of God,' with insolent defiance and disdain, by doing all in their power to dishonor Him, and to provoke Him, with the most desperate ingratitude and impiety ; they had esteemed the precious 'blood of the new covenant,' by the shedding of which Christ 'had been sanctified,' or consecrated, to be the High Priest and Advocate of sinners in the heavenly sanctuary, as if it had been an unclean thing, less holy than the blood of goats, or as vile as that of a malefactor ! (Notes, 5:7—10. 13:20, 21.) Some indeed apply the word *sanctified* to the apostate, who had been admitted into the church, as set apart for God, and consecrated to his service, by professing faith in the blood of Christ, which he afterwards vilified. — In either case, [that of applying it to the apostate, or to Christ,] it may refer to those blasphemies, against 'Jesus of Nazareth,' which were often required of such as renounced the Gospel, in order to avoid death, or other sufferings ; and which apostates would commonly use, in order to gain confidence with the party which they had joined.—They had, moreover, 'done despite to the Holy Spirit,' the divine and gracious Author of spiritual life, and all holy consolations in the souls of sinners. They had acted in direct opposition to the convictions of the Holy Spirit, and to his strivings with them. In renouncing Christianity, they traduced, with most virulent reproaches, that religion, which was adorned by the holy fruits of the Spirit, in the lives of its professors ; and, above all, by ascribing his miraculous power to divination and satanical agency, even contrary to their own knowledge ; thus they acted, as if they were determined to provoke Him in the most *despiteful* manner possible. Mat. 12:31, 32. Lu. 12:8—10. So that, the authority and mercy of the Father, the Person, love, and atoning blood of the Son, and the Person, and operations of the Holy Spirit, were alike insulted and blasphemed by them, after having professed the Gospel, and having been baptized 'into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost !' yea, many of

2. From the dreadful doom of such apostates ; there remains no more sacrifice for such sins, no other Christ to come to save such : they sin against the last resort and remedy. There remains only for them a certain fearful looking for of judgment, v. 27. Some think this refers to the dreadful destruction of the Jewish church and state ; but certainly it refers also to the utter destruction that waits for all obstinate apostates at death and judgment. Of this destruction God gives some notorious sinners, while on earth, a fearful foreboding in their own consciences, a dreadful looking for it, with a despair of ever being able either to endure or escape it.

3. From the methods of divine justice with those who despised Moses' law, that is, sinned presumptuously, despising his authority, his threatenings, and his power. These, when convicted by two or three witnesses, were put to death ; they died without mercy, a temporal death. Hence the apostle infers the heavy doom that will fall on those that apostatize from Christ.

(1.) They have *trampled under foot the Son of God*. To trample on an ordinary person shows intolerable insolence ; to treat a person of honor in that vile manner, is insufferable ; but to deal thus with the Son of God, who Himself is God, must be the highest provocation ; to trample on his Person, denying Him to be the Messiah ; to trample on his authority, and undermine his kingdom ; to trample on his members as the off-scouring of all things, and not fit to live in the world,—what punishment can be too great for such men ?

(2.) They have *counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing* : the blood of Christ, with which the covenant was purchased and sealed, and wherewith Christ Himself was consecrated, or wherewith the apostate was sanctified, that is, baptized, visibly initiated into the new covenant by baptism, and admitted to the Lord's supper. Observe, Persons may be distinguished by common gifts and graces, and yet fall away finally. Men who have seemed to esteem, may come to account the blood of Christ no better than that of a malefactor, though it was the world's ransom, and of infinite value.

(3.) They have *done despite unto the Spirit of grace* ; the Spirit graciously given to men, that should be regarded and attended to with the greatest care ; this Spirit they have grieved, resisted, quenched, yea, done despite to Him ; which is the highest act of wickedness, and makes the case of the sinner desperate ; refusing to have the gospel-salvation applied to him. Now he appeals to universal reason and equity, whether such aggravated crimes ought not to receive a

suitable punishment, a sorer punishment than they had who died without mercy. But what punishment can be sorer than to die *without mercy* ? I answer, To die *by mercy*, by the mercy and grace which they have despised. How dreadful is the case, when not only the justice of God, but his abused grace and mercy, call for vengeance !

4. From the description we have in the Scripture of the nature of God's vindictive justice, v. 30. see Ps. 94:1. The terrors of the Lord are known both by revelation and reason. Vindictive justice is a glorious, though terrible attribute of God ; it belongs to Him, and He will use and execute it on the heads of such sinners as despise his grace ; He will avenge Himself, and his Son, and Spirit, and covenant, on apostates. And how dreadful, then, will their case be ! The other quotation is from Deut. 32:36. *The Lord will judge his people* ; He will search and try his visible church, and will discover and detect those who say they are Jews, but are of the synagogue of Satan ; and He will separate the precious from the vile, and will punish the sinners in Zion with the greatest severity. Now those who know Him who hath said, *Vengeance belongeth to Me, I will recompense*, must needs conclude, as the apostle does, v. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*. They who know the joy that results from the favor of God, can thereby judge of the power and dread of his vindictive wrath.

Observe, The eternal misery of impenitent sinners and apostates shall come from God's own hand ; He will deal with them Himself ; their greatest misery will be the immediate impressions of divine wrath on the soul ; their destruction shall come from his glorious powerful presence ; He is a living God ; He lives for ever, and will punish for ever.

5. He presses them to perseverance, by putting them in mind of their former sufferings for Christ, v. 32. In the early days of the Gospel, a very hot persecution was raised against the professors of the Christian religion, and the believing Hebrews had their share of it : he would have them to remember,

(1.) *When they had suffered ; in former days, after they were illuminated ; that is, converted, or brought into a state of grace ; then earth and hell combined all their force against them*. Here observe, A natural state is a dark state, and those who continue in that state, meet with no disturbance from Satan and the world ; but a state of grace is a state of light, and therefore the powers of darkness will violently oppose it. They who will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution.

(2.) *What they suffered ; a great fight of*

them at least, after having received the Holy Spirit, by the laying on of the hands of the apostles ! and what punishment could be too severe for such accumulated guilt ?

(29.) *Wherewith he was sanctified, &c.* [This may either be referred to Christ, or to the apostate here described. But applying the term sanctified to the apostate, it may mean, only a professed devotedness of himself to Christ ; and, as Bp. Hoally suggests, receiving the sacramental cup. See 1 Cor. 11:29. 2 Pet. 2:1.] WILLIAMS.—*Spirit of grace*.] 'I see no reason to abandon the interpretation of the ancients, and earlier moderns, namely, the *Holy Spirit, the third Person in the sacred Trinity*. It may be observed, that, as in the former clause we have Jesus Christ *n Person*, so here we have the Holy Spirit also a *Person*. I cannot think apostasy alone here meant, or the sin against the Holy Ghost ; but all *wilful sin*, and a presumptuously corrupt life, since such must *tend* to that dreadful conclusion.' BLOOMF.

V. 32—34. Among those, whom the apostle especially addressed, were several that had 'shown compassion to him,' some years before, when he was bound at Jerusalem, and in his subsequent imprisonment ; and when, on that or other accounts, their property was seized and confiscated, they bore it, not only patiently, but 'joyfully ;' having abundant consolation from the assurance, that they had 'in heaven a better and more enduring inheritance,' which could not be taken from them, but would be their *substantial* felicity for ever. For they possessed *in themselves*, independently of all external things, the pledges and earnest of that expected blessing.

(32.) 'Afflictions scour us of our rust ; and, however the wicked, like trees in the wilderness, grow without culture ; yet the saints, like trees in the garden, must be pruned, and made fruitful ; and affliction does this. God will prune his people, but not cut them down.'

Dr. ARROWSMITH.



35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

36 For ye have need of<sup>j</sup> patience; that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

37 For<sup>k</sup> yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

### CHAP. XI.

1 What faith is. 6 Without faith we cannot please God.  
7 The worthy fruits thereof in the fathers of old time.

NOW faith is the<sup>a</sup> substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things<sup>b</sup> not seen.

i Mat. 5:12. 1 ver. 26. or, confidence.  
j Lu. 21:19. a or, ground, b Ro. 3:24,25.  
k Hab. 2:34.

afflictions, many and various afflictions united together against them, and they had a great conflict with them. They were afflicted in themselves; in their own persons, 1 Cor. 4:9. in their names and reputation, v. 33. and they were afflicted in their estates, by the spoiling of their goods, by fines and forfeitures. They were afflicted in the afflictions of their brethren; *partly, while ye became companions of those that were so used.* The Christian spirit is a sympathizing spirit, not selfish, but compassionate. Christians are one body, animated by one spirit, embarked in one common cause and interest, the children of that God who is afflicted in all the afflictions of his people. The apostle takes particular notice how they had sympathized with him, v. 34. We must thankfully acknowledge the compassions our Christian friends have showed for us under our afflictions.

(3.) How they had suffered. They had been mightily supported, and not only took their sufferings patiently, but joyfully, as a

favor and honor, in that they should be thought worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Christ, Col. 1:11.

(4.) What it was that enabled them thus to bear up under their sufferings. They knew in themselves that they had in heaven a better and more enduring substance. Observe, The happiness of the saints in heaven is something of real weight and worth, better than anything they can have or lose here, an enduring substance, that will make a rich amends for all they can lose and suffer here. In heaven they all have a better life, estate, liberty, society, hearts, work, everything better. Christians should know this, should get assurance of it; (the Spirit of God witnessing with their spirits;) for the assured knowledge of this will help them to endure any fight of afflictions.

6. He presses them to persevere, from that recompense of reward that waited for all faithful Christians, v. 35. not to cast away their confidence, their holy courage and boldness, but to hold fast that profession for which they had suffered so much before, and borne those sufferings so well. He encourages them to this, by assuring them that the reward of their holy confidence would be very great, a present reward in holy peace and joy, and much of God's presence, and a great recompense of reward hereafter. He shows them how necessary a grace the grace of patience is in our present state, v. 36. *Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise;* that is, this promised reward. Observe, The greatest part of the saints' happiness is in promise; they must first do the will of God before they receive the promise; and after they have done the will of God, they have need of patience to wait for the time when the promise shall be fulfilled; they have need of patience to live till God calls them away. To help their patience, he assures them of the near approach of Christ's coming to deliver and to reward them, v. 37. He will soon come to them at death, end all their sufferings, and give them a crown of life. He will soon come to judgment, end the sufferings of the whole church, and give them an ample and glorious reward in the most public manner. There is an appointed time for both, and beyond that time He will not tarry, Hab. 2:3. The

Christian's present conflict may be sharp, but it will be soon over.

7. And, *lastly*, He presses them to perseverance, by telling them that this is their distinguishing character, and will be their happiness; whereas apostasy is the reproach, and will be the ruin, of all who are guilty of it, v. 38, 39. It is the honorable character of just men, that, in times of the greatest afflictions, they can live by faith; they can live on the assured persuasion they have of the truth of God's promises. Apostasy is the mark and the brand of those in whom God takes no pleasure; and it is a cause of God's severe displeasure and anger. God never was pleased with the formal profession and external duties and services of such as do not persevere: He saw the hypocrisy of their hearts then; and He is greatly provoked when their formality in religion ends in an open apostasy from religion; He beholds them with great displeasure; they are an offence to Him. The apostle concludes, with declaring his good hope, concerning himself and these Hebrews, that they should not forfeit the character and happiness of the just, and fall under the brand and misery of the wicked, v. 39. Observe, Professors may go a great way, and after all draw back; and drawing back from God is drawing on to perdition; the further we depart from God, the nearer we approach to ruin. Those who have been kept faithful in great trials for the time past, have reason to hope, that the same grace shall be sufficient to help them still to live by faith, till they receive the end of their faith and patience, even the salvation of their souls. If we live by faith, and die in faith, our souls are safe for ever.

CHAP. XI. The apostle having, in the close of the foregoing chapter, recommended the grace of faith and a life of faith as the best preservative against apostasy, now enlarges on the nature and fruits of this excellent grace.

V. 1—3. Here we have, 1. A definition or description of the grace of faith in two parts. (1.) *It is the substance of things hoped for*, a firm persuasion and expectation, that God will perform all that He has promised to us in Christ; and this persuasion so strong, that it gives the soul a kind of possession and present fruition of

PRACT. OBS. V. 26—30. By negligence, pride, or carnal self-love, or by gradually yielding to the fear of man, many professors of the Gospel are left to sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth; and, though the fallen, the weak, and the trembling should be encouraged, yet we cannot too awfully alarm the secure, self-confident, and presumptuous; as every deliberate sin, against light and conscience, is a step towards the tremendous precipice described by the apostle.—However men may now despise these warnings, they will at length know, that it is 'a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,' and to hear Him say, 'It is a people that hath no understanding; therefore He who made them will have no mercy on them.' Is. 27:7—11. Let then every professed Christian 'give diligence to make his calling and election sure;' let us all remember our convictions, affections, and purposes, when we were first 'enlightened,' and how we thought, that we should be willing to endure or part with anything, if we could but obtain peace with God and a good hope of salvation; and let us also remember our consolations and supports under

former trials. If we have been called to 'endure a great fight of afflictions,' and have suffered reproaches and losses with fortitude and cheerfulness, from a persuasion that we had 'in heaven a better and a more enduring substance,' let us not disgrace our former conduct, or 'cast away our confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.' For we still 'have need of patience' and perseverance, whilst we wait the accomplishment of God's promises, in obedience to his will. But 'the time is short;' He that *cometh* will soon come, and will not tarry beyond his appointed season, and He will shortly end our sorrows and conflicts, by removing our souls to heaven; yea, He will speedily come to raise the dead, and perfect our salvation. Let us then show that we are justified through faith, by living and 'walking with God,' in dependence on his promises, and in obedience to his commands, because we are satisfied with the security of his Word. Thus we shall possess the assurance, that 'we are not of them who draw back to perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.' SCOTT.

V. 35—39. In regard to their final deliverance from trouble, as well as to the coming of Christ to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, and thus to deliver the Christian church from the persecutions, which they endured from that quarter, the words of God by the prophet might properly be applied; 'The just by faith would live,' Hab. 2:1—4. (38) *The just, &c.* 'The just man' (the word is singular here, in the Sept. and in the Heb.) 'by faith shall live; but if he draw back, &c.'—The insertion of the words, 'any man,' has been justly objected to, for if the just man himself draw back, and continue in apostasy, he shall finally perish, and we must not alter the Scriptures, to support our own view of evangelical truth. (Note, Ez. 3:20, 21.)—In the Sept. however, whence the quotation is made, the clauses are reversed; 'If he draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him; but the just, by the faith of Me, shall live.' And here, 'the just by faith, who shall live,' is clearly distinguished, as another character, from him, who 'drew back to perdition,' in the concluding v. The Sept. seems to have read the Hebrew very differently from our copies; but the meaning of each is important.

NOTES. CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. This view does not confine us to one single exercise of the fundamental grace of faith, but takes in all the variety of its actings, in the whole of a believer's experience and conduct. Where the principle, from which faith springs, is implanted by the regenerating Spirit of God, it leads a man to receive the truth, concerning [543]

justification by the merits of Jesus Christ, according to the measure of light afforded him; (Note, John 1:10—13.) but it will also embrace the whole Word of God, and expect its accomplishment, to all the extent, in which He has spoken and promised, 2 Thes. 2:13.—Thus the believer gives up present advantages, and endures present hardships, in obedience to God, and in waiting for his promise; even as men give ready money for an estate in reversion, or endure present labor, in hope of future ease and indulgence. 6:16—20. Rom. 5:3—5. 8:24—27. 1 Cor. 15:55—58. 1 Pet. 1:3—5. 1 John 5:1—3. The things revealed to *faith*, but invisible to *sense*, and undiscoverable by *reason*, may relate to the past, the present, or the future; to God, and to his works of creation, providence, and redemption; to his omniscient presence and his future judgment; to the world of spirits, and eternal state of happiness or misery; to the law and its sanctions, or the gospel and its privileges; and, in short, to a great variety of particulars which cannot be enumerated. But faith is the *evidence*, the internal conviction, or demonstration, of them all. To unbelievers those appear false, dubious, or visionary, for they have no medium, by which to obtain satisfaction about them; but believers take the clear 'testimony of God,' as a truth already demonstrated, which requires no further proof; their argument is this; 'God hath said it, and it must be true.' In proportion to the strength of this faith, their judgment and conduct are influenced by this realizing conviction, with reference to things revealed; even as if they were the ob-



2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it, he being dead, yet speaketh.

c Ge. 1:1. Ps. 33:6. d Ge. 4:15 e or, is yet spoken of.

those things; gives them a subsistence in the soul, by the first-fruits and foretastes of them, so that believers, in the exercise of faith, experience a substantial reality in the objects of faith. (2.) It is the evidence of things not seen. Faith demonstrates to the eye of the mind the reality of those things that cannot be discerned by the eye of the body; it helps the soul to make application of all to itself, with suitable affections and endeavors; and so it is designed to serve the believer instead of sight, and to be to the soul all that the senses are to the body. That faith is but opinion or fancy, which does not realize invisible things to the soul, and excite the soul to act agreeably to the nature and importance of them.

jects of sight, or capable of strict demonstration. The believer uses his powers of reasoning, to obtain satisfaction concerning the evidence, that such or such matters are divinely revealed, and to determine the meaning of the words, in which the revelation is conveyed. 1 Pet. 3:13-16. But, when these previous questions are answered, he most rationally says, 'God has determined this point; and though I once thought otherwise, as multitudes still do; yet infinite knowledge and truth have decided against our prejudices and erroneous opinions, and I submit to the divine teaching.' He is not so absurd, as to attempt to invalidate the testimony of God by his objections, or even to give force to it by his arguments. 1 John 5:9, 10. He does not suppose that divine revelation must be level to man's comprehension; or coincide with his speculations; he expects, believes, and adores mysteries, but knows that contradiction is not mystery; so that mysteries above reason he humbly receives, but absurdities contrary to it, he ascribes to misconception or imposture. Gen. 1:26, 27. Mat. 13:10, 11. 1 Tim. 3:16.—This description of faith will be illustrated by all the examples in this ch.—There is no operation of the human soul, which can possibly receive and profit by testimony, except faith, or believing. Revelation without faith is and must be as useless, as light without vision. Acts 26:16-18. Evidence.] 2 Tim. 3:16. Demonstration, conviction. John 16:18. 'Such a reason and argument, as both convinces the understanding, and engages a man to act according to that conviction.' Dodd.—(2) Obtained a good report.] Luke 4:22. 11:48. John 3:26. Col. 4:13. 'They were borne witness to,' that is, by God. Scott.

(1) Faith.] Guise, and Owen, with others, take this description of faith to include that which is justifying, but not, under the strictest notion of it, merely as justifying. For this is only as it has a regard to, and depends on, Christ and his righteousness; but here is no mention of Him as the object of faith; and in several of the instances there is only notice taken of temporal blessings, which were obtained by faith. Yet they may all be considered as so many proofs and evidences of the truth and efficacy of justifying faith in real believers on Christ, and of its more extensive exercise to the glory of God, and their own encouragement to go on in a course of dependence on Him, and obedience to Him, amidst all difficulties and dangers of every kind that surround them in this sinful world. HENRY, *abr.*—So Stuart, and he asks, 'what is the object of the whole [epistle]? Plainly to prevent apostasy, i. e. a renunciation of belief in Christ.' 'To this point,' he adds, 'converge all the warnings, reproofs, and tremendous judgments in the epistle; they all have a bearing on the same specific object.' Yet in this particular ch. he agrees, with others, that faith is to be taken for belief, or confidence generally in divine declarations. Ed.—Substance, &c.] 'Confident expectation.' Dodd.—'Confidence in respect to things hoped for.' Sr.—Evidence, &c.] 'Powerful conviction, &c.' Dodd.—'Strict proof or demonstration; i. e. such a kind of reason and argument, as both convinces the understanding, and engages a man to act according to that conviction.' Raphaelius, and Hallct. in Dodd.—Stuart renders it 'convincing evidence.' Ed.—There are certain doctrines, which ought to be preached with more caution than they usually are; such as the "living by faith and not by sight," "trusting God in the dark," &c. By walking by faith and not by sight is meant, a being governed by a respect to eternal things, which are the objects of faith, and not by temporal, which are the objects of sight. But this is understood by many, as if professors ought firmly to trust in Christ, without spiritual light, and though in a lifeless frame. What they mean by faith, is, believing they are in a good state. But the SS. are ignorant of any faith not founded on a spiritual sight of Christ. John 6:40. 2 Cor. 3:18. Men can only exercise faith, just in proportion as they have spiritual light. They cannot exercise trust in God, any further than they possess a believing view of his faithfulness and all-sufficiency. The people of God ought indeed to trust Him when in darkness, and when we do not see which way it is possible for Him to fulfill his word, as Abraham did, but this is a different thing from trusting without spiritual light. EDWARDS.

V. 3. The heavens and the earth, and all things in them, as well as

2. An account of the honor it reflects on all who have lived in the exercise of it, v. 2. Observe, (1.) True faith is an old grace, not a new invention, a modern fancy; it is a grace that has been planted in the soul of man ever since the covenant of grace was published in the world; it has been practised from the beginning of the revelation; the eldest and best men that ever were in the world, were believers. (2.) Their faith was their honor; and it put them on doing the things that were of good report, and God has taken care that a record should be kept, and report made, of the excellent things they did in the strength of this grace. The genuine actings of faith will bear to be reported, deserve to be reported, and, when reported, redound to the honor of true believers.

3. We have here one of the first acts and articles of faith, which has a great influence on all the rest, and which is common to all believers in every age, and that is, the creation of the worlds by the word of God, v. 3. Faith looks not only forward to the end of the world, but back to the beginning of the world. By faith we understand much more of the formation of the world, than ever could be understood by the naked eye of natural reason. Faith gives us to understand concerning the worlds, how they were made, that is, the upper, middle, and lower regions of the universe, by the word of God. These worlds were not eternal, nor did they produce themselves, but they were made by

another, even God; He is the Maker of all things; and whoever is so, must be God. He made the world with great exactness; it was a framed work; He made the world by his Word, that is, by his essential wisdom and eternal Son, and by his active will, saying, *Let it be done, and it was done*, Ps. 33:9. The world was thus framed out of nothing, out of no pre-existent matter, contrary to the received maxim, that 'out of nothing nothing can be made;' which, though true of created power, can have no place with God, who can call things that are not, as if they were, and command them into being. These things we understand by faith. The Bible gives us the truest and most exact account of the origin of all things, and we are to believe it, and not to wrest or run down the scripture-account of the creation, because it does not suit with some fantastic hypotheses of our own; which has been in some learned but conceited men the first remarkable step towards infidelity, and has led them into many more.

V. 4-19. The apostle, having given us a more general account of the grace of faith, now proceeds to set before us some illustrious examples of it in the Old Test. times. A few occur, whose names are not only mentioned, but the particular trials and actings of their faith subjoined; and in these verses are included the several instances from Abel to Isaac.

It is observable, that the Spirit of God has

the regular order with which they are governed and directed, might, indeed, be proved by argument to be the contrivance and work of God, Rom. 1:18-20. yet men's reason had never come to any satisfactory and practical conclusions in this matter. (Note, Gen. 1:1.) So that, 'by faith,' crediting the Word of God, we believe, and understand to good purpose, that 'the worlds' were contrived, framed, created, and arranged in their present order, by the omnipotent command of God; and that the things, which we now behold in such resplendent beauty, were made of those things, 'which do not now appear.' They were produced from the chaotic mass, which 'was without form and void,' by that powerful Word, which first called the chaos out of non-existence. Note, Gen. 1:2. and the satisfactory assurance, which believers derive from the scriptural account of the original of the world, being contrasted with the discordant hypotheses and endless disputations of ancient philosophers and modern theorists, exhibits a very striking illustration of the proposition, that 'faith is the evidence,' or demonstration, 'of things not seen.' 1, 2. Gen. 1:2.—'This world, which we see, was not made of any appearing or existing matter, but from nothing; contrary to the axiom of all the philosophers, "From nothing, nothing is made." This indeed never could enter into the mind of any philosophers, not even of those who wrote that God created the world. Therefore the whole of this is of faith.' Beza.—Nothing can possibly be more unphilosophical, or indeed absurd, than the notion of the eternal pre-existence of that chaos, from which God created the world; yet, I apprehend, Beza had firm grounds for asserting, that none of the philosophers had perceived this, or without revelation would have perceived it. Most commentators consider this v. as a decided proof, that God created the world from nothing; which no doubt is the doctrine both of reason and revelation.

(3.) Worlds.] 'The universe.' So Stuart and Bloomf., referring to the sublime passage, Gen. 1:3. Ed.—Were made, &c.] 'I. e. made out of nothing, without any pre-existent matter.' Bp. Pearson, in Dodd.—Ed.

V. 4. The original word rendered 'more excellent,' signifies also a 'greater,' fuller, or more complete sacrifice. Cain brought the meat-offering alone; Abel, as it is generally supposed, brought that, and also 'the firstlings of his flock.' . . . Cain . . . seemed to say, with modern infidels and skeptics; 'In what is my sacrifice inferior to Abel's? Why should he be so bigoted, as to think God will accept none, who do not come in his peculiar way? I, being sincere, shall be as favorably received with my sacrifice, as he with his; and indeed it seems more rational to present the first-fruits of the earth, than to slay an innocent lamb, to be burned upon the altar.' (Note, Gen. 4:3-5.) Yet God rejected his offering; and his rage and enmity against Abel, the accepted worshipper of God, produced the same horrid effects, which similar principles have in every age been producing, in cruel persecutions and multiplied murders of believers, especially by formalists and hypocrites. (Notes, Gen. 4:6-15, 1 John 3:11-15.) But God Himself attested, that Abel 'was righteous' before Him, and that his oblations were accepted; so that, being murdered by Cain, 'he still speaketh' to us; declaring, that sin cannot be pardoned without an atonement; that sinners can come to God, only by penitent faith in the great Propitiation; that faith is uniformly connected with righteousness and upright obedience; that believers have their portion in a better world, and not on earth; that they must expect no favor from proud, self-righteous unbelievers, and that their blood, shed by persecutors, calls from the ground to heaven for vengeance. (Notes, 12:22-25. Mat. 23:34-36. . . . 'In this character of Abel, Paul had our Lord's expression in his eye, "the blood of righteous Abel." Mat. 23:35.—Flesh not being permitted to kill any animal, after the flood, Abel must have thought it unlawful to kill any animal, unless God had ordered it to be killed as a sacrifice.' Mackn. Scott.

(4.) More excellent.] 'More acceptable, as proceeding from faith.' Bloomf.—So Stuart; who says, 'Abel made his offering in faith; the implication is, that Cain did not, and therefore [his offering] was not accepted.'



5 By faith Enoch<sup>f</sup> was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

6 But without faith it is impossible to please<sup>g</sup> Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

7 By faith<sup>h</sup> Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

[Practical Observations.]

<sup>f</sup> Ge. 5:22-24.    <sup>h</sup> Ge. 6:14-22.    <sup>g</sup> or, being wary.  
<sup>g</sup> Ps. 106:21, 22.

not thought fit to say anything here of the faith of our first parents; and yet the church of God has generally, by a pious charity, taken it for granted that God gave them repentance and faith in the promised Seed; but God has left the matter under some doubt, as a warning to all who have a great trust reposed in them, that they do not prove unfaithful, since God would not enrol our first parents among the number of believers in this blessed calendar.

1. The leading example is that of Abel.

Observe, (1.) What Abel *did* by faith, he offered up a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, a more full and perfect sacrifice. Hence learn, that, after the Fall, God opened a new way for men to return to Him in religious worship. God must be worshipped by sacrifices, a way of worship which carries in it a confession of sin, and of the desert of sin, and a profession of faith in a Redeemer, who was to be a Ransom for the souls of men. Note, also, From the begin-

ning, there has been a remarkable difference between the worshippers; here were two persons, brethren, both go in to worship God, and yet a vast difference is observable in their persons, and principles, and offerings; Abel a true believer, Cain a formalist; Abel actuated by faith, Cain not; Abel brought a sacrifice of atonement, the firstlings of the flock, acknowledging himself a sinner who deserved to die, and only hoped for mercy through the Great Sacrifice; Cain only a sacrifice of acknowledgment, a mere thank-offering, the fruit of the ground, which might, and perhaps must, have been offered in innocency; here was no confession of sin, no regard to the Ransom; this was an essential defect in Cain's offering.

(2.) What Abel gained by his faith; the original record in Gen. 4:4. *God had respect to Abel, and to his offering; first to his person as gracious, then to his offering as proceeding from grace, especially from the grace of faith.* In this place we are told, that he obtained by his faith some special advantages; as, that he was righteous, a justified, sanctified, and accepted person; very probably, attested by fire from heaven, kindling and consuming his sacrifice, God thus testifying his acceptance of his gifts. In this, He, being dead, yet speaketh. He had the honor to leave behind him an instructive speaking case; teaching us, That fallen man has leave to go in to worship God, with hope of acceptance, through faith in the Messiah; and that though those who obtain this favor from God, must expect the envy and malice of the world, yet God will not suffer the injuries done to his people to remain unpunished, nor their sufferings unrewarded. These are very good and useful instructions, and yet the blood of sprinkling speaketh better things than that of Abel.

2. *Enoch, v. 5.* In this place, and in Gen. 5:22, &c. we read, *That he walked with God,* was really, eminently, actively, progressively, and perseveringly, religious in his conformity to God, communion with God, and complacency in God. *That he was*

translated, that he should not see death, nor any part of him be found on earth; for God took him, soul and body, into heaven, as He will do those of the saints who shall be found alive at his second coming. *That before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.* He had the evidence of it in his own conscience, and the Spirit of God witnessed with his spirit.

It is said, v. 6. that *without this faith it is impossible to please God, without such a faith as helps us to walk with God, an active faith; and that we cannot come to God, unless we believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of those that diligently seek Him. He must believe that God is, and that He is what He is, what He has revealed Himself to be in the Scripture, a Being of infinite perfections, subsisting in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* Observe, The practical belief of the existence of God, as revealed in the Word, would be a powerful restraint to keep us from sin, and a spur of constraint to put us on all manner of gospel-obedience. *He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.* Here observe, By the Fall we have lost God; lost the divine light, life, love, likeness, and communion. God is again to be found of us through Christ, the second Adam. God has prescribed means and ways wherein He may be found; and they who would find God in these ways must seek Him diligently; seek Him early, earnestly, and perseveringly; then shall they seek Him, and find Him, if they seek Him with all their heart; and when once they have found Him, as their reconciled God, they will never repent the pains they have spent in seeking Him.

3. *Noah, v. 7.* Observe, (1.) The ground of Noah's faith,—a warning he had received from God; a divine revelation, whether by voice or vision does not appear, but such as carried in it its own evidence; he was forewarned of things not seen as yet, that is, of a great and severe judgment, such as the world had never yet seen, and of which, in the course of second causes, there was not

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-7. The wisdom and goodness of God are peculiarly manifested, in the appointment of 'faith,' to be both the recipient of Christ for justification, and the efficacious principle of our obedience: and, in neither case, will anything avail, but that faith which gives the soul, as it were, an appropriating hold of 'things hoped for,' and an internal demonstration of 'things not seen.'—We know nothing to good purpose, concerning the perfections or works of God, or the eternal state, except by this 'evidence of things not seen;' men's reasonings produce amusing speculations; but 'the sure testimony of God,' received by faith, brings satisfaction to the soul. While we credit his account of the creation, we learn to adore and obey the Creator, with humble, thankful, and admiring hearts; which philosophers, in general, with a few honorable exceptions, ancient and modern, have scarcely appeared to do; and those few were led to do it, not by philosophy, but by believing the Word of God.—Believing his testimony concerning the future judgment and the eternal world; and even more than believing,

that we are sinners exposed to condemnation, and deserving of it, according to the tenor of his righteous law; we gladly receive the truth, concerning salvation by grace, through the atoning blood of the divine Savior; and wait on Him for pardon and every blessing, as 'his gift through Jesus Christ.' Rom. 6:21-23. 1 John 5:11, 12.—If we possess this 'evidence of things not seen,' we shall hear, with great interest, the warnings of the oracles of God, concerning the future and eternal misery of the ungodly; we shall reverence the denunciation which unbelievers deride, object to, or blaspheme; we shall be 'moved with fear to flee from the wrath to come;' we shall be encouraged in hope to make Christ our refuge, and to leave all other things, as comparatively worthless, to seek admission into this ark. Thus we shall be safe, during the troubles of life, the terrors of death, and the solemnities of judgment, when 'the wicked shall be turned into hell, even all the people that forget God.' Scott.

V. 5, 6. Gen. 5:21-24. Jude 14-16. As all men deserve condemnation for their sins, and even their best services need forgiveness, no one can know, or on good grounds conclude, that God will reward his services, or accept him in them: unless by receiving the testimony of revelation, either immediate, traditional, or written. This Enoch doubtless did, and so he believed in God, and came to Him, by faith in his Word and promise, according to his appointment, and thus was accepted and graciously rewarded. But this differs widely from a mere assent to a conjecture, or a conclusion of reason, concerning the existence of a God, without any just notions of his perfections, will, or worship, and an attempt to please Him, in ways of man's devising. This may suppose to be all 'the faith,' which the apostle here means; though it does not at all resemble the religion of any one person mentioned in this chap. except that of Cain. Faith must have respect to some word spoken, which it believes; but the conjectures, or deductions from reasoning, in a man's own mind, cannot be faith, according to the common use of words, much less can such a meaning of faith be found in Scripture. It is 'the belief of the truth,' of 'the word,' and 'testimony of God.' (5) *He pleased God.* Paul here quotes the Sept. where the words, translated in our version, 'he walked with God,' are twice rendered 'he pleased God;' as the same Heb. term is rendered, in other places. Gen. 6:9. 17:1. 43:15. Sept. The general meaning is, no doubt, the same, though the language is less emphatical. *He pleased.* 6. 13:16.—Gen. 5:22, 24. Sept. Rom. 12:1. Phil. 4:18.—It is not said, that 'he always did those things which pleased God.' (Note, John 15:27-29.) This was never said of any man, except the Man Christ Jesus. Scott.

(6.) 'The two fundamental truths of all that can properly be called religion, are here adverted to, viz. a belief that God exists, and that He is the moral Governor of the universe; i. e. that He rewards those who are pious, and, consequently, punishes those who are not so.' STRAY.

V. 7. Gen. 6:—9. Noah had faith, he verily believed the word God had spoken, he confidently expected that Omnipotence would execute [548]

the sentence denounced by infinite justice, and fulfil the word of unflinching veracity: he therefore was prepared to employ any means of deliverance, which the Lord should see good to appoint. But 'he obeyed in faith;' he ventured all consequences, and exercised the needful self-denial; he waited the Lord's time, and preached, though unsuccessfully, to the men of his generation. 1 Pet. 3:19, 20. 2 Pet. 2:4-9. He expected safety in the ark, though Omnipotence alone could secure him, in a vessel constructed as it was, through so tremendous a deluge. Thus he was preserved, and he preserved his family also, from the common destruction of mankind, to re-people the earth; his example and admonitions concurred in 'condemning the world,' and in showing the justice of God in thus punishing their universal and incorrigible wickedness. (Notes, Is. 54:6-10, 15-17. Ez. 14:13-21. Mat. 12:41, 42. Rom. 2:25-29.) By the same faith, he relied on the promise of God concerning the Messiah, and became 'heir of the righteousness of faith,' and of eternal salvation through Him. This may be shown to be an exact representation of the manner, in which believers, being warned by God to 'flee from the wrath to come,' are 'moved with fear,' take refuge in Christ, part with all for his sake, are often made the instruments of salvation to their families also, 'condemn the world,' and become heirs of the righteousness of faith.' Phil. 3:8-11.—A Jewish writer introduces Noah, from the ark, expostulating with those who were perishing, because excluded. They plead, that they had used various means of securing themselves, in case the deluge should come, though they had declined his invitation to come into the ark; but he silences all their pleas at once, by saying, that they had refused to avail themselves of God's appointed way of preservation, and every other method must be unavailing. 'How shall ye escape, if ye neglect so great salvation?' 2:1-4. Mat. 24:36-41. Scott.

(7.) 'The things unseen were the deluge, and the events accompanying it.' Bloomf. 'True belief is effectual in the obedient use of God's appointed means of salvation.' BAXTER.



8 By faith <sup>1</sup> Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, <sup>k</sup> dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise :

10 For he looked for a city <sup>1</sup> which hath foundations, whose <sup>m</sup> builder and maker *is* God.

11 Through faith also Sara <sup>n</sup> herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful <sup>o</sup> who had promised.

12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, <sup>p</sup> so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

j Ge. 12:1,4, &c. l c. 12:22. 13:14. o c. 19:28.  
k Ge. 13:3,13. m Re. 21:2,10. p Ge. 22:17.  
13:1,9. n Ge. 21:1,2. Ro. 4:17.

yet the least sign; this secret warning he was to communicate to the world, who would be sure to despise both him and his message. God usually warns sinners before He strikes; and where his warnings are slighted, the blow will fall the heavier. (2.) The actings of Noah's faith, and the influence it had both on his mind and practice. It impressed his soul with a fear of God's judgments. Faith first influences our affections, then our actions suitably to the matter revealed. His faith influenced his practice; his fear, excited by believing God's threatening, moved him to prepare an ark, notwithstanding the scorns and reproaches of a wicked generation. And the blessed fruits and rewards of his faith were, that hereby himself and his house were saved, when a whole world of sinners were perishing about them. Hereby he also judged and condemned the world; his holy fear condemned their security and vain confidence; his faith their unbelief; his obedience their contempt and rebellion. This is the best way the people of God can take to condemn the wicked; not by harsh and censorious language, but by a holy exemplary conversation. Moreover, hereby he became an heir of the righteousness which is by faith, was possessed of a true justifying righteousness, was heir to it; his right of inheritance was through faith in Christ, as a member of Christ, a child of God, and if a child, then an heir. His righteousness was relative, resulting from his adoption, through faith in the promised Seed. As ever we expect to be justified and saved in the great and terrible day of the Lord, let us now prepare an ark, secure an interest in Christ, and in the ark of the covenant; and do it speedily before the

door be shut, for there is no salvation in any other.

4. Abraham, the friend of God, and father of the faithful. The apostle enlarges more on the heroic achievements of Abraham's faith, than any other of the patriarchs; and in the midst of his account of the faith of Abraham, he inserts the story of Sarah's faith, whose daughters those women are, that continue to do well. Observe,

(1.) The ground of Abraham's faith,—the call and promise of God, v. 8.

[1.] This, though a very trying call, was the call of God, and therefore a sufficient ground for faith, and rule of obedience. The manner in which he was called, Stephen relates in Acts 7:2. It was an effectual call, by which he was converted from the idolatry of his father's house, Gen. 12:1. The call was renewed after his father's death in Charran. Observe, The freeness of the grace of God in converting sinners, and how He appears a God of glory in it, working a glorious work in the soul. He calls us not only to leave sin, but sinful company, and whatever is inconsistent with our devotedness to Him. We need to be called, not only to set out well, but to go on well. He will not have his people take up that rest anywhere short of the heavenly Canaan.

[2.] The promise of God; God promised Abraham that the place, he was called to, he should afterward inherit; after a while he should inherit the heavenly Canaan, and his posterity the earthly. Observe here, God calls his people to an inheritance, by his effectual call making them children, and so heirs; not immediately, but the promise is sure, and shall have its seasonable accomplishment. The faith of parents often procures blessings for their posterity.

(2.) The exercise of Abraham's faith; he yielded an implicit regard to the call of God. [1.] He went out, not knowing whither he went. He put himself into the hand of God, subscribed to God's wisdom, and submitted to his will. Implicit faith and obedience are due to God, and to Him only.

[2.] He sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country. This was an exercise of his faith. Observe, Canaan is called the land of promise, because yet only promised, not possessed. Abraham lived in Canaan, not as an heir and proprietor, but as a sojourner only. He dwelt in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. He lived there in an ambulatory, moving condition, living in a daily readiness for his removal; and thus should we all live in this world. Abraham lived till Isaac was seventy-five years old, and Jacob fifteen, and the promise was renewed to Isaac, Gen. 26:3. and to Jacob, Gen. 28:13. It is pleasant to see parents and children sojourning together in this world, as heirs of the heavenly inheritance.

(3.) The supports of Abraham's faith, v. 10. Observe here, The description given of heaven; it is a city, a regular society, well established, well defended, and well supplied; a city that hath foundations, even the immutable purposes and almighty power

of God; the infinite merits and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ; the promises of an everlasting covenant; its own purity, and the perfection of its inhabitants; God contrived it, and made it, and is Himself the Substance and Felicity of it. Observe the due regard Abraham had to this heavenly city; he looked for it, believed there was such a state, waited for it, and in the mean time conversed in it by faith; he had raised and rejoicing hopes, that, in God's time and way, he should be brought safely to it. This influenced his present conversation; it was a support to him, and helped him patiently to bear all the inconveniences of his sojourning state, and actively to discharge all the duties of it, persevering therein unto the end.

5. In the midst of the story of Abraham, we have inserted an account of the faith of Sarah. Here observe,

(1.) The difficulties of Sarah's faith, which were very great; she laughed at the promise, as impossible, and was so unbelieving as to put Abraham on taking Hagar, that he might have a posterity, the thing promised was so improbable; when she was of sterile constitution naturally, and now past the prolific age. Now this sin of her's would make it more difficult for her to act by faith afterward.

(2.) The actings of her faith, v. 11. She received the promise as the promise of God; and being convinced of that, she truly judged He both could and would perform it, how impossible soever it might seem to reason; for the faithfulness of God will not suffer Him to deceive his people.

(3.) The fruits and rewards of her faith. She received strength to conceive seed. The strength of nature, as well as grace, is from God; He can make the barren fruitful. She was delivered of a child, a child of the promise, the comfort of his parents, and the hope of future ages. From them, by this son, sprang a numerous progeny of illustrious persons, as the stars of the sky, v. 12. a great, powerful, and renowned nation, above all the rest in the world; and a nation of saints, the peculiar church and people of God; and, which was the highest honor and reward of all, of these, according to the flesh, the Messiah came, who is over all, God blessed for evermore.

6. The apostle proceeds to make mention of the faith of the other patriarchs, Isaac and Jacob, and the rest of this happy family, v. 13. Where observe,

(1.) The trial of their faith in the imperfection of their present state. They had not received the promises, that is, the things promised; they had not yet been put into possession of Canaan, had not yet seen their numerous issue; had not seen Christ in the flesh. Observe, All who are interested in the promises, do not presently receive the things promised. One imperfection of the present state of the saints on earth, is, that their happiness lies more in promise and reversion, than in actual enjoyment and possession.

(2.) The actings of their faith during this imperfect state of things. Though they had not received the promises, yet, they saw

V. 8—10. Gen. 12:—17. If this was the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and this their expectation, can we suppose that such of their posterity, as 'obtained a good report by faith,' did not believe the same truths, and expect the same inheritance? Nay, can we reasonably doubt, whether this was the popular creed, and hope of Israel, through successive generations, to the time of Christ? We cannot, unless we can suppose, that the Sinai-covenant, in which national advantages were secured to Israel, on condition of national obedience, could operate, as the fabled waters of Lethe, to make them entirely forget all preceding revelations made to their forefathers, and transmitted to them; and all the obedient confidence their forefathers had placed in those revelations. In fact, there is not one age, in the history of Israel, from the origin of the nation, to the termination of the New Test. of which we have any remaining records, but, in these records, the belief of a future state of just retributions, a future judgment, and a state of supreme blessedness to the righteous, may not be clearly discerned, and pointed out. Mat. 22:23—33. Rom. 4. Gal. 3. Maker.] 'One who performs things which relate to the public.' Here only. Scott.

(3.) Not knowing.] 'This seems a popular mode of expression; and

Abraham probably was by no means ignorant of the country, or its productions; but went without knowing whither he was going, as not knowing where it would please God he should settle in the land.' BL.

(9.) With Isaac and Jacob.] 'Rather as, &c.' Id.

V. 11, 12. This principally refers to the descendants of Abraham by Isaac and Jacob; but those, descended from him by Ishmael, and the sons of Keturah, and from Isaac by Esau, render the fulfilment of the promises to him, in this respect, still more surprising. Gen. 12:1—3. 15:5, 6. 17:15—21. 18:9—15. 21:1—7. 22:16—18. 25:1—4. 36: Is 51:1—3. Ez. 33:21—29. Rom. 4:18—22.

(11.) Through faith, &c.] 'The first announcement that a child would spring from them, [Abraham and Sarah,] occasioned, both in his and her mind, a feeling of incongruity, of impossibility, that the course of nature should be so reversed. [See Gen. 18:10—15. comparing 17:17.] Subsequent consideration brought both to a full belief in the reality of the promised, future blessing. The history of this is not expressly given in Genesis, with respect to Sarah; but it is implied.' Sr.

(12.) As good as dead.] 'Dead, as to these things; i. e. as to having children.'



13 These all died <sup>q</sup> in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and <sup>r</sup> confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

14 For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned :

16 But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly : wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their <sup>s</sup> God ; for he hath prepared for them a <sup>t</sup> city.

17 By faith Abraham, when <sup>u</sup> he was tried, offered up Isaac : and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son,

18 <sup>v</sup> Of whom it was said, <sup>w</sup> That in Isaac shall thy seed be called :

19 Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up; even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

[Practical Observations.]

<sup>q</sup> according to. s Ex. 3:6,15. Ja. 2:21.  
<sup>r</sup> 1 Ch. 29:15. t ver. 10. v or, *To*.  
<sup>u</sup> 1 Pe. 2:11. u Ge. 22:1, &c. w Ge. 21:12.

them afar off, John 8. 56. they were persuaded they were true, and should be fulfilled; they embraced them; their faith was a faith of consent. They confessed they were *strangers and pilgrims on earth*. Observe, Saints are as strangers, whose home is heaven; as pilgrims, travelling toward their home, though often meanly and slowly. This their condition they were not ashamed to own; their lives confessed they expected little from the world, cared not to engage much in it, endeavored to lay aside every weight, to gird up the loins of their minds, to mind their way, to keep company and pace with their fellow-travellers, looking for difficulties, and bearing them, and longing to get home. Hereby they declared plainly that they sought another country, v. 14. heaven, their own country. For their spiritual birth is from thence, there are their best relations, and there is their inheritance. They gave full proof of their sincerity in making such a confession. For, they were not mindful of that country from whence they came, v. 15. did not regret they had left it, and had no desire to return to it. Note, Those that are once effectually and savingly called out of a sinful state, have no mind to return into it again; they now know better things. They did not take the opportunity that offered for their return; they might have had opportu-

nity; they had time enough, had natural strength, and knew the way; those with whom they sojourned would have been willing to part with them; they had sufficient to bear the charges of their journey; but they steadfastly adhered to God and duty under all discouragements, and against all temptations to revolt from Him. So should we all do. We shall not want opportunities to revolt from God; but we must show the truth of our faith and profession by a steady adherence to Him to the end of our days. Their sincerity appeared, not only in not returning to their former country, but in desiring a better country, that is, a heavenly. Observe, here: The heavenly country is better than any on earth, and all true believers desire it. They died in the faith of those promises; not only lived by the faith of them, but died in the full persuasion that all the promises should be fulfilled to them and theirs, v. 13. That faith held out to the last. These were the actings of their faith. Now observe,

(3.) The gracious and great *reward* of their faith, v. 16. Note, God is the God of all true believers; faith gives them an interest in God, and in all his fulness. He is called their God: He calls Himself so; gives them leave to call Him so; and the spirit of adoption, to enable them to cry *Abba Father*. Notwithstanding their meanness by nature, vileness by sin, and the poverty of their outward condition, God is not ashamed to be called *their God*; such is his condescension, such is his love to them; therefore let them never be ashamed of being called *his people*, nor of any that are truly so: above all, let them not be a shame and reproach to their God, and so provoke Him to be ashamed of them. For, as a proof of his love, He has prepared for them a city, a happiness suitable to the relation into which He has taken them; and it shall never be said, to the reproach and dishonor of God, that He has adopted a people to be his own children, and then taken no care to make a suitable provision for them. The consideration of this should inflame the affections, enlarge the desires, and excite the diligent endeavors, of the people of God, after this city that He has prepared for them.

7. The apostle having given this account of the faith of others, with Abraham, returns to him again, and gives us an instance of the greatest trial and act of faith recorded, either in the story of the father of the faithful, or of any of his spiritual seed, v. 17. In this, observe,

(1.) The *trial and exercise* of Abraham's faith; He was tried indeed. It is said, Gen. 22:1. *God in this tempted Abraham*; not to sin, for so God tempteth no man, but only tried his faith and obedience to purpose. God had before tried him in many other instances, but this trial was greater than all; he was commanded to offer up his son Isaac. Read the account of it, Gen.

22:2. There you will find every word was a trial; 'Take now thy son, &c.' A greater trial was never put on any creature. The apostle here mentions some things that very much added to the greatness of this trial.

[1.] He was put on it after he *had received the promises*, that this Isaac should build up his family, *that in him his seed should be called*, v. 18. and in him, as one of the progenitors of the Messiah, all nations be blessed; so that in being called to offer up his Isaac, he seemed to be called to destroy and cut off his own family, to cancel the promises of God, to prevent the coming of Christ, to destroy the whole world, to sacrifice his own soul and his hopes of salvation, and to cut off the church of God at one blow; a most terrible trial!

[2.] That this Isaac was his only begotten son by his wife Sarah, the only one he was to have by her, and the only one that was to be the child and heir of the promise. Either the promises of a posterity, and of the Messiah, must be fulfilled by means of this son, or not at all; so that, beside his most tender affection to this his son, all his expectations were bound up in him, and, if he perished, must perish with him. If Abraham had ever so many sons, this was the only son who could convey to all nations the promised blessing; a son for whom he waited so long, received in so extraordinary a manner, on whom his heart was set, to have this son offered up as a sacrifice, and that by his own hand; it was a trial that would have upset the firmest and the strongest mind that ever informed a human body.

(2.) The *actings* of Abraham's faith in so great a trial; he obeyed; he offered up Isaac; he intentionally gave him up by his submissive soul to God, and was ready to have done it actually, according to the command of God; he went as far in it as to the very critical moment, and would have gone through with it if God had not prevented him. Nothing could be more tender and moving than those words of Isaac, *My father, here is the wood, here is the fire; but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering?* little thinking that he was to be the lamb; but Abraham knew it, and yet he went on with the great design.

(3.) The *supports* of his faith; they must be very great, suitable to the greatness of the trial; *He accounted that God was able to raise him from the dead*, v. 19. His faith was supported by the sense he had of the mighty power of God, who was able to raise the dead; he reasoned thus with himself, and so he resolved all his doubts. It does not appear that he had any expectation of being countermanded; the expectation of that would have spoiled the trial, and consequently the triumph, of his faith; but he knew God was able to raise him from the dead; and he believed God would do so, since such great things depended on his son, which must have failed if Isaac had not a

PRACT. OBS. V. 8—19. That is not justifying faith, which does not obey the command, as well as rely on the promise, of God. If indeed we professed to seek a portion in the world, the advantages of religion might appear dubious: but we avow ourselves to be 'strangers' in a foreign land, and on our pilgrimage to our desired home, where 'our treasure and our hearts already are.' If, like apostates, we were minded to 'return to the country whence we came out,' we might 'find an opportunity' of doing it, perhaps with some secular advantage; but faith shows us that it is devoted to destruction, with all those who choose their inheritance in it. Whilst we live, our faith must be repeatedly and sharply tried, that we may be distinguished from mere professors of Christianity; but we may expect, that we shall be strengthened in pro-

portion to the trial; nor can we reasonably doubt of the power of faith, to produce the most unreserved obedience, when we remember, that by this principle, 'Abraham, when tried, offered his beloved Isaac' as a burnt-offering at God's command; and trusted in Him to perform all those promises, which his obedience seemed about for ever to render vain, and their fulfilment impossible. Let us then inquire how far our faith has produced similar obedience, when we have been called to acts of inferior self-denial, or to make inferior sacrifices to our duty; and whether we have given up what was called for, in an unreserved confidence that the Lord would make up all our losses, and even bless us by means of the most afflictive dispensations. SCOTT.

V. 13—16. (15) *If they had been mindful, &c.* If, weary of this wandering life, they had purposed to return into Mesopotamia, they might have found an opportunity of doing it, and might there have settled among their relations; but this would have been an act of unbelief and disobedience, and a renunciation of the promises. SCOTT.

(13.) *These all.* 'Who? Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Sarah, mentioned vs. 8—12.' Sr.—*Seek a country.* 'The original is very emphatical: It signifies, as it were, a native country, or a country in which the father dwelt, and is opposed to that in which they were *strangers* and *pilgrims*.' DONNA.

(15.) *Opportunity, &c.* 'It is calculated, that there were full 200

years between the call of Abraham and the death of Isaac; during which there were, doubtless, many opportunities of return.' WILLIAMS.

V. 19. *Counting, &c.* 'I. e. he believed, that, in case Isaac should be actually slain and consumed as a burnt-offering, God could and would raise him up from the dead, so that the promise made to him would be fulfilled.' Sr.—*Whence he received, &c.* 'Whence, comparatively, he obtained him, or, whence, as it were, he obtained him. Abraham believed God could raise Isaac from the dead, because he had, as it were, obtained him from the dead; i. e. he was born of those who were *as good as dead*.' [see v. 12. above.] Sr.—'The sacrifice of Isaac by his father, was so evidently typical of the sacrifice of Christ, that there can



20 By faith Isaac <sup>x</sup> blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed <sup>r</sup> both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, *leaning* <sup>z</sup> upon the top of his staff.

22 By faith <sup>a</sup> Joseph, when he died, <sup>b</sup> made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid <sup>c</sup> three months of his parents, because they saw *he was* a profer child; and they were not afraid of the king's <sup>d</sup> commandment.

x Ge. 27:27-40. a Ge. 50:24,25. c Ex. 2:2.  
y Ge. 48:5-20. b or, *remembered*. d Ex. 1:16, 22.  
z Ge. 47:31.

further life. Observe, God is able to raise the dead, dead bodies, and dead souls. The belief of this will carry us through the greatest difficulties and trials that we can meet with. It is our duty to reason down our doubts and fears, by the consideration of the almighty power of God.

(4.) The *reward of his faith* in this great trial, v. 19. he received his son from the dead in a figure, in a parable. He received his son. He had parted with him to God, and God gave him back again. He received him from the dead, for he gave him up for dead; he was *as* a dead child to him, and the return was to him no less than a resurrection. This was a figure or parable of something further, the sacrifice and resurrection of Christ, of whom Isaac was a type. It was a figure and earnest of the glorious resurrection of all true believers, whose life is not lost, but hid with Christ in God. We come now to the faith of other Old Test. saints, mentioned by name, and by the particular trials and actings of their faith.

V. 20—31. In this roll of believers we have an account,

I. Of the faith of Isaac; something of him we had before in the story of Abraham. Here we have something distinct,—that by faith he blessed his two sons, Jacob and Esau, *concerning things to come*. Where, observe,

1. The actings of his faith; He *blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come*. He blessed them; that is, resigned them up to God in covenant, recommended God and religion to them, prayed for them, and prophesied concerning them, what would be their condition in times to come; the account we have in Gen. 27. Observe, Both Jacob and Esau were blessed as Isaac's children; wicked children often fare the better in this world for their good parents' sake; for things present are in the covenant. Jacob had the precedency and the principal blessing, which shows that grace and the new birth exalt persons above their fellows,

and qualify for the best blessings; and that it is owing to the sovereign free grace of God, that in the same family one is taken and another left, since all the race are by nature hateful to God; that if one has his portion in this world, and the other in the better world, it is God who makes the difference; for even the comforts of this life are more and better than any deserve.

2. The difficulties Isaac's faith struggled with. (1.) He seemed to have forgotten how God had determined the matter at the birth of these his sons, Gen. 25: 23. he was rather swayed by natural affection and general custom, which gave the double portion of honor, affection, and advantage, to the first-born. (2.) He acted in this matter with some reluctance, when he came to pronounce the blessings, Gen. 27: 33. and charged Jacob that he had subtly taken Esau's blessing, v. 33, 35. But for all this, Isaac's faith recovered itself, and he ratified the blessing; *I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed*. Rebeeca and Jacob are not to be justified in the indirect means they used to obtain this blessing, but God will be justified in overruling even the sins of men to serve the purposes of his glory. Now the faith of Isaac thus prevailing over his unbelief, it has pleased the God of Isaac to pass by the weakness of his faith, to commend the sincerity of it, and record him among the elders, *who, through faith, have obtained a good report*. We now go on to,

II. Jacob, v. 21. There were a great many instances of the faith of Jacob; two it has pleased God to single out, beside what has been already mentioned in the account of Abraham. Where, observe,

1. The actings of his faith here mentioned, and they are two. (1.) *He blessed both the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh*; he made them both heads of different tribes, as if they had been his own immediate sons; prayed for them, that they might both be blessed of God; and prophesied that they should be blessed; but as Isaac before, so now Jacob prefers the younger, and this by divine direction, to show that the Gentile church, the younger, should have a more abundant blessing than the Jewish, the elder. (2.) *He worshipped, leaning on his staff*; that is, he praised God for what He had done for him, and for the prospect he had of approaching blessedness; and he prayed for those he was leaving behind him, that religion might live in his family when he was gone. He did this, *leaning on the top of his staff*; intimating to us, his great natural weakness, and yet, that he would not make this an excuse for neglecting the worshipping of God; he showed thereby his dependence on God, and testified his condition here as a pilgrim with his staff, and his weariness of the world, and willingness to be at rest.

2. The time and season when Jacob thus acted his faith: when he was dying. Observe, Though the grace of faith is of universal use throughout our whole lives, yet it is especially so when we come to die. The best way in which parents can finish their

course, is, blessing their families and worshipping their God. We are now come to,

III. Joseph, v. 22. And here, also, we consider, What he did by his faith; *he made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones*. The passage is from Gen. 50: 24, 25. Joseph was eminent for his faith, though he had not enjoyed the helps for it his brethren had; and this was evinced by his foretelling of the departure at length of the children of Israel, and giving charge concerning his bones. Some of the Rabbies fancied, that all the Jews who were buried out of Canaan, must be conveyed under ground to Canaan before they could rise again. But he gave this order to testify, 1. That though he had lived and died in Egypt, yet he did not live and die an Egyptian, but an Israelite. 2. That he believed the resurrection of the body, and the communion that his soul should presently have with departed saints, as his body had with their dead bodies. 3. To assure them that God would be with them in Egypt, and deliver them out of it in his own time and way. Observe, When it was that Joseph's faith acted after this manner; i. e. as in the case of Jacob, when dying. God often gives his people living comforts in dying moments. We go on now to,

IV. The parents of Moses, cited from Ex. 2: 3, &c. Where, observe,

1. The acting of their faith; they hid this their son three months. Though the mother, only, is mentioned in the history, yet by what is here said, it seems his father not only consented to it, but consulted about it. Observe, Moses was persecuted betimes, and forced to be concealed; in this he was a type of Christ, who was persecuted almost as soon as He was born, and his parents forced to flee with Him into Egypt for his preservation. In this faith of Moses' parents there was a mixture of unbelief, but God was pleased to overlook it.

2. The reasons of their thus acting. No doubt, natural affection could not but move them; but there was something further. *They saw he was a proper child, a goodly child*, Ex. 2: 2. *exceeding fair*, as in Acts 7: 20.—*fair to God*; there appeared in him something uncommon; the beauty of the Lord sat on him, as a presage that he was born to great things, and that by conversing with God his face should shine, Ex. 34: 29. Sometimes, not always, the countenance is the index of the mind.

3. The prevalency of their faith over their fear. They were not afraid of the king's commandment, Ex. 1: 22. they did not so fear as presently to give up their child; they considered that if none of the males were preserved, there would be an end and utter ruin of the church of God and the true religion, and that though, in their present state of servitude and oppression, one would praise the dead rather than the living, yet they believed God would preserve his people, and the time was coming when it would be worth while for an Israelite to live. Some must hazard their own

be no doubt of the design to be answered by this otherwise mysterious event. On the very spot where Christ was crucified, Abraham is commanded to slay his son. It is needless to recapitulate the coincidences between the sacrifice of Isaac and of Christ. . . . That the meaning of the whole of the circumstances of this mystical sacrifice of his son was revealed to Abraham; that he learned from them, that the promised Messiah, should in like manner bear the wood of the cross, and die for mankind; and that Abraham, in obeying the divine command, rejoiced to see the day of Christ, and that he then saw it and was glad, [John 8: 56.] is well argued by Bp. Warburton.

TOWNSEND'S *Old Test. arr.*, in WILLIAMS.

V. 21. So the Sept. render the words which, in our version, are translated 'the bed's head'; and the variation is immaterial. The same word, by changing merely the vowel points, will bear either signification.—'We have here a lively example of that *substance*, (1.) which was before commemorated. Jacob, dying a stranger in Egypt, distributes the kingdoms of the Canaanites to his twelve sons, in no other manner than he would have done, had he reigned in peace at Jerusalem. But how true and solid this "faith, the substance of things hoped for," was, appeared by this, that, after many years, the whole concern being committed to

the lot, than which nothing seems more fortuitous, the event confirmed Jacob's testament.' *Beza*.—This learned divine here includes the blessing, which Jacob pronounced on all his sons, as well as that on Joseph, with Manasseh and Ephraim. Gen. 49.

(21.) *When he was a dying*.] 'Not in the act of dying, as Gen. 48: 8—22. shows, but when on his death-bed he blessed both them [i. e. Joseph's sons] and his 12 sons; see Gen. 47: 31. 48: 2. 49: 33.' STUART.—*Bowed himself, &c.*] 'This last action did not accompany the blessing of Joseph's sons, (see Gen. 47: 31. comp. 48: 1, 15, 16.) but was a *separate* transaction: and it designates, as it would seem, *the act of worship, or reverence*, paid to God, and occasioned by the grateful emotions of the dying patriarch, on account of the promise his son Joseph had just made to bury him with his fathers.' ST.—The question respecting *top of his staff*, the Heb. of which in Gen. might, according to some, be rendered *head of his bed*, Stuart is decided upon, in favor of understanding the phrase in the most obvious and literal sense, of an old man standing and leaning over his staff for support; than which, he says, nothing can be more natural.

V. 23. *Not afraid*.] 'I. e. not so intimidated as to drown the child, as commanded, Ex. 1: 22.'

WILLIAMS.



24 By faith <sup>e</sup> Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing <sup>f</sup> rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach <sup>g</sup> of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense <sup>h</sup> of the reward.

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing <sup>i</sup> the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him <sup>k</sup> who is invisible.

28 Through faith he kept the <sup>l</sup> passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them.

29 By faith they passed <sup>m</sup> through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned.

<sup>e</sup> Ex. 2:10, 11. <sup>h</sup> c. 13:13. <sup>k</sup> 1 Ti. 1:17.  
<sup>f</sup> Ps. 84:10. <sup>i</sup> c. 10:35. <sup>l</sup> Ex. 12:21, & c.  
<sup>g</sup> or, for. <sup>j</sup> Ex. 10:28, 29. 12:31. <sup>m</sup> Ex. 14:22, 29.

lives to preserve their children, and they were resolved to do it; they knew the king's commandment was evil in itself, contrary to the laws of God and nature, and therefore of no authority or obligation. Faith is a great preservative against the sinful, slavish fear of men, as it sets God before the soul, and shows the vanity of the creature, and its subordination to the will and power of God. The apostle next proceeds to,

V. Moses himself, v. 24, 25, &c. Where, observe,

1. An instance of his faith in conquering the world.

(1.) He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Observe, How great his temptation; Pharaoh's daughter is said to have been his only child, and herself childless; and, having found Moses, and saved him as she did, they resolved to take him as her son; so he stood fair to be king of Egypt, and might, thereby, hope to be serviceable to Israel. He owed his life to this princess; and to refuse such kindness

from her, would look not only like ingratitude to her, but a neglect of Providence, that seemed to intend his advancement and his brethren's advantage. How glorious the triumph of his faith in so great a trial! He refused, &c. lest he should undervalue the truer honor of being a son of Abraham, the father of the faithful; he refused, lest it should look like renouncing his religion, as well as his relation to Israel; and no doubt both he must have done, had he accepted this honor; he therefore nobly refuses it.

(2.) He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, v. 25. He was willing to take his lot with the people of God here, though a suffering lot, that he might have his portion with them hereafter, rather than to enjoy all the sensual, sinful pleasures of Pharaoh's court, which would be but for a season, and then punished with everlasting misery. Herein he acted rationally as well as religiously, and conquered the temptation to worldly pleasure, as he had done before to worldly preferment. Here, observe, The pleasures of sin are, and will be, but short; and a true believer will despise them. Suffering is to be chosen rather than sin; there being more evil in the least sin than there can be in the greatest suffering.

(3.) He esteemed the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, v. 26. See how Moses weighed matters; in one scale he put the worst of religion,—the reproaches of Christ; in the other, the best of the world,—the treasures of Egypt; and in his judgment, directed by faith, the worst of religion weighed down the best of the world. Now here, Moses conquered the riches of the world, as before he had conquered its honors and pleasures.

2. The circumstance of time is noticed, when Moses by his faith gained this victory over the world, in all its honors, pleasures, and treasures; when he was come to years, v. 24. not only to years of discretion, but of experience, to the age of forty years; when he was great, or come to maturity. Some would take this as an extenuation of his victory, that he did not make this choice sooner; but it is rather an enhancement of the honor of it, that he made the choice when he was grown ripe for judgment and enjoyment. It was not the act of a child, but proceeded from mature deliberation. It is an excellent thing to be seriously religious, when in the midst of worldly business and

enjoyments; to despise the world, when most capable of relishing and enjoying it.

3. What supported and strengthened Moses' faith to that degree; respect to the recompense of reward, that is, say some, the deliverance out of Egypt; but doubtless it means much more,—the glorious reward of faith and fidelity in the other world. Observe, here, Heaven is a great reward, a reward suitable to the price paid for it,—the blood of Christ; suitable to the perfections of God, and fully answering to all his promises. It is a recompense of reward, because given by a righteous Judge, for the righteousness of Christ, to righteous persons, according to the righteous rule of the covenant of grace. Believers may, and ought to have, respect to this recompense of reward; they should acquaint themselves with it, approve of it, and live in the daily and delightful expectation of it. Thus it will prove a landmark to direct their course; a loadstone to draw their hearts; a sword to conquer their enemies; a spur to quicken them to duty; and a cordial to refresh them under all the difficulties of doing and suffering work.

4. We have another instance of Moses' faith, and that in forsaking Egypt, v. 27. Twice Moses forsook Egypt; (1.) As a supposed criminal, when the king's wrath was incensed against him for killing the Egyptian; where it is said, he feared, Ex. 2: 14, 15. not with a fear of despondency, but of discretion to save his life. (2.) As a commander and ruler in Jeshurun, after God had employed him to humble Pharaoh, and make him willing to let Israel go. Observe, here,

[1.] The product of his faith; He forsook Egypt, and all its power and pleasures, and undertook the conduct of Israel out of it.

[2.] The prevalency of his faith. It raised him above the fear of the king's wrath, though he knew that it was great, and levelled at him in particular; he was not dismayed, and said to Israel, Fear not, Ex. 14: 13.

[3.] The principle on which his faith acted in these his motions; seeing the invisible God. Observe, The God with whom we have to do is an invisible God; yet by faith we may see Him, be fully assured of his existence, of his providence, and of his gracious and powerful presence with us; and such a sight of God will enable believers to endure to the end, whatever they may meet with in the way.

V. 24—26. Refused, &c. any longer to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter? though tradition reports, and Josephus states, that he was considered as heir of that prosperous kingdom.—Esteeming the scoffs, cast on the Israelites, for expecting the Christ to arise from among them, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed, "greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." Mackn. (Notes, 13:9—14. 1 Cor. 10:6—10.) "The recompense of the reward," here mentioned, could not be temporal, for Moses came not into the land of Canaan; nor could he expect any greater blessing in that kind, than he might have had in Egypt. He therefore must have had respect to some spiritual and heavenly recompense. Whitby.—(21) Come to years } Become great. His authority and consequence in Egypt, as well as his time of life, seem intended.

(25.) Pleasures of sin, &c.] 'The luxurious and sinful pleasures of a court, at that time the most corrupt in the world. There is contained also an indirect contrast between the ever-enduring promises of God, and the fleeting pleasures of sin.'

(26.) Reproach of Christ.] 'Such contumely as Christ suffered.' So, Bloomf. says, most commentators. But some, as Doddr., think it refers to the relation in which Christ stood to Israel, as his peculiar people; and that Moses looked forward to the reward, in the promise of God respecting a future Savior.—Stuart renders it reproach, like that which Christ suffered, and thinks the simple sentiment is, 'Moses renounced pleasure and wealth, and endured suffering and reproach, because he believed in the promises God had made of future good, and that He would deliver his people from the bondage of Egypt. So Christ, "though rich, for our sakes became poor," in order to redeem us from a bondage worse than that of Egypt.'—Bloomf. remarks, on choosing rather, &c., v. 25. that 'it places in strong point of view the merit of the sacrifice [i. e. made by Moses]: for by renouncing the adoption, he ceased to be an Egyptian, and to have the privileges thereof; and became an Israelite, and was exposed to a participation in the oppressions of his countrymen.' Doddr. also remarks, respecting the recompense of reward here, v. 26. 'that it could not have been temporal grandeur, which he might have had, with much greater security and advantage, in Egypt; nor the possession of Canaan, which he never saw; but that it must, therefore, have been the eternal inheritance, discovered to him by the principle here [in this ch.] so largely described and recommended.'

Ed.

V. 27. Moses evidently 'feared,' when he forsook Egypt the first time; (Note, Ex. 2:13—15.) but this relates to his leaving that kingdom the second time, when he led forth the tribes of Israel. He was then strengthened in faith, to disregard the wrath and power of king Pharaoh; he denounced the death of the first-born, left the tyrant's presence, as one who had defiance to his menaces, and marched out of Egypt with great intrepidity; though he was fully aware, that Pharaoh, with his army, would pursue him. And when that actually took place, he boldly said to the affrighted Israelites, 'Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.—The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.' Ex. 9:13—18, 33. 10:16, 17, 29. 11:4—8. 12:29—39. 14:1—14.

V. 28. By the same efficacious faith, Moses foresaw the destruction of the first-born in Egypt, and expected the exemption of Israel from that calamity, in the way which the Lord prescribed unto him. He therefore influenced the people to keep the Passover, with 'the sprinkling of the blood' on the door-posts, and the other significant ceremonies; lest the destroying angel should enter their houses also. In this manner they were preserved, and this made way for their deliverance out of bondage.

V. 29. Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Caleb, and others, truly believed; and the rest of the nation, by the exhortations of Moses, were excited to a confidence in JEHOVAH's power and favor, for present deliverance from Pharaoh. But it was chiefly by the faith of Moses, their leader, that the Israelites passed safely through the Red Sea; even as Noah's family were preserved in the ark by means of his faith; though it does not appear that they were all true believers.

(29.) By faith, &c.] 'Not that every individual of the Israelites possessed such a confidence as is here described; but their leaders had it, and (as in other cases, of a similar nature) it is predicted of the nation.' Sr.—Red Sea.] 'The appellation, Red Sea, is founded in a vulgar error, and rather arose from its proper name, Mare Erythraeum, which, the commentators say, was derived from king Erythras, undoubtedly the same with Esau or Edom, who was a red man. So Grot. and others. It is called by Moses, Ex. 15:22. the weedy sea. And such, the accounts of modern tourists, as Niebuhr and others (see Harmer), testify it to be. But whether these weeds give a color to it so as to originate the name, Red Sea, is, I think, very doubtful.'

Bloomf.



30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

[Practical Observations.]

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; and of David also, and of Samuel, and of the prophets:

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

n Jos. 6:12-20. r Ju. c. 6 and 7. x Ga. 3:16.  
o Jos. 6:23. s Ju. 4:6, &c. y Da. 6:22.  
Ja. 2:25. t Ju. c. 15 and 16. z Da. 3:5.  
p or, were disobe. u Ju. 11:32, &c. a 1 K. 19:3.  
dient. v 1 Sa. 17:45, &c. 2 K. 6:16.  
q Jos. 2:4, &c. w 1 Sa. 7:9, &c.

5. We have yet another instance of the faith of Moses, in keeping the passover and sprinkling of blood, v. 28. The account we have, Ex. 12:13-23. All Israel kept this passover, yet God delivered the institution by Moses; and though it was a great mystery, Moses by faith both delivered it to the people, and kept it that night in the house where he lodged. The passover was one of the most solemn institutions of the Old Test.; and a very significant type of Christ, to whom the accommodation of it is not difficult.

VI. The Israelites passing through the Red Sea under the conduct of Moses their leader, v. 29. The story we have Exodus, ch. 14. Where observe,

1. Their preservation and safe passage, when there was no other way to escape from Pharaoh and his host, who were closely pursuing them; in which their danger was very great, and their deliverance very glorious: the grace of faith will help us through all the dangers we meet with in our way to heaven.

2. The destruction of the Egyptians.

PRACT. OBS. V. 20-31. While we desire, in faith, to 'bless our children' and worship God during life, and at the approach of death, and afterwards to have our lot with his people in the heavenly Canaan; and while we attend to every relative duty, trusting in the Lord, and 'not fearing the wrath' of man; let us particularly note the effects of the faith of Moses; and ask ourselves, whether we have been influenced to a similar judgment, choice, and experience. All believers are not called to make the same sacrifices, or to endure the same trials 'for righteousness' sake; nor have all the same measure of faith; yet without some experience and consciousness of this kind, we are not warranted to con-

V. 30. 'As the land of Canaan belonged to the Israelites, by a grant from "God, the Possessor of heaven and earth," it was proper that the first city, which resisted them, should be taken in such a manner, as to demonstrate the truth of their title.—Thus were . . . all the Canaanites made to know the supremacy and power of the God of Israel, and how vain it was to make any resistance.' Macknight. Scott.

V. 31. Doubtless she embraced the promises concerning the Messiah and spiritual salvation, in the same obedient manner, when she was made acquainted with them, and thus she was incorporated among the Israelites, and became an ancestor of Christ.—But the fruits and the infirmities of her faith have already been fully considered. Notes, Josh. 2:1-21. P. O. Notes, 6:17-19, 22-25. Jan. 2:25, 26. In.

(31.) Rahab.] 'Rahab is called a harlot on account of her former way of life, not because she remained such, Mat. 21:31. Therefore she received and preserved safe the spies sent by Joshua, because she believed that that was the one true God, who, in Egypt, and in the Arabian desert, had performed such wonders for the Israelites, who were his worshippers.' ROSENM.—'Rahab's falsehood in relation to the spies, was the effect, not of her faith, but of her sinful dread of the king's wrath; but it was not to the purpose of this discourse, to notice it, any more than the sinful infirmities mixed with the faith of others, enumerated. Guyse. But he considers her faith related only to the temporal preservation of her family, though she afterwards was incorporated with the church of Israel, and even then really believed that Jehovah was the only true God.' Henry, abr.—The notion of Rahab's having been an inn-

They, presumptuously attempting to follow Israel through the Red Sea, being thus blinded and hardened to their ruin, were all drowned. Their rashness was great, and their ruin grievous. When God judges, He will overcome; and it is plain that the destruction of sinners is of themselves.

VII. The Israelites, under Joshua their leader, before the walls of Jericho. The story we have, Josh. 6:5. where observe, 1. The means prescribed of God to bring down the walls of Jericho, wherein was a great trial of their faith: the method prescribed seemed very improbable to answer such an end, and would doubtless expose them to the daily contempt of their enemies; the ark of God would seem to be in danger. But this was the way God commanded them to take, and He loves to do great things by small and contemptible means, that his own arm may be made bare. 2. The powerful success of the prescribed means; the walls of Jericho fell before them. God was pleased in this extraordinary manner to slight and dismantle it, in order to magnify Himself, to terrify the Canaanites, to strengthen the faith of the Israelites, and to exclude all boasting.

VIII. Rahab, v. 31. Here consider, 1. Who this Rahab was, a Canaanite, a stranger to the commonwealth of Israel, yet a believer. The power of divine grace greatly appears, when it works without the usual means of grace. She was a harlot, and lived in a way of sin; yet she believed that the greatness of sin, if truly repented of, shall be no bar to the pardoning mercy of God. Christ has saved the chief of sinners; where sin has abounded, grace has superabounded. 2. What she did by her faith; she received the spies in peace, the men that Joshua had sent to spy out Jericho, Josh. 2:6, 7. She not only bade them welcome, but concealed them from their enemies, and made a noble confession of her faith, v. 9-11. Learn, here, true faith will show itself in good works, especially toward the people of God. It will venture all hazards in the cause of God and his people: a true believer will sooner expose his own person than God's interest and people. A true believer is desirous, not only to be in covenant with God, but in communion with the people of God, and is willing to cast in his lot with them, and to fare as they fare. 3. Observe what Rahab gained by her faith; she escaped perishing with those that believed not. Observe, (1.) The generality of her neighbors, friends, and fellow-citizens, perished; man and beast

were cut off. (2.) The cause of the people of Jericho's destruction,—unbelief; they believed not that Israel's God was the true God, and that Israel was the peculiar people of God, though they had evidence sufficient of it. (3.) The signal preservation of Rahab. Joshua gave a strict charge that she should be spared, and none but she and hers; and she taking care that the sign, the scarlet thread, should be hung out, her family were marked out for mercy, and perished not. Singular faith, when the generality are not only unbelievers, but against believers, will be rewarded with singular favors, in times of common calamity.

V. 32-40. I. The apostle having given a classis of many eminent believers, whose names are mentioned, and the particular trials and actings of their faith recorded, now concludes his narrative with a more summary account of another set of believers, where the particular acts are not ascribed to particular persons by name, but left to be applied by those who are well acquainted with the sacred story.

In this summary account the apostle, I. Mentions Gideon, see Judges 6:11. &c. an eminent instrument, raised up of God to deliver his people from the oppression of the Midianites, when his army was reduced from 32,000 to 300; yet by these, with their lamps and pitchers, God put the whole army of the Midianites to confusion and ruin; and the same faith that gave Gideon so much courage and honor, enabled him to act with great meekness and modesty toward his brethren afterward. It is the excellency of the grace of faith, that, while it helps men to do great things, it keeps them from having high and great thoughts of themselves.

2. Barak, another instrument raised up to deliver Israel out of the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan, Judges 4: a soldier, yet he received his commission and instructions from Deborah, a prophetess of the Lord; and insisted on having this divine oracle with him in his expedition. He obtained a great victory, by his faith, over all the host of Sisera, and returned all the praise and glory to God: this is the nature of faith; it has recourse unto God in all dangers and difficulties, and then makes grateful returns to God for all mercies and deliverances.

3. Samson, another instrument God raised up to deliver Israel from the Philistines, Judges ch. 13, 14, 15, and 16. From his story we learn, that the grace of faith is the strength of the soul for great service. If

clude that we are of Moses' religion; for a common walking-stick more resembles Aaron's fruitful rod, than the faith of many modern professors of evangelical truth does the self-denying faith of Moses or of Abraham. But the subject is absolutely inexhaustible. . . . By faith we must implicitly use every mean, however unlikely, which God prescribes in order to our obtaining the promises; trusting in Him alone to render them effectual; nor will any perish with the enemies of God, who believe his Word, and show it by love to his people; whatever former crimes they have committed, or in whatever situation they may be found. Scott.

keeper or hostess, which Bloomf. approves, Stuart rejects, as 'contrary to the laws of [Hebrew] etymology.' Ed.

V. 32-34. The eminent persons, here mentioned in general terms, are not placed in the order of time in which they lived, but as they occurred to the apostle's mind; and the whole succession of the prophets are mentioned at once. Yet it has generally been supposed, that there is a peculiar reference to the successes of Judas Maccabeus and his brethren, against the forces of Antiochus Epiphanes; when from feeble beginnings they arrived at great power, and defeated all that persecutor's devices, by faith in the promises and protection of the Lord.—While we make a decided difference, between the Word of God and all other writings, there seems no impropriety in supposing that the apostle had these events in his view, on this occasion; as the historical facts respecting the persecutions of Antiochus, and the victories of the Maccabees, were well known among the Hebrews, and really formed an illustrious example of the efficacy and nature of faith. Scott.

(33.) 'Oh, if you could expect enough, believe enough, and ask enough, I know not what you might not obtain; I know not what deliverances you might accomplish in the earth. The age is fast opening when the triumphs of prayer are to be everywhere displayed as they never were before, to draw the creation up to God, and to perpetuate the union by the bond of eternal confidence. When a nation shall be born in a day, in answer to prayer, that strong language of a condescending God shall be written on our banners, 'concerning the work of my hands command ye Me.' Dr. GRIFFIN.



35 Women<sup>b</sup> received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting<sup>c</sup> deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of<sup>d</sup> bonds and<sup>e</sup> imprisonment:

37 They were<sup>f</sup> stoned, they were slain asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

<sup>b</sup> 1 K. 17:22. <sup>c</sup> Ac. 4:19. <sup>e</sup> Je. 20:2.  
<sup>2</sup> K. 4:35,36. <sup>d</sup> Ge. 39:10. <sup>f</sup> Ac. 7:59.

Samson had not had a strong faith, as well as a strong arm, he had never performed such exploits.

4. Jephthah, Judges 11: before Samson; raised up to deliver Israel from the Ammonites. In his story, observe, The grace of God often finds out, and fastens on, the most undeserving and ill-deserving persons, to do great things for them and by them. Jephthah was the son of a harlot. The grace of faith, wherever it is, will put men on acknowledging God in all their ways, ch. 11: 11. It will make them bold and venturesome in a good cause; will not only put them on making their vows to God, but paying their vows after the mercy received; yea, though they have vowed to their own great grief, hurt, and loss, as in the case of Jephthah and his daughter.

5. David, that great man after God's own heart. Few ever met with greater trials, or discovered a more lively faith; having, when young, slain the lion and the bear; his faith in God encouraged him to encounter the great Goliath, and helped him to triumph over him. The same faith enabled him to bear patiently the ingrateful malice of Saul and his favorites, and to wait till God should put him into possession of the promised power and dignity: also it made him a very successful and victorious prince, and, after a long life of virtue and honor, (though not without some foul stains of sin,) he died in faith, relying on the everlasting covenant God had made with him and his, ordered in all things, and sure; and he has left behind him such excellent memoirs of the trials and

acts of faith in the book of *Psalms*, as will ever be of great esteem and use, among the people of God.

6. Samuel, raised up to be a most eminent prophet of the Lord to Israel, as well as a ruler over them. God revealed Himself to Samuel, when he was but a child, and continued to do so till his death. To Samuel he adds, and of the prophets, who were extraordinary ministers of the Old Test. church, employed of God sometimes to denounce judgment, sometimes to promise mercy, always to reprove sin; sometimes to foretell remarkable events, known only to God; and chiefly to give notice of the Messiah, his coming, Person and offices;—for all of whom a true and strong faith was very requisite.

II. And now, having done naming particular persons, he proceeds to tell us what things were done by their faith; some that easily apply to one or other of the persons named; but others not so easy to any here named.

1. By faith they subdued kingdoms, v. 33. Thus did David, Joshua, and many of the judges. 2. They wrought righteousness, both in their public and personal capacities: they turned many from idolatry to the ways of righteousness; they believed God, and it was imputed to them for righteousness; they walked and acted righteously toward God and man. 3. They obtained promises, both general and special: faith gives us an interest in the promises; by faith we have the comfort of the promises; and by faith we are prepared to wait for the promises, and in due time to receive them. 4. They stopped the mouth of lions; so Samson, Judg. 14: 5, 6. and David, 1 Sam. 17: 31, 35. and Daniel 6: 22. 5. They quenched the violence of the fire, v. 34. So Moses, by the prayer of faith, quenched the fire of God's wrath kindled against Israel, Num. 11: 1, 2. So did the three children, Dan. 3: 17, 27. Refusing to worship the golden image, exposed them to the fiery furnace which Nebuchadnezzar had prepared for them, and their faith engaged for them that power and presence of God in the furnace, which quenched the violence of the fire, so that not so much as the smell thereof passed on them. 6. They escaped the edge of the sword, as David, of Goliath and of Saul; and Mordecai and the Jews, the sword of Haman. 7. Out of weakness they were made strong; from national weakness, into which the Jews often fell by their unbelief; on the revival of faith, all their interest and affairs revived

and flourished: from bodily weakness; as Hezekiah, who ascribed his recovery to the promise and power of God, Isa. 38: 15. And it is the same grace of faith, that from spiritual weakness helps men to recover and renew their strength. 8. They grew valiant in fight; as Joshua, the judges, and David. God, as a reward and encouragement of their faith, put to flight the armies of the aliens, aliens to their commonwealth, and enemies to their religion. 9. Women received their dead raised to life again, v. 35. as the widow of Zarephath, 1 Kings 17: 23. and the Shunammite, 2 Kings 4: 36. Thus Christ had compassion on the widow of Nain, Luke 7: 12. &c. This should confirm our faith in the general resurrection.

III. The apostle tells us what these believers endured by faith:

1. They were tortured, not accepting deliverance, v. 35. They were put on the rack, to make them renounce their God, their Savior, and their religion; they bore the torture, and would not accept of deliverance on such vile terms; that which animated them thus to suffer, was, the hope they had of obtaining a better resurrection, and deliverance on more honorable terms, 2 Macc. ch. 7. &c.

2. They endured trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, and bonds and imprisonment, v. 36. They were persecuted in their reputation by mockings, which are cruel to an ingenious mind; in their persons by scourging, the punishment of slaves; in their liberty by bonds and imprisonment. Observe, how ingenerate is the malice wicked men have toward the righteous.

3. They were put to death in the most cruel manner; some were stoned, as Zechariah, 2 Chron. 24: 21. sawn asunder, as Isaiah, by Manasseh. They were tempted; some read it, burnt, 2 Macc. 7: 5. They were slain with the sword. All sorts of death were prepared for them; their enemies clothed death in all the array of cruelty and terror, and yet they boldly met it, and endured it.

4. Those who escaped death, were used so ill, that death might seem more eligible than such a life, v. 37, 38. Such sufferings as these they endured, then, for their faith; and such they endured through the power of the grace of faith; and which shall we most admire, the wickedness of human nature, that is capable of acting such cruelties on fellow-creatures, or the excellency of divine

V. 35—38. This is supposed to refer to the tortures and death of a woman and her seven sons, as recorded in the history of the Maccabees. (2 Macc. 7.)—This is a most decisive testimony of the sacred writer, that his countrymen expected a resurrection to eternal life, and that the Word of God warmed that expectation.—Others, in different ages, had been tried by 'cruel mockings,' and every kind of indignity and derision; with ignominious and painful scourgings, and with lingering sufferings in bonds and imprisonment; yet by faith they cleaved to God and their duty, amidst all that could be inflicted on them. Thus Micaiah, Jeremiah, and many others had been abused. (Notes, 1 K. 22: 3, 26, 27. Jer. 20: 23: 10—24. 37: 33.) Moreover, several had been stoned to death, and some had even been cruelly sawn asunder, as tradition reported that Isaiah had been. (Notes, 2 K. 21: 16. Is. 1: 1.) Others had been tempted with the most complicated sufferings, and with conditional offers of deliverance, to sin against God. Some were slain at once with the sword, whilst others were driven from their habitations, to wander as vagabonds, covered with matted skins instead of suitable raiment; and to inhabit mountains, deserts, dens, and caves, instead of commodious houses; being destitute of friends, afflicted by complicated distresses, and most cruelly tortured, when they fell into the hands of their persecutors. Yet they still trusted in God, and obeyed Him, with unremitting patience and constancy, in a realizing belief of his promises of support, comfort, and eternal salvation, and an unwavering confidence in them. Of these excellent persons 'the world,' which used them with such contempt and cruelty, 'was not worthy;' and therefore they were soon removed, in mercy to them, and in judgment to their enemies. The cases of David, Elijah, and many others, recorded in Scripture, may be alluded to; but doubtless many others occurred, during the persecuting reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel, of which particular accounts have not reached us; though some records or traditions concerning them might be extant among the Hebrews, when the apostle wrote. (M. R. p—s.)—(35) Tortured.] Probably they were killed by being stretched out, and beaten with staves as a drum by drumsticks.

(35.) Tortured.] I. e. by stretching upon the *tumpanon*, and beating at the same time. Sr.,—who says the shape of this instrument of torture is not certainly known. Williams suggests the *bastinadoing* still practised in the East, as what is meant.—Bl., in a learned and ingenious note, remarks, that 'the form of the *tumpanon* may have been this, T;

the criminal having his arms fastened to the two horns of the post, with his head above the top of it, and his feet bound to the lower part, but not reaching the ground,—a posture which would promote the object of punishment in the extreme, by rendering it impossible, for the poor wretch to shrink from the blows.' Ed.—Not accepting, &c.] 'Not accepting liberation, in order that, &c. I. e. they declined accepting liberation from their torments, on condition of renouncing their religion.' STUART.—Better resurrection.] 'I. e. the resurrection which is better than the resurrection of the wicked?' So Owen. But *Crellius* and *Hammond* (in *Doddr.*) understand better as opposed to a present remission of their torments, which *Doddr.* adopts; though he quotes *Hallett*, as being very clear, that the opposition lies between the resurrection to eternal life, which these martyrs expected, and the resurrection of the dead children to life in this world, mentioned in the first clause of the verse: to this sense *Stuart* accords; but *Bloomf.*, after *Rosenm.*, explains it 'of another and better life;' quoting *Theoph.* as confirming, he understands it of 'a heavenly one, better than that of the wicked, who will only rise from their graves to suffer punishment here below, while the righteous will be caught up, to meet the Lord in the air,' &c. The other interpretations he thinks 'precarious.'

(37.) Saw asunder.] 'Prideaux and many others suppose the apostle might here refer to the tradition among the Jews, that the prophet Isaiah was sawn asunder at the command of Manasseh. *Calmet* understands, by this expression, being torn in pieces, as it were under a threshing instrument, consisting of wooden rollers, full of sharp, iron teeth, like a harrow.' *DODDR.*—Were tempted.] The word in the original here has occasioned great difficulty in interpreting this passage, principally because of its genuine signification, and milder aspect, while placed amidst others which designate specific sufferings, and those of a high degree. But *Stuart* thinks a very obvious and intensive meaning of it, viz. that of temptation to do evil, (which, as presented here, v. 37. must mean temptations presented by persecutors, to the victims of their torture, in order to induce them to forsake their religion and worship the gods of idolaters,) makes it plain, and is, probably, the correct interpretation. He comp. v. 35. Ed.—Wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins.] 'Residing first in one cave, and then in another.—Not in skins, literally, but in rude garments made thereof. See 1 K. 19: 13, 19. 2 K. 2: 8. 13: 14.'



38 (Of whom the world was not worthy;) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise :

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

## CHAP. XII.

1 An exhortation to constant faith, patience, and godliness. 22 A commendation of the New Testament above the Old.

WHEREFORE seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

g or, foreseen. h Re. 6:11. a 2 Co. 7:1.

grace, that is able to bear up the faithful under such cruelties, and to carry them safely through all !

IV. What they obtained by their faith.

1. A most honorable character and commendation from God, the true Judge and Fountain of honor, v. 38. It is not fit good men should have their rest in this world ; therefore God receives them out of it, to that world that is suitable to them, and yet far beyond the merit of all their services and sufferings.

2. They obtained a good report, v. 29. of all good men, and of the truth itself, and have the honor to be enrolled in this sacred cal-

PRACT. OBS. V. 32—40. 'Faith' will enable a man to serve God, and his generation, in whatever way he may be employed ; whether in governing or reforming nations, or defending them, by crushing the power of iniquitous assailants ; or in preaching the Gospel and boldly testifying against the crimes of the most mighty and implacable of its opposers ; or by 'working righteousness,' and obtaining promises in a more obscure station. It will influence a man to such prompt obedience, disinterested diligence, and warranted expectation, as will ensure all needful success in his undertakings. It will also prepare him for facing any dangers ; and though we do not now expect to 'stop the mouths of lions,' or to 'quench the violence of the fire ;' yet we are

V. 38. *Dens, caves, mountains.*] Comp. 1 Sa. 23:14. &c. &c. The cases alluded to happened in Palestine, and the cut is a view in its mountains. ED.



V. 39, 40. Various interpretations have been given of this passage. Some suppose that the promise was that of 'the better country,' which the patriarchs desired, 13—16. but unto which they were not admitted, nor will he admitted, till the whole multitude of heirs shall be collected together at the end of the world. Others, perceiving that this interpretation is contrary to the general current of Scripture, which uniformly declares, that the 'righteous entereth into rest ;' that 'it is better to depart, to be with Christ ;' and that 'when absent from the body, believers are present with the Lord ;' 'blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord, &c.' confine the meaning almost wholly to deliverance from persecution !—But was not the promise of a Redeemer, from the first fall of Adam, the grand promise to fallen man ? (Notes, Gen. 3:14, 15. 12:1—3. 49:10.) This 'promise' the patriarchs received, and cordially embraced in faith (17) : but they did not live to obtain the thing promised.

eadar of the Old Test. worthies, God's witnesses ; yea, they had a witness for them in the consciences of their enemies, who, while they thus abused them, were condemned by their own consciences, as persecuting those who were more righteous than themselves.

3. They obtained an interest in the promises, though not the full possession of them. This is not meant of the felicity of the heavenly state, for that they did receive ; but of the felicity of the gospel-state ; they had types, but not the Antitype ; they had shadows, but had not seen the Substance ; yet, under this imperfect dispensation, they discovered this precious faith : this the apostle insists on, to render their faith more illustrious, and to provoke Christians to a holy jealousy and emulation. He tells the Hebrews, God had provided some better thing for them, v. 40. therefore they might be assured He expected at least as good things from them ; and that, since the Gospel is the end and perfection of the Old Test., which had no excellency but in its reference to Christ and the Gospel, it was expected that their faith should be as much more perfect than the faith of the Old Test. saints ; for their faith and dispensation were more perfect than the former, and were indeed the perfection and completion of the former ; for, without the gospel-church, the Jewish church must have remained in an incomplete and imperfect state. This reasoning is strong, and should be effectually prevalent with us all.

CHAP. XII. The apostle, in this ch., applies what he has collected in the ch. foregoing, and makes use of it as a great motive to patience and perseverance in the Christian faith and state.

V. 1—3. Here, observe, the great duty the apostle urges on the Hebrews, and which he so much desires they would comply with, and that is, to lay aside every weight, and the sin that did so easily beset them, and run with patience the race set before them. The duty consists of two parts, the one preparatory, the other perfective.

1. Preparatory ; Lay aside every weight, and the sin, &c. Every weight, that is, all inordinate affection and concern for the body, and the present life and world ; inordinate care for the present life, and fondness for it ; and The sin that doth so easily beset us ; the sin that has the greatest advantage against us, by the circumstances we are in, our constitution, our company,—either the damning sin of unbelief, or rather the darling sin of the Jews, an over-fondness for their own dispensation. Let us lay aside all external and internal hindrances.

2. Perfective ; Run with patience the race, &c. The apostle speaks in the gymnastic style, taken from the Olympic and other exercises. Christians have a race to run ; a race of service, and a race of sufferings ; a course of active and passive obedience. This race is set before them, marked out, both by the Word of God and the examples of the faithful, that cloud of witnesses with which they are compassed about. It must be run with patience and perseverance. There will be need of patience to encounter difficulties, of perseverance to resist all temptations to desist, or turn aside. Christians have a greater Example to animate and encourage them in their Christian course than any, or all, who have been mentioned, before, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ, v. 2. Here, observe,

1. What our Lord Jesus is to his people ;

authorized to look for proportionable supports and consolations if called to end our pilgrimage by the hand of violence. We seem not to have immediate cause to apprehend being 'stoned, or sawn asunder, or slain by the sword ;' yet we shall surely be 'tempted ;' and we cannot overcome temptation, except by that faith which supported the martyrs, and made them more than conquerors over the fear of torment and death. Let us then pray continually for the increase of our faith, that we may follow these illustrious examples, and be with them at length made perfect in holiness and felicity, and 'shine like the sun in the kingdom of our Father' for evermore. SCOTT.

They were indeed saved by faith in a Redeemer, who was to come ; but without those events, which the apostles testified as already past, their pardon and acceptance could not be ratified, or their salvation perfected. (Note, 1 Pet. 1:10—12.) Thus the Old Test. believers could not be perfected, except by communion with the N. T. church, in the promised Savior, and his righteousness, atonement, and intercession. SCOTT.

(40.) It is debated, whether this refers to the most perfect state of the church on earth, and so expresses a decorum in the conduct of providence in gradually improving the church, or to the glory of the future state. Doddr. ; who in his paraphrase inclines to the former. Ep. Better thing.] 'The only conjectures here that deserve particular regard are, that the better thing refers to the Messiah, or to the happiness of the heavenly world. But, how is heavenly blessedness vouchsafed to later more than to ancient saints ? And in what sense can it be affirmed, that the ancients could not, or did not, attain it without us. The object of the writer, through the ch., has been to show, that the hopes of heaven, cherished by the ancient worthies, were firm and bright, through faith in the Word of God. "The better thing reserved for Christians," then, is not a reward in heaven ; for such a reward was proffered also to the ancient saints.' So Stuart,—who accordingly adopts a different view of the whole passage ; in which he refers the promise to 'the promised blessing of the Messiah,' and construes thus : 'The ancient worthies persevered in their faith, although the Messiah was known to them only by promise. We are under greater obligations than they to persevere ; for God has fulfilled his promise respecting the Messiah, and thus placed us in a condition better adapted to perseverance than theirs. So much is our condition preferable to theirs, that we may even say, without the blessing which we enjoy, their happiness could not be completed. In other words, the coming of the Messiah was essential to the consummation of their happiness in glory, i. e. was necessary to their perfection. So the better thing seems to be, the actual fulfilment of the promise respecting the Messiah ; in respect to which, later times certainly have a pre-eminence over the early ones ; and on which the expected happiness of early times was really dependent.' Ep.

NOTES. CHAP. XII. V. 1. *Witnesses.*] Acts 6:13. 7:55. 22:20. 1 Thes. 2:10. Rev. 2:13. It does not appear, that this word is ever used, either in Scripture or in Greek writers to denote a spectator, simpl. ; except as he was one prepared to testify what he had seen. So that the testimony of the multitude of ancient believers to the truths insisted on, and not that they or others are spectators of our conduct, is perhaps exclusively meant. SCOTT.

(1.) 'Having proved, by numerous examples, the efficacy of faith, the apostle now proceeds, in the way of conclusion, to exhort them to steadfastness in the Christian faith.' Bloomf.—The commentators generally agree, that there is here an agonistical allusion, and Bloomf. sug-



2 Looking unto Jesus the <sup>b</sup> author and finisher of *our* faith; who, for the <sup>c</sup> joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

[Practical Observations.]

<sup>b</sup> or, beginner.

<sup>c</sup> Lu. 24:26.

the Author and Finisher of their faith; the Beginning, Perfecter, and Rewarder of it. He is so in all respects.

2. What trials Christ met with in his race and course: He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself, v. 3. He bore the opposition they made to Him, both in their words and behavior; and though He could easily have both confuted and confounded them, and sometimes gave them a specimen of his power, yet He endured their evil manners with great patience; their contradictions against Christ Himself, against his Person as God-man; against his authority; against his preaching; He endured all. He endured the cross,—all those sufferings He met with in the world, and at length the painful, ignominious, and accursed death of the cross; in which He was numbered with the transgressors, the vilest malefactors; all this He endured with invincible patience and resolution. He despised the shame, all the reproaches that were cast on Him, both in his life, and at his death, He despised them

all, was infinitely above them; He knew his innocency, and his own excellency, and despised the ignorance and malice of his despisers.

3. What it was that supported the human soul of Christ under these unparalleled sufferings; and that was the joy that was set before Him, the thought, that by his sufferings He should make satisfaction to the injured justice of God, and give security to his honor and government; make peace between God and man; seal and be the Mediator of the covenant of grace; should open a way of salvation to the chief of sinners, and effectually save all whom the Father had given Him, and Himself be the First-born among many brethren. This was the joy that was set before Him.

4. The reward of his suffering; He is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Christ, as Mediator, is exalted to a station of the highest honor, of the greatest power and influence; He is at the right hand of the Father; nothing passes between heaven and earth but by Him; He does all that is done; He ever lives to make intercession for his people.

5. Our duty with respect to this Jesus; we must Look unto Him; that is, set Him continually before us as our Example, and our great encouragement; look to Him for direction, for assistance, and for acceptance, in all our sufferings. We must consider Him, meditate much on Him, and reason with ourselves from his case to our own. We must analyze, as the word is; compare Christ's sufferings and ours; and we shall find, that, as his sufferings far exceeded ours, in the nature and measure of them, so his patience far excels ours, and is a perfect pattern for us to imitate.

6. The advantage we shall reap by thus

doing; it will be a mean to prevent our weariness and fainting, v. 3. Observe, There is a proneness in the best to grow weary, and to faint under their trials and afflictions, especially when they prove heavy and of long continuance; this proceeds from the imperfection of grace, and the remains of corruption. The best way to prevent this, is, to look unto Jesus, and to consider Him. Faith and meditation will fetch in fresh supplies of strength, comfort, and courage; for He has assured them, if they suffer with Him, they shall also reign with Him: and this hope will be their helmet.

V. 4—17. Here the apostle presses the exhortation to patience and perseverance, by an argument taken from the gentle measure and gracious nature of those sufferings which the believing Hebrews endured in their Christian course.

1. From the gentle and moderate degree and measure of their sufferings, v. 4. Observe, He owns they had suffered much, had been striving to an agony against sin. Every Christian is enlisted under Christ's banner, to strive against sin, against sinful doctrines, sinful practices, sinful habits, and customs, both in himself and in others. Observe, He puts them in mind, that they might have suffered more; they had not been called to martyrdom as yet, though they knew not how soon they might be. It becomes Christians to notice the gentleness of Christ in accommodating their trial to their strength; they should not magnify their afflictions, but notice the mercy mixed with them, and pity those who are called to the fiery trial, to resist to blood; not to shed the blood of their enemies, but to seal their testimony with their own blood. Christians should be ashamed to faint under less trials, when they see others bear up under greater, and do not know

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—4. We should seriously inquire, what are the weights which retard our [Christian] course; what the sin, or sins, by which we are 'most easily beset,' and peculiarly endangered; that we may seek for grace to enable us to 'lay aside the one,' and to be on our guard against all occasions of the other. Many, who seemed to run well, lose the race, through the weight of increasing business, prosperity, and affluence, with the peculiar snares, temptations, concupiscences, and encumbrances, which spring from that source. This seems the easily besetting sin of these days of liberty and peace; but all men, in whatever state, have their peculiar dangers and hindrances, against which they are required to watch and pray without ceasing; nor can we 'run with patience the race set before us,' unless we be crucified to

gests, that cloud well answers to the immense crowd of spectators, in the amphitheatre, seated one above another to an immense height.—Stuart remarks, that the sin which most easily beset the Hebrews was undoubtedly that of apostasy.—With patience.] 'With perseverance.' So Mackn., and others. Ed.

V. 2, 3. In order to their more full instruction and encouragement, they must look steadily to Jesus; not merely as One, who had run his glorious race, and completed his work, by faith in the promises and covenant-engagements of the Father; but as 'the Author and Finisher of faith' itself. He alone had opened the way for men to return to God and to enter heaven, 'by faith;' when sin had closed for ever that of personal righteousness: from Him, as the great Prophet of the church, the doctrine of faith had been delivered from the beginning, and perfected in the revelation made by the Gospel: and this none would ever be authorized to change, add to, or deduct from. He alone, by his Spirit, produces 'faith' in the hearts of his people, which He maintains, increases, and perfects, in its nature and fruits, till its work be finished. So that they must look to Him for faith, as well as by faith. He indeed did not want that faith, by which a sinner is justified; yet 'in finishing his work' on earth, He led his people the way to complete victory over every enemy, by a patient, obedient reliance on the word of his heavenly Father. (Note, Ps. 16:2—11.) As He had in 'all things the pre-eminence;' so He did not enter into his mediatorial glory without having the pre-eminence in the measure of his sufferings, above all others who ever went to heaven. 'For the joy set before Him,' of his own personal exaltation to the mediatorial throne; of the salvation of countless millions of lost sinners from destruction; of bringing them to endless happiness; and of eternally glorifying the whole Name, and all the perfections of God; (Notes, Mat. 25:19—23. John 17:22, 23.) He, with the utmost fortitude and constancy, endured all his other humiliating sufferings, from his birth in the stable to his agony in the garden; and at length most willingly submitted to be suspended on the cross, and there to expire in lingering tortures. Though this method of execution was peculiarly ignominious, and by the law pronounced accursed; and though his crucifixion was attended with unheard of circumstances of indignity, outrage, revilings, and derision; yet He disregarded and even 'despised the shame,' as also the anguish of it, as not worthy to be compared with the glorious event, which He had in full view. Thus, having 'endured' until his undertaking was finished, He was speedily raised from the dead, and exalted to 'the right hand of the throne of God.' (1:3, 4. 8:1, 2.) The disciples ought therefore to look unto Him, both as an example of constancy and patience; as the Author of their strength, encouragement, victory, and salvation; and as a glorious in-

the world, and daily employed in mortifying the whole body of sin, with all its affections and lusts, those especially, to which education, habit, and situation, give most advantage.—Let us then frequently 'consider Him, who endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds.' What are our little trials, to his agonies, or even to our deserts? What, indeed, are they to the sufferings of many of our brethren, in different ages and places? We have 'not yet resisted unto blood,' in our warfare against sin, as many others have done; and we should be ashamed of our murmurings and impatience, when we have so very little even apparent reason of complaint. Jer. 12:5, 6. Scott.

stance of the blessed effect of perseverance, amidst reproaches and sufferings, in cleaving unto God and being 'faithful unto death.' This case was so extraordinary, that they would do well to 'consider it,' even with arithmetical exactness, and to estimate the dignity and excellency of the Sufferer; 'the contradiction of sinners' against Him, who ensnared, reviled, opposed, and accursed Him, with most perverse enmity against his holy doctrine and example, and with malignant ingratitude for all his love; the intemperance and variety of his sufferings; the meek and composed fortitude with which He endured them; the love, which moved Him thus to suffer, and the most blessed consequences of his humiliation. When they began to grow 'weary and faint in their minds,' with trials and injuries from their malicious persecutors, such considerations would serve to quiet and encourage them: whilst they recollected, that the holy Jesus suffered to save them from deserved and eternal misery; and that sinners of the same nature with themselves inflicted these tortures; that He had much bitterness in his cup, which was not in theirs; (Notes, Mat. 26:36—39. John 1:29. Gal. 6:11—14.) that He was hated for his own sake, and they only because of their relation to Him; and that his cross secured a happy event to all their conflicts and trials in his cause. In short, by 'looking to Him,' every kind of humiliating and animating topic would occur to their minds, to invigorate the exercise of their holy affections, and to repress every corrupt propensity. (2) Looking.] Turning our eyes from other objects, to fix them on this alone.—Author. Acts 3:15. 5:31.—Finisher.] I apprehend, that the apostle specially meant, that 'in Jesus all the plans, which had previously been unfinished, had acquired their completion.—He finished and perfected all things, respecting salvation by faith.' Sc.

(2.) Looking.] 'It properly signifies our taking off our regards from other things, that we may fix them on Christ.' Doddr.—Author and finisher.] Bloomf. understands here a mixture of military and agonistical metaphors, and renders leader, as of soldiers; and Stuart gives the sense of the whole verse thus: 'Do as Christ the Author of our holy religion did. For the heavenly reward proposed, He, with patience and perseverance, endured every kind of indignity and suffering, and has, in consequence of it, received a glorious reward. Follow in his steps, and participate in his glory.'—It may be added from Slade, in Bloomf., 'As Jesus endured, for the joy of finishing his scheme of salvation, [so] should his disciples endure, for the joy of being partakers of it.' Ed.

V. 4—8. If the professed people of God were not at all corrected, it might be inferred, that He did not own them as his children, but considered them as spurious; members of the visible church, but not 'born of the Spirit,' or educated for the 'inheritance of his saints.' Gal. 4:21



5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation <sup>d</sup> which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him :

6 For <sup>e</sup> whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons ; for <sup>f</sup> what son is he whom the father chasteneth not ?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected <sup>g</sup> us ; and we gave <sup>h</sup> them reverence : shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the <sup>i</sup> Father of Spirits, and live ?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened <sup>j</sup> us <sup>k</sup> after their own pleasure ; but he for <sup>l</sup> our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous : nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit <sup>m</sup> of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

12 Wherefore lift <sup>n</sup> up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees :

13 And make <sup>o</sup> straight <sup>p</sup> paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way ; but <sup>q</sup> let it rather be healed.

[Practical Observations.]

d Pr. 3:11,12.	good, or, meet,	j Is. 35:3.
e Re. 3:19	to them.	k or, even.
f Pr. 13:24.	l Is. 32:17.	l Pr. 4:26,27.
g Na. 16:22. 27:16.	Ja. 3:13.	m Ga. 6:1.
h or, as seemeth		

how soon they may meet with greater themselves. Jer. 12:5.

2. He argues from the peculiar and gra-

PRACT OBS. V. 5-13. While we 'look to Jesus,' to reconcile us to suffering, to set us against sin, and to eclipse the vain splendor of this worthless world, we should also learn to receive every affliction, which the malice or envy of men brings upon us, as a correction sent by our wise and gracious Father, who speaketh to us by his Word, interpreting his providential dispensations, 'as to children,' and calls on us neither to 'despise his chastisements, nor to faint under' them. We should consider them as precious favors, needful blessings, pledges of love, and the only spiritual good, which He has promised to give us, without our praying for it. He never fails to chasten his children, though He often permits hypocrites to remain unmolested, because He means to destroy them. He will neglect the education of none, whom He receives into

—31.—The allusion may either be made to such children, as a man deems to be spurious, though born of his wife ; because he suspects her of having been unfaithful, and therefore he will bestow no pains about them ; or such, as the real father neglects, because they are illegitimate, and he is ashamed to own them ; (Notes, Judg. 9: 11:1, 2.) but the former case seems more exactly to accord to the apostle's intent.—(5) My son, &c.] The quotation is almost exactly from the Sept. ; which does not materially vary from the Heb. (4) Resisted.] To stand against the assaults of sin ; as a man, in fighting against his antagonist. SCOTT.

(4.) Resisted unto blood.] Some understand this as agonizing, but others take it otherwise. Bl. says, 'the words show what kind of apostasy must principally be intended. "By resistance to apostasy even unto blood," is meant, so to overcome the temptations of the flesh, as to be ready to shed one's blood in the cause of the Gospel. Now this the prophets and others, especially Jesus Christ, had already done. Those whom he is addressing, the apostle means to say, were called to comparatively light endurance ; and therefore had no excuse for fainting under them.' Ed.

(5) 'A slight affliction may overcome and disquiet the mind with suspicious and rebellious murmurs, and occasion a degree of distress quite disproportioned to the cause ; while a much heavier stroke is perhaps born with meek submission and heavenly fortitude. The slight affliction touches but one rivulet of earthly pleasure, and you have recourse to those which are left ; but the heavier stroke dries up the very source of all earthly comfort, and leaves you to sink or depend on God alone. The slight affliction you attempt to bear in your own strength ; the heavier stroke is no sooner felt than you are convinced, that if the same God who inflicts the wound does not heal, you must be over-

the reverence of obedience to the just commands of their parents, and the reverence of submission to their correction when they have been disobedient : to be stubborn and discontented under due correction is a double fault ; for the correction supposes there has been a fault already committed against the parent's commanding power, and superadds a further fault against his chastising power. From hence, he recommends a humble and submissive behavior towards our heavenly Father, when under his correction ; and this he does by an argument from the less to the greater. We owe reverence and affection to the natural fathers of our bodies ; but much more to Him who is the Father of our spirits, — they are the immediate offspring of God. Our earthly parents chastened us, sometimes to gratify their passion rather than to reform our manners. But the Father of our spirits never grieves willingly, nor afflicts the children of men, much less his own children." It is always for our profit ; and the advantage He intends thereby, is no less than our being partakers of his holiness ; it is to correct and cure those sinful disorders which make us unlike to God, and to improve and increase those graces which are the image of God in us, that we may be and act more like our heavenly Father. The fathers of our flesh corrected us for a few days, in our state of childhood, when minors ; and though we were in that weak and peevish state, we owed them reverence ; and when we came to maturity, we loved and honored them the more for it. Our whole life here is a state of childhood, minority, and imperfection, and therefore we must submit to the discipline of such a state ; when we come to a state of perfection, we shall be fully reconciled to all the measures of God's discipline over us now. God's correction is no condemnation ; his children may at first fear lest affliction should come on that dreadful errand ; but that is so far from being the design of God to his own people, that He therefore chastens them now, that they may not be condemned with the world, 1 Cor. 11: 32.

(1.) Those afflictions which may be truly persecution, so far as men are concerned in them, are fatherly rebukes and chastisements, so far as God is concerned in them. Men persecute us because we are religious ; God chastises us because we are not more so : men persecute us because we will not give up our profession ; God chastises us because we have not lived up to it.

(2.) God has directed his people how they ought to behave under all their afflictions ; they must avoid the extremes that many run into ; must not despise the chastening of the Lord, not make light of afflictions, and be stupid and insensible under them ; not faint under them, not despond and sink under them, nor fret and repine, but bear up with faith and patience. If they run into either of these extremes, it is a sign they have forgotten their heavenly Father's advice and exhortation, which He has given them in true and tender affection.

(3.) Afflictions, rightly endured, though they may be the fruits of God's displeasure, are yet proofs of his paternal love to his people, and care for them, v. 6, 7. Observe, The best of God's children need chastisement ; have their faults and follies, which need to be corrected. Though God may let others alone in their sins, He will correct sin in his own children ; and in this He acts as becomes a father, and treats them like children. To be suffered to go on in sin without a rebuke, is a sad sign of alienation from God ; such are bastards, not sons. They may call Him Father, because born in the pale of the church ; but they are the spurious offspring of another father, not God, v. 7, 8.

(4.) Those that are impatient under the discipline of their heavenly Father, behave worse toward Him, than they would do toward earthly parents, v. 9, 10. Here, the apostle commends a dutiful and submissive behavior in children toward their earthly parents ; it is the duty of children to give

his family ; and He sets us an example, how we should correct our children, 'not for our pleasure, but for their profit,' not from passion, but in wise affection. Thus 'He makes us partakers of his holiness,' that we may be meet to share his felicity. Let us then endeavor to receive chastening from 'the Father of our spirits,' as we expect our children to submit to our corrections. Let us also comfort ourselves and each other with these topics, that we may 'lift up the hands which hang down, and confirm the feeble knees ;' and let us carefully remove obstacles out of the way of pilgrims, and look well to the weak and tempted, lest they should be turned out of the way, instead of being encouraged to persevere in the course, amidst all its roughness and difficulty. SCOTT.

whelmed ; and your language is, "Lord save, or I perish."

Rev. Dr. MATTHEWS.

(7.) What son is he whom the father chasteneth not.] 'That a peculiar insensibility to the obligations of the parental and filial relation, exists, is, I fear, too evident to need any extended illustration. The notion, that a family is a society, and that a society must be governed, and that the right and the duty of governing this society, rests with the parent, seems to be rapidly vanishing from the minds of men. [Note, Job 12:13-22.] In the place of it, it seems to be the prevalent opinion, that children may grow up as they please ; and that the exertion of parental restraint, is an infringement of the personal liberty of the child. But all this will not abrogate the law of God ; nor will it avert the punishments which He has connected, indissolubly, with disobedience ; [indeed, these are now plainly seen, in our duels, personal rencontres, and mobs, all in defiance even of law.] The Law of Children ; Elts. Mor. Sci. WAYLAND.

V. 11. 'Unless some disappointment (affliction) is experienced, there is no place for submission to the will of God.' Dr. MATTHEWS.

V. 12. Lift up, &c.] The quotation is rather from the Hebrew, than the Sept. which is, 'Be strong, ye hands which hang down, and ye fainting knees.' SCOTT.

(12.) Doddr., with others, takes the expressions here as agonistical ; but Bloomf. thinks the metaphor is derived from extreme sickness or violent fatigue. Stuart gives the sense thus : 'since all your afflictions are dispensed by fatherly kindness, be of good courage, do not indulge despondency, but persevere in the course which you have begun.' Ed.

V. 13. 'Withdrawing the metaphor, the sense is : "Take the straight road of piety and virtue, removing all impediments in its course."'

BLOOMF.



14 Follow peace <sup>n</sup> with all men, and holiness, without <sup>o</sup> which no man shall see the Lord :

15 Looking diligently, <sup>p</sup> lest any man <sup>q</sup> fail of the grace of God ; lest any <sup>r</sup> root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled ;

16 Lest there be any <sup>s</sup> fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who <sup>t</sup> for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

17 For ye know how that afterward, when <sup>u</sup> he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected : for he found no <sup>v</sup> place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

[Practical Observations.]

18 For ye are not come unto <sup>w</sup> the mount that might be touched,

<sup>n</sup> Ps. 34:14. <sup>q</sup> or, fall from. <sup>u</sup> Ge. 27:34—38.  
<sup>o</sup> Mat. 5:8. <sup>r</sup> De. 29:18. <sup>v</sup> or, way to change  
Ep. 5:5. <sup>s</sup> 1 Co. 6:13,18. <sup>t</sup> his mind.  
<sup>p</sup> 2 Pe. 1:10. <sup>t</sup> Ge. 25:33. <sup>w</sup> Ex. 19:12—19.

that of sense in this case,—sense groans under afflictions, but faith corrects sense, and declares, that a sanctified affliction produces the fruits of righteousness, peaceable, and tending to quiet and comfort the soul. The great concern of the righteous when chastened, is, that the chastening they are under may be endured by them with patience, and improved to a greater degree of holiness. So the apostle again returns to exhort them, that, for the reason before mentioned, they should lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, v. 12. that they may the better run their spiritual race, and may encourage and not dispirit others in the same way.

Since God's design is their improvement in holiness, it ought to be the design and concern of his children, that with renewed strength and patience they may follow peace with all men, and holiness, v. 14. If they grow impatient under affliction, they will

PRACT. OBS. V. 14—17. To avoid stumbling-blocks and offences, we should 'follow peace with all men,' and leave no proper means untried to avoid contention, which numbers delight to kindle, and blow into a flame. As far as we can go, without sacrificing truth or duty, we shall find, that 'peace with men,' of all parties and descriptions, will be favorable to our pursuit of holiness, Rom. 12:17—21. without which no man of any sect or sentiment can enter heaven, or enjoy the favor of God, or be capable of delighting in Him, and his presence, worship, and service.—Those lax notions, especially, must be zealously opposed, which give allowance to the flesh, from a perversion of evangel-

V. 14. It should be noted, that humiliation, brokenness of heart, and proper affections towards the Lord Jesus, are essential to the holiness of a redeemed sinner; and all else, however specious, must be counterfeited, where these are wanting. Ps. 16:3—11. Mat. 5:3. 1 Cor. 15:3—12. Jam. 3:13—18. 1 John 3:1—3. Rev. 21:22—27. Follow after.] Rom. 9:30, 31. 12:13, 14. 1 Cor. 14:1. Phil. 3:12. 1 Thes. 5:15. 1 Tim. 6:11. 2 Tim. 2:22. 1 Pet. 3:11. Pursue peace and holiness, as the hound does the hare, the warrior his fleeing enemy, or the persecutor the object of his cruel enmity. Jam. 3:13—18. SCOTT.

(14.) 'The writer now leaves the subject on which he had dwelt so long, and reminds the Hebrews of various duties to which their Christian profession, and the times in which he lived rendered it necessary they should pay particular regard.' St.—'By see the Lord is meant, obtain an admission to heaven.' BLOOMER.—Stuart, here, comp. Mat. 5:8. also 1 Thes. 4:17. 2 Cor. 5:3. Phil. 1:23. John 14:3, 4. 17:24. ED.

V. 15—17. It behooved Christians 'to look diligently,' both to themselves, and likewise to each other, in respect of their principles and conduct, 'lest any one should fail' of an interest in the special mercy and favor of God, or remain destitute of his sanctifying grace, and so be left to apostatize; 3:7—13. 4:1, 2. 10:19—22, and lest 'any root of bitterness,' any unmortified lust in the heart, which seemed to be dead, should spring up and shoot forth its bitter and poisonous produce. Deut. 29:18—20. 1 Cor. 5:6—13. 15:31—34. 2 Tim. 2:14—18. 3:6—9. For instance, lest any one among them should commit fornication, under a mistaken notion of Christian liberty; or lest there should be some 'profane' person, who so despised the peculiar blessings of the new covenant, as to barter them away for temporal advantages; like Esau, who for one meal of meat sold his birthright. Gen. 25:30—34, and who, when 'afterwards he willed to inherit the blessing, was rejected,' both by the Lord, and by his father Isaac. Gen. 27:33—42. The whole history of Esau shows, that he, at that time at least, neither truly repented of all his sins, nor sought to do it. But he was grieved and vexed at being circumvented by Jacob; he was sorry that he had made so foolish a bargain; he coveted the temporal advantages which belonged to the birthright, especially the dominion over his brother; he had altered his

neither walk so quietly and peaceably toward men, nor so piously toward God, as they should do; but faith and patience will enable them to follow peace and holiness too, as a man follows his calling, constantly, diligently, and with pleasure. Observe, [1.] It is the duty of Christians, even when in a suffering state, to follow peace with all men, yea, even with those who may be instrumental in their sufferings. It is a hard lesson, a high attainment, but it is what Christ has called his people to. [2.] Peace and holiness are connected; there may be prudence and discreet forbearance, and a show of friendship and good-will to all; but this true Christian peaceableness is never found separate from holiness. [3.] Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. The vision of God our Savior in heaven is reserved as the reward of holiness, and the stress of our salvation is laid on our holiness; though a placid, peaceable disposition, contributes much to our meetness for heaven.

6. Where afflictions and sufferings for the sake of Christ are not considered by men as the chastisement of their heavenly Father, and improved as such, they will be a dangerous snare and temptation to apostasy, which every Christian should most carefully watch against, v. 15, 16. Here the apostle enters a serious caveat against apostasy, and backs it with an awful example.

(1.) The caveat, v. 15. Where, observe, [1.] The nature of apostasy; it is failing of the grace of God, and so coming short of the love and favor of God here and hereafter. [2.] The consequences of apostasy: a root of bitterness springing up, and producing bitter fruits, damnable errors, and corrupt practices, by which many are troubled, the peace of the churches broken, the peace of men's minds disturbed, and many defiled, tainted with those bad principles, and drawn into defiling practices; so that the churches suffer both in their purity and peace. But the apostates themselves will be the greatest sufferers at last.

(2.) An awful example, that of Esau. Where, observe, Esau's sin; he profanely despised and sold the birthright, and all the

advantages attending it, the privilege of being prophet, priest, and king, in his family; so do apostates, who, to avoid persecution, and enjoy sensual ease and pleasure, though they bore the character of the children of God, and had a visible right to the blessing and inheritance, give up all the pretensions thereto. Esau's punishment was suitable to his sin. He was condemned by his own conscience; he now saw that the blessing he had made so light of, was worth the having, worth the seeking, though with much carefulness and many tears. He was rejected of God, he found no place of repentance in God, in his father, or of true repentance in his own soul; the blessing was given to another, even to him to whom he sold it for a mess of pottage. Esau, in his great wickedness, had made the bargain, and God, in his righteous judgment, ratifies and confirms it, and would not suffer Isaac to reverse it. Learn, Apostasy from Christ is the fruit of preferring the gratification of the flesh to the blessing of God, and the heavenly inheritance. Sinners will not always have such mean thoughts of the divine blessing and inheritance as now they have. When the day of grace is over, (as sometimes it may be in this life,) they will find no place for repentance: they cannot repent aright of their sins: and God will not repent of the sentence He has passed on them for their sin. Therefore, as the design of all, Christians should never give up their title and hope of their Father's blessing and inheritance, and expose themselves to his irrevocable wrath and curse, by deserting their holy religion, to avoid suffering; which, though this may be persecution, as far as wicked men are concerned in it, is only a rod of correction and chastisement in the hand of their heavenly Father, to bring them near to Himself in conformity and communion. This is the force of the apostle's arguing from the nature of the sufferings of the people of God, even when they suffer for righteousness' sake; and the reasoning is very strong.

V. 18—29. Here the apostle goes on to engage the professing Hebrews to persevere

ical principles; for 'a little of this leaven' will suffice to 'leaven a whole lump.'—But the time is at hand, when those, who thus renounce or refuse the salvation of God, for carnal indulgence or interest, would be glad to 'inherit the blessing,' and will be rejected; no place will be found for reversing the fatal bargain, though they should 'seek it carefully with tears;' nor can any one, who wilfully rejects the Gospel, or deliberately refuses to comply with its exhortations, for the love of this present world, know to what obduracy and desperation he may be given up, in the righteous judgment of God. SCOTT.

mind in that particular, and he sought carefully, and with tears, to induce Isaac to alter his purpose, to retract Jacob's blessing, and to bestow it on him; but he sought this in vain, for it was then too late. The latter, however, even the change of mind in Isaac, which might induce him to retract the blessing pronounced on Jacob, and to confer it on him, seems to be the repentance which Esau sought with tears.—Thus the time would shortly come, when they, who refused spiritual blessings for the sake of temporal interests, would become fully sensible of their madness and folly, and would be glad to reverse the fatal bargain; but 'that must be let alone for ever.' This was another awful warning against apostasy, but it has no relation to the case of those who earnestly desire and pray for repentance. 6:4—8. 10:26—31. SCOTT.

(15.) Grace.] Some understand this of Christianity, or the doctrines of the Gospel; but Stuart understands it of 'that divine favor which is the result of holiness,' and suggests the connexion and the previous repeated warning of the writer against apostasy, as a reason for his preference. ED.—Looking diligently, &c.] 'It was a good remark of Fuller, "He need not complain of too little work, who hath a little world in himself to mend."' MATHER.

(16.) As Esau.] 'We do not read that Esau was a fornicator; nor does the apostle say he was. By putting a comma after fornicator, and by connecting the words, or profane person, with what follows, Esau will be called only a profane person. This he showed himself to be, by selling his birthrights to Jacob, who proposed it only because he had heard him speak contemptuously of them. In Abraham's family, the birthright entitled to spiritual as well as temporal privileges, all which Esau despised, as we learn from Moses. Gen. 25:32.' MAERN.—Stuart says, the argument is from analogy. 'Let no one give up himself to the gratification of his lusts, as Esau did, to the great grief of his father, Gen. 26:35. let no one despise the distinguished privileges of Christianity, as Esau did those of his birthright, and parted with them for a mere morsel of food.' ED.

V. 18—21. The apostle again returned to his former position, that the superior excellency of the Christian dispensation would render it proportionably more criminal and perilous to reject it, for his discourse



and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which <sup>x</sup>voice they that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more :

20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And <sup>y</sup>if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart.

21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake :) )

22 But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city <sup>z</sup>of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of <sup>a</sup>angels,

23 To the general assembly and church of the <sup>b</sup>first-born, which are <sup>c</sup>written <sup>d</sup>in heaven, and to God the <sup>e</sup>Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men <sup>f</sup>made perfect,

24 And to Jesus the mediator <sup>g</sup>of the new <sup>h</sup>covenant, and to the blood <sup>i</sup>of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* <sup>j</sup>Abel.

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape* if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven :

x Ex. 20:18,19.	c Or, <i>encollel</i> .	g c. 8:6.
y Ex. 19:13,15.	d Lat. 10:20.	h Or, <i>testament</i> .
z Re. 3:12.	e Ge. 18:25.	i Ex. 24:8.
a Ps. 63:17.	f 1 Co. 15:49,51.	j Ge. 4:10.
b Re. 14:4.		

in their Christian course and conflict, and not to relapse again into Judaism. This he does by showing them, how much the state of the gospel-church differed from that of the Jewish, and how much it resembles the state of the church in heaven, and on both accounts demands and deserves our diligence, patience, and perseverance in Christianity.

I. How much the gospel-church differs from the Jewish church, and how much it excels. And here we have a very particular description of the state of the church under

was equally suited to warn avowed unbelievers, and those who were tempted to apostasy. (*Notes*, 2:1—4. 6:4—8. 10:23—31.) He did not speak of the state of individuals, as converted or unconverted, but of the different method, in which God now spake to the nation, from that in which he delivered the law to their fathers. This he showed by an allusion to the two mountains, Sinai and Zion. Gal. 4:21—31.—The whole of the scene showed the impossibility of a sinner's coming before God with acceptance, according to the works of the law, the highly criminal presumption of attempting it, and the need of a Mediator and a better covenant; and it was to the apostle's purpose, to call off the attention of the Hebrews from that dispensation to the Gospel, by every argument and illustration which could be fairly made to bear on the subject.

(18.) 'The comparison between the two dispensations opens here, and is continued to the end of v. 24. the whole passage has respect to Ex. 20:21, &c. and Deut. 4:5.' *Sr.*—*The mount that might be touched*.] Some are stumbled here, as though it should read, *might not be touched*, referring to the prohibition, Ex. 19:13. mentioned here also, v. 20. but *Doddr.* remarks, that 'it is not intimated by the expression, that the mountain might lawfully be touched; but only that it was the object of touch,' or, as *Stuart* says, 'palpable to the senses.'

(19.) *The voice of words.*] 'I. e. articulate sounds,—probably loud, like that of a trumpet.'

(21.) *Moses said, &c.*] 'Not expressly mentioned in the O. Test., implied, however, Ex. 19:16. where it is said, "all the people trembled," and Moses was with them, comp. v. 14. The fear mentioned, Deut. 9: 19. was on a different occasion.'

V. 22—25. The Hebrew converts to Christianity ought to consider themselves, as summoned by the preachers of the Gospel, to come to 'mount Zion,' or as actually convened there, to hear the voice of God from the merey-seat. They were, *professedly*, become inhabitants of 'the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,' the place of the Lord's special residence with his covenant people and accepted worshippers, of which Jerusalem had been a type; at least they were invited to enter, and become citizens of that favored city. This meant the church of Christ on earth, with all its special privileges, ordinances, and

the Mosaic dispensation, v. 18—21. 1. It was a gross, sensible state. Mount Sinai, on which that church state was constituted, was a *mount that might be touched*, v. 18. a gross, palpable place; so was the dispensation. The state of the gospel-church on mount Zion is more spiritual, rational, and easy. 2. It was a dark dispensation. On that mount there were blackness and darkness, and that church state was covered with dark shadows and types: the gospel-state is much more clear and bright. 3. It was a dreadful and terrible dispensation; the Jews could not bear the terror of it, v. 19. The gospel-state is mild, kind, and condescending, suited to our weak frame. 4. It was a limited dispensation; all might not approach to that mount, but only Moses and Aaron. Under the Gospel we have all access with boldness to God. 5. It was a very dangerous dispensation, v. 20. It is true, it will be always dangerous for presumptuous, brutish sinners to draw nigh to God; but it is not immediate and certain death, as here it was. This was the state of the Jewish church, fitted to awe a stubborn and hard-hearted people, to set forth the strict and tremendous justice of God, to wean the people of God from that dispensation, and to make them more readily to embrace the sweet and gentle economy of the gospel-church, and adhere to it.

II. He shows how much the gospel-church represents the church triumphant in heaven; what communication there is between the one and the other. Mount Zion was the hill on which God set his King the Messiah. Now, in coming to mount Zion, believers come into heavenly places, and into a heavenly society.

1. Into heavenly places; *the city of the living God*. God has taken up his gracious residence in the gospel-church, which, on that account, is an emblem of heaven.

2. To a heavenly society, *an innumerable company of angels*, who are of the same family with the saints, under the same head, and, in a great measure, employed in the same work. These are innumerable; yet, for order and union, a company, a glorious one. And those who by faith are joined to the gospel-church, are joined to the angels, and shall at length be like them, and equal with them. *To the general assembly and church of the first born that are written in heaven*; that is, to the universal church, however dispersed. The names of these are written in heaven, in the records of the church there, written among the living in Jerusalem.

promises, as connected with the holy residence of God in heaven, and as continually transmitting to it new inhabitants. *Is.* 12:4—6. *Gal.* 4:21—31. *Rev.* 11:1, 2. 14:1—5. 21:9—27.—This is a most decisive proof, that the souls of believers enter into a state of perfect happiness when they die, as far as it can consist with their state of separation from the body.—*Better things, &c.*] While the blood of Abel called from the ground for vengeance on the murderer, the blood of Christ, applied in faith, not only took away the guilt of all other sins, however atrocious, but even that of being his murderers; as multitudes of the Hebrews, especially, who had been immediately concerned in that most tremendous crime, could thankfully witness. The national guilt of Israel, therefore, could not preclude them from pardon, through this great atonement; and the Lord invited and commanded them, to believe in the name of his Son, and so to share all the before mentioned inestimable privileges. Let them therefore see to it, as they valued his favor, and feared his vengeance, that they did not 'refuse' the gracious call and proffered salvation of Him, who thus spake to them from his 'throne of grace,' and by 'his beloved Son.' This plainly shows, that, by 'coming to mount Zion, &c.' the apostle did not mean *being true believers*, but having the Gospel proposed to them, or having made a profession of it. They might therefore be said to 'refuse,' and to 'turn away' from God, whether they rejected his invitation, or after a time became apostates from Christianity; but men cannot be said to refuse what was never proposed to them.

(22.) *Innumerable company, &c.*] 'And to myriads, the joyful company of angels.—The mention of such an assembly of angels, shows, the writer intends to describe the objects of the *invisible* world, as seen with the eye of faith; not things palpable, not the objects of sense.' *St.*

(24.) *The blood of sprinkling.*] *Stuart, Ros., and Bloomf.* seem evidently to understand the allusion to the blood of Christ.—*Than, &c.*] Here *Doddr.* too, understands literally the blood of Abel. And *Ros.* explains: 'The blood of Abel calls for vengeance, but that of Christ for pardon. Christ intercedes for us, and saves us everlastingly.'

(25.) *Him that speaketh.*] I. e. Christ. So *Bloomf.* and *Stuart.* *Him that spake on earth and was refused*, they both also understand of *Moses*. And *Stuart* remarks, that 'the legislator, or head of each dis-

*To God the Judge of all*; that great God who will judge both Jew and Gentile, according to the law they are under. *To the spirits of just men made perfect*; to the best sort of men, the righteous, and to these in their best state made perfect. *To Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant*, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. The gospel-covenant is a new covenant, distinct from the covenant of works, and it is now under a new dispensation, distinct from that of the old Test. Christ is the Mediator of this new covenant; the middle Person between both parties,—God and man; at length to bring God and his people together in heaven, and to be a Mediator of fruition between them for ever; they beholding and enjoying God in Christ, and God beholding and blessing them in Christ. This covenant is ratified by the blood of Christ sprinkled on our consciences, as the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled on the altar and the sacrifice. This blood of Christ pacifies God, and purifies the consciences of men. This is speaking blood, and it speaks better things than that of Abel. It speaks to God in behalf of sinners; it pleads not for vengeance, as the blood of Abel did on him who shed it, but for mercy. To sinners, in the name of God, it speaks pardon to their sins, peace to their souls; and bespeaks their strictest obedience, and highest love and thankfulness.

Now the apostle, having thus enlarged on the argument to perseverance, taken from the heavenly nature of the gospel-church state, closes the ch. by improving the argument in a manner suitable to the weight of it, v. 25. &c. Here observe,

1. When God speaks to men in the most excellent manner, He justly expects from them the most strict attention and regard. Now it is in the Gospel God speaks in this manner. For He now speaks from a higher and more glorious seat and throne, not from mount Sinai, which was on this earth, but from heaven. He speaks now more immediately by his inspired Word, and by his Spirit, which are his witnesses. He speaks not now any new thing to men, but by his Spirit speaks the same Word home to the conscience. He speaks now more powerfully and effectually. Then, indeed, his voice shook the earth, but now, by introducing the gospel-state, He hath shaken not only the earth, but the heavens; not only the hills and mountains, or the spirits of men, or the civil state of the land of Canaan, but the church, that is, the Jewish nation,



26 Whose voice then shook the earth : but now he hath promised, saying, <sup>k</sup> Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

27 And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that <sup>l</sup> are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us <sup>m</sup> have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear :

29 For <sup>n</sup> our God is a consuming fire.

### CHAP. XIII.

<sup>1</sup> Divers admonitions, as to charity, <sup>4</sup> to honest life, <sup>5</sup> to avoid covetousness, <sup>7</sup> to regard God's preachers, <sup>9</sup> to take heed of strange doctrines, <sup>10</sup> to confess Christ, <sup>16</sup> to give alms, <sup>17</sup> to obey governors, <sup>18</sup> to pray for the apostle. <sup>20</sup> The conclusion.

LET brotherly <sup>a</sup> love continue.

2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers : for thereby some <sup>b</sup> have entertained angels unawares.

3 Remember them that are in <sup>c</sup> bonds, as bound with them ; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

<sup>k</sup> Hag. 2:6.  
<sup>l</sup> or, may be.  
in hold fast.

<sup>n</sup> De. 4:24.  
<sup>a</sup> 1 Pe. 1:22.  
1 Ju. 4:7,20.

<sup>b</sup> Ge. 13:3. 19:2.  
<sup>c</sup> Mat. 23:35.

and them in their church-state, which was, in Old Test. times, a heaven on earth; this, their heavenly, spiritual state, He hath now shaken. It is by the Gospel from heaven that God shook to pieces the evil and ecclesiastical state of the Jewish nation, and introduced a new state of the church, that cannot be removed, shall never be changed for any other on earth, but shall remain till it be made perfect in heaven.

2. When God speaks to men in the most excellent manner, the guilt of those who refuse Him is the greater, and their punishment will be more unavoidable and intolerable ; there is no escaping, no bearing it, v. 25. The glory of the Gospel, which should greatly recommend it to our regard,

PRACT. OBS. V. 18—29. We have abundant cause for joy and gratitude, that we are not left under the terror and curse of the broken covenant of works, or under the darkness of the legal dispensation. Let all then see to it, that they do not refuse Him, who speaketh to them from heaven, with infinite tenderness and love, lest they should

penation, is introduced, as the person who addresses the laws or warnings of God to men. Ed.

V. 26—29. The voice of JEHOVAH, from mount Sinai, had been attended with tremendous earthquakes and convulsions ; but many ages after that transaction, in an express prediction of the Messiah, God had foretold, that He would 'once more shake the earth and the heavens also ;' Hag. 2:6—9. meaning, that He would change the whole civil and ecclesiastical state of the Jews, and abolish the Mosaic dispensation, in order to make way for the kingdom of Christ. . . . The apostle evidently meant some of his expressions for one description of readers, and others, for those of a different character ; though he left each to make the application to himself ; but he peculiarly aimed to convince his countrymen, that unbelievers among them were doomed to the most tremendous vengeance of God, both national and personal, from which there could be no escape, except by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and cleaving to Him. — (26) Yet once, &c.] The quotation varies both from the Sept. and the Heb. In the latter it is, ' Yet once, I will shake the heaven and the earth, &c.'

(26, 27.) ' Yet once more, &c. is from Hag. and respects the changes which would be introduced by the coming of the Messiah. The language which had been literally applied to the quaking of Sinai, when the law was given, is now figuratively applied, in the usual scriptural way, to denote a great change of a moral nature.' SruaAT.

(28.) Serve God acceptably.] 'How full of devices are we for our own secular advantage ! how expert in devising many little things to be done for ourselves ! But, O ! rational, immortal, heaven-born soul, are thy wondrous faculties capable of no greater improvements, — no better employments ? Oh, let a blush, deeper than scarlet, be thy clothing, for being found so meanly occupied. Hast thou no disposition to raise thy soul to some such thoughts as these : what may be done for God, for Christ, for my own soul, and for the most important interests of mankind ? How many hundreds of thoughts have we for ourselves, to one for God, his cause, his people in the world !' MATHER.

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appears in these three things : (1.) That the former dispensation and state of the church of God were shaken and removed ; (2.) That a new kingdom is erected for God in the world, which can never be so shaken as to be removed. (3.) This change is made once for all ; we have now received a kingdom that shall never be removed, never give way to any new dispensation. The gospel-church may be enlarged, and purified, but it shall never be altered for another : they who perish under the Gospel, perish without remedy. Hence the apostle justly concludes, [1.] How necessary it is for us to obtain grace from God, to serve Him acceptably : if we be not accepted of God under this dispensation, we shall never be accepted at all ; and we cannot worship God acceptably, unless we worship Him with godly reverence and fear. As faith, so holy fear, is necessary to acceptable worship. It is only the grace of God that enables us to worship God in a right manner : nature cannot come up to it ; it can produce neither that precious faith nor that holy fear, that are necessary to acceptable worship. God is the same just and righteous God under the gospel, that He appeared to be under the law ; and He will avenge Himself on all the despisers of his grace, and on all apostates ; nay, under the gospel, the justice of God is displayed in a more awful manner, though not in so sensible a manner as under the law ; for here we behold divine justice seizing on the Lord Jesus Christ, and making Him a propitiatory sacrifice, his soul and body an offering for sin ; which is a display of justice far beyond what was seen and heard on mount Sinai, when the law was given.

CHAP. XIII. The apostle, having treated largely of Christ, and faith, and free grace, and gospel-privileges, and warned the Hebrews against apostasy, now, in the close of all, recommends several excellent duties to them, as the proper fruits of faith ; then bespeaks their prayers for him, and offers up his prayers to God for them, gives them some hope of seeing himself and Timothy, and ends with the general salutation and benediction.

V. 1—17. The design of Christ in giving Himself for us, is, that He may purchase to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Now the apostle calls the believing Hebrews to the performance of many excel-

lent duties, in which it becomes Christians to excel.

1. To brotherly love, v. 1. by which he means, not only a general affection to all men, as our brethren by nature, but that special and spiritual affection which ought to be among the children of God. (1.) It is here supposed, that the Hebrews had this love one for another ; though, at this time, that nation was miserably divided and distracted among themselves, both about matters of religion and the civil state. The spirit of Christianity is a spirit of love ; faith works by love ; the true religion is the strongest bond of friendship ; if it be not so, it has its name for nothing. (2.) This brotherly love was in danger of being lost, and that, in a time of persecution, when it would be most necessary ; it was in danger of being lost by disputes about the respect they ought still to have to the ceremonies of the Mosaic law. Disputes about religion too often produce a decay of Christian affection ; but this must be guarded against, and all proper means used to preserve brotherly love.

2. To hospitality, v. 2. We must add to brotherly kindness, charity. Where observe, (1.) The duty required, — to entertain strangers, both strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to our persons ; especially those who know themselves to be strangers here, and are seeking another country ; which is the case of the people of God, and was so at this time. (2.) The motive, — thereby some have entertained angels unawares ; so Abraham did, Gen. 18. and Lot, Gen. 19. and one of those Abraham entertained was the Son of God ; and though we cannot suppose this will ever be our case, yet what we do to strangers, in obedience to Him, He will reckon and reward as done to Himself, Mat. 25: 35.

3. To Christian sympathy, v. 3. Where observe, (1.) The duty, — to remember those that are in bonds and in adversity. God often orders it so, that, while some Christians and churches are in adversity, others enjoy peace and liberty ; and those that are themselves at liberty, must sympathize with those that are in bonds and adversity, as if bound with them in the same chain ; they must feel the sufferings of their brethren. (2.) The reason of the duty, — as being yourselves in the body ; not only in the body natural, and so liable to the like sufferings ; but in the same mystical body, under the same Head ; and if one

fall from a greater height of privilege to a more tremendous depth of condemnation, than ancient rebels did ; for how can they escape, who turn away from God in unbelief or apostasy, whilst He so graciously beseeches them to be reconciled to Him, and to accept of his everlasting favor ?

SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. XIII. V. 1—3. The Hebrew converts, after the day of Pentecost, abounded in love to each other, and in all the fruits of this holy affection ; (Notes, Acts 2:42—47. 4:32—35.) but many things would naturally occur to interrupt that entire harmony, and to stop the current of that liberality, which they at first showed. It was therefore peculiarly proper for the apostle to exhort them to 'let brotherly love continue,' and to avoid everything which interfered with their persevering attention to peace, kindness, and reciprocal affection, as became children of one family, and heirs of the same inheritance. He likewise meant to excite them to 'brotherly love' towards the Gentile converts, against whom they were generally in some degree prejudiced. Eph. 2: 11—22. 3:1—7. 4:1—6.—It has been shown, that one of the three who came to Abraham was called JEHOVAH, and was doubtless the eternal Word and Son of God ; but it was not necessary for the apostle to advert to that circumstance, when he merely suggested a hint on the subject.—It could not indeed be expected, that the Hebrews would literally be visited by angels, in the form of strangers.—All captives and afflicted persons might be included in the exhortation ; but 'the household of faith' was specially intended.

SCOTT.

(1.) Let brotherly love continue.] 'To cultivate affection, is not to strive to excite it by any direct effort of abstract thinking, but to show by the whole tenor of a life of disinterested goodness, that our happiness is really promoted by seeking the happiness of another. [Note, 1 John 5:7—13.] It consists in restraining our passions, in subduing our selfishness, in quieting our irritability, in eradicating from our minds everything which could give pain to an ingenuous spirit ; and in cherishing a spirit of meekness, forbearance, forgiveness, and of active, cheerful, and incessant desire for the happiness of those whom we love. AT NO LESS PRICE THAN THIS CAN AFFECTION BE PURCHASED, AND THOSE WHO ARE WILLING TO PURCHASE IT AT THIS PRICE, WILL RARELY HAVE REASON TO COMPLAIN OF THE WANT OF IT.' Law of Marriage, Elts. Mor. Sci. 'He that hath,' or would have 'friends, must show himself friendly.' Prov.]

WAYLAND.



4 Marriage <sup>d</sup> is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but <sup>e</sup> whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content <sup>f</sup> with such things as ye have: for he hath said, <sup>g</sup> I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

6 So that we may boldly say, <sup>h</sup> The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

7 Remember them which <sup>i</sup> have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith <sup>j</sup> follow, considering the end of their conversation:

8 Jesus Christ, the same <sup>k</sup> yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.

[Practical Observations.]

d Pr. 5:15-23.	g Ge. 28:15.	De. 10:17.	i or, are the
e 1 Co. 6:9.	31:5, 8.	1 Ch. 16:13.	guides.
Re. 22:15.	28:20.		j c. 6:12.
f Mat. 6:25, 34.	h Ps. 27:1.		k Re. 1:4.

member suffer, all the rest suffer with it, 1 Cor. 12:26. It would be unnatural in Christians not to bear each other's burdens.

4. To purity and chastity, v. 4. Here you have, (1.) A recommendation of God's ordinance of marriage, that it is honorable in all, and ought to be so esteemed by all, and not denied to those to whom God has not denied it; it is honorable, for God instituted it for man in paradise, knowing it was not good for him to be alone; he married and blessed the first couple, the first parents of mankind, to direct all to look unto God in

that great concern, and to marry in the Lord. Christ honored marriage with his presence and first miracle; it is honorable, as a mean to prevent impurity and a defiled bed; it is honorable and happy, when persons come together pure and chaste, and preserve the marriage bed undefiled, not only from unlawful, but inordinate affections. (2.) A dreadful but just censure of impurity and lewdness; whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. God, who knows them; and will call such sins by their proper names, not by the names of love and gallantry, but of whoredom and adultery; whoredom in the single state, and adultery in the married. He will bring them into judgment, He will judge them, either by their own consciences here, or at his tribunal at death, and in the last day; He will convict them, condemn them, and cast them out for ever, if they die under the guilt of this sin.

5. To Christian contentment, v. 5, 6. Here observe, (1.) The sin that is contrary to this grace and duty,—covetousness, an over eager desire of the wealth of this world, envying those who have more than we; this sin we must not allow, but root it out of our souls. (2.) The duty and grace is contrary to covetousness; being satisfied and pleased with such things as we have; present things, for past things cannot be recalled, and future things are only in the hand of God; what God gives us from day to day, we must be content with it, though it fall short of what we have enjoyed heretofore, and come not up to our expectations for the future; we must be content with our present lot, bring our minds to our present condition, and this is the sure way to contentment; and they who cannot do it, would not be contented though God should raise their condition to

their minds, for the mind would rise with the condition. Hannu was the great court-favorite, and yet not contented; Ahab, on the throne, and yet not contented; Adam, in paradise, and yet not contented; yea, the angels, in heaven, and yet not contented; but Paul, though abased and empty, had learned in every state, in any state, therewith to be content. (3.) What reason Christians have to be contented with their present lot: God hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, v. 5, 6. This was said to Joshua, ch. 1:5. but belongs to all the faithful servants of God. This promise contains the sum and substance of all the promises; I will never, no, never leave thee, nor ever forsake thee. Here are no less than five negatives heaped together, to confirm the promise; the true believer shall have the gracious presence of God with him in life, at death, and for ever. From this comprehensive promise they may assure themselves of help from God, v. 6. Men can do nothing against God, and God can make all that men do against his people, to turn to their good.

6. To the duty Christians owe to their ministers, both those that are dead, and those yet alive.

(1.) To those that are dead, v. 7. Here observe, The description given of them; they were their guides and governors, not according to their own will, but the Word of God; not at a distance, and by proxy, but by personal presence and instruction. The duty owing to them, even when dead; 'Remember them; their preaching, praying, private counsel, example.' 'Follow their faith steadfastly, profess it, and labor after the grace of it. Consider the end of their conversation, how quickly, how comfortably, how joyfully, they finished their course!'

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-8. 'Brotherly love' tends, in such various ways, to the benefit of the church, the comfort of believers, and the honor of the Gospel; that the enemy of our souls endeavors, by every mean, to interrupt its exercise, and to work on the remains of our corrupt affections, for that purpose, with a vast variety of most subtle artifices, against which we should be perpetually on our guard. Hence it is, that so little of this love is found in the church, though so much is read concerning it in the Scriptures; and that so many divisions and controversies prevail among those, who seem, in a measure, to have been taught of God to love their brethren! John 13:31-35, 17:20-23. 1 Thes. 4:9-12. 1 John 2:7-11, 3:11-24, 4:9-12.—Defilement and dishonor spring from contrariety to the law of God, which is perfectly

sued to promote our present and future welfare. But God does, in this world, severely mark his abhorrence of those forbidden lusts, to which the depravity of the human heart leads such vast multitudes; Gen. 2:24. 1 Cor. 6:18-20. and He will surely condemn every impenitent fornicator and adulterer at the day of judgment; whatever disguise or excuse he may here use to cloke his wickedness.—Christians, whether poor or rich, should, in all their words and actions, show, that they 'abhor covetousness.'—The instructions and example of ministers, who have honorably and comfortably closed their testimony, should be peculiarly remembered by their survivors. But Jesus alone is an ever-living Friend, 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' SCOTT.

V. 4. Many expositors, particularly those of the church of Rome, explain this as an exhortation; 'Let marriage be honorable in all things, &c.' and doubtless the apostle meant, that it ought to be entered into, and behaved in, according to the holy commandments of God; that it might be honorable to the persons themselves, and to their profession of the Gospel; as well as that the state should be had in honor, and considered as undefiled. The particle *but*, however, introducing the second clause, shows that his primary meaning was to assert, that 'marriage' in itself 'was honorable in all' things, and in all persons; for he contrasts marriage with the conduct of fornicators and adulterers, whom God will certainly judge, and condemn for their violations of his law. 1 Cor. 5:9-13. 6:9-11. Gal. 5:19-21. Eph. 5:3-7. Rev. 21:5-8. 22:14, 15. Some persons, in the primitive times, contended for the lawfulness of fornication; and most abominable sentiments and practices, in respect of polygamy and divorcees, prevailed, not only among the Gentiles, but even to an astonishing degree among the Jews; while, on the other hand, some of both, and of the Christians, condemned marriage, or at least deemed it a less holy state than celibacy. This 'mystery of iniquity,' very early began to work; and the apostle, in a few most expressive words, guarded against both the extremes, which experience has always proved to be, in different forms, but almost equally, destructive to morality, the welfare of society, and the purity of religion. Gen. 2:21-24. 1 Tim. 4:1-5. SCOTT.

(4.) Marriage, &c.] Stuart and Mackn. render it; Let marriage, &c.; but Doddr. says, the connexion of the latter clause introduced by the particle, *but*, is sufficient to vindicate our version. EN.

V. 5, 6. The Hebrews were generally poor; many had sold their estates to relieve their brethren, after the day of Pentecost; and the goods of others had been plundered by their persecutors. (10:34.)—The apostle had strenuously exerted himself to procure them a liberal relief from the Gentile churches; Rom. 15:22-29. 2 Cor. 8: 9. but he here exhorts them, to let their whole conduct, discourse, and manner of life, be evidently at a distance from 'covetousness;' neither being anxious about getting money, to lay up, or to expend in superfluities; nor yet to be tenacious of what they had, or averse to lay it out for valuable purposes. I will never leave, &c.] The emphasis of the original words can scarcely be retained in a translation, though nearly the same words are used in several parts of the Scripture. Marc. Ref. 1.—They, however, evidently show that every believer, in similar circumstances, may rely on the promises made specially to any person, as recorded in the Scripture. The quotation gives the general meaning conveyed in the Sept. but in very different words. Deut. 31:3-3. SCOTT.

(5.) I will never leave, &c.] Doddr. renders or paraphrases: 'I will not, I will not leave thee, I will never, never, never forsake thee.'

ED.—In English, two negatives are equivalent to an affirmative, and destroy each other. But not so in Greek. They strengthen each other; and a third makes it stronger still, and so a fourth and fifth. Here is a case, connected with a promise, one of the "exceeding great and precious promises." We translate but two of them. Now, they need not all have been there. They are not all necessary to express the simple idea, that God will never forsake his people. There must have been design in multiplying them. God meant to be believed in that thing, and would secure the confidence of his people. He knew how prone they were to doubt his constancy,—how strongly inclined to that form of unbelief, and how liable to be harassed by the dread of being forsaken by Him. How in earnest God appears to be in this matter! How unworthy his children to suspect that He will forsake them!

Rev. Dr. W. NEVINS.  
V. 7, 8. The same yesterday, &c.] The expression seems to be a periphrasis of immutability, a divine attribute incommunicable to a mere creature; his Person is as immutable as his doctrine, his justice and holiness, as his mercy and truth; and all kinds of persons will meet a Judge exactly of the same character, as He manifested when He appeared on earth as a Savior. The Hebrews might, therefore, confide in Him, to support and comfort them under their sufferings for his sake; even as He had supported those, who had so happily finished their course. SCOTT.

(7.) Whose faith follow.] Or, as Mackn. and M'Lean, 'of whose conversation attentively considering the ending, or close, imitate their faith.' And M'Lean continues; 'This is the strong argument to imitate their faith; that though they were dead and gone, Jesus Christ in whom these holy men believed, continues still the same to-day as He was then; and shall for ever continue the same all-sufficient Savior, to the end of time.' So, Williams remarks, that the immutability of Christ is thus used, as an argument against vacillation or wavering in opinion. EN.

(3.) 'There is nothing in the argument to bar our understanding the passage, as referring primarily to the Person of Christ; and, in the phraseology, there is a reason, which I think of weight sufficient to be decisive. This is the adoption of the same phrase which, at the commencement of the epistle, had been employed to express the absolute unchangeableness of God; "Thou art the same, &c. Heb. 1:12." J. P. SMITH.—Some understand this of the doctrines of Christ, but others, more justly, so Mackn., Stuart, and Schulz, of the nature of Christ; and Bloomf. agrees with Stude, that the words are to be referred both to the preceding and following vs. and to be understood of the nature and object of the Hebrews' faith, as well as of the doctrines of their religion. EN.



9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines: for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

10 We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.

11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach:

14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.

16 But to do good, and to communicate, forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

1 Jn. 4:1.  
m Le. 16:27.  
n Jn. 19:17, 18.  
o Ac. 5:41.  
p Mic. 2:10.

q Ep. 5:29.  
r Ho. 14:2.  
s confessing.  
t Ro. 12:13.

u Phi. 4:18.  
v 1 Th. 5:12, 13.  
w or, guide.  
x Eze. 3:17.

Now this duty of following the same true faith the apostle enlarges much upon, and presses earnestly, from several motives:

[1.] From the immutability and eternity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Though their ministers were some dead, others dying, yet the great Head and High Priest of the church, the Bishop of their souls, ever lives, and is ever the same, in the Old Testament day, in the Gospel day, and for ever.

[2.] From the nature and tendency of those erroneous doctrines, they were in danger of falling in with, divers and various, v. 9. different from what they had received from their former faithful teachers, and in-

V. 12, 13. 'Hereby, Paul offers a most convincing proof to the Jews, that they must abandon their old ritual, and adopt a system that has changed the law of the priesthood, before they can have any claim to eat of our altar or sacrifice. It is as if he had said, "If you would have any claim to participate with us of the peculiar privileges of the Gospel, all resulting from the sufferings of Jesus, you must leave the old Jerusalem; you must go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing his reproach. Without the camp He suffered, and without the camp He must be enjoyed." Pirie, in Williams.—Without the gate.] 'Calvary was then without the walls of the city, although it is now within them.' Sr.

V. 15, 16. (15) Fruit of our lips.] Hos. 14:2. Sept. Our version, from the Heb. reads calves of the lips; but the omission of one letter would render it 'fruit of the lips.'

(15.) Praise . . . continually.] 'A man who lives a prayerful life, must be a man of transcendent loveliness and worth. And who knows not that in every age, the best and brightest of men have been those, who approached nearest to these (Enoch, Elijah and other scriptural) illustrious patterns of prayer. At this present time there are persons, of but inferior parts and accomplishments, who, by reason of great prayerfulness, transcend in moral worth professors of high distinction, and splendid gifts. Religionists, however exalted, who are not often with God in prayer, are but little profited by all their privileges, and but little profitable to others by all their intercourse with them; but, contrariwise, being persons of prayer by character, and not in fact, are stumbling-blocks to many; and are the principal causes of this world's incredulity, in regard to the efficacy, and usefulness of prayer.'

Rev. Dr. SKINNER.

V. 16. 'This duty (of benevolent giving) is not enjoined by human authority, but by that of conscience, and of God. Suppose the Lord Jesus should in some special manner come to you, and give you a particular amount of property, and expressly say, "This I commit to you in sacred

consistent with themselves; strange doctrines, such as the gospel-church was unacquainted with, of an unsettling, distracting nature; quite contrary to that grace of God that fixes and establishes the heart, which is an excellent thing. These strange doctrines keep the heart always fluctuating and unsettled. They are mean and low as to their subject, about external, little, perishing things, such as meats and drinks, &c. unprofitable; they make none more holy, humble, thankful, or heavenly. They would exclude those who embraced them from the privileges of the Christian altar, v. 10. This is an argument of great weight, and therefore the apostle insists the longer on it. Observe,

The Christian church has its altar. It was objected against the primitive Christians, that their assemblies were destitute of an altar; but that was not true. Christ is both our Altar, and our Sacrifice; He sanctifies the gift. This altar furnishes out a feast for true believers, a feast on the sacrifice, a feast of fat things, 1 Cor. 5:7. and this follows, therefore let us keep the feast. The Lord's supper is the feast of the gospel-passover. Those who adhere to the tabernacle, or the Levitical dispensation, or return to it again, exclude themselves from the privileges of this altar, from the benefits purchased by Christ. He argues thus under the Jewish law; No part of the sin-offering was to be eaten, but all must be burnt without the camp while they dwell in tabernacles, and without the gates when they dwell in cities: now, if they will still be subject to that law, they cannot eat at the gospel-altar; for what is eaten there, is furnished from Christ, who is the great Sin-offering, not the very sin-offering itself, as the papists affirm; for then it was not to be eaten, but burnt; but the gospel-feast is the fruit and procurement of the sacrifice, which they have no right to, who do not acknowledge the sacrifice itself. And that it might appear that Christ was really the Antitype of the sin-offering, and, as such, might sanctify or cleanse his people with his own blood, He conformed Himself to the type, in suffering without the gate. Having thus showed, that adherence to the Levitical law would, even according to its own rules, debar men from the Christian altar; he proceeds to improve this argument, v. 13—15. in suitable advices. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp; go forth from the ceremonial law, from sin, from the world, from ourselves, our very bodies, when He calls us. Let us be willing to bear His reproach, be willing to be accounted the offscouring of all things, not worthy to live, not worthy to die a common death; and we have the more reason, be-

cause, whether we go forth from this world to Christ or no, we must necessarily go forth in a little time by death; for here we have no continuing city; death will not suffer us to continue long here; therefore we should go forth now by faith, and seek in Christ the rest and settlement which this world cannot afford us, v. 14. Let us make a right use of this altar; not only partake of the privileges of it, but discharge the duties of it, as those whom Christ has made priests to attend on it. Let us bring our sacrifices to this altar, and to this our High Priest, and offer them up by Him, v. 15, 16. Now, what are the sacrifices we must bring and offer on this Altar, even Christ? Not any expiatory sacrifices; there is no need of them; Christ has offered the great Sacrifice of atonement; ours are only the sacrifices of acknowledgment; and they are, the sacrifice of praise to God, which we should offer up to God continually; all adoration and prayer, as well as thanksgiving, the fruit of our lips. The sacrifice of almsdeeds, and Christian charity, v. 16. according to our power, not contenting ourselves to offer the sacrifice of our lips, mere words, but the sacrifice of good deeds; and these on this altar, not depending on the merit of them, but of our great High Priest; and with such sacrifices as these, adoration and alms thus offered up, God is well pleased; He will accept the offering with pleasure, and will accept and bless the offerers through Christ.

(2.) Having thus told us the duty Christians owe to their deceased ministers; the apostle tells us what is the duty that people owe to their living ministers, v. 17. and the reasons of that duty: Their duty is to obey them, and submit themselves to them, not implicitly, or absolutely, but only so far as is agreeable to the mind and will of God revealed in his Word. Christians must submit to be instructed by their ministers, and not think themselves too wise, too good, or too great, to learn from them; and when they find that ministerial instructions are agreeable to the written Word, they must obey them. The motives to this duty are,—They have the rule over the people; their office, though not magisterial, is yet truly authoritative; not to lord it over the people, but to lead them in the ways of God, by informing and instructing them, explaining the Word of God to them, and applying it to their several cases. They watch for the souls of the people, not to ensnare them, but to save them; to gain them, not to themselves, but to Christ; to build them up in knowledge, faith, and holiness, and help them forward in the way to heaven. They must give an account how they have discharged their duty, and what is become of the

trust,—use it to promote the cause dearest to my heart." Would you not be happy to be the steward of his bounty? Could you have a thought of devoting it to any use but to promote his cause? Now "the silver and the gold are the Lord's," and He has virtually spoken in the manner supposed; He has intrusted you with a portion of his property, and made known his will respecting its use." Rev. Dr. Woods. 'The world contains, it is supposed, 800,000,000 of inhabitants. What an ample field for doing good!' To do good forget not.] 'While it is yet in the power of thy hand.' 'My friend, place thyself in dying circumstances; apprehend and realize thy approaching dissolution; suppose thy last solemn hour arrived; thy breath failing, thy throat rattling, thy hands with a cold sweat upon them: in this condition, "What wouldst thou wish to have done more than thou hast already done for thy own soul, for thy family, or for the people of God?" Think upon this question, and do not forget the result of thy thoughts; do not delay to perform what thou hast resolved upon. How much more profitable would such an exercise be on the Lord's day evening, than those vanities to which that evening is not unfrequently prostituted, and by which all the good of the past day is defeated. — And if such an exercise were often performed, Oh how would it regulate our lives; how watchfully, how faithfully would it cause us to live; what an incredible number of good works would it produce in the world!'

CORON MATHER.

V. 17. This must principally relate to the account given before the Lord, as it were, from day to day, with joy or grief, by ministers, of the reception given to their message: for no misconduct of the people will occasion sorrow to the faithful servants of Christ, at the final day of retribution; though their salvation will be unto them 'a crown of rejoicing.' 2 Cor. 2:14—17. 1 Thes. 2:17—20. The exhortation supposes the faithfulness of ministers and ecclesiastical rulers, and that they exercise a scriptural authority in a proper manner: for no obedience and submission can be due to the usurped dominion of 'idol shepherds,'



18 Pray for us : for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

19 But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ : to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation : for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

23 Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty ; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.

24 Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.

25 Grace be with you all. Amen.

¶ Written to the Hebrews from Italy by Timothy.

y Ac. 24:16.	b Eze. 34:23.	e 1 Pe. 5:10.
z 1 Th. 5:23.	c Zec. 9:11.	f or, doing.
a 1 Pe. 1:21.	d or, testament.	g Lbi. 2:13.

souls committed to their trust, whether any have been lost through their neglect, and whether any have been brought in and built up under their ministry. They would be glad to give a good account of themselves and their hearers, to give up their account with joy and not with grief. If they give up their account with grief, it will be the people's loss as well as theirs. If faithful ministers be not successful, the grief will be theirs, but the loss the people's. Faithful ministers have delivered their own souls, but a fruitless and faithless people's blood and ruin will be upon their own heads.

PRACT. OBS. V. 9—25. We should be careful not to be 'carried about with divers and strange doctrines,' and diligently seek to have our hearts 'established by grace;' for notions and forms never profit those who are occupied in them. Living by faith in Christ, and being consecrated to God through his blood, let us willingly separate from this evil world, and 'bear the reproach' of proud formalists, and all the enemies of true religion, however distinguished. Our pilgrimage here will soon end; let us then seek an abiding mansion in the city of our God, and consider all temporal prosperity or adversity, as of scarcely any consequence; being of a transient and evanescent nature. 1 Cor. 7:29—31. 2 Cor. 4:13—18. 1 Pet. 4:7. All ministers of the Gospel should peculiarly remember, that they are called 'to watch for men's souls, as those who must give account;' which involves the most weighty and

unfaithful stewards, or blind guides. To other rulers and superiors, honor is required for their office's sake; but to ministers for their work's sake alone.

V. 18, 19. It is plain, from these verses, that the persons immediately addressed, or to whom in the first instance the epistle was sent, would know from whom it came.—'That I may be quickly restored to you from this confinement, and have an opportunity of rendering you those services, which were prevented by this unjust imprisonment, occasioned by the fury of the populace, when I was last at Jerusalem.' *Dodtr.* The priests, rulers, and council were more deeply criminal than even 'the populace.'

V. 20, 21. The blood of Christ purchased the blessings of the new covenant, and ratified it as unalterable; so that it was rendered perpetual on earth to the end of time, and everlasting in respect of the salvation conferred according to it.—He prayed for them, under the full persuasion, that sanctifying grace, and holy obedience, would surely be attended with divine consolations, which he did not particularly mention. *Id.* *Stuart* renders these vs. thus: 'Now may the God of peace, that raised from the dead our Lord Jesus, (who by the blood of the everlasting covenant has become the great Shepherd of the sheep.) prepare you for every good work, that ye may do his will; working in you, &c.,' and this opens to the sense of the passage as understood by *Beza*,

V. 18—25. Here,

1. The apostle recommends himself, and his fellow-sufferers, to the prayers of the Heb. believers, v. 18. 'Pray for us; for me and Timothy,' mentioned v. 23. 'and for all those of us who labor in the ministry of the Gospel.' This is one part of the duty which people owe to their ministers,—to pray for them. There are good reasons why people should pray for their ministers; he mentions two: *We trust we have a good conscience*, &c. v. 18. Many of the Jews had an ill opinion of Paul, because he, being a Hebrew of the Hebrews, had cast off the Levitical law, and preached Christ: now he here modestly asserts his own integrity. Observe, *A good conscience* has a respect to all God's commands, and all our duty. Those who have this good conscience, yet need the prayers of others. Conscientious ministers are public blessings, and deserve the prayers of the people. Another reason why he desires their prayers is, that he hoped thereby to be the sooner restored to them, v. 19. intimating that he had been formerly among them; and that the best way to facilitate his return to them, and to make it a mercy to him and them, was, to make it a matter of their prayer. We should fetch in all our mercies by prayer.

2. He offers his prayers to God for them, being willing to do for them as he desired they should do for him, v. 20. In this prayer, observe, (1.) The title given to God,—*the God of peace*, who has found out a way for peace and reconciliation between Himself and sinners, and who loves peace on earth, and especially in his churches. (2.) The great work ascribed to Him; *He hath brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus*, &c. Jesus raised Himself by his own power; and yet the Father was concerned in it, attesting thereby that justice was satisfied, and the law fulfilled. (3.) The titles given to Christ,—our Lord Jesus, our Sovereign, our Savior, and the great Shepherd of the sheep, promised in Isa. 40:11. declared by Himself to be so, John 10:14, 15. Ministers are under-shepherds, Christ is the great Shepherd. (4.) The way and method in which God is reconciled, and Christ raised from the dead, *through the blood of the everlasting covenant*. The blood of Christ sat-

isfied divine justice, and so procured Christ's release from the prison of the grave, as having paid our debt, according to an eternal covenant or agreement between the Father and the Son; and this blood is the sanction and seal of an everlasting covenant between God and his people. (5.) The mercy prayed for, v. 21. Observe, The perfection of the saints, *in every good work*, is the great thing desired by them and for them, to fit them for the employment and felicity of heaven. The way in which God makes his people perfect is, by working in them always what is pleasing in his sight, and that through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever. Observe. There is no good thing wrought in us, but it is the work of God; and that through Jesus Christ, for his sake, and by his Spirit. And therefore eternal glory is due to Him, who is the Cause of all the good principles wrought in us, and all the good works done by us. To this every one should say, *Amen*.

3. He gives the Hebrews an account of Timothy's liberty, and his hopes of seeing them with him in a little time, v. 23. It seems Timothy had been a prisoner, doubtless for the Gospel, but now was set at liberty. The imprisonment of faithful ministers is an honor to them, and their enlargement matter of joy to the people. Opportunities of writing to the churches of Christ are desired by the faithful ministers of Christ, and pleasant to them.

4. Having given a brief account of this his letter, and begged their attention to it, v. 22. he closes with salutations, and a solemn, though short benediction.

The salutation is from himself, directed to all their ministers who had rule over them, and to all the saints; to them all, ministers and people. Also from the Christians in Italy. Religion teaches men the truest civility and good-breeding. It is not a sour or morose thing.

His benediction, though short, is solemn, v. 25. *Grace be with you all. Amen*. When the people of God have been conversing together by word or writing, it is good to part with prayer, desiring for each other the continuance of the gracious presence of God, that they may meet together again in the world of praise.

awful responsibility; for dreadful will be their condemnation, if they be slothful, selfish, or unfaithful. Christians should also pray fervently and constantly for their ministers; for these would generally walk more honorably, and labor more successfully, if the people were more earnest in praying for them. Even when they see, or think they see, something amiss in those who upon the whole have a good conscience, willing in all things to live honestly; they should pray the more frequently and earnestly for them. Let us approach 'the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep;' and 'through the blood of the everlasting covenant,' let us beseech Him for ourselves and each other, 'to make us perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ;' that we may glorify Him for ever. Amen. SCOTT.

*Dodtr.*, and others, who consider the clause, *blood of the everlasting covenant*, as more properly connecting with the words immediately preceding, namely, *great Shepherd of the sheep*.

(21.) *Working in you.* 'There are some animals of which we say, "they know not their own strength." Why should the Christian be like them?' COTTON MATHER.

V. 22—25. The apostle . . . had written a letter to them, in few words, compared with the vast importance, and the great variety, of the subjects discussed in it.—It appears hence, that he was either at liberty, or had a clear prospect of being speedily liberated; and that the spurious postscript *falsely* says, that Timothy was the bearer of the epistle. When the argumentative part of the epistle had been read, without the prejudices which the writer's name, in the beginning, would have unavoidably excited; these intimations at the close would have no had effect. After this, he concluded with salutations, especially to the pastors and rulers of their churches; and from all the Christians in Italy, as well as those at Rome. (24) *Them that have the rule*, &c.] 7, 17. *Luke* 22:26. 7, 8, 17. The pastors of the church are evidently thus distinguished from the people; but it must be allowed, that no disparity among the pastors is intimated. The apostle James was probably living at this time; and was the principal, though not the only person intended. *Acts* 20:17. *1 Tim.* 5:21, 22. [Note, *1 Pet.* 5:2.] SCOTT.



Extracts from the very interesting 'Fraternal Appeal to the American Churches,' by Rev. Dr. SCHMUCKER, have already been inserted in this Comm. The object is truly great, evangelical, and vitally important to human welfare. Feeling this, in no slight degree, the Editor inserts an outline of the worthy Professor's 'Plan for Catholic Union on Apostolic Principles,' appended to his Appeal, and reviewed in the Am. Bibl. Repos.; intermingling such remarks or references as seem necessary.

'Whoever,' says that eminent servant of Christ, and highly endowed writer, the late ROBERT HALL, 'forms his ideas of the church of Christ from perusing the New Test. will perceive, that unity is one of its essential characteristics; and that, though it be branched out into many distinct societies, it is still but one. Nothing more abhorrent from the principles and maxims of the sacred oracles can be conceived, than the idea of a plurality of true churches, neither in actual communion with each other, nor in a capacity for such communion. Though this rending of the seamless garment of our Savior, this schism in the members of his mystical body, is by far the greatest calamity which has befallen the Christian interest, and one of the most fatal effects of the great apostasy foretold by the sacred penmen, we have been so long familiarized to it as to be scarcely sensible of its enormity; nor does it excite surprise or concern in any degree proportioned to what would be felt by one who had contemplated the church in the first ages. Christian societies regarding each other with the jealousies of rival empires, each aiming to raise itself on the ruin of all others, making extravagant boasts of superior purity, generally in exact proportion to their departures from it, and scarcely deigning to acknowledge the possibility of obtaining salvation out of their pale, is the odious and disgusting spectacle which modern Christianity presents. The bond of charity, which unites the genuine followers of Christ in distinction from the world, is dissolved, and the very terms by which it was wont to be denoted, exclusively employed to express a predilection for a sect. The evils which result from this state of division are incalculable: it supplies infidels with their most plausible topics of invective; it hardens the consciences of the irreligious, weakens the hands of the good, impedes the efficacy of prayer, and is probably the principal obstruction to that ample effusion of the Spirit which is essential to the renovation of the world. It is easier, however,' he confesses, 'to deplore the malady than to prescribe the cure: for, however important the preservation of harmony and peace, the interests of truth and holiness are still more so; nor must we forget the order in which the graces of the Spirit are arranged. "The wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable." Peace should be anxiously sought, but always in subordination to purity; and therefore every attempt to reconcile the differences among Christians which involves the sacrifice of truth, or the least deliberate deviation from the revealed will of Christ, is spurious in its origin, and dangerous in its tendency. If communion with a Christian society cannot be had without a compliance with rites and usages which we deem idolatrous or superstitious, or without a surrender of that liberty in which we are commanded to stand fast, we must, as we value our allegiance, forego, however reluctantly, the advantages of such a union.'

Fully in the spirit of these observations, Dr. S. remarks, that 'the separation of the Protestants from the Papal hierarchy, was an insuperable duty; for Rome had poisoned the fountains of truth by her corruptions, and death, or a refusal to drink from her cup, was the only alternative: but that the Protestants them-selves should afterwards break communion with their professed brethren was inconsistent, although the result of many conspiring causes, with the practice of the apostolic church, as well as detrimental to the Christian cause.' Reviewing, then, the growth of the leading Protestant organizations, the Lutheran, German Reformed, Episcopal, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational or Independent, Moravian, and Methodist denominations, and alluding to 'others, of minor extent, whose principles coincide more or less with these,' he observes, 'All these together constitute the Protestant church, and are the great mass of the viable church of the Redeemer, engaged in promoting his mediatorial reign on earth, and owned by his Spirit's blessing.'

The subject is divided into, I. The causes of sectarian strife between these branches: and II. A remedy for the evils which result.

I. 'In continental Europe, the sectarian principle is not fully developed, the Lutheran or Reformed church being established by law, though in England, where greater liberty is enjoyed, dissenters are numerous. But in these United States, where Christianity has been divorced from the civil government, and restored to its primitive dependence on its own moral power, all sects are on perfect equality, and the natural tendency of sectarianism is witnessed in its full latitude. The separation between church and state is worthy of all praise, and demands our warmest gratitude to Heaven. It has restored,' he adds, 'the American Protestant church to the original advantages of the golden age of Christianity in the apostolic days. In this land of refuge for oppressed Europe, God has placed his people in circumstances most auspicious for the gradual "perfecting" of his visible kingdom. Here we are enabled, unencumbered with entangling alliances with civil government, to review the past history of the Redeemer's kingdom, trace error in its various forms, witness effects of different measures, and, by a species of experimental eclecticism, rejecting everything injurious, to combine all that has proved advantageous, and incorporate it in the structure and relations of the Protestant church. Has not God, then, by our peculiar situation, called us to such a work? Among the causes of this strife, are, 1. The absence of any visible bond, or indication of union, between the different churches in any city, town, or neighborhood, whilst each of them is connected to other churches elsewhere of their own denomination. 2. The separate organization of the churches on the ground of doctrinal diversity. 3. The use of transfundamental creeds; or those which embody not only the undisputed doctrines of Christianity, but also the sectarian peculiarities of some particular denomination. 4. The sectarian training of the rising generation. 5. Sectarian idolatry; man-worship, or inordinate veneration for distinguished theologians; each sect cultivating, almost exclusively, the literature of its own denomination. 6. Ecclesiastical pride; or undue preference of all that pertains to one's own sect. 7. Conflict of pecuniary interest between neighboring ministers and churches; the success of either being, more or less, at the other's expense.' For the Prof.'s judicious exemplification of each of these causes, however, room cannot be expected in this work.

II. 'Any plan of union, in order to possess a claim to the attention of the different Christian denominations generally, must be based on apostolic principles, [i. e.] be accordant with the spirit and principles of the New Test. or deducible from them; leaving untouched the unalienable rights and obligations of Christians: therefore, 1. It must require of no one

the renunciation of any doctrine or opinion believed by him to be scriptural or true. 2. It must concede to each denomination, or branch of the church of Christ, the right to retain its own organization, or to alter or amend it at option, leaving everything relative to government, discipline, and worship, to be managed by each denomination according to its own views. 3. It must dissuade no one from discussing fundamentals and non-fundamentals in the spirit of Christian love. 4. The plan must be applicable to all the orthodox Christian denominations,—all that are regarded as portions of Christ's visible church on earth, whom God has owned by the influences of his Spirit and grace. Now,

'Some few advocates of union have proposed, that all others should abandon their own peculiarities, and conform to *them* in practice and views. But this violates Christian right and obligation, by requiring the abandonment of what is believed to be truth; and no sect, at this late day, can expect all others so to adopt its peculiarities. It has also been proposed, that each denomination renounce its standards of doctrine, government, and worship, and then unite in one new, short confession, embracing only the doctrines held in common by all, and establishing such a system of government, as all could conscientiously adopt; whilst entire liberty and privilege of diversity should be enjoyed by all on every point not determined by the new standards.' But there seem difficulties, which are stated: and the Professor exhibits his own Plan, having the following features:

1. Let the several Christian denominations retain each its own present ecclesiastical organization, government, discipline, and mode of worship. 2. Let each of the confederated denominations formally resolve, for itself, not to discipline any member or minister, for holding a doctrine believed by any other denomination whose Christian character it acknowledges; provided his department be unexceptionable, and he conform to the rules of government, discipline, and worship adopted by said denomination: for, all doctrines, which the great body of all Christians whom God has owned by his grace and Spirit, and who have free access to the Scriptures, agree in finding in them, are certainly taught there; and all those points on which they differ, are less certain, are doubtful. 3. Let a creed be adopted including only the doctrines held in common by all the orthodox Christian denominations, to be termed the Apostolic, Protestant Confession, and let this same creed be used by all denominations as the term of sacramental, ecclesiastical, and ministerial communion. This creed should embrace, (1.) The so-called *Apostles' Creed*, embraced now by four fifths of the Protestant church: (2.) A selection of those articles from the creeds of the prominent Protestant churches, in which all can agree, taking but one article on each subject, and styling it the *United Protestant Confession*. Such a creed would [1.] Keep heretics out of the church: [2.] Give prominence to the great, acknowledged truths of Christianity. 4. There should be free sacramental, ecclesiastical, and ministerial communion among the confederated churches.' [Dr. S. explains the last of these as implying, 'that a certificate of good standing in the ministry of one church, ought,' other things being unexceptionable, 'to be a passport for admission to the ministerial ranks of any other church: by the second, 'that a certificate of good standing in any one church should be a certain passport for admission to regular membership in any other; but, concerning the first he observes, that 'free sacramental communion may be said already to exist among the churches.' How such an assertion could be made, by one whose views and information are so extensive, it is difficult to conceive. Has not the celebrated Treatise of that vigorous iconoclast, *Robert Hall*, attracted his notice? And can it be said, that *free sacramental communion* is enjoyed, when a denomination of more than half a million of souls, within the pale of the Protestant church, systematically withholds it? On this point, the Ed., deep as are his feelings, could hardly wish to employ stronger language than Mr. Hall has used,—although he is compelled to dissent from him, as would Dr. Schmuncker, (see above,) in his views on the method of producing the communion he aims at, by holding baptism as not pre-requisite. Rather would the Editor place it on the base of conscientious conviction of Christian obligation, which ought to be inviolate, as stated in the first article of the Plan of Dr. S. And it well deserves serious and prayerful inquiry, whether it be not using the Table of the Lord with irreverence, to constitute it the *mere badge* of a denomination or party; to make the admission to it of any such as are his acknowledged children depend on their compliance with sectarian peculiarity in the mode of administering an ordinance, to which, nevertheless, such attention has been paid as satisfies conscience. The refusal, in such case, the Ed. cannot but regard, as a rejection of Christ, in rejecting his acknowledged friends, and as the *boldest assumption at this day chargeable on persons and churches of admitted orthodoxy and piety*. He grieves to utter, but cannot, in Christian fidelity, withhold the remark. 'To the advocates of strict communion,' says Dr. POND, 'I will venture to suggest a way in which the difficulties between us may be consistently got over. Let them cease to judge another man's servant, and leave him to stand or fall to his own Master. We who differ from them on the subject of baptism, are not conscious of neglecting or trifling with the ordinance more than they; but observe it conscientiously, according, as we think, to the institution and will of Christ.' See Treat. on 'Christian Baptism,' 1833, p. 165.]

'5. In all matters not relating to the government, discipline, and forms of worship of individual churches, but pertaining to the common cause of Christianity, let the principle of co-operation, regardless of sect, be adopted as far as the nature of the case will admit, and as far as the views of the parties will allow. 6. The Bible should, as much as possible, be made the text-book in all religious and theological instruction. 7. Missionaries ought to use and profess no other than this Apostolic Protestant Confession, and connect it with whatever form of church-government and mode of worship they prefer.' He adds:

'For the sake of our bleeding Savior, our divisions ought not to be carried to heathen lands. The Protestant churches amount to but 60 millions out of 700, the probable population of the globe, and ought not to spread the Corinthian contagion of sectarianism over the Gentile world. Into the same district of country no two sects should send, to produce collision. In view of the divisions sectarianism has entailed on the heritage of God, let the disciples of Christ, instructed by the experience of 300 years of discord in the household of faith, settle some plan for preserving the unity of the church, as her triumphs extend to heathen countries. The signs of the times call us to this duty in the providence of God, [and the intellect of the Christian church should no longer be expended in internal contentions, but all her energies be directed to THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD.] See the article, *Creed, &c.*, Am. Bibl. Repos. No. for April, 1833.



AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

*(Henry's Exposition, completed by Dr. S. Wright.)*

THE writer of this epistle was not James the son of Zebedee: for he was put to death by Herod, (Acts 12.) before Christianity had gained so much ground among the Jews of the dispersion as is here implied. But it was the other James, the son of Alphaeus; who was cousin-german to Christ, and one of the twelve apostles, Mat. 10:3. He is called a *pillar*, Gal. 2:9. and this epistle of his cannot be disputed, without loosening a foundation-stone.

It is called a *general* epistle, because (so some) [see Guide, in Suppl.] not directed to any particular person or church, but, as we say, a *circular letter*: or, as others, to distinguish it from the epistles of Ignatius, Barnabas, Polycarp, and others, noted in the primitive times, but not generally received in the church, and on that account not canonical, as this is. Eusebius tells us, that this *epistle was generally read in the churches with the other catholic epistles*. Hist. Eccles. page 53. Ed. Val. 1678. James was called the *just*, for his great piety. He was an eminent example of those graces which he presses on others. He was so exceedingly revered for his justice, temperance, and devotion, that Josephus records it as one of the causes of the destruction of Jerusalem, 'That James was martyred in it.' This is mentioned in hopes of procuring the greater regard to what is penned by so holy and excellent a man.

The time of this epistle is uncertain. Its design is, to reprove Christians for their great degeneracy, both in faith and manners; and to prevent the spreading of those libertine doctrines, which threatened the destruction of all practical godliness: also, a special intention was, to awaken the Jewish nation to a sense of the greatness and nearness of the judgments coming on them; and to support all true Christians in their duty, under calamities and persecutions. Its truths are very momentous, and necessary to be maintained; and its rules for practice are for our times, as well as preceding ages. HENRY.

It is recorded in ecclesiastical history, and 'the Acts of the Apostles' confirm the fact, that James generally resided at Jerusalem, superintending the concerns of the churches in that city, and in the neighboring places, to the end of his life; which was terminated by martyrdom, the circumstances of which are differently related.—He seems to have written this epistle, only a short time before his death; and it is supposed by some, that the sharp rebukes and awful warnings, given in it to his countrymen, stirred up that persecuting rage, which terminated his life: but, indeed, it is peculiarly wonderful, that he should have been preserved so many years, in so perilous a situation; and it can be accounted for, only by ascribing it to the Lord's immediate protection. The epistle is styled *general*, or *catholic*, because addressed to the Jewish converts generally, throughout their dispersions; indeed, with most evident reference also to the unconverted part of the nation. This title, however, is not coeval with the epistle; but was prefixed to it some ages after it was written; and to the subsequent epistles, in several instances, with manifest impropriety. The apostle, by means of the elders and Christians at Jerusalem, probably circulated copies of this epistle, by those strangers who came to the sacred festivals, from the several cities and countries where the Jews resided, and especially where Jewish converts to Christianity were found: and, as it was exclusively addressed to his countrymen, it seems for a long season to have been little known among the Gentile converts; so that its authenticity was doubted for a considerable time.\*—It is generally known, that Luther, in the earlier part of the Reformation, spoke rather in a slighting manner of this epistle, groundlessly supposing that it contradicted Paul's doctrine, in the grand subject of justification: but deeper experience, more exact investigation, more extensive observation, and a maturer judgment, induced him to retract his opinion: and at present no further doubt seems to be entertained, among orthodox Christians, as to its divine inspiration and authority. It is not, however, so replete with the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, as Paul's epistles are in general; or, indeed, as the other apostolical epistles: for it is supposed to have been written with a special design of counteracting the false teachers, who, in different ways, perverted those doctrines, and wrested them to their own destruction, and that of other men. But the grand principles of Christianity are throughout taken for granted, and it will be found, on attentive consideration, entirely coincident with even Paul's doctrine, concerning grace and justification; though, at the first glance, it may appear discordant: and it abounds with most important exhortations to the patience of hope, and the obedience of faith and love; with which various very needful warnings, reproofs, and encouragements, are interspersed, according to the different characters of the persons addressed in it. SCOTT.

This epistle (like 2 Pet. and 2 and 3 John) was not at first received as canonical. But, after a severe scrutiny (attesting the great caution of the primitive church in receiving any books into the canon), all doubts respecting its genuineness being soon removed, it was admitted into the sacred volume, and at so early a period, that it is found in the Peshito-Syriac Version, formed at the beginning of the 2d century, and which does *not* contain 2 Pet., 2 and 3 John, nor Rev. Indeed, to its reception as an inspired book, there is strong attestation, in two allusions to it in Clement of Rome, and seven in Hermas' Pastor. . . The epistle ranks among the most instructive and edifying of the N. T.

'As to its *manner* and *style*, there is deep earnestness, true pathos, grandeur of thought, and beauty, nay, splendor of imagery; there is a singular vivacity of thought, and terseness of expression, (see Col. 4:6.) yet united with unaffected simplicity; there is an oratorical, not rhetorical *deinotēs* in the reproofs, yet united with true Christian meekness; there is, besides, much sound wisdom, evinced in the counsels here given; but that is (to use the apostle's own expression) the "meekness of wisdom," (the *mitis sapientia* of Horace,) the "wisdom that is from above, which is first pure, and then peaceable and gentle." BLOOMFIELD.

\* 'While 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and the Rev., are omitted in the first Syriac tr. of the N. T., made in the beginning of the 2d cent., for the use of converted Jews, this epistle of James hath found a place therein.—This is an argument of great weight; for certainly the Jewish believers, to whom that epistle was addressed and delivered, were much better judges of its authenticity, than the converted Gentiles to whom it was not sent; and who perhaps had no opportunity of being acquainted with it, till long after it was written.' Mackn. — 'It is cited by Clemens Romanus four several times, and by Ignatius, in his genuine epistle to the Ephesians; by Origen, in his 13th homily on Genesis. Eusebius saith, It was known to most, and publicly read in most Christian churches; Jerome, That in process of time it obtained authority. Eusebius notes, That they who before doubted of it, in the fourth century embraced the opinion of them who received it; and from thence no church, no ecclesiastical writer, is found who ever doubted of it. But, on the contrary, all the catalogues of the books of the Holy Scripture, published by general and provincial councils, Roman bishops, or other orthodox writers, number it among the canonical scriptures.' Whitby. — 'It appears to me, that the authority of this, and some other parts of the N. T., having been early questioned by some primitive churches, affords an argument of their peculiar caution, that no other writings should be admitted into the sacred canon, however excellent, besides those which had an undoubted claim to that distinction; and justly challenges our deference to *their* judgment, who doubtless were most capable of deciding, and gave sufficient evidence of their care, as well as their ca-

capacity. The epistle before us, having passed through a severe and accurate scrutiny, appears to have been *universally received*; and accordingly has been transmitted down to the present age, as an authentic part of the oracles of God.' Doddr. SCOTT.

The apostle, (ch. 1.) after the inscription and salutation, encourages believers to bear their trials cheerfully and patiently; to maintain good thoughts of God, and charge themselves with all sinful effects of their temptations; to keep watch over their turbulent passions, receive God's Word with meekness, and put it in practice. In ch. 2. he cautions against partial and undue respect to the rich, and treating the poor with contempt and neglect, feigning pity for them; illustrates the insignificance of profession of faith in Christ for justification, without proof of sincerity by good works, and confirms it by the obedience of Abraham and Rahab. Ch. 3. guards against reviling, censorious, imperious language; shows the mischief of the tongue, and the inconsistency of indulging it with the Christian temper and profession, and with heavenly wisdom. Ch. 4. reproves them for a litigious, proud, worldly, envious spirit, marring and defeating their prayers, and contrary to God and his law, and for their disregard to Providence, in secular affairs. Ch. 5. denounces God's approaching judgments against those unbelieving Jews, who heaped up unrighteous gains; exhorts Christian converts to wait patiently for deliverance from their enemies, who should soon fall, and for better blessings in heaven; to envy none; to avoid swearing; to live as Christians in prosperity and adversity, acknowledge their faults to, and pray for, each other, and seek to convert sinners to the truth and holiness of the Gospel. GUYSE.



## CHAP. I.

<sup>1</sup> We are to rejoice under the cross, <sup>5</sup> to ask patience of God, <sup>13</sup> and in our trials not to impute our weakness, or sins, unto Him, <sup>19</sup> but rather to hearken to the Word, to meditate in it, and to do thereafter. <sup>26</sup> Otherwise men may seem, but never be truly religious.

**JAMES**, a servant <sup>a</sup> of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve <sup>b</sup> tribes which are scattered <sup>c</sup> abroad, greeting.

<sup>2</sup> My brethren, count it all joy <sup>d</sup> when ye fall into divers temptations;

<sup>3</sup> Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh <sup>e</sup> patience.

<sup>4</sup> But let patience have *her* <sup>f</sup> perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

<sup>5</sup> If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that <sup>g</sup> giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and <sup>h</sup> it shall be given him.

a Jude 1. d Mat. 5:12. f Lu. 8:15. 21:19.  
b Ac. 26:7. 1 Pe. 4:13-16. g Pr. 2:3-6.  
c Ac. 8:1. e Ro. 5:3. h Je. 29:12.

CHAP. I. V. 1-12. This inscription has three principal parts:

1. The character by which our author desires to be known,—*James, a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ*. He was a prime minister in Christ's kingdom, yet he styles himself only a *servant*. Further, though called by the evangelist *the brother of our Lord*, yet it was his glory to serve Christ, rather than to boast of being akin, according to the flesh. Hence let us learn to prize this title above all others in the world,—*the servants of God and of Christ*. Again, James professes himself *a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ*, to teach us, that in all services we should have an eye to the Son as well as the Father, John 5:23. looking for acceptance in Christ, and assistance from Him, and yielding all obedience to Him; thus *confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*.

2. The conditions of those to whom he writes,—*the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad*. Some understand this of the dis-

persion on the persecution of Stephen, Acts 8. But that only reached to Judea and Samaria. Others understand it of the Jews dispersed in Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, and other kingdoms into which their wars had driven them. The greatest part indeed of ten of the twelve tribes were lost in captivity; yet some of every tribe were preserved, and are still honored with the ancient style of *twelve tribes*. These however were scattered and dispersed, even good people among them sharing in the common calamity. These Jews of the dispersion were those who had embraced the *Christian faith*. Note here, It is often the lot even of God's own tribes to be scattered abroad. The gathering day is reserved for the end of time. God has a particular care of his outcasts, Is. 16:3, 4. Eze. 11:16. We should not then value ourselves too much on outward privileges, nor despond, and think ourselves rejected, under outward calamities.

3. James here shows *the respect he had even for the dispersed, greeting, saluting them, wishing peace and salvation to them*.

We next come to consider the matter of this epistle. Observe,

I. *The suffering state of Christians in this world, represented in a very instructive manner*. 1. It is implied, that *troubles and afflictions* may be the lot of the *best Christians*, even of those who have the most reason to think and hope *well of themselves*. 2. These outward afflictions and troubles are *temptations to them*. The devil endeavors by sufferings and crosses to draw men to sin, and to deter them from duty, or unfit them for it; but as our afflictions are in God's hand, they are intended for the trial and improvement of our graces. 3. We must be armed on every side, because numerous and various temptations lie on all sides. 4. The trials of a good man are such as he does not create to himself, or sinfully pull on himself; but such as he is said to *fall into*; for this reason they are the better borne by him.

II. *The graces and duties of a state of trial and affliction are here pointed out to us*. Could we attend to these things, and

grow in them as we should do, how good would it be for us to be afflicted!

1. One Christian grace to be exercised, is joy; *Count it all joy*, v. 2. We must not sink into a sad and disconsolate frame of mind, that would make us faint under our trials; but must endeavor to keep our spirits dilated, enlarged, and full of hope, the better to take in a true sense of our case, and with greater advantage to set ourselves to make the best of it. Philosophy may instruct men to be calm under their troubles; but Christianity teaches them to be joyful; because such exercises proceed from love, and not fury in God. In them we are conformable to Christ our Head, and they become marks of our adoption; by suffering in the ways of righteousness, we are serving the interests of our Lord's kingdom among men, and edifying the body of Christ; and our trials will brighten our graces now, and our crown at last. And this is not purely a New Testament paradox, but even in Job's time it was said, *Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth*. There is the more reason for joy in afflictions, if we consider the other graces that are promoted by them.

2. Faith is a grace that one expression supposes, and another expressly requires, v. 3. There must be a sound believing of the great truths of Christianity, and a resolute cleaving to them, in times of trial. That faith which is spoken of here as tried by afflictions, consists in a belief of the power and promise of God, and in fidelity and constancy to the Lord Jesus.

3. There must be *patience*; *The trial of faith worketh patience*. Trying of one grace produces another; and the more the suffering graces of a Christian are exercised, the stronger they grow, Rom. 5:3. Christian *patience* is not a stupid, but an active thing. A stoical apathy and a Christian *patience* are very different; by the one men become, in some measure, insensible of their afflictions; but by the other, triumphant in and over them. Let us take care, in times of trial, that, whatever is said or done, *patience* have the saying and doing of it; give it leave to work, and it will work wonders, in a time of trouble. We must *let it have its*

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1. Probably, the apostolical authority of James was not disputed, among those whom he more immediately addressed, so that he waived the mention of it, and only styled himself 'the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.' (M. R. b.)—He is said to have been the first bishop of that church [Jerusalem]. This indeed is spoken inaccurately, for he certainly possessed far more than episcopal authority, however that may be defined; and surely it could be no *preferment* to an apostle, to be appointed a diocesan bishop!—[Greeting.] James, who probably drew up the epistle of the council at Jerusalem, to the Gentile converts, there uses the same word. Acts 15:22-29. SCOTT.

(1.) *Dispersion*.] 'There were properly two: the *Eastern* (beyond the Euphrates), and the *Western*, commencing in the time of Alexander. This increased so much, that, in the apostle's age, all the commercial and manufacturing cities of Syria, Egypt, and other parts of the sea-coast of Africa, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, and Spain, were full of them. And they cultivated the use of the Greek tongue, as if it were a *vernacular* one, because it was indispensably necessary to the commercial transactions by which they almost invariably lived.' BLOOMF.

V. 2-4. Knowing the afflicted and persecuted condition, in which his brethren were, the apostle exhorted them to 'count it' altogether a cause of rejoicing, if the Lord saw good, that, notwithstanding their watchfulness, they should fall into such 'trials,' as might expose them to temptation, and give them an opportunity of resisting and overcoming it; they ought to consider it as a matter of unmingled joy, an occasion of evidencing the sincerity and strength of their love to God, and as a rich advantage to their souls, though painful for the time. Mat. 5:10-12. Lu. 6:21-23. 1 Pet. 1:6, 7. 4:12-16.—2) *Temptations*.] Mat. 6:13. 26:41. Lu. 22:28. 1 Cor. 10:13. Gal. 4:14. Heb. 3:8. 1 Pet. 1:6. Some persons lay considerable stress on the distinction between *temptations* and *trials*; but the original word is the same as that in the Lord's prayer, which is rendered 'temptation.' Indeed, every trial is, or gives occasion to, temptation; and every temptation is a trial of our hearts, and tends to show whether divine grace or corrupt nature has, at that time, the ascendancy. 12-15. Gen. 22:1. The apostle, however, no doubt, especially referred to the persecutions, for the sake of their Lord, to which Christians were then peculiarly exposed.—(3) *The trying*.] 1 Pet. 1:7. 'The act of *proving*, or *assaying*.' Rom. 5:4. 2 Cor. 2:9. 8:2. 13:3. Phil. 2:22. 'the *proof*, arising from this act of *proving*.' SCOTT.

(2.) *All joy*.] 'Nought but joy, i. e., a matter of entire rejoicing. So we say, it is "all for the best." BL.—'The Lord does not prevent you from doing evil things, and from being wicked, if you choose to, because He wishes you to *choose freely* to be good.' It is with temptations as with *poisons* in the natural world, which in sickness operate as *medi-*

*cines*. You are, for instance, on some provocation, 'disposed to be angry, or revengeful; this is soul-sickness; and if you do this wickedness much and often, and persist in it, and love it, and do not repent of it, it will make your soul die; now this very provocation which has happened may supply a remedy. For if you recollect, that it is sinful to be angry, and if you stop, and put a restraint on yourself, and speak mildly and feel kindly [to the aggressor], you have cured your sickness; and what is more, you will never be so apt to have that soul-sickness again. Every time you check and prevent your own anger, it will be easier for you to check it the next time; and it will be more difficult for anything that happens to make you angry; and thus you will be far happier.—Just the same is true of every sinfulness, and of every trouble which comes upon us; and this, whether it is brought upon us by another's wicked act or not.—It is to get rid of sinfulness, and of the disposition to sin, that we live in this world. And it is to help us to get rid of them that troubles come to us. You may be always perfectly sure that the Lord will never permit, and that He never does permit, any trouble whatever, great or small, or of any kind, to come upon us, in any way whatever, unless He knows that the trouble which He permits may be used by us as a medicine for the soul. I. e. unless He sees in us some inclination to sin, and unless He sees, that the trouble He permits may be so used by us as to check that inclination, and get rid of that sin, or confirm us in some good. . . Generally, when you take medicine, you do not know *how* it is to help you; but you think *they* know who gave it to you, and you take it, trusting that it will relieve your pain and make you better. Just so it will often happen, that you are not able to see *why* any affliction has come to you, or what good it can do to you. But you can know, in the first place, that it may do some good, or it would not be permitted. And you may know, in the next place, that if you *try* and *endeavor* to be patient, and to be calm, and to have a belief in the Lord's goodness, and to wish that his will may be done, then it is certain that this endeavor will do you good, and will be useful to you for ever.' *Sunday Lessons for Children*. Comp. notes, Job 36:8-14. 34:1. ED.

(4.) The Jewish sacrificial law required both the victim and the sacrificing priest to be *teleioi, holocleroi*, (the Gr. words here tr. perfect and entire,) and *amōmoi*. See *Hottinger*. So did the Greeks. See *Potter*. Ed.—'If some Christians are more eminent than others, it is simply because *they make more efforts to be so*. So that all worldly minded and indifferent Christians continue in this state because they do not choose to make efforts to get out. ANY PERSON MAY BE AN EMINENT SAINT WHO CHOOSES TO BE SO. Christians are too apt to feel, as if eminence in piety was a distinction made by the *sovereignty of God*, and to suppose that high attainments are not within the reach of all, and that languid and inefficient piety is the result of divine sovereignty, rather than of negligence and sloth.' BEECHER.



6 But <sup>i</sup> let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8 A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.

9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted :

10 But the rich, in that he is made low : because as the flower of the grass <sup>k</sup> he shall pass away.

11 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

<sup>i</sup> Ma. 11:24. <sup>j</sup> or, glory. <sup>k</sup> Is. 40:6.

perfect work. 'Do nothing to limit it, or to weaken it; if one affliction come on the heels of another, and a train of them, yet let patience go on till its work is perfected.' When the work of patience is complete, it will furnish us with all that is necessary for our Christian race and warfare, and enable us to persevere to the end, and then its work will be ended, and crowned with glory. After we have abounded in other graces, we have need of patience, Heb. 10:36.

4. Prayer is a duty recommended also to suffering Christians; and here the apostle shows, (1.) What we ought more especially to pray for,—wisdom; *If any lack wisdom, let him ask of God.* We should not pray so much for the removal of an affliction, as for wisdom to make a right use of it. To be wise in trying times is a special gift of God, and to Him we must seek for it. (2.) In what way this is to be obtained,—on our petitioning or asking for it. Let the foolish become beggars at the throne of grace, and they are in a fair way to be wise. Let us confess our want of wisdom to God, and daily ask it of Him. (3.) We have the greatest encouragement to do this, *He giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.* Yea, it is expressly promised that *it shall be given, v. 5.* Here is something in answer to every discouraging turn of the mind, when we go

to God, under a sense of our own weakness and folly, to ask for wisdom. *He gives to all men.* And if you should say you want a great deal of wisdom, a small portion will not serve your turn; recollect, *He gives liberally.* And, lest you should be afraid of going to Him unseasonably, or being put to shame for your folly; it is added, *He upbraideth not.* Ask when you will, and as often as you will, you will meet with no upbraidings; it shall be given him. Justly then must fools perish in their foolishness, if wisdom may be had for asking, and they will not pray to God for it. But, (4.) There is one thing necessary to be observed in our asking, namely, that we do it with a believing, steady mind, v. 6. The promise above is very sure, wisdom shall be given to those who ask it of God, provided they believe that God is able to make the simple wise, and is faithful to make good his word to those who apply to Him. Here therefore we see,

5. That oneness, and sincerity of intention, and a steadiness of mind, constitute another duty required under affliction; *He that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed.* To be sometimes lifted up by faith, and then thrown down again by distrust, is very fitly and elegantly compared to a wave of the sea, that rises and falls, swells and sinks, just as the wind tosses it higher or lower, that way or this. A mind that has but one single and prevailing regard to its spiritual and eternal interests, [note, 1 John 5:7, 13. latter part,] and that keeps steady in its purposes for God, will grow wise by afflictions, will continue fervent in its devotions, and will be superior to all trials and oppositions. Now, for the cure of a wavering spirit and a weak faith, the apostle shows the ill effects of these; (1.) In that the success of prayer is spoiled hereby, v. 7. Such a distrustful, shifting, unsettled person is not likely to value a favor from God as he should do, and therefore cannot expect to receive it. (2.) A wavering faith and spirit has an ill influence on our conversation, v. 8. When our faith and spirits rise and fall with second causes, there will be great unsteadiness in all our conversation, [ends, interests,] and actions; and he that is unstable as water, shall not excel. Hereupon,

III. The holy, humble temper of a Christian, both in advancement and debasement, is described; and both poor and rich are

directed on what grounds to build their joy and comfort, v. 9—11.

Here observe, 1. Those of low degree are to be looked upon as brethren; *Let the brother of low degree, &c.*

2. Good Christians may be rich in the world, v. 10. *Grace and wealth* are not wholly inconsistent. Abraham, the father of the faithful, was rich in silver and gold.

3. Both are allowed to rejoice. No condition of life puts us out of a capacity of rejoicing in God. If we do not rejoice in Him always, it is our own fault. Those of low degree may rejoice, if they are exalted to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom of God, (so Whitby,) and the rich may rejoice in humbling providences, as they produce a lowly and humble disposition of mind, which is highly valuable in the sight of God. Where any are made poor for righteousness' sake, their very poverty is their exaltation. It is an honor to be dishonored for the sake of Christ.

4. What reason rich people have, notwithstanding their riches, to be humble and low in their own eyes; because both they and their riches are passing away, v. 11. Note, hence, Worldly wealth is a withering thing. Riches are too uncertain (says Baxter, on this place), too inconsiderable things, to make any great or just alteration in our minds. For this reason, let him that is rich rejoice, not so much in the providence of God, that makes him rich, as in the grace of God, that makes and keeps him humble; and in those trials and exercises that teach him to seek his felicity in and from God, and not from these perishing enjoyments.

IV. A blessing is pronounced on those who endure their exercises and trials, as here directed, v. 12.

Observe, 1. It is not the man who suffers only, who is blessed, but he who endures; who, with patience and constancy, goes through all difficulties in the way of his duty. 2. Afflictions cannot make us miserable, if it be not our own fault. A blessing may arise from them, and we may be blessed in them. 3. Sufferings and temptations are the way to eternal blessedness; so metals are tried as to their excellency by the fire; Note, hence, To be approved of God is the great aim of a Christian in all his trials; and it will be his blessedness at last, when he shall receive the crown of life. It will be life and bliss, and will last for ever. We only bear the cross for a while, but we shall

V. 5—9. In attempting properly to endure and improve their trials, as well as in a great variety of other matters, many, to whom the apostle wrote, would experience and discover, that they were very deficient in wisdom. When, therefore, any were conscious, that they were not capable of distinguishing truth from error, or of ascertaining the line of conduct which they ought to pursue, they should immediately bring the case before God, and earnestly beseech Him to be their Teacher and Counsellor; by the influences of his Spirit enabling them to understand, remember, and apply the instructions of his holy Word, and to remove all prejudices and carnal passions, which tended to mislead them.—'Let him come to God with firm adherence on Him; a mind resolved, whatsoever comes, to stick fast to God; to use no means of delivering himself, but such as are acceptable to Him; never entertaining a doubt, whether God's ways or his own are to be adhered to, for the obtaining of his ends; making no question of God's power and will to answer his requests, and therefore praying, and depending on Him quietly, for an issue out of all.' Hammond.—'A double-minded man,' whose schemes are divided between God and the world, and who cannot cheerfully and resolutely commit himself, in confidence of divine support, to be led whithersoever Providence shall please, "is unsettled in all his ways." He will perpetually be running into inconsistencies of conduct; and those imperfect and undetermined impressions of religion, which he feels, will serve rather to perplex and torment, than guide and secure him.' Doddr.—Such characters differ widely from weak believers, who constantly expect and seek help from God, and do not allow any doubts of his veracity and faithfulness, though they are harassed with fears, lest there be something in their case, or manner of asking, which should exclude them from the benefit. Their language is, 'Lord, to whom shall I go? Thou hast the words of eternal life?'—(8) Double-minded.] 4:3. *Having two souls.* The English word generally signifies, *deceitful, or insidious*; 'a man who secretly aims at one thing, but openly professes another.' This, however, is not the signification of the original, in this place at least. It denotes 'a man of unsettled, and fluctuating sentiments, too solicitous about the present to attain the future, too anxious about the future to secure the present; who, driven hither and thither in his judgment of things, is perpetually shifting the object; who this moment would sacrifice all for eternity, and the next renounce anything for this present life.' Ecumenius, in Campbell.

(5.) 'The most liberal men are apt [and it is common with the niggardly] to make mention of former benefits, to excuse themselves for not bestowing future ones.'

(6.) 'It is implied, that such an one [as *Ecum.* describes above] will not obtain his request, because he cannot ask with that undoubting faith, indispensable in him who addresses God in prayer.'

V. 9—11. All outward splendor and distinction must soon pass away, as the gaudy flowers, which grow among the grass, are withered by the scorching sun. . . . Thus rich men flourish only to be cut down; they grow but to wither, and their transient distinctions terminate in deeper misery and disgrace, if they proceed 'in their ways' of avarice, luxury, pride, selfishness, or ungodliness: and are not made low, by repentance, faith, self-denial, crucifixion to the world, and submission to the righteousness and authority of God. *Mat. 19:23—26. Lu. 1:46—55. 6:24—26. 12:15—21. 16:19—26. 1 Pet. 1:23—25.* This is an obvious and apposite interpretation. But to render the passage, (by inserting a word needlessly,) 'Let the rich be ashamed, in that he is brought low,' as some learned men do, wholly destroys the energy and beauty of the contrast; and to explain it *exclusively* of the rich man, when reduced to poverty for the sake of the Gospel, would imply, that no rich man, however humble, poor in spirit, liberal, and condescending to his poor brethren, could have any ground of rejoicing, or glorying in Christ, and in the hope of glory, unless he voluntarily relinquished, or were forcibly deprived of, his estate and possessions, and so reduced to entire poverty! A doctrine well suited to some orders of papists, but not at all to genuine Christianity. It is proper that some persons should be the Lord's stewards and almoners, in outward things; and if they be made low, as humble, teachable, penitent believers in Christ, and thankful to be thus employed by Him, let them rejoice in this humiliation of heart, under these circumstances, which almost always increase pride and self-exaltation. *Mat. 5:3.*

(10.) The sun in those countries, as soon as it gets high, say about 10 o'clock, produces the burning heat mentioned; which some needlessly understand of the burning wind, called in Heb. *qadm.* By grass, *dasha*, the Hebrews seem to have meant, all kinds of annual plants, (whose succulence exposes them to wilting,) as distinguished from shrubs, and trees, the other two divisions of their botany. Ed.

SCOTT.



12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

1 2 Ti. 4:8  
Re. 2:10.  
Mt. 6:11.

n or, evils.  
o Ho. 13:9.

p Job 15:35.  
q Ro. 6:21-23.

wear the crown to eternity. 4. This blessedness, involved in a crown of life, is a promised thing to the righteous sufferer. It is therefore what we may most surely depend on. But let us notice, our future reward comes, not as a debt, but by a gracious promise. 5. Our enduring temptations must be from a principle of love to God and to our Lord Jesus Christ, otherwise we are not interested in this promise; *The Lord hath promised to them that love Him*. Paul supposes a man may even give his body to be burnt, and yet not be pleasing to God, nor regarded by Him, because of his want of charity, or a prevailing sincere love to God and man, 1 Cor. 13:3. [Notes, 1 Jn. 5:7, 13. Jude v. 10.] 6. The crown of life is promised, not only to great and eminent saints, but to all who love God. Every soul that truly loves God, shall have its trials in this world fully recompensed in that world above, where love is made perfect.

V. 13-18. We are here taught several things.

I. That God is not the author of any man's sin. Whoever may raise persecutions against men, and whatever injustice and sin they may be guilty of in proceeding against them, God is not to be charged with it! And whatever sins good men may themselves be provoked to by their exercises and afflictions, [whether from the spontaneous action of propensities within, or accidents or malice without,] God is not the cause of them. It seems to be here supposed that some professors might fall in the hour of temptation; but, though this should be the case, and though such delinquents should attempt to lay their fault on God; yet the blame of their misconduct must lie entirely on themselves. For,

1. There is nothing in the nature of God, they can lay the blame on; all moral evil is owing to some disorder in the being that is chargeable with it; to a want either of wisdom, or of power, or of decorum and purity in the will. But who can impeach the holy God with the want of these, which are his very essence?

2. There is nothing in the providential dispensations of God, that the blame of any man's sin can be laid on, v. 13. As God cannot be tempted with evil Himself, so neither can He be a tempter of others. He cannot be a promoter of what is repugnant to his nature. The carnal mind is willing to charge its own sins on God; there is something hereditary in this; our first father Adam tells God, *The woman Thou gavest me tempted me*; thereby, in effect, throwing the blame on God, for giving him the tempter. Let no man speak thus. They who lay the blame of their sins either on their constitution, or on their condition in the world, or pretend they are under a fatal necessity of sinning, wrong God, as if He was the au-

thor of sin. Afflictions, as sent by God, are designed to draw out our graces, but not our corruptions.

II. We are taught where the true cause of evil lies, and where the blame ought to be laid, v. 14. neither the devil nor any other person or thing is to be so blamed, as to excuse ourselves; for the true original of evil and temptation is in our own hearts. The combustible matter is in us, though the flame may be blown up by some outward causes. And therefore, if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it, Prov. 9:12.

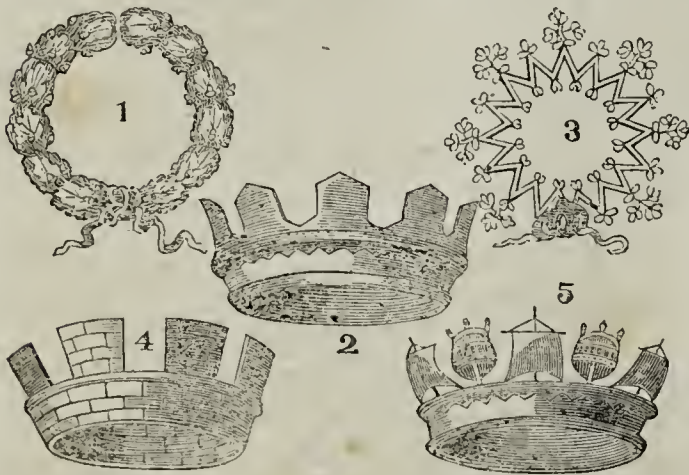
Observe here, 1. The method of sin in its proceeding. First it draws away, then entices. As holiness consists of two parts,—forsaking what is evil, and cleaving to what is good; so these two things, reversed, are the two parts of sin. The heart is first by corrupt inclinations, or by lusting after, and coveting some sensual or worldly thing, estranged from the life of God, and then by degrees fixed in a course of sin.

2. We may observe hence the power and policy of sin. The word here rendered *drawn away*, signifies a being forcibly haled or compelled. The word translated *enticed*, signifies being wheedled and beguiled by allurements, and deceitful representations of things. Great force is done to conscience and to the mind by the power of corruption; and there is great cunning, and deceit, and flattery, in sin, to gain us to its interests.

3. Observe the success of corruption in their hearts, v. 15. *Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin*; i. e. Sin being allowed to excite desires in us, it will soon ripen those desires into consent; and then it is said to have conceived. The sin truly exists, though but in embryo. And when it is grown to its full size in the mind, it is then brought forth in actual execution. Stop the beginnings of sin, therefore, or else all the evils it produces must be wholly charged on us.

V. 12. *When he is tried.*] Having become approved, i. e. having stood the trial.—Silver which by the goldsmith's trial is found good, is called *dokimon.* Leigh. Rom. 5:4. Scott.

(12.) *Crown of life.*] Here is an allusion to the crowning of victors in war, or in the games; note, 1 Cor 9: end. After a victory, the general assembled his troops, and, in presence of the whole army, bestowed rewards on those who deserved them. The highest reward was the *civic crown, corona civica*. (1) Given to him who had saved the life of



a citizen, with the inscription *ob civem servatum*; it was of oak leaves, and, by the appointment of the general, presented by the person who had been saved, to his preserver, whom he ever after respected as a parent. [Comp. 1 Thess. 2:19, 20] Under the emperors it was always bestowed by the prince. The person who received it, wore it at the spectacles, and sat next to the senate. When he entered, the audience rose up, as a mark of respect. The *corona vallaris, or castrens* (2), was given to him who first mounted the rampart, or entered the camp, of the enemy. It was golden, and given by the general: as also the *corona navalis* (5), to him who first boarded an enemy's ship; and the *corona muralis* (4), to him who first scaled the walls in an assault. When an army was freed from a blockade, the soldiers gave to their deliverer, a crown, made of the grass which grew in the place where they had been blocked up; hence called *graminea corona obsidionalis* (3). This, of all military honors, was esteemed the greatest. Golden crowns were also given to officers and soldiers, who had displayed singular bravery. There were also smaller rewards, as bracelets, necklaces, &c. These presents were conferred by the general, in presence of the army; and such as received them, after being publicly praised, were placed next him. They ever after kept them with great care, and wore them at the spectacles, and on all public occasions. Roman Antiquities. ADAM. Ed.

V. 13-15. The commandments and providential dispensations of [568]

God make trial of men's hearts, and tend to discover what dispositions prevail in them. Where gracious affections are prevalent, through the power of the Holy Spirit, remarkable obedience and fidelity are the consequence of the trial; but when sin and Satan rule within, disobedience must be the effect. Deut. 8:2, 3, 16. 13:1-5. 2 S. 24:1, 2. 1 Chr. 21:1, 2 Chr. 32:30-33. Pr. 17:3. Nothing, therefore, which is sinful, in the heart or conduct, can be ascribed to God, without the same absurdity as it would be, to charge darkness and coldness on the sun. Ec. 4:21. 'For God cannot be tempted with evil;' his absolute perfection and all-sufficiency render it impossible that there should ever be any inducement for Him, in the most minute degree, to deviate from complete and entire justice, truth, wisdom, purity, and goodness; neither 'doth He,' in this sense, 'tempt any man,' by putting evil into his heart, suggesting it to his thoughts, or necessitating the commission of it. He is not the Author of the *dross*, though his fiery trial detects and exposes it.—But every man is tempted, &c. when inordinate desires draw him out of the line of duty; as the fish is dragged out of the water, when it has been enticed by the delusive morsel, which covered the hook. (Ec. 9:11, 12. 2 Tim. 2:23-26.) So that when 'lust,' or vehement desire after any object which cannot be obtained without sin, 'is conceived' in the heart, through the suggestions of Satan, and the allurements of external objects; the purpose of indulgence is admitted and cherished. Thus actual transgression is brought forth, and, when this is completed, 'it bringeth forth death,' as its genuine offspring; and nothing but the mercy and grace of God, through Christ Jesus, can prevent the sinner's final destruction. This may be considered as the scriptural account of the original of moral evil, the natural history of the conception, production, progeny, and consequence of the first sin, and of every sin, except as repentance, through God's mercy in Christ Jesus, prevents the effects of them. Gen. 3:1-6. Josh. 7:20-26. 2 Sam. 11:1-5.—But perhaps the apostle referred to the case of apostates, who, under persecutions, through love of the world, conceived the purpose of renouncing Christianity; which, being deliberately done and persisted in, ended in their final obduracy and destruction.—It is egregious and pernicious trifling, and manifestly absurd, to take occasion from the English word 'lust,' which is often used to mean one particular sensual inclination, when impetuous and ungoverned, to limit the passage merely to sensuality; as if the impetuous and ungoverned desire of power, praise, wealth, or revenge, were not 'lusting,' as much as the sensual inclinations. The original word, indeed, is often used in a good sense; (Luke 22:15. Phil. 1:23.) and simply means a vehement inclination, whatever be the object. (Notes, Rom. 7:7, 8. [and 8: end.] Scott.

(14.) *Lust.*] *Epithumia*: his animal part, so Abp. Newcome, to which his rational part can always (with the aid of divine grace, adds *Bl.*) be superior. *Bl.*—Note, Rom. 7: end. It means, any inordinacy of desire. *Enticed.*] 'So, in the Tabula Cebetis, &c. a harlot is represented as laying hold, and dragging off, men to her company. A *piscatory metaphor* is added; and thus, Plato says, men are caught with pleasure, as fishes with a hook and bait. The embrace with the harlot, lust, conceives sin, this in its turn begets death, which destroys the sinner. Thus lust is mother to sin, sin to death, and the sinner the parent of both. "Evil concupiscence, (says a Jewish writer, in Dr. A. Clarke,) is, at the beginning, like the thread of a spider's web; afterwards it is like a cart-rope." *Bl.* Ed.



16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17 Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath :

20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

r Jn. 3:27.      Mat. 3:6.      12. Re. 14:4.  
1 Co. 4:7.      1 Jn. 1:13.      v Ec. 5:2.  
1 Sa. 15:29.      u Je. 2:3.      Ep. 1:      w 1r. 16:32.

4. Observe the final issue of sin ; when finished it bringeth forth death. After sin is brought forth in actual commissions, the finishing of it, as Dr. Manton observes, is its BEING STRENGTHENED BY FREQUENT ACTS, AND SETTLED INTO A HABIT. And when the iniquities of men are thus filled up, death is brought forth. Let sin therefore be repented of, and forsaken, before it be finished. *Why will ye die, O house of Israel!* Ez. 33:11. God has no pleasure in your death, as He has no hand in your sin ; but both sin and misery are owing to yourselves.

III. We are taught yet further, that while we are the authors and procurers of all sin and misery to ourselves, *God is the Father and Fountain of all good, v. 16, 17.* We should take particular care not to err in our conceptions of God ; not to wander, i. e. from the Word of God, and the accounts of Him there. The loose opinions of Simon, and the Nicolaitans, (from whom the Gnostics arose afterward,) may, perhaps, be more especially cautioned against ; consult the first book of Irenæus against heresies.

Here observe, 1. God is the Father of lights. The visible light of the sun and the heavenly bodies is from Him. He said, *Let there be light, and there was light.* Thus God is at once represented as the Creator of the sun, and in some respects compared to it. What the sun is in nature, God is in grace, providence, and glory ; aye, and infinitely more. For,

2. Observe, *Every good gift is from Him.* As the Father of lights, He gives the light of reason, Job 32:8. He gives also the light of learning ; Solomon's wisdom in the knowledge of nature, in the arts of government, and in all his improvements, is ascribed to God. The light of divine revelation is more immediately from above. The light of faith, purity, and all manner of con-

solation, is from Him. We must own God as the Author of all the powers and perfections of the creature, and the Giver of all the benefits we have in and by those powers and perfections ; but none of their darkneses, their imperfections, or their ill actions are to be charged on the *Father of lights* ; from Him proceeds every good and perfect gift, both pertaining to this life, and that which is to come.

3. Observe, As every good gift is from God, so particularly the renovation of our natures, our regeneration, and all the holy, happy consequences of it, must be ascribed to Him, v. 18. Here let us notice, (1.) A true Christian is a creature *begotten* anew, as different a person from what he was, before the renewing influences of divine grace, as if he were formed over again, and born afresh. (2.) The original of this good work is here declared ; it is of *God's own will* ; not by our skill or power ; not from any good foreseen in us, or done by us, but purely from the good-will and grace of God. (3.) The means are pointed out ; *the Word of truth*, i. e. the Gospel ; as Paul expresses it more plainly, 1 Cor. 4:15. This Gospel is indeed a *Word of truth* ; else it could never produce such real, such lasting, such great and noble effects. And we shall find it a mean of our sanctification, as it is a *Word of truth*, John 17:17. (4.) The end and design of God's giving renewing grace is here laid down ; *that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures* ; that we should be God's portion and treasure, and a more peculiar property to Him, as the first-fruits were ; and that we should become holy to the Lord, as the first-fruits were consecrated to Him. Christ is the First-fruits of Christians, Christians are the first-fruits of creatures.

V. 19—27. In this part of the ch. we are required,

1. To restrain the workings of passion. This lesson we should learn under afflictions ; and this we shall learn, if we are indeed begotten again by the Word of truth. For thus the connexion stands,—An angry and hasty spirit is soon provoked to ill things by afflictions ; and errors and ill opinions become prevalent through the workings of our own vile and vain affections ; but the renewing grace of God and the Word of the Gospel teach us to subdue these ; *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.* This may refer,

1. To the Word of truth spoken of in the verse foregoing. And so we may observe, It is our duty rather to *hear God's Word*, and apply our minds to understand it, than to speak according to our own fancies or the opinions of men, and to run into heat and passion thereupon. 2. To the afflictions and temptations spoken of in the beginning of

the ch. And then we may observe, It is our duty rather to hear how God explains his providences, and what He designs by them ; than to say, as David did in his haste, *I am cut off* ; or as Jonah did in his passion, *I do well to be angry.* Instead of censuring God under our trials, let us open our ears and hearts to hear what He will say to us. 3. To the disputes and differences that Christians, in those times of trial, were running into among themselves ; and so this part of the ch. may be considered without any connexion with what goes before. Here we may observe that, whenever matters of difference arise among Christians, each side should be willing to hear the other. People are often stiff in their own opinions, because they are not willing to hear what others have to offer against them ; whereas, we should be *swift to hear reason and truth* on all sides, and be *slow to speak* anything that should prevent this ; and when we do speak, there should be nothing of wrath ; for a *soft answer turneth away wrath.* As this epistle is designed to correct a variety of disorders that were among Christians, these words, *swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath*, may be very well interpreted according to this last explication. And we may further observe from them, that, if men would govern their tongues, they must govern their passions. When Moses' spirit was provoked, *he spake unadvisedly with his lips.* If we would be *slow to speak*, we must be *slow to wrath.*

II. A very good reason is given for the suppression of anger, v. 20. as if the apostle had said, 'Whereas men often pretend zeal for God and his glory, in their heat and passion, let them know that God needs not the passions of any man ; his cause is better served by mildness and meekness than by wrath and fury.' Solomon says, *The words of the wise are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools,* Eccl. 9:17. Dr. Manton here says, of some assemblies, 'That if we were as *swift to hear* as we are ready to *speak*, there would be less of *wrath*, and more of profit in our meetings. I remember, when a Manichee contested with Augustine, and with importunate clamor cried, *Hear me ! hear me !* the father modestly replied, *Neither let me hear thee, nor do thou hear me, but let us both hear the apostle.*' The worst thing we can bring to a religious controversy, is, anger. This, however it pretends to be raised by a concern for what is just and right, is not to be trusted. *Wrath* is a human thing, and the *wrath of man* stands opposed to the *righteousness of God.* Those who pretend to serve the cause of God hereby, show that they are acquainted neither with God nor his cause. This passion must especially be watched against, when we hear the Word of God. See 1 Pet. 2:1, 2.

V. 16—18. The sun, the great natural light, which He has made, *appears to us* to have several changes and turnings, whence summer and winter, day and night, succeed each other ; but in fact these appearances arise entirely from our varied situation respecting it.—It should be remembered, that all to whom the apostle wrote, as well as others, had been in themselves 'dead in sin' and 'children of wrath,' and that God, 'of his own will,' had regenerated them by his Spirit, 'through the Word of truth.' John 3:1—8. Eph. 2:1—10. Tit. 3:4—7. 1 Pet. 1:23—25. 1 John 3:7—10. This He had most graciously done, in order that they might be concerned to his service, as 'a kind of first-fruits of his creatures,' more excellent and valuable than the rest of them, and as an earnest of a vastly larger increase from the Gentile world, in that and future ages, even as the first-fruits, presented to the Lord, were the earnest of the future harvest, and brought a blessing upon it. Lev. 23:5—14. Jer. 2:2, 3. (17) *Gift.* Phil. 4:15. Rom. 5:16. It is remarkable, that the first clause is a regular hexameter verse in the original, and perhaps is a quotation from some unknown author.

SCOTT. (17.) *Father of lights, with whom is no variableness.* 'If the passage alludes, as it probably does, to the changes of the heavenly luminaries, the language is full of energy and beauty, as well as truth. We witness the varying aspects and revolutions of the orbs that roll above us, shining from evening to evening in the same triment, but never twice exactly in the same place ; but with the Father of lights, the Creator of these changing planets, there is not so much as the least shadow or resemblance of change. *Neither shadow of turning.*' For when God is said to *repent*, it implies no change in his character or purposes. As the parent accommodates his language to the capacity of the child,

so God, in condescension to human weakness, speaks of Himself in terms adapted to our conceptions. Hence we read of his hand, arm, and eye. So when He changes his dealings, it is said, He repents ; because, in men, a change of conduct usually proceeds from a change of purpose. The Bible is a plain book ; not a system of metaphysics. When we are told God repents, it implies no mutability ; but merely that He varies his dispensations, according to the character of moral agents ; or, in other words, that He changes his conduct towards changing creatures. (Otherwise He would not be immutable.)

REV. DR. E. PORTER. (18.) 'Bp. Bull thinks, there is a reference to the Pharisees' doctrine of fatal necessity, q. d. because we are faithful and pious, does not happen from any fatal necessity, but the true good pleasure of God through Christ ; nor is it owing to that *eukrasia* of temperament, which occurs to us from the *eutaxia* [proper position] of the heavens [or stars] at our nativity ; but to the *renewing and regeneration*, that new and celestial birth, which the Holy Spirit effects in us through the Gospel.' BL.—'If we could reason better than Locke, Butler, or Edwards,—yea, if we could reason with the powers of an angel, instead of those of a man,—we should never be able to reason a single sinner out of his sins, and persuade him into faith in Christ and love to God. The truths of Holy Scripture, plainly stated and powerfully urged, are those only from which we can look for this effect ; because everything, in this great concern, depends on God's blessing ; and it is his purpose ordinarily to bless only the truths of his own Word.'

REV. BERIAH GREEN. V. 19—21. As believers owed all the difference, in their state and character, to the sovereign will and distinguishing grace of God, by means of 'the Word of truth,' 17—19. it behooved all of them to be



21 Wherefore lay apart <sup>x</sup> all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

22 But be ye doers <sup>y</sup> of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass :

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25 But whoso <sup>z</sup> looketh into the perfect law of <sup>a</sup> liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man <sup>b</sup> shall be blessed in his deed.

<sup>x</sup> Col. 3:5-8. He. 12:1. 1 Pe. 2:1,2.

<sup>y</sup> Mat. 7:21. z 2 Co. 3:13. a Ps. 119:45.

<sup>b</sup> Lu. 6:47, &c. c or, doing.

III. We are called on to suppress other corrupt affections, as well as rash anger, v. 21. The word here translated *filthiness*, signifies those lusts which have the greatest turpitude and sensuality in them; and the words rendered *superfluity of naughtiness* may be understood of the overflowings of malice, or any other spiritual wickednesses. Hereby we are taught, as Christians, to watch against, and lay aside, not only those more gross and fleshly dispositions and affections which denominate a person *filthy*, but all the disorders of a corrupt heart, which would prejudice it against the Word and ways of God. Observe,

Sin is a defiling thing; abundance of it is in us, and this must be watched against; not only outward sins, and greater abominations, but all sin of thought and affection as well as speech and practice;—*all filthiness*, everything corrupt and sinful. Observe,

'swift' and prompt 'to hear' further admonitions, instructions, and counsels, from the same source, in a teachable and attentive manner. S.

(22) How many of the disputes which have agitated the world, divided the church, in heart as well as opinion, and even drenched kingdoms in blood, are upon subjects and thoughts beyond the limits of human ken. Would that Christians could learn, that unity of affections is that which makes the church one, and not unity of thoughts, for no two persons' intellectual opinions can be alike, while the endowments, education, &c. of each individual are and must be so diverse. Why then do we reject the light of all human experience, and deny all human progress, by still waging so many wars of words as disgrace our religious periodicals? Bacon, though the 'meanest,' is acknowledged to have been also one of the 'wisest' and 'brightest of mankind,' and to follow his example in philosophising, is thought to be the glory of modern times. Yet he did not, says a discriminating writer, 'meddle with those enigmas, which have puzzled hundreds of generations, and will hundreds more. He said nothing about the grounds of moral obligation, or the freedom of the human will. He had no inclination to employ himself in labors, resembling those of the damned in the Grecian Tartarus,—to spin for ever on the same wheel, round the same pivot,—to gaze for ever after the same deluding clusters,—to pour water for ever into the same bottomless buckets,—to pace for ever to and fro on the same wearisome path, after the same recoiling stone. . . . He troubled himself not at all about Homosonians and Homosonians, Monothelity and Nestorians; though he lived in an age, in which disputes on the most subtle points of divinity excited an intense interest throughout Europe, and nowhere more than in England. He was in power at the time of the Synod of Dort, and must for months have been daily deafened with talk about election, reprobation, and final perseverance. . . . He exhorted his disciples to prosecute researches of a very different description; to consider moral science as a practical science,—a science of which the object was to cure the diseases and perturbations of the mind,—and which could be improved only in a method analogous to that which has improved medicine and surgery. . . . He loved to dwell on the power of the Christian religion to effect much, that the ancient philosophers could only promise. He loved to consider that religion as the bond of charity; the curb of evil passions; the consolation of the wretched; the support of the timid; the hope of the dying. . . . Moral philosophers ought, he said, to set themselves vigorously to work, for the purpose of discovering what are the actual effects produced on the human character, by particular modes of education, by the indulgence of particular habits, by the study of particular books, by society, by emulation, by imitation. Then we might hope to find out what mode of training was most likely to preserve and restore moral health.' *Edinb. Rev.* July, 1837. Ep.

V. 22—25. In order that 'the Word of truth' might produce these blessed effects, on the souls of those who heard it, they must 'be doers of it, and not hearers only.' For if they were 'only hearers,' however attentive, constant, or teachable they might seem to be, their neglect

From the foregoing parts of this ch., the laying aside of *all filthiness*, is what a time of temptation and affliction calls for, and is necessary to the avoiding of error, and the right receiving and improving of the Word of truth; for,

IV. We are here fully, though briefly, instructed concerning hearing the Word of God.

1. We are required to prepare ourselves for it, v. 21. to get rid of every corrupt affection, and of every prejudice and prepossession, and to lay aside those sins which pervert the judgment and blind the mind. *All the filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness*, in an especial manner.

2. We are directed how to hear it; we are to receive it; yield ourselves to it, with most submissive, humble, and tractable tempers; this is to receive it with meekness. Being willing to hear of our faults, and taking it not only patiently, but thankfully; desiring also to be moulded and formed by the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel. In all our hearing we should aim at the salvation of our souls. It is the design of the Word of God to make us wise to salvation; and we should come to it, as those who know it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, Rom. 1:16.

3. We are taught what is to be done after hearing, v. 22. Observe here, (1.) Hearing is in order to doing; the most attentive and the most frequent hearing of the Word of God will not avail us, unless we be also doers of it. Therefore the apostle insists much upon it, that we practise what we hear.

'There must be inward practice by meditation, and outward practice in true obedience,' says Mr. Baxter. It is not enough to remember what we hear, be able to repeat it, give testimony to it, commend it, write it, and preserve it; what all this is in order to, and crown the rest, is, that we be doers of the Word. Observe, (2.) Bare hearers are self-deceivers; the original word signifies men's arguing sophistically to themselves; making one part of their work discharge them from the obligation they lie

under to another; or persuading themselves, that filling their heads with notions is sufficient, though their hearts be empty of good affections and resolutions, and their lives fruitless of good works. Self-deceit will be found the worst deceit at last.

4. The apostle shows what is the proper use of the Word of God, who do not, and who do make a right use of it, v. 23—25. (1.) The use we are to make of God's Word may be learnt from its being compared to a glass, in which a man may behold his natural face. There are glasses that will flatter people; but that which is truly the Word of God, is no flattering glass. Let the Word of truth be carefully attended to, and it will set before you the corruption of your nature, the disorders of your hearts and lives; it will tell you plainly what you are. Paul describes himself as insensible of the corruption of his nature, till he saw himself in the glass of the law, Rom. 7:9. Thus, when we attend to the Word of God, so as to see ourselves, our true state and condition, to rectify what is amiss, and to form and dress ourselves anew by the glass of God's Word, this is to make a proper use of it. (2.) We have here an account of those who do not use this glass as they ought, v. 2. This is the true description of one who hears the Word of God, and does it not. How many are there, who, when they sit under the Word, are affected with their own sinfulness, misery, and danger, acknowledge the evil of sin, and their need of Christ; but, when their hearing is over, all is forgotten, convictions are lost, good affections are vanished, and pass away like the waters of a land-flood; he straightway forgets; in vain do we hear God's Word, and look into the gospel-glass, if we go away, and forget our spots, instead of washing them off, and forget our remedy, instead of applying to it. This is the case of those who do not hear the Word as they ought. (3.) Those also are described, and pronounced blessed, who hear aright, and who use the glass of God's Word as they should do, v. 25. Observe here, The Gospel is a law of liberty, or, as

of practising what they had heard would prove, that the Word was not engrafted in their hearts, and that they were putting a most fatal imposition on themselves, by some specious but delusive and sophistical reasoning; whether custom, curiosity, a love of speculation, or a vain confidence in knowledge without obedience, for salvation, induced them to attend. A man of this description, who heard the Gospel, and did not obey its call to repentance, faith in Christ, and a sober, righteous, and godly life, was like a person, who gave a transient look at 'his natural face,' as reflected from a mirror, without attempting to alter what was unbecoming in his attire or appearance; who would therefore immediately depart, and soon 'forget what manner of man he was;' and the glimpse which he had of himself would have no abiding effect on him. (Notes, Mat. 7:24—27. 13:13, 19. Lu. 6:45—49. 11:27—28.) Thus, the mere hearer might have short-lived convictions of his sinfulness; but, displeased with the view given of his state, heart, and character, in the mirror of the sacred Word, and having no effectual desires of an entire change, he would soon lose sight of his transient discoveries in the company, business, and pleasures of the world, and so remain ignorant of himself, and destitute of transforming grace. But 'whosoever looked,' steadfastly and attentively, into the Word of God, with a real desire of learning from it his true state and character, and the way of acceptance and salvation, and 'continued' with perseverance in this important inquiry; he, 'not being a forgetful hearer,' but one who reduced to practice what he learned from time to time, [Note, Heb. 5:14. and note, 1 Tim. 4:7.] though it cost him much humiliation and self-denial, would be 'blessed in his deed,' or in his doing; the Lord would in this way lead him into the knowledge of his truth and salvation; his obedience would evidence the sincerity of his faith; his sanctification would proportionably advance, as he became acquainted with God and with himself, and his gracious recompense hereafter would succeed his present peace and comfort.—Some, by 'the perfect law of liberty,' suppose the moral law to be intended, in opposition to the ceremonial; and it certainly deserves that title in itself, as perfect obedience to it is perfect liberty, and every deviation from it is slavery, but then it cannot give liberty to us sinners. Others, therefore, suppose the Gospel to be intended, because by it we are set at liberty from condemnation, and the bondage of sin. But divine revelation in general seems to be meant; as every part of it has its use, in bringing the sinner to Christ for salvation, and in directing and encouraging him to walk at liberty, by the Spirit of adoption, according to the holy commandments of God. In the Word of truth, as the law, or rule, of obtaining and enjoying liberty, the true Christian looks, as into a mirror, that he may discover the remaining unholiness of his temper, affections, words, and actions; in order that his soul may be purified from defilement, beautified with salvation, and transformed into the holy image of God, continually more and more. (Marg. Ref.)

(25.) Liberty.] Certainly that person enjoys the highest moral liberty, of which creatures are capable, whose will is identified with



26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

27 Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

d Ps. 34:13. e Is. 1:16, 17. 58:6, 7. f Ro. 12:2.

Mr. Baxter expresses it, of liberation, giving us deliverance from the Jewish law, and from sin and guilt, and wrath and death. Observe again, It is a perfect law; nothing can be added to it. Observe, further, In hearing the Word, we look into this perfect law; we consult it for counsel and direction; we look into it, that from thence we may take our measures; but observe, withal, then only do we look into the law of liberty as we should, when we continue therein, are not forgetful of it, but practise it, as our work and business; set it always before our eyes, and make it the constant rule of our conversation and behavior, and model the temper of our minds by it. Observe once more from this place, They who thus do, and continue in the law and word of God; are, and shall be blessed in their deed; blessed in all their ways, according to the first Psalm, which, some think, James here alludes to. The papists pretend, that here we have a clear text to prove we are blessed for our good deeds; but Dr. Manton, in answer to that pretence, puts the reader on marking the distinctness of scripture-phrase. The

apostle does not say, for his deeds, that any man is blessed, but in his deed. This is a way in which we shall certainly find blessedness, but not the cause of it. This blessedness does not lie in knowing, but in doing the will of God, John 13:17. It is not talking, but walking, that will bring us to heaven.

V. The apostle next informs us, how we may distinguish betwixt a vain religion, and that which is pure and approved of God. Here it is plainly and peremptorily declared,

1. What is a vain religion, v. 26. (1.) In a vain religion there is much of show, and affecting to seem religious in the eyes of others. When men are more concerned to seem religious than really to be so, it is a sign that their religion is but vain. Not that religion itself is a vain thing; but it is possible for people to make it a vain thing, if they have only a form of godliness, and not the power. (2.) In a vain religion there is much censuring, reviling, and detracting of others. The not bridling the tongue here, is chiefly meant of not abstaining from these evils of the tongue. The man who has a detracting tongue, cannot have a truly humble, gracious heart. Censuring is a pleasing sin, extremely compliant with nature; and therefore evidences a man's being in a natural state. These sins of the tongue were the great sins of that age in which James wrote; and it is a strong sign of a vain religion, says Dr. Manton, to be carried away with the evil of the times. This has ever been a leading sin with hypocrites, that the more ambitious they have been to seem well themselves, the more free they are in censuring

and running down others; and there is such quick intercourse betwixt the tongue and the heart, that the one may be known by the other. On these accounts it is, that the apostle has made an unguarded tongue, an undoubted, certain proof of a vain religion. (3.) In a vain religion a man deceives his own heart, he goes on in such a course of detracting from others, and making himself seem somebody, that at last the vanity of his religion is consummated by the deceiving of his own soul. When once religion comes to be a vain thing, how great is the vanity!

2. It is here plainly and peremptorily declared wherein true religion consists, v. 27. Observe, (1.) It is the glory of religion to be pure and undefiled; not mixed with the inventions of men, nor the corruptions of the world; a holy life and a charitable heart show a true religion. (2.) That religion is pure and undefiled, which is so before God and the Father. That is right, which is so in God's eye, and which chiefly aims at his approbation. (3.) Compassion and charity to the poor and distressed, is a very great and necessary part of true religion; visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction. Visiting is here put for all manner of relief which we are capable of giving to others; and fatherless and widows are here particularly mentioned, because they are generally most apt to be neglected or oppressed; but by them we are to understand all others who are objects of charity; all who are in affliction. It is very remarkable, that if the sum of religion be drawn up in two articles, this is one,—to be charitable, and relieve the afflicted. (4.) An

PRACT. OBS. 'The servants of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ,' must consider themselves, as employed to do good to the chosen tribes of the true Israel, through all their dispersions in this evil world, in every way they are able.—'Divers temptations' we must meet with; and if we fall into them without our own fault, and have only the distress of hearing them, without the guilt of yielding to them; we may deem it a great cause of joy to be thus proved and purified in the furnace, and made meet for future honor and felicity. Heb. 2:16—18. But in every part of our conduct, we shall feel that we 'are deficient in wisdom,' in proportion as we become acquainted with ourselves; nor shall we, if we reverence the Scriptures, seek it in the schools of philosophy, or from the counsels of the wise men of this world; but we shall ask the precious boon of God, and obtain the substance, while others are deceived with an empty shadow. As 'God giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not,' (Mat. 11:20—21.) and has engaged that wisdom shall be given to them, who ask it of Him; did we fully avail ourselves of this privilege, how greatly should we be enriched with divine knowledge; and how prudently should we conduct all our concerns, and avoid every snare and device of our enemies!—The poor believer may well

rejoice in being exalted to an interest in Christ, and in the prospect of glory in heaven, though he have all kind of hardships by the way; and the rich have at least equal cause for rejoicing, if God has humbled them before his mercy-seat, though the world despise and hate them on that account; nay, though they should be stripped of their possessions and reduced to poverty for the cause of Christ. But if we be 'Christians indeed,' the Lord has, 'according to his determinate purpose,' and 'the counsel of his own will,' begotten us again with the Word of truth; we should therefore give Him all the glory of this happy change, and consecrate all our faculties to his service, that we may be 'a kind of first-fruits of his creatures,' and blessings to all around us. While we are 'swift to hear' the Word of God, let us take care to be 'doers of it, and not hearers only, lest we deceive our own souls;' for many such are found in the best instructed congregations; who deceive scarcely any but themselves.—Happy would it be for mankind, were they in general as assiduous in seeking this inward, durable, and spiritual adorning, as they are in decorating their poor mortal bodies, that they may appear comely in the eyes of their fellow-worms! SCOTT.

God's, and acts spontaneously as his law requires, being thus a 'law to itself.' Thus the Psalmist says, 'I will walk at liberty, for I keep thy precepts,'—and this one apostle calls 'perfect freedom,' and another, here, a 'law of liberty,' for liberty without law is not predicable of a created being. 'They will be done,' is the Christian's law of liberty. Ep.

V. 26. So necessary was practice, in every particular, to the very existence of real Christianity; that if 'any man,' among professed believers, appeared to be a devout worshipper of God, according to the doctrine and ordinances of the Gospel; and if his conduct in other respects were not reprehensible, yet, in case he habitually neglected to bridle his tongue, and so gave loose to vain, polluting, ostentatious, or improper discourse; especially if he uttered bitter, malicious, slanderous, or reviling words, in an unrestrained manner, under pretence of zeal against such as differed from him; and 'deceived his own heart' by one vain excuse or another, to think this was allowable or consistent with the Christian temper; his religion was thus proved to be vain and worthless, his heart was not right in the sight of God, whilst 'out of the abundance' of it such evil things habitually proceeded; but he was 'in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity.' (Notes, 3:3—12. Ps. 39:1—4. Mat. 12:33—37. Rom. 3:9—18. Eph. 4:29. 5:3, 4. Col. 3:7—11.) This is the general interpretation; and nothing more is supposed to have been intended. Yet men do not bridle horses, merely to restrain them from mischief, or from going in a wrong way; but likewise in order to rule and direct them in the right way; that they may be useful, and not merely inoffensive. Surely, then, the refraining from evil discourse, and not perverting the gift of speech, by which man is distinguished from all other creatures here below, is far from the whole, which is intended by 'bridling the tongue!' Beyond doubt, the proper improvement of that important talent is also meant; the tongue must be held in, and kept from improper discourse, and directed to that conversation, which tends 'to the use of edifying,' and is suited to 'minister grace unto the hearers.' It will perhaps be found, that those who have any regard to God and their duty, offend as frequently by silence when they ought to speak, as by speaking when they should be silent; but sins of omission are generally less regarded than sins of commission. How often do cowardice, indolence, and lukewarmness, make us silent; when holy courage, active zeal, and fervent love, would excite us to attempt 'a word in season,' which God often most eminently blesses. (Notes, Deut. 6:6—9. Ps. 37:29—31. Prov. 10:20, 21. 15:2, 7, 23. 24:26. 25:11—13.) SCOTT.

V. 27. 'Pure religion,' the holy worship and service of God, free from corrupt mixtures, and undefiled by corrupt motives and carnal passions, as exercised in the sight of 'God, even the Father,' with his approbation, by his adopted children in Christ Jesus, essentially consists in disinterested, humble, self-denying love to men, for the Lord's sake, and from love to Him; and in taking pleasure, from these motives, in visiting 'orphans, widows,' and other afflicted or destitute persons; to soothe their sorrows, relieve their wants, and afford them protection, counsel, and comfort in their distresses; and in keeping at a distance from the sinful pursuits, interests, pleasures, maxims, fashions, and pollutions of this wicked world; so that a man may have no stain upon his garments, no blemish on his character, no guilt upon his conscience, on that account.—Without some measure of this holy love, and this mortification to the world, no doctrines, forms, confidence, high affections, zeal, or apparent devotion, can prove a man an accepted worshipper of God. [Note, 1 Pet. 2:9, 12.] Our true religion is exactly equal to the measure, in which these things have place in our hearts, experience, and conduct; and these are therefore the criteria of 'pure and undefiled religion,' by which we should judge of it, in ourselves and in others, both as to the reality of it, and the degree in which it is possessed. But this holy love, and mortification to the world, can be produced only by faith in a crucified Savior, and the supply of his sanctifying Spirit; so that no appearance even of these things can be depended on, except they spring from, and are connected with, a credible and intelligent profession of faith, a reliance on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus for salvation, and the regular and fervent worship of God, in public and in private. (Notes, Mat. 25:31—40. 1 Cor. 13:.) *Visit.* Episkopesthai. Mat. 25:36, 43. Lu. 1:63, 79. 7:16. Acts 6:3. 15:14. Heb. 2:6. 'To look diligently into any matter, as taking the oversight of it, or devising good respecting it.—Fatherless.] Orphanous: wanting either father, or mother, or both.

(27.) 'True religion is, to do and be good.' Maltby. 'Some persons evidence great love to men, as it respects their temporal welfare, but appear to have no concern for their spiritual and eternal interests. Others pretend great love for the souls of men, while they have no concern for their temporal comfort. The former costs nothing; but to promote the latter it is necessary to part with money. True Christian love extends to both, and this resembles the love and compassion of Jesus Christ.' Edwards. "The righteous is more excellent than his neighbor," but we shall scarcely allow him to be so, unless he be more excellent as a



## CHAP. II.

It is not agreeable to Christian profession to regard the rich, and to despise the poor brethren: 13 rather we are to be loving and merciful: 14 and not to boast of faith where no deeds are, 17 which is but a dead faith, 19 the faith of devils, 21 not of Abraham, 25 and Rahab.

**M**Y brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect <sup>a</sup> of persons.

2 For if there come unto your <sup>b</sup> assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here <sup>c</sup> in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my foot-stool:

4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, <sup>d</sup> Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich <sup>e</sup> in faith, and heirs of <sup>f</sup> the kingdom <sup>g</sup> which he hath promised to them that love him?

a Ps. 23:21. seemly. f or, that.  
 Ju 1e 16. d 1 Co. 1:26—28. g Mat. 5:3. Lu.  
 b synagogue. e Re. 2:9. 12:32. 22:29.  
 c or, will, or,

unspotted life must accompany an unfeigned love and charity; to keep himself unspotted from the world; this must be our constant endeavor. Herein consists pure and undefiled religion. The very things of the world too much taint our spirits, if we are much conversant with them; but the sins and lusts of the world deface and defile them very woefully indeed. John comprises all that is in the world, which we are not to love, under three heads; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; and to keep one's self unspotted from all these, is to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. May God by his grace keep both our hearts and lives clean from the love of the world, and from the temptations of wicked worldly men.

CHAP. II. V. 1—7. The apostle here reproves and shows the mischief and sin of

neighbor: he must excel in the duties of good neighborhood. Neighbors be concerned that the orphans and widows be well provided for. By the same rule also all the afflicted in the neighborhood are to be considered. Would it be too much for you once a week, at least, to think, "What neighbor is reduced to pinching and painful poverty? What neighbor is languishing in sickness? What neighbor is broken-hearted with the loss of a dear relative? What neighbor has a soul assailed by the enemy of souls?" and then consider, "What can be done for such neighbors?"

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1—4. Some expositors, supposing the passage could scarcely consist with rendering honor to civil superiors, as required in other scriptures, have endeavored to explain it of partiality in deciding causes, in favor of the rich, and against the poor; because some courts of justice used to be held in the Jewish synagogues. But had the apostle intended to point out so gross an iniquity, he would doubtless have spoken of it with far more decided severity. If such partiality were used in the determinations of those matters, which came before the churches, it would certainly be condemned by what he said; yet the language does not at all relate to judicial proceedings of any kind; but to an improper respect shown towards some, and contempt expressed towards others, merely on account of external appearance.—No doubt this is very reprehensible, and the effect of a carnal judgment, how common soever it may be; nor does civil respect to superiors, or to those in authority, render such difference of conduct towards the rich and the poor, in religious concerns, at all necessary; especially when the rich have nothing but their wealth and splendor to recommend them, and the poor are persons of pious character and good behavior. As places of worship cannot be built and maintained, without much expense, it may be proper that they, who contribute towards defraying it, should be accommodated accordingly; but were all professed Christians more spiritually minded, less disparity would be made, and the poor would be treated with far more attention and regard, than they commonly are in worshipping congregations. And we may conclude without the least hesitation, that if the apostle could witness what takes place generally in our days, in this matter, and give his opinion of it, he would repeat the censure that we were 'become partial in ourselves,' and 'judges' influenced by evil thoughts, corrupt reasonings, and erroneous calculations; and add many like, and even more severe words.—(1) Our Lord, &c.] 'Jesus Christ our Lord, and of glory;' not

a very corrupt practice,—respect of persons, which seems to have been a very growing evil in the churches of Christ, even in those early ages, and has, in these after-times, sadly corrupted and divided Christian nations and societies. Here we have,

I. A caution against this sin, v. 1. Observe, 1. The character of Christians fully implied; they are such as have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. How honorably James speaks of Jesus Christ; he calls Him the Lord of glory; and Christ's being the Lord of glory should teach us not to respect Christians for anything so much, as their relation and conformity to Christ. In professing the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, we should not show respect to men, so as to cloud or lessen the glory of our glorious Lord; however any may think of it, this is certainly a very heinous sin.

II. We have this sin described and cautioned against, by an instance or example of it, v. 2, 3. Assembly here is meant of meetings appointed for deciding matters of difference among the members of the church; or, for determining censures, so the Greek word, here used, signifies; such an assembly as that in the Jewish synagogues, when they met to do justice; see Maimonides, as quoted by Dr. Manton; who says, 'it was expressly provided, by the Jews' constitutions, that when a poor man and a rich plead together, the rich shall not be bidden to sit down, and the poor stand, or sit in a worse place, but both sit, or both stand alike.\* But we must be careful not to apply what is here said to the common assemblies for worship; for in these certainly there may be appointed different places for persons, according to their rank and circumstances, without sin. They do not understand the apostle, who fix his

\* Contrast this with the following result of the inveterate Hindoo customs. 'For a man of a low caste to sit in a chair, in the presence of a Brahmin, would be a great offence. Should we offer chairs to men of low caste, who called to see us, the Brahmins would avoid us.'... The schoolmaster of one of these villages invited them [two young men the missionaries had sent out to distribute books, tracts, &c.] to his house, but not before he had inquired as to their caste. One of them, a villalal, told him, that the other was a pariah; in consequence of which he, the pariah, was directed to sit down outside of the house, while his companion went in, and was entertained by the schoolmaster. Letter from Mr. Dwight, in Southern India, Miss. Herald, for May, 1833. What shall we say of the Christianity of those among us who indulge this same prejudice of caste, and will not sit at the same table, ride in the same vehicle, or worship in the same pew with a colored brother! Some that can endure blacks as slaves, even in the same vehicle, will not as companions. This points us to the cause of these 'Christian' anomalies,—wicked pride. Ed.

severity here on this practice; they do not consider the word judges (used in v. 4.), nor what is said of their being convicted as transgressors of the law, if they had such a respect of persons as is here spoken of, according to v. 9. Observe hence, 1. God has his remnant among all sorts of people, among those that wear soft and gay clothing, and among those that wear poor and vile raiment. 2. In matters of religion, rich and poor, [black and white,] stand on a level; no man's riches set him in the least nearer to God, nor does any man's poverty set him at a distance from God. 3. All undue honoring of worldly greatness and riches should especially be watched against in Christian societies; civil respect must be paid to persons of different ranks; but must never be such as to influence the proceedings of Christian societies in disposing of the offices of the church, or in passing the censures of the church, or in anything that is purely a matter of religion; here we are to know no man after the flesh. If a poor man be a good man, we must not value him the less for his poverty; and if a rich man be a bad man, we must not value him the more for his riches. 4. It is important to take care what rule we go by in judging of men; commonly, to judge by outward appearance, will too much influence our spirits and our conduct in religious assemblies; many a man is vile and despicable, who yet makes a figure in the world; and on the other hand many a humble, heavenly, good Christian, is clothed meanly; but neither should he nor his Christianity be thought the worse of on this account.

III. The greatness of this sin, v. 4, 5. 1. In it there is shameful partiality; Are ye not then partial in yourselves? The question is here put, as what could not fail of being answered by every man's conscience, that would put it seriously to himself. According to the strict rendering of the original, the question is, 'Have ye not made a difference? And, in that difference, do you not judge by a false rule, and go upon false measures? And does not the charge of a partiality, condemned by the law, lie fully against you? Does not your own conscience tell you that you are guilty?' 2. This respect of persons is owing to the evil and injustice of the thoughts. 'Ye are become judges of evil thoughts; ye are judges, according to those unjust estimations and

only, 'our Lord,' but 'the Lord of glory;' the Fountain and Source of honor; constituting those related to Him truly honorable, however poor. Mat. 12:46—50. 25:34—40.—(2) Assembly.] *Synagōgēn*. Rev. 2:9. 3:9.—The place of worship seems intended, and that of Christians, not of Jews. The word was first used for the assembly, and, at length, for the place of assembling; as *ekklesia*, church, has since been.—(3) Are ye not partial.] 1:6. Jude 22. 'Do ye not distinguish?' i. e. 'unjustly.' Note, Job 31:17—19.

(2.) Gold ring.] 'Among the Romans, those of the senatorial and equestrian orders were distinguished from the common people, by wearing a gold ring. In time the use of them became promiscuous, [and general among the rich.] Burder. The Gr. refers to a ring worn on the finger. See the cuts, Dan. 6:17. and Concordance, (in the Supplement,) under the word 'Signet.'

(4.) 'Are ye not judges who form your judgments on erroneous reasonings and false estimates, viz. of any one's worth by his outward appearance.' Bl. It is plain, the same distinction of genteel and ungentle Christians prevailed then as now, when fine broadcloth has taken the place of gold rings, in Christian estimation. True, the vulgar and gross, those of unrefined taste, have no right to inflict their society upon those of better and purer tastes, for this injustice and tyranny would prevent social progress. But how can one Christian consider another, whom he or she really thinks to be a Christian, as vulgar? Is not Christianity the very essence of good-breeding and good taste, the beauty of the soul; and can any of Christ's brethren and family be less than noble? Can any one with whom Christ sympathizes, and in whom He lives, be too vulgar for a Christian's sympathy and intimacy? Will ye wound the Savior in the very house of his friends,—will ye thus crucify Him afresh, by the indulgence of that same vulgar and exclusive selfishness which nailed Him to the cross?

V. 5—7. The apostle endeavored to fix the attention of his brethren on the subject, by inquiring, whether they did not know that 'God had chosen the poor of this world.' Were not his people generally of that rank in life, with only a few exceptions? 1 Cor. 1:26—31. If the Lord, therefore, chiefly blessed the Gospel for the conversion of the poor, it must be evident, that He had appointed that lowly state for his chosen people, as the safest, and most comfortable, and advantageous for them; as most conducive to their progressive sanctification, most favorable to their inward peace, and most suited to show forth the power, and bless-



6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

7 Do not they blaspheme that <sup>h</sup> worthy name by the which ye are called?

8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, <sup>1</sup>Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well:

9 But if ye have respect <sup>j</sup> to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

<sup>h</sup> Pa. 111:9.      <sup>i</sup> Le. 19:8.      <sup>j</sup> ver. 1.

corrupt opinions which you have formed to yourselves. You secretly prefer outward pomp before inward grace, and *the things that are seen before those which are not seen.* The deformity of sin is never truly and fully discerned, till the *evil* of our *thoughts* be disclosed; and it is this which highly aggravates the faults of our tempers and lives,—that *the imagination of the thoughts of the heart are evil*, Gen. 6:5.

3. This *respect of persons* is a heinous sin, because it is to show ourselves most directly contrary to God, v. 5, 6. God has made those *heirs of a kingdom*, whom you make of *no reputation*; and has given very great and glorious promises to those, to whom you can hardly give a good word or a respectful look. And is not this a monstrous iniquity in you, who pretend to be the children of God, and conformed to Him? Their being *God's chosen* does not prevent their being *poor*; their being *poor* does not at all prejudice the evidences of their being *chosen*, Mat. 11:5. *The poor are evangelized.* God designed to recommend his holy religion to men's esteem and affection, not by the external advantages of gayety and pomp, but by its intrinsic worth and excellency; and therefore *chose the poor of this world.* Again notice, That many *poor in the world*, are *rich in faith*; thus the poorest may become rich; and this is what they ought to be especially ambitious of; it is expected from those who have wealth and estates, that they be *rich in good works*; because the more they have, the more they have to do good with; but it is expected from *the poor in the world*, that

they be *rich in faith*; for the less they have here, the more they may, and should, live in the believing expectation of better things in a better world. Notice further, Believing Christians are *rich in title*, and in being *heirs of a kingdom*, though they may be very poor as to present possessions; what is laid out on them is but little, what is laid up for them is unspeakably rich and great. Note again, Where any are *rich in faith*, there will be also divine love; *faith working by love*, will be in all the heirs of glory. Note once more, under this head, Heaven is a *kingdom*, and a *kingdom promised to them that love God.* We read of *the crown promised to them that love God*, in the former chapter, v. 12. here a *kingdom* too. And as *the crown is a crown of life*, so *the kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom.*

All these things, laid together, show how highly *the poor in this world*, if *rich in faith*, are now honored, and shall hereafter be advanced by God; and consequently how very sinful a thing it was for them to *despise the poor.* After such considerations as these, the charge is cutting indeed; *But ye have despised the poor*, v. 6.

4. *Respecting persons*, in the sense of this place, on account of their riches or outward figure,\* is shown to be a very great sin, because of the mischiefs which are owing to worldly wealth and greatness, and the folly which there is in Christians' paying undue regards to those who had so little regard either to their God or them, v. 7. 'Consider how commonly riches are the incentives of vice and mischief, of blasphemy and persecution; consider how many calamities you yourselves sustain, and how great reproaches are thrown upon your religion and your God, by men of wealth, and power, and worldly greatness; and this will make your sin appear *exceeding sinful* and foolish, in setting up that which tends to pull you down, and to dishonor *that worthy name by which you are called.*' The name of Christ is a *worthy name*; it reflects honor, and gives worth to them who wear it.

V. 8—13. The apostle, having condemned the sin of those who had an undue *respect of persons*, and having urged what was suffi-

\* Fellow-Christians let us, for Christ's sake, include color too. Ed.

ed effects, of his grace bestowed on them. It was, therefore, evident, that the Lord peculiarly honored and favored men of low condition; [among whom most *reforms* have originated, likewise, since the great one of Christianity;] whereas, his worshippers despised the poor, and slighted them, as if beneath their notice! Or, they 'despised the poor man,' for the word is singular. *Prov. 15:21, 31. 17:5. Ec. 9:13—18. Lu. 2:1—14.*—Could they imagine, that the enemies of Christ and his church, and persons of the worst characters, ought to be treated with more respect, on account of *wealth alone*, than their poor brethren and neighbors were entitled to?—This implies, that the apostle principally referred to the case of such rich persons, as occasionally came to their assemblies, to whom vast attention was paid, whilst the poor were despised; whereas the latter were far more likely to profit by the Word preached, than the former. He does not seem to have meant, that the rich, who were stated attendants on their assemblies, and pious persons, ought to have no degree of superior regard shown them; provided the poor were not despised and neglected.—One of the last observations which the author heard from the lips of a very wealthy and zealous servant of Christ, (John Thornton, Esq.,) was this: 'Ministers in London bestow more pains to get full congregations, than to profit those who attend; and aim more at the rich, than the poor; but they will always be most successful with the poor. These are two principal mistakes.'—(7) *By which ye are called.* Which is called upon you. 'From whom they derived their name of Christians.' *Mat. 23:19, 20. Acts 11:25, 26.* SCOTT.

(5.) 'What heraldry can go so high, as "our Father which art in heaven?" Who so high-born, as he that is born of God; a child of the Most High; that bears the image of the heavenly? To have a name written in heaven,—oh, how far is it above all the names on earth? To have a new nature,—how much nobler, than to be of the most ancient house! What though I be left behind in the world, when I am owned by the Lord? For Him to say, as Is. 41:1. "I have called thee by thy name;" how much more is it, than to be known and admired of all the world! For, to many men of note, He may say at last, "I know you not. For not many noble are called!" 1 Cor. 2:26. No; there is somewhat uses to call them another way: they will not stain their honor to come, on submission, to a despised Savior. They see it no such great matter, to be Christ's mother, and sister, and brother. They who scorn their brethren as mechanics; why should they not also disown the apostles of our Lord, as such? Yea, and the Redeemer Himself; as the earpenter's son? And shall I then envy them their honor; which they so abuse as to dishonor themselves; yea, and the Lord of glory? This is an honor that shall not run long in their veins: the bubble will soon

cient to convict them of the greatness of this evil, now proceeds to show how the matter may be mended; it is the work of a gospel-ministry, not only to reprove and warn, but to teach and direct, Col. 1:28. And here,

1. We have the law, that is to guide us in all our regards to men, set down in general, v. 8. Observe, (1.) The rule for Christians to walk by, is settled in *the Scriptures*; *if, according to the Scriptures, &c.* It is not great men, nor worldly wealth, nor corrupt practices among professors themselves, that must guide us, but *the Scriptures* of truth. (2.) *The Scripture* gives us this as a *law*, to *love our neighbor as ourselves*; it is what still remains in full force, and is rather carried higher and further by Christ, than made less important to us. (3.) This law is a *royal law*, it comes from the King of kings; our King; is of worth and dignity in itself, and is the law, by which all Christians now are to regulate all their actions to one another. (4.) A pretence of observing this *royal law*, when it is interpreted with partiality, will not excuse men in any unjust proceedings; the apostle allows, that, so far as they were concerned to observe the duties of the second table, they *did well in giving honor to whom honor was due*; but this fair pretence would not cover their sin, in that undue *respect of persons* which they stood chargeable with; for,

2. This general law is to be considered together with a particular law, v. 9. 'Notwithstanding the law of laws, *To love your neighbor as yourselves*, and to show that respect to them which you would be apt to look for yourselves if in their circumstances, yet this will not excuse your distributing either the favors or the censures of the church according to men's outward condition; but here you must look to a particular law, which God, who gave the other, has given you together with it, and by this you will stand fully convicted of the sin I have charged you with; this law is in *Lev. 19:15.* Yea, the very *royal law* itself, rightly explained, would serve to convict them, because it teaches them to put themselves as much in the places of the poor as in those of the rich, and so to act equitably towards one as well as the other. Hence he proceeds,

3. To show the extent of the law, and how far obedience must be paid to it; they

break, and the shadow flee away. Oh, what is that glory from the blood running in our veins, to the glory that redounds from the good done in our lives? May I but be numbered with them whom the Lord will honor; and upon whom rests the Spirit of God and of glory: and then take who will, for me, all that the world can contribute, to make them great and renowned. I know, they are not rich dresses, nor high places; but pure virtues, and heavenly graces, that truly do ennoble the owners. Nor can I count it so honorable, to glare like blazing, frightful comets; as to shine like sweet, useful lights in the world. Nay, let who will take it for a paradox, there is no "bearing," in any escutcheon, like the bearing of the cross of Christ; in which his followers do, and well may glory, to the contempt of all worldly glory. Oh, what so great correspondence as to be great with the blessed God! and what so great a thing can the world show, as a heart above all the greatness of this world! To have the top of all our kindred, the Most High, Himself; our house, heaven; our garden, paradise; our diet, manna; our clothing, the garments of salvation; our jewels, the graces of God's Spirit; our attendants, the angels of light; and our inheritance, a glorious, everlasting kingdom: Oh, how does this cloud all the royalties of the world! My soul, return to thy rest!—*Meditations.*

B. JENKS.  
(6.) 'Christians, on whom the Lord Jesus has bestowed affluence, rank, or talents, should be the last to disdain their fellow-men, or to look with indifference on indigence and grief. Pride, unseemly in all, is detestable in them who confess, by grace they are saved. The Lord Jesus came to deliver the needy. And surely an object which was not unworthy the Son of God, cannot be unworthy of any who are called by his name. How many hands that hang down would be lifted up; how many feeble knees confirmed; how many tears wiped away; how many victims of despondency and infamy rescued, *by a close imitation of Jesus Christ!*'

DR. J. M. MASON.  
V. 8—13. It is of vast importance to observe, how often this abstract of the second table of the law is referred to in the N. T., as a rule of conduct to believers; as this alone is sufficient to show the fatal mistake of those, who deny the moral law to be the rule of our duty.—A man is liable to the sentence of death, by the law of this land, who offends in one capital matter, though he be clear in all others. The chain, consisting of many links, is broken, when any one link is broken. According to the *covenant of works*, a single violation of any one command brings a man under condemnation, from which no obedience, past, present, or future, can deliver him [for each act of obedience being a *duty*, only fills its duty, and lays up nothing of supererogation]: and, according to the *covenant of grace*, the allowed, known, and habitual transgression of



10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he <sup>k</sup> is guilty of all.

11 For <sup>l</sup> he that said, <sup>m</sup> Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law <sup>n</sup> of liberty.

13 For <sup>o</sup> he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy <sup>p</sup> rejoiceth <sup>q</sup> against judgment.

14 What <sup>r</sup> doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

k De. 27:26. l or, that law which said. m Ex. 20:13,14. n c. 1:25. o Pr. 21:13. Mat. 6:15. 7:1,2. p or, glorieth. q Ps. 85:10. r Mat. 7:25.

must fulfil the royal law, have a regard to one part as well as another, otherwise it would not stand them in stead, when they pretended to urge it as a reason for any particular actions, v. 10. This may be considered, (1.) With reference to the case James has been upon; respect to the rich, and due regard to the poor. *Whosoever shall keep the whole law, if he offend in one point, wilfully, allowedly, and with continuance, and so as to think he shall be excused in some matters, because of his obedience in others, he is guilty of all;* not that all sins are equal, but all carry the same contempt of the authority of the Lawgiver, and so bind over to such punishment as is threatened on the breach of that law. This shows us what a vanity it is to think that our good deeds will atone for our bad deeds, and plainly puts us on looking for some other atonement. (2.) This is further illustrated by putting a case different from that before mentioned, v. 11. One, perhaps, is very severe in the case of adultery, but less ready to condemn murder; another has a prodigious dread of murder, but more easy thoughts of adultery, [such as, in the words of a witty, though gross writer, would 'compound for sins they are inclined to, by damning those they have no mind to.' *Ed.*] whereas, one who looks at the authority of the Lawgiver, more than the matter of the command, will see the same reason for condemning the one as the other. Obedience is then acceptable, when all is done with an eye to the will of God; and disobedience is to be condemned, in whatever instance it be, as it is a contempt of the authority of God;

and, for that reason, if we offend in one point, we condemn the authority of Him who gave the whole law, and so far are guilty of all. Gal. 3: 10.

4. He directs Christians to govern and conduct themselves more especially by the law of Christ, v. 12. This will teach us, not only to be just and impartial, but very compassionate and merciful to the poor; and it will set us perfectly free from all sordid and undue regards to the rich. Observe, (1.) The Gospel is called a Law; it has all the requisites of a law; precepts, with rewards and punishments annexed; it prescribes duty, as well as administers comfort; and Christ is a King to rule us, as well as a Prophet to teach us, and a Priest to sacrifice and intercede for us. *We are under the Law to Christ.* (2.) It is a Law of liberty; a law we have no reason to complain of, as a yoke or burden; it sets us at liberty from all slavish regards, either to the persons or the things of this world. (3.) We must all be judged by this law of liberty; men's eternal condition will be determined according to the Gospel; this is the book that will be opened, when we shall stand before the judgment-seat; there will be no relief to those whom the Gospel condemns, nor will any accusation lie against those whom the Gospel justifies. (4.) It concerns us therefore so to speak and act now, as becomes those who must shortly be judged by this law of liberty; i. e. that we come up to gospel-terms, that we make conscience of gospel-duties, that we be of a gospel temper, and that our conversation be a gospel-conversation, because by this rule we must be judged. (5.) The consideration of our being judged by the Gospel, should engage us more especially to be merciful in our regards to the poor, v. 13. Notice here, The doom which will be passed on impenitent sinners at last, will be judgment without mercy; there will be no mixtures or allays in the cup of wrath, and of trembling, the dregs of which they must drink. Notice again, Such as show no mercy now, shall find no mercy in the great day. But we may note, on the other hand, that there will be such as shall become instances of the triumph of mercy, in whom mercy rejoices against judgment: all men, in the last day, will be either vessels of wrath, or vessels of mercy. It concerns all to consider among which they shall be found; and let us remember, that blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

V. 14—26. In this latter part of the ch., the apostle shows the error of those who rested in a bare profession of the Christian faith, as if that would save them, while the temper of their minds and the tenor of their lives were altogether disagreeable to

that holy religion they professed. To let them see, therefore, what a wretched foundation they built their hopes upon, it is here proved at large, that a man is justified, not by faith only, but by works. But here arises a great question, namely, how to reconcile Paul and James? Paul, in *Romans* and *Galatians*, seems to assert the directly contrary thing to what James here lays down, saying it often, and with great emphasis, that we are justified by faith only, and not by the works of the law. Nothing, says Mr. Baxter, but men's misunderstanding the plain drift and sense of Paul's epistles, could make so many take it for a matter of great difficulty to reconcile Paul and James: it may be sufficient only to observe these few things following:

1. When Paul says, a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law, Rom. 3: 28. he plainly speaks of another sort of works than James does, but not of another sort of faith. Paul speaks of works wrought in obedience to the law of Moses, and before men's embracing the faith of the Gospel; James, of works done in obedience to the Gospel, and as the proper and necessary effects and fruits of a sound believing in Christ Jesus. Both are concerned to magnify the faith of the Gospel, as that which alone could save us, and justify us; but Paul, by showing the insufficiency of any works of the law before faith, or in opposition to the doctrine of justification by Jesus Christ; James, by showing what are the genuine and necessary products and operations of it.

2. Paul not only speaks of different works from those insisted on by James, but of a quite different use made of good works, from what is here intended. Paul had to do with those who depended on the merit of their works in the sight of God; thus he might well make them of no manner of account; James had to do with those who cried up faith, but would not allow works to be used even as evidences; and with these he might well urge the necessity and vast importance of good works: those who cry up the gospel, so as to set aside the law, and those who cry up the law, so as to set aside the gospel, are both in the wrong; for we must take our work before us; there must be both faith in Jesus Christ, and good works the fruit of faith.

3. The justification Paul speaks of, is different from that spoken of by James; the one speaks of our persons' being justified before God, the other of our faith being justified before men; our persons are justified before God by faith, but our faith is justified before men by works. This is so plainly the scope and design of the apostle James, that he is but confirming what Paul, in oth-

any part of the moral law, as given to us from the hands of a Mediator, proves a professed Christian to be impenitent, a hypocrite, an unreconciled enemy, and a rebel against God; and that his obedience, in other respects, is not the result of a sincere regard to the authority and glory of God. For if it were, the same principle would induce him to a constant endeavor and purpose of obeying every commandment.—Some explain the expression, 'mercy rejoiceth against judgment,' to denote the cheerful expectation of a future judgment, with which the exercise of mercy to others inspires the true Christian's heart. But though this may be implied, it seems not to be the proper meaning of the passage, or construction of the words; for to 'glory against,' or 'to rejoice against,' does most properly denote, to rejoice and glory in obtaining the ascendancy or victory over a competitor, as mercy is figuratively represented to do, over the severity of God's judgment, when they are justified and saved, who deserve to be condemned.

(8) *Royal.* 'I. e. pre-eminent, of superior obligation.' BL.—'With multitudes, the thought of giving to God never entered their minds. Go to them for their proportion to support the Gospel at home, and they will turn you away, or deal out a paltry pittance that makes you ashamed. Go to them in behalf of the heathen, and they have nothing to spare, though their poorer neighbors are giving by handfuls. They are so in debt for new lands and tenements, that they cannot give a cent to save a world from death. It is not more evident, that Lucifer himself has a separate interest from Christ, than that these men have. Wrapt up in themselves, they mean that the universe shall take care of itself. It is not for them to go abroad to inquire how it fares with other nations; their business is at home. In their own little, sordid selves, they lie buried, and not a meaner object is to be seen in the universe of God.'

GRIFFIN.

(10.) As Christ says, that on this precept hangs the whole law, Bp. Bull thinks it here meant, he that sins against this precept, sins against the whole. But this seems to confine the sense. We owed perfect obedience, and always did, and shall; if we fail in a little, our obedience is imperfect, as it always was, and ever must be; we are then cast out of the covenant of works, as much as if we had broken every command; and need atonement. *Ed.*—'Sin is like some distempers of the eye, which present things in different colors from those which belong to them. Many persons, in a bad frame of mind, waste their time in poring over past 'experience,' and in examining themselves by evidences proposed from the pulpit, or in books, when, in fact, there is other work for them to do. The accursed thing must be removed from the camp; Achan is to be slain; and, until this is done, they must be in darkness and trouble.'

V. 14—18. It is plain, that the apostle here argued against those, who substituted a notional belief of the Gospel, for the whole of evangelical religion, and who were ready to answer exhortations and reproofs, (as many now do,) by saying, 'We are not justified by our works, but by faith; we believe, and we have all things in Christ.' No doubt true faith, interesting men in the righteousness of Christ, his atonement and grace, saves their souls: (*Mark* 16:14—16. *Jn.* 3:14—16. 5:24—27. 20. 30, 31. 1 *Cor.* 15:1,2. *Eph.* 2:4—10.) but then it also produces holy fruits, and is evincing to be genuine, by its effect on their hearts and lives; whereas, a speculative assent to any doctrine, or a historical belief of any facts, essentially differs from this saving faith.—Most copies read, 'Show me thy faith by thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.'—'Thou professest to believe, and disgracest that profession by thy conduct; but do not expect to be considered as a believer, till thou showest thy faith by the good works of a holy life; and thou earnest me,



15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it profit?*

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being *alone*.

18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith *without thy works*, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils *also believe*, and tremble.

20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

u 1 Jh. 3:18. u Some copies read, by. w Ma. 1:24.  
t by itself. v c. 3:13. 5:7.

er places, says of his *faith*; that it is a *laborious faith*, a *faith working by love*, Gal. 5:6. 1 Thess. 1:3. Titus 3:8. and many other places.

4. Paul may be understood as speaking of that justification which is inchoate, James of that which is complete; by *faith only*, we are put into a justified state, but then *good works* come in for the completing of our justification at the last great day; then, *Come, ye children of my Father;—for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat*, &c.

Thus, having cleared this part of Scripture from everything of a contradiction to other parts of it, let us see what is more particularly to be learnt from this excellent passage of James; we are taught,

I. That faith without works will not profit, and cannot save us, v. 14. Observe, here, 1. That *faith* which does not *save*,

as not sufficiently exact, or zealous in respect of faith; but I deem it better to evince it by my works, than by disputing about it.' Either reading warrants the same inference, namely, that there is no possible way to show that we really do believe in Christ, except by being 'zealous of good works,' from evangelical motives and for evangelical purposes; and where good works are evidently wanting, the most confident profession, of the most orthodox creed, can only prove a man to be a well instructed hypocrite, who has received a system of doctrine into his understanding as true; but has never been so convinced of its excellency, as to admit it into his heart, experimentally, as the influential principle of his conduct towards God and man, 2 Cor. 5:13-16. Gal. 5:1-6. 1 Thes. 1:1-4. Heb. 11.—'He has received the knowledge of the truth,' but not 'the love of the truth.' 2 Thes. 2:8-12. Heb. 10:26, 27.—'A wicked opinion having sprung up, even in the apostle's days, by misunderstanding Paul's arguments; Peter, John, James, and Jude, aimed in their epistles principally at this end; to vindicate Paul's doctrine from the false consequences charged upon it, and to show that "faith without works is nothing worth." But indeed Paul does not speak of faith at large, but only of that living, fruitful, and evangelical faith, which, he says, "worketh by love." As for that faith, void of good works, which these men thought sufficient to salvation, he declareth positively against it.—Peter calls it *resting*; (2 Pet. 3:6.) because Paul was in truth of the same opinion with the other apostles, and held eternal life impossible to be attained by any faith, which had not the attestation of a holy life.' AUGUSTINE.

(16.) 'We have sometimes thought, that an amusing fiction might be written, in which a disciple of Epictetus, and a disciple of Bacon should be introduced as fellow travellers. They come to a village where the small-pox has just begun to rage; and find houses shut up, intercourse suspended, the sick abandoned, mothers weeping in terror over their children. The Stoic assures the dismayed population, that there is nothing bad in the small-pox, and that to a wise man diseases, deformity, death, the loss of friends, are not evils. The Baconian takes out a lancet and begins to vaccinate. They find a body of miners in great dismay. An explosion of noisome vapors has just killed many of those who were at work; and the survivors are afraid to venture into the cavern. The Stoic assures them, that such an accident is nothing but a mere "*apoproëgnon*." The Baconian, who has no such fine word at his command, contents himself with devising a safety-lamp. They find a shipwrecked merchant wringing his hands on the shore. His vessel, with an inextinguishable cargo, has just gone down, and he is reduced, in a moment, from opulence to beggary. The Stoic exhorts him not to seek happiness in things which lie without himself, and repeats the whole chapter of Epictetus, "*pros tous tēn aporian dedoikotas*." The Baconian constructs a diving-bell, goes down in it, and returns with the most precious effects from the wreck. It would be easy to multiply illustrations of the difference between the philosophy of thorns and the philosophy [as Bacon calls it] of fruit,—the philosophy of words, and the philosophy of works.' *Life of Lord Bacon*, EDINB. REV. July, 1837:—where will be found, the best account of Bacon's character, and of what the world owes him.

Ed.

will not really *profit us*; it may procure in some cases, worldly good things; but *what profit will this be*, for any to *gain the world, and to lose their souls*? All things should be accounted profitable or unprofitable as they tend to forward or hinder the salvation of our souls. 2. For a man to *have faith*, and to *say he has faith*, are two different things; the apostle does not say, *If a man have faith without works*, for that is not a supposable case; the drift of this place of Scripture is plainly to show, that an opinion, or speculation, or assent, *without works*, is not *faith*; but the case is put thus, *If a man say he hath faith*, &c. Men may boast of that to others, and be conceited of that in themselves, which they are really destitute of.

II. We are taught, that, as love or charity is an operative principle, so is *faith*; or that neither of them is good for anything; and, by trying how it looks for a person to pretend he is very charitable, who yet never does any works of charity, you may judge what sense there is in pretending to have *faith*, *without* the proper and necessary fruits of it, v. 15-17. What will such a charity as this, that consists in bare words, avail either you or the poor? We are too apt to rest in a bare profession of *faith*, and to think that this will *save us*; it is a cheap and easy religion to say, 'We believe the articles of the Christian faith'; but it is a great delusion to imagine that this is enough to bring us to heaven; those who argue thus, wrong God, and cheat their own souls.

III. We are taught to compare a faith boasting of itself without works, and a faith evidenced by works, by looking on both together, to try how that will work on our minds, v. 18. Suppose a true believer thus pleading with a boasting hypocrite, 'Thou makest a profession, and sayest thou hast faith; I make no such boasts, but leave my works to speak for me. Now, give any evidence of having the faith thou professest without works, if thou canst, and I will

soon let thee see how my works flow from faith, and are the undoubted evidences of its existence.' This is the evidence by which the Scriptures all along teach men to judge both of themselves and others. And this is the evidence according to which Christ will proceed at the day of judgment; Rev. 20:12.

IV. We are taught to look upon a faith of bare speculation and knowledge as the faith of devils, v. 19. That instance of faith which the apostle here chooses to mention, is the first principle of all religion. The word *tremble* is commonly looked upon as denoting a good effect of faith; but here it may rather be taken as a bad effect, when applied to the faith of devils. They tremble, not out of reverence, but hatred [fear] and opposition to that one God on whom they believe. To rehearse that article of our creed, therefore, *I believe on God the Father Almighty*, will not distinguish us from devils at last, unless we now give up ourselves to God as the Gospel directs; and love Him, and delight ourselves in Him, and serve Him, which the devils do not, cannot do.

V. We are taught that he who boasts of faith without works, is to be looked upon at present as a *foolish, condemned person*, v. 20. The words translated *vain man*, are observed to have the same signification with the word *Raca*; which must never be used to private persons, or as an effect of anger, Mat. 5:22. but may be used, as here, to denote a just detestation of such a sort of men as are empty of good works, and yet boasters of their faith. And it plainly declares them fools and abjects in the sight of God. Faith without works is said to be *dead*, not only as void of all those operations which are the proofs of spiritual life; but as unavailable to eternal life: such believers as rest in a bare profession of faith, *are dead while they live*.

VI. We are taught that a justifying faith

(18.) *Without*.] *Chōris*: read rather, *ek, from*. There are few passages that, with the appearance of plainness, have more perplexed expositors than this; as will be seen by consulting Poole, Wolf, and Pott. That it perplexed the *ancients*, and called forth the arts of the *emendatores*, we may infer from the *various readings*, especially that remarkable one by which, instead of the Vulg. *ek*, 14 MSS. and most of the ancient versions, have *chōris*; where one *must* be an *alteration* of the other. The *former* reading has been adopted by almost all critics, and edited by Griesbach, Knapp, Pott, Vater, Titman. It is far more likely that *ek* should have been altered to *chōris*, than *chōris* to *ek*, (for *chōris tōn ergōn*, [without works,] occurs at v. 20.) and *chōris* is as inferior in *internal* as in *external* testimony; for it is as impossible to conceive how so plain a reading as *chōris* could ever be *altered*; and it could not *accidentally* be changed into *ek*. Nor are we warranted in rejecting so strongly attested a reading as *ek*, unless it could be shown to yield either no sense, or one utterly unsuitable; which is not the case. But the sense is not only good in itself but perfectly suitable to the context, full as much so as *chōris*. See Hottinger, Mill, or Thiele. BL.—'Evidence of piety is not so much to be sought in *high emotions* of any kind, as in real humility, sorrow for sin, and a *continual effort* in every day life, to regulate our feelings and conduct by the Word of God. It is the *nature*, and not the *degree* of our affections, which is to be regarded in our examination of our evidences. The best way to know our feelings is, to see how they influence our *conduct*.' Rev. Dr. BECHER.—'Reader, suppose thyself standing before the judgment-seat of Christ! a necessary, a prudent supposition: it ought to be a very frequent one. The Judge demands, "What hast thou to plead for a portion in the blessedness of the righteous?" The plea must be, "Oh, my glorious Judge, Thou hast been my sacrifice: my righteousness is on the bench. Surely, in the Lord have I righteousness." The Judge proceeds: "But what hast thou to plead, that thy faith should not be rejected, as that of the hypocrite?" Here the plea must be, "O Lord, my faith was thy work. It was a faith which disposed me to all the good works of thy holy religion. It caused me, with sincerity, to love and keep thy commandments, and, with assiduity, to serve the interests of thy kingdom in the world." Thus you have Paul and James reconciled. Thus you have good works provided for. *The actions of men are more certain indications of what is within, than all their sayings.*'

MATHER.

V. 19, 20. It is vain to say, as some have done, that devils are not under a dispensation of mercy, and therefore they have no ground for *appropriating* the revelation, and promise of salvation to themselves. For the apostle is not speaking of the different *circumstances* of fallen angels, and fallen men; but of the difference between dead, inactive, inefficient faith, and that 'faith which worketh by love'; and his argument proves, beyond all doubt, that a faith, which is of no better kind than that of the devils, cannot possibly profit the possessor, however he may be circumstanced: for this plain reason, because it is not that faith [yielding up the will] to which the promises are made. *Devils, Demonia, demons. Ho diabolos, the devil*: but the plural is not used of evil spirits.

SCOTT.



21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

x Ge. 22:9,12. b 2 Ch. 20:7. He. 11:31.  
y or, Throughest. Is. 41:8. e Mat. 21:31.  
z He. 11:17. c Re. 20:12. f or, breath.  
a Ge. 15:6. d Jos. 2:1, &c.

cannot be without works, from two examples, Abraham and Rahab.

Abraham, James says, was justified by works, v. 21. Paul, on the other hand, says, Rom. 4. Abraham believed, and it was counted to him for righteousness: these are well reconciled, by observing what is said in Heb. 11. which shows that the faith, both

of Abraham and Rahab, was such as to produce those good works of which James speaks; and which are not to be separated from faith as justifying and saving. By what Abraham did, it appeared, that he truly believed. Thus the faith of Abraham was a working faith, v. 22. And by this mean you come to the true sense of that scripture which saith, v. 23. Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. And thus he became the friend of God. Faith, producing such works, endeared him to the Divine Being, and advanced him to very peculiar favors and intimacies with God. You see, then, v. 24. how that by works a man is justified, (comes into such a state of favor and friendship, with God,) and not by faith only; not by a bare opinion or profession, or believing without obeying, but by having such a faith as is productive of good works.

Now beside the explication of this passage and example, as thus illustrating and supporting the argument James is on, many other useful lessons may be learned by us from what is here said concerning Abraham. Those who would have Abraham's blessings, must carefully copy his faith. Those works which evidence true faith, must be works of self-denial, such as God Himself commands, and not such works as [have no reference to God as our Master, are merely] pleasing to flesh and blood, and may serve our interest, or are the mere fruits of our own imagination and devising. What we piously purpose and sincerely resolve to do for God, is

accepted as if actually performed, as Abraham in offering Isaac. The actings of faith make it grow perfect, as the truth of faith makes it act. Such an acting faith will make others, as well as Abraham, friends of God. Thus Christ says to his disciples, John 15:15. I have called you friends. All transactions betwixt God and the truly believing soul are easy, pleasant, and delightful.

The second example of faith's justifying itself and us, with and by works, is Rahab, v. 25. whose faith was meaner and of a much lower degree; so that the strongest faith will not do, nor the meanest, without works. Very probably Rahab's character was infamous; and such an instance is mentioned, to show that faith will save the worst, when evidenced by proper works, and will not the best without such works. This Rahab had heard of God's powerful presence with Israel; but what proved her faith sincere, was, that, to the hazard of her life, she received the messengers, and sent them out another way. Observe, here, The wonderful power of faith in transforming and changing sinners, and the regard which an operative faith meets with from God, to obtain his mercy and favor. Observe, Where great sins are pardoned, there must be great acts of self-denial. Rahab must prefer the honor of God and the good of his people, before the preservation of her own country. After she is justified, yet her former character must be remembered; not so much to her dishonor, as to glorify the rich

PRACT. OBS. The Lord Jesus is the true Fountain of honor, and they are the most honorable, who best serve Him and most resemble Him, whatever their external rank or appearance may be. But how difficult is it for us to divest ourselves of carnal reasonings, and corrupt prejudices, in such matters; and to give due respect to superiors, without a partial regard to the affluence and splendor, which too often are the appendages, or heralds, of vice and folly! [Let fashionable and worldly Christians ask themselves, if they would receive Christ or Paul to their families, 'circles,' or tables, with honor, or ill-disguised condescension, should either of them appear in the streets of the metropolis, in the 'ungentle' garb and simple manners and habits they once appeared in on earth. And if not, why? Ed.] We should watch and pray against so corrupt a judgment, especially in the worship of God, before whom 'the rich and the poor meet together,' and are regarded entirely according to their characters, and not in the least according to their rank.—The poor should hence learn to seek these riches and honors, and the assurance of them, with increasing earnestness; to be contented in their low estate, to rejoice in their spiritual privileges, to be cheerful in the humble duties of their station, to be thankful for their advantages; and to pray for their rich neighbors, that they may not be satisfied with a perishing inheritance.—If our obedience be sincere, it will be universal, as far as we are acquainted with our Lord's will; for the same au-

thority is opposed and affronted, whatever command is broken.—In vain do men urge that they are 'not under the law,' whilst they allow themselves in known sin: the very gospel will consign them over to the righteous vengeance of God, and all the curses of the law will be executed on them, with a tremendous increase of punishment, for having 'sinned on, that grace might abound.' Vain men, while neglecting 'judgment, mercy, and the love of God,' Mat. 23:23, 24. quiet their consciences, and ward off reproof, by speaking of faith, of grace, of salvation; but God will no more regard their heartless assent to truth, or their indolent, presumptuous reliance on his mercy, than their hollow expressions of love to their poor destitute neighbors. Let no man deceive himself: 'faith, being alone,' and not productive of good works, is no better than the faith of devils, and will leave the possessor in their company to all eternity. Would we have our inheritance with Abraham, 'the friend of God;' (Note, John 15:12—16.) we must both believe his promise, trust his mercy, and obey his commandment: or else 'publicans and harlots will enter heaven before us;' and a believing Rahab shall be 'justified by her works,' and distinguished from all open unbelievers, and from all those whose faith was dead, before the assembled world; when many disputers for orthodox creeds, which they have disgraced by their lives, shall 'have their portion with the workers of iniquity, in outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.' S.

V. 21—24. The apostle next proved his assertion by examples. The attentive reader must see, in what a powerful manner his [Abraham's] faith in the promises of God operated to produce good works, in obedience to his commands, in the most trying circumstances, universally, and without reserve. Abraham's justification by faith took place many years before he was commanded to sacrifice Isaac: but his obedience in that respect proved him to be a sound character, and justified him as a true believer, and a devoted servant of God. So that it was evident, there was a good and important sense, in which 'a man was justified by works and not by faith only;' as his works must be appealed to, for the justification of his professed faith, before men; and as they will be adduced before the tribunal of God, to distinguish true believers from hypocrites: Mat. 25:34—46. 2 Cor. 5:9—12. nor will faith justify any man before God, who is not thus justified before the world by his works also. Not that this will be a second justification by works, in the sense for which many contend; as the redemption and righteousness of Christ, depended on by living faith, can alone 'justify a sinner before God,' from first to last: but the good works of the true believer, from the time when he received Christ, to that of his death, how long or how short soever that space may be, will suffice to distinguish his living faith from the dead faith of mere professors, to justify him against every charge of hypocrisy; and to prove him entitled 'to the gift of God, even eternal life through Jesus Christ.'

(21.) Offering.] This, Abraham actually accomplished in his heart; and, as Bloomf. remarks, 'it is always regarded in Scripture as a real sacrifice.'

(24.) 'Ye see therefore that works may contribute to show a man's justification, and the act of faith is not the only thing which proves it.' Dr. Burton, and Bl. This shows, that there is no discrepancy between James and Paul; and, on this head, the worthy B. Jenks remarks, (in his popular Treatise on Submission to the Righteousness of God,) 'I cannot agree with those, who, to invalidate the credit of Paul, bring him in speaking more darkly; and not so well advised: and would have James to come after, as his interpreter, to help him out: who (no doubt) was very well able to explain himself; and rightly to manage and apply his own doctrine, which he insists upon so stately and largely: when James does but touch upon it collaterally, and sparingly. And if we must question the authority of either, it should be rather of the last named: because his epistle has been sometimes called in doubt; and the other's never was. But I would not offer to question either as not au-

thentic: nor have we any need to go that way to work, when they are so easily reconciled; and all the clashing is only in appearance. For that James does not mean the justification of our persons before the Lord, is to me evident; because he makes faith to have little or no concern in it; which yet all that hear the Scripture, must own to be a *con-cause*, at least, if not the only cause: yea, because the allegation which he brings in 2:23. would overthrow all his cause, if he intended the justification in God's sight. For "the Scripture (says he) was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed and it was imputed to him for righteousness," i. e. Abraham obeying God, in that difficult service of 'offering up his only son, did make appear what was spoken of him in that scripture; and gave the evidence and verification of it; that his faith was imputed to him for justification: though that justification was indeed many years before he made this attempt, to sacrifice Isaac; and long before Isaac was born. And if Abraham was justified before he wrought the works, then he could not be justified by the works: unless it be in some other sense of justification. Whence it appears, that James speaks of the declarative justification. And so, it is observable, how he makes his demand (*deixon moi*); make appear, *demonstrate*, and show me thy faith, v. 18. Let me see such signs of it, that, in the judgment of charity (though not of *infallibility*), I may conclude upon it; and so pronounce, as the Lord did in the case of Abraham, Gen. 22:12. "Now, I know that thou fearest God:" though before, the thing was not latent to me; yet now thou hast given a proof and manifestation, that thou hast not only a form of godliness, but the power. And thus thy faith is made perfect: i. e. showed to be so; as good fruits do not make, but they manifest, the tree to be good. And thus is the word used, 2 Cor. 12:9. "My strength is made perfect in weakness." For how can our weakness add to God's almightiness; but only illustrate and glorify it the more.' Pp. 46—48, 4th ed.

V. 25, 26. It is unnecessary to use further arguments, to prove the consistency of James' doctrine with that of the apostle Paul. Paul evidently meant, that faith alone interested a sinner in the mercy of God, through the redemption and righteousness of Christ, for justification: but the faith, of which he spoke, 'wrought by love,' 'constraining to obedience,' and was connected with a new creation unto holiness. James meant, that no faith, which was not productive of good works, could justify a man before God: that a speculative assent, or an indolent reliance, separate from repentance, diligence in the use of appointed means, and holy obedience, 'was dead' and unprofitable; [did not prove



## CHAP. III.

<sup>1</sup> We are not rashly or arrogantly to reprove others; <sup>5</sup> but rather to bridle the tongue, a little member, but a powerful instrument of much good, and great harm. <sup>13</sup> They who be truly wise be mild, and peaceable, without envying and strife.

**M**Y brethren, be not many <sup>a</sup> masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater <sup>b</sup> condemnation.

<sup>2</sup> For <sup>c</sup> in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in <sup>d</sup> word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

<sup>3</sup> Behold, we put bits <sup>e</sup> in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

<sup>4</sup> Behold also the ships, which though *they be* so great, and *are driven* of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

a Mat. 23:8, 14. c 1 K. 8:46. Pr. d Pr. 13:3.  
1 Pe. 5:3. 20:9. 1 Jn. 1:3. e Ps. 32:9.

b or, judgment.

grace and mercy of God. Though justified, she is called *Rahab the harlot*.

Upon the whole matter, the apostle draws this conclusion, v. 26. read differently; some reading, *As the body without the breath is dead, so is faith without works*: and then they show, that works are the companions of faith, as breathing is of life. Others, *As*

its own identity, because it wanted the characteristics inseparable from that identity; and that, consequently, there was a sound sense, in which a man might be said to be justified by his works, and in perfect consistency with 'his faith being imputed to him for righteousness'; as in the case of Abraham. But Paul opposed those who *objected* to the doctrine of justification by faith, and James wrote against such as *perverted* it. Both views of the subject are useful to the humble, upright, and attentive: but the Lord sees good, that the self-wise, the proud, the heedless, and the licentious, should have somewhat to cavil at and stumble over. Indeed, the same interpretation, which is necessary to render one part of these verses consistent with another, at the same time renders them consistent with the doctrine of Paul, concerning justification by faith (23).—'It is one thing to say, the faith which is without works "is dead," and another to say, that faith is dead without works; as if faith derived its *life* and *power* from works; which is not less... absurd, than if we should say, that the body is dead without sense and motion, as if sense and motion were the cause of life; when we should say, that the body, which is without sense and motion, is dead: for the cause is understood from the necessary effects; and works are the evidences and effects of living faith, and not the cause of it.' *Beza*.—The apostle frequently calls the faith which does not justify *dead*: but he does not use the word *living*; and some persons are so absurd as to ask what we mean by living faith! Simply, 'that faith which is not *dead*;' but active, operative, influential, like a 'lively' or living 'hope.' 1 *Pet.* 1:3—5. *Sc.*

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. The word rendered 'masters,' evidently signifies teachers. Indeed, that is the obvious meaning of the word, when used concerning any of the Jewish Scribes, and of our Lord Himself. 'When the apostle forbids *many* to be such, he seems to allow that *some* may; and consequently I think, "teachers" ought to be explained in an innocent sense.' *Doddr.*—An arrogant, self-preferring, dogmatical temper, whether it led men, without a proper call or suitable qualifications, to aspire to the office of teachers, or whether it induced them to assume pre-eminence in other ways, was the general object of the apostle's reprehension; though the former, as the effect of such a temper, seems to have been principally intended. *Mat.* 20:20—23. 23:8—12. *Luke* 22:24—27. 1 *Pet.* 5:1—4. Many converts to Christianity would be desirous of the distinction of 'teachers,' with a view to the credit and pre-eminence of that office, or from a mistaken idea, that they could not glorify God, and do good to man, in other stations; while perhaps they were not duly aware of the weight and difficulty of the work, and the solemn account which must be given of it. But they ought to know, and seriously consider, that 'teachers' must stand a greater, or more strict, judgment than other men, and that false, unfaithful, ambitious, and selfish teachers would be subject to a greater and more awful condemnation than other sinners. This is also, no doubt, in a degree, applicable to the case of censorious, assuming, and domineering persons in any station. 4:11, 12. *Mat.* 7:1—6. *Lv.* 6:37, 33. 3 *John* 9—12.—Indeed, even true believers, though preserved from final condemnation, if employed as teachers, must expect to be called to a more strict account than their brethren. As their conduct would be more severely scrutinized by men, than that of others, so they would be more sharply rebuked and chastened by God for their offences, in order to the display of his glory, and the prevention of scandals in the church: so that every attempt, made by any of them, to force themselves into eminent and conspicuous stations, would incur a larger measure of painful and mortifying trials. 1 *Cor.* 11:29—34. Nor could any man expect to behave so, as to escape correction or condemnation, for in many things all offended, without excepting the apostles themselves; and the more men were advanced and distinguished, the greater would be their dangers, the more noticed their transgressions, and the more needful their rebukes and chastisements. *Ec.* 10:1. Especially, it would be found extremely difficult, to speak so much and so often, as the public and private duties of the ministry required, without often uttering unadvised words, dishonorable to God, injurious to men, or the result of

the body without the soul is dead, so faith without works is dead also: and then they show, that as the body has no action, nor beauty, but becomes a loathsome carcase, when the soul is gone; so a bare profession without works is useless, yea, loathsome and offensive.

The *best works, without faith*, are dead; and the most *plausible profession of faith, without works*, is dead. Faith is the root, good works are the fruits, and we must see to it that we have both. This is the grace of God, wherein we stand, and we should stand to it.

CHAP. III. V. 1—12. The foregoing ch. shows how unprofitable and dead faith is without works; it is plainly intimated, by what this chapter first goes upon, that such a faith is, however, apt to make men conceited and magisterial in their tempers and their talk. We are therefore taught,

I. Not to use our tongues so as to lord it over others, v. 1. These words do not forbid doing what we can to direct and instruct, or to reprove, in a Christian way; but we must not affect to speak and act as those who are continually assuming the chair. 'Therefore, be not many *masters*;' (or *teachers*, as some read it [so *Scott*];) 'do not give yourselves the air of teachers, imposers, and judges, but rather speak with the humility and spirit of learners; do not censure one another, as if all must be brought to your standard.' This is enforced

by two reasons. 1. Those who thus set up for judges and censurers, shall receive the greater condemnation, *Mat.* 7:1. 2. Another reason given against such acting the master, is, because *we are all sinners*, v. 2. Were we to think more of our own mistakes and offences, we should be less apt to judge other people. We are all guilty before God; and they who want it over the frailties and infirmities of others, little think how many things they offend in themselves. Nay, perhaps, their magisterial managements, and censorious tongues, may prove worse than any faults they condemn in others. Let us learn to be severe in judging ourselves [whose sins we know *best*], but charitable in our judgments of other people.

II. We are taught to govern our tongue so as to *prove ourselves perfect and upright men*. It is here implied, that he whose conscience is affected by tongue-sins, and who takes care to avoid them, has an undoubted sign of true grace. But, on the other hand, if a man *bridle not his tongue*, whatever profession he makes, *that man's religion is vain*. Further, he that offends not in word, will not only prove himself a sincere Christian, but a very much advanced and improved Christian. For the wisdom and grace which enable him to rule his tongue, will enable him also to rule all his actions. This we have illustrated by two comparisons:

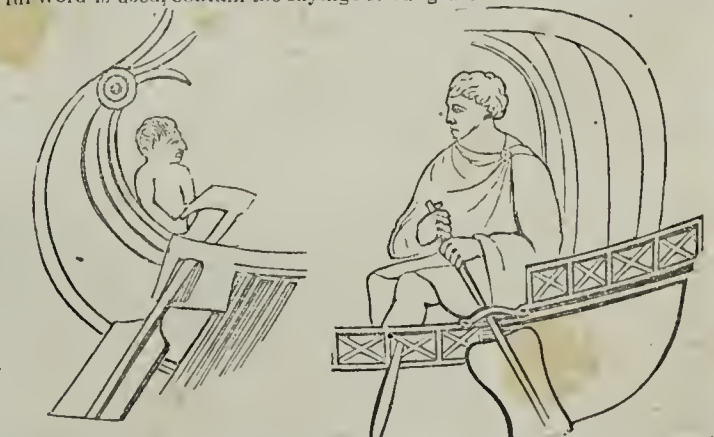
1. The governing and guiding all the motions of a horse, by the bit which is put into his mouth, v. 3. The more quickly and live-

pride, anger, or some unhallowed passion. So that idle and evil words must be multiplied, in consequence of men's *improperly* entering into the pastoral office; nor could any wholly escape this guilt, though such as were duly called to the service might expect proportionable grace and mercy. *Is.* 6:5—8. *Mat.* 12:33—37.—The Jews at that time, even when grossly ignorant and vicious, were exceedingly prone to consider themselves, as called and qualified to be the religious teachers of mankind; *Rom.* 2:17—21. and probably the apostle saw, that many of the Jewish converts to Christianity were influenced by the remains of the same disposition, to aspire prematurely, from questionable motives, or without proper qualifications and weight of character, to the office of teachers or ministers; which he counted it needful thus to repress.—*Condemnation.*] *Krīma*. See on 1 *Cor.* 11:29. The word is often tr. *condemnation*, and even *dammation*; and sometimes it is plain, that *to krīma* must be *eis katakrīma*, 'judgment unto condemnation;' *Rom.* 5:16. but the general meaning is *judgment*. 1 *Cor.* 11:29—34. *Scott*.

(1.) 'The connexion here is undetermined. I see not why the ch. may not have been intended to further develop the injunction at 1:19. where the apostle treats of the *pruritus dicendi*. And so *Thiele*.' *BL*.

(2, 3.) He infers the foregoing precept, from the difficulty of governing the tongue; adverting to one especial error into which persons who set up for teachers mostly run,—namely, that of two great vehemence and bitterness of censure. *Bits in the horses' mouths.*] The cut, is of a Medo-Perian sculpture, at Persepolis, and illustrates the ancient bits and bridles, as also the phrase, 'bells upon the horses,' *Zech.* 14:20. The curious reader may compare the ancient bits and bridles, seen in the cuts, *Gen.* 41:42, 43. *Ex.* 14:6. *Is.* 22:6, 7, &c. *Ep.* V. 3—6. To show its importance

the estimate must not be made according to appearance, but by the effect.—(6) *The course of nature.*] 1:23.—'Our whole life, which like a wheel goes on, not only without ceasing, but ever variably;... now lifting a man up, now depressing him.' *Leigh.*—*Hell.*] *Geōmētēs*. See on *Mat.* 5:22. It is worthy of notice, that all the other passages, where this awful word is used, contain the sayings of our gracious Savior Himself! *Sc.*



(4.) *Helm.*] The cuts, from Taylor's *Calm.*, show the helms of ancient ships; comp. notes and cuts, *Acts* 28:11. 27:40, &c. *Ep.*



5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

f Pr. 12:18.	k wheel.	o or, hole.
g Ps. 12:3.	l nature.	p Mat. 7:16.
h or, wood.	m nature of man.	q Ps. 137:43.
i Pr. 16:27.	n Ps. 149:3.	r Phi. 1:27.
j Mat. 15:11-20.	Ro. 3:13.	

ly the tongue is, the more should we take care to govern it. Otherwise, as an unruly and ungovernable horse runs away with his rider, or throws him, so an unruly tongue will serve those in like manner, who have no command over it.

2. The governing of a ship by the right management of the helm, v. 4, 5. The right governing of the helm or rudder will steer and turn the ship as the governor pleases; and a right management of the tongue is, in a great measure, the government of the whole man. There is a wonderful beauty in these comparisons, to show how things of small bulk, yet may be of vast use. And from hence we should learn to make the due man-

agement of our tongues more our study; because, though they are little members, they are capable of doing a great deal of good, or a great deal of hurt. Therefore,

III. We are taught to dread an unruly tongue, as one of the greatest and most pernicious evils. It is compared to a little fire, placed among a great deal of combustible matter, which soon raises a flame and consumes all before it, v. 5, 6. There is such an abundance of sin in the tongue, that it may be called a world of iniquity. How many defilements does it occasion! How many and dreadful flames does it kindle! Observe, hence, There is a great pollution and defilement in sins of the tongue; by it defiling passions are kindled, vented, cherished; the whole body is often drawn into sin and guilt by the tongue, Eccl. 5:6. It setteth on fire the course of nature. The affairs of mankind and of societies are often thrown into confusion, and all is on a flame, by it. Some read it, all our generations are set on fire by the tongue. There is no age of the world, nor any condition of life, private or public, but will afford examples of this. And it is set on fire of hell. Observe, hence, Hell has more to do in promoting the fire of the tongue than men are generally aware of. The devil is expressly called a liar, a murderer, an accuser of the brethren; and whenever men's tongues are employed any of these ways, they are set on fire of hell. The Holy Ghost, indeed, once descended in cloven tongues as of fire, Acts 2. And where the tongue is thus guided and wrought upon by a fire from heaven, here it kindleth good thoughts, holy affections, and ardent devotions. But when it is set on fire of hell, as in all undue heats it is, there it is mischievous, producing rage and hatred, and those things which serve the purpose and designs of the devil. As therefore you would dread fires and flames, you should dread contentions, revilings, slanders, lies, and everything that would kindle the fire of wrath in your own spirit, or in the spirits of others. But,

IV. We are next taught how very hard a thing it is to govern the tongue, v. 7, 8. No man can tame the tongue without supernatural grace and assistance. The apostle does not intend to represent it as a thing impossible, but as a thing extremely difficult, which therefore will require great watchfulness, and pains, and prayer. And sometimes all is too little, for it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Brute creatures may be kept within certain bounds; they may be managed by certain rules; and even serpents may be so used as to do no hurt with all their poison: but the tongue is apt to break through all bounds and rules, and to spit out its poison on one occasion or other,

notwithstanding the utmost care. So that it does not only need to be watched, and guarded, and governed, as much as an unruly beast, or a hurtful and poisonous creature; but much more care and pains will be needful, to prevent the mischievous outbursts and effects of the tongue. However,

V. We are taught to think of the use we make of our tongues in religion and in the service of God, and by such a consideration to keep it from cursing, censuring, and everything that is evil on other occasions, v. 9, 10. How absurd is it, that they who use their tongues in prayer and praise, should ever use them in cursing, slandering, and the like! That tongue which addresses with reverence the Divine Being, cannot, without the greatest inconsistency, turn upon fellow-creatures with reviling, brawling language. These things ought not so to be; and, if such considerations were always at hand, surely they would not be. Piety is disgraced in all the shows of it, if there be not charity.

Further, to fix this thought, the apostle shows that contrary effects from the same causes are monstrous, and not to be found in nature; and therefore cannot be consistent with grace, v. 11, 12. True religion will not admit of contradictions; and a truly religious man can never allow of them either in his words or his actions. How many sins would this prevent, and recover men from, to put them on being always consistent with themselves.

V. 13-18. As the sins before condemned arise from an affectation of being thought more wise than others, and being endued with more knowledge than they; so the apostle, in these vs., shows the difference between men's pretending to be wise, and their being really so; and between the wisdom which is from beneath, (from earth or hell,) and that which is from above.

I. Some account of true wisdom, with the distinguishing marks and fruits of it, v. 13. A truly wise man will not set up for the reputation of being wise, without laying in a good stock of knowledge; he will not value himself merely on knowing things, if he has not wisdom to make a right application and use of that knowledge. These two things must be put together, to make up the account of true wisdom. If we are wiser than others, this should be evidenced by the goodness of our conversation, not by the roughness or vanity of it. True wisdom may be known by its works. The conversation here does not refer only to words, but to the whole of men's practice; therefore it is said, Let him show, out of a good conversation, his works. Not he who thinks well, or he who talks well, is, in the sense of the Scripture, allowed to be wise, if he do not live and act well. True wisdom may be known by the meek-

(6.) *Course of nature.*] Some refer this to forests on fire; whose terrific effects, wrapping whole townships in flames, are sometimes experienced in our new settlements. All nature, the whole world, seems on fire. and birds, beasts, dwellings, and men, are sometimes devoured together. See the account of the conflagration at New Brunswick, Nova Scotia; some years ago. The word for *course* is *trochos*, a wheel; and *Burder* thinks, 'there is an allusion to a wheel, catching on fire, by its rapid motion, spreading its flames around, and at last involving the whole machine in destruction: the true version is, it setteth on fire the wheel of human life, and thus finally destroyeth the human body.' But, says *Bl.*, 'the best interpretation seems to be that adopted by Grot., Heins., Mich., Carpz., Ros., Pott, and Schl. "It is that which sets on fire, and destroys the whole course of life, from boyhood to old age;" i. e. by raising and nourishing hatred, and enmity, [and conceit,] it renders life a scene of misery. For, as *Bp. Butler* observes, "it begets resentment in him who is the subject of this wantonness of speech. It sows the seeds of strife among others, and inflames little [jealousies] disgusts and offences, which if let alone would wear away of themselves. [How much more commonly do we believe and report what is said to the disadvantage, than what is said to the praise of another!] It is often of as bad effect upon the good name of others, as deep envy or malice; and, to say the least of it in this respect, it destroys and perverts a certain equity of the utmost importance to society to be observed, namely, that praise and dispraise, a good or bad character, should always be bestowed according to desert." By *geinnes* we may understand the *powers* [and influences] of hell.' *Bl.* Let us remember the precept and the threatening, Mat. 12:36.

V. 7-12. Every kind, or *nature*, of living creatures, however monstrous, ravenous, fierce, or venomous, on the dry land, and in the ocean, has been, and is, in some instances, *subdued* by the reason, courage, and

persevering efforts, of the human species; by which means the mischiefs, which otherwise would have been occasioned by them, are in a great measure prevented. But no man could ever find out a way to *subdue* the tongue, or to hinder wicked men from corrupting the principles, polluting the imaginations, and inflaming the passions of others, by their mischievous discourse.—The word rendered *tame*, properly means *subdue*. It could scarcely be said, that all kinds of sea-monsters, crocodiles, and serpents, had been *tamed*, or rendered tractable, by men; but they have all been brought under subjection, in one way or another; whereas, no efforts could ever prevent the malignant effects of the unbridled tongues of ungodly men.—Pious, pure, loving, candid, sincere, humble, and edifying language is the genuine produce of a sanctified heart; and none, who understand Christianity, would expect to hear curses, lies, boastings, and revilings from a believer's mouth, any more than they would look for figs upon a vine, or olive-berries on a fig-tree. *Mat.* 7:15-20. 12:33-37.—(9) *Curse*, &c.] Perhaps the apostle in this glanced at the unconverted Jews, who... often cursed the Christians bitterly in their synagogues.' *Mackn.*—(7) *Mankind.*] The nature of man subdues the nature of beasts, of every sort. *SCOTT.*

(7.) 'The distribution of the brute creation, is [Jewish, comp. pt. iv. of Guide, in Suppl., and] founded on Gen. 9:2, 3. Ps. 8:7, 8. Sept., which passages are the best illustration of the present.'

V. 13-16. The apostle had digressed from his subject, by showing the consequences of an assuming temper, and an improper desire to be 'teachers;' but he here resumes it. If therefore any of those, into whose hands his epistle might come, were, or desired to be thought, persons of superior wisdom, understanding, and genius, and endued with much knowledge of the Gospel; let them not think themselves buried in a private or obscure station, or indulge a proud, aspiring, and discontented spirit; but let them 'show forth,' by the general tenor 'of a good



14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15 This <sup>v</sup> wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, <sup>s</sup> sensual, devilish.

16 For where envying and strife is, there is <sup>c</sup> confusion and every evil work.

17 But the wisdom <sup>v</sup> that is from above is first <sup>w</sup> pure, then, <sup>x</sup> peaceable, <sup>y</sup> gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without <sup>z</sup> partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of <sup>a</sup> righteousness

s 1 Co. 3:3. v 1 Co. 2:6,7. y Ga. 5:22.  
t or, natural. w 1 hi. 4:8. z or, wrangling.  
u tumult, or, x He. 12:14. a He. 12:11.  
tunqueness.

ness of the spirit and temper; *Let him show with meekness, &c.* It is a great instance of wisdom, prudently to bridle our own anger, and patiently to bear the anger of others. And as wisdom will evidence itself in meekness, so meekness will be a great friend to wisdom. For nothing hinders the regular apprehension, the solid judgment, and impartiality of thought, necessary to our acting wisely, so much as passion.

II. The glorying of those taken away, who are of a contrary character to that now mentioned; and their wisdom exposed, in all its boasts and productions, v. 14—16. 'Pretend what you will, and think yourselves ever so wise, yet you have abundance of reason to cease your glorying, if you run down love and peace, and give way to bit-

ter envying and strife. Lie not thus against the truth.'

Observe, Envy and strife are opposed to the meekness of wisdom; both cannot dwell together in the same heart. Holy zeal and bitter envying are as different, as the flames of seraphim and the fire of hell. Observe, the order of things here laid down. Envy is first, and excites strife; strife endeavors to excuse itself by vainglory and lying; and then, v. 16. hereupon ensue *confusion and every evil work.* And is such wisdom as produces these effects, to be gloried in? This cannot be without giving the lie to Christianity; and pretending that this wisdom is what it is not. For, observe, whence such wisdom cometh, v. 15. It springs from earthly principles, acts on earthly motives, is intent on serving earthly purposes; is *sensual*, indulging the flesh, and making provision to fulfil the lusts and desires of it: Or, according to the original word, it is *animal* or human, the mere working of natural reason, without any supernatural light. And it is *devilish*, such being the wisdom of devils, to create uneasiness, and to do hurt; and, being inspired by devils, whose condemnation is pride, 1 Tim. 3:6. and who are noted in other places of Scripture for their wrath, and their accusing of the brethren, therefore, those who are lifted up with such wisdom as this, must fall into the condemnation of the devil.

III. The lovely picture of that wisdom which is from above more fully drawn, and set in opposition to this which is from beneath, v. 17, 18.

Observe, here, I. True wisdom is God's gift, not gained by conversing with men, or by the knowledge of the world, but it comes from above. It is *pure*, without mixture of

maxims or aims that would debase it; and it is free from iniquity and defilements, not allowing of any known sin, but studious of holiness, both in heart and life. 2. It is *peaceable*. Peace follows purity, and depends on it. In kingdoms, in families, in churches, in all societies, and in all interviews and transactions, heavenly wisdom makes men peaceable. 3. It is *gentle*, not standing on extreme right in matters of property; not rigorous in points of censure, not furious about opinions, urging our own beyond their weight, or theirs who oppose us, beyond their intention; not rude and overbearing in conversation, nor harsh and cruel in temper. Gentleness may thus be opposed to all these. 4. It is *easy to be entreated*, very *persuadable*, either to what is good, or from what is evil. There is an easiness that is weak and faulty; but it is not blamable to yield ourselves to the persuasions of God's Word, and to all just and reasonable counsels or requests of our fellow-creatures; no, nor to give up a dispute, where there appears a good reason for it, and a good end may be answered by it. 5. It is *full of mercy and good fruits*, inwardly disposed to everything that is kind and good, both to relieve those who want, and to forgive those who offend, and actually to do this whenever proper occasions offer. 6. It is *without partiality*. The original word signifies to be *without suspicion*, or *free from judging*; making no undue surmises, or differences in our conduct towards one person more than another. The margin reads it, *without wrangling*; not acting the part of sectaries, and disputing merely for the sake of a party; or censuring others purely on account of their differing from us. The wisest men are least apt to be censurers.

conversation, in the several relations and employments of life, 'their works' of piety, equity, purity, and mercy, 'in meekness of wisdom;' exercising that prudence, which is characterized by a meek and quiet spirit, and inseparably connected with it, and with a readiness to forgive and be at peace with all men. 17, 18. 1:19—21. *Mat. 5:5. 2 Tim. 2:23—26. Tit. 3:1—3.*—The word rendered *sensual*, (*phusikē*), is in the passage referred to, *natural*; and I apprehend it should be so rendered in this place; for it seems rather to relate to man's natural depravity, [rather his animal and selfish propensities,] in general, than to his *sensuality* in particular, to which ambitious disputants are commonly less addicted than to malignant passions. *Sensual.*] 1 Cor. 2:14. 15:46. *Jude 19.*—It is opposed to the regenerate, and to the glorified. *Leigh.* (16) *Envyng.*] This word (which signifies a vehement and earnest commotion), and its derivatives, are used in a bad sense, *Acts 5:17. 7:9. 13:45. 17:5. 21:20. 22:3. Rom. 10:2. 13:13. 1 Cor. 3:3. 13:4. 2 Cor. 12:20. Gal. 1:14. 4:17. 5:20.*—But in a good sense, *John 2:17. 1 Cor. 14:1. 12. 39. 2 Cor. 7:7. II. 9:2. 11:2. Gal. 4:13. Col. 4:13. Tit. 2:14. Rev. 3:19.*

(13.) *Meekness.*] *Comp. Phil. 2:3.* 'A real saint may know that he possesses real grace, but it does not follow that an eminent one is particularly sensible that he is eminent compared with others. He who possesses much grace, may know that he is thus distinguished, but it will not be obvious to him that he is better than others, so that this should become a foremost thought. It may be remarked as infallibly true, that the person who, upon comparing himself with others, is apt to think himself a very eminent saint, in whom this is a leading thought, often recurring, is certainly mistaken; he is no eminent saint, but under the prevalence of a proud, self-righteous spirit; and, if this is the habitual and prevailing temper of his mind, he is no saint at all.'

(14.) *Envyings.*] To these, a social state like ours, where love of notice is so much cultivated, and where ranks are not ascertained, acknowledged, and fixed, is peculiarly exposed. *Bl.* refers on this text to a sermon, by Dr. Smith, 'where he shows, 1. what *envy* is, and wherein it consists. 2. Its causes, on the part (1) of the *envier*, great malice, and baseness of nature, [the Ed. would add, a prurient desire to be noted,] rapacity, and an inward sense of a man's weakness and idleness; (2) of the person *envied*, great natural abilities, the favor of the [multitude, or of the] great; wealth, and prosperity, esteem, and reputation. 3. Its effects, confusion [add, discomfort] and every evil work, (1) to the *envier*; (2) to the *envied*; a prying into all his concerns, calumny, and utter ruin.'

V. 17, 18. Heavenly wisdom, according to James' description of it, is very nearly allied to that love, for which Paul contended; 1 Cor. 13:4—7. and we may observe of both, that they are described, as they are in themselves, and that every man may ascertain the reality, or the degree, of his attainments in them, by their effects on his temper and conduct. For, whatever bigots and zealots may imagine, 'the fruit of righteousness,' or that good seed whence the blessed fruit of righteousness grows here on earth, 'is sown in peace;' men of peaceable, loving tempers, preaching the Gospel, or in any scriptural way endeavoring to make it known to mankind, adorning it in their lives, and watering it with their prayers, 'sow the seed,' which God blesses to the conversion of sinners, and the propagation of true religion in the world. It 'is sown in peace,' not amidst great noise and disturbance, and by those 'who make peace,' who are both peaceable and peace-makers, in the church and in the world. 1:19—21. *Mat. 5:9. Heb. 12:9—14.*—(17)

*Easy to be entreated.*] Here only. 'It may be used either actively or passively, i. e. easily to be persuaded to the best, or apt to persuade others with good speeches.' *Leigh.*

(17.) 'There are two kinds of hypocrites; the one are deceived by their morality and external religion; the other by false discoveries, (impulses, and imagined revelations, and suggestions respecting the goodness of their state, falsely called the witness of the Spirit,) and elevations of mind. These last often declaim against dependence on good works, and talk much of free grace, but yet make a righteousness of their "experience." They are more confident in this hope, than the former; and I have scarcely known an instance of their being undeceived.'

(18.) *Peace.*] 'Man's hostility to God manifests itself in ten thousand acts of resistance to his pleasure. While God claims the supreme love, and implicit obedience, of every intelligent creature, man denies both his claims, and the rights on which they are founded; and boldly sets up, in opposition to them, claims and rights of his own; which he determines to support to the utmost of his power. For this end he commences a progress of revolt, and contention, which occupies most of his time, and most of his thoughts; and at death leaves, not unfrequently, the controversy undecided.—With his fellow-men his contention arises from two sources: his own selfishness, and theirs. The mind in which selfishness reigns, always wishes, intends, and labors, to make every other interest subservient to its own; or, at least, to prevent it from disturbing, precluding, or diminishing its own. From this source have sprung all the private, and all the public contentions, which have destroyed the peace of neighborhoods, and ravaged the world; the sufferings and the sighs, the tears and the groans, which have spread from one end of heaven to the other.—Nor is man less busily employed in conflicting with himself. The passions and appetites of the human heart, have ever opposed the dictates of conscience, intended by God to regulate the moral conduct. Though it strenuously asserts its right to this most necessary control, the passions still more strenuously rebel against it; force the man to submit to their own dictates; and hurry him into a course of disobedience. In this progress of guilt, conscience holds out her dreadful mirror to his terrified eye; and exhibits him to himself, odious, deformed, and fearfully exposed to the anger of God.—To this distracted, miserable being, peace is announced (John 14:27.) by Him, who knew all the wants, sufferings, and dangers of our race. His legacy will be found to be exactly suited to their state,—as it is . . . a happy state of the mind, or intellect . . . of the affections . . . of the conscience . . . of the life. When the soul has sincerely said, *thy will be done*; conscience, unopposed and undisturbed, dictates whatever is to be done; and smiles its approbation, whenever it is performed. . . . To himself he is no longer a stranger,—prayer he no longer dreads,—from his moral character he no longer shrinks,—at his future destiny he ceases to shudder. A daily, welcome, cheerful visiter at the internal fire-side, he finds there nothing but peace, harmony, and pleasure.'

'Not as the world giveth, doth Christ give this evangelical peace, his own peace. The world gives with an intention to gain, at least as much as it gave; and thus gives for its own benefit; not for ours. The world gives by halves, and often resumes what it has given. The world gives grudgingly; with a meanness which embitters the boon; in pretence, not in reality; its gifts being, at best, of little value, and of momentary duration. Finally, the world reproaches us, as being deeply indebted for its largesses; and imperiously demands servile acknowledgments, and base compliances, as a proper return for the obligations



is sown in peace of them that make peace.

### CHAP. IV.

<sup>1</sup> We are to strive against covetousness, <sup>4</sup> intemperance, <sup>5</sup> pride, <sup>11</sup> detraction, and rash judgment of others: <sup>13</sup> and not to be confident in the good success of worldly business, but, mindful ever of the uncertainty of this life, to commit ourselves and all our affairs to God's providence.

**F**ROM whence come wars and <sup>a</sup> fightings among you? <sup>b</sup> come they not hence, <sup>c</sup> even of your <sup>d</sup> lusts that war <sup>e</sup> in your members?

<sup>2</sup> Ye lust, and have not: ye <sup>d</sup> kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

<sup>e</sup> or, *brawlings*. <sup>b</sup> or, *pleasures*. <sup>c</sup> 1 Pe. 2:11. <sup>d</sup> or, *envy*.

<sup>7</sup>. It is *without hypocrisy*. It has no disguises or deceits, cannot fall in with those managements the world counts wise; but it is sincere, open, steady, uniform, and consistent with itself. Oh that you and I might always be guided by such wisdom as this! And then, *lastly*, true wisdom will go on to sow the fruits of righteousness in peace, and thus, if it may be, to make peace in the world, v. 18. And that which is sown in peace, will produce a harvest of joys.

**PRACT. OBS.** Did men duly weigh the importance and difficulty of the sacred ministry, the account which must be given of it, and the trials and temptations to which it must expose them, they would be less forward, than they sometimes are, in aspiring to that distinction. 1 Tim. 3:1. If then, the glory of God, the good of mankind, and an evident call in Providence, did not require the contrary, a wise and humble man, possessed of much self-knowledge, and knowledge of human nature, and the state of the world and the church, would choose obscurity and privacy, to be out of the way of temptation, to shun the danger of dishonoring the Gospel, and to escape trials, as much as this present state will admit of it. [See a case in the life of Doddridge. Biography, in Suppl.]—Nothing is more arduous, than the proper government of the tongue; and . . . facts abundantly prove, that more professed Christians succeed in bridling their senses and appetites, than in duly restraining their tongues; and whilst we contemplate, with grief and astonishment, the horrible effects produced by this 'unruly evil,' let us particularly inquire, what use we make of our tongues. As no man is able to subdue and tame the tongue, no, not his own tongue, without the help of divine

it has conferred. Christ, on the contrary, never reproaches us on account of his blessings, but gives with perfect liberality, and unlimited bounty; cheerfully; demanding no unworthy sacrifices; never resuming what He has given; for our benefit only; really, and not in pretence; with absolute sincerity, and supreme nobleness of disposition, gifts that endure for ever. . . . A guest, fresh from heaven, and from the presence of God, Peace bears all the characteristics of the world from which she descends; of the regions in which she was born; of the family to which she is allied; and of the Parent, from whom she sprang. Gentle and serene, beautiful and lovely, she becomes a willing companion to every humble, faithful follower of the Lamb; to every genuine child of God. Her own angelic disposition, she breathes insensibly into the soul; her softness and gentleness she infuses into the heart; and her living smiles she spreads over the aspect. At once, the man is changed into a new creature. His soul, before the region of darkness and storm, is cleared, at once, of the clouds by which it was overcast. Its tempestuous passions cease to rage, and ravage; and a heavenly sunshine illumines the world within. The universe, to him heretofore a vast kingdom of war, and opposition, is converted into a delightful residence of quiet and harmony; in which an immense multitude of the inhabitants, such as *no man can number*, are become his friends, and in which the hostilities of the rest will only work together for his good. God, also, seen by him before in clouds and darkness, which were very *tempestuous round about Him*, has unfolded to him the light of his countenance; and given him a lively and transporting earnest of serene, unclouded, everlasting day. Sermon 84. DWIGHT.

**NOTES.** CHAP. IV. 1—3. 3:13—18. The apostle is generally supposed to have, in this place, addressed the unconverted Jews; to the conduct of whom his language is peculiarly applicable, according to the history of those times. Indeed, we can scarcely conceive, that persons, continuing members of the Christian church, at so early a period, were guilty of the enormities here mentioned: though the passage, alas! is applicable enough to nominal Christians in subsequent ages.—This seems to refer to the eager desires of the Jewish nation after temporal prosperity, and liberty from the Roman yoke; and to the violent and impious measures, which they adopted in order to obtain them: for these measures effected nothing, except the increase of their miseries; and they were hastening their own destruction, because they trusted not in God.—Some of them, however, it might be supposed, kept up the form of religion, and prayed for liberty from their oppressors, and for temporal prosperity.

(1, 2.) *Wars (come) of your lusts.* 'There is not a nation in Europe that could be led on to war against a harmless, just, forgiving, and defenceless people; for most commonly the love of plunder and of glory are the causes of national war. Have wars prevented men from being subjected and enslaved? Is there a country of Europe that has not been overrun with troops several times, even within the present century. And still more, is it not most commonly the case, that the very means by which we repel a despotism from abroad, only establish over us a military despotism at home. Since, then, the principle of retaliation will not, with any certainty, save a country from conquest, the

CHAP. IV. V. 1—10. The former eh. speaks of envying one another, as the great spring of strifes and contentions; this, of a lust after worldly things, and setting too great a value on worldly pleasures and friendships, as that which carried their divisions to a shameful height.

1. The apostle here reproves the Jewish Christians for their wars, and for their lusts, as the cause of them, v. 1. The Jews were very seditious, and had frequent wars with the Romans; they were a very quarrelsome, divided people, often fighting among themselves; and many of those corrupt Christians, against whose errors and vices this epistle was written, seem to have fallen in with the common quarrels; hereupon, our apostle informs them, that the origin of wars and fightings was not (as they pretended) a true zeal for their country, and for the honor of God, but that their prevailing lusts were the cause of all. Observe, from hence, What is sheltered and shrouded under a specious pretence of zeal for God and religion, often comes from men's pride, malice, covetousness, ambition, and revenge. But one would think here is enough said to subdue those lusts; for,

1. They make a war within, as well as fightings without; impetuous passions and

desires first war in their members, and then raise feuds in their nation. Apply this to private cases, and may we not then say of fightings and strifes, among relations and neighbors, that they come from those lusts which war in the members?

2. It should kill these lusts to think of their disappointment, v. 2. 'You covet great things for yourselves, and think to obtain them by your victories over the Romans, or by suppressing this and the other party among yourselves; \* but, alas, you are losing your labor and your blood, while you kill one another with such views as these.' Inordinate desires are either totally disappointed, or, however, not to be appeased and satisfied by obtaining the things desired. The words here rendered, *cannot obtain*, signify, cannot gain the happiness sought after. Note, hence, Worldly and fleshly lusts are the distemper which will not allow of contentment or satisfaction in the mind.

3. Sinful desires and affections generally exclude prayer, and the working of our desires toward God; 'Ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. You fight, and do not succeed, because you do not pray; or else,

\* Comp. Josephus for the horrible social state of the Jews, especially in Jerusalem, at this time. Ed.

grace, we are reminded to beg of God to do it for us; for the 'things which are impossible with man, are possible with God.' Depending on his grace, let us take heed 'to bless, and not curse.' Mat. 5:43—48. Rom. 12:14—16. 1 Pet. 3:3—12. let us aim at a consistency of conversation and conduct, and see to it that our love to men proves the sincerity of our professed love to God, and that our conduct, out of the place of worship, corresponds with our language and professions in it. For very many things are, even among Christians, that ought not to be so; and the odium theologium has passed into a proverb. The strong language of the apostle likewise applies to the use and abuse of the pen.—Instead of seeking the reputation of wisdom and knowledge, by ostentatiously aspiring after pre-eminence: let us be careful to 'show out of a good conversation our works with meekness of wisdom,' avoiding all bitter 'envyings, and zeal, and strife in our hearts' as well as in our words and actions; not glorying in such things as are indeed a shame to any man, or scandalizing the truth by disgraceful contentions about it, and slandering it by pleading that it calls for this bitter zeal. SCOTT.

real question, as before, is, by obedience to which law will a nation be most likely to escape it, by the law of retaliation, or by that of benevolence?

'I go still farther. The Scriptures teach us, that God has created men, both as individuals and as societies, under the law of benevolence; and that He intends this law to be obeyed. Societies have never yet thought of obeying it in their dealings with each other; and statesmen would generally consider the allusion to it as puerile. But this alters not the law of God, nor the punishments which He inflicts upon nations for the violation of it. This punishment I suppose to be war. I believe aggression from a foreign nation to be, the intimation from God that we are disobeying the law of benevolence; and that this is his mode of teaching nations their duty, in this respect, to each other. So that aggression seems to me, to be in no manner a call to retaliation and injury, but rather a call to special kindness and good-will. And still further, the requiting evil with good, tends just as strongly to the cessation of all injury in nations as in individuals. Let any man reflect upon the amount of pecuniary expenditure, and the awful waste of human life, which the wars of the last hundred years have occasioned, and then I will ask him, whether it be not self-evident, that the one hundredth part of this expense and suffering, if employed in the honest effort to render mankind wiser and better, would long before this time, have banished wars from the earth, and rendered the civilized world like the garden of Eden.

'The cultivation of a military spirit, then, is the cultivation of a great curse to a community.

'I am aware, all this may be called visionary, romantic, and chimerical. This, however, neither makes nor shows it so. . . . And if it be said, these principles may all be very true, but you can never induce nations to act upon them; I answer, this concession admits that such is the law of God. If this be the case, that nation will be the happiest and the wisest, which is the first to obey it. And if it be said, it would be wisest and best to obey the law of benevolence, but men will never obey it; I answer, here is manifestly the end of the argument. . . . It is a matter to be settled between men and their God. It remains, however, to be seen, whether God will or will not cause his laws to be obeyed; and whether omniscience and omnipotence have not the means of teaching his creatures submission to his will.' *On Benevolence towards the Injurious.* *Elys. Mor. Sci.*

(2.) *Lusts.* *Hēdonōn*: lit. *pleasures*. It has been thought a horrible doctrine, that man should be endowed with propensities which could take pleasure in destroying, &c. But were not this spontaneous impulse natural, evil would not be destroyed, nor energy supplied for good deeds, the murderer convicted and punished, or the wild beast slain. It is the abuse of the propensities which take pleasure in opposing and destroying; their *lusts*, i. e. inordinate energy, unrestrained by higher than selfish motives, that causes wars and fightings; and every soldier will acknowledge he has felt a *pleasure* even in killing his fellow men, and the Roman poets speak of the *gaudia certaminis*, the fierce battle-joy. The poet Young, true to nature, speaks of the 'lust of death.' How necessary, that reason should control the faintest stirring of this impulse,



3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God.

5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

6 But he giveth more grace: Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.

e 1 Jn. 2:15. f or. e. d. i. b. l. y. g Ec. 4:4. h Pr. 29:23. i 1 Pe. 5:9. j 2 Ch. 15:2. k Is. 1:16.

4. 'Your lusts spoil your prayers, and make them an abomination to God, whenever you put them up to Him,' v. 3. As if it had been said, 'Though perhaps you may sometimes pray for success against your enemies, yet it is not your aim to improve the advantages you gain, so as to promote true piety and religion, either in yourselves or others; but pride, vanity, luxury, and sensuality, are what you would serve by your successes, and by your very prayers; you want to live in great power and plenty, in voluptuousness, and a sensual prosperity; and thus you disgrace devotion, and dishonor God, by such gross and base ends; and therefore your prayers are rejected.'

Let us learn, hence, in the management of all our worldly affairs, and in our prayers to God for success in them, to see that our ends be right. Let us remember this, that, when we speed not in our prayers, it is because we ask amiss; either we do not ask for right ends, or not in a right manner; not with faith, or not with fervency: unbelieving and cold desires beg denials; and this we may be sure of, that, when our prayers are rather the language of our lusts than of our graces, they will return empty.

II. We have fair warning to avoid all criminal friendships with this world, v. 4. Worldly people are here called *adulterers and adulteresses*, because of their perfidiousness to God, while they give their best affections to the world. *Covetousness* is elsewhere called *idolatry*, and here *adultery*: it is a forsaking Him to whom we are devoted and espoused, to cleave to other things; there is this brand put on worldly-mindedness,—that it is *enmity to God*. A man may have a competent portion of the good things of this life, and yet may keep himself in the love of God; but he who sets his heart on the world, who places his happiness in it, and will conform himself to it, and do anything rather than lose its friendship, he is an *enemy to God*; it is constructive treason and rebellion against God, to set the world on his throne in our hearts. *Ye cannot serve God and mammon*, Mat. 6:24.

'Think seriously what the spirit of the world is, *Do you think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us, lusteth to envy?*' v. 5. The account given in the Holy Scriptures of the hearts of men by nature, is, *that their imagination is evil, only evil, and that continually*, Ge. 6:5. Natural corruption principally shows itself by envying, and there is a continual propensity to this; now this is the way of the world, which occasions strifes and quarrels; therefore Christians, to avoid contentions, must avoid the *friendship of the world*, and show that they are actuated by nobler principles; for if we belong to God, He gives more grace than to live and act as the generality of the world do; yea, the grace of God will correct and cure the spirit that naturally dwells in us; where He giveth grace, He giveth another spirit than that of the world.

III. We are taught to observe the difference God makes between pride and humility, v. 6. This is represented as the language of Scripture in the O. T.; for so it is declared, Ps. 18:27. and Prov. 3:34. Two things are here to be observed; 1. The disgrace cast on the proud; *God resisteth them*; the original word signifies, God's setting Himself as in battle-array against them; and can there be a greater disgrace, than for God to proclaim a man a rebel, and to proceed against him as such? *The proud resisteth God*; in his understanding he resisteth the truths of God; in his will the laws of God; [in his purposes, he has

no reference to God; God is in none, or never in all of his thoughts;] in his passions he resisteth the providence of God; therefore no wonder God sets Himself against the proud. Let proud spirits hear this and tremble, *God resisteth them*. Who can describe the wretched state of those who make God their enemy? Observe, 2. The honor and help *God gives to the humble*; *grace*, as opposed to disgrace, is honor; this *God gives to the humble*; and where *God gives grace to the humble*, there He will give all other graces; and, as in the beginning of this v. 6. He will give more grace. Whenever *God gives true grace, He will give more; for to him that hath, and useth what he hath aright, more shall be given*. He will especially give more grace to the humble, because they see their need of it, will pray for it, and be thankful for it; and such shall have it. For this reason,

IV. We are taught to submit ourselves entirely to God, v. 7. Christians should forsake the *friendship of the world*, and watch against that envy and pride which they see prevailing in natural men, and should by grace learn to glory in their submissions to God. We are subjects, and as such must be submissive; not only through fear, but through love; *not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake*.

Now as this subjection and submission to God are what the devil most industriously strives to hinder, so we ought with great care and steadiness to resist his suggestions. If we basely yield to his temptations, he will continually follow us; but if we put on the whole armor of God, and stand it out against him, he will be gone from us. Resolution shuts and bolts the door against temptation.

V. We are directed how to act toward God, in our becoming submissive to Him, v. 8—10. 1. *Draw nigh to God*; the heart, that has rebelled, must be brought to the foot of God; the spirit, that was distant and estranged from a life of communion and converse with God, must become acquainted with Him. 2. *Cleanse your hands*; he who comes unto God, must have clean hands, 1 Tim. 2:8. hands free from blood and bribes, and everything unjust or cruel. 3. *The hearts of the double-minded must be purified*; those who halt between God and the world, are here meant by the *double-minded*; to purify the heart, is to be sincere, and to act on

(acerbity, malice, &c.) so terrible when, unchecked, it rules with sympathetic flame in the hearts of marshalled legions, bending every energy to destroy each other! When shall the war-cry of the death-lust cease over its prey,—when shall the *Prince of Peace* triumph in the hearts of individuals and of nations? Ed.

V. 3. 'We must not employ our good actions as persons use water which they pour into a pump,—to draw up something for ourselves.' GORTON MATHER.

V. 4—6. The Jews were still the professed worshippers of God, and the nation had been espoused to Him by special covenant: idolatry, therefore, and other direct violations of the national covenant, were spiritual adultery; and the rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah was the grossest instance of that crime, which could be committed. They moreover idolized worldly interests and pleasures, in the most excessive manner: as if these had been their portion, and religion no farther valuable than as it subserved that primary object. It is also probable, that many nominal Christians had renounced, concealed, or belied, their profession, from regard to the world, to such a degree as to merit the severe rebuke contained in this address. Both descriptions might justly be called 'adulterers and adulteresses,' in respect of their unfaithfulness to that God, whose professed worshippers they were; though perhaps not guilty of adultery, in the common acceptation of the word; as no doubt many of the Jews were. The world, or mankind in general, being under the influence of Satan, and consequently governed by unholy maxims, the result of a carnal judgment and disposition; he who will, at any rate, be on terms with the world, must not profess the truth, attend on the ordinances, or keep the commandments of God; above all, he must not be zealous for the honor, cause, and Gospel of Christ, in that manner and measure, to which every believer is bound, and in fact, disposed. Gen. 3:14, 15. 4:3—12. Mat. 10:21—26. John 7:3—10. 8:41—47. 15:17—21. 17:13—16. Rom. 8:5—9. Eph. 2:1—3. 1 John 3:11—15. 4:4—6. 5:19.—It is evident from the whole tenor of the O. T., that the natural disposition of fallen man, as instigated by Satan, so eagerly covets worldly things, as to envy all those who possess them, and thus prompts to ambition, contention, hatred, fraud, injustice; and that it leads [him] to envy, or to hate, those who love God, as Cain envied, hated, and murdered his brother Abel. Some expositors, not finding any text in the O. T. expressly declaring, that 'the spirit which is in us lusteth to envy,' and not satisfied with the general tenor of the Scripture on that point, read the last clause

as a separate interrogation: 'Do ye think, that the Scripture speaketh in vain' against this worldly-mindedness? or, 'doth the Spirit, which dwelleth in us, lust to envy?' That is, does the Holy Spirit, which dwelleth in all Christians, or that new nature which He creates, produce such fruit? Gal. 5:22—26. The meaning is nearly the same: but the first seems the true interpretation. The apostle quotes the Sept., except as God is substituted for the Lord. The Heb. reads 'He scorneth the scorers;' but the scorers are the proud, and the Lord resisteth those whom He scorers. Ps. 2:4—6. [4] *Enmity.*] Luke 23:12. Rom. 8:7. Gal. 5:20. Eph. 2:15, 16. 'Enmity, not an enemy; an enemy may be reconciled, but enmity can never be reconciled.' Leigh, on Rom. 8:7. (6) *Resisteth.*] 'Places himself in battle-array against the proud.' Sc.

(1) *Friendship . . . enmity.*] The radical error of the world is selfishness, self-idolatry; distrusting, as far as it may, the God of unity, brotherhood, and love; and having separate interests, ends, aims, desires, and will. Notes, Jude 10, 1 Jn. 5:3 and the epistle of John, *passim*. Ed.

(5.) 'Do ye think that the Scripture [throughout, in its general precepts, BL.] speaketh in vain? Does the Spirit (i. e. the Holy Spirit) that dwelleth in us lust to envy?' Schl. So BL. Ip.

V. 7—10. From the preceding reproofs and arguments, the apostle took occasion to exhort the unconverted Jews, or nominal Christians, who should read his epistle, to 'submit themselves to God.' SCOTT.

(7, 10.) 'The convictions of sin in some persons are vastly different from what they are in others. Some, as Dr. Scott, for instance, have comparatively very little conviction of sin before their conversion. Others have dreadful and pungent convictions. They are borne down into the dust in view of a holy God, and their awful depravity. Their terrors of mind affect their animal nature, deprive them of sleep, and prevent them from pursuing their worldly occupations. And their apprehensions of guilt and misery increase as they approach the time of conversion. This was the case with John Bunyan. Others again have deeper convictions of guilt after they obtain a hope than before. This was the case with President Edwards, the elder. Some are convicted for a short time only, as the 3000 on the day of Pentecost. Others are convicted for days; others, for weeks, and others again, for months, before they experience a change of heart. And some are impressed with their sinfulness and danger, whose convictions after a time wear off, and who do not entertain a hope, that they have spiritually passed from death unto life. This was the case with Felix. Some have their consciences



9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your joy* to heaviness.

10 Humble *yourself* in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

11 Speak *not* evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

1 Mat. 23:12. m Ep. 4:31. 1 Pe. 2:1. n Mat. 10:28.

this single aim and principle, rather to please God [and conform our wills to his] than to seek after anything in this world; hypocrisy is heart-impurity; but they who submit themselves to God aright, will purify their hearts as well as cleanse their hands. 4. 'Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; what afflictions God sends, take them as He would have you, and be duly sensible of them; be afflicted when afflictions are sent, and not despise them; or be afflicted in your sympathies with those who are so, and in laying to heart the calamities of the church of God; mourn and weep for your own sins and the sins of others.' This may be taken, either as a prediction of sorrow, or a prescription of seriousness; let men think to set grief at defiance, yet God can bring it on them; none laugh so heartily, but He

can turn their laughter into mourning; and this, the unconcerned Christians James wrote to, are threatened should be their case; they are therefore directed, before things come to the worst, to lay aside their vain mirth and their sensual pleasures, that they might indulge godly sorrow and penitential tears. 5. *Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord*; let the inward acts of the soul be suitable to all those outward expressions of grief, affliction, and sorrow before mentioned. *Humble yourself.*

VI. We have great encouragement to act thus toward God, v. 8—10. Those that draw nigh to God in a way of duty, shall find God drawing nigh to them in a way of mercy. If there be not a close communion between God and us, it is our fault, and not his. *He shall lift up the humble.* Thus much our Lord Himself declared, Mat. 23:12. If we are truly penitent and humble under the marks of God's displeasure, we shall in a little time know the advantages of his favor. *Before honor is humility.* The highest honor in heaven will be the reward of the greatest humility on earth.

V. 11—17. In this part of the ep.,

I. We are cautioned against the sin of evil-speaking, v. 11. The Greek word signifies speaking anything that may hurt or injure another; we must not speak evil things of others, though true, unless there be some necessary occasion for it; much less report evil things, when they are false, or, for aught we know, may be so; our lips must be guided by the law of kindness, as well as truth and justice; this, which Solomon makes a necessary part of the character of his virtuous woman, Prov. 31:26, must needs be a part of the character of every true Christian. *Speak not evil one of another.*

1. Because ye are brethren. The compellation, as used by the apostle here, carries an argument along with it. Consider, ye are brethren.

2. Because this is to judge the law; the law of Moses, Lev. 19:16. the law of Christ, Mat. 7:1. The sum and substance of both is, that men should love one another. A detracting tongue therefore condemns the law of God, and the commandment of Christ, when it is defaming its neighbor. The Christians to whom James wrote, were apt to speak very hard things of one another, because of their differences about indifferent things, as appears Rom. 14. 'Now,' says he, 'he who censures and condemns his brother for not agreeing with him in those things which the law of God has left indifferent, thereby censures and condemns the law, as if it had done ill in leaving them indifferent; he who quarrels with his brother, and condemns him for the sake of anything not determined in the Word of God, [note, Titus, 3:10.] does thereby reflect on that Word of God, as if it were not a perfect rule; let us take heed of judging the law, for the law of the Lord is perfect; if men break the law, leave that to judge them; if they do not break it, let not us judge them.'

3. Because God, the Lawgiver, has reserved the power of passing the final sentence on men wholly to Himself, v. 12. Princes and states are not excluded, by what is here said, from making laws; nor subjects at all encouraged to disobey human laws [which conflict not with conscience]; but God is still to be acknowledged as the Supreme Lawgiver, who only can give law to the conscience, and who alone is to be absolutely obeyed. He has power fully to reward the observance of his laws, and to

suddenly smitten by the news of the conviction and conversion of others, or by something of a religious nature heard in public or private, or by some passages of Scripture, or by some sermon, or by some striking dispensation of Divine Providence. Others are affected more gradually. They first become thoughtful, and then, by meditating upon those things of religion which have an awakening tendency, deep conviction ultimately takes fast hold on them. Some who have been concerned in a degree for their salvation many years, are roused to a greater sense of their guilt and danger. Some are affected by the justice of God; others, by his mercy; some at a view of heaven and its glories; others, at a view of hell and its miseries. Some have their minds fixed on particular sins they have committed; others, on particular mercies of God towards them. Some are deeply impressed at the truth of the Gospel in general; others at the truth of some particular doctrine. Thus conviction of sin in different persons varies in the degree, duration, manner, and occasion of it. But in one absolutely essential feature it is alike in all,—a sense of their entire depravity, guilt, and ruin.' *Harbinger of the Millennium*; ch. on Revivals. Rev. Dr. COGSWELL.

(8.) *Cleanse hands.* 'I. e. abstain from wicked actions. We cannot give the inward principle of goodness to ourselves; on the other hand God will not grant it to lazy wishes, and half-formed resolutions. The double-minded are persons wavering between long-confirmed habits of evil, and incipient wishes to become good.' BL., after Bp. Jebb.

V. 11, 12. Nothing can more completely demonstrate any proposition, than this passage demonstrates, that the moral law is the believer's rule of duty; and that every word or action, which dishonors the law of God, is rebellion, if not blasphemy, against our one Lawgiver and Judge. At the same time, it exposes, in a most striking manner, the wickedness of that presumptuous, rash, and censorious way, in which zealous and bigots condemn and anathematize those, who in any respect differ from them, to the immense scandal of the Gospel, and disturbance of the church; and this conduct in fact is almost always found to accompany antinomian tenets, and is perfectly congenial to them, though not confined to those who adopt them. SCOTT.

(11, 12.) *Judge . . . lawgiver.* 'A church has no right to command, as a duty, a particular mode of showing our attachment to Christ, unless He had Himself commanded it: . . . nor has it a right to resolve itself into a temperance, abolition, missionary, peace, or any other society. . . Nor can it pledge any member to anything but what he has pledged himself to. He has united himself to a particular church, by promising to obey it in all that Christ has commanded, and in nothing more. In everything else he is perfectly unpledged and uncommitted. An hundred thousand men have, in like manner, united themselves with particular churches, on the same general principle. All are bound to their particular churches, by the same ties, and this is all. All are united to each other by identity of belief and practice, in the things which they all believe Christ to have commanded, and in nothing else. In everything else, every one is as free as the air he breathes, free not only of his particular church, but also of the whole church or denomination. To the particular church with which he is united, he is responsible, under Christ, for his belief and practice, but not to the denomination, nor to any one else. If he imbibe false doctrine, or, by his conduct, give evidence, that the love of Christ is not in him, they may reprove him, or withdraw themselves from him. And here the matter ends. Each voluntary association is thus final within itself. The denomination can neither control nor overrule the decisions of a church, nor approve or censure a single individual. If a man stand faultless before his church,

he is faultless before his sect. And for them to assume any authority over him or them, is gross and unblushing arrogance.—Hence, a denomination, as it is called, is a very different thing from what it is currently supposed to be. It is not an association, into the common stock of which a man throws his conscience, his property, his character, and opinions, to be used or abused, to be directed or controlled, by the will of a majority. It is not a clan, of which every member is bound to espouse the quarrels of every other, and of which all the members must rally at the call of him who claims to be their leader, or who volunteers to be their representative. There is no such clanship, for, except in those matters which Christ has enjoined, they are not in any respect committed to each other. There is no such representation, for there is no power to be delegated; and he who assumes it, and those who allow it to be assumed, act in direct variance with the first principles of Independency.

'I insist the more upon this, because, at the present time, there is great danger lest it should all be forgotten. . . If associations, however excellent, wandering beyond their proper limits, assume to legislate over churches, and to control the opinions and the consciences of individuals, by majorities, or by fictitious public opinion, an irresponsible hierarchy will be created in the very bosom of independency. . . A church never invests its delegates to such assemblies, with power to pledge it for anything, nor can it; for no member of it can delegate to any man or set of men, the answering of the question, what does or does not Christ require of me.—I must answer this question for myself, no one else can answer it for me. . . The church is responsible for the cultivation of piety in the hearts of its members. If, through the neglect of piety, benevolence in any respect languishes, for the neglect of piety the church is responsible to Him who is her Head. But she is responsible in no other respect. [Again.] if the church have a right to enjoin a particular matter, on its own authority, it has an equal right to forbid on the same authority; for the right, in both cases, is the same. If a church may command me, on pain of exclusion, to do this particular good in this particular way, it may, if it so choose, enjoin me, on the same authority, to leave it undone. Now this is manifestly a most gross violation of right, and every one, not demented, so esteems it. . . If we surrender the doctrine, that Christ is the sole [Lawgiver or] Legislator for every individual of his church, and allow that the church may itself make laws, binding on the conscience of the individual, what is the result? We become papists at once. This is the very essence of the Romish error. That corrupt church assumes, that it has the power and the right to bind the conscience in all matters, both of faith and practice; and upon this assumption, all the superstructure of her hideous superstition has been reared. But the principle is the same in both cases. If my conscience is to be bound by my fellow-men, it matters not whether these men be a conclave of bishops, and cardinals, or whether they be my brethren whom I meet every day, and with whom I sit down around the same communion table. My brethren will, I doubt not, use this usurped authority more mildly; but this alters not the fact, that the authority is usurped, nor does it offer any guarantee that it may not, in the end, become as oppressive as the other.

'I delight to see every man choosing that form of ecclesiastical association which pleases him. But I may, without offence, ask every Independent to understand and to maintain his principles. In maintaining them, our fathers suffered bonds, confiscation, banishment, and death. Let us not be unmindful of the heritage which they have left us. Let us stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made us free.' *Limitations of Human Responsibility.* WAYLAND.



13 Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

14 Whereas, ye know not what shall be on the morrow: For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

## CHAP. V.

<sup>1</sup> Wicked rich men are to fear God's vengeance. <sup>7</sup> We ought to be patient in afflictions, after the example of the prophets, and Job: <sup>12</sup> to forbear swearing, <sup>13</sup> to pray in adversity, to sing in prosperity: <sup>16</sup> to acknowledge mutually our several faults, to pray one for another, <sup>19</sup> and to reduce a straying brother to the truth.

GO to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

<sup>o</sup> or, For it is.  
<sup>p</sup> Job 7:7.

<sup>q</sup> Lu. 12:47.  
<sup>a</sup> Pr. 11:28. Lu. 6:24.

punish all disobedience; and therefore should be feared and obeyed as the great Lawgiver, and all judgment should be committed to Him. Since there is one Lawgiver, we may infer, that it is not for any man or company of men in the world, to pretend to give laws immediately to bind conscience; for that is God's prerogative, which must not be invaded; there is one Lawgiver.

II. We are cautioned against a presumptuous confidence of the continuance of our lives, and against forming projects thereupon, with assurance of success, v. 13, 14. The apostle, having reproved those who were judges and condemners of the law, now reproves such as were disregarding of Providence; 'Go to now, an old way of speaking, designed to engage attention; the Greek word may be rendered, Behold now! or See, and consider. Reflect a little on this way of thinking and talking, call yourselves to account for it.' Observe, on this, How

apt worldly and projecting men are to leave God out of their schemes; how much of worldly happiness lies in the promises men make to themselves beforehand; therefore observe, how vain a thing it is to look for anything good in futurity, without the concurrence of Providence. We will go to such a city; (say they;) perhaps to Antioch, or Damascus, or Alexandria, which were then the great places for traffic; but how uncertain their journey, their stay, their success, their life! God hath wisely left us in the dark concerning future events, and even concerning the duration of life itself; we know not what shall be on the morrow; we may know what we intend to do, and to be, but a thousand things may happen to prevent us; we are not sure of life itself, since it is but as a vapor; appears but for a little time, and then vanisheth away, vanisheth as to this world, but there is a life that will continue in the other world; and since this life is so uncertain, it concerns us all to prepare and lay up in store [a character] for that to come.

III. We are taught to keep up a constant sense of our dependence on the will of God, for life, and all the actions and enjoyments of it, v. 15. The apostle, having reproved them for what was amiss, now directs them how to be and do better, v. 15. This must be said, not in a slight, formal, and customary way, but so as to think what we say, and so as to be reverent and serious in what we say. 1. If the Lord will, we shall live. We must remember our times are at God's disposal; we live as long as God appoints, and in the circumstances God appoints, and therefore must be submissive to Him, even as to life itself; and then, 2. If the Lord will, we shall do this or that. We may propose for ourselves, or families, or friends; but Providence sometimes breaks all our measures, and throws our schemes into confusion; therefore both our counsels for action, and our conduct in action, should be entirely referred to God; all we design, and all we do, should be with a submissive dependence on God.

IV. We are directed to avoid vain boasting, and to look upon it not only as a weak, but a very evil thing, v. 16. They promised themselves life and prosperity, and great things, in the world, without any just regard to God; and then they boasted of these

things, and rejoiced in them. Such is the joy of worldly people, to boast of all their successes, yea often to boast of their very projects before they know what success they shall have. How common is it for men to boast of things which they have no other title to, than what arises from their own vanity and presumption. Such rejoicing, says the apostle, is evil; it is foolish and hurtful for men to boast of worldly things, and of their aspiring projects, when they should be attending to the humbling duties before laid down in v. 8—10. It is a great sin in God's account, it will bring great disappointments on themselves, and will prove their destruction in the end. If we rejoice in God, that our times are in his hand, that all events are at his disposal, and that He is our God in covenant, this rejoicing is good; the wisdom, power, and providence of God, are then concerned to make all things work together for our good; [when our wills are consonant with his;] but if we rejoice in our own vain confidences and presumptions, this is evil; it is an evil carefully to be avoided by all wise and good men.

V. We are taught, in the whole of our conduct, to act up to our own convictions, and, whether we have to do with God or men, to see that we never go contrary to our own knowledge, v. 17. To do so is aggravated sin, and is to have the worst witness against us that can be, even our own conscience. Observe, This stands immediately connected with the plain lesson of saving, If the Lord will, we shall do this or that; they might be ready to say, 'This is a very obvious thing; who knows not that we depend on Almighty God for life, and breath, and all things?' Remember then, if you do know this, that whenever you act unsuitably to such a dependence, to him that knows to do good, and does it not, to him it is sin, the greater sin. Let us therefore take care that conscience be rightly informed, and then that it be faithfully and constantly obeyed; for if our own hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God; but if we say, We see, and do not act suitably to our sight, then our sin remaineth, John 9: 41.

CHAP. V. V. 1—11. The apostle here addresses first sinners, and then saints.

I. Sinners; here James seconds what Christ had said, Luke 6:24. Those here

PRACT. OBS. The carnal affections of the heart having cast off the rule of reason and wisdom, anarchy, and civil war, takes place in the soul; while one member of the corrupt nature wars against the rest, and they in turns prevail and are gratified; and while the members of the body are the instruments of their pernicious purposes, and obey the dictates of the tyrant of the hour.—This being, in one way or another, the case with the unnumbered millions of the human species, (except the remnant who are 'born again,') we need not wonder at the confusion, crimes, and miseries, which have, in every age, abounded in all parts of the world, though we ought deeply to mourn over them.—Alas! how many nominal Christians might be addressed in the apostle's words, 'as adulterers and adulteresses,' both literally and spiritually! And yet, how would they be disgusted and enraged, if a minister were to accost them in such language, however justly and scripturally applied! But, in whatever terms the offensive truth be conveyed, we are bound to declare, most perspicuously, that 'the friendship of the world is enmity

against God; and that whosoever willeth and purposeth to be the friend of the world, he is the enemy of God.' Such a profession of the Gospel, as gives no offence to a 'world that lieth in wickedness,' will leave a man to perish with the enemies of Christ. Let us then endeavor to be friends to mankind, and to do good to all: to separate from the intimate society of ungodly men, and to profess the truths and obey the precepts of Christ; not inquiring how far we may do it without incurring reproach, contempt, opprobrious names, or other kinds and degrees of persecution.—Alas! too many professed Christians seem openly to quit the place of the servants of God, and doers of his commandments, to set up for judges, and to prescribe to their fellow-servants, or decide on their eternal state. But let us leave them, and all others, to their own Master, remembering, that 'there is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy;' and let us be careful to judge ourselves, that we may not be condemned by Him; Rom. 14:10—12. 1 Cor. 11:29—34. remembering, that omitting known duty is as criminal as committing known sin. S.

V. 13—17. The apostle next proceeds to reprove and expose the self-sufficiency, worldly spirit, and unbelieving, irreligious language, which were manifested by many in another way. The expression, 'Go to now,' or 'Come now,' here implied strong disapprobation, and a call to any one to consider the absurdity, or ungodliness of his conduct. M. R. l.

SCOTT.

(13.) Most of the eastern merchants are, and have ever been, more or less, pedlers, going out for a year and more, and tarrying a longer or shorter time in a city. See Bush's Illustrations. The Jews were thus constantly trading to Tyre, Babylon, Alexandria, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, Rome, &c.

ED.

(14.) Vapor.] The beautiful allusion is (comp. Hos. 6:4. &c.) to the dew-cloud, or river-mist of the early morning, which, as the sun mounts, is seen soon to attenuate and exhale.

IB.

(15.) 'The Jews begin nothing without an if God, or if the name will, and they abbreviated the phrase to its initials. So the Mohammedans begin every writing with *bismillah*, i. e. in the name of God; the Greeks use *sun Theō*; the Latins, *Deo volente*.'

BURNEA.

(17.) 'I appeal to every man who has ever used his [time and] substance for the welfare, and especially the spiritual welfare, of others. Of all the money he has expended that has yielded him the most pleasure which has been devoted to benevolent purposes. On the score of enjoyment, the gratification of all the animal appetites, all the selfish

desires, and even the domestic and social affections falls infinitely below the gratification of *Christian benevolence*. And, as it is so much superior to other pleasures, so it is more permanent. Low, selfish gratifications afford no pleasure in review, and are generally succeeded by the bitterness of remorse. Hence, the lovers of worldly pleasure avoid reflection, and seek relief in new scenes of dissipation. But the man of active benevolence loves to recall past pleasures, and in the recollection, with a peaceful conscience and new excitement of benevolent feeling, he enjoys them again and again. Be rich therefore in good works.' Rev. Dr. Woods. — 'Though the assertion may fly like chain shot among us, and rake down all before it, I will again and again assert, that every one of us might do more good than he does: and therefore we ought to be exceedingly humbled, that we have done so little good in the world. I am not uncharitable in saying, that I know not one assembly of Christians on earth, which ought not to be a Boshim on this consideration. The most useful men in the world have gone out of it, crying, "Lord forgive our sins of omission." — "Those who devote themselves to good devices, and who duly observe their opportunities to do good, usually find a wonderful increase of their opportunities. As when a stone falls into a pool, — one circle and service will produce another, till they extend, — who can tell how far?" MATHER.

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1—6. The apostle... wrote only a short time before the destruction of Jerusalem, even before those tremendous



2 Your riches<sup>b</sup> are corrupted, and your garments are<sup>c</sup> moth-eaten.

3 Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped<sup>d</sup> treasure together for the last days.

4 Behold, the hire<sup>e</sup> of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered<sup>f</sup> into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

5 Ye have lived in pleasure<sup>g</sup> on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist<sup>h</sup> you.

b Je. 17:11.  
c Job 13:28.  
d Ro. 2:5.

e Ja. 2:23.  
f Mal. 3:5.  
g Ex. 22:27.

g Lu. 16:19,25.  
h Mat. 5:39.

addressed were not professed Christians, but the worldly, unbelieving Jews, such as are here said to condemn and kill the Just; the infidel Jews would not hear the Word, therefore it is written, that they might read it; it is observable, this epistle is not directed, as Paul's epistles were, to the brethren in Christ, but, in general, to the twelve tribes; and the salutation is not, *grace and peace from Christ*, but, in general, *greeting*; ch. 1:1. many poor among the Jews believed; but the generality of the rich rejected Christianity, were hardened in unbelief, and hated and persecuted those who believed; to these oppressing, unbelieving, persecuting, rich people, the apostle directs himself in the first six verses.

He foretells the judgments of God, that should come on them, v. 1, 3. *miserics*, and such dreadful *miserics*, that the very apprehension of them was enough to make them weep and howl; *miserics* that should arise from the very things in which they placed their happiness, and *miserics* that should be completed by these things *witnessing against*

them at the last, to their utter destruction; and they are now called to reason upon, and thoroughly to weigh, the matter, and to think how they will stand before God in judgment. *Rich men* are apt to say to themselves, (and others are ready to say to them,) *Eat, drink, and be merry*; but God says, *Weep and howl*. It is not said, *Weep and repent*, for this the apostle does not expect from them, (he speaks in a way of denouncing rather than admonishing,) but, *Weep and howl*, for, when your doom comes, there will be nothing but *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth*. Those who live like beasts, are called to *howl* like such. Public calamities are most grievous to rich people, who live in pleasure, and are secure and sensual; and therefore they shall weep and howl more than other people for the *miserics that shall come upon them*. They think to heap up treasure for their last days, to live plentifully on when old; but alas! they are only heaping up treasures to become a prey to others; (as the Jews had all taken from them by the Romans;) and treasures that will prove at last to be only *treasures of wrath, in the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God*; then shall their iniquities, in the punishment of them, *eat their flesh, as it were with fire*. In the ruin of Jerusalem, many thousands perished by fire; in the last judgment the wicked shall be condemned to everlasting burnings, prepared for the devil and his angels.

The Lord deliver us from the portion of wicked rich men! and, in order to this, let us take care that we do not fall into their sins, which we are next to consider.

1. Covetousness; laid by garments, and hoarded up gold and silver: it is a very great disgrace to these things, that they carry in them the principles of their own corruption and consumption; but the disgrace is most heavy on those who hoard and lay up these things till they come to be thus corrupted, and cankered, and eaten. God gives us our worldly possessions, that we may honor Him, and do good with them; but if, instead of that, we sinfully hoard them up, through an undue affection toward them, or a distrust of the providence of God for the future, this is a very heinous crime, and will be witness-

ed against by the very rust and corruption of the treasure thus heaped together.

2. Oppression, v. 4. Those who have wealth in their hands, get power into their hands, and then they are tempted to abuse that power to oppress such as are under them: the rich, having power in their hands, probably made as hard bargains with the poor as they could; and, even after that, would not make good their bargain as they should have done. This is a crying sin, an iniquity that cries so as to reach the ears of God; and, in this case, God is to be considered as the Lord of sabaoth, or the Lord of hosts,—a phrase often used in the Old Test. when the people of God were defenceless, and wanted protection; and when their enemies were numerous and powerful. The Lord of hosts, who has all ranks of beings and creatures at his disposal, and who sets all in their several places, He hears the oppressed when they cry, by reason of the cruelty or injustice of the oppressor, and He will order some of his hosts,—angels, devils, storms, distempers, or the like,—to avenge the wrongs done to those who are dealt with unrighteously and unmercifully. Take heed of this sin of defrauding and oppressing, and avoid the very appearances of it.

3. Sensuality and voluptuousness, v. 5. God does not forbid us to use pleasure; but to live in it as if we lived for nothing else, is a very provoking sin; and to do this on the earth, where we are but strangers and pilgrims, to continue but for a while, and where we ought to be preparing for eternity,—this is a grievous aggravation of the sin of voluptuousness. Luxury makes people wanton, as in Hos. 13:6. It is hard for people to have great estates, and not too much indulge themselves in carnal, sensual pleasures. Some may say, 'What harm in good cheer, provided people do not spend above what they have?' What! is it no harm for people to spend that in superfluities, which ought to be spent in charity; and to unfit themselves for minding the concerns of their souls, by indulging the appetites of their bodies? Surely that which brought flames on Sodom, and would bring these *miserics* for which rich men are here called to weep and howl, must be a heinous evil!

desolations, which Christ had predicted, and his disciples expected, Mat. 24: Mark 13: Luke 21: Above all their other crimes, the Jews had iniquitously condemned and crucified, with the suffrage, as it were, of the whole nation, that 'Just One' who had come among them, even 'Jesus Christ the righteous,' and they still perpetuated that enormous crime, by persecuting his meek and harmless followers. Hitherto He had not resisted them, but had meekly and patiently endured their injuries, and they had no pretence for their outrageous enmity and cruelty to Him and his disciples. But He was about to come, and to execute most terrible vengeance on them. (3) *Cankered*.] From *ios, poison*, or *rust*, 3:8. Rom. 3:13. The rust of some metals is poisonous; hence the same word signifies both *rust* and *poison*.—(4) *Lord of sabaoth*.] JEHOVAH sabaoth, 'Lord of hosts,' occurs continually in the O. T. and the apostle, referring to it, retains the Heb. word *sabaoth*; yet substitutes *Kurios, Lord*, for JEHOVAH, which is not used in the N. T. Se.

(2, 3.) 'Those treasures which have been amassed, and suffered to rust and decay in useless hoards, instead of having been brightened by a liberal circulation, "will be a witness against you, and will eat your flesh as it were fire," i. e. will show that you have not properly employed them, and will consequently occasion severe misery and woe.' Holden, Mat. 8:4. 10:18. [Indeed, as wealth is a talent committed to one's stewardship, it seems improper to wait till the grasp upon it is loosening by death, before it is employed, for one knows not the mischief or good it may do; whereas, were it properly laid out by its possessor in service to God and man, while enjoying the use of his abilities, its disposal could be regulated to the best advantage. And this would seem to be a duty; and the accumulation of wealth, with an intention to give it away, when one can retain it no longer, is unwise, at the least.]

'Bp. Jebb well remarks, that "the enumeration of the various kinds of wealth, is a poetical amplification, containing a climax. Three kinds of wealth are intended: 1. stores of corn, wine, oil, &c. liable to putrefaction; 2. wardrobes of rich garments; among the ancients, especially the orientals, a principal portion of their wealth [for their fashions do not change], and proverbially the prey of the moth (see Is. 51:8.); 3. treasures of gold and silver, liable to rust, or, at least, to change of color.—Again, the rust of the precious metals, rising as a witness against avaricious hoarders, is a very noble personification; and the terror is heightened, when, in the next line, it becomes a fire that preys upon their vitals." From the classics, it fully appears, that the gold and silver utensils of ancient times, were subject to something like rust; probably from the metal having a greater proportion of alloy than that of modern times. [Certain gases tarnish both gold and silver.] In *eat, &c.* Pott supposes an image, borrowed from the painful and deleterious effects of rust when rubbed into raw flesh; an apt designation of the present misery and fu-

ture woe, unutterable and never ending, which results from the abuse of riches, or the amassing of them by unlawful methods. Yet there is, I conceive, also an allusion to the "fire that is not quenched," which must partly be alluded to in the next clause; with which, indeed, many eminent contrs. ancient and modern, construe the preceding words, in the sense, "ye have, as it were, treasured up fire to consume you in the last days." But there appears no reason to abandon the common construction, by which the words are taken with the preceding. As to Dr. Burton's objections, that "it occasions a confusion of metaphor, and leaves the verb *lay up* without an accusative;" the former is of no weight in a passage, like this, of Æschylean sublimity; and the latter is utterly without force; since the accusative, by a common idiom, is included in the verb itself. So Bp. Jebb well explains, "Ye have laid up treasures for the 'last days':—treasures! but of what kind? Let the last days tell: the days of the destruction of your nation." Paul (Rom. 2:5.) fully expresses what James indignantly suppresses, "treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath." The mythological fiction of Tantalus (who was punished with an insatiable desire for what he could not enjoy), imitates a fine moral lesson, respecting the punishment of avarice even in this world." See Bloomfield's N. T. with Notes. B.

(3.) 'The man who possesses riches, and who lives and dies in an age like this, without giving any considerable portion to benevolent and pious objects, has no honor from God, and deserves none from man. He sinks himself, his name, and his riches, into contempt: and though he leaves a large estate to his heirs, he leaves no blessing of God with it.' Rev. Dr. Woods.

(4.) *Hire of laborers kept back by fraud*.] How common a sin, yet how seldom noted! How often, in a case of bankruptcy, are the rich secured, and the poor denied their hard earnings. How much of their only property, *time*, is stolen, by compelling day-laborers to call again and again for daily or weekly wages, 'kept back:' and how entirely is the consequent misery forgotten, yea, their wages spent in extravagance, and wanton luxuries. How many females are thus, or from insufficient wages, tempted to prostitution, how many negroes to despair in bitter bondage by this selfishness! Better, far better, for master and for slave, white or black, to hire liberally and pay punctually. See treatises on Political Economy. Ed.—'Alas! how much of the silver and the gold of the world is buried in hands, where it is little better than conveyed back to the mines whence it came!' MATHER.

(6.) *The just*.] 'Bp. Middleton remarks, that the *hypothetic* use of the article, by which *ton dikaion* [singular] would be for *tous dikaios*, [plural], is much too strong; and the strictly *definitive* use would point out the eminently *Just One*. On any other supposition than that the passage was meant of the condemnation of our Savior, terms so obvi-



7 <sup>i</sup> Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the <sup>j</sup> early and latter rain.

8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for <sup>k</sup> the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

9 <sup>l</sup> Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth <sup>m</sup> before the door.

10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering <sup>n</sup> affliction, and of patience.

11 Behold, we count them <sup>o</sup> happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience <sup>p</sup> of Job, and have seen the end <sup>q</sup> of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

[Practical Observations.]

12 But above all things, my brethren

<sup>i</sup> or, Be long patient; or, Suffer with long patience. <sup>k</sup> Re. 22:20. <sup>l</sup> or, groan; or, grieve. <sup>m</sup> Re. 3:20. <sup>n</sup> He. 11:35-38. <sup>o</sup> Pa. 94:12. <sup>p</sup> Mat. 5:10. <sup>q</sup> Job 1:21, &c. <sup>r</sup> Job 42:10, &c.

Pride, and idleness, and fulness of bread, mean the same thing with living in pleasure, and being wanton, and nourishing the heart as in a day of slaughter.

4. Persecution, v. 6. This fills up the measure of their iniquity. They oppressed, to get estates; when they had them, they gave way to luxury and sensuality, till they had lost all sense and feeling of the wants or afflictions of others; and then they persecute and kill without remorse: they pretend to act legally, indeed; they condemn before they kill; but unjust prosecutions, whatever color of law they may carry in them, will come into the reckoning when God shall make inquisition for blood, as well as massacres and downright murders. Thus far the address to sinners goes.

II. We have next subjoined an address to saints: some despise or condemn this way of preaching to sinners, and to saints; but, from the apostle's here taking this method, we may conclude, that this is the best way rightly to divide the Word of truth. From what has been said concerning wicked and oppressing rich men, occasion is given to administer comfort to God's afflicted people.

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-11. The rich, who are luxurious and haughty, yea, all who now scornfully refuse to mourn for their sins, will soon be forced to weep and howl, under the miseries which are coming upon them. The doom of unfaithful stewards will then be very dreadful; but the cruel injustice and oppression, with which many treat their dependents and laborers, by whose toil and ingenuity they are enriched, and whom they leave to penury and distress, will cry for most tremendous vengeance, 'in the ears of the Lord of hosts.'—But let the poor and afflicted Christian patiently wait for the coming of his Lord, as 'the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth;' the good seed, which he now sows in pain, and waters with tears, will spring up and soon ripen to a harvest of eternal joy. Ps. 126:5, 6. P. O. Let us

ously applicable to that event would hardly have been employed. "Moreover," says Bp. Jebb, "our Lord is often so styled in Scripture; as Ac. 3:14, 15. 7:5. And the murder of our Lord was the great national transgression of the Jews, and therefore likely to be mentioned by James as the consummation of their apostasy." Midl. tr. "The Savior opposes not your perverseness, but leaves you a prey to the delusion;" or, as Bp. Jebb paraphrases, "He is not arrayed against you; you feel secure; you despise the Crucified, as still powerless to vindicate his own cause, and to protect his followers: but wait: the time of his array will come; the day of vengeance is at hand." BLOOMF.

V. 7, 8. He primarily meant the providential coming of the Lord Jesus, to deliver them from the persecution of the Jewish rulers, and to execute vengeance on that devoted nation; yet He intended, no doubt, to lead their thoughts forward to the hour of death, and the coming of Christ to judgment. Mat. 24: 25. (7) Be patient.] The verb, and its derivatives, are used, for the forbearance, which God exercises towards sinners, in delaying to punish them; 10, Rom. 2:4. 9:22. 2 Pet. 3:9, 15. of the same lenity, exercised by men; Mat. 18:26, 29. Acts 26:3. 1 Cor. 13:4. Eph. 4:2. 1 Thes. 5:14; of the Lord's delay to rescue his persecuted servants; Luke 13:7. and of man's patient waiting for and expecting promised mercies, in persevering faith and obedience; Gal. 5:22. Heb. 6:15. SCOTT.

1. Attend to your duty; Be patient, v. 7. stablish your hearts, v. 8. grudge not one against another, brethren, v. 9. Consider well the meaning of these three expressions: (1.) 'Be patient; bear your afflictions without murmuring, your injuries without revenge; and though God should not in any signal manner appear for you immediately, wait for Him. Let your patience be lengthened out to long-suffering;' so the word here used signifies. When we have done our work, we have need of patience to stay for our reward. Be patient to the coming of the Lord. And because this is a lesson Christians must learn, though ever so hard or difficult, it is repeated in v. 8. Be ye also patient. (2.) 'Stablish your hearts; let your faith be firm, without wavering; your practice of what is good, constant, and continued, without tiring; and your resolutions for God and heaven fixed, in spite of all sufferings or temptations.' The prosperity of the wicked, and the affliction of the righteous, have, in all ages, been a very great trial to the faith of the people of God. So David, Ps. 73:2. Some to whom James wrote, might probably be in the same tottering condition; therefore they are called on to establish their hearts; faith and patience will establish the heart. (3.) Grudge not one against another; the words signify, Groan not one against another; that is, 'Do not make one another uneasy by your murmuring groans at what befalls you; your distrustful groans as to what may further come upon you; your revengeful groans against the instruments of your sufferings; or by your envious groans at those who may be free from your calamities: do not make yourselves and one another uneasy, by thus groaning to and grieving one another.' Dr. Manton thinks James refers here to different classes of Christians, as of circumcision and uncircumcision, at variance with each other. Those who are in the midst of common enemies, and in suffering circumstances, should be more especially careful not to grieve one another, otherwise judgments will come on them as well as others; and the more such grudgings prevail, the nearer do they show judgment to be.

2. Consider what encouragement here is for Christians to be patient, to stablish their hearts, and not to grudge one against another. (1.) 'Look to the example of the husbandman; and if you should be called to wait a little longer than the husbandman, is not a crown of glory something proportionably greater, and infinitely more worth your waiting for?' 'But,' (2.) 'Think how short your

waiting time may possibly be, v. 8, 9. Do not be impatient, do not quarrel with one another; the great Judge, who will set all to rights, is at hand: He should be conceived by you as at the door.' The coming of the Lord, to punish the wicked Jews, was then very nigh, when James wrote this epistle; and, whenever the graces of his people are tried in an extraordinary manner, the certainty of Christ's coming as Judge, and the nearness of it, should establish their hearts. The Judge is now a great deal nearer, in his coming to judge the world, than when this epistle was written; therefore this should have the greater effect on us. (3.) The danger of our being condemned when the Judge appears, should excite us to mind our duty as before laid down; Grudge not, lest ye be condemned. Fretfulness and discontent expose us to the just judgment of God, and we bring more calamities on ourselves by our murmuring, distrustful, envious groans and grudgings against one another, than we are aware of. If we avoid these evils, and be patient under our trials, God will not condemn us. Let us encourage ourselves with this. (4.) We are encouraged to be patient, by the example of the prophets, v. 10. Observe, here, The prophets, on whom God put the greatest honor, and for whom He had the greatest favor, were most afflicted: and when we think that the best men have had the hardest usage in this world, we should hereby be reconciled to affliction. Observe, further, Those who were the greatest examples of suffering affliction, are also the best and greatest examples of patience: tribulation worketh patience. Hereupon James gives it us as the common sense of the faithful, v. 11. We count them happy who endure: we look upon righteous and patient sufferers as the happiest people. See ch. 1:2-12. (5.) Job also is proposed as an example for the encouragement of the afflicted, v. 11. Under all his miseries, he was patient and humble; and what came to him in the end? Why, truly, God accomplished and brought about those things for him, that plainly prove the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. The best way to bear afflictions, is, to look to the end of them; and the pity of God is such, that He will not delay the bringing of them to an end, when his purposes are once answered; and the tender mercy of God is such, that He will make his people an abundant amends for all their sufferings and afflictions.

V. 12-20. This epistle now drawing to a close, the penman goes off very quick from one thing to another; hence it is that mat-

then 'patiently continue in well doing,' having 'our hearts established with grace,' and realizing expectations of the great day of retribution.—It does not become Christians to grudge one against another, or to envy, repine, despond, or dispute; rather let us prepare to meet our 'Judge, who standeth at the door,' that we may not be condemned at his coming.—The event will clear up the darkness of all the Lord's dealings with his people; and whatever they or others have thought during the continuance of their trials, in the end it will appear as evident in the case of every one of them, as it did in that of Job, nay, far more illustriously evident, that 'the Lord is pitiful and of tender mercy,' and that they are happy, who patiently trust in Him, and keep his commandments. SCOTT.

V. 9-11. It would also be wholly inconsistent for the Christians to grudge one another the transient advantages which some possessed and others did not; or to give way to envy, discontent, repinings, or resentment; lest 'the coming of the Lord' should prove their condemnation, instead of their redemption.—(9) Grudge.] Mark 7:34. Rom. 8:23. 2 Cor. 5:2. Heb. 13:17.—The temptation to envy the prosperity of their oppressors, to murmur under their own sufferings, and to allow a spirit of resentment against their enemies, seems especially meant. SCOTT.

(10.) 'The example of God is constantly proposed to us in Scripture, as the most unexceptionably worthy of our imitation. But God being no object of our senses, the Scripture hath added to it that of Christ, the visible Image of the invisible God. But here, again, there is a sort of excuse for falling so very far short of our Pattern, from the frailties of our nature, and the turbulencies of our passions. To remove, therefore, all exceptions of this sort, we have the rules of morality reduced to practice, by men like ourselves, who had, indeed, the divine assistance to strengthen their infirmity; and so may we, if we seek it as they did.' Dr. JORTIN.

V. 12. 'It was a proverbial manner, among the Jews, . . . of characterizing a man of strict probity and good faith, by saying, His yes is yes, and his no is no; i. e. you may depend on his word; as he declares, so it is; and as he promises, so he will do.' Campbell. 'We ought never to



ren, swear 'not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and *your* nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

r Ma. 5:34, &c.      Jo. 2:2, &c.      u Ma. 16:13.  
s 2 Ch. 33:12.      t Ep. 5:19.

ters so very different are insisted on in these few verses.

I. The sin of swearing is cautioned against, v. 12. Some understand this too strictly, as if the meaning was, 'Swear not at your persecutors;' but the apostle's warning extends to other occasions of swearing as well as this; some have translated *above*, by *before*; and so made the sense to be, that they should not, in common conversation, *before* everything they say, put an oath. Profane swearing was very customary among the Jews; and, since this epistle is directed in general to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, we may conceive this exhortation sent to those who believed not. It is hard to suppose swearing should be one of the spots of God's children; but, possibly, some of the looser sort of those called *Christians*, might, among other sins here charged on them, be guilty also of this. It is a sin that has most scandalously prevailed, and many make light of nothing so much as common profane swearing! But why, *above all things*, is swearing here forbidden? Because it strikes most directly at the honor of God, and has, of all sins, the least temptation to it; neither gain, nor pleasure, nor reputation, that can move men to it, but a wantonness in sinning, and a needless showing of enmity to God, Ps. 139:20. This is a proof of men's being enemies to God; it is also a sin that is most hardly left off when once men are accustomed to it; therefore it should, above all others, be watched against. And once more, *Above all things, swear not*; for how can you expect God should be a strong tower to you in your distress?

Baxter observes, 'All this is so far from swear, but to be so universally observant of truth in our conversation, that our word may always be regarded as an oath.' *Philo*, in *Campbell*.

(13.) Notes, Eph. 5:19. Col. 3:16. 'The heathens, in their drunken festivals to the god of wine, used to celebrate his bounty in impure and wanton songs. The Ephesians, [&c.] just converted from paganism, the apostle instructs in a more excellent devotion,—to sing not impure, but spiritual songs; not to the god of wine, but to the Lord of nature; not so as to corrupt but to comfort and edify one another. Singing is enjoined [on us] as a sacred branch of social worship. We are wonderfully made; and the capacity of uttering a tuneful variety of sounds, is not the smallest wonder in our formation; and there is the same reason why the musical, as any other faculty, should be consecrated to God.—Psalmody was an instituted part of the Jewish worship. Many devout songs and psalms were composed by inspiration, and from the days of David, there was a select number of singers, instructed and supported at public expense, to carry on this branch of worship. In the N. T. we find that psalmody is an ordinance of Christ. After the institution of the Lord's Supper, "they sung a hymn." Paul and Silas in prison, "sang praises to God." The apostle exhorted the Ephesians and Colossians, to maintain this branch of worship. The early fathers exhorted the church to do the same, and heathen writers say, "It was a custom among Christians to assemble on a certain day, and sing hymns to Christ, as unto God;" and the church in heaven are represented as "singing the song of Moses and the Lamb," and "singing a new song." By *psalms*, then, is doubtless intended that book which passes under this name, and is canonical; by *hymns*, perhaps such compositions as those of Moses, Hannah, Simeon, &c.; by *spiritual songs*, those which were composed under the immediate influence of the Spirit. That there was such a spiritual gift in the apostolic age, is evident from 1 Cor. 14.—The apostle directs us to sing, *making melody*,—with the understanding,—with grace,—*teaching and admonishing* one another. The use of music in worship, is, to assist and enliven the devotion of the heart; and when performed with skill, melody of sound, and exactness of time, and harmony, it greatly contributes to this end. But a confused and grating discord chills devotion, and damps the ardor of the soul. Great care was taken that singers, in Jewish worship, should be well instructed. We may form some conception of the solemnity of the temple-worship,

forbidding necessary oaths, that it is but to confirm them, by preserving the due reverence of them.' And then he further notes, 'That the true nature of an oath is, by our speech, to pawn the reputation of some certain or great thing, for the averring of a doubted less thing; and not, as is commonly held, an appeal to God, or other judge.' Hence it was that swearing by the heavens, and by the earth, and by the other oaths the apostle refers to, came to be in use. The Jews thought if they did but admit the great oath of *Chû-Eloah*, they were safe. But they grew so profane as to swear by the creature, as if it was God; while, on the other hand, they who swear commonly and profanely by the name of God, do hereby put Him on the level with every common thing.

But let your yea be yea, and your nay nay; lest you fall into condemnation; that is, 'Let it suffice you to affirm or deny a thing as there is occasion; it is being suspected of falsehood, that leads men to swear. Let it be known that you keep to truth, and are firm to your word, and by this mean you will find there is no need to swear to what you say. Thus shall you escape the condemnation which is expressly annexed to the third commandment; *The Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain.*'

II. As Christians, we are taught to suit ourselves to the dispensations of Providence, v. 13. Our condition in this world is various; and our wisdom is to submit to its being so, and to behave as becomes us, both in prosperity and under affliction. Afflictions should put us on prayer; and prosperity should make us abound in praise. Not that prayer is to be confined to a time of trouble, or singing to a time of mirth; but these several duties may be performed with special advantage, and to the happiest purposes, at such seasons.

1. In a day of affliction, nothing is more *seasonable than prayer*. The person afflicted must pray himself, as well as engage the prayers of others for him. Times of affliction should be praying times. *Is any afflicted? Let him pray.*

2. In a day of mirth and prosperity, *singing psalms is very proper and seasonable*. In the original it is only said, sing, without the addition of psalms, or any other word; and we learn from the writings of several in the first ages of Christianity, (particularly from a letter of Pliny's, and from some passages in Justin Martyr and Tertullian,) that

the Christians were used to sing hymns, either taken out of Scripture, or of more private composure, in their worship of God. Though some have thought that Paul's advising both the Colossians and Ephesians to *speaking one to another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs*, refers only to the compositions of Scripture; the Psalms of David being distinguished in Heb. by *Shurim, Terhillim, and Mizmorim*, words that exactly answer these of the apostle. Let that be as it will, this we are sure of, that singing psalms is a gospel-ordinance, and that our joy should be holy joy, consecrated to God. Holy mirth becomes families and retirements, as well as public assemblies. Let our singing be such as to make *melody with our hearts unto the Lord*, and God will assuredly be well pleased with this kind of devotion.

III. We have particular directions given as to sick persons; and *healing, pardoning mercy promised*, on the observance of those directions, v. 14, 15. *If any be sick, they are required*, 1. *To send for the elders, the presbyters, pastors or ministers of the church*. It lies on sick people as a duty, to send for ministers, and to desire their assistance and their prayers. 2. It is the duty of ministers to pray over the sick, when thus desired and called for. 3. In the times of miraculous healing, the sick was to be anointed with oil in the name of the Lord. Expositors generally confine this anointing with oil to such as had the power of working miracles; and when miracles ceased, this institution ceased also. In Mark's gospel we read of the apostles' anointing with oil many that were sick, and healing them, Mk. 6:13. And we have accounts of this being practised in the church two hundred years after Christ; but then the gift of healing also accompanied it; when that miraculous gift ceased, this rite was laid aside. The papists, indeed, have made a sacrament of this, which they call *the extreme unction*. They use it, not to heal the sick, as it was used by the apostles; but, as they generally run counter to Scripture, in the appointments of their church, so here they ordain, that this should be administered only to such as are at the very point of death. The apostles' anointing was in order to heal the disease; the popish anointing is for the expulsion of the relics of sin, and to enable the soul, as they pretend, the better to combat with the powers of the air. Some Protestants have thought that this

by the allusions to it in Rev. 5, &c.—Singing being a part of religious worship, it should as well as our prayers be directed to God. We must "make melody in our hearts,"—sing with a sense of God's presence, and with affections corresponding to the matter of the psalm. If the subject be petition, confession, thanksgiving, or adoration, our hearts must harmonize with it. All should take a part in it, and if any are unable to join with their voices, they should not less than others make melody in their hearts. Every one according to his ability is bound to promote the psalmody of the church; as many as are capable, by acquiring the skill and taking an active part, and they who cannot do this, by aiding and furnishing others the means of instruction, by countenancing efforts to improve it, and by cheerfully sharing in the expense of maintaining it. Finally, let the thought be deeply impressed on every heart, that *psalmody is a branch of divine worship; not a theatrical exhibition, but a religious solemnity.* [Comp. Eph. 5:19.] LATHROP.

V. 14, 15. As miraculous cures are not now expected, the symbolical action of 'anointing with oil' cannot properly be retained.—It need scarcely be observed, that the *extreme unction*, used by the church of Rome, totally differs from the anointing recommended by James; for that is never administered, till the sick person is supposed to be at the point of death, and no hope is entertained of his recovery: so that a spiritual benefit alone can be *proposed* by the ceremony; which on the contrary serves merely as an opiate, to quiet and stupify the consciences, both of the dying, and of the living.—It cannot be supposed, that these miraculous cures could be performed at all times: but there seems to have been some impression on the mind of the person, who wrought the miracle, and a peculiar exercise of faith in Christ for that purpose. It might be proper for Christians, always, when sick, to send for their pastors to counsel and pray for them; though the visiting of the sick, by ministers exclusively, is not particularly spoken of in Scripture, as it might have been expected that it would.—The indiscriminate visiting, praying in the same words for persons of all characters, and giving the Lord's supper to sick and dying persons, without particular and appropriate instructions and exhortations, as it is too commonly managed, is doubtless of extremely bad tendency, and a relic of popish superstition and formality. For it not only gives a false quiet to many of those, who have then first begun to think about God and their souls, but it encourages others to procrastinate, under a delusive imagination, that a



15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

16 Confess <sup>w</sup> your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth <sup>x</sup> much.

17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he <sup>y</sup> prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

18 And he prayed <sup>z</sup> again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

19 Brethren, if any of you do err

v Is. 53:24.  
w Ac. 19:13.

x Ps. 145:19.  
y 1 K. 17:1.

z or, in prayer.  
a 1 K. 18:42,45.

anointing was only permitted or approved by Christ, not instituted. But it should seem, by James here, that it was enjoined in cases where there was faith for healing. And some Protestants have argued for it with this view. It was not to be commonly used, not even in the apostolical age; and some have thought it should not be wholly laid aside in any age; but that, where there are extraordinary measures of faith in the person anointing, and in those who are anointed, an extraordinary blessing may attend the observance of this direction for the sick. However that be, one thing is carefully to be observed here, that the saving of the sick is not ascribed to the anointing with oil, but to prayer, v. 15. So that, 4. *Prayer over the sick must proceed from, and be accompanied with, a lively faith.* There must be faith both in the person praying, and in the person prayed for. 5. *We should observe the success of prayer.* The Lord shall raise up; that is, if God has anything farther for such a person to do in the world. And if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him; i. e. where sickness is sent as a punishment for some particular sin, that sin shall be pardoned; and in token thereof, the sickness shall be removed. As when Christ said to

the impotent man, *Go and sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee*, it is intimated that some particular sin was the cause of his sickness. The great thing, therefore, we should beg of God for ourselves and others in the time of sickness, is, the pardon of sin. When healing is founded on pardon, we may say as Hezekiah did; Thou hast, in love to my soul, delivered it from the pit of corruption, Isa. 38:17. When you are sick, and in pain, it is most common to pray and cry, *Oh give me ease! Oh restore me to health!* But your prayer should rather and chiefly be, *Oh that God would pardon my sins!*

IV. Christians are directed to confess their faults one to another, and so to join in their prayers with and for one another, v. 16. Some expositors connect this v. 16. with v. 14. As if, when sick people send for ministers to pray over them, they should then confess their faults to them. Indeed, where any are conscious that their sickness is a vindictive punishment of some particular sin, it may be proper they should do so, that those who pray over them may know how to plead rightly for them. But the confession here required, is, that of Christians one to another, and not, as the papists would have it, to a priest. Where persons have injured one another, acts of injustice must be confessed to those against whom they have been committed. Where persons have tempted one another to sin, or have consented in the same evil actions, there they ought mutually to blame themselves, and excite each other to repentance. Where crimes are of a public nature, and have done any public mischief, there they ought to be more publicly confessed, so as may best reach to all who are concerned. And sometimes it may be well to confess our faults to some prudent minister, or praying friend, that they may help us to plead with God for mercy and pardon. But then we are not to think James puts us on telling everything that we are conscious is amiss in ourselves, or in one another: but so far as confession is necessary to our reconciliation with such as are at variance with us, or for reparation of wrongs done to any, or for gaining information in any point of conscience, and making our own spirits quiet and easy; so far, we should be ready to confess our faults. And sometimes, also, it may be of good use to

Christians, to disclose their peculiar weaknesses and infirmities to one another, where there are great intimacies and friendships; and where they may help each other by their prayer to obtain pardon of their sins, and power against them. Those who make confession of their faults one to another, should, thereupon, pray with and for one another. The 13th verse directs persons to pray for themselves; *Is any afflicted, let Him pray*: the 14th directs to seek for the prayers of ministers; and the 16th directs private Christians to pray one for another; so that here we have all sorts of prayer (ministerial, social, and secret) recommended.

V. The great advantage and efficacy of prayer is declared and proved; witness the example of Elias, v. 17, 18. He who prays, must be a righteous man; not righteous in an absolute sense, (for this Elias was not, who is here made a pattern to us,) but righteous in a gospel-sense; not loving or approving of any known iniquity, Ps. 66:18. Further, the prayer itself must be a fervent, IN-WROUGHT, well-wrought prayer, a pouring out of the heart to God, from faith unfeigned. Such prayer avails much. It is of great advantage to ourselves, may be very beneficial to our friends, and we are assured is acceptable to God. It is good having those for friends, whose prayers are available in the sight of God.

The power of prayer is here proved from the success of Elijah, who prayed earnestly, or as it is in the original, *in prayer he prayed*. Thus, you see, prayer is the key which opens and shuts heaven, to which Rev. 11:6. alludes, and this instance of the extraordinary efficacy of prayer is recorded, for encouragement even to ordinary Christians to be instant and earnest in prayer. If Elijah by prayer could do such great and wonderful things, surely the prayers of no righteous man shall return void.

VI. This epistle concludes with an exhortation to do all we can in our places to further and promote the conversion and salvation of others, v. 19, 20. Some interpret these vs. as the apostle's apology for so plainly and sharply reproving the Jewish Christians for their many faults and errors. But we are not to restrain this place to the apostle's converting such as erred from the truth; since, let him be who he will that does so

confession, a prayer, a ministerial absolution, and the sacrament, will set all right at last; without any previous diligence in the duties of a godly life. On the other hand, if nothing but a miraculous cure was sought, there could be no sufficient reason, why 'the elders of the church,' rather than others, who were endued with miraculous gifts should be sent for. The plural number is used; and, where it could be obtained, the presence of more than one minister would be desirable: but it cannot be supposed, that this was indispensably necessary.—That any difficulty should be found, about the persons intended by 'the elders of the church,' would have been inconceivable to the author, had he never read anything on the subject, except the N. T.: but some have supposed that the apostles themselves are meant! SCOTT.

(14.) Oil, &c.] On this subject we get little satisfaction from comtrs., who take opposite views, according to their respective habits of believing too little or too much: and the reader will form his opinion from the text. 'There can be little doubt,' says Bl., 'that in the next generation the thing became (what, indeed, most recent comtrs. here suppose it) a solemn religious ceremony, comprehending a symbolical rite, the use of which tended to produce the blessings prayed for, as far as was consistent with the plans of divine Providence.' 'As the miraculous gifts of healing have long ceased, the symbolical ceremony of anointing with oil ought not to be retained.' Bl. Ed.

V. 16—18. Such a confession of faults one to another, does not in any respect resemble the practice, which the church of Rome had absurdly grounded upon it, of the laity being required to confess all their secret sins to the priests, in order to their being pardoned and absolved. For thus, that order of men, who are in themselves no less ambitious, interested, and prone to vice, than other orders in the society, is put in possession of the secrets of families, nay, of councils and princes, of which they have made abundant use, to their own aggrandizement, to the enslaving of the laity, and for many other most mischievous purposes. Thus also they discover the weak and vulnerable side of almost every individual; which opens the way to their attempting and committing crimes of every kind. But 'the confession of faults,' spoken of by the apostle, is no more that of a layman to a priest, than that of a priest to a layman: it is reciprocal between Christians; and voluntary, that it may be regulated according to prudence and propriety, for the benefit of mutual exhortations and prayers.—This example [of Elias or Elijah] seems rather to favor the opinion of those, who supposed the apostle to refer to 'the prayer of faith,' as it respected miraculous interpositions: but the efficacy of that prayer, which is, in all ages, presented under the teaching and influences of the Holy Spirit, is through-

out the Scripture so fully declared, that this exclusive interpretation is here inadmissible. (16) *Effectual fervent.* *Energoumenè.* 1 Cor. 12:6, 11. Ep. 1:11. 2:2. 3:20. Ph. 2:13. It may be understood either actively, (as the middle voice,) or passively. Actively, it signifies efficacious, effectual; but this seems a mere tautology, being equivalent to *availeth*; or, it means energetic, implying the earnestness and fervency employed. Passively, it denotes the energy by which the Holy Spirit prepares the heart for genuine prayer. Ps. 10:17, 18. Rom. 8:24—27. 'The earnest prayer of a righteous man, the effect of good affections wrought in his heart by the energy of the Holy Spirit, is of great efficacy.' Doddr.—[For it is the will of God acting itself out, with omnipotence; and the word signifying *inwrought*. Rom. 8:26, 27. Ed.] SCOTT.

(16.) 'Of course, this passage will by no means support the Romish practice of auricular confession, especially to a priest; for the confession, in the present case, is supposed to be made to the injured person, in order to be forgiven.' It is astonishing that human nature should become so degraded, and should so have lost the principles of liberty of thought and of conscience, as to submit to so flagrant an imposition of priestcraft. Indeed the Editor has known of some, who have been so trampled under spiritual despotism, as actually to believe, that their priest could smite with death, turn one black, or arrest a mortal blow by a word or wish! What a pitiable object is such a darkened and spell-bound soul; how deeply should it move the Christian freeman to use every proper exertion, with all love and meekness, by precept, and especially example, to bring such a fellow-creature into the light and liberty of Christ! Ed.—'There is no conflict between our doctrine of prayer and that of the divine purposes.—The purposes of God embrace all events, and in that very order in which they occur in time. If, in the order of actual occurrence, prayer always precedes the bestowal of blessings, it precedes it agreeably to the divine purposes. If, in the purpose of God, prayer eternally stands present as the immediate condition of his favor, it were inconsistent, if things were not so in the event.'

REV. DR. SKINNER.  
(17.) 'Elias was a man, &c. says James, to wean Christians from that false idea which makes us reject the examples of the saints, as disproportioned to our own condition. They were saints, we say, and not men like us.'

PASCAL.  
V. 19, 20. Among other important works of love, which believers ought to attempt by faith and prayer, the recovery of such professed Christians as had run into dangerous heresies, or fallen into sin, was peculiarly to be attended to: especially as many evils of this kind had taken place among them. Gal. 6:1—5. Jude 22—25.—'Surely it cannot be the



from the truth, and one <sup>b</sup> convert him,

20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide <sup>c</sup> a multitude of sins.

b Mat. 18:15.

c Pr. 10:12. 1 Pe. 4:8.

good an office, he is therein an instrument of *saving a soul from death.* Those whom the apostle here calls *brethren*, he yet supposes liable to err. It is no mark of a wise or holy man, to boast of his being free from error, or to refuse to acknowledge when he is in an error. Nor if any do err, must you be afraid to show them their error; and be they ever so weak, and little, you must not disdain to make them wiser and better. We are not presently to accuse and exclaim against an erring brother, and seek to bring

reproaches and calamities on him, but to convert him: and if, by all our endeavors, we cannot do this, yet we are nowhere empowered to persecute and destroy him. If we are instrumental in the conversion of any, we are said to convert them, though this be principally and efficiently the work of God. And if we can do no more toward the conversion of sinners, yet we may do this, pray for the grace and Spirit of God to convert and change them. And let those that are any way serviceable to convert others, know what will be the happy consequences of their doing this: they may take great comfort in it at present, and they will meet with a crown at last.

He that is said to *err from the truth*, v. 19. is described as *erring in his way*, v. 20. and we cannot be said to convert any, merely by altering their opinions, unless we can bring them to correct and amend their ways. This is conversion; and he who thus converteth

a sinner from the error of his ways, shall not only *save a soul from death*, but by such conversion of heart and life, a *multitude of sins shall be hid*; a most comfortable scripture. Some make the sense of this text to be, that conversion shall prevent a multitude of sins; and it is true many sins are prevented in the party converted; many also may be in others that he may have an influence upon, or may converse with. Upon the whole, how should we lay out ourselves with all possible concern for the conversion of sinners! It will be for the happiness and salvation of the converted; it will prevent much mischief, and the spreading and multiplying of sin in the world; it will be for the glory and honor of God; and it will mightily redound to our comfort and renown in the great day. *They that turn many to righteousness*, and they who help to do so, *shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.*

PRACT. OBS. V. 12—20. It is peculiarly important to the interests of genuine piety, that all who profess the Gospel, should reverence the name of God, and keep at a distance from the profane language, which abounds in the world, and from that insincerity which is intimately connected with it; that 'their yea may be yea, and their nay, nay.' Indeed, such as neglect these things have little reason to conclude, that they shall escape condemnation, when the Judge appears.—The voice of prayer should always accompany that of our lamentations, when we are afflicted, and our joy should be expressed in the language of praise and thanksgiving.—Christians may profitably confer together concerning their conflicts, sins, and temptations; that they may encourage,

apostle's intention to tell us, that the turning of a sinner from the error of his way, will conceal, from the eye of God's justice, a multitude of sins committed by the person, who does this charitable action, if he continueth in them. Such a person needs himself to be turned "from the error of his way," in order that his own soul may be saved from death.' *Maekn.* In no sense or way can it be said, that our good works, of whatever kind, 'cover the multitude of our sins,' or any of our sins; without either implying, that they purchase for us an *indulgence*, or *dispensation*, to continue in sin; or that they are efficacious in atoning for sin, either alone, or along with the blood of Christ; or that by them we become interested in his redemption and righteousness, and not by faith only. The words referred to, (for it cannot be called a quotation, the word *charity*, or *love*, being omitted.) are found in the Proverbs, in the Heb. and the Sept. The context there evidently excludes this interpretation, and the use, afterwards made of them by Peter, by no means favors it. *Prov. 10:12. 1 Pet. 4:8.*—'He shall save a soul from eternal death; and shall be the means that the many sins of that convert shall, through his true repentance, be forgiven and not imputed to him.' *Bp. Hall.*—The zeal and diligence thus shown might indeed be an evidence of grace, and conduce to a man's enjoying the comfort of the pardoning love of Christ, under chastenings and sorrows, notwithstanding his manifold defects: *Ps. 41:1—3.* yet this falls vastly short of the energy of the apostle's words, and seems not at all to have been in his thoughts; so that many learned men have labored in vain to put this construction upon them.

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(19, 20.) 'To the injunctions to mutual confession, forgiveness, and prayer for each other, the apostle now subjoins another, to co-operate mutually in correcting each other's errors in the doctrines, or failures in the practice of Christianity. *Cover, &c.* Expositors are not agreed whether this is to be understood, of the covering the sins of the *converter*, or of the *converted*. The former interpretation is espoused by Origen, and several Latin fathers, and of the moderns, by Han., Whit., Wells, Pale, Atterbury, and Dodd.; the latter, by Grot., Vorst., Est., Bp. Hall, Wolf, Benson, Sherlock, Ros., Maekn., Newe., Pott, Scott, and almost all recent comrs. They argue (to use the words of *Stute*) "that it seems hardly consonant with the language and doctrines of the Gospel, that any sin should be forgiven, if it be unrepented of, or persisted in; and if it be repented of and forsaken, it will be pardoned *without* the meritorious act here mentioned." Indeed, the context requires the latter interpretation, the high antiquity of which appears from its having been adopted by the Peshito Syriac translation. We are, however, only to understand, that the good offices of the reformer will powerfully tend to procure the forgiveness of sins, and the final salvation of the penitent sinner; since *conversion* does not necessarily imply final

EARLY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION. The space here left cannot be better occupied, than by the following hortatory appeals.

Ed.

Reader, I beg of you as from Christ, for his sake, for your soul's sake, for your children's sake, for the sake of the church and [world], that you will conscientiously and seriously set up family religion, calling upon God, singing his praises, and instructing your children and servants in the Scripture and catechism, and in a wise and diligent education of youth. Hear me, as if I begged it of you, with tears, on my knees. Alas, what doth the world suffer by the neglect of this! It is out of ungodly families that the world hath ungodly rulers, ungodly ministers, and a swarm of serpentine enemies of holiness and peace, and their own salvation. What country groaneth not under the confusions, miseries and horrid wickedness, which are all the fruits of family neglects, and the careless and ill education of youth? It is a work of great skill and constant care to instruct and educate your children, and to keep them from tempting company and snares. To cry out of dumb or unfaithful ministers, while you are worse at home yourselves, is but self-condemnation: are ministers more obliged to care for your children's souls, by nature, or by vow and covenant, than you are? Can they do that for whole parishes, which you will not do for one household, or your own children? The first charge and part is yours: if families treacherously neglect their part, and then look that all should be done at the church, you may as wisely send boys to the universities,

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warn, counsel, exhort, and properly pray for each other; and we ought greatly to desire, and highly to value, the prayers of our fellow Christians; and to abound in supplications for them, 'as the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.'—In the use of all proper means, every one of us should seek the spiritual good of our children, relatives, friends, enemies, and all around us, and the conversion of ignorant and thoughtless profligates and sinners of every description. Let us then, in our several stations, keep these things in mind, and spare no pains, and shrink from no self-denial, and be wearied out by no ill success, in so charitable a service, and the event will prove that 'our labor was not in vain in the Lord.'

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*perseverance*, and therefore cannot ensure salvation.' BLOOMF.  
(20.) 'It is obvious to all, that the kingdom of Christ can be extended in our world only by the accession of *individuals*. His blood avails not to the salvation of men *in the mass*; but to those who *individually* repent and accept of mercy. Yet, to how great an extent are the prayers and contributions of Christians made, indefinitely, for the conversion of the world *as a whole*, while the salvation of *no one individual* is the object of their *personal* and persevering endeavors! The truth evidently is, that *personal effort for the souls of individuals*,—the lip, thoughts, and heart of a living man brought into contact with the lip, thoughts, and heart of a living man,—IS A GRAND INSTITUTION OF GOD FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD. His command is, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another." Not only "the Spirit and the Bride," but "he that heareth," must "say come." Christians are to "shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life." The parable of Nathan illustrates this principle. "Thou art the man," humbled the king in the dust. The same principle is exemplified in the success of the personal efforts of the pious mother; of the skilful Sabbath School Teacher, and of faithful pastoral visitation; in all which divine truth is *happily pressed upon the heart of the individual*. WHEREVER the Holy Spirit is largely poured out, the ministers, and members of the church, abound in prayer and faithful conversation with each other and the impenitent.—Paul, with all his crushing public responsibilities, could testify to the Ephesian elders, that he had labored among them, both "publicly and from house to house," and appeal to them as witnesses of his fidelity in the memorable and most emphatic words, "REMEMBER, THAT, BY THE SPACE OF THREE YEARS, I CEASED NOT TO WARN EVERY ONE, NIGHT AND DAY WITH TEARS." Of the signal outpouring of the Holy Spirit among the natives at Ceylon, Rev. M. WINSLOW states, there were few cases of permanent conviction, in which religious impressions were not cherished by much patient labor of the missionaries, or their assistants, *in conversing and praying with individuals alone*. It was this *repeated and personal* application of truth, which principally took effect. This was the secret of the wonderful success of *Baxter*, at Kidderminster.' See it also exemplified in the lives of numerous faithful ministers and private Christians, especially that of HARLAN PAGE, by Rev. W. A. HALLOCK, from which the above extract is taken. He, a humble, private Christian, BY THE POWER OF PRAYER AND PERSONAL EFFORT, was the means under God of the conversion of a large number of individuals. And what encouragement is given to those who thus labor: they that be wise (*marg. teachers*), shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars, for ever and ever. 1 Pet. 4: 10. Rev. 22:17. 1 John 5:16.

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before they are taught to read or write in lower schools. If there be any hope of the amendment of a wicked, miserable, and distracted world, it must be mostly done by family-religion, and the Christian education of youth.'

BAXTER.

'Had I a voice, capable of reaching the remotest bounds of Christendom, I would lift it up in exhortation to parents and ministers, and say, Set your hearts on the promotion of *early piety* in the children and youth committed to your care. Let it engage, with *peculiar interest*, your daily studies, and your daily prayers. Parents! if you love your children, be intent, and let them see that you are *earnestly intent* on their eternal welfare. Begin as early as possible, and never intermit your diligence. Ministers! if you love immortal souls; if you love the church of God; if you desire to bind the hearts of parents and of children to your persons and your ministry, for their spiritual benefit; if you desire to build up the cause of Christ in the most effectual manner, let there be no delay or intermission in this most interesting work. Satan begins early to enlist youth into his service. Set yourselves to rescue them from his power, and train them up to God. Keep a catalogue of their names, residences, &c. Review it often with prayer. Notice them affectionately in your daily walks and visits. Catchise them diligently. Explain with condescension what you attempt to teach them. Guard against everything austere or repulsive in your manner. And follow all with earnest cries to God for success.'

Dr. MILLER.



AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF PETER,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

*(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. Z. Marryat.)*

Two epistles we have in the canon of Scripture, written by Peter, a most eminent apostle of Jesus Christ, whose character shines brightly, as described in the gospels, and the Acts; but, as painted by the papists and legendary writers, a person of extravagant pride and ambition.

It is certain from Scripture, that Simon Peter was one of the first of those our Lord called to be his disciples and followers; a person of excellent endowments, both natural and gracious; of great parts, and ready elocution; quick to apprehend, and bold to execute, whatever he knew to be his duty. When our Savior called his apostles, and gave them their commission, He nominated him first; and, by his behavior toward him, He seems to have distinguished him as a special favorite among the twelve. Many instances of our Lord's affection to him, both during his life, and after his resurrection, are on record.

But many things, confidently affirmed of this holy man, are directly false: as, That he had a primacy and superior power over the rest of the apostles; that he was the sole universal pastor over all the Christian world, the only vicar of Christ on earth; that he was for above twenty years bishop of Rome, that the popes of Rome succeed to Peter, and derive from him a universal supremacy and jurisdiction over all churches and Christians on earth; and that all this was by our Lord's ordering and appointment. Whereas, Christ never gave him any pre-eminence of this kind, but positively forbade it, and gave precepts to the contrary. The other apostles never consented to any such claim. Paul declares himself *not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles*, 2 Cor. 11:5. 12:11. Here is no exception of Peter's superior dignity, whom Paul took the freedom to blame, and *withstood him to the face*, Gal. 2:11. And Peter himself never assumed anything like it, but modestly styles himself *an apostle of Jesus Christ*; and when he writes to the presbyters of the church, he humbly places himself in the same rank with them; *The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder*, ch. 5:1. See Dr. Barrow on the pope's supremacy.

The design of this first epistle is, 1. To explain more fully the doctrines of Christianity to these newly-converted Jews. 2. To direct and persuade them to a holy conversation, in the faithful discharge of all personal and relative duties, whereby they would secure their own peace, and effectually confute the slanders and reproaches of their enemies. 3. To prepare them for sufferings. This seems to be his principal intention; for he has something to this purport in every chap., and does, by a great variety of arguments, encourage them to patience and perseverance in the faith, lest the persecutions and sad calamities that were coming on them, should prevail with them to apostatize from Christ and the Gospel.—It is remarkable, that you find not so much as one word savoring of the spirit and pride of a pope in either of these epistles. \* HENRY.

The pretensions of the church and bishop of Rome are so absurd and extravagant, as to deserve little notice; it is not *absolutely certain* that Peter ever was at Rome; though it is highly probable he went thither, towards the close of his life; and was there put to death by crucifixion, at, or near the same time, when Paul, as a Roman citizen, was beheaded, during Nero's persecution. He wrote this epistle, probably, some time before, to the Christians in the different provinces of Asia Minor. Many, indeed, and some of high respectability, have endeavored to prove, that, as the apostle of the circumcision, he addressed the Jewish converts only: but Peter was distinguished, not only as the chief preacher to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, but also as the first preacher to the Gentiles. And as Paul, 'the apostle of the uncircumcision,' wrote to the Hebrews, and in all his epistles addressed the Jewish as well as the Gentile converts; we may well suppose, that Peter addressed the Gentile, as well as the Jewish converts; though perhaps with a peculiar reference to the case of the latter. *Acts* 2:10. Indeed, the contrary opinion is founded on some passages in the epistle, which are capable of another, and more natural interpretation: while the apostle's language in other places cannot at all consist with it. It also seems evident, that he wrote to the very churches, which had been founded by Paul, intentionally to corroborate his testimony, and to confute those, who maintained that his doctrine differed from that of the other apostles; and he sent the epistle by Silvanus, Paul's faithful and constant coadjutor; often, indeed, called Silas, by abbreviation; as Priscilla is called Prisca. *2 Tim.* 4:19. And as those churches consisted of converted Jews and Gentiles; and as the epistle of Peter conveyed instruction equally suited to both; why should it be imagined, that he meant it for the perusal of only one part of them? The epistle is dated from Babylon, in the remains or vicinity of which city, it is probable, a Christian church had been planted, perhaps consisting principally of the descendants of the Jews, who remained in those regions after the Babylonish captivity. For no satisfactory reason can be assigned, for supposing, as many have done, in ancient and modern times, that here Babylon signifies Rome. Language of this kind suited the nature of John's Revelation; but was wholly unsuitable to the date of a letter. (*Note*, 5:13.)—We here find the same great doctrines, with which Paul's epistles are replete, applied to the same practical purposes. And it is peculiarly remarkable for the sweetness, gentleness, and humble love, with which it is written; which, indeed, forms a striking contrast to the domineering pride and severity, that characterize the pretended successors of this sacred writer.—Various opinions have been entertained of the time, when the epistle was written; but as no certainty seems attainable, it is dated according to the author's opinion on the subject; in which, however, he is by no means confident. SCOTT.

\* *T. H. Horne* divides this epistle into four sections, besides the introduction and conclusion. 1. An exhortation to Jewish Christians to persevere in the faith, and to maintain a holy conversation, notwithstanding their sufferings and persecutions. This is enforced by considering the peculiar blessings and privileges freely bestowed on them, ch. 1:3—2:10. 2. Includes exhortations to a holy conversation in general, ch. 2:11, 12. and to the faithful discharge of their duties, as subjects to their rulers, vs. 13—17. servants to their masters, vs. 18—25. and husbands to their wives, ch. 3:1—13. 3. Patience, submission, and holiness of life, are enforced, by considering the example of Christ, ch. 3:14—18. by the punishment of the disobedient, as in the days of Noah, v. 19—22. by the example of Christ, by the conversion of believers become dead to the flesh, ch. 4:1—6. by the approaching destruction of the Jewish state, v. 7—11. and by the consideration, that, under the Gospel, afflictions

are the portion of the believer, and matter of joy, v. 12—19. 4. Ministers and people are directed respecting their mutual behavior, chap. 5:1—11.

'This epistle,' says *Leighton*, 'is a brief, yet very clear summary, both of consolations and instructions needful for the encouragement and direction of a Christian, in his journey to heaven; elevating his thoughts and desires to that happiness, and strengthening him against all opposition in the way, both that of corruption within and temptations and afflictions from without. The heads of doctrine contained in it are many, but the main that are most insisted on, are these three; faith, obedience, and patience; to establish the Christians in believing, to direct them in doing, and to comfort them in suffering; often setting those to whom he wrote, the matchless example of the Lord Jesus, and the greatness of their engagements to follow Him.'



## CHAP. I.

<sup>1</sup> He blesseth God for his manifold spiritual graces : 10 shewing that the salvation in Christ is no news, but a thing prophesied of old : 13 and exhorteth them accordingly to a godly conversation, forasmuch as they are now born anew by the Word of God.

**PETER**, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

<sup>2</sup> Elect <sup>b</sup> according to the foreknowledge <sup>c</sup> of God the Father, through sanctification <sup>d</sup> of the Spirit, unto <sup>e</sup> obedience and sprinkling <sup>f</sup> of the blood of Jesus Christ ; Grace unto you, and peace, be <sup>g</sup> multiplied.

<sup>3</sup> Blessed <sup>h</sup> be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which

a Ac. 8:4. d 2 Th. 2:13. g Jude 2.  
b Ep. 1:4. e Ro. 16:26. h 2 Co. 1:3.  
c Ro. 8:29. f He. 12:24.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. In this inscription we have three parts.

1. Its author described. (1.) By his name, *Peter*. His first name was *Simon*, and Jesus gave him the surname of *Peter*, i. e. a rock, in commendation of his faith, and to denote that he should be an eminent pillar in the church of God, Gal. 2:9. (2.) By his office,—an apostle of Jesus Christ. The word signifies, *one sent, a legate, a messenger*, any one sent in Christ's name, and about his work ; more strictly, the highest office in the Christian church, 1 Cor. 12:28. Thus humbly Peter asserts his own character as an apostle. Hence, learn, A man may lawfully acknowledge, and sometimes is bound to assert, the gifts and graces of God to him. To pretend to what we have not, is hypocrisy ; and to deny what we have, is ingratitude. It concerns all, but especially ministers, to consider well their warrant and call from God to their work. This will justify them to others, and give them inward support and comfort under all dangers and discouragements.

2. The persons described, to whom this epistle was addressed.

(1.) By their external condition,—*Strangers, dispersed throughout Pontus, Galatia, &c.* chiefly Jews, descended (so Prideaux) from Jews transplanted from Babylon into the cities of Asia the less, by order of Antiochus king of Syria, about 200 years before Christ : very likely, our apostle had been among them, and converted them, being the

apostle of the circumcision, and that he afterward wrote this epistle to them from Babylon, where multitudes of the Jewish nation then resided : their circumstances were poor and afflicted.

(2.) By their spiritual condition, v. 2. These poor strangers were, *Elect, &c.* v. 2. Election is either to an office, as in case of Saul, to be king, 1 Sam. 10:24. and the twelve to be apostles, John 6:70. or to a church-state, for the enjoyment of special privileges ; as Israel was God's elect, Deut. 7:6. or to eternal salvation ; *God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.* This is the election here spoken of ; importing God's decree or resolution to save some, and bring them, through Christ, by proper means, to eternal life.

This election is said to be according to the foreknowledge of God, i. e. mere prescience, foresight, or understanding ; as the mathematician certainly foreknows that at such a time there will be an eclipse. Or, counsel, appointment, and approbation, as Acts 2:23. The death of Christ was not only foreseen, but foreordained, as v. 20. Take it thus here ; so the sense is, *elect according to the counsel, ordination, and free grace of God.*

It is added, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by which, understand the first Person of the blessed Trinity. Thus, in the affair of man's redemption, election is, by way of eminency, ascribed to the Father, as reconciliation is to the Son, and sanctification to the Holy Ghost ; though in each of these one Person is not so entirely interested, as to exclude the other two. Hereby the persons of the Trinity are more clearly discovered to us, and we are taught what obligations we are under to each of them distinctly.

They were elect through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. God's decree for man's salvation always operates through sanctification of the Spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus.

By sanctification, here, understand, not a federal sanctification only, but a real one, begun in regeneration, and carried on in the daily exercise of holiness, mortifying our sins more and more, and living to God in all the duties of a Christian life ; here summed up in one word, *obedience*, comprehending all the duties of Christianity.

By the Spirit, some would have the apostle to mean the spirit of man, the subject sanctified. Others, with better reason, think, that by Spirit is meant the Holy Ghost, the Author of sanctification. See Rom. 8:13. and Gal. 5:22, 23. This sanctification of the Spirit implies the use of means, John 17:17.

Unto obedience. This word, as pointed in our translation, is referred to what goes before it, and denotes the end of sanctification, which is, to bring rebellious sinners to universal obedience, to obey the truth and gospel of Christ, v. 22.

They were elected also to the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. Here is a manifest allusion to the typical sprinklings of blood under the law, which language these Jewish converts understood very well. The blood of the sacrifices must not only be shed, but sprinkled ; to denote that the benefits designed thereby, are applied and imputed to the offerers. Thus the blood of Christ, the grand and all-sufficient Sacrifice, typified by the legal sacrifices, was not only shed, but must be sprinkled and communicated to every one of these elect Christians, *that through faith in his blood they may obtain remission of sins*, Rom. 3:25. This blood of sprinkling justifies before God, Rom. 5:9. seals the covenant between God and us, of which the Lord's supper is a sign, Luke 22:20. cleanses from all sin, 1 John 1:7. and admits us into heaven, Heb. 10:19.

Note, The doctrine of the Trinity lies at the foundation of all revealed religion. If you deny the proper deity of the Son and Holy Spirit, you invalidate the redemption of the one, and the gracious operations of the other, and by that mean destroy the foundation of your own safety and religion.

3. The salutation follows : The blessings desired for them, are, *grace and peace*, as by Paul in his salutations in his epistles ; which see. Here is the request of prayer, in relation to these blessings,—that they may be multiplied ; which implies, that they were already possessed in some degree. They who possess spiritual blessings in their own souls, earnestly desire the communication of the same to others ; therefore, the apostles so often make this their prayer in the beginning and end of their epistles.

V. 3. We come now to the body of the epistle, which begins with a congratulation of the dignity and happiness of the state of these believers, brought in under the form

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. The churches here addressed were situated in Asia Minor, (as distinguished from the continent of Asia,) and Asia (as mentioned separately) was the proconsular district, of which Ephesus was the capital city, Acts 19:8—12. so that they were chiefly the churches which had been planted by Paul, and by the evangelists who accompanied or helped him. (A. R. d—h.) The apostle called the persons to whom he wrote, 'strangers;' and some have labored to prove, that they were 'proselytes of the gate,' who had embraced the Gospel ; as Cornelius and his friends are supposed to have been before their conversion. Others confine it to the Jewish converts, who were thus distinguished, as living at a distance from the promised land, among the Gentiles. But as Christians are 'strangers and pilgrims on earth,' and as the sojourning of the patriarchs, or of the Jews, in foreign nations, was a type or emblem of this pilgrimage, 2:11. Heb. 11:13—16. it is more natural to understand it of believers in general, who were pilgrims or 'strangers,' in every city or country where they lived, and who were 'scattered' through the nations, to be as 'lights in the world, and the salt of the earth.' Mat. 5:13—16.—*Sprinkling, &c.* 'Men are not easily convinced . . . of the deep stain of sin, and that no other laver can fetch it out, but "the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Some, that have moral resolutions of amendment, dislike at least gross sins, and purpose to avoid them ; and it is to them cleanness enough to reform in these things ; but they consider not what becomes of the guiltiness that they have contracted already, or how that shall be purged.—Be not deceived in this ; it is not a transient sigh, or a light word, or a wish of God forgive me, nor the highest current of repentance, nor, that which is the truest evidence of repentance, amendment ; it is none of these, that purifies in the sight of God and expiates wrath. They are all imperfect and staid themselves, cannot stand and answer for themselves, much less be of value to counterpoise the former guilt of sin. The very tears of the purest repentance, unless they be sprinkled with this blood, are impure ; all our washings, without this, are but the washings of a blackamore ; it is labor in vain.' Abp. Leighton.—*Scattered.* John 7:35. Jam. 1:1.—This word may seem to favor the opinion, that the epistle was written to Jewish converts exclusively ; but the apostle used several terms, taken from what had been said of that nation, in relation to Christians, where this opinion cannot stand. 2:9, 10.—(2.) *Be multiplied.* 2 Pet. 1:2. This is not found in Paul's salutations ; at the same

time Peter does not add, 'From God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ,' 1 Cor. 1:3. but in his second epistle he says, 'Through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.' John 17:1—3. SCOTT.

(1.) *Strangers, &c.* 'I. e. all Christians, both Jewish and Gentile, in the countries out of Palestine.' Bl., after Wolf, Ros., and Pott. Ed.

(2.) *Elect, &c.* 'Chosen by God the Father, sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and justified by the atoning blood of Christ, which is evidently the meaning of being sprinkled by his blood : in which we may observe a perfect harmony with the doctrine of Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, ch. 8:29, 30.' WILLIAMS.—'The free election of God is the efficient cause of our salvation ; the material cause is Christ's obedience ; our effectual calling is the formal cause ; and the final cause is our sanctification.' BISHOP'S BIBLE, in Henry, abr.—Many persons, when first seriously awakened, are greatly distressed by the apprehension, that they cannot be saved because not predestinated. But, says Dr. Lathrop, 'A Savior has come to open a way of salvation for sinners. Salvation is offered to all, and the terms are the same to all. In God there is no insincerity. To Him belong secret things, things revealed only to us. THERE CAN BE NO DECREE WHICH FRUSTRATES THE DIVINE PROMISES. If we comply with the terms, the benefits promised are ours. By faith and patience we may inherit the promises.' Rev. Dr. LATHROP.—'The doctrine of election throws no obstacle in the way of a man's salvation. To make the matter plain, let us suppose for a moment, that the doctrine is not true. Mankind are free agents, an atonement has been provided, and salvation is freely offered to all ; and each individual is left to comply with the terms of salvation or not. In this case there would be no obstacle in the way of salvation but a man's own will. Now what alteration does the doctrine of election make ? It renders it certain, that some will comply with the terms of salvation. With regard to the rest, it does not affect their situation at all. They are still free agents,—an atonement has been made,—salvation is freely offered,—"the Spirit and the Bride say, come."—the door of heaven stands open, and all may enter if they will. The doctrine of election, therefore, alters no man's condition for the worse, although it does that of many for the better. It is simply an exhibition of mercy. The only sense in which God has REPROBATED any, is the same as that in which those who deny election suppose He has reprobated the whole race ; that is, 'He has determined to leave them to themselves.' Rev. BENNET TYLER. Ed.



according to his <sup>i</sup> abundant <sup>j</sup> mercy hath begotten us again <sup>k</sup> unto a lively hope, by the resurrection <sup>l</sup> of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance <sup>m</sup> incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth <sup>n</sup> not away, reserved <sup>o</sup> in heaven <sup>p</sup> for you,

5 Who are kept <sup>q</sup> by the power of God through faith <sup>r</sup> unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

[Practical Observations.]

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need <sup>s</sup> be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations :

i *much* m He. 9:15. q Jude 1,24.  
j Ep. 2:4 n c. 5:1 r Ep. 2:8.  
k Ja. 3:3,5 o Col. 1:5. s He. 12:7.  
l 1 Co. 15:20. p or, us.

of a thanksgiving to God. Other epistles begin in like manner, 2 Cor. 1:3. Eph. 1:3.

1. Here we have the duty performed, which is, *blessing God*. A man blesses God by a just acknowledgment of his excellency and blessedness.

2. The object of this blessing, described by his relation to Jesus Christ; *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*; three names of one Person, denoting his threefold office; *Lord*, a universal King or Sovereign; *Jesus*, a Priest or Savior; *Christ*, a Prophet, anointed. *This God, so blessed, is the God of Christ*, according to his human nature, and his *Father*, according to his divine nature.

3. The reasons that oblige us to this duty of *blessing God*, are, in general, *his abundant mercy*; all our blessings are owing to God's *mercy*, particularly regeneration; He *hath begotten us again*, and this deserves our thanksgiving, especially if we consider the fruit it produces in us, that excellent grace of *hope*, and that not such a vain, dead, perishing *hope* as that of worldlings and hypocrites, but a *lively hope*, a living, strong, quickening, durable *hope*, as that *hope* must needs be, that has such a solid foundation as *the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*. Learn, hence,

A good Christian's condition is never so bad, but he has great reason still to bless God; but a sinner has always reason to mourn, notwithstanding his present prosperity.

Every unconverted person is a hopeless creature; whatever he pretends to of that kind, is all confidence and presumption; the right Christian *hope* is what a man is *begotten again unto* by the Spirit of God; not from nature, but free grace; and it has this excellency, it is a *living hope*; Job 27:8. being founded on *The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*; which, as it is the act of the Father as a Judge, and of the Son as a Conqueror, demonstrates that the Father accepts his death in full discharge for our ransom, that He is victorious over death, the grave, and all our spiritual enemies; also, it is an assurance of our own *resurrec-*

*tion*, there being an inseparable union between Christ and his flock; they rise by virtue of his *resurrection* as a Head, rather than by virtue of his power as a Judge. *We are risen with Christ*, Col. 3:1. From all this taken together, Christians have two fast, solid foundations whereon to build their *hope* of eternal life.

V. 4. The apostle continues his thanksgiving to God; and, having congratulated these people on their new birth, and their hope of everlasting life, he goes on to describe that life under the notion of an *inheritance*; a most proper way of speaking to them; for,

1. They were poor and persecuted, perhaps turned out of their *inheritances* to which they were born.

2. They were Jews, most of them, and so had a great affection to the land of Canaan, as the land of their *inheritance*, settled on them by God Himself; and to be driven out was looked upon as a sore judgment, 1 Sam. 26:19. To comfort them under this, they are put in mind of a noble *inheritance reserved in heaven for them*, such a one, that the land of Canaan was but a mere shadow in comparison of it.

Note, *Heaven* is the undoubted *inheritance* of all the children of God; the apostle argues, *If children, then heirs*, Rom. 8:17. God giveth his gifts to all, but the *inheritance* to his children, those that are his sons and daughters by regeneration and adoption, Heb. 9:15.

The incomparable excellences of this *inheritance*, are four.

It is *incorruptible*; in which respect it is like its Maker, who is called *the incorruptible God*, Rom. 1:23. and our *house from above*, which is *eternal in the heavens*, 1 Cor. 15:33.

It is *undefiled*, like the great High Priest now in possession of it, Heb. 7:26. Sin and misery, the two grand defilements that spoil this world, and mar its beauty, have no place there.

It *fadeth not away*, but always retains its vigor and beauty, ever entertaining and pleasing the saints who possess it, without the least weariness or distaste.

It is *reserved in heaven for you*; it is a glorious *inheritance*, for all that is in *heaven* is *glorious*, 1:18. it is *certain*, a reversion safely kept, till we come to the possession of it; and also it is *for you*, for us, for every one that is *begotten again to a lively hope*; this *inheritance* is preserved for them, and none but them; all the rest will be shut out for ever.

V. 5. This *inheritance* being described as future, the apostle supposes some doubt or uneasiness yet to remain on the minds of these people, whether they might not possibly fall short by the way; To this therefore he answers, that they should be safely guarded and conducted, kept and preserved from all such destructive temptations and injuries, as would prevent their safe arrival at eternal life; the blessing promised, is, preservation; *Ye are kept*; the Author of it, *God*; the means in us made use of for that end, our own *faith* and care; the end to which we are preserved, is, *salvation*;

and the time when we shall see the safe end and issue of all, is, *the last time*.

Being *kept*, implies both danger and deliverance; the greatness of the work, the number of enemies, and our own infirmities, are such, that no power, but what is almighty, can preserve the soul through all *unto salvation*; therefore the Scripture often represents man's salvation as the effect of divine power, 2 Cor. 12:9. Rom. 14:4. yet the preservation of *God's power* does not supersede man's endeavor and care for his own salvation; here is *God's power*, and man's faith, which implies an earnest desire of salvation, a reliance on Christ, a vigilant care to do everything pleasing to God, and avoid whatever is offensive, an abhorrence of temptations, a respect to the recompense of reward, and persevering diligence in prayer; by such a patient, operating, conquering *faith*, we are *kept*, under the assistance of divine grace, *unto salvation*.

This *salvation* is ready to be revealed in the last time. It is now prepared, and made ready, and reserved in heaven; yet it is in a great measure hidden and unrevealed at present, not only to the ignorant, blind world, that never inquire after it, but even to the heirs of salvation themselves. 1 John 3:2. But it shall be fully and completely revealed in the last time, or at the last day of judgment. *Life and immortality are now brought to light by the Gospel*, but beyond this there will be a further and a final revelation of the amplitude and transcendency of the saints' felicity at the last day, when their bodies shall be raised, and re-united to their souls, and judgment shall pass on angels and men, and Christ shall publicly honor and applaud his servants in the face of all the world.

V. 6. The first word, *wherein*, refers to the apostle's foregoing discourse about the excellency of their present state, and their grand expectations for the future; in this condition *you greatly rejoice, though now for a season, or a little while, if need be, ye are made sorrowful through manifold temptations*. The apostle grants they were in great affliction, and propounds several things in mitigation of their sorrows.

Note, 1. Every true Christian has always something *wherein* he may *greatly rejoice*; and that is, things spiritual and heavenly, his relation to God and to heaven; in these he *greatly rejoices*; his joy arises from his treasure, which consists of matters of great value, and the title to them is sure.

2. The best Christians may yet be in *great heaviness through manifold temptations*; all sorts of adversities are *temptations*, or trials of faith, patience, and constancy; these seldom go singly, but are *manifold*, and come from different quarters; the effect of all which is *great heaviness*. Great heaviness is often necessary to a Christian's good; it may be for a season only; God does not afflict his people willingly; but there is a expediency and fitness, nay, an absolute necessity in the case, for so the expression signifies, *it must be*; therefore *no man should be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto*, 1 Thess. 3:3. Troubles never come

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—5. As we, if true Christians, are 'strangers' on earth, we should expect contempt and unkindness from the men of this world, and continually prepare for a removal to our eternal home. All the redeemed were 'elected according to the foreknowledge of God the Father;' but this cannot be known by them, except 'through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience.' 1 Thes. 1:1—4. 'The lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading,' which springs from regeneration, is inseparably connected with faith in a cru-

cified and risen Savior; is peculiar to the real Christian; and totally differs from the vain confidence of formalists, Pharisees, Antinomians, and enthusiasts of every description. If we thus hope for an undefiled felicity, and habitually prepare for it; we may well rejoice, and exult triumphantly, that it is 'reserved for us in heaven;' and that 'we are kept,' as in a castle, 'by the power of God, through faith unto salvation,' which is made ready, and will be openly revealed when the mystery of God shall be finished. SCOTT.

V. 3—5. *A lively hope.*] 'Living in death itself. The world dares say no more for its device, than, While I breathe, I hope; but the children of God can add, When I expire, I hope. It is a fearful thing when a man and his hopes expire together.' Abp. Leighton. — (5) *Who are kept.*] 2 Cor. 11:32. Gal. 3:23. Phil. 4:7. 'It properly signifies, being kept as in an impregnable garrison, secure from harin, under the observation of an all-seeing eye, and protection of an almighty hand.' Blackwall, in Doddr. 'Guarded, as in a strong and impregnable garrison.

by the almighty power of God, through the continued exercise of that faith, which this almighty power wrought in your hearts; and which He will still maintain unto that blessed hour, &c.' Doddr. SCOTT.

(5.) *The last time.*] 'Some understand this of the destruction of Jerusalem, or the gospel-age, the last end of the world. But it seems more natural to interpret it of the final consummation of all things.' BL. So Doddr.; also Guyse, who paraphrases: 'It will soon be seen, in all its riches and delights, when Christ shall judge the world.' Ed.



7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ :

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory :

9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

[Practical Observations.]

10 Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you :

t Ja. 1:3,12. w Re. 1:7. y Jn. 16:22.  
u 1 Co. 3:13. x 1 Ju. 4:20. z Da. 9:3.  
v Ro. 2:7,10.

upon us but when we have need, and never stay any longer than needs must.

V. 7. These words express the end of good people's afflictions, and the ground of their joy under them.

Note, 1. The afflictions of Christians are designed for the trial of their faith. God's design in afflicting his people, is, their probation, not their destruction; their advantage, not their ruin; a trial, as the word signifies, is an experiment or search made on a man, by some affliction, to prove the value and strength of his faith; this trial is made upon faith principally, rather than any other grace, because the trial of that is, in effect, the trial of all that is good in us; our Christianity depends on our faith; the faith of good people is tried, that they themselves may have the comfort of it, God the glory of it, and others the benefit of it.

2. A tried faith is much more precious than tried gold; here is a double comparison of faith and gold, and the trial of the one with the trial of the other; gold is the most valuable, pure, useful, and durable, of all the metals; so is faith among the Christian virtues, it lasts till it brings the soul to heaven, and then it issues in the glorious fruition of God for ever; gold does not increase and multiply by trial in the fire, it rather grows less; but faith is established, improved, and multiplied, by the oppositions and afflictions that it meets with; gold must perish at last; but faith never will, Luke 22:32.

3. The trial of faith will be found to praise, and honor and glory. Honor is properly that esteem and value which one has with ap-

ther, and so God and man will honor the saints. Praise is the expression or declaration of that esteem; so Christ will commend his people in the great day, Come, ye blessed of my Father, &c. Glory is that lustre wherewith a person, so honored and praised, shines in heaven, Rom. 2:10. If a tried faith be found to praise, honor, and glory, let this recommend faith to you, as much more precious than gold, though it be assaulted and tried by afflictions.

4. Jesus Christ will appear again in glory; and, when He does so, the saints will appear with Him, and their graces will appear illustrious; and the more they have been tried, the more bright they will then appear; the trial will soon be over, but the glory, honor, and praise will last to eternity. This should reconcile you to your present afflictions; they work for you a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory.

V. 8. The faith of these primitive Christians is further commended on two accounts: 1. The excellency of its Object, the unseen Jesus; the apostle had seen our Lord in the flesh, but these dispersed Jews never did, yet they believed in Him. 2. On account of two notable productions or effects of their faith, love and joy; and this joy so great, as to be above description; ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

Learn, (1.) The faith of a Christian is properly conversant about things revealed, but not seen; faith ascends, and assures us of abundance of particulars that sense and reason could never have found out, on the credit of revelation; it is the evidence of things not seen.

(2.) True faith is never alone, but produces a strong love to Jesus Christ; it discovers itself in the highest esteem for Him, affectionate desires after Him, willingness to be dissolved, and to be with Him, delightful thoughts, cheerful services and sufferings, &c.

(3.) Where there are true faith and love to Christ, there is, or may be, joy unspeakable and full of glory; this joy is inexpressible, it cannot be described by words; the best discovery is by an experimental taste of it; it is full of glory, full of heaven; there is much of heaven and the future glory in the present joys of improved Christians; their faith removes the causes of sorrow, and affords the best reasons for joy; though good people sometimes walk in darkness, it is often owing to their own mistakes and ignorance, or to a fearful, melancholy disposition, or to some late sinful conduct, or perhaps to some sad occurrence of Providence, that sinks their comfort for the present; yet they have reason to rejoice in the

Lord, and joy in the God of their salvation, Hab. 3:18.

V. 9. Well might these Christians rejoice with joy unspeakable, since they were every day receiving the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls. The word used alludes to the games at which the conqueror received or bore away, from the judge of the contest, a crown or reward, which he carried about in triumph; so the salvation of the soul was the prize these Christians sought for, the crown they labored for, the end they aimed at, which came nearer and more within their reach every day.

Learn, 1. Every faithful Christian is daily receiving the salvation of his soul; salvation is one permanent thing, begun in this life, not interrupted by death, and continued to all eternity. This was properly urged to these distressed people; they were on the losing side in the world, but the apostle puts them in mind of what they were receiving; if they lost an inferior good, they were all the while receiving the salvation of their souls.

2. It is lawful for a Christian to make the salvation of his soul his end; the glory of God and our own felicity are so connected, that if we regularly seek the one, we must attain the other.

V. 10. The apostle having described the persons to whom he wrote, and declared to them the excellent advantages they were under, goes on to show them what warrant he had for what he had delivered; and, because they were Jews, and had a profound veneration for the Old Test., he produces the authority of the prophets to convince them, the doctrine of salvation, by faith in Jesus Christ, was no new doctrine, but the same which the old prophets did inquire and search diligently into. They foresaw glorious times of light, grace, and comfort, coming on the church, which made them desire to see and hear the things which came to pass in the days of the Gospel. Observe the manner of their inquiry; they inquired and searched diligently; allusion is had to miners, who dig deep to come to the ore; so these holy prophets had an earnest desire to know, and were proportionably diligent in their inquiries after the grace of God, which was to be revealed in the days of the Messiah; their being inspired did not make their industrious search needless. Daniel understood by books, and study, the computations of time, ch. 9:2. Even their own revelation required their study, meditation, and prayer; for many prophecies had a double meaning; in their first intention they aimed at some person or event near at hand, but their ultimate design was to describe the Person, sufferings, or kingdom of Christ

PRACT. OBS. V. 6—9. 'The lively' and assured 'hope of an inheritance in heaven,' gives substantial joy to the soul, and to it we must have recourse in all our troubles, for support and animation: yet we cannot but sometimes 'be in heaviness,' when called to struggle with ' manifold temptations,' to conflict with inward enemies, to walk in darkness without sensible comfort, and to endure afflictions in body, mind, or circumstances.—But neither the trials of God's people, nor the peculiarly distressing circumstances connected with them, will be sharper, more numerous, or of longer continuance, than is needful. In the intervals of their temptations and conflicts, when composed enough to make observations on their experience, their trials, conflicts, and the event of

V. 8, 9. This faith, love, and joy, in respect of an unseen Savior, constituted the peculiar experience, and formed the distinguishing character, of real Christians; who thus were assured, that they should receive that 'salvation of their souls,' which was the end proposed by them, when they believed; indeed, they were continually receiving that salvation in the earnestness, comforts, and sanctification of it, amidst their trials and conflicts. John 20:24—29.—'8) In whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing.] On whom not yet looking, but believing, intimating, that at length they would behold Him. 1 John 3:1—3. SCOTT.

(8, 9.) 'The affection here demanded for Christ, is not founded on a personal intercourse with Him. The absence of strong encomiums on the most eminent human instruments of divine beneficence to the world, is a remarkable characteristic of the inspired writings. And in this passage the unmeasured character of the affection described, and the reason of the joy, the salvation of the soul, carry it infinitely out of the range of a rational application to any created nature.' J. P. Smith, in Henry, abr.—Whom not having seen, &c.] Wells, in Bloomf., understands an allusion to the case of Thomas, and to what Christ said on that occasion.

V. 10—12. For they [the prophets] did not know the full import of

them, they can find, that they really do believe in and love an unseen Savior, and show that faith and love by cleaving to Him, and aiming to obey Him, in the midst of their troubles. This causes them to rejoice in his all-sufficiency and grace, in his glory and blessedness, and in admiring his infinite loveliness and loving kindness, with a 'joy which is unspeakable,' and which forms a sweet antepast of the heavenly felicity; tuning their hearts to the songs of the redeemed, and preparing them for their holy employments. Thus, by the way they receive in part, as an earnest and pledge, 'the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls.'

SCOTT.

their own words, while they 'testified long before,' that the Messiah would pass through a variety of complicated sufferings, even unto death; and that He would afterwards be glorified, in his personal exaltation, and in the extent, peace, and duration of his mediatorial kingdom, the happiness of his subjects, and the destruction of his enemies. Ps. 2:22: 69: 72. Is. 9:6, 7. 11:1—10. 53: Dan. 9:24—27.—The Holy Spirit is here spoken of, as a distinct Person; and as 'the Spirit of Christ,' not only in that He spake of Him, but as sent forth by Him long before his incarnation.—Both in the express prophecies of the Messiah, and in all the typical persons, events, and institutions which related to Him, his sufferings were uniformly represented as introducing his glory, and the glories of his kingdom. The prophets had been immediately instructed, that they should not live to witness the accomplishment of their own predictions; and that neither they, nor their contemporaries, would derive the principal benefit of their ministry, or enjoy the privileges announced by them. But they were laboring for the benefit of future generations; whilst they declared those great events, which had at length taken place, and had been reported to the Jews and Gentiles, by the apostles of Christ, who had preached the Gospel to them; whose ministry was attested by the miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit,



11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit <sup>a</sup> of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not <sup>b</sup> unto themselves but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost <sup>c</sup> sent down from heaven; which things the angels <sup>d</sup> desire to look into.

13 Wherefore gird <sup>e</sup> up the loins of your mind, be <sup>f</sup> sober, and hope <sup>g</sup> to the end <sup>h</sup> for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 As obedient children, not fashioning <sup>i</sup> yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

<sup>a</sup> 2 Pe. 1:21. <sup>d</sup> Ep. 3:10. <sup>g</sup> perfectly.  
<sup>b</sup> 1 Pe. 11:39, 40. <sup>e</sup> Lu. 12:35. <sup>h</sup> He. 10:35.  
<sup>c</sup> Ac. 2:4. <sup>f</sup> 2 Co. 1:22. <sup>i</sup> Ro. 12:2.

Observe, The doctrine of man's salvation by Jesus Christ, has been the study and admiration of the greatest and wisest of men; a good man is much affected and pleased with the grace and mercy of God to others, as well as to himself; they who would be acquainted with this great *salvation*, and the *grace* that shines therein, must *inquire and search diligently* into it; if it were necessary for an inspired *prophet* to do so, much more is it for persons so weak and injudicious as we are.

V. 11. What the ancient prophets chiefly searched into is here expressed; Jesus Christ was the main subject of their studies; and in relation to Him, they were most inquisitive into, 1. His humiliation and death, and the glorious consequences of it; *the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow*; this inquiry would lead them into a view of the whole Gospel, the sum whereof is this, *that Christ Jesus was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification*. 2. The time, and the manner of the times, wherein the Messiah was to appear; so far as *the Spirit of Christ, which was in them*, had signified anything toward that purpose. The *nature* of the times, as well as the times, was under their strict consideration, whether they would be quiet or troublesome; times of peace, or of war.

Learn, (1.) Jesus Christ had a being before his incarnation; for his Spirit then existed in the prophets. (2.) The doctrine of the Trinity was known to the faithful in the Old Test.; here is a plurality of persons [implied], and from other parts of the Old Test. a Trinity may be collected. (3.) The works here ascribed to the Holy Ghost prove Him to be God; He manifested to the prophets, many hundred years *beforehand the sufferings of Christ*, with a multitude of particular circumstances attending them; He also gave proof and evidence *beforehand*, of the certainty of that event, by inspiring the prophets to reveal it, to work miracles in confirmation of it, and by enabling the faithful to believe it. (4.) From the example of Christ Jesus, learn to expect a time of services and sufferings before you are received to glory; it was so with Him, and *the disciple is not above his Lord*; the suffering time is but short, but the glory is everlasting; let the suffering season be ever so sharp and severe, it shall not hinder, but *work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. V. 12. These words contain an answer to the prophets' inquiry; they were informed, that these things should not come to pass in their time, but yet all was firm and certain, and should come to pass in the times of the apostles.

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You have here three sorts of students, or inquirers into the great affair of man's salvation by Jesus Christ; *prophets, apostles, and angels*.

Learn, 1. A diligent endeavor after the knowledge of Christ, and our duty, will certainly be answered with good success. The prophets were answered with a revelation.

2. The holiest and best of men sometimes have their lawful and pious requests denied. It was both lawful and pious for these prophets to desire to know more, than they were permitted to know, about the time of the appearance of Christ in the world, but they were denied.

3. It is the honor and practice of a Christian, to be useful to others in many cases, rather than to himself; the prophets ministered to others, *not unto themselves*, Rom. 14:7. Nothing is more contrary to Christian principles, than for a man to make himself his own end, and live to himself.

4. The revelations of God to his church, though gradual, and given by parcels, are all perfectly consistent, and exactly agree, as coming from the same Spirit of God.

5. The efficacy of the evangelical ministry depends on *the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven*; the Gospel is the *ministration of the Spirit*.

6. The mysteries of the Gospel, and the methods of man's salvation, are so glorious, that the blessed *angels* earnestly *desire to look into* them; they consider the whole scheme of man's redemption with deep attention and admiration, particularly the points the apostle had been discoursing of.

V. 13. Here the apostle begins his exhortation to them, whose glorious state he had before described, thereby instructing us, that Christianity is a doctrine according to godliness, designed not only to make us wiser, but better; *Wherefore*, since you are so honored and distinguished, as above,

*'Gird up,'* &c. i. e. 'as the traveller, racer, warrior, and laborer, gather in, and gird up, their long loose garments, that they may be more ready, prompt, and expeditious in their business; so do you by *your minds*; restrain their extravagances, and let the *loins*, or strength and vigor of *your minds*, be exerted in your duty; disengage yourselves from all who would hinder you, and go on resolutely in your obedience.

*'Be sober,* be vigilant against all your spiritual dangers and enemies, and be temperate and modest in eating, drinking, apparel, recreation, business, and in the whole of your behavior; *be sober-minded* also in opinion, as well as in practice, and humble in your judgment of yourselves.'

*And hope to the end,* &c. Some refer this to the last judgment, as if the apostle directed their *hope* to the final *revelation of Jesus Christ*; but it seems more natural to take it, as it might be rendered, *'Hope perfectly, or thoroughly, for the grace that is brought to you in, or by the revelation of Jesus Christ; by the Gospel which brings life and immortality to light; hope perfectly, trust without doubting to that grace which is now offered to you by the Gospel.'* The main work of a Christian lies in the right management of his heart and mind. The best Christians need to be exhorted to sobriety; it is required of a *bishop*, 1 Tim. 3:2. of *aged men*, Tit. 2:2. *young women and young men*, Tit. 2:4, 6. A Christian must still hope and strive for more grace. A strong and perfect trust in God's grace is very consistent with our best endeavors in our duty; we must *hope perfectly*, and yet *gird up our loins*, and address ourselves vigorously to the work we have to do, encouraging ourselves from the *grace of Jesus Christ*.

V. 14. The exhortation is continued, and the words may be taken either as a rule of holy living, which is both positive and negative; or, as an argument to press them to holiness from the consideration of what they now are, *children of obedience*, and what they were when they lived in *lust and ignorance*. The children of God ought to prove

and rendered successful by his life-giving and sanctifying influences, and who was 'sent down from heaven' to bear testimony to the performance of those prophecies, which He had of old inspired. *Mark* 16: 17, 20. *Jn.* 15:17—27. *Acts* 2:25—33. 5:32. *Heb.* 2:1—4. In fact, these mysteries of redemption contained such displays of the wisdom, power, truth, justice, holiness, and mercy of God; that 'the angels desired,' with great earnestness and persevering attention, 'to look into them,' and to join in adoration of the Divine Redeemer, like the cherubim who were represented as bowing down to look on the ark of the covenant. (*Note, Ex.* 25:10—21.) They, as it were, left the glories of heaven, to study the divine perfections, and to learn new songs of adoring praise, in the stable at Bethlehem, in the desert, in Gethsemane, on mount Calvary, and from 'the church,' which 'God, manifested in the flesh,' had 'purchased with his own blood.' *Mat.* 4:3—11. *Luk.* 2:8—11. 22:43. 24: 1—9. *Ac.* 1:9—12. *Eph.* 3:9—12. 1 *Tim.* 3:16. *Rev.* 5:11—14—11) *Spirit of Christ.*] *Note,* 3 *19, 20.*—I. e., say the Socinians, the spirit in them, which spake of Christ, &c. But in this sense, He might as well have been styled the Spirit of Antichrist, or the false prophets, because He also spake of them. All the ancients agree in the other sense, that Christ spake by his Spirit in the prophets, they being inspired with his grace, and taught by his Spirit; their words sprang from the divine Word moving them, and by Him they prophesied. He spake in Isaiah, in Elias, and in the mouth of the prophets. So the fathers. — Shall holy prophets be so desirous to know the time when these things should happen; and holy angels to look into these glorious revelations? And shall we, to whom, and for whose happiness, this Gospel was revealed, neglect, not only to obtain, but even to know, this great salvation? *Whitby.* *To look into.*] *Luk.* 24:12. *Jn.* 20:5. *Jam.* 1:25. 'With bowing head, and bended neck, accurately to look into.' *Stephanus.*

New Test., as well as of the Old, searched into the mystery of their own productions.' WILLIAMS.—*Which the angels, &c.*] 'By the which are meant all the wonderful things above-mentioned, before their event not thoroughly known to the angels, but now surveyed and contemplated with wonder and delight; for that is the sense of the word translated *desire*.—Perhaps nothing can more strongly excite our admiration of the Gospel than this glorious passage.'

V. 13. 'Here follows an exhortation to a holy life, deduced from the foregoing commemoration of the glories and blessings of the Gospel, which extends to ch. 3:16.' ROS.—*Wherefore.*] 'I. e. such being the glory and felicity prepared to reward your obedience.' BL.—*Gird up, &c.*] 'This is an allusion to the manners of the east; where, the men's garments being long and flowing, they prepared themselves for travelling, and other active employments, by tucking them up, and fastening them round their loins with a girdle, to prevent their being encumbered. *The loins of the mind girded*, is a bold but most expressive metaphor, to signify, *the faculties of the mind prepared* for exerting themselves properly.' MACKN.—*Hope.*] Pres. Edwards, the elder, remarks, on Heb. 6:19. 'Hope here is the same with the grace of *faith*, but only with respect to one kind of its exercises, viz. those that respect God's *promises*, or *our own future promised good*. Hope, in the N. T., is often spoken of as a great Christian grace and virtue, and one of the main things that distinguishes a true Christian; which would be difficult to account for, if by hope is meant no more than what we commonly understand by the word, viz. one's hoping well of his future state. That is not hard to do. But by hope is doubtless meant, an embracing the promises of God, and *fiducial* relying on them through Christ for salvation. In 1 Cor. 13: where faith and hope are distinguished, by the former is meant faith in a larger sense, without any regard to our own future interest in what is revealed. Hope, is our relying on God's truth as to what concerns our own future happiness.' EDWARDS.



15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation ;

16 Because it is written, <sup>j</sup> Be ye holy ; for I am holy.

[Practical Observations.]

17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning <sup>here</sup> in <sup>k</sup> fear :

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation <sup>received</sup> by tradition from your fathers ;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb <sup>l</sup> without blemish and without spot :

20 Who verily was fore-ordained before <sup>m</sup> the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you ;

21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the

<sup>j</sup> Le. 11:44. <sup>k</sup> Phi. 2:12. <sup>l</sup> Jn. 1:29,36. Re. 7:14. <sup>m</sup> Re. 13:8.

themselves to be such, by their obedience to God, by their present, constant, universal obedience. The best have had their times of *lust and ignorance*. Persons, when converted, differ exceedingly from what they were formerly ; their inward frame, behavior, speech, and conversation, are much altered from what they were in times past. *The lusts and extravagances of sinners are both the fruits and the signs of their ignorance.*

V. 15, 16. Here is a noble rule enforced by three reasons, taken from the grace of God, in *calling us* ; from his command, *it is written* ; and from his example, *Be ye holy, for I am holy.*

The grace of God in calling a sinner, is a powerful engagement to holiness ; great favors are strong obligations ; they enable as well as oblige to be holy.

Complete holiness is the desire and duty of every Christian : here is a twofold rule of holiness ; 1. For extent, it must be universal ; we must *be holy*, and *in all manner of conversation* ; in all affairs, in every condition, towards all people, in all our intercourse and business. 2. For the pattern of it, we must *be holy, as God is holy* ; He is perfectly, unchangeably, and eternally *holy* ; and we should aspire after such a state.

PRACT. OBS. V. 10—16. While we discourse freely on evangelical and experimental subjects, numbers, either ignorantly or maliciously, charge us with holding *novel* doctrines, and introducing a new religion ; but in fact these principles were first published, as soon as 'sin entered into the world ;' though they have passed, so to speak, through several enlarged editions : but everything is new to him, who is hitherto unacquainted with it. Concerning these things the ancient 'prophets inquired' and searched with great diligence ; and shall not we then search diligently those Scriptures, which contain the joyful and interesting doctrines of salvation ? Or shall we neglect the means of appropriating to ourselves its everlasting benefits ? Far be this from us ! Rather let us throw aside all carnal encumbrances, and use every method of bringing our

V. 15, 16. 'We are to imitate our Father and our God, as good children do their parents. The sentiment is confirmed from Lev. 11:41.' Bl.

V. 17—21. The Christian's best state of mind is, a due proportion of humble fear and believing hope, at an equal distance from presumption and despondency. Without hope, a man is like a ship which has no anchor ; without fear, he resembles one without ballast. The fearless professor is defenceless ; and Satan 'takes him captive at his will ;' while he who desponds has no heart to avail himself of his advantages, and surrenders at discretion.—The apostle, therefore, exhorted his brethren to 'fear always,' as well as to 'hope to the end ;' especially considering at what a price they had been redeemed.—Once they had lived in a vain, unprofitable manner ; Jews had rested in the legal ceremonies, and the 'traditions of the elders ;' Gentiles in the absurd fables and idolatrous worship, transmitted to them from their ancestors ; both were at an immense distance from a spiritual religion. But they had been redeemed, not only by power exerted, but by a price paid for them, as a satisfaction to the justice of God, that He might act honorably in delivering them. This price had not consisted of the treasures which men generally most value ; but it had been paid with 'the blood of Christ,' 'the Son of the living God,' which was indeed most precious,

The *written* Word of God is the surest rule of a Christian's life, and by this rule we are commanded to *be holy* every way.

The O. T. commands are to be studied and obeyed in the times of the N. T. ; the apostle, by virtue of a command delivered several times by Moses, requires holiness in all Christians.

V. 17. The apostle here supposes these Christians would certainly *call upon their heavenly Father*, and from that argues with them to *pass the time of their sojourning here in fear.*

All good Christians look upon themselves in this world as pilgrims and sojourners, as strangers in a distant country, passing to another, to which they properly belong, Ps. 39:12. Heb. 11:13.

The consideration of God as a Judge, is not improper for those who can truly call Him *Father*. Holy confidence in God as a *Father*, and an awful fear of Him as a Judge, are very consistent ; to regard God as a Judge, is a singular mean to endear Him to us as a *Father*.

The judgment of God will be *without respect of persons, according to every man's work*. The works of men will in the great day discover their persons ; God will make all the world to know who are his by their works ; we are obliged to faith, holiness, and obedience, and our works will be an evidence whether we have complied with our obligations or not.

V. 18, 19. The apostle having exhorted to *pass the time of our life in the fear of God*, from this consideration, that we *call on the Father*, adds, in these words, a second argument, because, or *forasmuch as we are redeemed by the Son, &c.* Herein he reminds them of their *redemption, of the price paid for it, of their knowledge of it, and of what they were redeemed from, a vain conversation received by tradition.*

The consideration of our redemption ought to be a constant and powerful inducement to holiness, and the fear of God.

God expects a Christian should live answerably to what he knows, and therefore we have great need to be put in mind of what we already know, Ps. 39:4.

*Silver and gold, and such corruptible things*, can by no means purchase or procure a man's salvation ; they are *corruptible*, and, therefore, cannot *redeem* an incorruptible and immortal soul. The redemption of man is real, not metaphorical ; and the price is equal to the purchase, for it is *the precious blood of Christ, it is the blood of an innocent Person, whom the paschal lamb represented, and of an infinite Person, being the Son of*

God, therefore it is called *the blood of God*, Acts 20:28.

Christ's design in shedding his most precious blood, was, to redeem us, not only from eternal misery hereafter, but from a vain conversation in this world ; empty, frivolous, trifling, and unserviceable to the honor of God, the credit of religion, the conviction of unbelievers, and comfort and satisfaction of a man's own conscience.

A man's conversation may carry an appearance of devotion, and may plead antiquity, custom, and tradition, in its defence, and yet, after all, be a most vain conversation. The Jews had a deal to say from these heads, for all their formalities ; yet their conversation was so vain, that only the blood of Christ could redeem them from it.

V. 20, 21. The Redeemer is further described, not only as a Lamb without spot, but as one foreordained or foreknown. When prescience is ascribed to God, it implies more than bare prospect or speculation. It imports an act of the will, a resolution that the thing shall be, Acts 2:23. God did not only foreknow, but determine and decree, that his Son should die for man, and this decree was *before the foundation of the world.*

Also, He was *manifested in these last days for you* ; manifested or demonstrated to be that Redeemer whom God had foreordained, by his birth, by his Father's testimony, and by his own works, especially by his resurrection, Rom. 1:4. 'This was done in these last times of the New Test. and of the Gospel, for you, you Jews, you sinners, you afflicted ones ; you have the comfort of the manifestation and appearance of Christ, if you believe on Him.'

God raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory. The resurrection of Christ, considered as an act of power, is common to all the three Persons, but as an act of judgment it is peculiar to the Father, who, as a Judge, released Christ, raised Him from the grave, and gave Him glory, proclaimed Him to all the world to be his Son, advanced Him to heaven, crowned Him with glory and honor, invested Him with all power in heaven and earth, and glorified Him with that glory which He had with God before the world was.

The redeemed are also described here by their faith and hope. The cause of this is, Jesus Christ ; 'You do by Him believe in God ; by Him as the Author, Encourager, Support, and Finisher of your faith ; your faith and hope now may be in God, as reconciled to you by Christ the Mediator.'

Learn hence, God had purposes of special

minds into a proper frame for attending to this grand concern, and of doing the work of our great Master with alacrity and industry. Let us study to be 'sober,' in the midst of a giddy, sensual, and intoxicated world ; let us 'hold fast the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end ;' and show ourselves the 'obedient children' of God, by avoiding conformity to the world, and by taking care not to 'fashion ourselves according to the former lusts in our ignorance ;' 4:3—5. *Rom.* 12:1, 12. but especially watching and praying against those sins, to which we were then most prone or accustomed. Thus let us aim to become 'holy in all manner of conversation,' even 'as God who hath called us is holy ;' for He sanctifies all whom He saves, and 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord.'

SCOTT.

by reason of his divine nature and excellency ; so that it was sufficient to render it glorious, to the justice and law of God, for the sake of it, to show mercy and give grace to sinners of every nation and description. *John* 1:29. (17) *Fear.* 'Why should he, that hath assurance of salvation, fear ? If there is truth in his assurance, nothing can disappoint him, not sin itself, it is true ; but it is no less true, that if he do not fear to sin there is no truth in his assurance. It is not the assurance of faith, but the misperception of a secure and profane mind.' *Leighton.* Sc.

(17) 'Now follows the *second* argument, by which we are actuated to virtue, and that derived from the divine benignity and justice.' Bl.

(18) *Redeemed with corruptible things, &c.* 'Some think here is an allusion to the *lamb*, which made an atonement, and was bought at the *common* expense furnished by the contribution of the *half shekel*, as an atonement for their souls.' *Doddr.—Redeemed, Bloomf.* says, 'may simply signify *liberated* ; but there is an allusion to the atoning blood of Christ, without which not even the religion that liberated them could have been promulgated.' *Vain conversation.* Mackn. renders it *foolish behavior*, and *Bloomf.* refers to Tit. 3:9. and says, it relates not only to *idolatry*, but to the other vices which that carries with it, and to which human nature is prone.

ED.



dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.

[*Practical Observations.*]

22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away :

25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

CHAP. II.

1 He exhorted them from the breach of charity: 4 shewing that Christ is the Foundation whereupon they are built. 11 He beseecheth them also to abstain from fleshly lusts, 13 to be obedient to magistrates, 18 and teacheth servants how to obey their masters, 20 patiently suffering for well doing, after the example of Christ.

WHEREFORE laying aside all malice and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

n Mat. 28:18.	q Jn. 1:13.	u Jn. 1:1,14.
Phi. 2:9.	r Ja. 1:18.	2 Pe. 1:19.
o Jn. 17:17,19.	s or, For that.	a Ep. 4:23,31.
p 1 Jn. 3:14,18.	t Is. 40:6-8.	

favor toward his people long before He made any manifestations of them. The clearness of light, the supports of faith, the efficacy of ordinances, and the proportion of comforts; these are all much larger since the manifestation of Christ, than they were before. Our gratitude and services should be suitable to such favors. The redemption of Christ belongs to none but true believers: none [can scripturally] pretend to a general application of Christ's death for the salvation of all. Hypocrites and unbelievers will be ruined for ever, notwithstanding the death of Christ. God in Christ is the ultimate Object of a Christian's faith, which is strongly supported by the resurrection of Christ, and the glory that did follow.

V. 22. Here the apostle begins another

PRACT. OBS. V. 17-21. The God whom we worship 'is no Respeeter of persons;' but does now, and will at last, 'judge according to every man's work.' Knowing these things, and aware of the deceitfulness of our hearts, the subtlety of our enemies, and the manifold delusions which are propagated on every side; we should 'pass the time of our sojourning' in this perilous world, in humble, watchful, and jealous 'fear;' which will best secure us against fatal deceptions, and preserve us from dishonoring God and exposing ourselves to his fatherly corrections. *Prov. 14:15, 16. 28:14. Rom. 11:16-21.* It behooves us also frequently to remember, that all the riches of the world could never have saved one soul from eternal destruction. Why then should we covet such unavailing, perishing treasures? *Ps. 49:6-9. Mat. 16:24-26. P. O. 21-23.*—But how vast are our obligations to the Lord Jesus, the spotless 'Lamb of God,' whose precious blood was freely shed to ransom our souls, and to obtain eternal salvation for us! May we 'by Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, that our faith and hope' may rest on the infinite perfection and love of God, for all things pertaining to our eternal salvation! SCOTT.

(21.) *Who by Him believe, &c.* 'Who by Him trust in God. The phrase is remarkable, and I think, with *Hallet*, the meaning is, that Christians, who, before their conversion, were ignorant of the true God, learnt his being and providence from the great fact of *Christ's resurrection*, and the power with which God invested Him on his ascension into heaven.' DONNR.

(21-23.) 'It is a fact beyond reasonable controversy, that there is not now, and within the memory of history there never was, a people who were not given up to gross idolatry, totally ignorant of God, and destitute of all true religious worship, except those who have been saved from this dreadful state, by the light of revelation. Yes, the Holy Bible is the sun of the moral system. Take it from any people, and that people is in darkness; take it from the world, and the world is blind. It enlightens, elevates, and purifies society, wherever it is introduced.' REV. BERIAH GREEN.

V. 22. *They* indeed were active and earnest in this matter, [their purification,] but *He* [the Holy Spirit] had given them both the will and the power. *Fervently.* Here only.—'With all their power, vehemently, permanently, liberally, with the whole soul.' *Quol. in Leigh. Sc.*

exhortation to brotherly love, wherein he supposes the Gospel had already such an effect on them as to purify their souls, while they obeyed it through the Spirit, and that it had produced at least an *unfeigned love of the brethren*; and from thence he argues with them to proceed to a higher degree of affection, to love one another with a pure heart fervently.

To purify the soul, supposes some great uncleanness and defilement which had polluted it, and that this defilement is removed. The Word of God is the great instrument of purification, and is effectual, if it be obeyed, *John 17: 17.* Many hear the truth, but are never purified by it, because they will not obey it.

The Spirit of God is the great Agent in purification; convinces of impurities, furnishes virtues and graces; faith, *Acts 15: 9.* hope, *1 John 3: 3.* the fear of God, *Ps. 34: 9.* and the love of Jesus Christ. The aid of the Spirit does not supersede our own industry; these people purified their own souls, but it was through the Spirit.

The souls of Christians must be purified before they can so much as love one another unfeignedly. There are lusts and partialities in man, that without divine grace we can neither love God nor one another as we ought to do; there is no charity but out of a pure heart.

It is the duty of all Christians sincerely and fervently to love one another. Our affection to one another must be sincere and real, fervent, constant, and extensive.

V. 23. This duty, of loving one another with a pure heart fervently, the apostle further presses on Christians, from the consideration of their spiritual relation. Hence, we may learn,

That all Christians are born again; and by this, their new birth, are brought into a new and a near relation to one another, they become brethren.

The Word of God is the great mean of regeneration, *Jam. 1: 18.* which is a new, second birth, much more desirable and excellent than the first. This the apostle teaches, by preferring the incorruptible to the corruptible seed. By the one we become the children of men, by the other the sons and daughters of the Most High. Comparing the Word of God to seed, he teaches us its power and value, and how God works by means.

Those that are regenerate should love one

another with a pure heart fervently; they are under the same government, partake of the same privileges, and are embarked in the same interest.

The Word of God is a living, or lively Word, *Heb. 4: 12.* a mean of spiritual life, animating and exciting us in our duty, till it brings us to eternal life; and it is abiding; it remains eternally true, and abides in the hearts of the regenerate for ever.

V. 24, 25. The apostle having given an account of the excellency of the renewed spiritual man, as born again, now sets before us the vanity of the natural man, taking him with all his ornaments and advantages about him; he is as grass and the flower of grass; and nothing can make him a solid, substantial being, but the being born again, of the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, which will transform him into a most excellent creature, whose glory will not fade like a flower, but shine like an angel; and this Word is daily set before you in the preaching of the Gospel.

Man is a withering, fading, dying creature. In his entrance into the world, in his life, and in his fall, he is like to grass, *Job 14: 2. Is. 40: 6, 7.* Take him in all his glory, even that is as the flower of grass; his wit, beauty, strength, vigor, wealth, honor; these are but as the flower of grass, which soon withers and dies away.

The Word of God, if received, and that only, will preserve him to everlasting life, and abide with him for ever.

The prophets and apostles preached the same doctrine, *Isaiah* and others, in the Old Test., the same which the apostles preached in the New.

CHAP. II. The general exhortation to holiness is continued and enforced by several reasons, taken from the foundation on which Christians are built, Jesus Christ, and from their spiritual blessings and privileges in Him. The mean of obtaining it, the Word of God, is recommended, and all contrary qualities are condemned. Particular directions are given how subjects ought to obey the magistrates, and servants their masters, patiently suffering in well doing, in imitation of Christ.

V. 1. *Malice* may be taken more generally for all sorts of wickedness, as *Jam. 1: 21.* *1 Cor. 5: 8.* but, in a more confined sense, is anger resting, settled, overgrown, and retained till it inflames a man to design and

PRACT. OBS. V. 22-25. It is highly important, that men should seriously consider, and be deeply convinced, that their souls must be purified from pollution, or they will inevitably perish; that there is a work and duty for them to attend on in this matter; that they can do nothing in it, except by 'obeying the truth;' that they cannot 'obey the truth' but by the 'Holy Spirit,' whom God has promised to give to those that ask Him; *Luke 11 5-13.* and that 'unfeigned love' of true Christians is one proper test and standard of evangelical purity of heart. All other distinctions will soon be lost, and as it were swallowed up, in the difference between the regenerate and the unregenerate; all other glory will wither, and terminate in everlasting shame and disgrace; all other unions will be dissolved, and perish. But those who are one in Christ Jesus, and are 'beautified with his salvation,' will be united in perfect love, glory, and felicity, for ever. As 'this Word of the Gospel,' which is the seed of eternal life, is preached to us also; let us see to it, that it dwells in our hearts, and brings forth holy fruit in our lives; and then we shall 'not be ashamed or confounded, world without end.' SCOTT.

(22.) 'Having given the above arguments to the living holily and righteously, he returns to the exhortation, that they should strive after virtue, and, above all, brotherly love.' POTT, in *Bloomf.*

V. 23-25. This brotherly love was indeed in some sense natural to them, not as men, but as Christians; as they were all children of one family, and more nearly related than any earthly brethren could be. The quotation, *Is. 40: 6, 7.* is nearly from the Sept., which accords to the Heb. 'It is grossly contrary to the truth of the Scriptures, to imagine, that they who are thus renewed can be unborn again.' SCOTT.

(23.) *Not of corruptible seed, &c.* 'This was said against the Jews, who gloried in their descent from Abraham. See *John 1: 13. 3: 6.*' ROS.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1-3. The apostle here applied to Christ, as the context proves, what the Psalmist had spoken of *Jehovah.* *Ps. 34: 8.*—The Lord is merciful and kind, whether men believe it, or not; many have inefficacious notions of his mercy, without any experience or taste of it, and these notions commonly embolden them in rebellion; but regenerate persons believe that He is gracious; they apply to Him in that persuasion, and thus they taste and relish his grace, and have an



2 As new-born <sup>b</sup> babes, desire the sincere milk <sup>c</sup> of the word, that ye may grow thereby :

3 If so be ye have tasted <sup>d</sup> that the Lord is gracious.

4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed <sup>e</sup> indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

5 Ye also, as lively stones, <sup>f</sup> are built up a spiritual <sup>g</sup> house, an holy <sup>h</sup> priesthood, to offer up spiritual <sup>i</sup> sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

6 Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, <sup>j</sup> Behold, I lay in

<sup>b</sup> Mat. 18:3. <sup>c</sup> Ps. 118:22. <sup>d</sup> Is. 61:6. <sup>e</sup> Re. 1:5.  
<sup>f</sup> 1 Co. 3:2. <sup>g</sup> 1 Cor. 3:2. <sup>h</sup> Mal. 1:11. <sup>i</sup> Mal. 1:11.  
<sup>j</sup> Ps. 34:3. <sup>k</sup> 1 Pe. 1:12. <sup>l</sup> Ps. 118:22. <sup>m</sup> Is. 61:6. <sup>n</sup> Re. 1:5.

do mischief, or delight in any mischief that befalls another. *Guile* is deceit in words, and comprehends flattery, falsehood, and delusion, a crafty imposing on another's ignorance or weakness, to his damage. *Hypocrisies*, the word being plural, comprehends all sorts of hypocrisies. In matters of religion, hypocrisy is counterfeit piety; in civil conversation, counterfeit friendship, much practiced by those who give high compliments, or promise what they never intend to perform, or pretend friendship when mischief lies in their hearts. *Envy* is a grieving at the good of another; at their abilities, prosperity, fame, or successful labors. *Evil speaking* is detraction, speaking against another, or defaming him; it is rendered *backbiting*, 2 Cor. 12:20. Rom. 1:30. These are to be put off, as a vile garment.

Learn, 1. The best Christians have need to be cautioned and warned against the worst sins; they are but sanctified in part, and are still liable to temptations.

2. Our best services toward God will neither please Him, nor profit us, if we are not conscientious in our duties to men. The sins here mentioned are offences against the second table.

3. Whereas it is said, *all malice, all guile, learn*, That one sin, not laid aside, will hinder our spiritual profit and everlasting welfare.

4. Malice, envy, hatred, hypocrisy, and evil-speaking, generally go together; and all of them combine to hinder our profiting by the Word of God.

V. 2. The duty here exhorted to, is, a strong and constant desire of the *Word of God*, here called *reasonable milk*. Only that phrase not being proper English, our translators rendered it *the milk of the Word*, by which we are to understand food proper for the soul, or a reasonable creature. It must be sincere, not adulterated by the mixtures of men, who often corrupt the Word of God, 2 Cor. 2:17. The manner how they are to desire it is stated. He puts them in mind of their regeneration. They being newly born, must desire the milk of the Word, and

for this end, that they may grow thereby; that we may improve in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, 2 Pet. 3:18.

Learn, 1. Strong desires and affections to the Word of God, are a sure evidence of a person's being born again: the lowest evidence, but yet certain.

2. Growth and improvement in wisdom and grace are the design and desire of every Christian; all spiritual means are for edification and improvement. The Word of God, rightly used, does not leave a man as it finds him, but improves and makes him better.

V. 3. *If so be, or since that, or forasmuch as, ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* The apostle does not doubt, but affirms that these good Christians had tasted the goodness of God, hence he argues with them, as v. 1, 2. The next verse assures us, that the Lord, here spoken of, is the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence,

Learn, 1. Our Lord Jesus Christ is very gracious to his people.

2. The graciousness of our Redeemer is best discovered by an experimental taste of it; which supposes our being united to Him by faith, and then we may taste his goodness in all his providences, in all our spiritual concerns, in all our fears and temptations, in his Word and worship every day.

3. The best of God's servants have, in this life, but a taste of the grace of Christ.

4. The Word of God is the great instrument whereby He discovers and communicates his grace to men. They who feed on the sincere milk of the Word, taste and experience most of his grace.

V. 4. The apostle here enters on a description of Jesus Christ, which he continues to v. 9. He calls Him a Stone, to denote his invincible strength and everlasting duration, and to teach his servants that He is their Protection and Security, the Foundation on which they are built, and a Rock of offence to all their enemies. He is the living Stone, having eternal life in Himself, and being the Prince of life to all his people.

The reputation and respect He has with God and man are very different. He is disallowed of men, reprobated or rejected; but chosen of God, separated and foreordained to be the Foundation of the church, as ch. 1:20. and precious, a most honorable, choice, worthy Person, in Himself, in the esteem of God, and in the judgment of all who believe on Him.

To this Person so described we are obliged to come; to *whom coming*, not by a local motion, but by faith, whereby we are united to Him at first, and draw nigh to Him ever after.

Learn, 1. Jesus Christ is the very foundation-stone of all our hopes and happiness.

2. Men in general disallow and reject Jesus Christ; they slight Him, dislike Him, oppose and refuse Him, as Scripture and experience declare, Isa. 53:3.

3. However, He is chosen of God, and precious in his account; chosen to be the

Lord of the universe, the Head of the church, the Savior of his people, and the Judge of the world; precious in the excellency of his nature, the dignity of his office, and the gloriousness of his services.

4. Those who expect mercy from this gracious Redeemer, must come to Him, which is our act, though done by God's grace; an act of the soul, not of the body; a real endeavor, not a fruitless wish.

V. 5. The foundation was laid, v. 4. Here is the superstructure built upon it; *Ye also, as lively stones, are built up.* The apostle is recommending the Christian church and constitution to these dispersed Jews. It was natural for them to object, that the Christian church had no such glorious temple, nor such a numerous priesthood; but its dispensation was mean, having nothing of the pomp and grandeur the Jewish dispensation had. To which the apostle answers, that the Christian church is a much nobler fabric than the Jewish temple, a temple consisting not of dead materials, but of living parts. Christ, the Foundation, a living Stone, Christians lively stones,—these make a spiritual house, and a holy priesthood; and though they have no bloody sacrifices of beasts to offer, yet they have much better and more acceptable; and they have an Altar, too, on which to present their offerings; for they offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Learn, 1. All-sincere Christians have in them a principle of spiritual life, derived from Christ their Head; hence, *living stones*. 2. The church of God is a spiritual house, Eph. 2:20. 1 Cor. 3:10. Eph. 2:22. its foundation, Christ Jesus; the materials of it, spiritual persons; its furniture, the graces of the Spirit;—in connexion, held together by the Spirit of God, and by one common faith; and in use, to offer up spiritual sacrifices. This house is daily built up, every part of it improving, and the whole supplied, in every age, by the addition of new particular members. 3. All good Christians are a *holy priesthood*. The apostle speaks here of the generality of Christians; they are all select persons, sacred to God, serviceable to others, well endowed with heavenly gifts and graces, and well employed. 4. This holy priesthood must and will offer up spiritual sacrifices to God. The spiritual sacrifices Christians are to offer, are, their bodies, souls, affections, prayers, praises, alms, and other duties. 5. The most spiritual sacrifices of the best men are not acceptable to God, but through Jesus Christ; He is the only great High Priest, through whom we and our services can be accepted; therefore bring all your oblations to Him, and by Him present them to God.

V. 6. What was asserted before of Christ, his being a *living Stone*, &c. is here proved from Isa. 28:16. rather the sense than the words, from either the Heb. or LXX. The true sense of Scripture may be justly and fully expressed in other than in scripture-words. *It is contained*. The verb is active, but our translators render it passively, to

earnest of their future felicity, even 'the witness in themselves' of his mercy and truth. Ps. 4:6—8. 51:12,13. 63:5—8. Prov. 14:10. 24:13,14. Cant. 1:3, 4. 2 Pet. 1:19. 1 John 5:9, 10.—1. *Malice, &c.* 'The apostles sometimes name some of these evils, and sometimes others of them, but they are all inseparable as one garment, and all comprehended under that one word, "the old man," which the apostle there exhorts to put off. (Eph. 4:22.)—"The Word" . . . is both the incorruptible seed, and the incorruptible food, of that new life of grace, which must therefore be an incorruptible life.—Though it seem a poor, despicable business, that a frail, sinful man, like yourselves, speak a few words in your hearing, yet, look upon it as the means, wherein God communicates happiness to them that believe, and works that believing into happiness; . . . consider this, which is a true notion, and then what can be so precious?' Abp. Leighton.—The word *sincere* shows with what diligent care, the true doctrines and principles of the sacred Word should be distinguished from all corrupted and mutilated systems; even as a parent would guard his beloved child, from infectious or poisonous nutriment, though it assumed the name, form, and color of milk.—(3) *Tasted*.] This is a reference, rather than a quotation, and alike near to the Sept. and to the Heb. Ps. 34:8.

SCOTT.

(2.) "Unto salvation." These words are to be added to this v. on

the best authorities.' HENRY, *abr.*—*New-born babes*.] 'New-born infants. This expression very emphatically denotes, those who are newly converted or regenerated.'

DONNE.

(2, 3.) 'The more a person loves God with a gracious affection, the more he desires to love Him; and the more he hates sin, the more he desires to hate it. The kindling of gracious affection is like a flame, the higher it is raised, the more ardent it is. It is as natural for one who is spiritually born to thirst after holiness, as it is for a child to desire its mother's breast. Their highest enjoyment in this world, is but a taste and prelibation of their future glory, and has no tendency to satisfy or abate their desires for more.'

EDWARDS.

V. 4—6. The apostle, having been educated a Jew, and writing to Jewish converts, as well as others, retained the typical language of the Old Test. concerning a temple, a priesthood, and sacrifices. SCOTT.

(4.) 'Here Peter had in his eye Is. 28:16. where the formation of the Christian church is foretold, under the image of a temple, which God was to build on Messiah, as the Foundation-stone thereof.' MACKN.

(6.) 'Returning to the subject of v. 4. the apostle shows that, in a passage of the Old Test., Christ is compared with a Corner-stone, and those who fly to this stone are declared blessed.' POTT, in *Bloomf.*, who says, the passage is doubtless *accommodated* by the apostle; and he



Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

7 Unto you therefore which believe, *he is*<sup>k</sup> precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: <sup>m</sup> whereunto also they were appointed.

[Practical Observations.]

9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar<sup>o</sup> people; that ye should shew forth the praises<sup>p</sup> of him who hath called you out of darkness<sup>q</sup> into his marvellous light:

k or, an honour. n or, purchase. p or, virtues.  
1 Mat. 21:42. o De. 4:20. q Ac. 26:18.  
m Jude 4.

avoid the difficulty of finding a nominative case for it, which had puzzled so many interpreters before them.

The matter of the quotation is this; *Behold, I lay in Zion.*

Learn, 1. In the weighty matters of religion, we must depend entirely on scripture-proof; Christ and his apostles appealed to Moses, David, and the ancient prophets. 2. The accounts God hath given us in Scripture concerning his Son Jesus Christ, are what require our strictest attention; *Behold, I lay*—*John* calls for the like attention, *John 1:29*. 3. The constituting of Christ Jesus Head of the church, is an eminent work of God; *I lay in Zion*. 4. Jesus Christ is the chief Corner-stone that God hath laid in his spiritual building. 5. Jesus Christ is the Corner-stone for the support and salvation of none but such as are his sincere people: none but Zion, and such as are of Zion; not for Babylon, not for his enemies. 6. True faith in Jesus Christ is the only way to prevent a man's utter confusion. Three things put a man into great confusion, and faith prevents them all,—disappointment, sin, and judgment. Faith has a remedy for each.

V. 7. These words are an inference from what went before.

Learn, 1. Whatever is by just and neces-

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—8. The apostles, with one consent, declare the necessity of 'laying aside all malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, and slanders,' in order to 'receive with meekness' the instructions of Christ. We need not then wonder, that there are so many hearers of the Word wholly unfruitful; and that others are so little edified, when we observe how much these apostolical injunctions are neglected.—But let no man rest in unexperienced notions; for even 'habet in Christ taste that He is gracious;' and their experience of his love and mercy draws them to seek Him, in all their subsequent distresses, fears, wants, and temptations, and to rest on Him as 'the Foundation' of all their hopes.—But whilst our Emmanuel, and his salvation, are glorious in the eyes and

quotes *Ros.*, as saying, 'that, according to the *primary* sense, there is promised that defence and security, which Jerusalem would afford to its inhabitants, and all who took refuge there from Sennacherib. Thus *Sion* signifies *Jerusalem*; and the *stone* is a symbol of security. But in a *sublimed* sense, the words hold good of Christ, in whom all should take refuge who desire eternal salvation. Then *Sion* is the Jewish nation, from which Christ descended; and the *Corner-stone* is Christ.' *Ed.*

V. 7, 8. 'Unto them that disbelieve, the Stone which the builders disallowed, the same is become the Head of the corner, and a Stone of stumbling, and a Rock of offence. They disbelieving the Word, that is, the Word of the Gospel, which contains this testimony, stumble at this Corner-stone, "whereunto they were appointed." The meaning is, that God, the righteous Judge of all the earth, had appointed, or decreed, that destruction, or eternal perdition, should be the punishment of those disbelieving persons, who wilfully rejected all the evidences that Jesus Christ was the Messiah, the Savior of the world.'

T. H. HORNE.

V. 9, 10. 'A chosen generation,' referring to the choice of Abraham and his posterity; 'a royal priesthood,' referring to the covenants with Aaron as to the priesthood, and with David as to the kingdom; and 'a holy nation, a peculiar people,' referring to the national covenant with Israel, at the giving of the law. (*Ex. 19:6. Sept.*)—To explain all this, as some do, to mean that nominal Christians are, exactly in the same sense, 'a chosen generation, &c.' as Israel was of old; is a most unreasonable confusion of the *typical* prophecies contained in the Old Test.,

sary consequence deduced from Scripture, may be depended on with as much certainty as if it were contained in express words of Scripture. The prophet did not expressly say so, yet he said that from which the consequence was unavoidable. Our Savior bids them search the Scriptures, because they testified of Him; yet no place in those Scriptures to which He there refers them, said Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. Yet those Scriptures do say, He should be born of a virgin, before the sceptre departed from Judah, during the second temple, and after Daniel's seventy weeks; but such was Jesus Christ. To collect which conclusion, one must make use of reason, history, eyesight, experience; and yet it is an infallible scripture-conclusion for all that.

2. The business of faithful ministers is, to apply general truths to the particular condition and state of their hearers, *v. 6*. This requires wisdom, courage, and fidelity; but is very profitable to the hearers.

3. Jesus Christ is exceeding precious to all the faithful. The majesty and grandeur of his Person, the dignity of his office, his near relation, his wonderful works, his immense love,—everything, engages them to the highest esteem and respect for Him.

4. Disobedient people have no true faith. By disobedient, understand the unpersuadable, incredulous, and impenitent.

5. They that ought to build the church of Christ, are often the worst enemies of Christ in the world. In the Old Test. the false prophets, and in the New, the scribes, pharisees, chief priests, and still the hierarchy of Rome.

6. God will carry on his own work, and support the interest of Jesus Christ in the world, notwithstanding the falseness of pretended friends, and the opposition of his worst enemies.

V. 8. The words are taken from *Isa. 8:13, 14*. From whence it is plain, that Jesus Christ is the Lord of hosts, and consequently the most high God.

The builders, the chief priests, refused Him, and the people followed their leaders; so Christ became to them a *Stone of stumbling, and a Rock of offence*, at which they stumbled, and hurt themselves; and, in return, He fell on them as a mighty stone or rock, and punished them with destruction, *Mat. 21:44*.

Learn, 1. All the disobedient take offence at the Word of God; are offended with Christ Himself, with his doctrine and the

purity of his precepts; the Jewish doctors more especially stumbled at the meanness of his appearance, and the proposal of trusting only to Him for their justification before God, *Rom. 9:32*.

2. The same blessed Jesus, who is the Author of salvation to some, is to others the occasion of their sin and destruction. *He is set for the rising and fall of many in Israel.*

3. God Himself hath appointed everlasting destruction to all those who *stumble at the Word, being disobedient*. All those who go on resolutely in their infidelity and contempt of the Gospel, are appointed to eternal destruction; and God, from eternity, knows who they are.

4. To see the Jews generally rejecting Christ, and multitudes in all ages (slighting Him, ought not to discourage us in our love and duty to Him; for this had been foretold by the prophets long ago, and is a confirmation of our faith, both in the Scriptures and in the Messiah.

V. 9. The Jews were exceedingly tender of their ancient privileges, of being the only people of God. 'Now,' say they, 'if we submit to the gospel-constitution, we shall lose all this, and stand on the same level with the Gentiles.' To this objection the apostle answers, That, if they did not submit, they were ruined, *v. 7, 8*. That, if they did submit, they should lose no real advantage, but continue still what they desired to be,—*a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, &c.*

Learn, 1. All true Christians make one family, *one holy nation*, a species of people distinct from the common world; of another spirit, principle, and practice; which they could never be, if they were not chosen in Christ to be such, and sanctified by his Spirit.

2. All the true servants of Christ are royal in their relation to God and Christ; in their power with God, and over themselves and all their spiritual enemies; in the improvements and excellency of their own spirits, and in their hopes and expectations; they are a *royal priesthood*, separated from sin and sinners, consecrated to God, and offering to God spiritual services and oblations, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

3. It is the honor of the servants of Christ, that they are God's *peculiar people*, the people of his acquisition, choice, care, and delight. These four dignities of all genuine Christians are not natural to them; for their first state is a state of horrid darkness, but

'precious' to the hearts of all the regenerate; men in general, continuing proud, carnal, and alienated from God, can see no comeliness or glory in them. *Is. 53:2, 3. Jn. 1:14, 15, 22—25*. He is, indeed, made 'the Head-Stone of the corner;' but modern builders in general make no account of Him; and many carry on their work, either in open opposition to Him, or in manifest neglect of Him.—But let us inquire, whether we have the obedient faith of those to whom 'Christ is precious;' for many profess his *truths*, who stumble at his *precepts*; and so, in another way, He becomes to them 'a Rock of offence,' and an occasion of deeper condemnation. *Scott.*

with the accomplishment of them in the 'true Israel,' or the whole body of true believers, as addressed in the New Test.; and to admit it, would subvert the whole system of interpretation, adopted throughout this work, and which, on mature reflection, even on the objections of opponents, the author is daily more and more assured is the only true one. *Rom. 9:6—13, 11:1—6. Gal. 3:6—14, 26—29. 4:21—31. Heb. 12:13—21*. He would not indeed notice these interpretations, but from a fear, lest it should be thought, that he had not only considered what men, eminent for learning, had said against that exposition, which he decidedly adheres to.—Israel, as typically 'a chosen generation,' was cast off from being the peculiar people of God; but Christians, as the spiritual seed of Abraham, and as born again in consequence of their election in Christ, and 'accounted to Him for a generation,' are indeed 'a chosen generation.' *Ps. 22:30, 31. Is. 53:9, 10. Eph. 1:3—12*. A small company of Israel, compared with the whole nation, officiated as priests, and they were not of the same tribe to which the kingdom was allotted; but in Christ the kingly and priestly offices are united. *Zech. 6:12, 13. Heb. 7*. and through Him believers become 'a royal priesthood,' both 'kings and priests,' being every way dignified and made honorable; called to exercise a spiritual dominion over those passions to which others are enslaved, and to obtain victories over Satan, the world, and sin; and appointed heirs of the kingdom of heaven. They also constituted 'a holy nation,' incorporated under the government of Christ, subject to his holy laws, sanctified by his Spirit, conformed to his image, and safe under his protection; and 'a peculiar people,' purchased with



10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

r Ro. 9:25. t Gr. 5:15-21. v or, wherein.  
s Ps. 119:19. u Ro. 8:13. Ja. 4:1. w Mat. 5:16.

they are effectually called out of darkness, into a state of marvellous light, joy, pleasure, and prosperity; with this intent and view, that they should show forth, by words and actions, the virtues and praises of Him who hath called them.

V. 10. To make this people content, and thankful for the great mercies and dig-

the blood of Christ, redeemed from worse than Egyptian bondage, favored with peculiar privileges, and formed to a peculiar character and conduct. *Tit.* 2:14.—In all these respects, Christians are appointed to show forth the praises of the Lord, by their spiritual worship, their open profession of his Gospel, their holy conversation, and exemplary conduct. To this, therefore, the apostle earnestly exhorted his brethren. The Lord had called many of them out of the total darkness of Pagan idolatry, and the rest, from the comparative darkness of the Mosiac dispensation and Jewish formality, into the clear light of the Gospel, to behold the 'marvellous' displays thus given of the divine glory, and to partake of his astonishing love to sinners. This He had done, in order that they might be his witnesses and worshippers; to render Him the glory due to his name, and to 'show forth his praises,' or to declare his virtues, or energies, even the efficacy of his grace, in their holy tempers and actions. They had formerly been a people of no name, or excellency; but they were now become 'the people of God,' and had 'obtained that mercy,' for the pardon of their sins, and the salvation of their souls, to which they once were strangers. The prophecy, thus referred to, being quoted by Paul, as expressly predicting the calling of the Gentiles, evidently shows, that the Jewish converts were not here exclusively addressed. *Hos.* 1:8—10. 2:21—23. *Rom.* 9:24—29. *Praises.* *Phil.* 4:8. 2 *Pet.* 1:3—5. The only places in which the Greek word for *virtue* occurs in the New Test.

SCOTT.  
(9—12.) *Comp.* 3:16. 'We have to complain of the public injustice that is done to Christianity, when one of its ostentatious professors has acted the hypocrite, and stands in disgraceful exposure before the eyes of the world. We advert to the readiness with which this is turned into a matter of general impeachment, against every appearance of seriousness; and how loud the exclamation is against the religion of all who signalize themselves; and that, if the aspect of godliness be so very decided as to become an aspect of peculiarity, then is this peculiarity converted into a ground of distrust and suspicion against the bearer of it. Now, it so happens, that, in the midst of this world lying in wickedness, a man, to be a Christian at all, must signalize himself. Neither is he in a way of salvation, unless he be one of a very peculiar people; nor would we precipitately consign him to discredit, even though the peculiarity be so glaring as to provoke the charge of methodism. But, instead of making one man's hypocrisy act as a draw-back upon the reputation of a thousand, we submit, if it would not be a fairer and more philosophical procedure, just to betake one's self to the method of induction,—to make a walking survey over the town, and record an inventory of all the men in it, who are so very far gone, as to have the voice of psalms in their family; or as to attend the meetings of fellowship for prayer; or as scrupulously to abstain from all that is questionable in the amusements of the world; or as, by any other marked and visible symptom whatever, to stand out to general observation as the members of a saintly and separated society. We know, that even of such there are a few, who, if Paul were alive, would move him to weep for the reproach they bring upon his Master. But we also know, that the blind and impetuous world exaggerates the few into the many; lays the sins of one upon the multitude; looks at their general aspect of sanctity, and is so engrossed with this single expression of character, as to be insensible to the noble uprightness, and the tender humanity with which this sanctity is associated. And therefore it is that we offer the assertion, and challenge all to its most thorough and searching investigation, that the Christianity of these people, which many think does nothing but cant, and profess, and run after ordinances, has augmented their honesties and their liberalities, and that, tenfold beyond the average character of society; that these are the men we oftenest meet with in the mansions of poverty, and who look with the most wakeful eye over all the sufferings and necessities of our species, and who open their hand most widely in behalf of the imploring and the friendless: and to whom, in spite of all their mockery, the men of the world are sure, in the negotiations of business, to award the readiest confidence, and who sustain the most splendid part in all those great movements of philanthropy, which bear on the general interests of mankind; and who, with their eye full upon eternity, scatter the most abundant blessings over the fleeing pilgrimage of time,—and who, while they hold their conversation in heaven, do most enrich the earth we tread upon, with all those virtues which secure enjoyment to families, and uphold the order and prosperity of the commonwealth.' *On the Influence of Christianity in augmenting Mercantile Virtues.* Disc. 2. vol. 2. CHALMERS.—'We were created and redeemed for the sole purpose of praising and glorifying our Creator;

unities brought unto them by the Gospel, the apostle advises them to compare their former and their present state.

Learn, 1. The best people ought frequently to look back on what they were in time past. 2. The people of God are the most valuable people in the world; all the rest are not a people; good for little. 3. To be brought into the number of the people of God is a very great mercy, and may be obtained.

V. 11. Even the best of men need exhortation to abstain from the worst sins. Many of them proceed from the corruption of nature, which, in their exercise, depend on the body, gratifying some sensual appetite, or inordinate inclination of the flesh. These, Christians ought to avoid, considering,

1. The respect they have with God and good men; they are dearly beloved. 2. Their condition in the world; they are strangers and pilgrims, and should not impede their passage by giving into the wickedness and lusts of the country through which they pass. 3. The mischief and danger these sins produce; 'they war against the soul'; therefore your souls ought to war against them.'

Learn, 1. The grand mischief sin does to

man, is, it wars against the soul; destroys its moral liberty, robs it of its comfort and peace, hinders its present prosperity, and plunges it into everlasting misery.

2. Of all sorts of sin, none are more hurtful to the soul than fleshly lusts. Carnal appetites, lewdness, and sensuality, are most odious to God, and destructive to man's soul. It is a sore judgment to be given up to them.

V. 12. These Christian people are here exhorted to adorn their profession by an honest conversation; that is, good, lovely, decent, amiable, and without blame, and that because they lived among the Gentiles, people of another religion, and who were inveterate enemies to them, who did already slander them, and constantly spake evil of them as of evil-doers. But there is a day of visitation coming, wherein God may call them by his Word and his grace to repentance; and then they will glorify God, and applaud Christians, *Luke* 1: 68.

Note, 1. A Christian profession should be attended with an honest conversation, *Phil.* 4:8. 2. It is the common lot of the best Christians to be evil spoken of by wicked men. 3. Those that are under God's gracious visitation, immediately change their

[note, *Mal.* 4:4—6. *Comp.* 1 *S.* 15:22, 23.] if we refuse or neglect to do this, we transgress the great law of creation, frustrate the end of existence, leave unperformed the work for which we were made, and do all in our power to prove we were created in vain. Should the sun refuse to shine; the showers to descend; the earth to bring forth food; or trees in a fruitful soil be barren; it would be manifestly contrary to nature, and the design of their creation; and thus, since they no longer fulfilled this design, they might be properly reduced to nothing again. So if man refuses to praise and glorify God, his conduct is equally unnatural, and he might justly be made the monument of his everlasting displeasure. What would be unnatural in inanimate creatures, is the height of folly and wickedness in us; for we are capable of knowing our duty and are under [infinite and] innumerable obligations to practise it. Let the sun then refuse to shine, the showers to descend, and the earth to be fruitful, but let not rational creatures refuse to praise and glorify their Creator!

PAYSON.  
(10.) *Were not a people.* 'I think it plain, *Hosea* 2:23. (to which there seems here to be a reference,) relates to the Israelites after their rejection; but it may be accommodated to the Gentiles, so far as not to suppose it here spoken only of Jewish converts.' DODDR.

V. 11. Covetousness, pride, envy, and other aspiring and malignant passions, as much militate against the salvation of men's souls, and oppose the believer's growth in grace, as sensual propensities can do; 'they war against the soul,' and are numbered by the apostle Paul among 'the works of the flesh.' *Gal.* 5:19—21. It cannot therefore be proper to explain the words of Peter restrictively of the animal appetites, as warring against the rational powers of the soul. The whole 'natural man' is depraved, the seat of sin is in the soul, and the body is only 'the instrument of unrighteousness.' *Gen.* 6:5. 8:20—22. *Jer.* 17:9, 10. *Mat.* 15:15—20. *Mark* 7:22. *Rom.* 6:12, 13, 16—19. And, in the regenerate, the conflict is not between the body and the soul, but between the new and the old nature, called 'the flesh and the spirit;' *Rom.* 7:15—25. *Gal.* 5:16—18. 'Warring against the soul,' relates to the destructive tendency of fleshly lusts, the indulgence of which, in any way, is hostile to the soul, and wars against its salvation, or its peace, purity, and vigor.

SCOTT.  
(11.) *Fleshly lusts.* 'Lusts of the flesh, *Gal.* 5:26. denoting not only lasciviousness, but sensuality of every kind.' BROOM.

V. 12. *Which they shall behold.* 3:2. 2 *Pet.* 1:16. — The word denotes a diligent and prying inspection of the object looked at. Thus carnal men watch and pry into the conduct of religious persons; and from it form their judgment of their religion itself. SCOTT.

(12.) *Day of visitation.* 'Some understand the day of judgment; but, as Benson says, it plainly denotes something in this life. Others, as *Whit.* and *Mackn.*, take it of the time of persecution. *Schleusen. Grot., Benson,* and *Jaspis*, of the infliction of divine punishment. But that does not suit the word glorify. The two best founded interpretations seem to be. 1. that of *Wolf, Hamm, Raphael, Carp., Stude,* &c., who take it to allude to persecution; 2. that of *Pisc., Calv., Menoch, Est., Ger., Beza, Doddr., Pott,* and *Rosenm.*, who interpret: "When God shall mercifully visit them with a conviction of the truth and blessings of the Gospel." BROOM.—'In all our intercourse with the world, we are to consider, not only what is honest and right in the sight of God, but what is so in the sight of men. We must never transgress, nor, if we can help it, seem to do so. We must be honest in the sight of the world (*Rom.* 12:17.) as well as in fact. It is not enough for a professed follower of Christ, that he can vindicate himself in a court of justice, or sit down and convince any candid mind, that every suspicion against him is unfounded. No; this may do for a man of strict worldly honesty, but it is not enough for a Christian. His integrity ought to stand out in such bold relief, everywhere, that it may be distinctly recognized at a glance. He should on no account fail to let his light so shine before men, that they may glorify his Father in heaven. Cases will often happen, especially with men in active and extensive business, where, owing to circumstances beyond their foresight, or control, there will be the appearance of overreaching, or hard dealing, though everything is honest in fact. And in such cases, where the sacrifice of property is not too great, it ought to be cheerfully made, rather than bring reproach on the Christian name, and thereby prejudice sinners against religion, to their eternal undoing.' DR. HUMPHREY.—'How much mischief may be done by one wicked man! Yea, though of slender abilities, becoming an indefatigable tool of the devil, he may effect incredible mischief in the world. We have seen some such wretched instruments, ply the intention of doing mischief at a



13 Submit <sup>x</sup> yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake : whether it be to the king, as supreme ;

14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that <sup>y</sup> with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men :

16 As <sup>z</sup> free, and not <sup>a</sup> using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

17 <sup>b</sup> Honor all <sup>c</sup> men. Love the <sup>d</sup> brotherhood. Fear <sup>e</sup> God. Honor the <sup>f</sup> king.

[Practical Observations.]

18 <sup>g</sup> Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear ; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

x Mat. 22:21.      a *having.*      d Jn. 13:35.  
 Ro 13:1-7.      b or, *esteem.*      e Ps. 111:10.  
 y Tit. 2:8      c Ro. 12:10.      f Pr. 24:21.  
 z Ga. 5:1,13.      Phil. 2:3.      g Ep. 6:5, &c.

opinion of good people, glorifying God, and commending them, whom, before, they rail- ed at as *evil-doers*.

V. 13, 14. The general rule of a Christian conversation is, it must be honest ; which it cannot be, if there be not a conscientious discharge of all relative duties : the apostle here, therefore, settles the rules and measures of obedience to the civil magistrate. The duty required is submission, i. e. loyalty and reverence to their persons, obedience to their just laws and commands, and subjection to legal penalties. The persons or objects to whom submission is due, are,

1. More generally ; every ordinance of man. The form is human, but the authority divine ; and though each particular country may have its own laws and constitutions,

PRACT. OBS. V. 9-17. Happy are they, of whom it may truly be said, 'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people !' If we aspire at these distinctions, let us be 'followers of God as dear children ;' . . . thus we shall best evince that these blessings belong to us, and shall make the most suitable returns for them. — But we should consider, not only our own comfort and advantages ; the honor of the Gospel, and the conversion of our neighbors, likewise demand our attention. For if we, who 'had not obtained mercy, have at length obtained mercy,' why may not they, who still remain

strange rate, till they have ruined a whole country. You will hardly find one of a thousand who does half so much to serve God and his own soul, as you may see done by thousands to serve the world and the devil. Oh, my soul, how little is it that thou dost for thy Maker and thy Savior, so worthy of thy love ! See, in the circle of your observation, some monster of wickedness, who, to his uttermost, will serve a master that will prove a destroyer to him, and whose wages will be death ; he *studies* how to serve the devil ; he is never weary of his drudgery ; he racks his invention to go through with it. Ah ! he shames me ; he shames me wonderfully. Now, why should not we be as active, as frequent, as forward in devising good ; why not as wise to do good, as he to do evil ? We have a better cause. Reader, perhaps thou art one who makest but little figure in the world, a "brother of low degree," yet, behold a vast encouragement. *A little man may do a great deal of harm ; and pray, why may not a little man do a great deal of good.* "The wisdom of a poor man" may start a proposal which may "save a city," serve a nation ! The strength of a single hair, applied to a wheel that has other wheels depending on it, may pull up an oak, or pull down a house.

V. 13-17. Rom. 13:1-7. Tit. 3:1, 2. The words, rendered 'every ordinance of man,' may signify every human constitution or form of government. . . . So that Christians are required to submit to that government, which is established in the countries where they severally reside, without attempting any alteration, except in a peaceable and legal manner, according to their rank in the community. The apostle wrote when Nero was the Roman emperor ; but he was led to use the more general name of 'king,' as his epistle was intended, for the use of future ages and every country. This savage tyrant, who was at length put to death as the enemy of mankind, but not till he had slain multitudes of Christians by his persecuting cruelty, and among the rest the apostles Peter and Paul, as it is generally supposed, was the 'supreme,' whom Christians must submit to and honor ! And the governors of provinces, deputed by him and the Roman senate, together with other subordinate magistrates, must also be obeyed. The intention of civil government is 'to punish evil-doers,' and to protect and 'honor those who do well ;' and, in general, the administration, even at that time, would be productive of immense good, compared with lawless anarchy ; though in very many things the end of government was doubtless counteracted ; for which the

yet these, in all nations, are binding according to a general rule, be the established form of government what it may. 2. Particularly ; to the king, as supreme ; first in dignity, and most eminent in degree ; or unto governors, deputies, proconsuls, rulers of provinces, who are sent by him, that is, commissioned by him to govern.

The reasons to enforce this duty, are,

1. For the Lord's sake, Rom. 13 : whose honor is concerned in the dutiful behavior of subjects to their sovereigns. 2. From the end and use of the magistrate's office, which is, to punish evil-doers, and to praise and encourage all them that do well.

Learn hence,

True religion is the best support of civil government ; it requires submission for the Lord's sake, and for conscience' sake. All the punishments, and all the magistrates in the world, cannot hinder, but there will be evil-doers in it. The best way the magistrate can take to discharge his own office, and to amend the world, is, to punish well and reward well.

V. 15. Here is another reason why Christians should submit to the civil magistrate ; it is the will of God, and the way to put to silence the malicious slanders of ignorant and foolish men.

Learn, 1. The will of God is, to a good man, the strongest reason for any duty. 2. Obedience to magistrates is a considerable branch of a Christian's duty ; so is the will of God. 3. A Christian must endeavor, in all relations, to believe himself so as to put to silence the unreasonable reproaches of the most ignorant and foolish men. 4. Those who speak against religion and religious people, are ignorant and foolish.

V. 16. The Jews, from Deut. 17:15. concluded they were bound to obey no sovereign, but one taken from among their own brethren ; and the converted Jews thought they were free from subjection, by their relation to Christ. To prevent these mistakes, the apostle tells the Christians they were free, spiritually, from the bondage of sin and Satan, and the ceremonial law ; but they

ignorant and prejudiced, he made partakers of the same salvation ?— With this intent, and from other evangelical motives, we should 'submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake,' praying for all in authority, that they may have wisdom and grace to be faithful to their important trust, 1 Tim. 2:1-4. and endeavoring, by 'well doing to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men ; as free,' with that liberty which the Son of God bestows through the Holy Spirit, Jn. 8:30-36. Rom. 8:16-23. but remembering, that we are the 'servants of God,' and must, in no degree, use our liberty to cloak any malicious or ambitious designs. Sc.

rulers would be accountable to the Judge of the world. In this way the duty of kings and rulers also was pointed out to them. But in respect of Christians, it was expressly 'the will of God,' that, by their good behavior, 'in all godliness and honesty,' as peaceable subjects, notwithstanding the oppressions which they suffered, they might 'put to silence the ignorant' slanders 'of foolish' and wicked men, who reviled them as seditious persons and enemies to the state, because they would worship 'the one living and true God,' alone, and not join in any idolatry. — It is almost impossible, that there can be a worse supreme governor, than he who ruled the vast Roman empire, when this was written by divine inspiration.—The comprehensive brevity of the closing verse, has been greatly and justly admired by competent judges. Scott.

(13.) Every ordinance, &c.] 'Every human constitution. The whole course of the apostle's reasoning in this place, shows plainly, how very impertinent it is to apply this to the injunctions of men in matters of religion.' Dodd.

(15.) 'Providence has placed us in a situation very peculiar, in a country where, as far as the mighty influences of religion are concerned, nothing has authority or power but the Bible. This is more and more seen every year. And when it shall be fully understood, that among the teeming millions of our country there is nothing to regulate the awful energies of the religious principle, but the authority of the Word of God, the Bible will be studied with an intensity of interest, and used with a fidelity of application, as yet unknown in these latter days. And it will carry its authority more entirely through every department of the church, than has ever been witnessed since the days of the apostles. The truth will then go with lightning glance, and electric force, from heart to heart, and from land to land,—and the earth be soon filled with the knowledge and glory of God.' Rev. Dr. JOHN H. RICE.

(17.) 'Perhaps no finer and stronger instances of the laconic style are to be found anywhere than in this place. It is remarkable, that they are required to honor the emperor, though so great a persecutor, and of so bad a character, as Nero himself.' Dodd.

V. 18-25. Eph. 6:5-9. Col. 3:22-25. 1 Tim. 6:1-5. Tit. 2:9-10. The apostle Peter exhorted servants to obedience, even in stronger language, than his beloved brother Paul had done. These were generally slaves, and many of them to heathen masters, who used them very cruelly. The word here used, signifies domestics, who being more constant-



19 For this *is* <sup>h</sup> thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* <sup>h</sup> acceptable with God.

21 For even hereunto <sup>j</sup> were ye called: because Christ also suffered <sup>k</sup> for us, leaving us an example, that ye should <sup>l</sup> follow his steps:

22 Who <sup>m</sup> did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again: when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed <sup>n</sup> himself to him that <sup>o</sup> judgeth righteously:

24 Who his own self bare <sup>p</sup> our sins in his own body <sup>q</sup> on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live <sup>r</sup> unto righteousness: by <sup>s</sup> whose stripes ye were healed.

25 For ye were as sheep going <sup>t</sup> astray; but are now returned unto the <sup>u</sup> Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

h or, <i>it can't.</i>	l 1. Jn. 2:16.	q or, <i>to.</i>
Lu 6:22	Re. 12:11.	r Ro. 6:11.
1 Mat. 5:10-12.	m Is. 53:9	s Is. 53:5, 6.
Mat. 16:24.	n or, <i>his cause.</i>	t Ps. 119:176.
1 Th. 3:3, 4.	o Lu. 23:46.	u Eze. 34:23.
k Some read, <i>for you.</i>	p Is. 53:4, &c.	Jn. 10:11-16.

submit patiently to hardships and inconveniences: this subjection they owe to their *masters*, who have a right to their service; and that *not only to the good and gentle*, such as use them well, and abate somewhat of their right, *but even to the crooked and perverse*, who are scarcely to be pleased at all.

Learn, 1. *Servants* ought to conduct themselves to their *masters* with submission, and fear of displeasing them. 2. The sinful misconduct of one relation does not justify the sinful behavior of the other; the *servant* is bound to do his duty, though the *master* be sinfully *froward* and perverse. 3. Good people are to be *meeke and gentle to their servants*, and inferiors.

V. 19, 20. Having charged *servants* to be *subject*, he condescends to reason with them about it; if they were patient under their hardships, and continued doing their duty to their unbelieving and untoward *masters*, this would be *acceptable to God*, and He would reward all they suffered *for conscience*

PRACT. OBS. V. 18-25. The view given by the apostle, of the behavior of many masters to their unoffending slaves, may serve to convince us, how incompatible slavery is with the 'love of our neighbors,' and animate us to protest, in all proper ways, against so grievous an oppression of our fellow-creatures; yet Christianity, among its other unparalleled excellences, teaches men to behave honorably, and live comfortably, even in these circumstances of degradation and suffering. But if *slaves*, when thus unjustly and cruelly used, were directed to submit to their masters and respect them; how inexcusable are those *hired servants*, who, professing the Gospel, do not 'obey good and gentle mas-

ters' who can endure no degree of 'frowardness' in others, through the indulgence of it in themselves; and who will not bear a reproof, when they are most evidently culpable! Indeed, we cannot go through with our duty, as Christians, in any station, if we do not persevere in endeavoring to 'overcome evil with good,' copying the conduct of Him who 'suffered for us, and left us an example that we should follow his steps.' . . . let us learn to copy his example, when reviled and abused; as well as to rely on his merits, and keep close under his gracious protection and guidance to the end of our pilgrimage. SCOTT.

(19.) 'The emperor Antoninus quotes it as an excellent saying of Antisthenes, *That is truly royal; to do good, and to be reproached*' [for it]. DONOR.

(21.) 'It is observable, that, upon the mention of Christ the apostle falls into an animated and noble digression, of several verses, to the end [600]

toward Him; but to be patient when justly chastised, deserves no commendation at all; it is only *doing well and suffering patiently for that, which is acceptable with God*.

Learn, 1. No condition is so mean, but a man may live conscientiously in it, and glorify God in it; the meanest *servant* may do so. 2. The most conscientious persons are very often the greatest sufferers; *for conscience toward God they suffer wrongfully; they do well and suffer for it*; but those who thus suffer are praiseworthy, they honor God and religion, and are accepted of Him; and this is their highest support and satisfaction. 3. Deserved sufferings must be endured with patience. Sufferings in this world are not always pledges of our future happiness; if children, or servants, are rude and undutiful, and *suffer for it*, this will neither be *acceptable with God*, nor procure the praise of men.

V. 21. More reasons are given to encourage Christian servants to patience under unjust sufferings, from their Christian calling and profession, and from the example of *Christ*, who *suffered for us*, and so became our *Example, that we should follow his steps*. From whence learn,

1. Good Christians are a sort of people called to be sufferers, and therefore they must expect it. 2. Jesus Christ *suffered for you, or for us*; it was not the Father that *suffered*, but He whom the Father sanctified, and sent into the world, for that end; it was both the body and soul of Christ that *suffered*, and He *suffered for us*, in our stead, and for our good, v. 24. 3. The sufferings of Christ should quiet us under the most unjust and cruel sufferings we meet with in the world; He *suffered voluntarily*, not for Himself, but *for us*, with the utmost readiness, with perfect patience, and all this, though He was God-man; shall not we sinners, who deserve the worst, submit to the light afflictions of this life, which work for us unspeakable advantages afterward?

V. 22, 23. The example of Christ's subjection and patience is here explained and amplified; *Christ suffered*,

1. Wrongfully, and without cause, Isa. 53:9. his words, as well as actions, were all sincere, just and right.

2. Patiently; when they blasphemed Him, mocked Him, called Him foul names, He was *dumb, and opened not his mouth*; when they went further, to real injuries, beating, buffeting, and crowning Him with thorns, *He threatened not; but committed both Himself and his cause to God that judgeth righteously*, who would in time clear his innocency, and avenge Him on his enemies.

Learn, 1. Our blessed Redeemer was perfectly holy; no temptation, no provocation

whatsoever, could extort from Him so much as the least sinful or indecent word.

2. Provocations to sin can never justify the commission of it; the reasons for sin can never be so great, but we have always stronger reasons to avoid it.

3. The judgment of God will determine justly on every man, and every cause; and thither we ought, with patience and resignation, to refer ourselves.

V. 24. Lest any should think, from what is said, v. 21-23. that Christ's death was designed only for an example of patience under sufferings, the apostle here adds a more glorious design and effect of it; *Who his own Self, &c.* where,

Note, 1. The person suffering, Jesus Christ; the expression, *his own Self*, is emphatical, and necessary to show that He verified all the ancient prophecies, and to exclude all others from participation with Him in the work of man's redemption; it is added, *in his body*; not but that He suffered in his soul, Mat. 26:38. but the sufferings of the body were visible, and more obvious to the consideration of these suffering servants, for whose sake this example is produced.

2. The sufferings He underwent; *stripes, wounds, death, the death of the cross*; servile and ignominious punishments!

3. The reason of his sufferings; *He bare our sins*; which teaches, that, in his suffering, He stood charged with our sins, as one who had undertaken to put them away by the *sacrifice of Himself*, Isa. 53:6. that He bare the punishment of them, and thereby satisfied divine justice, and so that He *takes away our sins*, and removes them away from us, Lev. 16:21. John 1:29.

4. The fruits of Christ's sufferings are, (1.) Our sanctification, consisting of the death, the mortification of sin, and a new holy life of *righteousness*; for both which we have an example, and powerful motives and abilities also, from the death and resurrection of Christ. (2.) Our justification; Christ was bruised and crucified as an expiatory Sacrifice, and *by his stripes we are healed*.

Learn, 1. Jesus Christ bore the sins of all his people, and expiated them by his *death on the cross*. 2. No man can depend safely on Christ, as having borne his sin, and expiated his guilt, till he *dies unto sin*, and *lives unto righteousness*.

V. 25. The apostle concludes his advice to Christian servants, putting them in mind of the difference between their former and present condition. *They were as sheep going astray*; but now by their conversion are *returned*. The word is passive, and shows that the return of a sinner is the effect of divine grace. This return is, from all their

of the ch.; afterwards he continues to pursue his exhortation to relative duties.' DONOR.—*Leaving us an example.*] 'Pattern, — such a pattern as painters and writing-masters place before their scholars to be imitated.' Beza, in *Maackn.*—The impression is not infrequent among those who call themselves followers of Christ, that though they are bound to imitate their Lord, it is enough if they follow Him "a great way off," and therefore, though they may tread in his footsteps, it is with a timid and hesitating progress. There lurks within the feeling, that it is impossible for them to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, and therefore they are not to aim at a point so elevated. Such an impression is fatal to the growth of piety. The example of Christ is a practicable example for universal imitation. Its excellences are those of which all men are capable, and which they are *commanded* to possess and cultivate (1 John 2:6). They are *moral and human* excellences. They consist not in the power, majesty, and wisdom of the Deity, but in the voluntary actions of the Man Christ Jesus. The example of Christ has nothing to do with the peculiar constitution of his Person, or the faculties of his divine nature. It consisted not in his oneness with the Father, but in his prayers, fastings, strivings with human trials, and communications with God. Christ took part of flesh and blood, and was made



## CHAP. III.

1 He teacheth the duty of wives and husbands to each other, 8 exhorting all men to unity and love, 14 and to suffer persecution. 19 He declareth also the benefits of Christ toward the old world.

**L**IKEWISE, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

3 Whose<sup>b</sup> adorning, let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4 But *let it be* the hidden man of the<sup>c</sup> heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a<sup>d</sup> meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

5 For after this manner, in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:

a Ep. 5:22. c Ps. 45:13. d Ps. 25:9. 149:4.  
Tit. 2:5,6. Ro. 2:29. Mat. 5:5.

b 1 Ti. 2:9,10.

errors and wanderings, to Christ; who is the true, careful *Shepherd, that loves his sheep, and laid down his life for them*; who is the most vigilant Pastor, and *Bishop, or Overseer, of souls*.

Learn, 1. Sinners, before their conversion, are always *going astray*; their life is a continued error. 2. Jesus Christ is the supreme *Shepherd and Bishop of souls*, who is always resident with his flock, and watchful over them. 3. Those that expect the love and care of this universal Pastor, must return to Him; must *die unto sin*, and *live unto righteousness*.

CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. The apostle, having treated of the duties of subjects to their sovereigns, and of servants to their masters, comes now to explain the duty of wives to their husbands.

1. In *subjection*, or an affectionate submission to the will, and obedience to the just authority, of *their own husbands*; which obliging conduct would be most likely to win disobedient and unbelieving husbands.

like unto his brethren. He was tempted,—touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and *tried in all points like as we are*, yet without sin. By denying that the excellences of Christ's example are those of which all men are capable, the impenitent are armed with an unanswerable excuse for all their unbelief,—*suppose you should live one whole day exactly as Christ lived; how would it compare with the ordinary days of your life?*

(25.) From Isa. 53:6. 'The sense is: "For ye were as stray sheep, without pasture, exposed to peril, and without protection." A fine image of complete misery, and utter destruction.'

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1—4. This [being subject in all things lawful] must be attended to in a conscientious manner, with an especial aim at the conversion of their husbands, 1 Cor. 7:13, 16, which was not so much to be expected from a disputatious attempt to teach them the Gospel, as from the silent, persuasive eloquence of a becoming deportment. In this endeavor, they must not deem outward things, such as 'plaiting the hair, wearing' golden rings and bracelets, or 'putting on' elegant or becoming garments, to be 'their adorning,' in any degree; but they must value and seek for an inward beauty, residing in the heart, as 'a hidden man,' visible in its essence, only unto God, consisting of a renewal and sanctification of the whole soul to the divine image, through 'the incorruptible seed of the Word,' made effectual by the power of the Holy Spirit; for this alone would continue for ever, without decaying, or being tarnished. 1 Tim. 2:9, 10. This inward beauty and ornament of a sanctified heart, would especially be manifested by 'a meek and quiet spirit,' which was 'in the sight of God' very valuable; and He would certainly honor it, though men might undervalue it.—Outward ornaments, according to every one's rank in life, are not *absolutely* prohibited by these Scriptures, as it has been generally observed; but the frivolous affectation and vanity, which constitute the love of finery; the time, attention, and expense wasted by those, who are attached to such decorations; and the proportionable neglect of the 'inward adorning,' which is uniformly connected with it, sufficiently prove, that the more moderate and indifferent about these embellishments Christians are, from proper principles, and without preciseness and censoriousness, the more respectable and amiable they must appear in the eyes of all competent judges.—The works of charity, performed

2. In a *chaste conversation*, which their unbelieving husbands would accurately observe and attend to.

3. In *fear*, or reverence to their husbands, Eph. 5:33.

Learn, 1. Every distinct relation has its particular duties, which ministers ought to preach, and people to understand.

2. A cheerful *subjection*, and a loving, reverential respect, are duties which Christian women owe their husbands, whether good or bad; these were due from Eve to Adam before the Fall, and are still required, though much more difficult now than before, Gen. 3:16. 1 Tim. 2:11.

3. Nothing is more powerful, next to the Word of God, to win people, than a good conversation, and the careful discharge of relative duties.

4. Irreligion and infidelity do not dissolve the bonds, nor dispense with the duties, of civil relations; *the wife* must discharge her duty *to her own husband*, though he obey not the Word.

5. Evil men are strict observers of the conversation of professors of religion; their curiosity, envy, and jealousy, make them watch narrowly the ways and lives of good people.

6. A *chaste conversation*, attended with due and proper respect to every one, is an excellent mean to win them to the faith of the Gospel, and obedience to the Word.

V. 3. This rule relates to the dress of religious women: *plaiting of hair* was commonly used in those times by lewd women; *wearing of gold*, or ornaments made of gold, was practised by Rebecca, and Esther, and other religious women, but afterwards became the attire chiefly of harlots and wicked people; *putting on of apparel* is not absolutely forbidden, but only too much curiosity and costliness in apparel.

Learn, 1. Religious people should take care, that all their external behavior be answerable to their profession of Christianity; *they must be holy in all manner of conversation*.

2. The *outward adorning* of the body is very often sensual and excessive; for instance, when it is immoderate, and above your degree and station in the world; when you are proud of it, and puffed up with it; when you dress, designing to allure and tempt others; when your apparel is too rich, curious, or superfluous; when your fashions are fantastical, imitating the levity and vanity of the worst people; and when they are

immodest and wanton. *The attire of a harlot* can never become a chaste Christian matron.

V. 4. Instead of the *outward adorning* of the body, the apostle directs Christian wives to put on much more excellent and beautiful ornaments; where,

Note, 1. The part to be adorned; *the hidden man of the heart*; that is, the soul. 2. The ornament prescribed; in general, something *not corruptible*, that is, the graces and virtues of God's Holy Spirit: more especially, the finest *ornament* of Christian women, *a meek and quiet spirit*; a tractable, easy temper of mind, void of passion, pride, and immoderate anger; discovering itself in a quiet, obliging behavior toward their husbands and families: *a quiet spirit* will make a good woman easy to herself, which, being visible to others, becomes an amiable ornament to a person in the eyes of the world. 3. The excellency of it; *meekness* and calmness of spirit are, *in the sight of God, of great price*; amiable *in the sight of men*, and precious *in the sight of God*.

Learn, 1. A true Christian's chief care lies in the right ordering and commanding of his own *spirit*; where the hypocrite's work ends, there the true Christian's work begins.

2. The endowments of the *inner man* are the chief ornaments of a Christian; but especially a composed, calm, and *quiet spirit*, renders either man or woman beautiful and lovely.

V. 5, 6. The duties of Christian wives being in their nature difficult, the apostle enforces them by the example,

1. Of the *holy women of old, who lived in old time*, and had less knowledge to inform them, and fewer examples to encourage them; yet practised this duty; they were *holy women*, and therefore their example is obligatory; they *trusted in God*, yet did not neglect their duty to man. 2. Of *Sara, who obeyed her husband*, followed him when he went from Ur of the Chaldeans, *not knowing whither he went, and called him lord*, thereby showing him reverence, and acknowledging his superiority over her; and all this, though she was declared a *princess*, by God from heaven, by the change of her name.

Learn, 1. God takes exact notice, and keeps an exact record, of the actions of all men and women in the world.

2. The *subjection of wives to their husbands*, is a duty which has been practiced universally by *holy women* in all ages.

to the distressed, with the money necessary for purchasing ornaments of gold and costly attire, will render women much more beautiful in the eyes of God and man, than if they were decked with all the vain ornaments, in which the lighter part of the sex delight.' Mackn. Scott.

(1.) 'Hence, to v. 7. follow the reciprocal duties of wives and husbands.' Bloomf.—'The wives of impenitent husbands, are too apt to suffer themselves to be drawn away from their own standard of duty, instead of seeking continually to draw their husbands to that standard. You either see a softening influence working upon the man's character, at least in the way of restraint, from the pious example and consistency of the wife, or else the wife, however exemplary before marriage, sinks down into a state of stupidity, or conformity to the world. A Christian, in such a union, needs to mark that passage, 2 Pet. 1:10. "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure," for daily meditation and prayer;—not for her own sake only, but for the sake of the offspring, whose eternal destiny is, in a peculiar manner, and in the midst of peculiar danger, committed to her care. It should be the mother's constant endeavor, to have her children baptized, *so as to surround them with every possible religious influence*, as well as for the influence which her vows may exert upon her own conduct in the family.' Rev. N. Adams.

(1—7.) 'With my married friends, I will leave this excellent remark: "Family passions cloud faith, disturb duty, darken comfort." You will do the more good to one another, the more this sentence is considered. When the husband and wife are always contriving to be blessings to each other, I will say, with Tertullian, "where shall I find words to describe the happiness of that state?" Oh, happy marriage!—Why should we not at least, once or twice a week, make *relative duties* the subject of our inquiries, and of our purposes?' Mather.

(3.) 'Ancient medals, and works of sculpture, show the plaited tresses condemned by the apostles, with all the expensive and fanciful head decorations of ancient females. Dr. A. Clarke remarks: "No female head ever looks so well, as when it is adorned with its own hair alone."' Henry, abr.

V. 5, 6. Many of the Christian women, whom Peter addressed, were descended from Abraham and Sarah; and the others would be accounted as her daughters, heirs of her faith, and imitators of her example, so long as they behaved well in their relative duties, and as it became the disciples



6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him <sup>e</sup> lord: whose <sup>f</sup> daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

7 Likewise, ye <sup>g</sup> husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

[Practical Observations.]

8 Finally, be ye all of one <sup>h</sup> mind, having compassion one of another; <sup>i</sup> love <sup>j</sup> as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous :

9 Not <sup>k</sup> rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

10 For <sup>l</sup> he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile :

<sup>e</sup> Ge. 18:12. <sup>f</sup> children. <sup>g</sup> Col. 3:19. <sup>h</sup> Ro. 12:16. <sup>i</sup> or, loving to the. <sup>j</sup> 1 Ju. 3:13. <sup>k</sup> Mat. 5:44. <sup>l</sup> Ep. 4:32. <sup>l</sup> Ps. 31:12, &c.

3. The greatest honor, of any man or woman, lies in a humble and faithful deportment of themselves in the relation or condition in which Providence has placed them.

4. God takes notice of the good that is in his servants, to their honor and benefit, but covers a multitude of failings; Sara's [unbelief] and derision are overlooked, when her virtues are celebrated.

5. Christians ought to do their duty to one another, not out of fear, nor from force, but from a willing mind, and in obedience to the command of God; *wives* should be in *subjection to their churlish husbands*, not from

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—7. The truths, precepts, and grace of the Gospel teach men a becoming and beneficial behavior, in all the relations of life, by a happy union of piety, purity, meekness, fidelity, and holy love; and form them to it. The inward and incorruptible adorning of wisdom and grace, constitutes the most durable beauty and amiableness, and will ensure esteem and affection, when all outward ornaments, with

of Christ; and were not so afraid of the anger of their husbands, or of others, as to deny Him, or act contrary to his commandments, through unbelief and consternation of spirit. For this would be rather an imitation of Sarah, when, through surprise, she denied that she laughed; than of her faith and holiness, or her becoming subjection to her husband. SC.

(6.) *Calling him lord.* [As to the names by which husbands are to be addressed by their wives, the apostle's words are not to be supposed authoritative. Reverence and obedience are the bounden duty of wives; and the expression of this, as being made in terms purely conventional, may very well vary with manners and customs of different ages.] BLOOMF.—*Not afraid.* [I prefer, with Est. and Calvin, to understand it of a firmness and intrepidity of character, which would be necessary to support their religious independence, when united to heathen husbands. The amazement is well explained by Calvin, of that weak timidity which fosters senseless fear, and is too often found in the female sex.] BLOOMF.—The structure of the Greek sentence makes it evident, that he speaks of the condition, on which they were to preserve the characters of *daughters of Sarah*.

V. 7. On the other hand, the apostle exhorted 'husbands,' professing the Gospel, to 'dwell with' their wives, in a rational and intelligent manner, which might evince the propriety of the authority being conferred on them. They ought to behave towards them, as became those who had the knowledge of God and of true religion; who understood the ends for which marriage was appointed, and the manner in which pious persons ought to behave in that holy estate; and this would keep them from everything unbecoming, unkind, unfaithful, or injurious to their temporal comfort, or spiritual improvement. As their wives were of the same nature, and conjoined in the most endeared and indissoluble union, which blended all their interests with those of their husbands; so the consideration of their inferiority in this relation, and the comparative weakness of their sex, which rendered them incapable of so great hardship and fatigue as men could endure; together with their manifold infirmities, as connected with child-bearing, should induce their husbands to treat them with the greatest respect, and more tender regard, instead of exciting them to tyrannize over them. They ought, therefore, to show a peculiar esteem and affection for them; to take much satisfaction in their company; to honor them before servants and strangers, to support their credit in the family; to make a becoming provision for their wants, to lay no unreasonable injunctions on them, and to show a great concern in everything relative to their health, comfort, and reputation. And, if they would be thought superior in knowledge or wisdom, they ought to show it, by not taking offence at trifles, and by giving up their own humors and inclinations, to oblige their wives, and for their welfare. These things should be attended to, from the considera-

tion that they were 'fellow-heirs of the grace of life,' or of the free favor and gift of God, which is eternal life; and, therefore, as companions in their pilgrimage, they ought to do all, which they possibly could, to solace, counsel, and assist each other by the way. They should also more attentively guard against all disagreements and domestic uneasiness; that nothing might occur to indispose them for prayer, in secret, and in the family, but especially with each other. This being essential to the Christian's prosperity, was a matter of so great importance, that all things, in his whole conduct, ought to be regulated with reference to it.—Perhaps it might also be intimated, that in case a Christian had an unconverted wife, he ought to study by kind behavior to conciliate her mind, that so she might do nothing to interrupt the social worship of the family, but might be induced amicably to join in it.

dread and amazement, but from a desire to do well, and to please God.

V. 7. The husband's duty to the wife comes next to be considered; the particulars whereof are,

1. *Cohabitation*; which forbids unnecessary separation, and implies a mutual communication of goods and persons one to another, with delight and concord.

2. *Dwelling with the wife according to knowledge*; not according to lust, as brutes; nor according to passion, as devils; but according to knowledge, as wise and sober men, who know the Word of God, and their own duty.

3. *Giving honor to the wife*; giving due respect unto her, and maintaining her authority, protecting her person, supporting her credit, delighting in her conversation, affording her a handsome maintenance, and placing a due trust and confidence in her.

The reasons are, Because she is *the weaker vessel* by nature and constitution, and so ought to be defended: but then the wife is, in other and higher respects, equal to her husband; they are *heirs together of the grace of life*, of all the blessings of this life and another, and therefore should live peaceably and quietly one with another, which if they do not, *their prayers* will, and for one another will be hindered, so that often you will not pray at all, or if you do, you will pray with a discomposed, ruffled mind, and so without success.

Learn, All married people should take care to behave themselves so lovingly and peaceably one to another, that they may not by their broils hinder the success of their prayers.

V. 8. The apostle here passes from special to more general exhortations; he advises Christians to be all of one mind, to be unanimous in the belief of the same faith, and practice of the same duties of religion; and whereas the Christians at that time were many of them in a suffering condition, there-

fore he charges them to have compassion one of another, to love as brethren, to pity those who were in distress, and to be courteous to all. Hence,

Learn, Christians should endeavor to be *likeminded one to another*, Rom. 15:5. not according to man's pleasure, but God's Word. Though they cannot be exactly of the same mind, yet they ought to love one another with more than common affection; they should love as brethren. Christianity requires pity to the distressed, and civility to all. He must be a flagrant sinner, or a vile apostate, who is not a proper object of civil courtesy, 1 Cor. 5:11. 2 John 10:11.

V. 9. The former direction teaches us, how Christians and friends should treat one another; this instructs us how to behave towards enemies. To bear evils patiently, and to bless your enemies, is the way to obtain the blessing of God.

Learn, 1. To render evil for evil, or railing for railing, is a sinful, unchristian practice; but for ministers to rebuke sharply, and to preach earnestly against the sins of the times, is not railing; all the prophets and apostles practised it, Isa. 56:10. Zeph. 3:3. Acts 20:29. 2. The laws of Christ oblige us to return blessing for railing, Mat. 5:44. We must pity, pray for, and love them who rail at us. 3. A Christian's calling, as it invests him with glorious privileges, so it obliges him to difficult duties. 4. All the true servants of God shall infallibly inherit a blessing; they have it already in a great degree, but the full possession of it is reserved to another state and world.

V. 10, 11. We have here an excellent prescription for a comfortable, happy life, in this quarrelsome, ill-natured world, taken from Ps. 34:12—14.

Learn, 1. Good people under the Old and New Test. were obliged to the same moral duties; to refrain the tongue from evil, and the lips from guile, was a duty in David's time, as well as now. 2. It is lawful to

all that beauty which they are so vainly meant to embellish, will not secure any one from contempt and aversion, whose conduct in life is disgraceful: and they will soon leave the poor body to the confinement and corruption of the tomb; and the soul, which is 'without holiness,' to be for ever loathsome and abhorred of God. SCOTT.

(7.) *Giving honor, &c.* [Alloting an honorable subsistence. This sense of the word [here rendered honor] is confirmed by 1 Tim. 5:17.—Many Christians were of low rank in life, which might make the precept of maintaining their wives decently, and not subjecting them to too hard labor, exceeding proper.] DODDR.—It is pleasing to see a man who is not a member of the church, willing to assist his wife in presenting their child for baptism. It is an evidence, that shame does not triumph over his respect and affection for his wife, and the mother of his children, and that the fear of man that bringeth a snare has not wholly entwined itself about his conscience. The man who truly promises to respect and honor his wife, will remember that he is to respect her conscience, and honor her fear of the Lord, and he will do this when she wishes to offer her child in baptism, though he knows that he will be condemned by it, for not being able to offer the child in his own name.]

Rev. NEB. ADAMS. V. 8—12. 2:13—25. Rom. 12:9—21. 1 Cor. 1:4—9. 13:4—7. Eph. 4:1—6. Phil. 2:1—4. These exhortations entirely coincide with those, which have been considered in Paul's epistles. (10) *He that will love.* The quotation is from the Sept. which well translates the Heb., except as the apostle uses the third person, instead of the second. SCOTT.

(8.) Hence, to v. 13. the apostle gives some general directions, which concerned all Christians. BLOOMF.—Let our pity to the distressed, be expressed by our prayer for them. It would be a very lovely practice for you, in the daily prayer of your closet, every evening, to think, "What miserable object have I seen to-day, for whom I may do well now to entreat the mercies of the Lord?"—Render the afflicted all the assistance which their necessities may require. Assist them by advice; by obtaining the help of other persons on their behalf; and, if needful, bestow your alms; at least, exercise Nazianzen's charity: "If you have nothing else to bestow upon the miserable, bestow a tear or two upon their miseries." MATHER.



11 Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

12 For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are* open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord *is* <sup>m</sup> against them that do evil.

13 And <sup>n</sup> who *is* he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy *are* ye: and <sup>o</sup> be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and <sup>p</sup> be ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and <sup>q</sup> fear:

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17 For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing than for evil doing.

18 For <sup>r</sup> Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just <sup>s</sup> for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put <sup>t</sup> to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit;

[Practical Observations.]

on upon.	o Is. 8:12,13.	5t:12.	r c. 2:21.
a Pr. 16:7.	p Ps. 119:46.	s 2 Co. 5:21.	
Ro. 8:28.	q or, reverence.	t Ro. 4:25.	

consider temporal advantages as motives and encouragements to religion. 3. The practice of religion, particularly the right government of the tongue, is the best way to make this life comfortable and prosperous; a sincere, inoffensive, discreet tongue, is a singular mean to pass us peaceably and comfortably through the world. 4. The avoiding of evil, and doing of good, is the way to contentment and happiness both here and hereafter. 5. It is the duty of Christians not only to embrace *peace* when it is offered, but to *seek and pursue* it when it is denied: *peace* with societies, and *peace* with particular persons, in opposition to division and contention, is what is here intended.

V. 12. The allegation is continued from Ps. 34. Christians need not fear that such patient, inoffensive behavior as is prescribed, v. 10, 11. will invite and encourage the cruelty of their enemies, for God will thereby be engaged on their side; so that if any injuries be offered to them, their heavenly Father will certainly aid them against their unrighteous enemies; for He is more an enemy to wicked persecutors than men are.

Learn, 1. We must not in all cases adhere to the express words of Scripture, but

PRACT. OBS. V. 8—18. As peace and love are necessary to domestic comfort, so are they to the prosperity of the church. But 'how astonishing and lamentable is it, that when the way to happiness is so plainly delineated, so few should find it! What man is there who does not desire life, and to live many days, that he may see good? Yet how few tongues are kept from evil! How few lips from speaking guile! How few decline from evil, and do good! How few seek peace and pursue it! On the contrary, how much low cunning and artifice, and what discords and contentions, reign among mankind! And how detestable and miserable do these perverse and ungovernable passions render us!' *Doddr.*—Yet, in pleading the cause of truth, in public or in

V. 13. 'The apostle now enjoins some further inducements to a holy and virtuous life.'

V. 15. 'J. P. Smith considers that the reading, "Christ," instead of God, is established by sufficient evidence; therefore we have here a precept, to pay Christ that reverential homage which is due to the most Holy One alone. The connexion shows the sentiment to be, revere and trust in Christ, as your Refuge from the malice and injuries of men.' HENRY, *abr.*—"The Lord Christ." So the Alexandr. Vatic., Codex

study the sense and meaning of them; we must not imagine, that God hath eyes, and ears, and face, though these are the express words of the Scripture. 2. God hath a special care and paternal affection toward all his righteous people. 3. God doth always hear the prayers of the faithful, John 9: 31. 1 John 5: 14. Heb. 4: 16. 4. Though God is infinitely good, yet He abhors impenitent sinners, and will pour out his wrath on them that do evil; He will do Himself right, and do all the world justice; and his goodness is no obstruction to his doing so.

V. 13, 14. The patient, humble behavior of Christians, recommended above, is here urged again from two considerations: 1. It will be the best and surest way to prevent suffering; for *who is he that will harm you?* 2. It is the way to improve sufferings; and will entitle to the blessing promised by Christ, Mat. 5: 10.

Learn, 1. To follow always that which is good, is the best course we can take to keep out of harm's way. 2. To suffer for righteousness' sake is the honor and happiness of a Christian; to suffer for the cause of truth, a good conscience, or any part of a Christian's duty, is a great honor; the delight of it is greater than the torment, the honor more than the disgrace, and the gain much greater than the loss. 3. Christians have no reason to be afraid of the threats or rage of any of their enemies; 'Your enemies are God's enemies, his face is against them, his power is above them, they are the objects of his curse, and can do nothing to you but by his permission; therefore, trouble not yourselves about them.'

V. 15. Instead of terrifying yourselves with the fear of men, be sure to sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; let Him be your Fear, and let Him be your Dread, Isa. 8: 12, 13. Luke 12: 4.

We sanctify the Lord God in our hearts, when we with sincerity and fervency adore Him; and when our deportment is such, as invites and encourages others to glorify and honor Him; both are required, Lev. 10: 3.

Learn, 1. An awful sense of the divine perfections is the best antidote against the fear of sufferings; did we fear God more, we should certainly fear men less. 2. The hope and faith of a Christian are defensible against all the world; there may be a good reason given for religion; it is not a fancy, but a rational scheme revealed from heaven, suited to all the necessities of miserable sinners, and centering entirely in the glory of God through Jesus Christ. 3. Christians should have a reason ready for their Christianity, that it may appear they are not actuated either by folly or fancy; this defence may be necessary more than once or twice, so that Christians should be always prepared to make it, either to the magistrate, if he demand it, or to any inquisitive, serious Christian, who desires to know it for his information or improvement. 4. Apologies for our religion ought to be made with modesty and meekness, in the fear of God, with jealousy over ourselves, and reverence to our superiors.

V. 16, 17. The confession of a Christian's faith cannot credibly be supported, but by the two means here specified,—a good conscience, and a good conversation. Conscience is good, when it does its office well, when it is kept pure and uncorrupt, and clear from guilt; then it will justify you, though men accuse you. A good conversation in Christ is a holy life, according to the doctrine and example of Christ.

Learn, 1. The most conscientious persons cannot escape the censures and slanders of evil men; they will speak evil of them, as of evil doers, and charge them with crimes which their very souls abhor; Christ and his apostles were so used. 2. False accusation generally turns to the accuser's shame, by discovering at last the accuser's indiscretion, injustice, falsehood, and uncharitableness. 3. As well-doing sometimes exposes a good man to suffering, so evil-doing will not exempt an evil man from it. The apostle supposes here that a man may suffer for both. It is a sad condition that that person is in, on whom sin and suffering meet together at the same time; sin makes sufferings to be extreme, unprofitable, comfortless, and destructive.

V. 18. The example of Christ is here proposed as an argument for patience under sufferings, the strength of which will be discerned, if we consider the several points contained in the words; observe, therefore,

1. Jesus Christ Himself was not exempted from sufferings in this life, though He had no guilt of his own, and could have declined all suffering if He had pleased. 2. The reason, or meritorious cause, of Christ's suffering was the sins of men; Christ suffered for sins: He suffered to expiate and to make an atonement for sin; and it extends to all sins. 3. In the case of our Lord's suffering, it was the Just that suffered for the unjust; He that knew no sin, suffered instead of them that knew no righteousness. 4. The merit and perfection of Christ's sacrifice were such, that for Him to suffer once was enough; the legal sacrifices were repeated from day to day, and from year to year; but the sacrifice of Christ, once offered, purgeth away sin, Heb. 7: 27. 9: 26, 28. 10: 10, 12, 14. 5. The blessed end and design of our Lord's sufferings, were, to bring us to God, to reconcile us to God, to give us access to the Father, to render us and our services acceptable, and to bring us to eternal glory, Eph. 2: 13, 18. 3: 12. Heb. 10: 21, 22. 6. The issue and event of Christ's suffering, as to Himself, were these, He was put to death in his human nature, but He was quickened and raised again by the Spirit.

Now if Christ was not exempted from sufferings, why should Christians expect it? If He suffered, to expiate sins, why should not we be content when our sufferings are only for trial and correction, but not for expiation? If He, though perfectly just, why should not we, who are all criminals? If He once suffered, and then entered into glory, shall not we be patient under trouble, since it will be but a little time and we shall follow Him to glory? If He suffered, to bring

private, we should be prepared, not only with conclusive arguments, but 'with meekness and fear;' that a humble, benevolent, peaceable conduct towards men, may evidently unite with a reverential awe of the majesty of God: for wrath, pride, bitterness, and irreverence, will prejudice men's minds against the truth, whatever ability is shown in defending it. Nor can this service be successfully performed, except by those, who 'exercise themselves to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man;' for nothing can be so well opposed to the enmity of the human heart against the truth, as the holy lives of its professors, which tend to make those 'ashamed, who falsely accuse their good conversation in Christ.'

Ephrem, and three junior MSS. Likewise the Vulg., Syr., Copt., and Armen. versions, and some of the early fathers; yet it is rejected by Griesb. as not in the far greater majority of MSS. WILLIAMS.

V. 17, 18. The resurrection of Christ is sometimes ascribed to God or the Father, sometimes to Christ Himself, and sometimes to the Holy Spirit. This is very easy and natural, if Father, Son, and Spirit are one God; but how can it be explained on any other principle?—The case is the same in many other things. SCOTT.



19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in <sup>a</sup> prison;

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once <sup>v</sup> the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water.

21 The like figure whereunto, even <sup>w</sup> baptism, doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience <sup>x</sup> toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ :

22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; <sup>y</sup> angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

n Is. 42:7. w Ep. 5:26. Ro. 10:10.  
v Ge. c. 6, &c. x Ac. 8:37. y Epi. 1:21.

us to God, shall not we submit to difficulties, since they are of so much use to quicken us in our return to God, and in the performance of our duty to Him ?

V. 19, 20. Here the apostle passes from the example of Christ, to that of the old world, and sets before the Jews, to whom he wrote, the different event of those who believed and obeyed Christ preaching by Noah, from them that continued disobedient and unbelieving; intimating to the Jews, that they were under a like sentence. God would not wait much longer on them; they had now an offer of mercy, those that accepted of it should be saved, but those who rejected Christ and the Gospel, should be as certainly destroyed as ever the disobedient in the times of Noah were.

Observe, here, 1. The preacher; Christ Jesus, who interested Himself in the affairs of the church and of the world, ever since He was first promised to Adam, Gen. 3:15. He went, not by a local motion, but by special operation, as God is frequently said to move, Gen. 11:5. Mic. 1:3. Hos. 5:15. He went and preached, by his Spirit striving

PRACT. OBS. V. 19—22. While we recollect the end proposed in the sufferings of the divine Savior, let us inquire, whether we be really brought unto God, as his worshippers, and in the temper of our hearts, and conduct of our lives. Let us enter the Ark, which God has provided, as the only security from the deluge of impending vengeance, which will destroy a guilty world: let us beware that we rest not in outward forms; as if that baptism could save us, or anything but 'the answer of a good conscience towards God.' While we profess ourselves the dis-

V. 19, 20. Various other interpretations [other than that in Henry, with which Scott agrees] have been given of this passage; but none of them appears to me in the least degree satisfactory. Scott.

(19, 20.) 'It was by some an early opinion, that when Christ died, He descended into the place of punishment, and preached to the infidel inhabitants of the old world, there imprisoned: in consequence of which some, or, as others think, all of them were converted and delivered. But neither this, nor any other text that we are aware of, speaks of conversion after death: but the Scriptures universally represent the dead as awaiting the event of the final advent, when all must "appear before the judgment-seat of Christ:" nor does there seem either reason or scriptural authority, for believing, that a whole generation of sinners of the most abandoned character, should be privileged with a second opportunity of mercy,—another day of grace. "To-day, if ye will hear his voice! Now is the accepted time! How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation!" The general current of protestant expositors are therefore of opinion, that the preaching here referred to, took place in the days of Noah, by the instrumentality of himself and some of his family, who were inspired teachers.—The following is the substance of their interpretation:—"For Christ also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, (that He might bring us to God,) being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit [of God]. By which Spirit also He formerly went and preached unto the spirits [now] in prison: which were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah [120 years] while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by, or through the water." Williams;—who prefers, in the last clause, *by*, because, as he says, it was *by* water, probably, that Noah and his family were, in the first instance, saved from the rage of the wicked; and more certainly, at length, from the overwhelming effects of the deluge from above; while the sense of being saved *by* water, further, best agrees with the v. following. "The like figure, &c. since baptism was unquestionably the ordinance by which the first Christians were separated from the world, even as Noah and his family [were] from their infidel neighbors."—Yet *BL* holds the foregoing interpretation in great disrespect, nay, almost contempt, apparently,—and says, in his *Syn.*, 'no interpretation seems at all natural, or to carry with it the stamp of truth, but [what he calls] 'the common' 'one, namely, that Christ went and preached (or rather proclaimed his kingdom) to the

with them, and inspiring and enabling Noah to plead with them, and preach righteousness to them, as 2 Pet. 2:5.

2. The hearers; because they were dead and disembodied when the apostle speaks of them, therefore he properly calls them spirits now in prison; not that they were in prison when Christ preached to them, as the vulgar Latin translation and the popish expositors pretend.

3. The sin of these people; they were disobedient, that is, rebellious, unpersuadable, and unbelieving, as the word signifies; and their sin is aggravated from the patience and long-suffering of God, which once waited on them 120 years together, while Noah was preparing the ark, and by that, as well as by his preaching, giving them fair warning of what was coming on them.

4. The event of all; their bodies were drowned, and their spirits cast into hell, which is called a prison, Mat. 5:25. 2 Pet. 2:4, 5. but Noah and his family, who believed and were obedient, were saved in the ark.

Learn, 1. God takes exact notice of all the means and advantages people in all ages have had for the salvation of their souls; it is put to the account of the old world, that Christ offered them his help, sent his Spirit, gave them fair warning by Noah, and waited a long time for their amendment. 2. Though the patience of God wait long upon sinners, yet it will expire at last; it is beneath the majesty of the great God always to wait upon man in vain. 3. The spirits of disobedient sinners, as soon as they are out of their bodies, are committed to the prison of hell, from whence there is no redemption. 4. The way of the most is neither the best, the wisest, nor the safest way to follow: better to follow the eight in the ark, than the eight millions [or more] drowned by the flood and damned to hell.

V. 21. Noah's salvation in the ark on the water, prefigured the salvation of all Christians in the church by baptism; that temporal salvation by the ark was a type, the antitype whereunto is the eternal salvation of believers by baptism; to prevent mistakes

of Christ, and partakers of his grace, let us seek the true baptism of the regenerating and sanctifying Spirit of God, in behalf of our children and friends: and thus let us trust in his merits, power, love, and truth, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification; and 'who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels, principalities, and powers being made subject to Him.' Heb. 6:16—20. 7:24—25. 9:24—26. Scott.

antediluvians in Hades; [which, i. e. interpretation] he says, moreover, 'is supported by the united authority of the ancients and the soundest of our modern commentators.—He adds: 'The words certainly involve no difficulty; and the plain and natural sense is not to be rejected because it contains matter of wonder, or what is little accountable, to us, with our present faculties. Man, (he continues from *Slade*.) on this point is not an adequate judge; the subject lies entirely beyond the reach of his knowledge; and we may apply to this case the remarkable words of Paul, 1 Cor. 1:25.' Ed.—[*Papists*], indeed, here find a purgatory, which we can nowhere find in the Bible: but, 1. Purgatory is, according to their doctrine, for venial offences only, and these were evidently guilty of mortal sin, and must therefore be consigned to hell, from whence they hold no deliverance, and, 2. These were so far from being delivered, that the apostle describes them as in prison when he wrote.' *Greenfield*.—'These were the spirits of men in Noah's day. They were disobedient during God's forbearance, and while the ark was building. Noah was a preacher of righteousness. He had the Spirit of Christ; and Christ by his Spirit, in him, preached to them, or their spirits. They did not repent, but were cut off, and their spirits cast into prison. Peter speaks of them as in prison when he wrote. Here then is no proof that the spirits of the disobedient repent in prison, or that any means are there used with them for this purpose.' Dr. COTTON.

V. 21, 22. Christ is the true Ark. His church is within the ark, and is therefore safe; but all without will be swept by the deluge of divine vengeance into destruction. Into this ark men enter by faith; this faith Jews and Gentiles professed, when by baptism they were admitted into the Christian church; and thus the baptismal water formed, as it were, the sign of their safety. When Jews and Gentiles professed Christianity, they were thus received into the church, exactly in the same manner as Gentiles had been into the Jewish church by circumcision: but the argument, concerning the baptism of infants, born of Christian parents, is not at all affected by it. The apostle spoke of baptism, as the initiatory ordinance of Christianity: but he took care to remind men, that the inward grace of baptism, even regeneration, from which all holy affections and actions spring, alone could introduce them into the true church, the ark, or real security; and that no outward administration of baptism could effect this blessed translation into the kingdom of the Son of God. Scott.



## CHAP. IV.

1 He exhorteth them to cease from sin, by the example of Christ, and the consideration of the general end that now approacheth: 12 and comforteth them against persecution.

**F**ORASMUCH then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

3 For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

a Phi. 2:5.  
b Ro. 6:2,7.

c 2 Co. 5:15.  
d 1 Co. 6:11.

Tit. 3:3  
e Ac. 13:45.

his people; to demonstrate the fulness of his satisfaction; to take possession of heaven for his people, to prepare mansions for them, and to send down the Comforter, who was to be the First-fruits of his intercession, John 16:7.

2. On his ascension into heaven, Christ is enthroned at the right hand of the Father. His being said to sit there, imports absolute rest and cessation from all further troubles and sufferings, and an advancement to the highest personal dignity and sovereign power.

3. Angels, authorities, and powers, are all made subject to Christ Jesus; all power in heaven and earth, to command, to give law, issue orders, and pronounce a final sentence, is committed to Jesus, God-man, which his enemies will find to their everlasting sorrow and confusion, but his servants to their eternal joy and satisfaction.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. The work of a Christian is twofold,—doing the will of God, and suffering his pleasure. This ch. directs us in both. In this verse, the apostle draws a new inference from the consideration of Christ's sufferings. As he had before used it to persuade to patience in suffering, so here to mortification of sin. The antece-

dent or supposition is, that Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, or in his human nature. The consequent or inference is, 'Arm and fortify yourselves likewise with the same mind, courage, and resolution.' The word flesh, in the former part of the verse, signifies, Christ's human nature, but in the latter part, man's corrupt nature. So the sense is, 'As Christ suffered in his human nature, do you make your corrupt nature suffer, by putting to death the body of sin by self-denial and mortification; for if you do thus suffer in the flesh, or make the flesh suffer, you will be conformable to Christ in his death and resurrection, and will cease from sin.'

Learn, 1. Some of the strongest and best arguments against all sorts of sin are taken from the sufferings of Christ.

2. The beginning of all true mortification lies in the mind; not in penances and hardships on the body. Man is not a sincere creature, but partial, blind, and wicked, till he be renewed and sanctified by the regenerating grace of God.

V. 2. Here the apostle explains what he means by being dead to sin, and ceasing from sin. Negatively, a Christian ought no longer to live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the sinful lusts and corrupt desires of carnal wicked men; but positively, he ought to conform himself to the revealed will of the holy God.

Learn, 1. The lusts of men are the springs of all their wickedness, Jam. 1:13, 14. occasional temptations could not prevail, were it not for men's own corruptions.

2. All good Christians make the will of God, not their own lusts or desires, the rule of their lives and actions.

3. True conversion makes a marvellous change in the heart and life of every one who partakes of it. It alters the mind, judgment, affections, way, and conversation of every one who has experienced it.

V. 3. Here the apostle argues from equity. Though these were Jews to whom he writes, yet, living among the Gentiles, they had learned their way.

Learn, 1. When a man is truly converted, it is very grievous to him to think how the time past of his life has been spent, the hazard he has run so many years, the mischief he has done to others, the dishonor done to God, and the loss he has sustained.

2. While the will of man is unsanctified and corrupt, he walks continually in wicked ways, makes them his choice, delight, work, and business, and makes a bad condition daily worse and worse.

3. One sin, allowed, draws on another. Here are six named, and they have a connexion and dependence one on another. *Lasciviousness*, or wantonness, expressed in

looks, gesture, or behavior, Rom. 13:13. *Lusts*, acts of lewdness, such as whoredom and adultery. *Excess of wine*, though short of drunkenness, an immoderate use of it, to the prejudice of health or business. *Revelings*, or luxurious feasting, too frequent, too full, or too expensive. *Banquetings*, by which is meant gluttony, or excess in eating. *Abominable idolatry*; the idol-worship of the Gentiles was attended with lewdness, drunkenness, gluttony, and all sorts of brutality and cruelty; and these Jews, living long among them, were, some of them at least, debauched and corrupted by such practices.

4. It is a Christian's duty, not only to abstain from what is grossly wicked, but also from those things that are generally the occasions of sin, or carry the appearance of evil. *Excess of wine* and immoderate feasting is forbidden, as well as lust and idolatry.

V. 4. Here you have the visible change wrought in those, who, in the foregoing verse, were represented as having been in the former part of their life very wicked. Hereupon, observe, the conduct of their wicked acquaintance toward them.

1. They are surprised, as at something new and unusual, that their old friends should be so much altered, and not run with as much violence as they used to do to the same sottish excesses and luxury which before they had greedily and madly followed.

2. They speak evil of them, of their persons, way, religion, and God.

Learn, 1. They that are once really converted, will not return to their former course of life, though ever so much tempted by the frowns or flatteries of others to do so.

2. The temper and behavior of true Christians seem very strange to ungodly men,—that they should despise that which every one else is fond of; believe many things which to others seem incredible; delight in what is irksome and tedious, be zealous where they have no visible interest to serve, and depend so much on hope.

3. The best actions of religious people cannot escape the censures and slanders of those who are irreligious. Those actions which cost a good man the most pains, hazard, and self-denial, shall be most censured by the uncharitable and ill-natured world.

V. 5. For the comfort of the servants of God, it is here added, that all wicked people shall be put to give a reason of their behavior, to Him who is both able and duly authorized to judge, and who will ere long pass sentence on all who shall then be found alive, and all such as being dead shall then be raised again, Jam. 5:8, 9. 2 Pet. 3:9.

Learn, The malignant world shall in a little time give an account to the great God of all their evil speeches against his people,

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1, 2. The word *flesh*, in these vs., seems to be used in three different senses. It means, 1st. The holy, human nature of Christ; 2dly. The depraved nature of man, the body of sin and death; and, 3dly. The mortal body, in which the soul tabernacles during its continuance in this world.—The contrast between 'the lusts of man,' and 'the will of God,' should be noticed.

(1.) This ch. consists of two parts; 1. Vs. 1—12, contains an exhortation to a holy life; 2. Fortifies Christians against persecution. ROSEN. — [He that hath suffered] 'I. e. the crucifixion of sin in the flesh, in conformity to Christ.'—[Hath ceased from sin.] 'I. e. the habitual practice of all sin whatsoever.' DODD. — 'For he who suffers in the flesh usually ceases to sin.'

V. 3—5. The Jews, at that time, were exceedingly exact and scrupulous, in avoiding all approaches to gross idolatry; it is not, therefore, at all probable, that the apostle meant this of converts from among them, which confirms the opinion, that the epistle was not written exclusively to the Jewish converts.—The apostle uses the first person, thus joining himself with his Christian brethren, probably, as a less offensive manner of stating the subject, and as conscious, that though free from many of the gross crimes here mentioned, he had yet spent too many years of his past life, 'according to the course of the world,' and 'to the lusts of men, and not according to the will of God.' Eph. 2:1—3. Tit. 3:4—7.—Some learned men indeed venture to change the text, without any authority, and to read 'may suffice you'; but the same principle might lead us to explain the words, as addressed exclusively to the Gentile converts; because the Jews had never lived in 'abominable idolatries.'—(4) *Think it strange.*] 12. Acts 17:20. 'The Greeks used the word to express that . . . wonder, with which a stranger is struck, who beholds anything uncommon or new.' Mackn. He seems to himself, as in a strange country, where everything is new or unusual, and

wonderful to him; or, to use an expressive, but inelegant word, *outlandish*.

(3.) *Abominable idolatries.*] 'Unnatural lusts indulged in pagan worship,—both unlawful and detestable.'

(3, 4.) 'Drunkenness excludes from heaven, Gal. 5:21. It is, therefore, a subject of church discipline. A vigilant discipline is doubtless demanded in the case of members of lax and doubtful morality in respect to intemperance. It is not enough to cut off those who are past reformation, and to keep those, who by close watching can be preserved in the use of their feet and tongue. Men who are mighty to consume strong drink, are unfit members of that kingdom which consisteth not in "meat and drink," but in "righteousness and peace." The time is not distant, we trust, when the use of ardent spirit will be proscribed by a vote of all the churches in our land, and when the commerce in that article shall equally with the slave-trade, be regarded as inconsistent with a credible profession of Christianity. [Nor is it enough to fix the mark of reprobation on the poor, miserable victim of intemperance, and yet express no disapprobation of the course of the guilty man who furnishes the temptation, and the means of his self-destruction.] Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ! will you not watch over one another with keener vigilance,—lift an earlier note of admonition,—draw tighter the band of brotherly discipline,—and, with a more determined fidelity, cut off those whom admonition cannot restrain? Separate, brethren, between the precious and the vile, the living and the dead, and burn incense between them, that the plague may be stayed.'

(5.) *The quick and the dead.*] I. e. 'all men without exception.' ROSEN. — Benson interprets the *dead* figuratively, i. e. 'dead in trespasses and sins.' Wets. explains, 'those who have died for the Gospel.' Mackn., 'Jews and Gentiles.' Bloomf. says of both, 'those then alive,' and 'those already dead.'



6 For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

[Practical Observations.]

7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

f Mat. 24:9. h Ja. 5:8,9. j 1 Co. 13:7.  
g Re. 14:13. i Lu. 21:36. k or, will.

Jude, 14, 15. They will soon be called to a sad account for all their curses, their foolish jests, their slanders and falsehoods, uttered against the faithful people of God.

V. 6. Some understand this difficult place thus; For this cause was the Gospel preached to all the faithful now dead in Christ, that thereby they might be taught and encouraged to bear the unrighteous judgments and persecutions which the rage of men put on them in the flesh, but might live in the Spirit unto God. Others take the expression, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, in a spiritual sense, thus; The Gospel was preached to them, to judge them, condemn them, and reprove them, for the corruption of their natures, and the viciousness

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—6. The Christian soldier, in preparing for the battle, must peculiarly remember to 'arm himself with the same mind' which was in Christ, the Captain of our salvation; that love, zeal, spirituality, hatred of sin, contempt of the world, fortitude, patience, meekness, and hope, may concur in determining him to venture and suffer all things for the glory of God, the good of men, and 'the joy set before him.' Phil. 2:5—11. P. O. 1—11. Note, Heb. 12:1—3. Vast numbers, now dead, have suffered the same revilings before us: the Gospel called them to separate from the wickedness of their former companions in

V. 6. The Gospel had before this been preached to those, who were 'dead' when the apostle wrote, for this very reason, viz. 'that they might,' by the proud and carnal judgment of wicked men, be condemned as evil-doers, and some even suffer death at their hands; but that, at the same time, being 'quickened' to a divine life by the Holy Spirit, they might 'live to God' as his devoted servants, and his witnesses among their persecutors, and so be prepared for living with Him for ever in heaven. Rom. 8:10, 11. Thus their transient afflictions, disgrace, and sufferings, soon terminated in perfect felicity. In the mean time, they glorified God in life and death, and were supported and comforted by Him; and the Gospel had been the means of preparing them for these things, as it still continued to prepare others to glorify God; and then, after some fleeting sorrows, to be admitted to everlasting, uninterrupted joy, and unalloyed felicity. 3: 19, 20. 1 Cor. 15:29, 30. This seems the meaning of the verse, which is generally allowed to be obscure.—Several other interpretations are given; but that above stated seems the most satisfactory, and it best connects the verse with the words which immediately precede. 'The dead,' there, means such as had already died, 'the quick,' or living, those who were then alive on earth; both of these Christ will judge. The Gospel was preached, in order to the salvation of the hearers; those who embraced it were condemned according to men, or by any man's judgment, but they were accepted by God. The same had been the case with those, to whom the Gospel had formerly been preached, who were since dead, even those from the beginning who had been favored with the Word of God. Believers had been persecuted and condemned by men; but 'they lived according to God in the Spirit,' or 'by the Spirit;' while their persecutors, if impenitent, would be judged and condemned by the Lord. SCOTT.

(6.) Some, as Doddr. and Mackn., understand *dead*, here, of the Gentiles, as 'dead in trespasses and sins;' the chief objection to which, Doddr. says, is, that it changes the signification of the word *dead*, so soon. Saurin understands it of the sinners of the old world, and compares ch. 3:19. Slade compares the same, and understands 'the apostle to assert, that the Gospel had been preached, even to the dead,—that they will be judged by the law of nature for the things done in the body, and be rewarded in proportion to their deserts, by a spiritual life, according to the will and power of God.' Bloomf., on the whole, thinks, *dead*, here, must be interpreted as in v. 5. and it involves the least difficulty, he says, to suppose, (which he seems to, after *Jensius*, *Carpz.*, and *Ros.*, as also *Wets.* and *Jaspis.*) that it is meant of 'those who, being Christians, have died for their profession of the faith.' *Ros.* gives the sense of the whole v. thus: 'Even to those who in these times have suffered death was the joyful annunciation made, that, although they had suffered death in the flesh, they should yet, by the divine Omnipotence, be alive.' Leighton understands *dead*, of the generations now literally made dead, and says, 'to be judged according to men in the flesh, is to die to sin, or to have sin die to us, vs. 1, 2. and to live to God in the Spirit is to live to his glory: not unto themselves, as Paul expresses it, but unto Him who died for them and rose again, 2 Cor. 5:16. And to enforce this on those to whom he wrote, he adds, "the end of all things is at hand;" which, though it may refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, yet refers also farther to a greater event, with which that is generally connected, namely, the second coming of our Lord.' Ed.

of their lives; while they lived after the manner of the heathen, or the mere natural man; and that, having thus mortified their sins, they might live according to God, a new and spiritual life. Take it thus; and thence,

Learn, The mortifying of our sins, and living to God, are the expected effects of the Gospel preached unto us.

V. 7. We have here an awful doctrine, and an inference from it. The position is, the end of all things is at hand. 'The miserable destruction of the Jewish church and nation foretold by our Savior, is now very near; consequently, the time of their persecution and your sufferings is but very short. Nay, the world itself will not continue very long, and all things will soon be swallowed up in eternity. The inference is, *Be ye therefore sober*. Let the frame and temper of your minds be grave, staid, and solid; and observe strict temperance and sobriety in the use of all worldly enjoyments. Do not suffer yourselves to be caught with your former sins and temptations, v. 3. And watch unto prayer. Take care that you be continually in a calm, sober disposition, fit for prayer; and that you be frequent in prayers, lest this end come upon you unawares.' Luke 21: 34. Mat. 26: 40, 41.

Learn, 1. The consideration of our approaching end is a powerful argument, to make us sober in all worldly matters, and earnest in religion.

2. They who would pray to purpose,

sin, and to bear testimony against it; they were therefore 'judged according to men in the flesh,' as deserving reproach and persecution; but 'they lived according to God in the Spirit;' and when removed out of the world, they were found 'meet to be partakers of the heavenly inheritance.' Ours is indeed a favored day in this respect: yet, if 'the Spirit of life' dwell in us, the world will judge us deserving of scorn and reproach, whilst God will graciously account us 'worthy of that glorious kingdom for which we suffer.' SCOTT.

V. 7. Christians must expect tribulations in the world, but these would soon terminate.—Many expositors explain 'the end of all things,' to signify the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, and the whole constitution of the Jewish nation in church and state. But the Christians in Asia Minor were far distant from Jerusalem, and not immediately concerned in those events; as they and all others were and are in the speedy approach of death and judgment, to which the words most naturally lead our minds, and which alone answer to the full import of them. Mat. 24:29—51. SCOTT.

V. 8. 1:22. 1 Cor. 13:4—7. Jam. 5:19, 20. The apostle here again enforced the exhortation to charity, or love of each other; and in doing this he referred to the proverb, that 'love covereth all sins,' or 'the multitude of sins.' Prov. 10:12. As the love of God in Christ 'covereth the multitude of the sins' of believers, from his sight, Ps. 32:1, 2. so they ought to cast the mantle of love over the number of faults, into which their brethren would fall, in their conduct towards them, and thus hide them from their eyes, by forbearing and forgiving one another, as Christ had forgiven them. Eph. 4:30—32. 5:1, 2. Col. 3:13, 14. Thus the peace of the church, and the communion of the saints, might be preserved, which otherwise must be interrupted; for there were so many things amiss in all, that unless love covered, excused, and forgave, in others, such mistakes and faults, as every one would have need to be borne with in himself, Satan would prevail to excite perpetual divisions and discords among them.—To suppose, that charity, or love, will so cover, or make mends for, the multitude of the man's sins who exercises it, as to induce God to forgive them, is totally subversive of the whole Gospel; for 'if righteousness come by the law, then Christ died in vain;' and the perversion of these words, which are very obvious and important in their true meaning, has encouraged such numbers to neglect Christ, and continue impenitent in their sins, from a vain hope of being pardoned for the sake of a proud, partial benevolence, and some selfish almsdeeds, which by no means constitute the love of which the apostle spoke, 1 Cor. 13:4—7. that a particular and repeated protest against it seems absolutely necessary.—'Those who love one another, easily forgive each other's offences.' Beza.—Self-love veils and covers our own faults, and its effect, in rendering men blind to their own characters, however quick-sighted in other things, is notorious, and allowed on all sides; now if we truly loved others, as we do ourselves, love would veil and cover their faults also, and render us less keen in noticing and animadverting on them, and more disposed to forbearance and long-suffering towards them. Id.

(8.) 'Some, and the Romanists especially, explain: "Charity shall procure us pardon for a multitude of sins." But, as Doddr. observes, "it would be monstrous to imagine, that acts of liberality to the poor can procure the pardon of sin, while men continue in a course of impenitence and unbelief; for by this the whole Gospel would be subverted." The sense is plainly this: "For this affectionate feeling will cover, and cause us to forgive, a multitude of offences in others." As to James 5:20. to which most commentators here refer, it is not of the same nature. Though, however, the above must be considered as the only correct interpretation, yet it cannot be denied that the exercise of this virtue will (in the words of Doddr.) "entitle us, by divine mercy, to expect forgiveness for numberless slips and failings. For (as he adds) where acts of charity spring from an inward principle of love to God,



9 Use hospitality <sup>1</sup> one to another without grudging.

10 As every man hath received <sup>m</sup> the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards <sup>n</sup> of the manifold grace of God.

11 If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all <sup>o</sup> things may be glorified through Jesus Christ; to <sup>p</sup> whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

[Practical Observations.]

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery <sup>q</sup> trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you :

13 But <sup>r</sup> rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when <sup>s</sup> his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

1 He. 13:2,16. o 1 Co. 10:31. r Ja. 1:2.  
m Ro. 12:6-8. p Re. 1:6. s 2 Ti. 2:12.  
n Lu. 12:42. q 1 Co. 3:13.

3. It is the property of true charity to cover a multitude of sins. It inclines people to forgive and forget offences against themselves; to cover and conceal the sins of others, rather than aggravate them, and spread them abroad. It teaches us to love those who are but weak, and who have been guilty of many evil things before their conversion; and it prepares for mercy at the hand of God, who hath promised to forgive them that forgive others, Mat. 6:14.

V. 9. The hospitality here required, is, a free and kind entertainment of strangers and travellers. Sometimes Christians were spoiled of all they had, and driven to distant countries for safety. Therefore it was a wise and necessary rule the apostle here laid down. It is elsewhere commanded, Heb. 13:1. Rom. 12:13. The duty must be done in an easy, kind, handsome manner, *without grudging*, or grumbling at the expense or trouble.

Learn, 1. Christians ought not only to be charitable, but hospitable, one to another.

2. Whatever a Christian does by way of charity or of hospitality, he ought to do it

cheerfully, and *without grudging*. *Freely* you have received, *freely* give.

V. 10. Here the apostle directs about the improvement of talents. The rule is, that whatever gift, ordinary or extraordinary, is given to us, we should minister, or do service, with the same *one to another*; accounting ourselves not masters, but only *stewards of the manifold grace*, or the various gifts of God.

Learn, We must not assume our gifts to ourselves, or hide them in a napkin, but do service with them *one to another* in the best manner we are able; looking upon ourselves as stewards only, and acting accordingly. The talents we are intrusted with, are our Lord's goods, and must be employed as He directs. And it is required in a steward, that he be found faithful.

V. 11. The apostle exemplifies his direction about gifts in two particulars,—speaking and ministering; concerning which he gives these rules. 1. *If any man speak*, whether a minister or a private Christian, *the oracles of God* must direct as to the matter of his speech; and as to manner, it must be with the seriousness, reverence, and solemnity, that become those holy and divine oracles. 2. *If any man minister*, either as a deacon, distributing the alms of the church, and taking care of the poor, or as a private person, by charitable gifts and contributions, *let him do it as of the ability which God giveth*. He who has received plenty and ability from God, ought to minister plentifully, and according to his ability. These rules ought to be followed and practised for this end, *that God in all things*, in all your gifts, ministrations, and services, may be glorified, Mat. 5:16. *through Jesus Christ*, who has procured and given these gifts to men, Eph. 4:8. and through whom alone we and our services are accepted of God, Heb. 13:15. to whom, *Jesus Christ, be praise and dominion for ever and ever*. Amen.

Learn, 1. It is the duty of Christians in private, as well as ministers in public, to speak to one another of the things of God, Mal. 3:16. Eph. 4:29. Ps. 145:10—12.

2. It highly concerns all preachers of the Gospel to keep close to the Word of God, and to treat that Word as becomes *the oracles of God*.

3. Christians must not only do the duties of their place, but do them with vigor, and according to *the best of their abilities*.

4. In all the duties and services of life, we should aim at the glory of God as our

chief end; which would sanctify our common actions and affairs, 1 Cor. 10:31.

5. God is not glorified by anything we do, if we do not offer it to Him through the mediation and merits of Jesus Christ. *God in all things must be glorified through Jesus Christ*, who is the only Way to the Father.

6. The apostle's adoration of Jesus Christ, and ascribing unlimited and everlasting praise and dominion to Him, prove that Jesus Christ is the most high God over all, blessed for evermore. Amen.

V. 12, 13. The frequent repetition of counsel and comfort to Christians, considered as sufferers, in every ch. of this epistle, shows, that the greatest danger these new converts were in, arose from the persecutions to which their embracing of Christianity exposed them. The good behavior of Christians under sufferings, is the most difficult part of their duty, but yet necessary both for the honor of Christ and their own comfort; therefore the apostle, having exhorted them in the former part of this ch. to the great duty of mortification, comes here to direct them in the necessary duty of patience under suffering. An unmortified spirit is very unfit to bear trials.

Observe, 1. The apostle's kind manner of address to these poor despised Christians; they were his *beloved*.

2. His advice to them, relating to their sufferings, which is, that they should not think them *strange*, nor be surprised at them, as if some unexpected event befell them; for though sharp and fiery, yet they are designed only to try, not to ruin them; to try their sincerity, strength, patience, and trust in God.

On the contrary, they ought rather to rejoice under their sufferings, because theirs may properly be called Christ's sufferings. They are of the same kind, and for the same cause, that Christ suffered; they make us conformable to Him; He suffers in them, and feels our infirmities; and if we be partakers of his sufferings, we shall also be made *partakers of his glory*, and shall meet Him with exceeding joy at his great appearing to judge his enemies, and crown his faithful servants, 2 Thes. 1:7. &c.

Learn, 1. True Christians love and own the children of God in their lowest and most distressing circumstances.

2. There is no reason for Christians to think strange, or to wonder, at the unkindness and persecutions of the world.

3. Christians ought not only to be patient,

PRACT. OBS. V. 7—11. 'The end of all things is at hand;' all our worldly pursuits, possessions, distinctions, and enjoyments; all our temporal trials, sorrows, and conflicts; our season of probation and preparation: it behooves us then 'to be sober, and to watch unto prayer.' Eph. 6:18—20. Col. 4:2—4.—The more ungodly men hate and revile believers, the greater care should they use to have 'fervent love among themselves;' that, by mutual candor, long-suffering, and forgive-

ness, 'the multitude of offences may be covered;' and so nothing interrupt their peace and harmony. This blessed grace of love dethrones our natural selfishness, dictates or regulates our words, and disposes every one, in his proper calling, to minister or communicate to others 'as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ;' to whom 'be praise and dominion for ever and ever.' Amen.<sup>2</sup>

and faith in Christ, with that humble regard to his atonement and righteousness, which every true Christian will have, it cheerfully encourages our hopes of finding [acceptance with God at last]. Bl.—Cover, &c.] 'Love is skilful in putting the fairest construction on things doubtful. When the thing is plainly a sin, then will love consider what will lessen it most; whether it was by surprise, through ignorance, or human frailty. All reproach will be sweetened by that compassion which flows from love. What is wrong will be forgiven. Those are grossly mistaken, who think it greatness of spirit to resent wrongs, and baseness to forgive them: on the contrary, it is the only excellent spirit, scarcely to feel a wrong, or feeling, straightly to forgive it.' LEIGHTON, in Will.

V. 9—11. Rom. 12:6—13. 1 Tim. 3:2. Heb. 13:1—3. 3 John 5—8.—This especially, though by no means *exclusively*, concerned ministers, and those employed in managing the affairs of the church.—To restrict this merely to spiritual gifts, because the original word is used, when these are spoken of, (though not used of them exclusively,) may be considered as one of the various ways, by which learned commentators endeavor to convince us, that a vast proportion of the Scripture was written, not for our instruction, but for that of others, long since dead; and that we need concern ourselves but little about it. Now this is precisely what a vast majority of professed Christians wish to believe.—(9) Use *hospitality*.] 1 Tim. 3:2. Tit. 1:3. *Be lovers of strangers*. 'The primitive Christians were hospitable to all strangers, but chiefly to those who were of the same faith and communion. Believers scarce ever went without letters of recommendation, which testified the purity of their faith. This was sufficient to procure them reception in all those places where the name of Jesus Christ was known.' Cruden.—(10) *Gift*.] Rom. 5:15, 16. 6:23. 12:6. 1 Cor. 12:4. 2 Tim. 1:6. 'It is never used in Scripture, but for a free gift. . . This word is not in any heathen au-

thor.' Leigh.

(10.) *The gift*.] 'The original word, here, as in many other places, the ancients and most moderns explain of the spiritual and supernatural gifts vouchsafed to many of the primitive Christians. Others, as Grot., Est., Rosenun., and most recent commentators, take it of any *faculty or endowment* of mind. But though this may be *included*, yet the other sense, I doubt not, is principally intended. The term itself has usually that force, as in 1 Tim. 4:14. and 1 Cor. 12:13, 14. At the same time I suspect the apostle intended *temporal gifts*, for which we are equally stewards, and have to administer for the good of others.' BLOOMF.

(11.) The doxology in the close of this verse is understood of *Christ*, by Grot., Doddr., and Bloomf., and others.

V. 12—16. If they exposed themselves to sufferings by their crimes, this would be most dishonorable to God, and injurious to themselves. It behooved them, therefore, to be careful, that none of them were brought before the magistrates, cast into prison, or condemned, for any violation of wholesome laws; nay, that they did not incur reproach by intermeddling in the affairs of other men, whether they were of a private or a public nature, especially on political subjects; or by passing their judgment and censures, or intruding into the management of those concerns, which did not belong to them: as if they had been appointed, or were authorized and qualified, to oversee and give orders to those employed. These were common reasons for men's suffering public punishment or private reproach; and professors of Christianity might be drawn into such misconduct, and yet vainly imagine that they were persecuted for their religion! But if they avoided such imputations, and suffered as Christians for acting consistently with that honorable character; they ought by no means to be ashamed of the reproach, connected with their punishment; though it were imprisonment, scourging, or even a violent



14 If 'ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busy-body in other men's matters.

16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

19 Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

Mat. 5:11. 49:12. Eze. 9:6. Lu. 23:31.  
Je. 18:10:12. Je. v Je. 25:29. w Ps. 37:5.

but to rejoice, in their sharpest and sorest sufferings for Christ, because they are tokens of divine favor; they promote the Gospel, and prepare for glory.

V. 14. From the fiery trial, the apostle descends to a lower degree of persecution,—that of the tongue by slander and reproach. He supposes they would be reviled for the name or sake of Christ. In such case he asserts, *Happy are ye*; the reason of which is, 'Because ye have the Spirit of God with you, to fortify and comfort you; and the Spirit of God is also the Spirit of glory, that will carry you through all, bring you off gloriously, and prepare and seal you up for eternal glory. This glorious Spirit resteth upon you, resideth with you, in you, and is pleased with you; and is not this an unspeakable privilege? By your patience and

PRACT. OBS. V. 12—19. When we consider the upright, harmless, benevolent, and useful conduct of true Christians, we are apt to 'think it strange, that they must pass through 'fiery trials,' from the enmity of wicked men, and that God should permit them to be injured and afflicted.' We must not, however, indulge such thoughts, but prepare for tribulation; as 'the excellent of the earth' have always been thus treated, and God has purified all his gold in this furnace. We may indeed deem ourselves 'happy,' when wicked men discern 'the seal of God in our forehead,' and 'reproach us for the name of Christ;' because 'the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon us;' and they revile us, because we bear his image, belong to Him, and glorify Him.—But we cannot be too careful, not to give the enemies of the Gospel any just cause to revile or hate us. It is not indeed common for professors of evangelical truths, to suffer as murderers, thieves, or malefactors; yet they often

and ignominious death: nay, they ought rather to praise and glorify God for 'counting them worthy to suffer shame for his sake.' Acts 5:40, 41. Heb. 12:2, 3. (15) *Busy-body*, &c.] 'As a bishop in another man's diocese.' Leigh. Some understand it of those who look with concupiscence on what belongs to others, with intention of seizing on it by guile: but this, however criminal, was not an overt act, to be punished by the magistrate. Scott.

(12.) 'Afflictions are blessings when we can bless God for them; suffering has kept many from sinning, and if the furnace were seven times hotter, it would make the saint seven times better. Fiery trials make golden Christians, sanctified afflictions are spiritual promotions, and it is better to be preserved in brine than perish in honey.' Dyer.

(13.) To be partakers of Christ's sufferings, is not only to bear similar sufferings, but to bear them for a similar cause, even religion. So Ros. and Bloomf.; and Ros. comp. James 1:2. Ed.

(14.) 'To what special service of piety should I be awakened by the reproach which is cast upon me? One thus expresses it: "The back-biter's tongue, like a mill clack, will be still in motion, that he may grind thy good name to powder. Learn, therefore, to make such use of his clack as to make thy head by it; I mean so to live that no credit shall be given to slander." Thus all the abuses you meet with may prove to you, in the hand of a faithful God, no other than as the strokes which a statuary employs on his ill-shaped marble, only to make you fitter to adorn the heavenly temple.' Cotton Mather.

(15.) *Busy-body*.] 'One who busily pries into other people's affairs, and, as is almost always the case, exaggerates what may be true, and fabricates falsities to their great injury. This is confirmed by 1 Tim. 5: 13. where Paul had in view this same vice of tittle-tattling and backbiting.' Bloomf. But Lardner, Doddr., and Williams understand it

fortitude in suffering, by your dependence on the promises of God, and adhering to the Word which the Holy Spirit hath revealed, *He is on your part glorified*; but by the contempt and reproaches cast on you *the Spirit itself* is evil spoken of and blasphemed.'

Learn, 1. The best men and the best things usually meet with reproaches in the world. 2. The happiness of good people not only consists with, but even flows from, their afflictions; *Happy are ye*. 3. That man who hath the Spirit of God resting on him, cannot be miserable, be his afflictions ever so great. 4. The blasphemies and reproaches evil men cast on good people, are taken by the Spirit of God as cast on Himself. 5. When good people are vilified for the name of Christ, his Holy Spirit is glorified in them.

V. 15, 16. One would think such a caution as this needless to such an excellent set of Christians as these were. But their enemies charged them with these and other foul crimes; therefore the apostle, when he was setting the rules of the Christian religion, thought these cautions necessary, forbidding every one of them to hurt the life, or the estate and property, of any one, or to do any sort of evil; or, without call and necessity, to play the *bishop in another man's charge*, or busy himself in *other men's matters*. To this caution he adds a direction, *that if any man suffer* for the cause of Christianity, and with a patient Christian spirit, he ought not to account it a shame, but an honor to him; and ought to glorify God who hath thus dignified him.

Learn, 1. The best of men need to be warned against the worst of sins.

2. There is very little comfort in sufferings, when we bring them on ourselves by our own sin and folly. It is not the suffering, but the cause, that makes the martyr.

3. We have reason to thank God for the honor, if He calls us to suffer for any of the doctrines or duties of Christianity.

V. 17. The usual method of Providence has been this: When God brings great calamities and sore judgments on whole nations, He generally begins with his own people, Is. 10:12. Jer. 25:29. Ezek. 9: 6. 'Such a time of universal calamity is

now at hand, as was foretold by our Savior, Mat. 24:9, 10. This renders all the foregoing exhortations to patience necessary for you. And you have two considerations to support you.' 1. 'That these judgments will but begin with you, and will soon be over with you.' 2. 'Your troubles will be but light and short, in comparison of what shall befall the wicked world; your own countrymen, the Jews; and the infidels and idolatrous people among whom you live, *them that obey not the Gospel of God*.'

Learn, 1. The best of God's servants, his own household, have so much amiss in them, as renders it fit and necessary that God should sometimes correct and punish them with his judgments.

2. The family of God have their worst things in this life. Their worst condition is tolerable, and will soon be over.

3. Such persons or societies of men as *disobey the Gospel of God*, are not of his church and household; though possibly they may make the loudest pretensions to it. The apostle distinguishes the disobedient from the house of God.

4. The sufferings of good people in this life are demonstrations of the unspeakable torments that are coming on the disobedient and unbelieving. Who can express or say how dreadful their end will be?

V. 18. This whole verse is taken from Prov. 11:31. The LXX translate it exactly as the apostle here quotes them. If we take the salvation here in the highest sense, we may learn, 1. It is as much as the best can do, to secure the salvation of their souls; there are so many sufferings, temptations, and difficulties to be overcome; so many sins to be mortified; the gate is so straight, and the way so narrow. 2. The ungodly and the sinner are unquestionably in a state of damnation. *Where shall they appear?* How will they stand before their Judge? Where can they show their heads? *If the righteous scarcely be saved*, the wicked must certainly perish.

V. 19. Here the apostle finishes his discourse concerning sufferings, and gives this general advice; *Let them that suffer*, look chiefly to the safety of their souls, which cannot be kept secure otherwise than by

bring odium on themselves by various evident and palpable faults: and then many of them *unjustly* impute the reproach cast on them to the persecuting malice of their enemies! This we should watch against; and carefully distinguish between those things, which we suffer 'for the sake of Christ and of righteousness,' and those that we bring on ourselves by imprudence and misconduct. And if such diligence and watchfulness only just suffice to ensure the believer's salvation; what will be the event of the slothful and heedless conduct of professed Christians in general? Let us then see to it, that we 'obey the Gospel,' by a penitent 'faith working by love;' and, if called to 'suffer, according to the will of God;' 'let us commit the keeping of our souls to Him, in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator,' and as in Christ become our Omnipotent Savior. Scott.

of a *political busy-body*,—a factions, seditious person, of which character were many of the Jews at that time, and exceedingly offensive to the Romans. Ed.

(16.) *Christian*.] 'The word occurs but thrice in the N. Test., here, and in Acts 11:26. 26:28.' Ros.—Bloomf. remarks, that the name had now become established. Id.

V. 17—19. The persecutions, by which the church was tried, were introductory to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the tremendous ruin of the Jews; and preparatory to 'the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.' Ez. 9:5—7. Mat. 24:9—14. John 16:1—3. 2 Pet. 3:5—7. 'The apostle cannot intend deliverance from the Roman invasion, in which so few of these Christians were concerned; nor merely deliverance from any of their persecutors; because he takes it for granted, that 'the righteous would be saved,' though with difficulty; whereas multitudes fell by persecution, even of these Christians, in Bithynia, as appears by Pliny's letter. It is necessary therefore to understand it, more generally, of the difficulty with which good men get to heaven, through this dangerous and ensnaring world.' Doddr. Scott.

(17.) *The time is come*.] 'Time is coming, &c., the time foretold by Christ, John 16:2. &c.' Doddr.—who thinks there is allusion here to Ez. 9:6. Benson, in Bloomf. says, 'it designates the particular distress that was to take place before Jerusalem should be destroyed. The Christians were to expect to feel some of the first effects of that general calamity. It was to begin with them, as our Savior had plainly promised. It was God's way of old to begin with sending calamities on his own people.' Ed.

(18.) 'This whole v. is taken from Prov. 11:31. according to the Sept. The salvation here spoken of seems to be mostly of a temporal nature. The principal design of the passage is, to prepare believers against the



## CHAP. V.

<sup>1</sup> He exhorteth the elders to feed their flocks, <sup>5</sup> the younger to obey, <sup>8</sup> and all to be sober, watchful, and constant in the faith: <sup>9</sup> and to resist the cruel adversary the devil.

**T**HE elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory <sup>a</sup> that shall be revealed :

<sup>2</sup> Feed <sup>b</sup> the flock of God <sup>c</sup> which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but <sup>d</sup> willingly; not for filthy <sup>e</sup> lucre, but of a ready mind ;

<sup>3</sup> Neither as <sup>f</sup> being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples <sup>g</sup> to the flock.

<sup>a</sup> Ro. 8:17, 18. <sup>c</sup> or, as much as <sup>e</sup> 1 Ti. 3:3, 8. <sup>b</sup> Jn. 21:15-17. <sup>d</sup> in you is. <sup>f</sup> or, overruling. <sup>g</sup> 1 Ti. 4:12.

committing them to God, who will undertake the charge, if we commit them to Him in well-doing ; for He is their Creator, and has, out of mere grace, made many kind promises to them of eternal salvation, in which He will show Himself faithful and true.

Learn, 1. All the sufferings that befall good people, come on them according to the will of God.

2. Christians, in all their distresses, should look more to the keeping of their souls, than to the preserving of their bodies.

3. The only way to keep the soul well, is, to commit it to God, in well-doing, by solemn dedication, prayer, and patient perseverance in well-doing, Rom. 2:7.

4. Good people, when in affliction, have

great encouragement to commit their souls to God, because He is their Creator, and faithful in all his promises.

CHAP. V. V. 1. Here observe, 1. The persons to whom this exhortation is given ; presbyters, pastors, and spiritual guides of the church ; elders by office, rather than by age, ministers of those churches to whom he wrote this epistle. 2. The person who gives this exhortation ; Peter, their brother-presbyter or fellow-elder ; and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, being with Him in the garden, attending Him to the palace of the high priest, and, very likely, a spectator of his suffering on the cross, at a distance among the crowd, Acts 3:15. He adds, that he was also a partaker of the glory that was in some degree revealed at the transfiguration, Mat. 17:1-3. and shall be completely enjoyed at the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Learn, 1. They whose office it is to teach others, ought carefully to study their own duty, as well as teach the people theirs.

2. How different the spirit and behavior of Peter were from that of his pretended successors ! He does not command and domineer, but exhort. All the apostles were elders, though every elder was not an apostle.

3. It was the peculiar honor of Peter, and a few more, to be the witnesses of Christ's sufferings ; but it is the privilege of all true Christians to be partakers of the glory that shall be revealed.

V. 2. 3. Here you have the pastor's duty described, and how it ought to be performed. The duty is threefold : 1. To feed the flock ; by preaching to them the sincere

Word of God, and ruling them according to such directions and discipline as the Word of God prescribes ; both implied in this expression, Feed the flock. 2. To take the oversight thereof. The elders are exhorted to do the office of bishops, (as the word signifies,) by personal care and vigilance over all the flock committed to their charge. 3. To be examples to the flock ; to practice the holiness, self-denial, mortification, and all other Christian duties, which they preach and recommend to their people.

These duties must be performed, not by constraint, not from compulsion of the civil power, or fear of shame, but from a willing mind, that takes pleasure in the work : not for filthy lucre, any emoluments and profits, or any perquisite, but of a ready mind ; regarding the flock more than the fleece, sincerely and cheerfully endeavoring to serve the church of God ; neither as being lords over God's heritage, tyrannizing over them, or imposing unscriptural and human inventions on them, instead of necessary duty, Mat. 20:25, 26. 2 Cor. 1:24.

Learn, 1. The eminent dignity of the church of God, and all the true members of it. They are God's heritage, or clergy ; his own peculiar people, chosen to enjoy his special favor, and to do Him special service. The word is never restrained in the New Test. to the ministers of religion only.

2. The pastors of the church ought to consider their people as the flock of God, as God's heritage, and treat them accordingly.

3. Ministers who are either driven to the work by necessity, or drawn to it by filthy lucre, can never perform their duty as they ought, because they do not do it willingly, and with a ready mind.

severest sufferings for Christ, and the calamities then coming on the Jewish state. But, if it is referred to a spiritual and eternal salvation, it is to be understood only of the extreme difficulty, trouble, suffering, and apparent danger, through which the righteous were to pass in their way to heaven, and not of any real hazard, as to the event, with respect to the purpose, promise, and power of God for accomplishing it. Guyse, in Henry, abr.—'If the condition of the faithful be so hard, the condition of the unbelievers must be altogether intolerable.' Ames.—Ros. says, the wicked 'will most certainly perish ;' and Bloomf. says, the interrogation here involves a strong negation of their salvation. Ep. (19.) Faithful Creator.] 'Who will preserve their separate spirits, and restore them to their bodies at the resurrection.' WILLIAMS.

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1-4. 'The elders' were, in general, the rulers and teachers of the churches ; (Notes, Acts 11:27-30. 14:21-23. 20:17. 1 Tim. 3:1.) and Peter, waiving the mention of his apostolical office, addressed them as being himself one of the company, and as acquainted with the nature and difficulties of the service assigned to them. They ought to consider the congregations, over which they severally presided, and among whom they labored, as a part of the 'purchased' and beloved 'flock of God ;' and so 'take the oversight of them,' not merely because 'necessity was laid on them,' and they could not safely do otherwise ; but 'willingly,' from zeal to the glory of God, and love to the souls of his people, and as men who were ready to encounter difficulties, face dangers, and endure losses, reproaches, and persecutions in so good a work. 1 Cor. 9:13-18. And when the counsel of inspired persons, or other pious ministers, concurring with the wants and desires of the people, called on any one to engage in the pastoral office, he ought not to feel reluctant to it, as some were found to be ; partly from modesty and diffidence, yet not without a measure of unbelief, and undue regard to the ease, quiet, and safety of a private situation, the want of zeal and love, or the preference of more profitable employments ; whence it became necessary, almost to constrain them to engage in this arduous, laborious, and perilous work. This is generally supposed to be implied ; yet the charge is made to those who were already elders. At the same time, some improper persons, of inferior stations, might be induced to undertake the office of the ministry, from the expectation and desire of a better maintenance than they could otherwise obtain, Jam. 3:1, 2. and such as had been ordained, might be tempted to go through with their services rather to secure their incomes, than from better motives, and to modify their instructions in subserviency to their own interests ; but such things must scrupulously be avoided, as the lucre thus sought would be most filthy and base, and the wages of the vilest prostitution. John 10:10-13. 1 Tim. 3:3, 8-15. Tit. 1:5-13. (1) Am also an elder.] Here only. (2) Taking the oversight.] Heb. 12:15. Acts 20:28. 1 Tim. 3:2. Acts 20:17:28. 1 Tim. 5:21, 22. This must be allowed a decisive testimony, that no express distinction between presbyters and bishops was at the time, when the apostle wrote, established in the church. It would however be well, if, desisting from such controversies about precedence, all, whether called bishops, or archbishops, presbyters, or elders, of every church, would more study, and endeavor to practise, the admirable lessons here inculcated.—Alas ! how small a proportion of nominal ministers of Christianity, either in the more exalted orders, or among their often too much depressed inferiors, so preach, labor, and live, as to give an impartial student of the Bible reason to conclude, that 'when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they will receive the crown of unfading glory.' (3) Being lords.] Mat. 20:25. Mark 10:42. Acts 19:16. Such a dominion and authority, as the apostles, when expecting a temporal kingdom, under the Messiah, were ambitious of according to the

custom of temporal rulers.—Heritage.] Acts 1:26. 3:21. 26:18. Col. 1:12. 'The LORD's portion is his people.' Hence the word clergy. Some however interpret it of that part of the church, which was, in Providence, allotted to each presbyter.

SCOTT.  
(1-3.) 'The presbyters or elders (ministers or pastors) were destined to be not unlimited monarchs, but rulers and guides in an ecclesiastical republic, and to conduct everything in conjunction with the church assembled together, as the servants and not the masters of which they were to act. The apostles saw these relations in this manner, because they addressed their epistles, which treated of things pertaining to the ecclesiastical life and discipline, not to the rulers of the churches only, but to the whole of the church. Where Paul pronounces an exclusion from the communion of the church, he represents himself as united in the Spirit with the whole church, (1 Cor. 5:4.) supposing that, for an affair of such general concernment, the assembling of the church would be regularly requisite.' Church Hist.

NEANDER.  
(2.) Episcopountes.] Thus far the excellent Scott has been permitted to speak his own language on the much controverted subject of episcopacy,—with great candor, indeed, often ; but still with some results, of course, which are not admitted by presbyterian, or congregationalist (independent) brethren. It is but just therefore to state, as follows, in the language of Rev. Dr. MILLER : '1. That Christ gave but one commission for the office of the gospel-ministry, and that this office, of course, is one. 2. That the words bishop and elder, or presbyter, [or, it may be added, minister,] are uniformly used in the New Test. as convertible titles for the same office. 3. That the same character and powers which are ascribed, in the sacred writings, to bishops, are also ascribed to presbyters : thus plainly establishing the identity of order, as well as of name. 4. That the Christian church was organized by the apostles, after the model of the Jewish Synagogue, which was unquestionably,' says Dr. M. 'Presbyterian in its form.' To establish the first position, he quotes Mat. 28:18, 19, 20. and John 20:21, 22, 23. and adds : 'These passages form the grand commission under which all lawful ministers have acted, from the moment in which it was delivered, to the present time ; and under which they must and will act to the end of the world.' After dilating on this position, Dr. M. proceeds to the next head, as above, showing from Acts 20:17, 28. from the address of Paul to the Philippians ; from Titus 1:5-7. &c. and lastly, from the text, (1 Pet. 5:2.) 'that presbyter and bishop are the same office,'—the presbyter here being exhorted solemnly 'to exercise the powers, and perform the duties' of a bishop, or overseer,—as is asserted under the 3d head, establishing the identity of the two. For proof of the last position, Dr. M. appeals, after a course of reasoning and representation well worthy perusal, to Selden, De Synedriis, Lightfoot's Horæ Heb., the Comm. of Grotius, Bp. Stillingfleet's Irenicum, and Vitringa, De Synagoga Vetere, as uniting their testimony with Neander, Kuinoel, and Rosenmüller at the present day : concluding that the 'establishment of these positions decides the controversy,' so far, at least, as the sole authority of the SS. is concerned, and the inquiry respects 'the system adopted in the apostle's days. With respect to the question, how far the apostolic model of church order is unalterably binding in all ages, in all nations, and under all states of society, it is wholly a different inquiry.'

Ed.  
(3.) 'This is the language of St. Peter, in his catholic epistle to the catholic church ! According to him, there are to be no lords over God's heritage.' Dr. A. CLARKE.—God's.] 'This is not in the original, but is plainly to be supplied both from the subject and the context.—The original for heritage, in the simple diction of the apostle, can apply only to



4 And when the chief <sup>h</sup> Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown <sup>l</sup> of glory that fadeth not away.

5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder: yea, all <sup>l</sup> of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God <sup>h</sup> resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

6 Humble <sup>l</sup> yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7 Casting <sup>m</sup> all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

[Practical Observations.]

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as <sup>n</sup> a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

<sup>h</sup> He. 13:20.      <sup>k</sup> Ja. 4:6.      <sup>m</sup> Ps. 55:22.  
<sup>i</sup> 2 Ti. 4:8.      <sup>l</sup> Is. 57:15.      <sup>n</sup> Re. 12:12.  
<sup>j</sup> Ep. 5:21.

4. The best way a minister can take to engage the respect of a people, is, to discharge his own duty among them in the best manner he can, and to be a constant example to them of all that is good.

V. 4. In opposition to that filthy lucre which many proposed to themselves, as their principal motive in their undertaking and discharge of the pastoral office, the apostle sets before them the crown of glory designed by the great Shepherd, Jesus Christ, for all his faithful ministers.

Learn, 1. Jesus Christ is the chief Shepherd of the whole flock and heritage of God.

2. The chief Shepherd will appear, to judge all ministers and under-shepherds, to call them to account, whether they have faithfully discharged their work, according to the foregoing directions.

3. They that are found to have done their duty, shall have what is infinitely better than temporal gain; they shall receive from the grand Shepherd a high degree of everlasting glory, a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

V. 5. Having settled and explained the duty of the pastors of the church, he comes now to instruct the flock; he calls them the younger, as being generally younger than

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—7. Those who most know the nature, difficulties, snares, and temptations of the pastoral office, are best qualified to exhort their brethren, and they will speak with the most impressive authority on such topics. *Mat. 7:23, 29.*—Ministers should have skill, vigilance, diligence, faithfulness, love, zeal, patience, disinterestedness, and self-abasement, in their characters and conduct; both in order 'to feed the flock of God,' and to be 'examples unto them.' They ought to perform the most laborious services, and endure the greatest hardships, for 'the Lord's heritage,' not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, and without assuming any 'dominion over their faith.'—This is not, indeed, the road to high preferments in the outward church, nay, it leads far from it; but 'when the chief Shepherd shall appear,' such pastors 'shall receive' of Him 'a crown of glory that will never fade away.' And what, compared with this, are all those riches, eminent stations, or lordly dignities, which so many nominal pastors eagerly pursue? Or where will the avaricious, the slothful, the sensual, or the tyrannical men, who have borne the name of ministers,

appear, when the great Judge shall come, and call them to give an account of their stewardship?—But every station and age has its peculiar duties; subordination is the universal plan and appointment of God, and all, in their several relations, should be subject to those placed over them. This will be the case, as far as men 'are clothed with humility,' and God never shows favor to a proud man, except when He brings him down into the dust of self-abasement; *Dan. 4:34—37.* nor will any humble soul come short of his grace, or of eternal life. When we become humbly subject to our reconciled God, and simply dependent on Him; we are allowed and commanded to 'cast all our care on Him,' and assured 'that He careth for us,' as a Father for his own children; and thus will bring far sweeter peace and greater comfort into the soul, than could arise from the most complete gratification of pride, ambition, avarice, or any worldly affections. Thus also we shall be safe; and thus we may unreservedly and cheerfully leave all events to the God to whom alone they belong.

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persons.' BLOOMF.—*Examples, &c.*] 'Or, models, that the flock may be stamped aright, taking the impression of the pastor's life. Sound doctrine alone will not serve. Though the water you give your flocks be pure, yet, if you lay spotted rods before them, it will bring forth spotted lives in them. Either teach not at all, or teach by the rhetoric of your lives.' LEIGHTON.

(4.) Chief Shepherd.] 'In Spain, flocks often contain 10,000 sheep, divided into ten tribes, with 50 under-shepherds, and as many dogs.' *Orient. Cust.*, No. 577, in WILLIAMS.

V. 5—7. The word 'younger,' *Luke 22:26.* does not seem here to relate to any particular station in the church; but in general denotes juniors, whether in the pastoral office or not. And as pride, in juniors and inferiors, militates against due subordination, even as in superiors it prompts to tyranny; so they all were admonished to be clothed with humility, as their chief ornament, or rather their outward garment; that whatever abilities, endowments, or spiritual gifts they possessed, their modesty and humility might be conspicuous to all beholders, more than any other distinction.

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(5.) 'In obeying the precept, "he clothed with humility," the Christian finds a deep source of pure enjoyment. Self-abasement he perceives to be appropriate to his character and prospects. No sooner

their grave pastors, and to put them in mind of their inferiority, the term younger being used by our Savior to signify an inferior, *Luke 22:26.* he exhorts them to respect and reverence their persons, and to yield to their admonitions, reproof, and authority, enjoining and commanding what the Word of God requires, *Heb. 13:17.* They should also all receive the reproofs and counsels one of another, and be ready to perform all the offices of friendship and charity; and particular persons should submit to the directions of the whole society, *Eph. 5:21. Jam. 5:16.* These duties being contrary to the proud nature and selfish interests of men, he advises them to be clothed with humility; 'Let your minds, behavior, garb, and whole frame, be adorned with humility, as the most beautiful habit you can wear; but if you be disobedient and proud, God will set Himself to oppose and crush you; for He resisteth the proud, when He giveth grace to the humble.'

Learn, 1. Humility is the great preserver of peace and order in all Christian churches and societies; consequently, pride is the great disturber of them, and the cause of most dissensions and breaches in the church.

2. There is a mutual opposition between God and the proud, so the word signifies; they war against Him, and He scorns them, *Prov. 3:34.*

3. Where God giveth grace to the humble, He will give more grace, more wisdom, faith, holiness, and humility.

V. 6. Since God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble, therefore humble yourselves, not only one to another, but to God, whose judgments are coming on the world, and must begin at the house of God, *ch. 4:17.* his hand is almighty to pull you down, if you be proud, or to exalt you, if you be humble; and it will certainly do it, either in this life, if He sees it best for you, or at the day of general retribution. The consideration of the omnipotent hand of God, should make us humble and submissive to Him in all He brings upon us. Humbling ourselves to God under his hand, is the next way to deliverance and exaltation; patience under his chastisements, submission to his pleasure, repentance, prayer, and hope in his mercy, will engage his help and release in due time, *Jam. 4:7, 10.*

V. 7. The apostle, knowing these Christians were already under very hard circum-

stances, rightly supposes that what he had foretold, of greater hardships yet coming, might excite in them abundance of care and fear about the event; and, foreseeing this, he gives them the best advice, and supports it with a strong argument; his advice is, to cast all their care, or all care of themselves, upon God; 'Trust in Him with a firm, composed mind; He will release you of your care, and take the care of you on Himself; avert what you fear, or support you under it; order all events to you, so as shall convince you of his paternal love and tenderness toward you; and so that no hurt, but good, shall come unto you.' *Mat. 6:25. Ps. 84:11. Rom. 8:28.*

Learn, 1. The best of Christians are apt to labor under anxious and excessive care; the apostle calls it, all your care, intimating, that the cares of Christians are various; personal cares, family cares, cares for the present, and for the future; for themselves, for others, for the church.

2. The cares even of good people are too often very sinful; as when they arise from unbelief and [distrust of God], when they torture and distract the mind, unfit us for the duties of our place, and hinder our delightful service of God.

3. The best remedy against immoderate care, is, to resign every event to God's wise and gracious determination. A firm belief of the rectitude of the divine will and counsels, calms the spirit of man; We ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done, *Acts 21:14.*

V. 8, 9. Here the apostle,

1. Shows them their danger from an enemy more cruel and restless than even the worst of men, whom he describes, (1.) By his characters and names; he is an adversary, that adversary of yours; not a common adversary, but an enemy that impleads you, and litigates against you in your grand depending cause, and aims at your very souls. The devil, the grand accuser of all the brethren; a title derived from a word which signifies to strike through, or to stab; he would strike malignity into our natures, and poison into our souls; if he could have struck these people with passion and murmuring in their sufferings, perhaps he might have drawn them to apostasy and ruin. He is a roaring lion, hungry, fierce, strong, and cruel; the fierce and greedy pursuer of souls. (2.) By his business; he walks about, seeking whom he may devour; his whole design is to devour

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does he take the place assigned by the wisdom of God, than a calm delight spreads itself upon his soul. He acquiesces in the dispensations of Providence. He is no more tormented with the aspirations of pride, the fires of envy, the goadings of discontent. In whatever state he is, he occupies his station of usefulness with cheerfulness and content. What Christian cannot modestly appropriate to himself, the apt, delicate, and striking description which Bunyan gives, of one in the valley of humiliation.—"There was a kind of sympathy betwixt that valley and him. He would now be up every morning by break of day, tracing and walking to and fro in the valley; he would even lie down, embrace the ground, and kiss the very flowers which grew around him."

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V. 8, 9. The terrible persecutions which were instigated by this enemy of God and man, as 'working in the children of disobedience,' seem to be peculiarly intended.—These repeated exhortations to 'watchfulness,' and the especial motive assigned for it, ought to have peculiar weight, as coming from that apostle, who, through self-confidence, carnal security, and inwatchfulness, when 'Satan desired to sift him' and his brethren 'as wheat,' was induced to deny his Lord with solemn oaths and dire imprecations. (*Notes, Mat. 26:30—46, 69—75.*) (8) Walketh about.] *Notes, Job 1:7. Mat. 12:43—45.* (9) Adver-



9 Whom ° resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a <sup>p</sup> while, make you <sup>q</sup> perfect, <sup>r</sup> stablish, <sup>s</sup> strengthen, <sup>t</sup> settle you.

11 To him be <sup>u</sup> glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

12 By <sup>v</sup> Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye <sup>w</sup> stand.

13 The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.

14 Greet <sup>x</sup> ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace <sup>y</sup> be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

o Ja. 4:7. s Zec. 10:6, 12. w 1 Co. 15:1.  
p 2 Co. 4:16. t Ps. 133:7, 8. x Ro. 16:16.  
q He. 13:21. u c. 4:11. y Ep. 6:23.  
r 2 Th. 3:3. v 2 Co. 1:19.

and destroy souls; always, night and day, he is going about, studying and contriving whom he may ensnare to their eternal ruin.

2. Infers hence our duty, (1.) *To be sober*, and to govern both the outward and the inward man by the rules of temperance, modesty, and mortification. (2.) *To be vigilant*; not secure or careless, but rather suspicious of constant danger from this spiritual enemy, and, under that apprehension, to be watchful and diligent to prevent his designs, and save our souls. (3.) *To resist him, steadfast in the faith*; it was the faith of these people that Satan aimed at; if he could overturn their faith, and draw them into apostasy, then he knew he should gain his point, and ruin their souls; therefore, to destroy their faith, he raises bitter persecutions, and sets the grand potentates of the world against them; this strong trial and temptation they must resist, by being well-grounded, resolute, and *steadfast in the faith*: to encourage them to this.

3. Tells them their care was not singular, for they knew that the like afflictions befall

their brethren in all parts of the world, and that all the people of God were their fellow-soldiers in this warfare.

Learn 1. All the great persecutions ever raised in the world, are raised by the devil, Gen. 3:15. Rev. 12:12, in which his design is, to bring the faithful to apostatize, by reason of their sufferings, and so to destroy their souls.

2. Sobriety and watchfulness are necessary virtues at all times, but especially in times of suffering and persecution; 'You must moderate your affection to worldly things, else Satan will soon overcome you.'

3. 'If you would overcome Satan, either as a tempter, accuser, or persecutor, you must resist him, steadfast in the faith; if your faith give way, you are gone; therefore, above all, take the shield of faith,' Eph. 6:16.

4. The consideration of what others suffer, is proper to encourage us to bear our own share in any affliction; the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren.

V. 10. We come now to the conclusion of this epistle, which the apostle begins with a most weighty prayer, acknowledging, on their behalf, that God had already called them to be partakers of that eternal glory, which, being his own, He had promised and settled on them, through the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ. You may observe what he prays for on their account; not that they might be excused from sufferings, but that their sufferings might be moderate and short, and that, after a while, God would restore them to a settled, peaceable condition; and perfect his work in them; that He would stablish them against wavering, either in faith, or duty; that He would strengthen those who are weak, and settle them on Christ, the Foundation, so firmly, that their union with Him might be indissoluble and everlasting.

Learn, 1. All grace is from God; it is He who restrains, converts, comforts, and saves men by his grace.

2. All who are called into a state of grace, are called to partake of eternal glory and happiness.

3. Those who are called to be heirs of eternal life through Jesus Christ, must, nevertheless, suffer in this world, but their sufferings will be but for a little while.

4. The perfecting, establishing, strengthening, and settling, of good people in grace, and their perseverance therein, is so difficult

a work, that only the God of all grace can accomplish it; therefore, He is earnestly to be sought unto by continual prayer and dependence on his promises.

V. 11. From this doxology we may learn, that they who have obtained grace from the God of all grace, should, and will, ascribe glory, dominion, and power, to Him, for ever and ever.

V. 12. Here the apostle recapitulates the design of his writing this epistle to them, ch. 1:13—15. and recommends Silvanus, the person by whom he sent them this brief epistle.

Learn, 1. An honorable esteem of the ministers of religion, tends much to the success of their labors; the prejudices that some of these Jews might have against Silvanus, as a minister of the Gentiles, would soon wear off when they were once convinced that he was a faithful brother.

2. The main thing ministers ought to aim at in their labors, is, to convince their people of the certainty and excellency of the Christian religion; this the apostles did exhort and testify with all their might.

3. A firm persuasion that we are in the true way to heaven, will be the best motive to stand fast, and persevere therein.

V. 13. Peter, being at Babylon in Assyria, when he wrote this epistle, sends the salutation of that church to the other churches to whom he wrote, telling them, that God had elected or chosen the Christians at Babylon out of the world, to be his church, and to partake of eternal salvation through Christ Jesus, together with them and all other faithful Christians, ch. 1:2. In this salutation he particularly joins Mark the evangelist, who was then with him, and who was his son in a spiritual sense, being begotten by him to Christianity.

All the churches of Jesus Christ ought to have a most affectionate concern one for another; they should love and pray for one another, and be as helpful one to another as they possibly can.

V. 14. He exhorts them to fervent love and charity one towards another, and to express this by giving the kiss of peace, according to the common custom of those times and countries; and so concludes with a benediction, which he confines to those, only, that are in Christ Jesus, united to Him by faith, and sound members of his mystical body.

PRACT. OBS. V. 3—14. Did a roaring lion at any time traverse our streets, devouring numbers of the careless and inattentive; and we were informed of it, by indisputable testimony; we should proceed with great caution and circumspection, if obliged to go out in such perilous circumstances; yet a far more formidable enemy continually watches his opportunity of destroying our souls; God Himself gives us the information and alarm, and we cannot have any safety except we 'watch and are sober.' But, alas! how little do we take the warning, and act as if we really believed this to be the case! Yet in this way alone can we reasonably hope to be kept from falling into temptation, and being over-

sary.] Mat. 5:25. Luke 12:53, 13:3. An adversary at law; one who brings an accusation.—Diabolos, means a false accuser; Satan, an adversary, or enemy. The persecuted Christians were first calumniated, and then condemned to tortures or death. Instigated by the devil, the original liar and murderer, John 8:41—47. the persecutors murdered their characters first, and then their persons.

(8.) Devour.] 'The word expresses more, even swallowing up; and so represents the insatiable rage of the enemy of our salvation.'

(9.) 'Truly it is a pity to be at the trouble of suffering afflictions, and not get good by them. We get good by them when they awaken us to do good; and I may say, never till then. When God is distributing sorrows to you, the sorrows still come upon some errands; therefore the best way for you to find that they do not come in his anger, is, to consider what the errands may be. When any affliction comes, immediately reflect, "To what special act of repentance does this call me?" and while it is yet upon you, seriously inquire, "To what improvement in holiness and usefulness does this call me?" Be more solicitous to gain this point, than to escape the affliction. Oh the peace that will compose, possess, and ravish your mind, when your afflictions shall be found yielding these "fruits of righteousness!" Luther did well to call afflictions "the theology of Christians." MATHER.

V. 12. It is highly probable, that Silvanus was the same person, who generally attended Paul; and who was frequently called Silas. M. R. x.—Acts 15:22—41.—This confirms the supposition, that Peter wrote, to establish in the faith the same churches, which had been plucked by Paul and his companions, against all the insinuations of those, who endeavored to persuade the Gentile converts, that he preached a different

doctrine than the other apostles did: and indeed the attentive reader will mark a great similarity in the sentiments of those two great apostles; especially in the manner in which they connect doctrine and practice together. Testifying.] Here only. Heb. 2:4—Neh. 9:29, 30. 13:15. Sept.—May not this word imply, that the apostle added his testimony to that of those, who had first preached the Gospel to them? Sc.

V. 13. There is no sufficient ground to suppose, that by Babylon, the apostle mystically meant Rome; for no reason can be assigned, why he should withhold the name of that city, when he wrote this epistle. Yet if any choose to avail themselves of this only scriptural proof, that Peter ever resided at this great antichristian metropolis; protestants are not concerned to controvert it. It is, however, generally allowed, that Peter went to Rome, and there suffered martyrdom.—It is not certain, whether Marcus is, or is not, the same with John Mark, mentioned frequently by Paul, and in the Acts of the Apostles. Pref. to the Gospel according to Mark.

(13.) Babylon.] 'There were two Babylons; one in Egypt, the other in Syria: but Lardner says, there is no mention of either church or bishop at the former place, by any of the writers of the first four centuries. Many, therefore, refer to the great Babylon of Assyria: Lardner, however, objects, that "this city was almost deserted in the apostle's days;" and further argues, from ch. 2:13, 14, 17. that Peter wrote from some part of the Roman empire, which at that time did not include Babylon, then under the dominion of the Parthians. These difficulties have led to a third opinion, which we adopt from Mr. Horne, that by Babylon, Peter meant Rome, as John did in the Apocalypse, on account of its being the metropolis of idolatry. This opinion has the general testimony.'

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AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
**SECOND EPISTLE GENERAL OF PETER,**  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. J. Hill.)

THE penman of this epistle appears plainly to be the same who wrote the foregoing; and not Simon, who succeeded the apostle James in the church at Jerusalem, inasmuch as he who wrote this epistle, calls himself *Simon Peter, and an apostle*, v. 1. and says, he was *one of the three apostles present at Christ's transfiguration*, v. 18. and expressly, *that he had written a former epistle to them*, ch. 3:1. Moreover, the design of this second epistle is the same with that of the former, as is evident from ch. 3:1. whence observe, that, in the things of God, we have need of *precept upon precept, and line upon line*, and all little enough to keep [them] in remembrance; yet these are the things which should be most faithfully recorded, and frequently remembered by us.

The writer of this epistle alludes to circumstances and facts, which agree to none but Peter, 1:14—16. *John* 21:19. and he speaks of his 'beloved brother, Paul,' 3:15. It must, therefore, either be the work of the apostle Peter, or of one who personated him; but 'it is a thing of the worst example, for any man to forge another's name, or pretend to be the person he is not.' *Le Clerc*. It may be added, 'especially to forge the name of an apostle, and to personate him, in order to sanction a man's private opinions by so high an authority.' Yet the epistle is remarkable for the energy, with which the writer inculcates holiness, and the solemn, yet affectionate manner, in which he testifies against the delusions of those who neglect it. It has indeed been urged, that the style remarkably differs from that of Peter's first epistle; but this is by no means true, except in respect to a part of the second ch., which in fact seems to have been taken, in a measure, at least, from some writing, which described in very strong language, the false prophets of that age, or of earlier ages, which was then extant, and well known, but is now lost. Jude seems also to have taken some things from it; for part of his epistle greatly coincides with the second chap. of this. In all other respects, the *internal* characters of authenticity are very strong.—Some doubts, however, in this respect, were entertained in the primitive church, which Jerome ascribes to the supposed dissimilarity of style. But it is probable, that it was written only a short time before the apostle's martyrdom; and, not having been so publicly avowed by him, and clearly known to be his, during his lifetime, the scrupulous caution of the church hesitated about admitting it into the sacred canon, till *internal evidence* fully convinced the most competent judges, that it was entitled to that high distinction. It is generally supposed to have been written at least three or four years after the former epistle, and it is evident, that primarily it was intended for the same persons, though not expressly addressed to them.—It appears, that the apostle, by this epistle, especially designed to put Christians on their guard, against the false apostles and teachers, who perverted the Gospel; and the profane scoffers, who started objections to the truth of it; but it is replete with the most important instructions on a variety of subjects.

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A. D. 67.

CHAP. I.

1 Confirming them in hope of the increase of God's graces, 5 he exhorteth them, by faith, and good works, to make their calling sure: 12 whereof he is careful to remember them, knowing that his death is at hand: 16 and warneth them to be constant in the faith of Christ, who is the true Son of God, by the eyewitness of the apostles beholding his majesty, and by the testimony of the Father, and the prophets.

**S**IMON Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like <sup>b</sup> precious faith with us through the righteousness of <sup>c</sup> God, and our Savior Jesus Christ:

2 Grace and peace <sup>d</sup> be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

<sup>a</sup> or, *Symeon*. <sup>c</sup> our God and <sup>d</sup> Da. 4:1. 6:25.  
<sup>b</sup> Ep. 4:5. <sup>e</sup> Savior.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. The apostle begins this second epistle with an introduction, wherein the same persons are described, and the same blessings desired, that are in the preface to his former letter; but there are some additions or alterations, which ought to be noticed in all the three parts of the introduction.

I. The person who wrote the epistle, *Simon Peter*. *Peter*, being in both epistles, seems to be the name most frequently used, and most acceptable to him, being given

him by our Lord, on his confessing *Jesus to be Christ the Son of the living God*; signifying, also, and sealing that truth to be the fundamental article, the *rock* on which all must build; but *Simon*, though omitted in the former epistle, is mentioned in this, lest the total omission of that name, which was given him when he was circumcised, should make the Jewish believers, who were all zealous of the law, to become jealous of him, as if he disclaimed and despised circumcision; he here styles himself *a servant*, as well as *an apostle, of Jesus Christ*; in this he may be allowed to glory, as David does, Ps. 116: 16. The service of Christ is the way to the highest honor, *John* 12:26. He makes all his servants *kings and priests unto God*, Rev. 1:6. To triumph in being *Christ's servant*, is very proper for those who are engaging others to enter into, or abide in, the service of Christ.

II. The people to whom the epistle is written; described in the former epistle as *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*; and here, as *having obtained precious faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*; a grace precious, not only as very scarce, even in the visible church, *Mat.* 22:14. but as very excellent, and alike precious in the private Christian and in the apostle, producing the same *precious* effects in the one and in the other; uniting both to Christ, purifying the

heart of one as truly as of another, and justifying each in the sight of God, *Acts* 13: 39. taking hold, in whomsoever it is, of the same *precious* Savior, and applying the same *precious* promises. This *precious faith* is obtained of God, is his gift, wrought by the Spirit, who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead. The preciousness of *faith*, as well as our obtaining it, is through the righteousness of Christ. The satisfactory, meritorious righteousness and obedience of Christ gives *faith* all its value and preciousness; and the righteousness of such a Person cannot but be of infinite value to those who by *faith* receive it.

III. The apostolical benediction, the same with that in the former epistle; but here he adds, 1. An account of the way and means whereby *grace and peace are multiplied*; it is *through the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ*; and, 2. The ground of the apostle's faith in asking, and of the Christian's hope in expecting, the increase of *grace*. Observe, (1.) The fountain of all spiritual blessings is, the *divine power* of Jesus Christ, who could not discharge all the office of Mediator, unless He was God as well as man. (2.) *All things* that have any relation to, and influence on, the true spiritual life, are from Jesus Christ; *in Him all fulness dwells*, and from Him we receive, *grace for grace*, *John* 1:16. even all that is necessary

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. Perhaps Peter deemed it proper to style himself 'an apostle,' as well as 'a servant of Christ;' because he meant in this epistle to oppose certain false teachers, who did great mischief in the church.—Thus [i. e. by speaking of *like precious faith*] he tacitly distinguished 'the faith of God's elect,' from that dead and worthless faith, by which many were deluded. *Tit.* 1:1—4. *Jam.* 2:14—26. This faith, which, as the original intimates, they received by the special favor and allotment of God, rested on the 'righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ,' as the words may be literally rendered. (*Marg.*) Thus they were taught to believe and trust in the obedience unto death of the Lord Jesus, as their incarnate God and Savior, for their justification, and for all the blessings connected with it, and resulting from it. This is the most obvious meaning of the words; but if any contend, that the expression, 'our God,' refers to the Father, they should also remember, that the meritorious obedience of the incarnate Son is often called, 'the righteousness of God.' *Rom.* 1:17. 3:21—26. *2 Cor.* 5:18—21. *Phil.* 3: 8—11. Nor can we form any idea, in what sense a Christian's faith could be said to be either *in*, or 'through,' the righteousness, or justice of God, considered merely as a divine attribute, when it rests mainly on the mercy and truth of God, and only views his justice as satisfied, and,

as it were, consenting to the sinner's salvation, through the meritorious work of Christ.—Our translation, 'through the righteousness,' though it seems not to be the exact sense of the passage, yet conveys a very important meaning; as the faith, by which we receive Christ for salvation, is given to us 'through the righteousness,' which He finished as our Surety, for it springs from the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, as given to us through his mediation. *John* 1:10—12.—*Through*] *En. In, with, by, for, from, for the sake of*; rarely, *through*. The apostle Paul having used *en* for several verses, when the idea of *through* occurred to him, changes *en* for *dia* with the genitive, *2 Cor.* 6:4—8. which is not observed in our version. Comp. 3 with 3:18. *Gr.*

(1.) *Through the righteousness, &c.*] 'In the righteousness of our God, &c.' *Scholefield*. — 'In it is the object of faith.' *Henry*, *abr.* — 'Of God and our Savior, &c.' 'Of our God and Savior, &c.' So *Doddr.* and *Bloomf.*; and *Greenfield*, referring to *Granville Sharp*, *Wordsworth*, *Middleton*, and *Pye Smith*, in confirmation, says, 'this is certainly the literal and proper rendering of the original, and should have been received in the text: it is an absolute proof,' he adds, 'that Peter calls Jesus Christ God, in the most proper sense of the term.' *Ed.*



3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

e Ps. 84:11. g 2 Ti. 1:9. j c. 2:13,20.  
 f Ti. 4:8. h 2 Co. 7:1. k Phi. 4:8.  
 or, by. i He. 12:10. l Phi. 1:9.

for the preserving, improving, and perfecting of grace and peace, which, so some, are called here, *godliness and life*. (3.) Knowledge of God, and faith in Him, are the channel whereby all spiritual supports and comforts are conveyed to us; God is the Author of our effectual calling, for so He is here described; Him that hath called us to glory and virtue. Observe, here, The design of God in calling or converting men, is, to bring them to glory and virtue, that is, peace and grace, so some; but many prefer the marginal rendering, by glory and virtue, and so make effectual calling the work of the glory and virtue, or the glorious power, of God, described Eph. 1:19. and Ps. 63:2. this power or virtue is to be extolled by all that are called out of darkness into marvellous light, 1 Pet. 2:9.

In v. 4. the apostle goes on to encourage their faith and hope in looking for an increase of grace and peace, because the same glory and virtue are employed and evidenced in giving the promises of the Gospel, that are exercised in our effectual calling. Observe, The good things the promises make over, are exceeding great: the pardon of sin, of sins numerous and heinous, is a wonderful thing, and so called, Ps. 119:18. the promised blessings of the Gospel are very precious: they who receive the promises of the Gospel, partake of the divine nature, are renewed in the spirit of their mind, after the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; their hearts are set for God and his service; they have a divine temper and disposition of soul: those in whom the Spirit works the divine nature, are freed from the bondage of corruption, and translated into the liberty of the children of God; for it is the world in which corruption reigns; they who are not of the Father, but of the world, are under the power of sin; the world lies in wickedness, 1 John 5:19. And the dominion that sin has in the men of the world is through lust; their desires are to it, therefore it rules over them. The dominion sin has over us, is according to the delight we have in it.

V. 5—7. Here the apostle comes to the chief thing intended in this epistle,—to excite and engage them to advance in grace and holiness; a good beginning is not to be rested in; he had prayed that grace and peace might be multiplied to them, and now he exhorts them to press forward for the obtaining of more grace; and they who will

make progress in religion, must be very diligent in their endeavors; without giving all diligence, there is no gaining any ground in the work of holiness; we must strive, if we will enter in at the strait gate, Luke 13:24.

Here we cannot but observe how the believer's way is marked out, step by step.

1. He must get virtue, by which some understand justice; and then knowledge, temperance, and patience, being joined with it, the apostle may be supposed to put them on pressing after the four cardinal virtues, or the four elements that go to the making up of every virtue or virtuous action; but seeing it is a faithful saying, and constantly to be asserted, that they who have faith, be careful to maintain good works, Tit. 3:8. by virtue here we may understand strength and courage, without which the believer cannot stand up for good works, by abounding and excelling in them. We have need of virtue while we live, and it will be of excellent use when we come to die.

2. The believer must add knowledge to his virtue, prudence to his courage; there is a knowledge of God's name, which must go before our faith, Ps. 9:10. but there are proper circumstances for duty, which must be known and observed; every believer must labor after the knowledge and wisdom that are profitable to direct, both as to the proper method and order wherein all Christian duties are to be performed, and as to the way and manner of performing them.

3. We must add temperance to our knowledge; the Gospel teaches sobriety as well as honesty, Tit. 2:12. we must be moderate in desiring and using the good things of nat-

V. 3, 4. It might be expected by Christians, that the progressive work of illumination, sanctification, and consolation, would be carried on in them, according to what 'the divine power' of the Lord Jesus had already conferred. Eph. 3:20, 21. In consequence of his exaltation, and mediatorial authority, 'his divine power' had given to his people 'all things pertaining to life and godliness;' whatever was requisite for their spiritual and eternal life and final felicity, and for their acting suitably to their relations and obligations to God, during their passage through this evil world to heaven. All these things had been freely bestowed on them, 'through the knowledge of God, who had called them,' by his glorious grace and mercy, and the 'virtue,' or energy, of his quickening Spirit; or, He had called on them to partake of 'his eternal glory,' and to a constant and courageous profession of the Gospel, and obedience to Christ, amidst all the trials and sufferings of their present state. For the words 'glory and virtue,' may either refer to God, who called them, or that to which they were called; the former seems the more literal construction; but the unusual use of the word rendered *virtue*, in applying it to God, has induced most expositors to adopt the latter interpretation. Yet the same word is used, in this application of it, by Peter, in another place. 1 Peter 2:9. *Gr.*—The promises of Scripture relate to things most needful to sinners, suitable to their case, answerable to all their wants, and abundantly sufficient, when fulfilled to them, as believers, to render them most blessed for evermore. These are set before men, by the Gospel, who are invited to come and partake of the promised blessings; but they are given to believers alone, who may consider them as so many valuable securities; for, being united to Christ, and partakers of Him, all the promises belong to them through Him and by his covenant. 2 Cor. 1:17—20. —They were, moreover, bestowed on them, to the end that they 'might be partakers of the divine nature,' that so a new nature might be formed within them, and a new direction given to their understandings, wills, and affections, conformably to the holy nature of God, and capable of loving and delighting in Him, and finding happiness in his service. Gen. 1:26, 27. Rom. 12:2. 2 Cor. 3:17, 18. Eph. 4:20—24. Col. 3:7—11. When this change of heart and nature was begun in regeneration, it influenced those who experienced it, to separate from all those outward vices and enormities, into which men are drawn, by their excessive and idolatrous cravings after the pleasures, possessions, or distinctions of the world. — When sinners profess to repent, and to embrace the Gospel, they outwardly relinquish these iniquities; (Notes, 2:20—22. Mat. 12:43—45.) and all regenerate persons actually and finally escape them, i. e. the allowed or habitual practice of any of them.—*Virtue.*] 5. Phil. 4:8. 1 Pet. 2:9.—This word, used so frequently in heathen writers, seldom occurs in the New Test.; and when it does, it does not always signify the whole of a right principle, but generally courage. Doddr.—It never occurs, but in the texts referred to; and it never signifies general holiness, or a right state of the heart and conduct. Courage is the heathen meaning of it in general; being derived from *Arēs*, Mars. Or it signifies, military fortitude; as *virtus*, manly valor, from *vir*, a man. 5—7.—(1) *The divine nature.*] A divine nature; without the article: a nature like that of God, bearing his holy image; not the essence of the divine nature. Gal. 4:8. Eph. 2:3. Some for a time 'escape the corruption of the world,' who are not partakers of a 'divine nature;' and these 'in time of temptation fall away.' 2:20—22. Mat. 13:20, 21.

(3.) *To.*] Margin, "By" glory and virtue. If we take the textual rendering, it means, that we are called to practise the one, and enjoy the other; if the margin, it may import, that by a display of these in the Gospel, we are called to embrace it. WILLIAMS.—It may very properly be understood, of that strengthening energy which God exerts on

the human mind, which appeared in so extraordinary a manner in the apostolic age. DODDR.—Whitby, in Doddr. understands it of the glorious effusion of the Holy Spirit. Ed.—Giving all diligence.] 'There is an end to the earnestness of some persons when they have obtained what they call their conversion. While they consider themselves in a state of nature, they seek after God, and cry earnestly in the use of means; but afterwards they act as if their work was done. The SS. everywhere represent striving and labor as subsequent to regeneration. Almost all that is said in the N. T. about watching, running, wrestling, pressing forward, crying to God day and night, is said to SAINTS. But there are many professors who have adopted the strange, antisciptural notion of having all this before they are converted; so as to have an easy time of it afterwards, in sloth and indolence.'

(4.) *Divine nature.*] 'The best commentators agree, that it denotes disposition: so that to be partakers of the divine nature will be, to imitate God's perfections, aim at a similitude to his moral properties and attributes.'

V. 5—7. These holy dispositions, and the effects of them on their conduct, must be diligently and carefully added together, as different voices in harmony form a chorus; that so, the exercise of each other might regulate, and bound, and unite with that of the rest, and prevent their exceeding or degenerating. Thus, the Christian character would appear well proportioned, and beautiful: whereas, if any of these graces were remarkably defective, the others would appear to be redundant, being joined with those natural dispositions, which most resembled them; and the character would appear deformed and destitute of symmetry; whilst one man would be bold without knowledge or love; another, gentle and kind, without firmness or fortitude. The same disproportion would appear in various other particulars.—It is evident, that none of the genuine graces of the Christian character can exist alone; all combine in forming it, but symmetry is the source of beauty. Mat. 5:3. Gal. 5:22—26.

(5.) *Add to your faith virtue.*] Many commentators, as Doddr., Mackn., Ros., &c. take *virtue* here, in the sense of courage; but Bloomf., after Schleus., prefers 'Christian virtue.' Ed.—Knowledge.] 'The young Christian should aim at the highest intellectual improvement within his reach. An ignorant man may be truly a Christian, devout, safe, happy, and in a measure useful;—not however because of his ignorance, but in spite of it. His Christian character, instead of resting on his ignorance, will rest on what he knows. He will love God, not because he knows Him not, but because he knows Him. The devotion of ignorance is superstition; but Christian devotion arises from knowing God, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Pour upon the ignorant Christian's mind, a flood of light and knowledge; expand and strengthen his mind, till he has that reach of thought, and those powers of discrimination, which belong to a mind fully instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven [the will of God, as displayed in the laws of his universe]: let his conceptions of God, and of Christ, and of all eternal things, become clear, wide, and powerful;—will not the change from ignorance to knowledge, heighten and beautify all the graces of his character? [See vs. 8 and 9. also Note, Mat. 4:4—6.] The ignorant Christian may be useful; but his ignorance will always impede his usefulness. If he can make himself useful with the little knowledge which he has, how much more useful would he be, if the sphere of his intelligence were widened. His usefulness will be proportioned to his influence; and one of the greatest means of usefulness, is knowledge. Wealth may give him power to bless the destitute with the Gospel, or ease the widow's heart to sing for joy;—or he may be in circumstances where his mere example of industrious and unremitting toil, or calm submission to the will of God, shall bring persuasion and conviction to a



6 And to knowledge <sup>m</sup> temperance; and to temperance <sup>n</sup> patience; and to patience <sup>o</sup> godliness;

7 And to godliness brotherly <sup>p</sup> kindness; and to brotherly kindness <sup>q</sup> charity.

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be <sup>r</sup> barren nor unfruitful <sup>s</sup> in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But he that lacketh these things is <sup>t</sup> blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your <sup>u</sup> calling and election sure: for <sup>v</sup> if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

[Practical Observations.]

m 1 Co. 9:25.	q 1 Co. 13:1-3.	u c. 3:17.
n Ja. 1:4.	r idle.	v 1 Jn. 3:19.
o 1 Ti. 4:7.	s Jn. 15:2-6.	Re. 22:14.
p Ju. 13:34,35.	t 1 Jn. 2:9-11.	

ural life, such as meat, drink, clothes, sleep, recreations, and credit; an inordinate desire after these is inconsistent with an earnest desire after God and Christ; and they who take more of these than is due, can render to neither God nor man what is due to them.

4. Add to temperance patience; which must have its perfect work, or we cannot be perfect and entire, wanting nothing, Jam. 1:4. for we are born to trouble, and must through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of heaven; and it is this tribulation, Rom. 5:3. which worketh patience, that is, requires the exercise, and occasions the increase, of this grace.

5. To patience we must add godliness, and this is the very thing produced by patience,

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-11. We should carefully examine, whether our faith be of a 'like precious' nature and efficacy, with that of the primitive servants of Jesus Christ: for if we have 'obtained' this inestimable benefit, we are certainly interested in 'the righteousness of our God and Savior;' and 'grace and peace will be multiplied unto us,' in proportion to 'our knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,' till the whole is perfected in the felicity of heaven. But 'the light which is in' numbers, even of those who profess the Gospel, 'is darkness;' Notes, Mat. 6:22, 23. Tit. 1:14-16. and, while they boast themselves to be more clear-sighted than practical Christians and teachers, their own deficiency, in the graces and good works of true religion, proves them to be 'blind,' or at least very dim-sighted; men who can see nothing, but a few things belonging to their own narrow system, without perceiving the enlarged nature and beneficent tendency of the Gospel; who have

thousand hearts. But if, in addition, he had that power which springs from superior intelligence, how much wider would be his usefulness? [These remarks are of equal force in favor of a thoroughly educated ministry.]

REV. LEONARD BACON.

V. 5-7. 'Having reminded, that God had given them all things pertaining to a godly life, the apostle here mentions those virtues which were required of them: withal intimating that, if professed Christians did not bring forth such fruit, they neither duly attended to the nature of Christianity, nor would they have any benefit thereby.' BENSON, in Bloomf.—'Aim at consistency in your Christian character. There is a beauty in moral consistency, which resembles the symmetry of a well proportioned building, when nothing is deficient, or redundant. Consistency can only be acquired and maintained, by cultivating every part of the Christian character. The circle of virtues must be complete, without chasms or obliquities. A character well proportioned, and nicely balanced in all its parts, we are not frequently permitted to witness; for while in one branch there is vigor, and even exuberance, in another there may be the appearance of feebleness and sterility. The man who is distinguished for virtues of a particular class, is apt to be deficient in those which belong to a different class. This is so commonly the fact, that many entertain the opinion that the same person cannot excel in every virtue. Thus, it is not expected that the man of remarkable firmness and intrepidity, should be at the same time distinguished for meekness and gentleness. But, after making due allowances for a difference of constitutional temperament, we must maintain, that there is not, nor can there be, any incompatibility between the several virtues of the Christian life. They are all branches of the same root, and the principle which affords nourishment to one, communicates its virtue to all. As all truth is harmonious, however it may, on a superficial and partial view, seem to be contradictory; so all the exercises of moral goodness [614]

for that works experience, Rom. 5:4. When Christians bear afflictions patiently, they get an experimental knowledge of the loving-kindness of their heavenly Father, which He will not take from his children, even when He visits their iniquity with the rod, and their transgressions with stripes, Ps. 89:32, 33. and hereby they are brought to the childlike fear and reverential love wherein true godliness consists; to which,

6. We must add brotherly-kindness, a tender affection to all our fellow-Christians, who are children of the same Father, servants of the same Master, members of the same family, travellers to the same country, heirs of the same inheritance.

7. Charity, or a love of good-will to all mankind, must be added to the love of delight which we have for those who are the children of God. God has made of one blood all nations; all are of the same human nature, capable of the same mercies, and liable to the same afflictions; therefore, though on a spiritual account Christians are distinguished and dignified above those who are without Christ, yet are they to sympathize with others in their calamities, relieve their necessities, and promote their welfare, both in body and soul, as they have opportunity.

All the forementioned graces must be had, or we shall not be thoroughly furnished for all good works,—for the duties of the first and second table, for active and passive obedience, and for those services wherein we are to imitate God, as well as for those wherein we only obey Him.

V. 8-11. To engage us to an industrious and unwearied pursuit of all the forementioned graces, the apostle sets forth the advantages that redound to all who successfully labor, so as to get these things to be and abound in them. This is proposed,

1. More generally, v. 8. The having these things makes not barren, (or slothful,) or unfruitful; where, according to the style of the Holy Ghost, understand a great deal more than is expressed; as that it will make us very zealous and lively, vigorous and active, in all practical Christianity, and eminently fruitful in the works of righteousness; these will bring much glory to God, by

bringing forth much fruit among men; this is the necessary consequence of adding one grace to another; for, as the apostle intimates in the beginning of v. 8. wherever grace abounds, there will be an abounding in good works.

How desirable it is to be in such a case, the apostle evidences, v. 9. There he sets forth how miserable it is to be without those quickening, fructifying graces; for he who has not, or though he pretends or seems to have, the forementioned graces, does not exercise and improve them, dotes upon this present evil world, but has no discerning at all of the world to come, so as to be affected with the spiritual privileges and heavenly blessings thereof; and how wretched their condition, who cannot see anything of the reality and certainty, the greatness and nearness, of the glorious rewards God will bestow on the righteous, and the dreadful punishment He will inflict on the ungodly!

But this is not all: they are as unable to look backward as forward; they forget that they have been laid under obligations to holiness of heart and life, and are solemnly bound to fight against the flesh, the world, and the devil. Often call to mind, and seriously meditate on, your solemn engagement to be the Lord's, and your peculiar advantages and encouragements to lay aside all filthiness of flesh and spirit.

2. The apostle proposes two particular advantages that will attend or follow on diligence in the work of a Christian: stability in grace, and a triumphant entrance into glory. These he brings in by reassuming his former exhortation, and laying it down in other words; for what, v. 5. is expressed by giving diligence to add to faith virtue, &c. is here expressed by giving diligence to make our calling and election sure; to do which, observe, It requires great diligence and labor; there must be a very close examination of ourselves, a very narrow search and strict inquiry, whether we are thoroughly converted, our minds enlightened, our wills renewed, and our whole souls changed as to the bent and inclination thereof; to come to a fixed certainty in this, requires the utmost diligence, and cannot be attained

forgot, that even baptism signifies 'a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness;' and that Christians, by their very profession, are bound 'to mortify all evil and corrupt affections, and daily to proceed in all virtue and godliness of living.' As, therefore, so many 'are pure in their own eyes, who are not washed from their filthiness;' (Notes, Prov. 14:12. 16:2. 30:11-14.) and as every one of Christ's apostles bears most decided testimony against such a worthless form of knowledge, such a dead and solitary faith; (Notes, Gal. 5:1-6, 13-18. 6:6-10. Jam. 2:19-26. 1 John 3:7-10. Jude 3, 8.) 'we ought the rather to give diligence to make our calling and election sure.' It is not said, that if we hold certain doctrines, we shall never fall; but 'if we do these things, we shall never fall;' and, in the diligent and persevering practice of every good work, we should wait for 'an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.' SCOTT.

are not only consistent, but assist and adorn each other. . . . Men are frequently found, whose zeal blazes out ardently and conspicuously, so as to leave others far back in the shade, while they are totally destitute of that humility, meekness, and brotherly kindness [charity], which form an essential part of the Christian character. Man, at his best estate in this world, is an inconsistent creature. The only persons in whom this defect is not observed, are the men, who, by grace, live near to God, and exercise a constant jealousy and vigilance over themselves. But when faith is weak and inconstant, great inconsistencies will mar the beauty of the Christian character. Young persons ought to begin early to exercise this vigilance, and to keep their hearts with diligence, lest they be ensnared by their own passions, and overcome by temptation. I counsel you, then, my young friends, to aim at consistency,—cultivate, assiduously every part of the Christian character: that there may appear a beautiful proportion in your virtue.' 'Counsels to the Young.' DR. ALEXANDER.

V. 8, 9. These things ought to be peculiarly attended to, as the usefulness and comfort of Christians greatly depended on them. (9) Cannot see afar off.] Here only. Learned men do not agree about the derivation; but it signifies, seeing nothing but what is brought close to the eyes.—Hath forgotten.] Having received forgetfulness of his purification from his sins formerly committed. SCOTT.

(9.) 'He who is destitute of the moral virtues, and yet expects the salvation of the Gospel, which imperatively enjoins them, is blind, or sees a very little way into the true nature of it, and forgets that he was cleansed from his former sins, only on condition of renouncing sin in future.' BLOOMF.

V. 10, 11. Sure.] 19. Rom. 4:16. 2 Cor. 1:7. Heb. 2:2. 3:6, 14. 6:19. 9:17.—The only way of knowing our election, is by our conversion, or calling; if called, it is because elected. Our calling must be known by our loving God. Rom. 8:28. Jam. 2:5. This is known by its fruits and



12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth.

13 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance;

14 Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

15 Moreover, I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

17 For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'

w c. 3:1. y 2 Co. 4:2.  
z Jn. 21:18, 19. z Mat. 17:1-5. Jn. 1:14.

and kept without divine assistance, as we may learn from Ps. 139: 23. Rom. 8: 16.

But the advantage you gain by it is great; you will be kept from falling, even in those hours of temptation that shall be on the earth. When others and many shall fall, these shall be preserved *sound in the faith*, and stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. They shall have also a triumphant entrance into glory; while of those few who get to heaven, some are scarcely saved, 1 Pet. 4: 18. 1 Cor. 3: 15. these, who are *growing in grace*, and *abounding in the work of the Lord*, shall have an *abundant entrance into the joy of their Lord*, even that *everlasting kingdom* where Christ reigns, and they shall *reign with Him for ever and ever*.

V. 12—15. If ministers be negligent in their work, it can hardly be expected that the people will be diligent in theirs; therefore Peter will not be negligent, that is, at no time or place, in no part of his work, to no part of his charge, but will be exemplary and universally diligent, and that in the work of a remembrancer; this is the office of the best ministers, even the apostles themselves; they are *the Lord's remembrancers*, Is. 62: 6. they are especially bound to make mention of the promises, and put God in

effects; the more these abound, the fuller the testimony of our conscience to our integrity, and of God's Spirit with our spirit. Rom. 3: 14—17. 2 Cor. 1: 12—14. This must be sought by *diligence*; and thus that becomes *sure* to us, in our consciences, which was indeed *sure* before, in the secret purpose of God.

V. 12—15. The composure with which Peter, on this occasion, spoke of the excruciating death which awaited him, as if it had been no more than putting off his garment, or removing his tent, may very properly be contrasted with his terror, and denial of his Lord, when he had been left to himself in order to his humiliation. Notes, Mat. 26: 30—35, 69—75—Though he wrote to the churches in Asia, yet he evidently intended his exhortations for the benefit of Christians in other ages and nations; and we still have his words 'in our remembrance.' John 15: 12—16. P. O. 9—16.

(12.) *Present truth.*] 'I. e. that of which he was now treating; namely, that diligence in religion was the way to perseverance.' WILLIAMS.—Bloomf. thinks the clause may be rendered, 'though ye are at present established in the truth.'

(14.) 'He plainly adverts to our Lord's words, John 21: 18, 19. It is plain Christ foretold to Peter his *martyrdom*, as he also did to Paul. 2 Tim. 4: 6. But whether these words of the apostle, were founded on any fresh revelation as to the *speedy* approach of that event, admits of no certain determination.'

V. 16—18. Cunningly devised fables. This [to follow these] had been the nature, intention, and effect of many of the Pagan fictions, and the inventions of Jewish rabbies; and indeed this, in one way or other, is the object of all those, who invent and propagate false or perverted

mind of his engagements to do good to his people; and they are the people's remembrancers, making mention of God's precepts, and putting them in mind of the doctrines and duties of Christianity, that they may remember God's commandments to do them.

And this the apostle does, though some might think it needless, inasmuch as they already knew these things that he writes about, and were established in the very truth that he insists on. Observe, 1. We need to be put in mind of what we do already know, to prevent our forgetting it, and to improve our knowledge, and reduce all to practice. 2. We must be established in the belief of the truth, that we may not be shaken by every wind of doctrine, and especially in the present truth,—the truth more peculiarly necessary for us to know in our day, what belongs to our peace, and what is more especially opposed in our time. The great doctrines of the Gospel,—that *Jesus is the Christ*; that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*; that *those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved*, and all that believe in God must be careful to maintain good works. These are truths the apostles insisted on in their day; these are faithful sayings, and worthy of all acceptance in every age of the Christian church. And as these must be constantly affirmed by ministers, Tit. 3: 8. so the people are to be well instructed and established therein; and yet must, after all their attainments in knowledge, be put in mind of such things as cannot be too clearly known, or too firmly believed.

The apostle, being set on the work, tells us, v. 14. what makes him earnest in this matter, even the knowledge he had, not only that he must certainly, but also that he must shortly, *put off this tabernacle*. Our Lord Jesus had shown him, that the time of his departure was at hand, therefore he bestirs himself with greater zeal and diligence, because the time is short; he must soon be removed from those to whom he wrote; and his ambition being that they should remember the doctrine he had delivered to them, after he himself was taken away from them, he commits his exhortation to writing. The apostle had not any great opinion of oral tradition; that was not so proper a mean to reach the end he was in pursuit of. He would have them always to remember these things, and not only to keep them in mind, but also to make mention of them, as the original words import. This is the way to spread the knowledge of the Lord; and this the apostle had at heart; and they who have the written Word of God, are thereby put into a capacity to do this.

V. 16—18. Here we have the reason of giving the foregoing exhortation, and that with so-much diligence and seriousness. These things are not idle tales, or a vain

thing, but of undoubted truth and vast concern. The way of salvation by Jesus Christ is eminently the counsel of God; the most excellent contrivance of the infinitely wise Jehovah; it was He that invented this way of saving sinners by Jesus Christ, whose power and coming are set forth in the Gospel, and the apostle's preaching was a making these things known. This coming of Christ, his coming in the flesh, to die for sinners, the Gospel is very plain and circumstantial in setting forth; but there is a second coming, which it likewise mentions, which the ministers of the Gospel ought also to make known, when He shall come in the glory of his Father with all his holy angels, for He is appointed to be Judge both of quick and dead. He will come to judge the world in righteousness, by the everlasting Gospel, and call us all to give account of all things done in the body, whether good or evil.

And though this Gospel of Christ has been blasphemously called a *fable* by one of those wretches who call themselves 'the successors of St. Peter'; yet our apostle proves that it is of the greatest certainty and reality, inasmuch as during our blessed Savior's abode here on earth, when He took on Him the form of a servant, and was found in fashion as a man, He sometimes manifested Himself to be God, and particularly to our apostle and the two sons of Zebedee, who were *eyewitnesses of his divine majesty*, when He was *transfigured before them*, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light, exceeding white, as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them. This, Peter, James, and John, were eyewitnesses of, and therefore might and ought to attest it; and surely their testimony is true, when they witness what they have seen with their eyes, yea, and heard with their ears; for beside the visible glory that Christ was invested with here on earth, there was an audible voice from heaven. Where observe,

What a gracious declaration was made; made by God the Father, who thus publicly owns his Son, even in his state of humiliation; made to do our Savior a singular honor while here below, by declaring Him to be his Son. This voice is from heaven, called here *the excellent glory*, which still reflects a greater glory on our blessed Savior. This declaration is from God the Fountain of honor, and from heaven the seat of glory, where God is most gloriously present. This voice was heard, so as to be understood by Peter, James, and John. They not only heard a sound, as the people did, John 12: 28, 29. but understood the sense. Blessed are those who not only hear, but understand; who believe the truth, and feel the power of the voice from heaven, as he did, who testifieth these things;—and we have all the reason in the world to receive his testi-

mony of religion. But there was nothing of this nature in the doctrine taught by the apostles, concerning the power and authority to which Christ had been advanced, in consequence of his crucifixion and resurrection, and the ends for which He reigned; or in what related to his 'second coming to judge the world,' to perfect the salvation of his disciples, and to execute vengeance on his enemies. These doctrines were not suited to please carnal men, or to procure secular advantages to those who taught them; indeed such instructions would certainly offend those who were not brought to repentance, faith, and holiness; but they were authenticated in the most satisfactory manner. SCOTT.

(16.) 'Surely, if Christianity be a delusion, it is a blessed delusion indeed; and he who attempts to destroy it is an enemy to mankind. It is a delusion which teaches us to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God; a delusion which teaches us to love our Maker supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves; which bids us love, forgive, and pray for our enemies, render good for evil, and promote the glory of God, and the happiness of our fellow-creatures; which, wherever it is received, produces a humble, meek, charitable, and peaceful temper, and which, did it universally prevail, would banish wars, vice, and misery from the world. It is a delusion which not only supports and comforts its believers in their wearisome progress through this vale of tears, but attends them in death, when all other consolations fail, and enables them to triumph over sorrows, sickness, and the grave. If delusion can do this, in delusion let me live and die; for what could the most blessed reality do more? PAXSON.—'If we should err in supposing the Christian religion to be true, we can be no great losers by the mistake. But how dreadful must it be to err in supposing it false!'

PASCAL.



18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

[Practical Observations.]

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light<sup>a</sup> that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star<sup>b</sup> arise in your hearts:

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. 119:105. Pr. 6:23. <sup>b</sup> Re. 2:28 22:16.

mony; for who would refuse to credit what is so circumstantially laid down as this account of the voice from heaven, of which the apostle tells us? It was heard by them in the holy mount, when they were with Jesus. The place wherein God affords any peculiarly gracious manifestation of Himself, is thereby made holy, not with an inherent holiness, but relatively, as the ground was holy, where God appeared to Moses, Exod. 3:5. and the mountain holy, on which the temple was built, Ps. 87:1.

V. 19—21. In these words the apostle lays down another argument to prove the truth and reality of the Gospel, and intimates that this second proof is more convincing than the former, that the doctrine of the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is not a mere fable or cunning contrivance of men, but the wise and wonderful counsel of the holy and gracious God. For this is foretold by the prophets and penmen of the Old Test. who spake and wrote under the influence, and according to the direction, of the Spirit of God. Here note,

I. The description given of the Scriptures

of the Old Test.; they are called a *more sure word of prophecy*. 1. It is a prophetic declaration of the power and coming, the Godhead and incarnation of our Savior, which we have in the Old Test. His power to destroy the devil and his works, and his being made of a woman, are there foretold. But the New Test. is a history of that whereof the Old Test. is a prophecy, Mat. 11:13. Now the accomplishment of the Old Test. by the New, and the agreeableness of the New to the Old, are a full demonstration of the truth of both. 2. *The Old Testament is a more sure word of prophecy*. It is so to the Jews, who received it as the oracles of God. Following prophets confirmed what had been delivered to those who went before, and these prophecies had been written by the express command, and preserved by the special care, and many of them fulfilled by the wonderful providence, of God, and therefore were more certain to them who had all along received and read the Scriptures, than the apostle's account of this voice from heaven. *Moses and the prophets more powerfully persuade than even miracles themselves*, Luke 16:31. How firm and sure should our faith be, who have such a firm and sure word to rest upon!

II. The encouragement the apostle gives us to search the Scriptures. He tells us, *We do well if we take heed to them*; that is, apply our minds to understand the sense, and our hearts to believe the truth, of this sure Word. The Word is that form of doctrine into which we must be cast, Rom. 6:17. *that formulary of knowledge*, Rom. 2:20. by which we are to regulate our thoughts and sentiments, our words and confessions, our whole life and conversation; and this indeed is but a paying that regard which is due to the oracles of God. But in order to this, the apostle suggests some things of

singular use to those who would attend to the Scriptures to any good purpose. 1. They must account and use the Scripture as a light which God hath sent into the world, to dispel that darkness which is upon the face of the whole earth. 2. They must acknowledge their own darkness; every man in the world is naturally without that knowledge which is necessary in order to attain eternal life. 3. If ever men are made wise to salvation, it is by the shining of the Word of God into their hearts; natural notions of God are not sufficient. 4. When the light of the Scripture is darted into the blind mind and dark understanding, by the Holy Spirit of God, then the *spiritual day dawns, and the day-star arises in that soul*. To give heed to this light must needs be the interest and duty of all; and all who do truth, come to this light, while evil-doers keep at a distance from it.

III. The apostle lays down one thing as previously necessary in order to our giving heed to, and getting good by, the Scriptures, and that is, the knowing that all prophecy is of divine original; this important truth he not only asserts, but proves. 1. Observe, No Scripture prophecy is of private interpretation, (or a man's own proper opinion, an explication of his own mind,) but the revelation of the mind of God. This was the difference between the prophets of the Lord, and the false prophets. The prophets of the Lord did not speak or do anything of their own mind, as Moses, the chief of them, says expressly, Numb. 16:28. But false prophets *speak a vision of their own heart, not out of the mouth of the Lord*, Jer. 23:16. The prophets and penmen of the Scripture spake and wrote what was the mind of God. But though the Scripture be the revelation of the mind and will of God, yet every private man ought to search it,

PRACT. OBS. V. 12—18. It behooves all ministers, after the example of Peter, diligently and at all times to put their readers 'in remembrance of the things' above mentioned, in connexion with evangelical truth: otherwise they cannot 'take them to record, that they are pure from their blood, having declared unto them all the counsel of God,' however exactly they have preached the doctrines of grace. Acts 20:18—27. Yet nothing can tend so much to produce composure in the prospect or in the pangs of death, and in expectation of our great account, as consciousness that we have not sought to please men, or to obtain wealth, reputation, ease, or indulgence to ourselves; but that we have faithfully and simply, and perseveringly, served the Lord Jesus Christ, and sought his glory, and the salvation of souls, as the great aim of all our labors. Indeed the speedy approach of death should excite

V. 19. The recollection of the transfiguration of Christ, gave great confidence *personally* to the apostle, which was indeed especially intended; and his testimony concerning it might be a great confirmation of the faith of other Christians: yet, they had also 'a more sure word of prophecy.' The appearance and voice on the mount were *transient*, and only three persons witnessed the interesting scene; one of whom had long before been martyred. (Note, Acts 12:1—4.) Whatever assurance, therefore, it might bring to the individuals concerned, it was not so well suited fully to satisfy the minds of men in general, as the prophecies of Scripture were. These, from the beginning, at least from Adam's fall, Gen. 3:14, 15. had foretold and described one extraordinary Person; and given intimations of his birth, character, miracles, doctrines, sufferings, death, resurrection, and exaltation; together with the establishment, extent, prosperity, and duration of his kingdom, and his final coming to judgment. And when they were compared with the accomplishment of them in Jesus of Nazareth, they constituted a permanent and general proof, unanswerably conclusive, that He was 'the Messiah,' 'the Son of God,' and 'the Savior of the world.' Thus the prophecies more powerfully corroborated the doctrine of the apostles, concerning his exaltation and second coming, than anything Peter had seen on the mount could do; not indeed to him personally, or to James and John, who witnessed the transfiguration; but to men in general. So that the more 'this word of prophecy' should be considered, the fuller conviction would it communicate. Christians ought therefore to attend to the prophecies of Scripture, for their direction and conviction, concerning the truth of the Christian religion; till the Holy Spirit should discover to their souls the glory and excellency of the Gospel, and, by his sanctifying and comfortable influences, give them 'the dawning' of heaven in their hearts; and till the knowledge of Christ, and the experience of his power, truth, and love, had formed, within them, an assurance and anticipation of the light, holiness, and felicity of the saints, in the presence of their glorified Savior; even as the morning star preceded and ushered in the rising Sun and 'the perfect day.' Prov. 4:18, 19. Hos. 6:1—3. 2 Cor. 1:21, 22. 4:5, 6. Nothing can be more manifest, than that the 'day-dawn and day-star arise in the hearts' of true Christians; and that no *external*, or, what is not improperly called, *internal* evidence of the divine original of Christianity, is meant. The *internal* evidence of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, signifies the evidence of divinity which they contain *in themselves*: but 'the day-dawn, and day-star in our hearts' must mean what is internal in our own experience; 'the secret of the Lord, which is with them that fear Him.' [616]

us, not only to prepare to meet it with comfort, but to use every proper mean, that all around us may have the substance of our instructions in remembrance after our decease. Nor are ministers alone concerned in this: parents, tutors, school-masters, even to the teachers of charity-schools and Sunday-schools, have an important opportunity of usefulness in these respects; and an awful responsibility attached to their several employments. For, whatever elators may be raised about bigotry and uncharitableness, it is most certain, that they only, who preach salvation for sinners through Jesus Christ, and who make 'known his power and coming to judge the world,' are free from the charge of following cunningly devised fables; and therefore they ought to be the most earnest in their labors, without regarding what the consequence may be respecting their temporal interests. SCOTT.

Ps. 25:14. 68:5—8. John 14:18—24. Rev. 2:17. The unnatural and far-fetched interpretations of those, who oppose this conclusion, serve only to confirm the author in his judgment.—This inward demonstration of the truth of Christianity would render the external evidences less necessary to those who enjoyed it: as they could no longer doubt of it, when they saw the glory, and tasted the comfort of it, and experienced the truth and power of it in their hearts, and manifested it in their conduct. 1 John 5:9, 10. SCOTT.

(19.) *More sure word of prophecy.* [Some think the comparative is used here for the positive, so that it only means a *very sure prophetic word*. Others, that the *series* of prophecies, when explained in the light of the New Test., is a much clearer proof of Christ's being the Messiah, than any single miraculous fact, as this was.] So Doddr., and he acquiesces in the latter opinion, as does also Bloomf. and others, especially Knapp.—Ros. explains: 'The prophecies always had a great authority with us, but now they have much greater, since we see events so aptly corresponding to the predictions.'—Take heed.] Or attend. So Ros., who says, that 'to attend to prophecies is to inquire after and think upon, the sense and fulfilment of them; to which Bloomf. adds, that 'it must also imply a prompt faith in the Word of God.' Ev.

V. 20, 21. *No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.*—This clause has been variously explained. Some render it, 'of any private impulse,' as if it related rather to the *giving*, than the *interpreting* of prophecy: but the word cannot properly be so rendered, as it implies the *loosing of a knot*: and it would also render the next verse a mere repetition of the same thought; and that in the form of a reason assigned for what went before, which is very unnatural.—Many have opposed the text to the right of *private judgment*, in order to support a supposed authority inherent, *somewhere*, in the church and its ministers; and to make them the ultimate object of faith, by fixing the sense of the Scriptures for the people: yet, at last, this is as much *private* interpretation as any other can be; for every church and its ministers put their own meaning on the Word of God, and that often contrary to the truth. Some have referred the words to the general application of scriptural promises by believers to their own case; as being a common property of the church, and not the appropriate, exclusive right of the individuals to whom they were at first given. But the apostle was not discouraging of *promises*; as his argument relates entirely to *predictions*: and this indeed seems to point out the true meaning. The lively imaginations and inventive genius of men often lead them to suppose events to be accomplishments of scriptural prophecies, which in fact



21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man : but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

## CHAP. II.

1 He foretelleth them of false teachers, shewing the impiety and punishment both of them and their followers : 7 from which the godly shall be delivered, as Lot was out of Sodom : 10 and more fully describeth the manners of those profane and blasphemous seducers, whereby they may be the better known, and avoided.

**B**UT there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways ; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

c or, at any. d Lu. 1:70. e 2 Ti. 3:16. a De. 13:1, &c. b Mat. 24:5, 24. Ac. 20:29, 30. 1 Ti. 4:1. c or, lascivious, as some copies read.

and understand the sense and meaning thereof. 2. This important truth of the divine original of the Scriptures, (that what is contained in them is the mind of God, and not of man,) is to be known and owned by all who will give heed to the sure word of prophecy. 3. The divinity of the Scriptures must be known and acknowledged in the

PRACT. OBS. V. 19—21. We have not seen or heard such things as the apostles did : but 'we have a more sure Word of prophecy,' which will fully satisfy the diligent investigator, even more than any transient miracle could do ; as it lies open to every man's examination, and continually becomes more conclusive, by the further accomplishment of its predictions.—But, 'in searching the Scriptures,' and especially in considering the prophecies and their accomplishment, we should beware of self-confidence, party prejudices, ungoverned fancy, and the influence of selfish passions. We have indeed a right to judge for ourselves, and should call no man master on earth ; but it is requisite we should exercise our judgment with sobriety, modesty, and docility : nor is it generally safe to indulge a fondness for novelty, or to deviate from the approved judgment of eminent servants of God, in other ages of the church, without evident necessity. Above all, we should examine these subjects

have no direct relation to them : and this way of misapplying them, as fancy, inclination, system, or external, transient appearances may dictate, has always tended to render prophecies suspected or disregarded. Instead then of employing a lively imagination, or superior genius, to discover some agreement between our own private concerns, or those of our party, or the events of the day, and the predictions of Scripture ; and so attempting to foretell future events from them ; we should remember, and be assured, that every prophecy has its precise and determinate meaning, which no human ingenuity can alter. We ought therefore to exercise our judgment, with proper help, and in dependence on divine teaching, to discover, as far as we can, the real meaning of the predictions, and the accomplishment of them in the public concerns of Christ and his church, and in those of the world as connected with the church ; and to rest satisfied with understanding such as have evidently been fulfilled ; without too curiously prying into those which appear to be hitherto unaccomplished. Thus the perversion of prophecy would be prevented, and the objections against the argument brought from it, in proof of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, would be fully obviated. The prophecies, which have been already most evidently fulfilled, in the Person and salvation of Christ, and in the grand concerns of the church and of the world, form a most unanswerable demonstration of the truth of Christianity ; and the accumulating evidence, arising from the fulfilment of further prophecies, from age to age, must at last rouse the attention of the most heedless, and silence the cavils of the most sceptical. But the misapplication of prophecy, as if it were 'of private interpretation ;' and as if every man were at liberty to put his own fanciful meaning on it, only serves to furnish objections, gives the whole an air of uncertainty, and so exceedingly perplexes the subject.—The author has lately been led to consider Bishop Horsley's view of this subject : but he can only say, that it has not in the least made him doubt of the truth of the interpretation above given.—The apostle intended the prophecies of the Old Test. ; but his arguments are equally conclusive respecting those of the New Test. also : and the close is a most decisive attestation to the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. Sc.

(20.) *Private interpretation.* 'Private impulse, invention, or origin ; amounting to what Paul says, 2 Tim. 3:16. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.' Williams, after Doddr.—Ros. and Jaspis (in Bl.) explain : 'no prophecy can be expounded of itself, or by itself, nor understood without comparing together the prophecy and its event or completion, by the aid of history.' Which, Bloomf. remarks, is very true, but not, he thinks, the truth intended by the apostle ; and he prefers greatly the common rendering,—'private explanation or interpretation,' in expressing which he quotes Slade, thus : 'Prophecy gave no light to the age in which it was delivered, and therefore was a lamp shining in a dark place ; and let this be impressed upon you, that prophecy was so entirely and exclusively designed for the benefit of future ages, that its import was not always fully understood even by the prophet himself, who was aware that his words were often inapplicable to the people

first place, before men can profitably use them, before they can give good heed to them.

Now seeing it is so absolutely necessary that persons be fully persuaded of the Scripture's divine original, the apostle, v. 21. tells us how the Old Test. came to be compiled ; *It came not by the will of man ; but Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* Observe, *They were holy men of God.* If Balaam and Caiaphas, and others who were destitute of holiness, had anything of the spirit of prophecy, on occasion, yet such sort of persons were not employed to write any part of it ; all the penmen of the Scriptures were holy men of God. *These holy men were moved by the Holy Ghost,* in what they delivered as the mind and will of God. The Holy Ghost is the Supreme Agent, the holy men are but instruments. (1.) The Holy Ghost inspires and dictates to them what they were to deliver of the mind of God. (2.) He powerfully excites and effectually engages them to speak (and write) what He had put into their mouths. (3.) He so wisely and carefully assists and directs them in the delivery of what they had received from Him, that they [are] effectually secured from any the least mistake in expressing what they revealed. So that the very words of Scripture are to be accounted the words of the Holy Ghost, and all the plainness and simplicity, all the power and virtue, and all the elegance and propriety, of the very words and expressions are to be regarded by us as

proceeding from God, Mix faith therefore with what you find in the Scriptures ; esteem and reverence your Bible as a book written by holy men, inspired, influenced, and assisted by the Holy Ghost.

CHAP. II. V. 1—3. In the end of the former ch. mention is made of holy men of God, who lived in the times of the Old Test. and were used as the amanuenses of the Holy Ghost, in writing the sacred oracles ; but, in the beginning of this, he tells us they had, even in that time, false prophets in the church, as well as true. Concerning these, in all ages, observe, Their business is, to bring in destructive errors ; as the business of teachers sent of God is, to show the way of truth, even the true way to everlasting life. This is commonly done privily, under the cloak and color of truth ; but yet in rejection of the great Teacher sent from God, though He is the only Savior and Redeemer of men. They who bring in errors destructive to others, bring swift (and therefore sure) destruction on themselves.

He proceeds, v. 2. to tell us the consequence with respect to others ; and here we may learn, 1. Corrupt leaders seldom fail of many to follow them ; the way of error is a pernicious way, yet many walk therein. 2. The spreading of error will bring up an evil report on the way of truth ; that is, the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. The Christian religion is from the God of truth as its Author, and leads to true happiness, in the enjoyment of the true God, as its end ; yet it is

with earnest prayer for the teaching of the same Spirit, by whom 'holy men of God spake' their prophecies ; that we may be enabled to discover what was his meaning in them, as far as that is good for us. Under his guidance, we shall be kept from interpreting Scripture according to our private fancy, humor, or inclination ; we shall discover the relation, nearer or more remote, of all the prophecies to Christ and his church. We shall also perceive that so many of them have already been fulfilled, that we are fully authorized to expect the accomplishment of all the rest ; till his second coming to judge the world, to perfect his people's salvation, and to shut up the wicked in hell, shall fulfil the last of these predictions, to the glory of his truth, power, love, wisdom, and righteousness, and the joy and admiration of all his redeemed people, in the sight of the whole assembled world of angels and men. SCOTT.

immediately addressed, (1 Pet. 1:11, 12.) and uttered them not from the suggestions or persuasions of his own mind, but from the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1—3. It is not requisite to understand the apostle, as declaring, that the Lord Jesus had died, with an express intention of redeeming these very persons ; it sufficed for his argument, that they denied Him, as their Lord, in whom they professed to hope as a Redeemer, as all avowed antinomians do. Thus Christ sometimes addressed the Pharisees according to their own mistaken notions, and argued with them from their own principles. Luke 15:3—7, 25—32.—The inconsistency and base conduct of these false teachers was evident from their own profession, and it was not the manner of the sacred writers to express themselves with that systematic exactness, which many now affect. Rom. 14:15—23. 1 Cor. 3:7—13.—It appears very unnatural to explain the words, 'the Lord that bought them,' of Israel's redemption from Egypt, which would never have been thought of, in this connexion, had not controversy led men to exercise their utmost ingenuity, to evade the arguments, and answer the objections, of their opponents. Thus attachment to a system leads men to do violence to the Scriptures, and this deeply injures the cause, which they are so anxious to defend. Doubtless Christ intended to redeem those, and those only, who, He foresaw, would eventually be saved by faith in Him ; yet his ransom was of infinite sufficiency, the proposal of it in Scripture is general, and men are continually addressed, according to their profession, even when it is intimated that they are not upright in it. 1:9.—Learned men have maintained discordant opinions, concerning the heretics whom the apostle especially intended : but probably he used general language designedly, that the description might suit various kinds of false teachers, in that and in all future ages.—*Privily shall bring in.] Fraudulently introduce. Heresies.]* 1 Cor. 11:17—22. Gal. 5:19—21. Tit. 3:10, 11. It is undeniable, that heresies here signify false doctrines, and not merely divisions, or separations. They were brought in privily by false teachers, 'who denied the Lord, &c.'—(3) *Feigned.]* Here only. *Words skillfully fashioned and framed.* SCOTT.

(1.) This connects well with the preceding, showing that not all are prophets that call themselves such ; many falsely assume the name. The apostle, therefore, now turns from true prophets to false teachers. Respecting who are meant, the common opinion is, that they were Nicolaitans, or Gnostics. But this has been convincingly refuted by Tillman. Ros. however observes, that though the name Gnostics was not known in those times, yet the dogmas of those who, in the second century, were called Gnostics, might be known and disseminated. Others take them to be Judaizers, who, abandoning the true doctrine, feigned oracles against the Roman government, and promised a new theatre of pleasure to their votaries. They seem to have commenced with being fanatics, and ended with being hypocrites and knaves : and many opinions of the Mohammedan system seem to have been partly derived from that impure source.—Some explain Lord here of God ; but this is very harsh. It is



3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you : whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

[Practical Observations.]

4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment ;

5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly ;

6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly ;

7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked :

d Jude 4-7. f Ge. 19:24,25. h Ge. 19:16  
e Ge. 7:1, &c. g De. 29:23.

traduced and blasphemed by those who embrace and advance destructive errors. This the apostle has foretold, as what should certainly come to pass. Let us not be offended at anything of this in our day, but take care that we give no occasion to the enemy to blaspheme the holy name whereby we are called, or speak evil of that way whereby we hope to be saved.

Observe, in the next place, the method seducers take to draw disciples after them. They flatter, deceive, and make a gain of them whom they make their proselytes: faithful ministers of Christ, who show men the way of truth, desire the profit and advantage of their followers, that they may be

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-3. The unbelief, selfishness, and impiety of man's carnal heart, always give an opening to 'false teachers,' who 'speak smooth things,' 'to draw away disciples after them,' for their own credit or lucre's sake; and alas! how many thus 'turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables,' and liberally reward ingenious men for helping them to deceive themselves! But in vain do

far more natural to take it of Christ; as indeed the term, *bought*, requires.—On what is meant by *denying* Christ as their Lord, we are left somewhat in the dark, owing to a want of historical testimony. There seems to be a *provincial brevity* of diction; and the sense is probably this: "denying Him who purchased them (i. e. their Redeemer) to be their Lord." It should seem, that, from a misrepresentation of the words of the apostle, they stumbled at the description of the *majesty* of Jesus Christ, and the ineffable glory of his second advent; and regarded the account of the apostles on that subject, as a fable, devised to hold the disciples in subjection. If so, they must have denied the proper deity of Jesus Christ; and probably held opinions not very different, from those which generated Arianism and Socinianism: therefore this text may, with great propriety, be adduced in controversy with persons professing such tenets. *Bl.*—Denying Him that redeemed them to be the Sovereign. The act of redeeming mankind is in the New Test. exclusively predicted of Christ. The scope of the passage shows, that dominion over minds and consciences is intended, which is involved in religious obedience, here required to Christ as our only Sovereign and Lord. J. P. SMITH. *Damnable heresies.*] 'It can by no means be a matter of small moment (whatever some may insinuate to the contrary) what your doctrinal belief on the great subject of religion may be. If these heresies are damnable, then those who embrace them cannot be the cordial friends of the Author of truth. Every degree of doctrinal error is not an evidence of enmity to God; for no man, it is probable, is absolutely perfect in his creed, any more than in his practice. Yet when we have ascertained what the *fundamental*, the absolutely *essential* doctrines of the Gospel are,—and there will be no great difficulty in this to those who have the Bible in their hands,—we are perfectly warranted in pronouncing, that those who reject them, are not on the Lord's side. They reject that, without which no man can be said to receive the Gospel.'

Rev. Dr. MILLER.

(3.) *Whose judgment, &c.*] 'The apostle looks forward, not so much to any particular persons, as to those perversions and abuses of the Gospel, of which, from the corruption of human nature, its teachers in every age would furnish lamentable examples?' BLOOMF.

V. 4-9. The angels, who sinned against God, were bound as criminals, and reserved to take their trial at the day of judgment, when sentence will be openly passed, and finally executed upon them. *Rev.* 20: 1-3, 7-10. In the mean time, their incurable enmity and wickedness, and the omnipresent and omnipotent justice of God, hold them fast, as 'in chains of darkness,' misery, and despair, from which there can

saved; but these seducing teachers desire and design only their own temporal advantage and worldly grandeur.

V. 3-6. Men are apt to think that a reprieve is the forerunner of a pardon, and that if judgment be not speedily executed, it is, or will be, certainly reversed. But the righteous Judge will speedily take vengeance; the day of calamity for the wicked is at hand, and the things that shall come on them make haste. To prove this assertion, here are several examples of the righteous judgment of God, in taking vengeance on sinners; proposed to our serious consideration.

1. The angels who sinned. Observe, No excellency will exempt a sinner from punishment. If angels violate the law of God, the sentence, which that law awards, shall be executed on them without mercy or mitigation. Whence observe, By how much the more excellent the offender, by so much the more severe the punishment; these angels are immediately punished; there is no sparing them for a few days, no favor at all shown them. Sin debases and degrades the persons who commit it; angels are cast down from the height of their excellency, and divested of all their glory and dignity, on their disobedience. They who rebel against the God of heaven, shall all be sent down to hell. There is no place or state between the height of glory and the depth of misery, in which they shall be allowed to rest. Sin is the work of darkness, and darkness is the wages of sin,—the darkness of misery and torment. They who will not walk according to the light and direction of God's law, shall be deprived of the light of God's countenance and the comforts of his presence. As sin binds men over to punishment, so misery and torment hold men under punishment. The last degree of torment is not till the day of judgment. The sinning angels, though in hell already, are yet reserved to the judgment of the great day.

2. The old world. Here observe, The number of offenders signifies no more to

procure any favor, than the quality; if the sin be universal, the punishment shall be so likewise. But, if there be but a few righteous, they shall be preserved. God does not destroy the good with the bad. In wrath He remembers mercy. God can make use of those creatures as the instruments of his vengeance, in punishing sinners, which He at first made and appointed for their service and benefit. But observe, The procuring cause; *it was a world of ungodly men.* Ungodliness puts men out of the divine protection, and exposes them to utter destruction.

3. Sodom and Gomorrah. Observe, No felicity of situation, or of country, or political union or confederacy, can keep off judgments from a sinful people; then these cities might have stood. God can use contrary creatures to punish incorrigible sinners. He destroys the *old world by water*, and Sodom by fire. Most heinous sins bring most grievous judgments. They who were abominable in their vices, were remarkable for their plagues. The punishment of sinners in former ages, is designed for the example of those who come after. Let us take warning by all the instances of God's taking vengeance, which are recorded for our admonition, and to prevent our promising ourselves impunity, though we go on in a course of sin.

V. 7-9. When God sends destruction on the ungodly, He commands deliverance for the righteous. This we have in his preserving Lot. Where, observe, 1. The character of Lot; *a just man*; this he was, to the generally prevailing bent of his heart, and through the main of his conversation. God does not account men just or unjust from one single act, but from their general course. 2. The impression the sins of others have on this righteous man; they grieve and vex him. In bad company we cannot escape either guilt or grief. Let the sins of others be a trouble to us, otherwise it will not be possible for us to keep ourselves pure. 3. A particular mention of the continuance of this good man's grief

plausible and soothing preachers hope to escape with impunity; the judgment so long since foretold, and 'the damnation' menaced, will speedily arrive; though unbelief may suppose that the justice of God 'lingereth and slumbereth,' because He 'endures with much long suffering the vessels of wrath which are fitted for destruction.' *Rom.* 10:22, 23. SCOTT.

be no possible escape. Their doom is therefore irreversible; though the Lord, for wise reasons, lengthens their chains, enlarges the bounds of their prison, and defers the extremity of their punishment; which respite and relaxation they employ, in opposing to the uttermost his purposes of love to mankind, and in attempting their destruction. *Gen.* 3:1-6, 14, 15. *Job* 1:6-11. 2:1-5. *Zech.* 3:1-4. *John* 8:41-47. *2 Cor.* 4:3, 4. *Rev.* 12:7-12. But this will all be overruled for the fuller display of the glory of God, the accomplishment of his eternal counsels, and the more conspicuous exercise of his awful justice, in the everlasting misery of these implacable enemies.—Thus He would also bear with the false teachers above mentioned, till their impiety and enmity were sufficiently evinced; and when his wise and holy purposes were accomplished, He would execute deserved vengeance on them and their adherents, and so terminate the temptation, to which his people were exposed through their artifices. *2 Tim.* 3:6-9.—The same instructions might be deduced from the Lord's dealings with the old world, and with Sodom—*Cast them down to hell.*] The original word is not used in any other part of the New Test., or in the Greek translation of the Old; yet the meaning of it must not be sought from the fables of heathen poets, but from the general tenor of the sacred Scriptures. SCOTT.

(4.) *Hell.*] Greek, *Tartarus*. 'The word is used only in two places in the New Test., here and Jude 6.' *Williams*. 'Every one will bring to mind the sublime description of Milton *Tartarus* is a word found in Homer and Hesiod, and signifies the lowest and darkest pit in the universe. Of its origin the etymologists seem perfectly ignorant. I suspect it to be an *intensive reduplication* of the very old word *tar*, which in the earliest dialects seems to have signified *dark*; and indeed our term *tar* appears derived from a common source.' *Bl.*—*In chains.*] 'A general confinement may be reconcilable with some degree of liberty, yet liable to restraint as God shall see fit.' *Doorn*. 'It is needless to enter into a description of what the ancients figured to themselves under this notion. Suffice it to say, the apostle employs it as a most forcible adumbration of misery the most deplorable and hopeless.' BLOOMF.

(5.) *Eighth.*] Bps. *Pearson* and *Cumberland* refer this to *preacher*, making Noah the *eighth preacher*, &c., which is possible; but Noah was the tenth from Adam, who, *Doddr.* thinks, must have been in a wonderful manner fitted to perform the office of preacher in the *first* world, as Noah was in the *second*. *Bloomf.* connects *eighth* with *Noah*, meaning 'Noah, and seven others,' which, he says, is an idiom found in the best writers from Herodotus and Thucydides downwards, and is the only explanation that can well be admitted. ED.



8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds :)

9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished :

[Practical Observations.]

10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government: presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

11 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

12 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

13 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day-time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings, while they feast with you;

14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children :

[Practical Observations.]

l Ps. 35:15-18. m Jer. 8, 10. o Je. 12:3.  
j Jude 14, 15. n Some read, p Phi. 3:19.  
k He. 13:4. against them. Jude 12, &c.  
l of, dominion. selves. q an adulteress.

and vexation; it was from day to day. Being accustomed to hear and see their wickedness did not reconcile him to it, nor abate

the horror occasioned by it. Now, from this case of Lot, we are taught to argue, that God knows how to deliver his people, and punish his enemies. It is here presupposed, that the righteous must have their temptations and trials; it is therefore our duty to reckon upon, and prepare for them. Observe, here, *The Lord knows them that are his*; if but one in five cities, He knows him; and where there is a greater number, He cannot be ignorant of or overlook any of them. The wisdom of God is never at a loss about ways and means to deliver his people. The deliverance of the godly is the work of God; both his wisdom to contrive, and his power to work out, to prevent their falling, and being ruined: and surely if he can deliver out of temptation, He can keep from falling into it, if He did not see such trials to be necessary. God makes a very great difference in his dealings with the godly and the wicked. The wicked are reserved to the day of judgment. Here, we see, There is a day of judgment; God has appointed a day, wherein He will judge the world. The preservation of impenitent sinners is only a reserving of them to the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

V. 10—22. But why will God thus deal with these false teachers? This he shows in what follows.

1. *These walk after the flesh*; they follow the devices and desires of their own hearts, of their own fleshly mind, refusing to make their reason stoop to divine revelation; they, in their lives, act directly contrary to God's righteous precepts, and comply with the demands of corrupt nature: *the measure of iniquity* to which they have attained will not content them; but they go on in their sinful course, and increase unto more ungodliness; they also pour contempt on those whom God has set in authority over them, and requires them to honor; these, therefore, despise the ordinance of God.

2. This he aggravates, by setting forth the very different conduct of more excellent creatures, even the angels. They are greater even than those who are clothed with authority and power among men, and much more than those false teachers, who are

scandalous revilers of magistrates and governors; the good angels vastly exceed us in all natural and moral excellences, in strength, understanding, and holiness too. Good angels are accusers of sinful creatures, of their own kind, or ours, or both; allowed to behold the face of God, and stand before his throne, they cannot but have a zeal for his honor, and accuse and blame those who dishonor Him. They bring their accusations of sinful creatures before the Lord; not publish them to their fellow-creatures, in a way of calumny and slander; the Lord is the Judge, and will be the Avenger, of all impiety and injustice. Good angels mingle no bitter revilings, or base reproaches, with any of the accusations or charges they bring against the wickedest and worst of criminals. Let us who pray that God's will may be done on earth, as it is in heaven, imitate the angels in this particular; if we complain of wicked men, let it be to God, and that not with rage and reviling, but with compassion and composedness of mind, that may evidence that we belong to Him who is meek and merciful.

3. The apostle, having shown, v. 11. how unlike seducing teachers are, to the most excellent creatures, proceeds, v. 12. to show how like they are to the most inferior. Men, under the power of sin, are so far from observing divine revelation, that they do not exercise reason; but as brute creatures, they follow the instinct of their sensitive appetite, and the inclination of their carnal mind; so they are ignorant of what they might and ought to know; therefore, observe, Ignorance is the cause of evil-speaking; and destruction will be the effect of it; these persons shall be utterly destroyed in their own corruption; their vices not only expose them to the wrath of God in another world, but often bring them to misery and ruin in this life; whatever they meet with, is the just reward of their unrighteousness. Such sinners as sport themselves in mischief, deceive themselves, and disgrace all they belong to; by one sort of sins they prepare themselves for another; and their extravagant feasting, and drinking, bring them to commit all manner of lewdness, so that their

PRACT. OBS. V. 4—9. The manifold 'goodness of God,' if it do not lead men to repentance, and engage them to obedience, will no more secure them from condemnation, than the creating kindness of God to angels induced Him to 'spare' such of them as sinned in heaven itself; but, 'as He cast them down to hell, to be reserved in chains of darkness to the day of judgment to be punished;' so will He, in due season, execute 'the vengeance that is written' on all impenitent sinners. Rom. 2:4—11. But, if indeed we do fear, trust, love, and obey the Lord, we should recollect in all our conflicts and trials, that 'He knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation,' that He has ten thousand ways of rescuing us, of which we never thought, and that his wisdom and power will surely effect the purposes of his love, and the engagements of his truth; whilst wicked men often escape suffering here, because 'they are reserved to the day of judgment to be punished,' with 'the devil and his angels,' in that eternal state of hopeless misery, to which they are doomed. SCOTT.

PRACT. OBS. V. 10—14. Whilst we take encouragement from the tender mercies of our God, let us also stand in awe of his holiness and justice. None have more cause to tremble, than they who are emboldened to gratify their sinful passions by presuming on his grace and mercy; nor can anything more fitly illustrate the desperate wickedness of the human heart, than the abominations, in which men have wallowed, whilst professing to be religious, and while contending for the holy doctrines of Christianity! Many, both in ancient and modern times, have deemed themselves at liberty to 'walk after the flesh in the lust of un-

(8.) 'The sight of sin makes a man either sad or guilty. If we see it, and are not sorrowful, we are sinful.' T. ADAMS, in *Henry, abr.*

V. 10, 11. The preceding observations were applicable to all wicked men; but especially to hypocritical and heretical professors and teachers of Christianity; yet they were, and would be, peculiarly verified in the licentious heresiarchs, of whom the apostle treated, and in that of their abandoned followers. They denied Christ, in respect of his kingly office, and would not obey Him as their Lord and Master, 1—3. and we may suppose, they contemptuously disregarded the spiritual authority of the apostles, and other pastors and rulers of the church. 1 John 4:4—6. 3 John 9—12. They seem also to have treated civil government with scorn, as if determined, like genuine 'sons of Belial,' to cast off every yoke, and to be wholly their own masters!—(10) *In the lust of uncleanness.*] Tit. 1:15. Heb. 12:15. Jude 8. Sensual lusts are meant; perhaps Sodom's sin. SCOTT.

(10.) *Walk after the flesh.*] 'To walk after the flesh, like the parallel expression in Jude 7. signifies all uncleanness, both of fornication and adultery. Rom. ch. 1. is the best commentary on this passage.' Br.

(11.) *Accusation against them.*] 'Them, i. e. those of their body,

cleanliness,' and have 'despised government' of all kinds; as if licentiousness and anarchy were the only desirable freedom, presumption and self-will equivalent to holy confidence and holiness in the Lord, and calumnies, or revilings, against 'the powers that be,' the proper way of rendering to Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and to God the things that are God's! Such liberty of conscience, and license of speech and conduct, holy 'angels, who are greater in power and might,' never thought of. But let Christians stand at a distance from such contests; for alas! many, running into these excesses, bring their characters into suspicion, and open the mouths of those who speak evil of us, as of evil-doers; nay, many 'utterly perish in their own corruption.'—Especially let us fear a licentious profession of the Gospel: doubtless they 'will receive the reward of unrighteousness, who count it pleasure to riot in the day-time;'... who join with Christians in sacred ordinances, and with the world in their licentiousness and dissipated revels; and who attempt to reconcile these things, by perverting the doctrines of the Gospel, and boasting of their liberty and privileges! But could it have been conceived, if Scripture and facts had not evinced it, that teachers and professors of the holy doctrine of Christ, could preserve their confidence, credit, and influence, whilst 'their eyes are full of adultery,' and while 'they cannot cease from sin?' that 'unstable souls' could be beguiled by such men? and that success should attend the 'covetous practices' in which their hearts are exercised? or that they should be considered as *blessed*, who are indeed the children of the curse, and evidently described as such in the Word of God? Ps. 10:3. SCOTT.

the bad angels. Most commentators understand the *magistrates*, or bad. But it is a good rule, that the plainer and larger account of anything should be taken to explain what is more brief and obscure, and explaining this from Jude v. 9. the other interpretation is the true one.' Br.

V. 12. *Natural brute beasts.*] 'Irrational animals.' Donn.—'Such as follow the impetus of sense.—In their own, &c.] 'Or, for or by their own, &c.'

V. 13. *Sporting themselves, &c.*] *Stade* (in Bloomf.) interprets, 'committing excess, when they feast with you, by means of their deceits and impostures.' *Elsner* and *Ros.* explain it of 'the wanton artifices by which these persons sought to seduce the women they found at the love-feasts; to which opinion Bloomf. inclines. But *Doddr.* paraphrases and renders thus: 'living luxuriously in other places by means of those deceits, which they conceal under the mask of Christianity, banqueting with you at the holy table;' and understands it of the Lord's supper, rather than of their love-feasts.

V. 14. *Full.*] 'There is no mediocrity in sin. If the heart of man be not full of God, it seeks to be full of somewhat else.'

T. ADAMS, in *Henry, abr.*



15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son of Bosor*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass, speaking with man's voice, forbad the madness of the prophet.

17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest: to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

18 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

r Nu. 22.5, &c. read. 10:26,27.  
s Ep. 4:14. v Jn. 8:34. x Ma. 11:23,24.  
t Ps. 73:8. Ro. 6:16. Lu. 12:47,48.  
u or, for a little while, as some v Lu. 11:26. y Pr. 12:23.  
He. 6:4, &c.

wanton looks show their own impure lusts, and are designed to kindle the like in others; and in this, the heart is insatiate, and the eye incessant in looking after what may gratify their unclean desires; and they who are themselves impudent and incessant in sin, are very diligent and often successful in deceiving others, and drawing them into the same excess of riot. But here, observe, who are in the greatest danger, even those whose hearts are not established with grace; these are easily turned into the way of sin, or else such sensual wretches would not be able to prevail on them; for these are not only riotous and lascivious, but covetous, also; they pant after riches, and it is a considerable part of their work to contrive to get wealth; in this their hearts are exercised, and then they execute their projects; and if men

abandon themselves to all sorts of lusts, we cannot wonder the apostle should call them *cursed children*; for they are liable to the curse of God denounced against such *ungodly, unrighteous men*, and they bring a curse on all who hearken and adhere to them.

4. The apostle, v. 15, 16. proves they are *cursed children*, even such covetous persons as *the Lord abhors*, by showing, that *They have forsaken the right way*; and are gone into a wrong way, which leads to death; and this he makes out by showing it to be *the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor*. That is a way of *unrighteousness*, into which men are led by the wages of *unrighteousness*. Outward temporal good things are the wages sinners promise themselves, though they are often disappointed. The inordinate love of the good things of this world, turns men on of the way which leads to the unspeakably better things of another life. They, who, from the same principle, are guilty of the same practices with notorious sinners, are, in the judgment of God, the followers of such vile offenders, and, therefore, must reckon on being at last where they are. Heinous and hardened sinners sometimes meet with rebukes for their iniquity. Though extraordinary rebukes may for a little while cool men's courage, and hinder their violent progress in the way of sin, it will not make them forsake the way of iniquity, and go over into the way of holiness; for here was a surprising miracle wrought, and yet all in vain; they who will not yield to usual methods of reproof, will be but little influenced by miraculous appearances, to turn them from their sinful courses.

5. The apostle proceeds, v. 17. to a further description of seducing teachers, whom he sets forth as wells, or fountains, without water. Observe, Ministers should be as wells or fountains, where the people may find instruction, direction, and comfort: But false teachers have nothing of this to impart to those who consult them: and therefore are set forth as empty, because there is no truth in them. They are also clouds carried with a tempest; not of the Spirit, but the stormy wind or tempest of their own ambition and covetousness; and as clouds obstruct the light of the sun, and darken the air, so do these *darken counsel by words without knowledge*, and wherein there is no truth; and, seeing these men are for promoting darkness in this world, it is very just that *the mist of darkness* should be their portion in the next; *utter darkness*, and that for ever.

And it is just with God to deal thus with them, for they allure those they deal with, and draw them into a net, or catch them with great swelling words of vanity; lofty expressions, which have a great sound, but little sense. They work upon the corrupt affections and carnal, fleshly lusts of men, proposing what is grateful to them. Thus, they

seduce persons, who, in reality, avoided and kept at a distance from hurtful and destructive errors. Observe, By application and industry men attain a skillfulness and dexterity in promoting error; they are as artful and as successful as the fisher, who makes angling his daily employment. Erroneous teachers have a peculiar advantage to win men over to them, because they have sensual pleasures to take them with; whereas the ministers of Christ put men on self-denial, and the mortifying of those lusts that others gratify and please: wonder not, therefore, that errors spread so much. Persons who have for a while adhered to the truth, may, by the subtlety and industry of seducers be so far deceived, as to fall into those errors they had for a while clean escaped; Be therefore always on your guard, maintain a godly jealousy of yourselves, pray for the Spirit to instruct and establish you in the truth, walk humbly with God, and watch against everything that may provoke Him to give you up, to be taken with the fair and specious pretences of these false teachers. To prevent these men's gaining proselytes, he tells us, that in the midst of all their talk of liberty, they themselves are the vilest slaves; their minds and hearts are so far corrupted and depraved, that they are completely conquered and captivated by their spiritual enemies; and what a shame to be overcome and commanded by those who are themselves the servants of corruption, and slaves to their own lusts! This consideration should prevent our being led away by these seducers; and to this he adds another, v. 20. hereby, i. e. by being led away, their latter end is made worse than their beginning. Here, we see, It is an advantage to escape the pollutions of the world; hereby we are kept from grieving those who are truly serious, and emboldening those who are openly profane. Some men are, for a time, kept from the pollutions of the world, by the knowledge of Christ, who are not savingly renewed in the spirit of their mind. False teachers at first insnare and entangle; they first perplex with some plausible and specious objections; and the more ignorant and unstable are hereby made to stagger, and brought to question the truth, because they cannot solve all the difficulties, nor answer all the objections, urged by these seducers. When men are once entangled, they are easily overcome; therefore should Christians keep close to the Word of God, and watch against those who seek to perplex and bewilder them; and that, because, if men who have once escaped, are again entangled, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

The apostle, in the last two verses of the ch. sets himself to prove that a state of apostasy is worse than a state of ignorance; for this is a condemning the way of righteousness, after they have had some knowledge of it, and expressed some liking to it;

V. 15. *Bosor*.] 'Either Balaam's father had two names, *Beor* and *Bosor*, or the latter (as Ainsworth and Lightfoot suppose) was the Chaldean pronunciation of the former.' WILLIAMS.—The force of the comparison rests in this, that as Balaam counselled the Moabites, to entice the Israelites to illicit connexion with their women, and thus lead them into idolatry, and draw on them the heavy punishment of God; so these false teachers, by giving Christians a license to commit immorality, namely, for the purpose of gratifying their own avarice, in like manner called forth the severe castigation of God. Such is the view taken by most commentators. Perhaps, however, Peter had regard only to the avarice of Balaam, like whom these false teachers, for the purpose of gratifying that base passion, make a gain of the Gospel in the way above-mentioned. So *Rosenm.* But I prefer the common and more extensive sense, since that seems to be required by the force of the words themselves, and the circumstances of Balaam's case.' BL.

V. 17. 'They pretended to be fountains of deeper knowledge, and greater purity than any others; but, when a man came thirsting after truth and righteousness, how great must be his disappointment, when he found nothing but emptiness and vanity. In this comparison is pointed out their ostentation and hypocrisy.' BENSON, in *Bloomf.*

V. 18. *Clean escaped, &c.*] 'Quite escaped.' DONOR.—Some read, "a little," or "a little while," others "almost;" but, whichever reading is followed, the escape seems only to relate to a change of notions, and outward reformation. Escaping from error, and, in v. 20. escaping the pollutions of the world, are the strongest expressions of good, used in the description of these apostates, yet neither these, nor

any other, import that they were ever really partakers of saving grace.' GUYSE.

V. 20—22. They [the dog returning to his vomit, and the sow to her wallowing in the mire] are the two most disgusting and loathsome emblems, which the whole animal race can suggest, and are adduced to illustrate the filthiness of those, who, after convitious, professed repentance, and outward reformation, return back to wickedness, because their carnal hearts loved it. But if the power of God should change the swine into a 'sheep,' (the emblem of the regenerate,) though it might be thrown into the mire, yet it could no longer 'wallow in it' with delight, but must be most uncomfortable till cleansed from it.—They who 'had escaped the pollutions of the world,' had not been 'made partakers of a divine nature;' nor had the nature of the dog, or swine been changed; the swine was washed, but not made 'a new creature.'—The true Christian is born again, 'new created to good works;' Christ dwells in him by his Spirit, and 'makes all things new.' *Mat.* 12:29—32. *Heb.* 6:4—8. 10:26—39. 1 *John* 2:18, 19. 5:14—18.—The difference between this ch. and the other parts of Peter's epistles, in the style and manner, and its coincidence with that of Jude, have made several expositors suppose, that both of them borrowed their language from some ancient book which is now lost; but of this every reader must judge for himself.

(20, 21.) *Edwards* remarks on *Heb.* 6:4, 5, 6. 'It is a good argument that those that are here spoken about, were never regenerated, that they are compared to the thorny ground, which, however it may seem to receive the seed and nourish it, so that it may spring up and appear



22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, <sup>z</sup> 'The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and, The sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire.'

## CHAP. III.

<sup>1</sup> He assureth them of the certainty of Christ's coming to judgment, against those scornful who dispute against it: <sup>8</sup> warning the godly, for the long patience of God, to hasten their repentance. <sup>10</sup> He describeth also the manner how the world shall be destroyed: <sup>11</sup> exhorting them, from the expectation thereof, to all holiness of life: <sup>15</sup> and again, to think the patience of God to tend to their salvation, as Paul wrote to them in his epistles.

THIS second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

2 That <sup>a</sup> ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before <sup>b</sup> by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior:

3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days <sup>c</sup> scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

4 And saying, Where <sup>d</sup> is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

z Pr. 26:11. 2 Ti. 3:1. Eze. 12:22-27.  
a Jude 17, 18. c Is. 5:19. Mat. 24:48.  
b 1 Ti. 4:1. d Je. 17:15.

this carries in it a declaring that they have found some iniquity in the way of righteousness, and some falsehood in the Word of truth; now, to bring up such an evil report on the good way of God, and such a false charge against the way of truth, must necessarily expose to the heaviest condemnation; the misery of such deserters of Christ and his Gospel, is more unavoidable, and more intolerable, than that of other offenders. Well, if the Scripture gives such an account of Christianity on the one hand, and of sin on the other, as we have here in these two verses, we certainly ought highly to approve of the former, and persevere therein, because it is a way of righteousness, and a holy commandment; and to loathe and keep at the greatest distance from the latter, because it is set forth as most offensive and abominable.

PRACT. OBS. V. 15-22. Those who would escape deceivers should consider, that they abound in 'high swelling words' of vain boasting and ostentation; and speak of themselves, as if wisdom and knowledge belonged exclusively to them, at the same time that they give great indulgence to the lusts of the flesh. Thus they allure, with the hope of sensual gratification, worldly advantages, and impunity in them, such 'stony-ground hearers,' as, under convictions and transient affections, had 'escaped from those that live in error.' Persons of this description, not valuing the liberty of obeying the commandments of God, are disposed to listen to those, who promise them liberty of another sort, and assure them that their practical instructors have held them in bondage; and thus antinomian tenets are embraced, as a covert way of returning to the world and sin, and as a more specious and quiet kind of apostasy; . . . nor is such a departure from practical Christianity to antinomian principles and behavior, less fatal, than open apostasy; as it serves to keep the conscience entirely asleep, perhaps more effectually

flourishing awhile, yet never brings forth any good fruit, but always briars and thorns, because the ground was never purged; and how benign soever the showers that descend upon it, yet they only nourish the thorns (see v. 8.), which certainly implies that the ground was never so changed, as to prepare it to bring forth good fruit. In Christ's parable, they that are represented by the thorny ground, are manifestly different from the good ground, those that have "good and honest hearts." The fault of the stony ground and thorny ground was the nature of the ground, and the good fruit is ascribed to the better nature of the good ground. Ed.

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1-4. 'This second epistle' appears, by the opening of this chapter, to have been primarily addressed to the same churches as the former; though this is not mentioned at the beginning of it. 1:1, 2.

(1.) 'The apostle here gives them to understand, that he wrote this and the former epistle, to put them in mind of Christ's final advent to judgment, and to excite them to prepare for it. But he withal informs them, they must expect to hear the notion ridiculed by foolish and wicked men. To show how ill-founded is this ridicule, he intimates that the first constitution of the earth was such as to occasion the flood, and the

CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. That the apostle might the better reach his end in writing this epistle, which is, to make them steady and constant in a fiducial and practical remembrance of the doctrine of the Gospel, he expresses his special affection and tenderness of them, his sincere love to them, and his hearty concern for them. The better to recommend the matter, he tells them, that what he would have them to remember, is, what came from God by the holy prophets, and the commandments of the apostles of the Lord and Savior; what cannot, therefore, but demand and deserve to be frequently remembered; and they who meditate on these things, will feel the quickening virtues thereof; it is by these things the pure minds of Christians are to be stirred up, that they may be active and lively in the work of holiness, and zealous and unwearied in the way to heaven.

V. 3-7. To quicken and excite us to a serious minding, and firm adhering to, what God has revealed to us by the prophets and apostles, we are told that his way of saving sinners by Jesus Christ, is what men will scoff at, and that in the last days, under the Gospel. It may seem strange, that the New Test. dispensation of the covenant of grace, which is spiritual, and therefore more agreeable to the nature of God than the Old, should be ridiculed and reproached; but the spirituality and simplicity of the New Test. worship are directly contrary to the carnal mind of man; and this accounts for what the apostle seems here to hint at, namely, that scoffers shall be more numerous and more bold in the last days than ever before.

Now to prevent the true Christian's being overcome, when attacked by these scoffers, we are told,

1. What sort of persons they are; they walk after their own lusts, follow the devices and desires of their own hearts, and carnal, corrupt affections, not the dictates of right reason, and an enlightened, well-informed judgment; they live as they list; not only their inward minds are evil and opposite to God, Rom. 8: 7. but they are grown to such a height of wickedness, that they proclaim openly that their tongues are their own, their strength, time, and all; and 'Who is lord over us?' Who shall contradict or control us, or ever call us to an account for what we say or do? And as they seem to be confined by any laws of God in their life, so neither will they bear that the revelations of God should dictate and prescribe to them

what they are to believe; here, also, their own lusts alone shall be consulted by them.

2. We also are foretold how far they will proceed; they will attempt to shake and unsettle us, even as to our belief of Christ's second coming, v. 4. Without this, all other articles of the Christian faith will signify very little; this gives the finishing stroke to all the rest; the promised Messiah is come; He is altogether such an one as is stated before, and has done all that has been before noticed; these principles the enemies of Christianity have all along endeavored to overturn; but, as these all rest on facts already past, of which this and the other apostles have given us the most satisfying evidence, probably they will at last grow weary of opposition to these; and yet, while one very principal article of our faith refers to what is still behind, and only has a promise to rest on, here they will still attack us, even till our Lord is come; nay, laugh at the very mention of his second coming, and do what in them lies, to put all out of countenance who seriously believe and wait for it. Now, therefore, let us see how this point stands, between the believer and these seducers: the believer not only desires He may come, but having a promise that He will come, a promise Himself made and often repeated, a promise received and reported by faithful witnesses, and left on sure record, he is also fully persuaded He will come: on the other hand, these seducers, because they wish He never may, therefore do all that in them lies, to cheat themselves and others into a persuasion that He never will come; if they cannot deny that there is a promise, yet they will laugh at it; which argues much higher degrees of infidelity and contempt; Where is the promise, say they, of his coming?

3. We are also forewarned of the method of their reasoning; for while they laugh, they will pretend to argue too; to this purpose, they add, that, since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation, v. 4. This is subtle, but not solid; it is apt to make impressions on weak minds, and especially on wicked hearts; say they, 'The fathers are all dead, to whom the promise was made; therefore, as it never was made good in their time, so there is no likelihood it ever will be; why should we trouble ourselves about it? If there had been any truth or certainty in the promise, we should surely have seen, before this, some signs of his coming; but

ally than any other opiate yet devised by the grand deceiver of mankind. It is evident, therefore, that 'it would have been better' for such men, if they had continued ignorant of the Gospel, than thus to pervert it to their own deeper condemnation, and the ruin of others along with them. Yet, alas, how many are there, who thus verify 'the true proverb,' by 'turning as the dog to his own vomit again, and as a sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire! But this shall never happen to any, who are 'in Christ new creatures,' and made partakers of a divine nature. Let us then pray continually, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me;' let us remember, that a 'holy commandment' is given to us, as well as 'exceedingly great and precious promises;' let us beware of turning from the precepts, as much as of rejecting the truths, of Christianity; and let us equally avoid antinomian corrupters, and pharisaical opposers of the Gospel, as alike the enemies of 'our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.'

SCOTT.

present one tends to a dissolution by fire, which will take place at its appointed time; and that the reason why it is delayed, is, to give men an opportunity for previous preparation.

BLOOMF.

(2.) Mindful of the words.] 'I. e. in the way of caution concerning the deceivers before mentioned; or, in general, of the things pertaining to the advent and kingdom of Christ.'

ID.

(3.) Last days.] 'The period of the last dispensation to man, the whole of the times of the New Test., so some. But this is too harsh. The period of the Jewish system. But as the destruction of Jerusalem happened about 3 years after, the apostle could scarcely have had that in view. Yet the scoffers were soon to come (so State); otherwise there could have been no need to caution the disciples against them; and in the days of Jude (see his Epis. 18, 19.) they were come; therefore the passage relates to some event or judgment near at hand, i. e. to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the final advent to judgment, [which may be considered as ever near in every age.]'

ID.

(4.) Since the fathers, &c.] 'Except that the fathers have fallen asleep; that is, that the inhabitants of the world are continually changing, and new generations rising instead of the old, all other things continue as they were.'

GROVE, in Doddr.



5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that <sup>a</sup> by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth <sup>f</sup>standing out of the <sup>g</sup> water and in the water :

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with <sup>h</sup> water, perished :

7 But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire <sup>i</sup> against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

e Ge. 1:6,9. g Ps. 24:2. i Ps. 50:3. Zep.  
f consisting. h Ge. 7:11, &c. 3:3. 2 Th. 1:3.

we find, to this very day, *all things continue as they were, even from the beginning*; why, therefore, should we affright ourselves, as if the world were to have an end? Thus do these *scoffers argue!* Ps. 55:19. They neither fear Him, nor his judgments; what He never has done, they would conclude He never can do, or never will.

4. Here is the falsehood of their argument detected; the apostle puts us in remembrance of a change already past, which, in a manner, equals that which we are called to expect and look for,—the drowning of the world in the days of Noah: this these *scoffers* took no notice of; they might have known it, v. 5. but chose to pass it over as if they had never heard of it. Note, It is hard to persuade men to believe what they are not willing to find true; in many cases, *they are ignorant*, because they do not care to know. But let not sinners think, that such ignorance will be admitted as an excuse for the sin it may betray them into; they who crucified Christ, did not know who He was; for, *had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, 1 Cor. 2:8. but they were not therefore innocent; their ignorance itself was a sin, willing, wilful ignorance; and one sin can be no excuse for another. So it is here. Now, therefore, consider the representation the apostle here lays down, both of the destruction of the old world by water, and that which awaits this present world at the final conflagration. He mentions the one as what God had done, to convince and persuade us the rather to be-

lieve, that the other both may be and will be. First, we begin with the apostle's account of the destruction which has once already come on the world, v. 5, 6. Originally, the world was otherwise situated; *the waters were most wisely divided at the creation*, and most beneficially for us; some had proper repositories *above the firmament*, here called *the heavens*, as also Gen. 1:8. and others *under the firmament, gathered together unto one place*; there were then both *sea and dry land*, a commodious habitation for man; but now, at the time of the universal deluge, the case is strangely altered; *the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished*, v. 5. Is not here a change, a most awful change? And then it is to be observed, that all this was done *by the word of God*; by that the world was made at first, Heb. 11:3. Gen. 1:5, 7. v. 9, 10. Thus, *He spake, and it was done*, Ps. 33:9. Thus, says our apostle, *by the word of the Lord the heavens were, as they were of old*, that is, at the first creation, *and the earth* (as it was at first a terraqueous globe) *standing out of the water and in the water*. Nor was it only the first frame and order of the world that is here said to be *by the word of God*, but the after confusion and ruin of the world, as well as the utter destruction of its inhabitants, were also *by the same word*; it was also done according to *the word of his promise*; God had said He would *destroy man, even all flesh*, and that He would do it by bringing a *flood of waters on the earth*, Gen. 6:7, 13, 17. This was the change God had before brought on the world, and which these *scoffers* had overlooked; and now we are to consider, in the second place, what the apostle says of the destructive change which is yet to come on it, v. 7. Here we have an awful account of the final dissolution of the world, and which we are yet more nearly concerned in: the judgment is yet to come, but will surely come, and we know not when, nor on what particular age or generation of men; therefore we cannot be sure it may not happen in our own times; and this makes a very great difference, though it should be admitted that they were equal in every other respect; which yet must not be allowed, for there were some, though very few, who escaped that deluge, but not one can escape in this conflagration; be-

sides, we were not in reach of the one, but are not sure we shall not be included in the other calamity. Now, therefore, to see the world to which we belong destroyed at once,—not a single person only, not a particular family only, nor yet a nation, but the whole world, I say, sinking at once, and no ark provided, no possible way left, for any one, of escaping from the common ruin; this makes a difference between the desolation that has been and what we yet are to expect. The one is already past, and never to return, Gen. 9:11—15. the other is still behind, and as certain to come as the truth and the power of God can make it: the one came gradually on the world, and was growing on its inhabitants forty days, before it made an utter end of them, Gen. 7:12, 17. this other will come on them swiftly, and all at once, 2 Pet. 2:1. Thus, whatever differences may be assigned, between that destruction of the world and this here spoken of, [they] do indeed represent the approaching as the most terrible judgment; yet, that the world has once been destroyed by a universal deluge, renders it the more credible that it may be ruined by a universal conflagration; let, therefore, the *scoffers* at least consider that it *may be*; and though they still should laugh, they shall not put us out of countenance; we are well assured it will be, because He has said it, and we can depend on his *promise*; they err, *not knowing* (at least not believing) *the Scriptures, nor the power of God*; but we know, and we do, or ought to, depend on both. What He has said, and will certainly make good, is, that *the heavens and the earth* we are now related to, are not to be, what earthly minds would wish to have them, treasures for us, but to be what God will have them, in his treasury, securely kept for his purposes; it follows, they are *reserved unto fire*. Observe, God's following judgments are more terrible than those which went before; the old world was destroyed by water, this is *reserved unto fire*; and though this seems to be delayed, yet as it is upheld by the word of God, so it is only reserved for *the vengeance of Him to whom vengeance belongs*, who will, at the day of judgment, deal with an ungodly world according to their deserts; for *the day of judgment is the day of the perdition of ungodly men*. They who now scoff at a future judg-

V. 5—7. (5) *Standing out of the water, and in the water.*] *Subsisting from the water, and by the water.* Col. 1:17. SCOTT.

(5—7.) He means to refute the scoffers, who said that the whole system of nature remained, and would always remain in the state it had been in from the creation, nor would the world ever be destroyed. (v. 4.) Against these he shows, that all things have not remained in the state in which they were created by God; for that the world (i. e. our earth with its atmosphere) had once been destroyed by water (v. 5, 6.) and would again be destroyed in like manner even by fire. This those scoffers were ignorant of, or did not choose to understand. ROS.

(5) *By the word of God, &c.*] 'The heavens were of old, and the earth, which is framed, by the word of God, from the waters, and between the waters.' *Kypke*. 'It was the opinion of the remotest antiquity, that the earth was formed out of water, or primitive moisture, which they termed *ulē*, first matter; and *Thales* taught, that "all things derive their existence from water." This also appears to be the doctrine of Moses, Gen. 1:1, 2. and that the earth was at first in a fluid state, is evident from its form; for it has been demonstrated by measuring, some degrees near the pole, that the earth is not round, but an oblate spheroid, a figure nearly resembling an orange, and one which any soft or elastic body would assume if whirled rapidly round a centre, as the earth is round its axis. When the waters retired into one place, and when "God divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament," then the earth was placed "between the waters." *Greenf.*—*The earth standing out of the water and in the water.*] 'I. e. part rising above the water, and part submerged; or, perhaps above the waters "under the earth," and beneath those treasured in the clouds, by the meeting of which in the deluge, "the world that then was," being overflowed, was drowned. See Gen. 1:6—10. 7:11—20.' *Williams*.—'If we translate "between the waters," it will bear some resemblance to Gen. 1:6, 7. and it may refer to the whole of the atmosphere with which the earth is surrounded, and which contains the vapors without which we could neither have animal or vegetable life. Thus the earth which was originally formed out of water, subsists by water, and by means of that very water, the water compacted with the earth, the fountains of the great deep and the waters of the atmosphere, Gen. 7:11, the antediluvian world was destroyed. But though the same means still exist, for there is water enough to draw the earth, and there is iniquity enough to induce God to destroy it, and its inhabitants, it is nevertheless treasured up, reserved to be destroyed, not by water, but by fire at the day of judgment.' *A. Clarke*,

in *Henry, abr.*—'The tradition of the heathen, doubtless in accordance with the divine declaration, was, that the world would be destroyed by fire.' *Henry, abr.*—*Bloomf.* says, the apostle seems not to have spoken with reference to *cosmogony*, but meant to have *standing*, &c. taken in the sense of *exist* or *subsist*. EP.

(6) *The world that then was.*] 'This is by almost all explained, the world and its inhabitants, as they existed at the deluge recorded by Moses. But since the opposition is not the world that now is, but the heavens and the earth which are now, (v. 7.) *Ros.* thinks the apostle distinguishes these heavens and this earth from others. And he would understand, not the deluge in the time of Noah, but some former one; adopting the opinion of Burnet, in his Theory of the Earth, that there was quite a different appearance of earth and heaven before the deluge in the time of Noah. He then adds: "Very probable to me is the opinion of those, who affirm that the world, long after that first creation of this universe, was utterly laid waste by some universal inundation, much more terrible and of longer continuance than the deluge recorded by Noah; after which God fitted it up for a residence for man and animals, and that this metamorphosis is what is described [as creation, or in Gen. 1.] by Moses." A conjecture indeed highly ingenious, and which is thought by natural philosophers to be somewhat confirmed by the recent discoveries in geology. But it is vain to seek for any support to it in the words of the apostle, which, if taken in a popular sense, are quite consistent with the deluge in the time of Noah; and as that is especially adduced as an example and warning in a similar passage, Mat. 24:37—39. so it seems to be meant here.' BLOOMF.

(7.) 'To obviate the direct bearings of this passage, Universalist writers say, that this earth is to be the hell of wicked men; and that as the burning of it will not be eternal, so the perdition of the ungodly will be but temporary. There are however three serious difficulties to this gloss. 1. The Scriptures speak of a hell *already existing*, wherein the angels who kept not their first estate are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day; and in which the departed spirits of wicked men now lift up their eyes, being in torment. 2. The Scriptures declare this hell now existing will be the hell of all ungodly men; for they are doomed to depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. 3. If the earth, as being dissolved by fire, is to be the hell of ungodly men, then punishment must precede the day of judgment; for the conflagration is uniformly represented as prior to that event. See 2 Thess. 1:7—10.' WILLIAMS.



8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

[Practical Observations.]

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.

j Ps. 90:4. m Eze. 33:11. p Ps. 102:26.  
k Da. 2:3. n 1 Ti. 2:4. l 51:6.  
l Ps. 85:15. o Mat. 24:42,43. Re. 20:11.  
Is. 30:18. Re. 16:15.

ment, shall find it a day of vengeance and utter destruction; 'Beware, therefore, of being among these scoffers; never question but the day of the Lord will come; give diligence, therefore, to be found in Christ, that that may be a time of refreshment and day of redemption to you, which will be a day of indignation and wrath to the ungodly world.'

V. 8—10. The apostle comes, in these words, to instruct and establish Christians in the truth of the coming of the Lord, where we may clearly discern the tenderness and affection wherewith he speaks to them, calling them beloved; he has a peculiar respect for the true believers, and the remaining ignorance and weakness that he apprehends to be in them make him jealous, and put him on giving them a caution. Here we may observe,

1. The truth he asserts; that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. In the account of men, there is a great difference between a day and a year, and a vast deal more between one day and a thousand years, yet, in the account of God, there is no difference; for all things, past, present, and future, are ever before Him; and the delay of a thousand years cannot be so much to Him as the

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—2. The 'purest minds' of men on earth want 'stirring up by the way of remembrance,' that, by habitual attention to the doctrine and precepts delivered by 'the holy prophets and apostles,' they may be kept steadfast in faith, fervent in love, and diligent in obedience.—The only wise God our Savior, by predicting the scoffs and contemptuous objections of infidels and profane men, in ancient and modern times, has taken care, that even their perverse opposition to the Scripture should furnish an additional proof of its divine inspiration!—Most of their cavils and sneers expose their ignorance of 'the Scrip-

V. 8. One day and a thousand years, are with God the same thing.—This maxim, well considered, is the key for reconciling what is continually said, concerning the speedy approach of judgment, with the prophecies, extending through many ages, which must previously be accomplished. Ps. 90:3—6. 2 Thes. 2:1—12. Rev. 11:1, 2. 20:4—6. SCOTT.

(8.) Be not ignorant of this one thing.] 'This is a most solemn formula of soliciting serious attention; and the scope of the following passage is, to show why the Lord defers the last judgment from day to day; namely, out of his singular patience and clemency.' Bloomf.—One day, &c.] 'This was a proverbial expression among the Jews, to signify that no finite duration bears any proportion to the eternity of God.' DODDR.

V. 9. Men's impenitence arises from their unwillingness to return to God, not from his unwillingness to receive them; and therefore He is doubtless 'willing that all should come to repentance' and be saved; but no one can conceive, that He absolutely willeth the salvation of the wicked, in the same sense as He willeth that of the righteous. ('I will, be thou clean;') and yet is unable to effect it! These are two distinct, but consistent views, which may be taken of the subject; the one accords to the condition of sinners, when first taught to attend to the Word of salvation; to them, 'the long-suffering' of God, the provisions of the Gospel, the general invitations, the 'command to all men to repent,' and the promises that Christ will cast out none who come to Him, are so many assurances, that 'the Lord is not willing that any,' who seek salvation, 'should perish;' but that sinners of all descriptions should come to repentance; and that they who repent, do that which pleases Him, and shall be accepted. Ez. 18:23. 33:11. John 6:36—40. 1 Tim. 2:3, 4. Rev. 2:20—23. But the other refers to God: 'known unto whom are all his works from the beginning of the world;' and according to it, the established believer ascribes his willingness to repent, to special

deferring of anything for a day or hour is to us.

2. The importance of this truth; this is the one thing the apostle would not have us ignorant of; a holy awe and reverential fear of God are necessary in order to our worshipping and glorifying Him; and a belief of the inconceivable distance between Him and us is very proper to beget and maintain that religious fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom. This is a truth that belongs to our peace, therefore he endeavors it may not be hid from our eyes; as it is in the original, *Let not this one thing be hid from you.*

In v. 9. we are told, *The Lord is not slack*; He does not delay beyond the appointed time; as God kept the time He had appointed to deliver Israel out of Egypt, to a day, Exod. 12:41. so He will keep to the time appointed, in coming to judge the world. What a difference is there between the account God makes, and that men make! Ungodly men dare charge a culpable slackness on God, as if He had slipt the time, and laid aside the thoughts of coming. But the apostle assures us, that what men count slackness, is truly long-suffering, and that to us-ward: it is giving more time to his own people, whom He has chosen before the foundation of the world, many of whom are not as yet converted; and those who are in a state of grace and favor with God, are to advance in knowledge and holiness, and in the exercise of faith and patience, to abound in good works, doing and suffering what they are called to, that they may bring glory to God, and improve in a meetness for heaven; for God is not willing that any of these should perish, but that all of them should come to repentance. Here observe, Repentance is absolutely necessary in order to salvation, Luke 13:3, 5. God has no delight in the death of sinners; and though the principal design of God, in his long-suffering, is, the blessedness of those whom He has chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, yet his goodness and forbearance do, in their own nature, invite and call to repentance all those to whom they are exercised. 'Abuse not, therefore, the patience and long-suffering of God, by abandoning yourselves to a course of ungodliness; presume not to go on boldly in the way of sinners, nor to sit down securely in an un-

converted, impenitent state, as he who said, Mat. 24:48. *My lord delayeth his coming,* lest He come and surprise you; for, as we read, v. 10. *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.*' Here we may observe,

(1.) The certainty of the day of the Lord: though it is now above 1800 years since this epistle was written, and the day is not yet come, it assuredly will come; and God will keep his appointment, Heb. 9:27. (2.) The suddenness of this day; it will come at a time when men are sleeping and secure, and have no manner of apprehension or expectation of the day of the Lord, any more than men have of a thief when in a deep sleep, in the dark and silent night, Mat. 25:6. Let us, then, beware how we, in our thoughts and imaginations, put that day far away from us; but rather suppose it to be so much nearer in reality, by how much further off it is in the opinion of the ungodly world. (3.) The solemnity of this coming; *The visible heavens*, unable to abide when the Lord shall come in his glory, shall undergo a mighty alteration, and this very suddenly, and with such a noise, as the breaking and tumbling down of so great a fabric must necessarily occasion. *The elements* of which the creatures are composed, shall melt with fervent heat, at this coming of the Lord. *The earth*, also, and its inhabitants, and all the works, whether of nature or art, shall be destroyed; all sorts of creatures which God has made, and all the works of men, must submit, all must pass through the fire, which shall be a consuming fire to all that sin has brought into the world, though it may be but a refining fire to the works of God's hand, that the glass of the creation being made much brighter, the saints may much better discern the glory of the Lord therein.

And now who can but observe what a difference there will be between the first coming of Christ and the second! Yet that is called the great and dreadful day of the Lord, Mal. 4:5. How much more dreadful must this coming to judgment be! May we be so wise as to prepare for it, that it may not be a day of vengeance and destruction unto us. Oh! what will become of us, if we set our affections on this earth, and make it our portion, seeing all these things shall be burnt up? Look out, therefore, and make sure of a happiness beyond this visible world, which must all be melted down.

tures and of the power of God? yet their very ignorance is the consequence of their ungodliness, and wilful opposition to those parts of divine truth, which condemn their darling iniquities. But none, who read and believe the sacred oracles, can be ignorant, that the Omnipotent Creator of the heavens and the earth, who upholds, preserves, changes, or destroys his own work, as He sees good, has his whole plan before Him; and is alone competent to determine times and seasons; and that with Him, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.' SCOTT.

grace; and acknowledges that if he had been left to himself, he should have perished in obstinate love of sin, and enmity to God, as numbers of his fellow-sinners do.—Let it be particularly noticed, that God 'willeth all men to repent,' exactly in the same manner, as He 'willeth all men to be saved,' so that none who do not repent can have any benefit from his willingness that all should be saved. SCOTT.

(9.) The Lord is not slack, &c.] 'Procrastinating and slow as to fulfilling his promises,—the Lord is not so.' BLOOMF.

V. 10—13. Though delays seemed to be made, whilst the Lord waited to complete the counsels of his wisdom and mercy, and to render the implacable enmity of impenitent sinners manifest to the whole creation; yet his great and terrible day would certainly come, suddenly, when not expected, and with most surprising consternation, and inevitable destruction, to all who were found unprepared. (Marg. Ref. b—Notes, Mat. 24:42—44. 1 Thes. 5:1—3.) At that important catastrophe, 'the heavens' and all the host of them, (as far, at least, as connected with this earth and its inhabitants,) 'will pass away,' and rush into confusion and destruction; with a tremendous 'noise,' of which thunders, earthquakes, and all other convulsions of nature, are wholly inadequate to give the least conception. Then all 'the elements,' of which the earth and its atmosphere, and all the luminaries connected with it, are composed, shall melt 'with intense heat;' and not only one vast city, or one whole nation, but the earth, with all its cities, forests, mountains, yea, the contents of its bowels to the very centre, as well as all the works of men, however admired or magnificent, which cover the surface of it, shall constitute one vast conflagration, and be reduced to as confused a chaos, as that from which it was first created; and indeed shall 'wholly pass away.' Ps. 102:23—25. Mat. 24:32—35. Heb. 1:10—12. Rev. 20:11—15. Ought not Christians therefore to be continually 'looking for,' and preparing to welcome that solemn season, called emphatically 'the



11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness:

12 Looking for <sup>q</sup> and <sup>r</sup> hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt <sup>s</sup> with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new <sup>t</sup> heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

[Practical Observations.]

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

<sup>q</sup> Tit. 2:13. <sup>r</sup> or, hastening the coming. <sup>s</sup> Is. 34:4. Mi. 1:4. u 1 Co. 15:58. <sup>t</sup> 1 Th. 5:23.

V. 11—18. The apostle, having instructed them in the doctrine of Christ's second coming, takes occasion thence to exhort them to purity and godliness in their whole conversation, v. 11. *Seeing all these things must be dissolved, how holy should we be, that are assured of it, departing from and dying to sin, that has so corrupted and defiled all the visible creation, that there is an absolute need of its dissolution! And inasmuch as this dissolution is in order to their being restored to their primitive beauty and excellency, how pure and holy should we be, in order to our being fit for the new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness! It is a very exact and universal holiness that he exhorts to, not resting in any lower measure or degree, but laboring to be eminent beyond what is commonly attained; holy in God's house and in our own; in all our*

conversation, whether with high or low, rich or poor, good or bad, friends or enemies; we must exercise ourselves unto godliness of all sorts, in all its parts, trusting in God, and delighting in God only, who continues the same when the whole visible creation shall be dissolved; whereas, what worldly men delight in, and follow after, must all be dissolved; these things which we now see, must, in a little while, pass away, and be no more as they now are: let us look, therefore, at what shall abide and continue, which, though not present, is certain, and not far off. This looking for the day of God, is one of the directions the apostle gives us, in order to our being eminently holy and godly in all manner of conversation, v. 12. The coming of the day of God is what every Christian must hope for and earnestly expect; for it is a day when Christ shall appear in the glory of the Father, and evidence his Divinity and Godhead even to those who counted Him a mere man. The first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when He appeared in the form of a servant, was what the people of God earnestly waited and looked for; that coming was for the consolation of Israel, Luke 2:25. How much more should they wait with expectation and earnestness for his second coming, which will be the day of their complete redemption, and of his most glorious manifestation! Here we must notice,

1. What true Christians look for,—new heavens and a new earth, in which a great deal more of the wisdom, power, and goodness of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be clearly discerned, than we are able to discover in what we now see; for in these new heavens and earth are to be the habitation of such righteous persons only as do righteousness, and are free from the power and pollution of sin; all the wicked shall be turned into hell; those only who are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and

sanctified by the Holy Ghost, shall be admitted to dwell in this holy place.

II. The ground and foundation of this expectation and hope,—the promise of God. To look for anything God has not promised, is presumption; but if our expectations are according to the promise, both as to the things we look for, and the time and way of their being brought about, we cannot meet with a disappointment; for He is faithful, who has promised. See, therefore, that you raise and regulate your expectations of all the great things that are to come, according to the Word of God; and as to the new heaven and new earth, look for them as God has allowed and directed, by the passages we have in this portion of Scripture now before you, and in Isa. 65:17. 66:22. to which the apostle may be thought to allude.

As in v. 11. he exhorts to holiness, from the consideration that the heavens and the earth shall be dissolved, so in v. 14. he resumes his exhortation, from the consideration that they shall be again renewed; 'and see to it,' says he, 1. 'That you be found of Him in peace, in a state of peace and reconciliation with God through Christ, in whom alone God is reconciling the world to Himself. They whose sins are pardoned, and their peace made with God, are the only safe and happy people. 2. That ye be found of Christ without spot, and blameless; we must not only take heed of all spots which are not the spots of God's children, but we must be pressing toward spotless purity, absolute perfection. Christians must be perfecting holiness, that they may be not only blameless before men, but also in the sight of God; and all this deserves and needs the greatest diligence; he who does this work negligently, can never do it successfully. And, Remember there is a curse denounced against him who does the work of the Lord negligently, Marg. Jer. 48:10.

PRACT. OBS. V. 9—13. The Lord, in reality, makes no delays; however his dispensations may appear to our unbelief and scanty knowledge; yet 'his counsel shall stand,' and that 'great day of the Lord shall come,' even as surely as the deluge came, and equally unexpected by unbelievers. Mat. 24:36—41.—What will then be the surprise, the terror and anguish of proud scoffers, infidels, and all ungodly and worldly men! Here imagination itself is baffled; description would be vain, and we can only apply the inconceivable subject to practical purposes.

day of God; 'hastening' to have all ready to meet Him with comfort, and even longing for the solemn catastrophe which would perfect their felicity? Luke 21:25—28. Though it was in itself so terrible to think of, 'the heavens being on fire and dissolved, and the elements melting with heat;' (Marg. Ref. c—p.) yet the Gospel suggested such consolation, and inspired such hopes, that believers had no reason for terror or uneasiness.—In some scriptures, 'new heavens and a new earth,' seem figuratively to describe the most prosperous and peaceful days of the church on earth; Is. 65:17—19. 66:19—23. Heb. 12:26—29. yet here the state of the righteous, after the judgment, and dissolution of this world, are evidently intended; but what is meant, in various particulars, the fulfilment alone can fully explain. Rev. 21:1—4, 22—27. 22:1—5. SCOTT.

(10.) 'Day of the Lord, here, is undoubtedly the day of judgment, which will come on men as unexpectedly as a thief in the night.' Bloomf.—And truly, compare v. 7. and what an idea does it give of the introduction of that day! Even to the pious, whose perfect love shall cast out fear, yet with what sublimity and grandeur not only, but with what solemnity also, and awe, and moral glory, will that day come, when, with the same word of power by which the world was at first created, even with the same, and as suddenly, God shall change the relation of the elements, and cause the earth and the works that are therein to be hurried up!—That the earth contains the elements of its own dissolution, or transformation, is exceedingly evident. What but evidence of this do we see in its often returning earthquakes, and in its numerous now active and now sleeping volcanoes? Many of the islands of the sea are with good reason supposed to be of volcanic origin. And who can contemplate the great crater of Kirauea on the island of Hawaii, as described by our missionaries, in their Journal of their tour round that island, and not be deeply impressed with the conviction, that there is within the bowels of the earth a latent power, which, when God shall give it commission, shall be abundantly adequate to the production of all the effects which are here spoken of by the apostle? How well it becomes us to make the practical application of the thought which we find in the following verse: *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness! Ed.—Heavens.* 'The heavens, as at v. 6. Great noise.] Properly *whiz*: and then the noise made by any falling body, or body impelled to perpetually accelerated motion. "The hissing sound of a dart passing through the air, the flight of birds, the swift motion of the winds, the running of a chariot, the rolling of an impetuous torrent, the noise of soldiers running to battle, the crackling of a wide-spreading fire, the rushing sound of a violent storm or tempest." So *Bens.*—*Pass away.* Properly, to pass by or away, and also, as here, to perish, i. e. as to the purpose it had served. So *Bens.* observes, "that it is not necessary to suppose the world will be annihilated, or removed, with its

Rev. 6:15—17. 20:11—15. 'Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness!' Surely our chief business is to prepare for this great catastrophe, by daily expecting and 'hastening to' the coming of the day of God, that we may possess a triumphant hope of lifting up our heads with joy, when the heavens and the earth shall form one immense conflagration, and when no refuge will remain to the wicked from the intolerable wrath, the everlasting fire, of their offended Judge. SCOTT.

atmosphere, from its present orbit. It may be said to 'pass away,' if the form and constitution be altered; as the old world is, at v. 6. said to have been destroyed by water." *Elements, &c.*] Some say the air; others, the stars; Slade refers it to the heavens which goes before, and explains it (with Mackn.) of the electric matter, sulphurous vapors, and whatever floats in the air, together with the air itself. But I approve of *Ros.* from *Bens.*, *partes, etiam aspectabiles, ex quibus omnes res naturales, quæ sub cælo sunt, componuntur.* So *Bens.* "Suppose the earth, air, and water shall be subdued by the prevalence of fire; and their stamina, or first constituent principles, quite altered thereby; then it may very properly be said, *the elements being on fire shall be dissolved*, or, as at v. 12. *melted*. They are not therefore to be annihilated, but subdued, and greatly altered by the prevalence of fire." *Works, &c.*] The sense is: the works of both nature and art, each of the most exquisite sort, all shall be involved in overwhelming ruin.' BLOOMF.

(13.) 'From the relics of the ancient fabric another and a better will arise. This may be understood, either physically, of a better corporeal world, or figuratively, of the new state of things in the eternal and blessed abodes of heaven. It is proved by *Whitby* and *Mackn.* that there can here be no reference to the millennium.' ID.

V. 14—16. The fourth and fifth verses of the second ch. of the Epistle to the Romans, are generally supposed here (15) to be intended, *Note, Rom. 2:4—6.* but it is not obvious, in what sense these could be said to be written to those whom Peter addressed. They, therefore, who maintain, that he wrote to the Jewish converts exclusively, point out some passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews, to which they think he alluded. *Heb. 9:27, 28. 10:36, 37.* Yet that epistle was directly addressed to the churches in Judea, and not to the Jewish converts in Asia; so that this does not much aid their supposition. But, indeed, the apostolical epistles, though written to some particular churches, or description of Christians, were evidently intended for general instruction; and as Peter had read the epistles of Paul when he wrote this; so they, to whom he wrote, had probably done the same, even in respect of those which were addressed to other churches.—The false teachers, whom Peter opposed, seem to have grounded their 'damnable heresies,' 2:1—3. on a misinterpretation of some passages in Paul's epistles, which might appear to some persons contrary to Peter's exhortations; so that the general tenor of the epistles to some of the Asiatic churches, or of that to the Hebrews, rather than detached expressions, seems to have been meant; for certainly, when properly understood, they are as exhortatory and practical as Peter's. Indeed, the apostle next observed, that this was the case in all the epistles of his beloved brother Paul; (as those to the Romans, the Corinthians, the churches of Macedonia, and to Timothy and Titus, as well as those to Ephesus, and Colosse, and the Hebrews;) for, in them all, he spoke of the coming of Christ, and the pre-



15 And account *that* the long-suffering of our Lord is *salvation*; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you;

16 As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.

17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

18 But *grow* in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory, both now and for ever. Amen.

v Ro. 2:4. 1 Th. 4 and 5. x Col. 1:10.  
w Ro. 8:19. 1 Co. 15. 2 Th. 1:5-10. y 2 Ti. 4:13.

Now, that you may be diligent, *account the long-suffering of our Lord to be salvation.* Think not this is to give more time to make provision for your lusts, to gratify them; no, it is so much space to repent, and work out your salvation. Learn, then, to make a right use of the patience of our Lord, who does, as yet, delay his coming. Follow after peace and holiness, or else his coming will be dreadful to you. And inasmuch as it is difficult to prevent men's abuse of God's patience, and engage them in the right improvement thereof, our apostle quotes Paul as directing men to make the same good use of the divine forbearance, that in the mouth, or from the pen, of two apostles the truth might be confirmed. And we may here observe with what esteem and affection he speaks of him! What an honorable mention does this apostle of the circumcision make of that very man who had openly, *before all, reproved him*, as not walking uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel! Though many seducing teachers denied Paul's apostleship, yet Peter owns him to be an apostle.

PRACT. OBS. V. 14-18. In the firm belief of the great and eternal realities, set before us in this ch., let us 'give diligence to be found of Christ at his coming, in peace, without spot and blameless.' Let sinners 'seek Him while He may be found, and call on Him while He is near;' that they may have the privilege of blessing Him to eternity, for sparing them when others were cut off in their sins.—We should also avail ourselves of the apostle's caution, whilst we read the epistles of Paul, and other difficult parts of the Holy Scriptures. Most evident

comparison to be made for it, with warnings and admonitions to different descriptions of persons. But this perversion of Paul's writings (which Peter evidently here speaks of as a part of the sacred Scriptures), must not be charged on the epistles themselves, but on those who thus perverted them, contrary to their real meaning and tendency; for they thus 'wrested the other Scriptures also,' both the books of the Old Test., and as many of the New Test. as were then extant, and allowed to be of Divine authority. Proud, carnal, ambitious, covetous, or licentious men could wrest some things, in any of them, to a *seeming* agreement with their pernicious doctrines, and so pervert them to their own destruction, in the same manner, as they made a fatal use of the mysterious subjects on which Paul discoursed. It was, therefore, proper to warn and instruct men to read them with humility, and a teachable spirit; and not to perplex themselves with 'hard things,' till they were established in such as were more plain. 1 Cor. 3:1-3. Heb. 5:11-14.—This, however, is no reason why either Paul's epistles, or any part of the other scriptures, should be laid aside, or put out of sight; for men, left to themselves, pervert every good gift of God, and the corruption of the best things becomes the worst.—The persons, to whom Peter's epistles were written, were for the most part Paul's converts.—'Of this vice,' (wresting the Scriptures,) 'they are most commonly guilty, who, from the pride of understanding, will receive nothing but what they can explain. Whereas the humble and teachable receive the declarations of revelation, according to their plain, grammatical, unconstrained meaning, which it is their only care to attain, by reading the Scriptures frequently, and with attention.' Mackn. He should have added, and with constant, fervent prayer, for the promised teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit.—*Wrest.*] Here only. *To torture, put on the rack.* From *streblē*, an instrument of torture. *Demosth.*—Men, when put to torture, speak things contrary to their real meaning. Sc.

(15.) *Written unto you.*] Probably all the epistles, though addressed to particular churches, were meant for general circulation. Ed.

(16.) *Wrest.*] 'The expression plainly implies violence done by these bad men to passages of Scripture, to make them speak an unnatural sense to answer their own ends, as often in theological controversies.' Doddr.

He calls him *beloved*; and they being both alike commissioned, and both united in the same service of the same Lord, it would have been very unseemly if they had not been united in affection to one another. He mentions Paul as one who had an uncommon measure of wisdom given unto him. He was a person of eminent knowledge in the mysteries of the Gospel, and did neither in that nor any other qualification come behind any of all the other apostles. How desirable, that those who preach the same Gospel, should treat one another according to the pattern Peter here sets them! Here observe, also, (1.) The excellent wisdom that was in Paul, is said to be *given* him. The understanding and knowledge that qualify men to preach the Gospel, are the gift of God. (2.) The apostle imparts to men according as he had received from God. Acts 20:27. (3.) The epistles which were written by the apostle of the Gentiles, and directed to those Gentiles who believed in Christ, are designed for the instruction and edification of those who from among the Jews were brought to believe in Christ; for it is generally thought, that what is here alluded to, is contained in the epistle to the Romans, ch. 2:4. though in all his epistles there are some things that refer to one or other of the subjects treated of in this and the foregoing ch.; and it cannot seem strange, that those who were pursuing the same general design, should, in their epistles, insist on the same things. But Peter proceeds to tell us, that in these things which are to be met with in Paul's epistles, there are some things hard to be understood; such are prophecies, mysterious doctrines, and the things of the Spirit of God, mentioned 1 Cor. 2:14. And here the unlearned and unstable make wretched work; for those who are not well instructed and well established in the truth, are in great danger of perverting the Word of God; but where there is a divine power to establish as well as to instruct men in divine truth, persons are effectually secured from falling into errors; and how great a blessing this is, we learn by observing what is the pernicious consequence of the errors that ignorant and unstable men fall into,—even their own de-

struction. Errors, in particular concerning the holiness and justice of God, are the utter ruin of multitudes of men. Let us therefore earnestly pray for the Spirit of God to instruct us in the truth, that we may know it as it is in Jesus, and have our hearts established with grace, that we may stand firm and unshaken, even in the most stormy times, when others are tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.

In v. 17. the apostle gives them a word of caution, where he intimates, that the knowledge we have of these things should make us very wary and watchful, inasmuch as there is a twofold danger: 1. Of being turned away from the truth. The unlearned and unstable, and they are very numerous, do generally wrest the Scripture. Few attain to the knowledge and acknowledgment of doctrinal Christianity; and fewer find, so as to keep in the way of, practical godliness, which is the narrow way, that alone leadeth unto life. There must be a great deal of self-denial, and suspicion of ourselves, and submitting to the authority of Christ Jesus our great Prophet, before we can heartily receive all the truths of the Gospel, and therefore we are in great danger of rejecting the truth. 2. Of being turned into the path of destruction.

Now that we may the better avoid being led away, the apostle, v. 18. directs us what to do. *We must grow in grace.* He had, in the beginning of the epistle, exhorted us to add one grace to another; here he advises us to grow in all grace, in faith, virtue, knowledge. By how much the stronger grace is in us, by so much the more steadfast shall we be in the truth. *We must grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.* This is the knowledge of Christ the apostle Paul reached after, and desired to attain to, Phil. 3:10. Such a knowledge of Christ as conforms us more to Him, and endears Him more to us, must needs be of great use to us, to preserve us from falling off in times of general apostasy; and they who experience this effect of the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, will, on receiving such grace from Him, give thanks and praise to Him, and join with our apostle in saying, *To Him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen.*

it is, that untaught, unteachable, self-sufficient, 'unstable,' and unconverted men, 'wrest many things' of this kind 'to their own destruction.' Yet these parts of the sacred Word have a most important use, in the system of divine truth, and if men will pervert them, they do it at their peril. Taking things in their proper order, and proceeding with humility, caution, prayer, and practice, we shall be prepared to derive benefit from the deepest and most mysterious truths, and to perceive their consistency with the rest of divine revelation. SCOTT.

V. 17, 18. *The wicked.*] 2:7.—'One who can be restrained by no law, but determines, that all things are lawful to him.' Leigh.—(18) *For ever.*] *To the day of eternity*; one endless day, without night.—'The difficulty' (16) 'is said to affect, chiefly, unteachable, and unsteady men, whose prejudices dispose them for admitting the truth, or whose levity prevents their due solicitude to retain it; but not persons of humble and teachable minds, resolute in pursuing and maintaining the truth. And the remedy prescribed, is, not to lay aside the Scriptures' (or the parts specially meant), on account of their obscurity, as some would persuade us to do, but a concern to "grow in grace." Doddr. SCOTT.

(18.) *Grace.*] This word is of frequent occurrence. In the great concern of man's salvation no word has a richer meaning. But while the general idea of the term is everywhere retained, there are several shades of difference in the signification, as used in different passages. Its primary and more usual sense is, the favor of God to sinners. "By grace ye are saved."—But as the Gospel is the channel through which this fountain pours forth its exuberant streams, it is called not only the Gospel of the grace of God, but grace itself.—And as the Gospel is rendered effectual only by the aids of the Holy Spirit, therefore his influences have received the name of grace.—But in this text "grace" has a still different meaning. Christians are exhorted "to grow in grace," which would not be practicable in any of the senses of the word already given. By "grace," here, we must understand, the principle of new life, implanted in regeneration, a sense of the word much in use among us, but rather unusual in the Scriptures. When the apostle exhorts Christians to grow in grace, it is the same as if he had said, increase in holiness, or advance in piety. And it would not be easy to select a subject of greater importance to all professors of religion. If comfort and usefulness here, and the degree of our felicity and glory in heaven, will be proportioned to our growth in grace, then the subject possesses an intrinsic importance, which should command the attention and deeply interest the feelings of all. ALEXANDER.—'This doxology belongs with undeniable clearness to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is an act of devotion, ascribing to the Savior that honor, which reason and scripture-example show to be properly attributed only to the Divine Majesty.' J. P. SURRA.



AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
**FIRST EPISTLE GENERAL OF JOHN,**  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. T. Reynolds.)

THOUGH the continued tradition of the church attests, that this epistle came from the apostle *John*, yet other evidence will confirm the certainty of that tradition. It should seem, the penman was one of the apostolical college, by the sensible, palpable assurance he had of the truth of the Mediator's Person in his human nature, *v. 1*. He here notices the evidence the Lord gave Thomas of his resurrection, recorded by *John*. And he must have been one of the disciples present, when the Lord came, on the same day in which He arose from the dead, and showed them his hands and his side, *John 20:20*. But, that we may be assured which apostle this was, there is scarcely a critic or competent judge of diction, or style of argument and spirit, but will adjudge this epistle to the writer of that gospel that bears the name of the apostle *John*. They wonderfully agree in the titles and characters of the Redeemer; (*the Word, the Life, the Light; his name was the Word of God*. Compare *1 John 1:1*. and *ch. 5:7*. with *John 1:1*. and *Rev. 19:13*.) in the commendation of God's love to us, (*1 John 3:1*. and *ch. 4:9*. *John 3:16*.) in speaking of our regeneration, or being born of God; (*1 Epist. 3:9*. *ch. 4:7*. and *ch. 5:1*. *John 3:5*, *6*.) and in the allusion to, or application of, that passage in that gospel, which alone relates the issuing of water and blood out of the Redeemer's opened side, *ch. 5:6*. Thus the epistle plainly appears to flow from the same pen that gospel did. Now I know not that the text, or the intrinsic history of any of the gospels, gives us such assurance of its writer or penman, as that ascribed to *John* plainly does; for, who is this disciple, *ch. 21:24*. but he concerning whom Peter asked, *What shall this man do?* And concerning whom the Lord answered, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* *v. 22*. And who, in *v. 20*. is described by these three characters; 1. *That he is the disciple whom Jesus loved; the Lord's peculiar friend*. 2. *That he also leaned on his breast at supper*. 3. *That he said unto him, Lord, who is he that betrayeth Thee?* As sure, then, as that disciple was *John*, so sure is it that the gospel and epistle came from the beloved *John*.

It is styled *general*, as being not inscribed to any particular church; it is, as a circular letter, sent to divers churches, (some say of Parthia,) to confirm their steadfast adherence to the Lord Christ, and the sacred doctrine concerning his Person and office, against seducers; and to instigate them to adorn that doctrine by love to God and man; and particularly to each other, as being descended from God, united by the same Head, and travelling toward the same eternal life. HENRY.

On the similarity of sentiment and expression between this epistle and *St. John's* gospel,\* and in full confirmation that he was the writer, though his name is not prefixed to it, see *Notes, Mat. 4:18—22. 10:1—4. 17:1, 2. 20:20—23. 26:30—35. Mark 5:35—43, v. 37. 9:38—40. Luke 9:46—56. John 13:18—30. 19:25—27. 20:1—10. 21:18—23. Acts 3:1—11. 4:13—22. Gal. 2:6—10*.—From two expressions in *ch. 2*; 'Because ye have known Him that is from the beginning;' and 'It is the last time;' several learned moderns have concluded, that it was written just before the destruction of Jerusalem, and to the Jewish converts exclusively; but it has been the more general opinion, that it was written much later than that event, and not long before the book of Revelation. (*Note, Rev. 6:1, 2*.) The texts on which the former opinion is grounded, do not seem to require, or even admit of that interpretation, which these learned men put upon them, (*Note, 2:18, 19*.) and there is not the least intimation of any distinction between Jewish and Gentile converts, in the whole epistle. So that the term, GENERAL, or CATHOLIC, strictly and properly belongs to it. For it appears, to me at least, the more probable opinion, that it was written towards the close of the apostle's life, after the death of all the other apostles; and that it was intended as a circular letter, or a general address, to all the Christian churches, which was known to come from the only surviving apostle. The authoritative yet affectionate manner, in which the writer addresses his dear children, favors this conclusion; (*Note, 2:1, 2*.) and the heretics, or antichrists, whom he evidently intended to oppose, came forward much more openly, at this time, than at an earlier period. It is generally allowed, that they who denied the real Deity of Christ; they who explained away his proper humanity, and the reality of his sufferings and death, as an atoning sacrifice, and those who taught their followers, that believers, being 'saved by grace,' were not required to obey the commandments of God, were the principal antichrists. These were branched out into a variety of sub-divisions called by different names, such as Ebionites, Cerinthians, Docetæ, or Phantasiastæ, Gnostics, Nicolaitans, &c. on which ecclesiastical writers have enlarged abundantly. The apostle, however, did not name any of them, and his language was suited to refute and expose many other heretical sentiments, both of ancient and modern times; and in that view the epistle is highly interesting to us. He expatiates also on the love of God to us, as shown in the salvation of his Son; and, again and again, most pathetically enforces on believers love to each other, as shown in its practical effects, by almost every motive imaginable. This, I suppose, has given occasion to the general opinion of his being himself of a most loving disposition, even more so than the other apostles. Our Lord, however, called him, and James his brother, *Boanerges*; (*Note, Mark 3:13—19*.) and the faithful, plain, and even sharp manner, in which he speaks of hypocrites and false teachers, sufficiently illustrates the reason for which that name was given.—He also lays down various marks and evidences, by which Christians might be distinguished, both by themselves and others, from self-deceivers and hypocrites.†

SCOTT.

* The coincidences are traced as follows by Macknight.		Ed.	
Epistle.	Gospel.	Epistle.	Gospel.
Ch. 1:1. - - - - -	Ch. 1:1,14. 4:14.	3:1. - - - - -	1:12.
2:5. - - - - -	- - - - - 14:23.	2. - - - - -	17:21.
6. see 3:24. 4:13,16.	15:4.	8. - - - - -	3:44.
8. - - - - -	- - - - - 13:34.	13. - - - - -	15:20.
3:11. - - - - -	- - - - - 13:34.	4:9. - - - - -	3:16.
2:8. - - - - -	- - - - - 1:5,9.	12. - - - - -	1:18.
10. - - - - -	- - - - - 11:10.	5:13. - - - - -	20:31.
13,14. - - - - -	- - - - - 17:3.	14. - - - - -	14:14.
29. Sec 3:3. 5:1. - - -	- - - - - 3:35.	20. - - - - -	17:2.

† His leading design is, "to demonstrate the vanity of faith, separate from morality, to soothe and refine the warm and over-zealous tempers of the Christians to whom he writes, into that amiable charity and love he himself was so eminent and illustrious for, and to guard and arm them against the snares and efforts of *antichrist*, the grand apostate, and seducer of the Christian church; and all endued with his spirit." DODDR.

'Sec. 1. Asserts the true Divinity and humanity of Christ, in opposition to the false teachers, and urges the union of faith and holiness of life, as necessary to enable Christians to enjoy communion with God, *ch. 1:1—7*. Sec. 2. Shows that all have sinned, and explains the doctrine of Christ's propitiation, *ch. 1:3—2:2*. whence the apostle illustrates the marks of true faith, obeying the commandments, and sincere love of the brethren, and shows that the love of the world is inconsistent with the love of God, *ch. 2:3—17*. Sec. 3. Asserts Jesus to be the same person with Christ, in opposition to the false teachers who denied it, *13—29*. Sec. 4. On the privileges of true believers, their happiness and duties, and the marks by which they are known to be the sons of God, *ch. 3*. Sec. 5. A mark to know one sort of antichrist,—the not confessing that Christ has come in the flesh, *ch. 4:1—3*. Also marks for distinguishing false Christians, as, love of the world, *v. 4—6*. want of brotherly love, *v. 7—12*. denying Christ to be the Son of God, *v. 13—15*. and a recommendation of brotherly love, from the consideration of the love of God in giving his Son for sinners, *v. 16—21*. Sec. 6. Shows the connexion between faith in Christ, regeneration, love to God and his children, obedience to his commandments, and victory over the world,

and that Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God, able to save us, and to hear the prayers we make for ourselves and others, *ch. 5:1—16*. The conclusion, in a summary of the whole, shows that a sinful life is inconsistent with true Christianity; asserts the divinity of Christ; and cautions believers against idolatry, *v. 17—21*. This epistle, especially, contains marks by which Christians may soberly examine themselves, whether they be in the faith.' T. H. HORNE.

'J. P. Smith shows, that the commencing paragraph of this epistle, recognises the pre-existent state, and the divine nature of the Messiah, coinciding with the declarations of the gospel by the same apostle. He also points out other expressions in these epistles [*John's*], referring to a divine nature in the Person of the Messiah. 1. Obedience to his commands as those of the One Supreme Lawgiver, *ch. 2:3—6. 3:22. 5:2, 3. 2*. Expressions occur which strongly imply that the Savior's existence among men, was an act of condescension from a previous state, *ch. 4:2. 3:8. 4:9, 10:14. ep. 7. 3*. That Christ and the Father are ONE, in nature, perfections, and honor, *2:22, 23. 4*. That our holy and happy union with the True One, is, in fact, our union, by the living principle of religion, with the Savior Himself, *5:19, 20*.'

'The uniform tone of reverential awe, in which the Person of our blessed Redeemer is alluded to, throughout the apostolical epistles, is a circumstance which those who are disposed to object to the doctrine of his divine nature, should seriously consider. The intimacy of friendship to which the disciples of our Lord were admitted, appears not, for a moment, to have trenched upon their reverential adoration of Him. Above all, we find that sentiment most strongly marked in the writings of the beloved apostle *John*. The unequivocal assertions of our blessed Savior's divinity, contained in his epistles and his gospel, afford some of the strongest scriptural proofs of that important doctrine. But that such an impression should take complete hold of a mind, which had been permitted to trace the object of its reverence, through the humble detail of private life [to his crucifixion], can be accounted for only, from the evidence, confirmatory of that impression, having been of too decided a character to be shaken by even that critical and perilous act. Certain it is, no misgivings, or interventions of doubt on this subject, ever seem for one instant to be suggested to that apostle's mind.' SHUTTLEWORTH.



## CHAP. I.

1 He describeth the Person of Christ, in whom we have eternal life, by a communion with God: 5 to which we must adjoin holiness of life, to testify the truth of that our communion and profession of faith, as also to assure us of the forgiveness of our sins by Christ's death.

**T**HAT which was from the <sup>a</sup>beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen <sup>b</sup>with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have <sup>c</sup>handled, of the Word of life;

2 (For the Life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal <sup>d</sup>Life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us:

a Ju. 1:1, &c. b 2 Pet. 1:16. c Lu. 24:39. d Jn. 17:3.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. The apostle omits his name and character, either out of humility, or as willing the Christian reader should be swayed by the light and weight of the things written, rather than by the name that might recommend them. And so he begins,

1. With an account or character of the Mediator's Person. He is the great Subject of the Gospel; the Foundation and Object of our faith and hope. He should be well known; and He is represented here, (1.) *As the Word of Life, v. 1.* It is intimate, He is the Word of some Person; that is, of God the Father. *He is the Word of God,* so He is intimated to issue from the Father, as truly (though not in the same manner) as a word from a speaker. But He is not a mere vocal word, but a vital one; *the Word of Life;* the living Word; and thereupon, (2.) *As eternal Life.* His duration shows his excellency. He was from eternity; and so is, in scripture-account, necessary, essential, uncreated life. That the apostle speaks of his eternity, as *from everlasting*, seems evident, in that he speaks of Him as He was in and from the beginning, when with the Father, before his manifestation to

us, yea, before the making of all things that were made, as John 1:2, 3. So that He is the eternal, vital, intellectual Word of the eternal, living Father. (3.) *As life manifested, v. 2.* manifested in the flesh; manifested to us. Here were condescension and kindness indeed, that eternal Life (a Person of eternal, essential life) should come to visit mortals, and to procure eternal life for them, and then confer it on them!

2. With the evidence and convictive assurances the apostle and his brethren had of the Mediator's presence and converse in the world, there were sufficient demonstrations of the reality of his abode here, and of the excellency and dignity of his Person in the way of his manifestation. *The Life* was clothed with flesh; and, as such, gave sensible proof of its existence and transactions here. The Divine Life, or Word incarnate, presented and evinced itself to the very senses of the apostles. As, (1.) *To their ears, v. 1, 3.* The apostles not only heard of Him, but heard Him Himself. And it was meet, they who were to be his representatives and imitators to the world, should be personally acquainted with his ministrations. (2.) *To their eyes, v. 1—3.* The Word would become visible; not only be heard, but be seen; seen publicly, privately, at distance and at nearest approach; which may be intimated in the expression, *with our eyes;* with all the use and exercise we could make of our eyes. We saw Him in his life and ministry; in his transfiguration on the mount, hanging, bleeding, dying and dead, on the cross; and after his return from the grave and resurrection from the dead. His apostles must be eyewitnesses as well as earwitnesses of Him, Acts 1:21, 22. *And we were eyewitnesses of his majesty, 2 Pet. 1:16.* (3.) *To their internal sense; to the eyes of their mind; for so* (possibly) may the next clause be interpreted, *which we have looked upon,* the same with what the apostle says in his Gospel, *ch. 1:14. And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father.* The word is not applied to the immediate object of the eye, but that was rationally collected from

what they saw. The senses are to be the informers of the mind. (4.) *To their hands and sense of feeling; And our hands have handled, touched, and felt, of the Word of Life.* This, surely, refers to the full conviction our Lord afforded his apostles of the truth, reality, solidity, and organization of his body, after his resurrection from the dead; alluding, probably, to the case of Thomas in particular. The invisible Life and Word was no despiser of the testimony of sense. Sense, in its place and sphere, is a mean God has appointed, and the Lord Christ has employed, for our information. *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, v. 3.* The apostles could not be deceived in such long and various exercise of their sense. The rejection of the Christian revelation is at last resolved into the rejection of sense itself; *He upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed them not who had seen Him after He was risen, Mark 16:14.*

3. With a solemn assertion and attestation of these grounds and evidences of the Christian truth and doctrine, the apostles publish these assurances for our satisfaction, *v. 2. That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, v. 3.* It became the apostles to open to the disciples the evidence by which they were led. Wisdom and integrity obliged them to demonstrate, that it was not either private fancy, or a cunningly devised fable, that they presented to the world. Evident truth would open their mouths, and force a public profession, Acts 4:20. It concerned the disciples to be well assured of the truth of the institution they had embraced. They should see the evidences of their holy religion. It fears not the light, nor the most judicious examination. It is able to afford rational conviction, and solid persuasion of mind and conscience, Col. 2:1, 2.

4. With the reason of the apostle's exhibiting and asserting this summary of sacred faith, and this breviate of evidence attending it. This reason is twofold:

(1.) That the believers of it may be advanced to the same happiness with them,

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. (Note, John 1:1—3.) The apostle began this epistle, in the same abrupt manner as he did his gospel, and without any particular address or salutation; and he wrote as a witness or a messenger, in a sententious, declaratory style, and not in an argumentative manner.—If we then understand him to mean Christ, as the Son of God, (and it does not appear what else could be meant,) 'from the beginning,' must denote *from eternity*; for if the *creation and time* were coeval, 'That which was from the beginning,' when 'God created the heavens and the earth,' must have been eternal. *Gen. 1:1. Prov. 8:22—30.* Indeed the same expression, in some places, may signify the first opening of the dispensation of the Gospel; (2:7, 8.) yet this sense does not appear at all consistent with the context in this place. 2 *Thess. 2:13, 14.* The obvious meaning, however, is this; that essential Good, which 'was from the beginning with God, and was God,' by whom all things were created, 'had become flesh,' to dwell on earth among men, and the apostle and his brethren, especially the other apostles, had heard Him deliver his doctrine, and publish his salvation; they had seen Him with their eyes, while they 'beheld his glory, as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' (Note, John 1:14.) They had not only viewed Him with a transient glance, but had accompanied Him, and contemplated Him, both in respect of the wisdom and holiness of his character, the power of his miracles, and his abundant love and mercy, during some years; till they saw Him expire on the cross, and afterwards risen from the dead; and 'their hands had handled Him,' while He condescended to give them this full proof of his resurrection, that they might witness it to others. *Luke 24:35—43. John 20:19—29.* This divine Person, 'the Word of life,' 'the Word of God,' became incarnate, that He might be 'the Life of men,' and this 'great mystery of godliness' the apostle declared to mankind. (Notes, 5:11, 12, 20, 21. 1 *Tim. 3:16.*)—Indeed, he wrote to assure his Christian brethren throughout the world, yea, and all future ages, of the reality of Christ's human nature, which some in those days denied, and that of his divine nature, which his resurrection fully demonstrated. *Rom. 1:1—4.* For 'the Life,' the Source and Author of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal, who possessed 'life in Himself,' necessarily and unchangeably, and who might therefore be called 'the Life;' life being essential to Him, and derived from Him to all creatures; even He had been 'manifested in the flesh,' to be the Life of fallen men. (Notes, John 1:4—9. 8:12. 11:20—27. 14:4—6.) And when 'the Son of God,' the essential Life of all creatures, was thus manifested, the apostles were peculiarly favored, in being chosen to be his attendants, and to see Him, during his ministry, at his death, after his resurrection, and at his ascension; that they might bear witness to others of these things, and show unto them 'that eternal Life,' which had always subsisted with the Father, as 'One with Him,' and yet distinct from Him, One in the undivided essence of the Godhead, but possessing distinct personality, as

'the Only-begotten of the Father,' by an eternal and incomprehensible generation; *John 1:14, 18. 3:16.* and who 'in the fulness of time' was manifested, as the Author and Giver of eternal life to sinners, through the redemption of his blood, and by the communication of his new-creating Spirit. The apostles did not, therefore, proceed on report, or insufficient proof, when they went to the nations, and encountered all hardships, dangers, and persecutions, in preaching the Gospel to them. (Note, 2 *Pet. 1:16—18.*) But they declared the things concerning the Person, doctrine, and salvation of Christ, which they had seen and heard, and had the most abundant opportunity of learning from his own lips; and of which they had been assured by his miracles, resurrection, and ascension. (1) *That which.*] *Ho.*—The second Person in the sacred Trinity is intended. Thus He says, 'I and the Father are one;' *Hen, not heis.* (Note, *John 10:26—31, v. 30.*) And thus the Evangelist, 'That holy thing which shall be born of thee.' *Luke 1:35.* SCOTT.

(1—3.) *J. P. Smith* shows, that the expression, "from the beginning," can be attached only to the first term in the series, and submits the following as an attempt at a very close version: "With respect to the Word of Life, (for indeed the Life has been manifested, and we have seen [it] and bear witness [to it], and we announce to you that eternal Life which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us,) we announce to you Him who was from the beginning, whom we have heard, whom we have with our eyes beheld, whom we have gazed upon, and our hands have touched; in order that ye also may have a communion [of blessings] with us; and indeed ours [is] the communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." HENRY, *abr.*—From the beginning.] From the first pronouncement of the Gospel. Bp. Bull and Carpz. and others, understand it of the beginning of the world, as 3:8. but this though true in one sense, cannot, on account of the context, be considered *the truth here meant.* BL.—V. 2. 'The heresy most conspicuous in the age of the apostles, was that which denied, not the *Divine*, but the *human* nature of the Redeemer. And so far from being called upon to prove Him to be very *God*, a point universally acknowledged, the great difficulty seems to have been, to convince the first polluters of the Christian faith, that He was also, really and actually, very *man*. It was not until after the lapse of time had subdued, by distance, the astounding effect produced by his miraculous career on earth, that human audacity dared to speak of Him as a merely mortal preacher, or even as the most glorious of created beings.' SHUTTLEWORTH, in *Henry, abr.*—'One credible person steadily bearing testimony to the power of divine grace, in his own conversion, will have a greater effect in converting others, than the most learned and eloquent declaration of the same truth from a thousand *unconverted* preachers.' ADAMS.

V. 3, 4. They shared the special love and favor of God the Father; all his perfections ensured their happiness; they were made 'partakers of his holiness,' and even 'of a divine nature;' and they had the assured



and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

4 And these things write we unto you, that *your joy may be full.*

5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is *light*, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk *in the light*, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood *of Jesus Christ his Son* cleanseth us from all sin.

e Jn. 17:21.  
f Jn. 15:11.  
g Jn. 1:4,9.

1 Th. 6:16.  
h Jn. 12:35.  
i Ep. 1:7. He. 9:

14. 1 Pe. 1:19.  
Re. 1:5.

v. 3. The apostle means not personal fellowship or consociation in the same church-administrations, but such as is consistent with personal distance from each other. It is communion with heaven, and in blessings that come from thence, and tend thither; there is a fellowship or communion that runs through the whole church of God. There may be some personal distinctions and peculiarities, but there is a communion belonging to all saints, from the highest apostle to the lowest believer. Now that believers may be ambitious of this communion, that they may be instigated to retain and hold fast the faith that is the mean of such communion, that the apostles also may manifest their love to the disciples in assisting them to the same communion with themselves, they indicate what it is, and where it is; *And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ.* 2 Jn. v. 3. We have now such supernatural conversation with God and the Lord Christ, as is an earnest and foretaste of our everlasting abode with them, and enjoyment of them, in the heavenly glory. See whither the Gospel revelation tends,—to advance us far above sin and earth, and to carry us to blessed communion with the Father and the Son. See for what end the eternal Life was made flesh,—that He might advance us to eternal life, in communion with the Father and Him-

self. See how far *they* live beneath the dignity, use, and end of the Christian faith and institution, who have not spiritual, blessed communion with the Father and the Son Jesus Christ.

(2.) That believers may be enlarged and advanced in holy joy, v. 4. The gospel-dispensation is not properly a dispensation of fear, sorrow, and dread, but of peace and joy. It should be joy to us, that the eternal Son should come to seek and save us; that He has made a full atonement for our sins; that He has conquered sin and death and hell; that He lives, as our Intercessor and Advocate with the Father; and that He will come again, to perfect and glorify his persevering believers. Believers should rejoice in their happy relation to the Father, and to the Son, as being members of his beloved body, and co-heirs with Himself; in the pardon of their sins, in the sanctification of their natures, in the adoption of their persons, in the prospect of grace and glory that will be revealed at the return of their Lord and Head from heaven. Were they confirmed in their holy faith, how would they rejoice! *The disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost*, Acts 13:52.

V. 5—7. The apostle, having declared the truth and dignity of the Author of the Gospel, brings a message from Him; from which a just conclusion is to be drawn for the consideration and conviction of professors of religion.

1. The message, v. 5. Christ being the principal Person spoken of in the preceding context, is the next antecedent also to whom the article *him* can relate. The wisdom and present dispensation of the Lord Jesus is, to send his messages to us by persons like ourselves; and it was the ambition of the apostles, faithfully to deliver the messages they had received. The message relates to the nature of God, whom we are to serve, and with whom we should covet all indulged communion. *That God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all*, v. 5. It asserts the excellency of the divine nature. He is all that beauty and perfection that can be represented to us by light; self-active, uncompounded spirituality, purity, wisdom, holiness, and glory; there is no defect or imperfection, nothing contrary to absolute excellency, no mutability or capacity of any decay in Him; *In Him is no darkness at all*,

v. 5. Or it may more immediately relate to what is usually called *the moral perfection of the divine nature*; what we are to imitate, or what is more directly to influence us in our gospel-work. And so it will comprehend the holiness of God, the absolute purity of his nature and will; his penetrative knowledge, (particularly of hearts,) his jealousy and justice, which burn as a most bright and vehement flame. Thus it is the prerogative of the Christian revelation, to bring us the most noble, the most august, and agreeable account of the blessed God; such as is most suitable to the light of reason, and what is demonstrable thereby; most suitable to the magnificence of his works round about us, and to the nature and office of Him that is the Supreme. What more comprehensive or perfect conception of Him could be concluded in one word than in this, *God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all?* Then,

2. A just conclusion to be drawn from this message; and that for the consideration and conviction of professors of religion. (1.) Of such professors as have no true fellowship with God; *If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.* To walk, in Scripture, is to order and frame the course and actions of the moral life, that is, of the life so far as it is capable of subjection to the divine law. *To walk in darkness*, is to live and act according to such ignorance, error, and erroneous practice, as are contrary to the fundamental dictates of holy religion. Now, as to such, their practice gives their profession and pretences the lie. They belie God; for He holds no heavenly fellowship or intercourse with unholy souls. They belie themselves; for they have no such communications from God, nor accesses to Him. (2.) Of such as are near to God; *But if we walk in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* As the blessed God is the eternal, boundless Light, and the Mediator is, from Him, the Light of the world; so the Christian institution is the great luminary that appears in our sphere, and shines here below. A conformity to this in spirit and practice, demonstrates fellowship or communion with God. They that so walk, show that they know God, that they have received of the Spirit of God, and

hope and blessed earnestness of enjoying Him, as their all-sufficient and eternal Portion. Moreover, they had a free access to Him, as their Father, and, a sacred union having been formed between Him and their souls, through Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, a most honorable and happy communion and intercourse was continually carried on between the glorious God and them; while they poured out their inmost souls before Him, made Him their Hope and Confidence, [centred their interests not in self,—but in Him,] aimed to do his will and manifest his glory, celebrated his praises, were his devoted worshippers, and sought their felicity in his favor and acceptance; while in return, He graciously heard their supplications, accepted their persons and services, communicated to them his holy consolations, showed them his will, supplied them with wisdom and strength suited to their wants, and took on Him the care of all their concerns.—This 'fellowship with the Father,' arose from their 'fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ.' This was no enthusiastic imagination, or hypocritical pretence, as many were disposed to represent it; nor was it an unsatisfactory or inefficacious transaction, as others might suppose, who did not deny its reality; but they had the happy experience of it in their souls; manifested the excellency of it in their lives, and shared with their brethren, in this sacred communion, such comforts and substantial satisfaction, as made them ample amends for all their losses, sufferings, and hardships. Being therefore assured, that this alone was sufficient to make men happy, and knowing the inexhaustible 'fulness of Christ,' and his inestimable salvation: they desired exceedingly, that their fellow-sinners would come and share their felicity; and, leaving the lying vanities of the world, or the empty forms and superstitions of false religion, would seek with them this 'fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.' The same principle induced the apostle John to write this epistle to the churches, that, rejecting the heretical doctrines of false teachers, 'having fellowship with Christ,' and with those who adhered to the apostle's doctrine, and avoiding whatever could interrupt their communion with God, their holy joy might be complete, and they might live in actual possession of those invaluable privileges, to which they were called by the Gospel.—The 'communion of the Holy Spirit' is not particularly mentioned, in this most interesting passage; because the communion of believers with the Father and the Son, and their loving communion with each other, are effected and maintained by the communication, and influences of the Holy Spirit, who is the immediate Author of their spiritual life, hope, love, joy, peace, and holy affections,

the bond of union between Christ and his mystical body, and between every member of it and all the others; the great blessing communicated from the Father's love, and through the incarnation and mediation of the Son, and the Seal and pledge of all other blessings, in time and to eternity, and the preparation for them. As the Holy Spirit is, therefore, the great Agent in our 'communion with the Father and the Son,' it was not necessary, that communion with Him should be separately mentioned. 2 Cor. 13:11—14. (3) *Fellowship.*] Phil. 1:3—6.—The leading idea is *participation*; and *communication*, and reciprocal *intercourse*, and expressions of *friendship*, as resulting from it. Gen. 5:21—21.

V. 5—7. The substance of this declaration is, 'That God is Light,' pure, perfect intellect, an all-pervading, all-penetrating Spirit, essential knowledge, wisdom, holiness, love, and felicity; so that 'in Him is no darkness at all;' no ignorance, error, moral evil, or defect in felicity; and therefore none of these can be derived from Him. Jam. 1:13—18. As this is the nature of God, the doctrines and precepts, which come from Him, must be of the same kind; true religion may be distinguished from counterfeit by this criterion, and especially his spiritual worshippers, who really have communion with Him, may be known by their conformity to Him. (5) *Light.*] Notes, Ps. 36:5—9. 84:11, 12. Is. 60:15—22. Rev. 21:22—27. *Light* is the emblem of knowledge, holiness, and happiness,—darkness, of ignorance, error, wickedness, and misery. (Ps. 97:12. Is. 2:5. Notes, Mal. 4:2, 3. Acts 26:16—18. Col. 1:9—14. 2 Pet. 2:4—9.)

(5) *Message.*] 'If we unite the senses of declaration, precept, and message, we shall, I think, attain the full sense.' BLOOMF.—*God is light.*] 'This expresses his most clear and perfect knowledge, for light discovers all things; his unspotted holiness, for light is incapable of any pollution; and his sovereign goodness and happiness; for light, joined with vital heat, inspires pleasure into universal nature.' See Bates. DONDR.—'Darkness implies all imperfection, principally ignorance, sinfulness, and misery. Light is the purest, the most penetrating, the most useful, and the most diffusive of all God's creatures; it is therefore a very proper emblem of the purity, perfection, and goodness of the Divine nature. God is to human souls what the light is to the world.' DR. A. CLARKE.

(6) *Walk in darkness.*] 'I. e. go on in sin.' DODDR.—(7) *Cleanseth.*] 'The efficacy of atonement, however, is conditional; and the sins here meant, must be sins of infirmity and frailty, heartily repented of and entirely forsaken.' BLOOMF.



8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

### CHAP. II.

1 He comforteth them against the sins of infirmity. 3 Rightly to know God is to keep his commandments, 9 to love our brethren, 15 and not to love the world. 18 We must beware of seducers: 20 from whose deceits the godly are safe, preserved by perseverance in faith, and holiness of life.

MY little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

1 K. 6:46. Job Ps. 32:5. 1 Co. 6:11. —  
25:4. Ec. 7:20. Pr. 23:13. Ro. 8:31.  
Ja. 3:2. 1 Ps. 51:2. He. 7:25.  
k Job 33:27,28.

that the divine impress or image is stamped on their souls. Then we have fellowship one with another; they with us, and we with them, and both with God, in his blessed or beatific communications to us. And this is one,—that his Son's blood, or death, is applied or imputed to us; *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* His blood applied to us discharges us from the guilt of all sin; and so far we stand righteous in his sight; and not only so, but his blood procures for us those sacred influences, by which sin is to be subdued more and more, till it is quite abolished, Gal. 3: 13, 14.

V. 8—10. The apostle, having supposed, that even they of this heavenly communion have yet their sin, proceeds here to justify that supposition; and this, by showing in two particulars the dreadful consequences

PRACT. OBS. Our most lively gratitude is due to God for that fully authenticated revelation, which He has given us concerning 'the Word of life.' But what words can express the praises of the love of God, in causing 'the life to be manifested,' even 'the eternal life, which was with the Father,' in order that we, justly condemned rebels, who were dead in sin, might live by Him! This appears the more admirable, when we consider the deep abasement, and the agonizing sufferings, to which this manifestation exposed the incarnate Word and 'Son of God;' nay, how his very humiliation has given occasion to the children of men to rob Him of his glory, to deny his Deity, and to speak of Him whom 'all angels worship,' as if He were altogether such an one as themselves!—Faithful and zealous ministers, though they have not 'seen and heard' 'the Lord of glory,' with their outward senses, may yet declare to men what they have known and experienced of his mercy, truth, and power; and as He became incarnate, that the chief of sinners, believing in Christ, 'might have fellowship with Him,' and share in the love of the Father through Him, for their everlasting felicity; so they are willing to labor and suffer, that their fellow-criminals may be brought to 'have fellowship with them,' in their most precious blessings. 2 Cor. 5:13—21. 6:1, 2.—This 'fellowship with the Father; and his Son Jesus Christ,' is 'the secret of the Lord,' which is peculiar to those who fear Him; and ungodly men must therefore treat it, as the

V. 8—10. While the apostle strenuously insisted on the necessity of an habitual holy walk, as the effect and evidence of the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus, and of communion with Him; He guarded with as much care against self-righteous pride, as against an antinomian perversion of the Gospel. If any professed Christians, while they seemed to 'walk in the light,' should be so elated with a conceit of their own attainments, as to say, 'that they had no sin,' but were perfectly pure, and as holy in heart and life as the law of God required; they were certainly deceived in a most awful manner; nay, they virtually denied the truth of the whole Gospel, which everywhere speaks of men as sinners; so that the Word of God was not in them, by faith, or by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. 5:9, 10. Ps. 51:4. Rom. 3:3, 4.—In this latter verse, the apostle opposed such persons as totally denied their sinfulness, their need of mercy, or their desert of wrath, by whatever method they deceived themselves into a confidence that they had never sinned, or that they had, in some way, made amends for their offences, or could do it, and were not justly deserving of punishment. 'Have patience with me and I will pay thee all.' Mat. 18:26. But in the former, he showed the gross error of those who imagined, that, through the Gospel, they were so perfectly sanctified, as to have no spot or blemish of sin in them; the present tense, 'have no sin,' being used in the eighth verse, and the past, in the tenth, 'have not sinned.' Lev. 26:40—42. 1 Kings 8:33,34. Neh. 9:2, 3. Job 33:27—30. Ps. 51:3—6. P. O. Dan. 9. SCOTT.

(9.) 'Confessing, here, so evidently refers to God, that one can hardly forbear being astonished it should ever have been urged in behalf of auricular confession.'

of denying it. 1. If we say, *We have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, v. 8.* We must beware of deceiving ourselves in denying or excusing our sins. The more we see them, the more we shall esteem and value the remedy. *If we deny them, the truth is not in us;* either the truth that is contrary to such denial; (we lie in denying our sin;) or, the truth of religion is not in us. The Christian religion is the religion of sinners; of such as have sinned, and in whom sin in some measure still dwells. 2. *If we say, We have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and his Word is not in us, v. 10.* The denial of our sin not only deceives ourselves, but reflects dishonor on God. It challenges his veracity. God has given his testimony to the continued sin and sinfulness of the world, by his providing a sufficient, effectual Sacrifice for sin, that will be needed in all ages; and to the continued sinfulness of believers themselves, by requiring them continually to confess their sins, and apply themselves by faith to the blood of that Sacrifice. Therefore, if we say either that we have not sinned, or do not yet sin, *the Word of God is not in us,* either in our minds, as to the acquaintance we should have with it, or in our hearts, as to the practical influence it should have upon us.

The apostle then instructs the believer in the way to the continued pardon of his sin. Here we have, 1. His duty in order thereto; *If we confess our sins, v. 9.* Penitent confession and acknowledgment of sin are the believer's business, and the means of his deliverance from his guilt. And 2. His encouragement thereto, and assurance of the happy issue. This is the veracity, righteousness, and clemency of God, to whom he makes such confession, v. 9. God is faithful to his covenant and Word, who has therein promised forgiveness to penitent, believing confessors. He is just to Himself and his glory, has provided such a Sacrifice, by which his righteousness is declared in the justification of sinners. He is just to

his promise to his Son, that those who come through Him shall be forgiven on his account. Isa. 53:11. He is clement and gracious also, and so will forgive, to the contrite confessor, all his sins, cleanse him from the guilt of all unrighteousness, and in due time deliver him from the power and practice of it.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. These verses relate to the concluding subject of the foregoing ch., in which the apostle proceeds on the supposition of the real Christian's sin. And here he gives them both dissuasion and support.

1. Dissuasion. He would leave no room for sin, v. 1. See the familiar and affectionate compellation with which he introduces his admonition; *My little children;* children, as having perhaps been begotten by his Gospel; *little children,* as being much beneath him in age and experience. *My little children;* as being dear to him in the bonds of the Gospel. Certainly the Gospel most prevailed where and when such ministerial love most abounded.

2. Support and relief in case of sin. *And (or but), if any man sin,* any of us, or of our aforesaid communion, v. 1. Believers themselves have yet their sins. There is a great distinction between sinners in the world; some are converted, others unconverted. Believers, as they have had an atonement applied to them at their entrance into a state of pardon and justification, so they have an Advocate in heaven still to continue to them that state, and procure their continued pardon and forgiveness. The original name is sometimes given to the Holy Ghost; and then it is rendered, *the Comforter;* He acts within us, by teaching us to intercede for ourselves. But here is an Advocate without us, in heaven and with the Father. The proper office and business of an advocate is with the judge. The Judge with whom our Advocate pleads, is, the Father; his Father and ours. He who was our Judge in the legal court of the vio-

delusion of a heated imagination. 5:9, 10. Ps. 25:14. John 14:21—24. 2 Pet. 1:19. Rev. 2:17. No doubt there are both enthusiasts and hypocrites, who are deceived, or mean to deceive others; yet that is not worth counterfeiting, either by Satan or wicked men, which in itself is of no value or reality. There are then those, who are warranted to say, 'Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ,' and they all desire to bring others to partake of the same blessedness.—It is the grand interest, as well as the duty of all men, to regard 'the message' sent to us by those, who 'declare that God is Light, and that in Him is no darkness at all;' for as his perfect felicity is inseparable from his perfect holiness, so our happiness must be proportioned to our sanctification. . . . No encouragement is therefore given in Scripture to any of those, 'who say they have not sinned,' or that they have no longer any sin to repent of, to be pardoned, or to be cleansed away. Let us then learn to plead guilty before God, and be humbly willing to know the worst of our case; relying wholly on his mercy and truth, through the righteousness of Christ, for a full and free forgiveness, let us trust in Him as 'a just God and a Savior,' and wait on Him 'to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,' till no spot or blemish remain in us, even in the judgment of our holy and merciful Father. Eph. 5:25—27. Col. 1: 21—23. Jude 22—25. SCOTT.

(10.) 'This text plainly implies, that Christianity does in effect assert, that we are all in a degenerate state; and consequently is a clear proof of the corruption of human nature.' DODDR.—'The expressions used here [in this ch.], and in the Gospel of St. John, Word, Life, Light, and others, show that the apostle had in view the philosophy of the Gnostics (Note, end of Rev. 9:), who used, or rather abused, those expressions, as technical terms of their philosophy.' T. H. HORNE.

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. It is probable John was the only surviving apostle, when he wrote this epistle: and his old age, and long-continued usefulness, faithfulness, and love to Christians, must have given him a kind of parental authority, throughout the whole church, as far as it adhered to the pure Gospel of Christ. It was therefore peculiarly proper for him, to address them as his spiritual family, whose welfare he had greatly at heart: and as most of them were young in years, compared with this beloved and truly venerable disciple, who probably was the oldest Christian on earth at that time; none ever could with such propriety adopt the endearing language of his Lord, and call his fellow-Christians, 'My little,' or my dear 'children,' as he did. John 13:33. The diminutive is commonly used by way of endearment, and to express peculiar affection.—Superficial speculators might here have been ready to charge the apostle with inconsistency, as if the latter part of the v. (1) had contradicted the former: but the state of a Christian in this world, is such, that encouragements 'after having sinned,' are as necessary as warnings against sin: for, through the remaining power of sin in his heart, the manifold snares of the world, and the power of Satan, 'he cannot always stand upright:'. . . and *despondency* is as ruin



2 And he is the <sup>b</sup> propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world.*

3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep <sup>c</sup> his commandments.

4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

6 He that saith he abideth <sup>d</sup> in him, ought himself also so to <sup>e</sup> walk, even as he walked.

b Ro. 3:25.      Jn. 14:15,23.      e Jn. 13:15.  
c Lu. 6:46.      d Jn. 13:4,5.

lated law, is our Father in the gospel-court of heaven and of grace. His throne or tribunal is the mercy-seat. And He that is our Father, is also our Judge; the Supreme Arbitrator of our state and circumstances, either for life or death, for time or eternity, Heb. 12:23. That believers may be encouraged to hope that their cause will go well, as their Judge is represented to them in the relation of a Father, so their Advocate is recommended to them on these considerations: (1.) By his Person and personal names; *Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father*; one anointed by the Father for the whole office of mediation, the whole work of salvation; and consequently for that of the Intercessor or Advocate. (2.) By his qualification for the office; *Jesus Christ the Righteous*; the Righteous One in the court and sight of the Judge. This is not so necessary in another advocate. But here the clients are guilty; and the Advocate must plead his own righteousness for the criminals. He has been righteous to the death, righteous for them; this the Judge will not

deny. On this score He pleads, that the clients' sins may not be imputed to them. (3.) By the plea He has to make, v. 2. In vain do the professors of Rome distinguish between an advocate of redemption, and an advocate of intercession, or a mediator of such different service. The Mediator of intercession, the Advocate for us, is the Mediator of redemption, the Propitiation for our sins. It is his propitiation that He pleads. We might suppose his blood had lost its efficacy, were no mention made of it in heaven since it was shed. But now we see it is of esteem there, since it is continually represented in the intercession of the great Advocate for the church of God. *He ever lives to make intercession for those that come to God through Him.* (4.) By the extent of his plea; the latitude of his propitiation,—*the whole world, v. 2.* not only for the past, or us present believers, but for the sins of all who shall hereafter believe on Him, or come to God through Him. As He is the only, so He is the universal Atonement and Propitiation, for all that are saved and brought home to God, and to his favor and forgiveness.

V. 3—6. These verses may seem to relate to eh. 1:7. between which and these verses there occurred an incidental discourse concerning the believer's duty and relief in case of sin, occasioned by the mention of one of the believer's privileges,—his being cleansed from sin by the Mediator's blood. In that verse, the apostle asserts the beneficial consequence of *walking in the light*. Here now succeeds the trial or test of our light and love:

1. Of our light, v. 3. Young Christians are apt to magnify their new light, and applaud their knowledge, especially if suddenly or in a short time communicated; and old ones are apt to suspect the sufficiency and fulness of their knowledge; they lament that they know God and Christ, and the rich contents of his Gospel, no more; but here is the evidence of the soundness of our knowledge, if it constrains us to *keep God's com-*

*mands*; a careful, conscientious obedience, shows the apprehension and knowledge of these things is graciously impressed on the soul; therefore it must follow, in the reverse, that *he that saith I know Him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him, v. 4.* A disobedient life is the confusion and shame of pretended religious knowledge; it gives the lie to such boasts and pretences, and shows that there is neither religion nor honesty in them.

2. Of our love, v. 5. *To keep the Word of God, or of Christ, is sacredly to attend thereto in all the conduct and motion of life; in him that does so is the love of God perfected.* Possibly, some may here understand *God's love to us*; and doubtless, his *love to us cannot be perfected* without our practical observance of *his Word*; no act of divine love, that terminates on us, obtains its proper tendency, issue, and effect, without our holy attendance to God's Word; but the phrase rather denotes here our love to God; so v. 15. *The love of (to) the Father, is not in him; so ch. 3:17. How dwelleth the love of (to) God in him?* Now light is to kindle love; and love must and will keep the Word of God; it inquires wherein the Beloved may be pleased and served, and finding He will be so by any observance of his declared will, there it employs and exerts itself; there love is demonstrated; there it has its perfect operation, and delight; and *hereby* (by this dutiful attendance to the will of God, or Christ) *we know that we are in Him, v. 5. we know that we belong to Him, and that we are united to Him by that Spirit which elevates and assists us to this obedience; and if we acknowledge our relation to Him, and our union with Him, it must have this continued enforcement on us, v. 6.* The Lord Christ was an Inhabitant of this world, and *walked* here below; here He gave a shining example of absolute obedience to God; they who profess to be on his side, and to abide with Him, must walk with Him, after his pattern and example. John 15:14.

ical to watchfulness, diligence, and holy obedience, as even *carnal security* itself. No man, on scriptural principles, can conclude himself to be any better than a hypocrite, who *habitually* commits sin because God is ready to forgive the penitent: but the fallen, who desire to arise and renew the combat, have abundant encouragement so to do. From the sinner's first conviction of guilt, to the end of the Christian's warfare by death, the general rule is applicable, that, 'if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; one, who has undertaken, and is fully qualified and authorized, to plead in the presence of God the Father, in behalf of every one who seeks for pardon, salvation, and all things pertaining to them, in his name, and in dependence on his meritorious intercession. (2) *Propitiation.* 4:10. Rom. 3:25. Heb. 9:5. Luke 13:13. Heb. 2:17.—See Ex. 25:20—22. Lev. 4:31. 5:6, 10, 18. Sept. The propitiation, or *appeasing sacrifice*, being provided by God Himself, as the grand display of his love to us, (Note, 4:9—12.) cannot be intended to *dispose Him to mercy*, as before *implacable*; but to render his mercy, to which He is infinitely propense, consistent with his justice and holiness, that it may be honorably displayed. SCOTT.

(1.) *These things.* 'I. e. concerning the readiness of God to forgive sins.—*If any man sin.* 'I. e. through the surprise of a violent temptation, and remaining infirmity of human nature.—*Advocate.* 'Perhaps nothing illustrates the matter more, than the residence of some eminent persons from distant provinces in the courts of great princes or states, whose business it was constantly to negotiate with them the affairs of those whom they represented, to vindicate them from any unjust aspersions, and to advance their interest to the utmost of their power.' DODDR.

(2.) 'The apostle's reasoning stands thus: "He who must be an advocate must first of all be a reconciliation for us: now, no saints can be a reconciliation for us; therefore no saints can be advocates." *Parkins, in Henry, abr.*—The apostle is to be understood as speaking only of all those who believe, whether Jews or Gentiles, over the whole world.' DODDR.—*Propitiation.* 'This word is nowhere found in the N. T. but in this passage, and in eh. 4:10. But it occurs often in the Sept.; it signifies a sacrifice of atonement. See Lev. 6:6, 7. Num. 5:3. Ex. 44:27.' *Williams.*—'The death of Christ, for aught we know, may exert an influence of some kind or other, wherever there are intelligent beings; but in respect to ourselves, and the world to which we belong, there is no room for doubt. It is agreeable to the uniform tenor of Scripture, that we are redeemed by the *blood of Christ*. Here is the hinge on which the whole system of Christianity turns. It is the death of Christ, as a propitiation for the sins of the world, which gives the Gospel its chief value, as a religion for sinners. By limiting the influence of Christ's death to his example, you not only set all our immortal hopes afloat, and blot out the glory of the Gospel, but you reflect upon the character of God, by imputing to Him the weakness of incurring so amazing an expense, without a sufficient end. Believe it, who will, that "He who was the *Brightness of the Father's glory*, and who made all things by the word of his power, condescended to assume our na-

ture and die upon the cross, merely to exhibit to the world the constancy of a martyr!'

Rev. Dr. W. B. SPRAGUE.

V. 3—6. The 'knowledge' of God, or of Christ, evidently signifies a believing, spiritual, and experimental acquaintance with Him, and a cordial acceptance of his salvation, ensuring their participation of it. Professed Christians would desire to *know*, or be *assured*, that their faith and experience were genuine, and distinguishable from those of all hypocrites; and, as the apostle and his brethren 'knew that they thus knew,' or had known 'Christ,' not by exact notions, or transient high affections, or miraculous powers, but by a disposition of heart, habitually, unreservedly, and willingly to keep his commandments; so any other man might know his profession to be sincere, and his knowledge of Christ spiritual and saving, by the same evidence. It is evident, that the obedience, here spoken of, is the humble, sincere, unreserved, and loving obedience of a believer in Christ; which is not perfect, but attended with continual repentance, and application to his atoning blood for pardon and acceptance; as well as with a constant dependence on the Holy Spirit for grace, to enable him in any measure to perform it. John 14:15—24. 15:3, 11. Yet, even this observance of the holy commandments of Christ, in imitation of his example, though far from real perfection, constitutes a degree of holiness and excellency, of which none but true Christians have any adequate conception; and which, if universal, would render the earth in no small degree like heaven itself. Rev. 20:4—6.—(3) *We do know, &c.* How astonishing is it, that when apostles so clearly speak of our *knowing* that we know Christ, and are in Him, and in a state of acceptance and peace with God; and when they so carefully show, in what way this may be *known*; Christian divines should, without discrimination or hesitation, speak of *assurance* in terms of bitter abhorrence. 'The demon of assurance.' Dr. Whitaker.—As if the *word* and the *thing* were both unscriptural and anti-scriptural. 20—25. Heb. 6:11, 12.—In fact, no man, who duly considers the difference between eternal happiness and eternal misery; who is aware of his danger of eternal damnation, and who recollects that he may be in heaven or hell, in a day or an hour, can be quiet, without some degree of assurance, that he shall go to everlasting happiness, not to everlasting misery. SCOTT.

(3.) *Know Him.* 'Whether Christ, or God the Father, be meant by *Him*, here, is not agreed; generally it is referred to Christ, the nearer antecedent; but the *latter* is supported by v. 5. It is at v. 6. (as Carpov observes) that Christ, and faith in Him, is spoken of.' BLOOMF.

(6.) 'Here is the standard of Christian character. A man may have his frames, and talk much about his experiences, and yet be no Christian. He may be liberal in his contributions; his name may stand in capitals on the list of the benefactors of his country or the church, and yet he be no Christian. But the man who follows the steps of Jesus, whose character is modelled after his image [whose will is identified with his]; who leads a life of meekness, patience, self-denial, toil, benevolence, and prayer, such as were seen in the life of Christ,—that man, and that only, is a Christian.' Rev. L. BACON.



7 Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment, which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you; which thing is true in him and in you, because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

11 But he that hateth his brother, is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

[Practical Observations.]

12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

f. Jn. 13:34.      i scandal.      k Ps. 25:11.  
g. R. 13:12.      j Pr. 4:15.      l. Lu. 24:47.  
h. 2 Pe. 1:9.      m. Jn. 12:35.      n. Ac. 10:43.

V. 7—11. This v. 7. may be supposed either to look backward to what immediately preceded; or forward to that law of fraternal love the apostle is now going to recommend; this is the message heard from the beginning, ch. 3: 11. and the old commandment, 2 John, 5. he is ready to give an instance of it himself in his affectionate appellation, *Brethren*; and so the precept of fraternal love is recommended.

1. An old one, v. 7. The precept of love must be as old as human nature; in the state of innocence, had human nature then been propagated, men must have loved one another, as being of one blood, made to dwell on the earth, as being God's offspring, and bearing his image. In the state of sin and promised recovery, they must love one another, as related to God their Maker, as related to each other by blood, and as partners in the same hope. When the Hebrews were peculiarly incorporated, they must ac-

cordingly love each other, as being the privileged people, whose were the covenants and the adoption, and of whose race the Messiah and Head of the church must spring; and the law of love must be conveyed with new obligations to the new Israel of God, to the gospel-church; and so it is the old commandment, or the Word which the children of the gospel-Israel have heard from the beginning, v. 7.

2. As a new one, v. 8. Again, to constrain you to this duty the more, a new commandment I write unto you, the law of the new society, the Christian corporation, which thing is true in Him; the matter of which was first true in and concerning the Head of it; He loved the church, and gave Himself for it: and it is true in you; this law is, in some measure, written on your hearts; ye are taught of God to love one another, and that because (or since, or forasmuch as) 'the darkness is past, the darkness of your prejudiced, unconverted (whether Jewish or Gentile) minds; your deplorable ignorance of God and of his Christ is now past, and the true light now shineth; the light of evangelical revelation hath shone with life and efficacy into your hearts; hence you have seen the excellency of Christian love, and the fundamental obligation thereto.'

Here, v. 9—11. is another trial of our Christian light; before, it was to be approved by obedience to God; here by Christian love: 1. He who has not such love, in vain pretends his light, v. 9. There are often those who assume to themselves more than is true; who say, Divine Revelation has made its impression on their minds and spirits, and yet they walk in hatred and enmity; these cannot be swayed by the sense of the love of Christ, and therefore remain in their dark state, notwithstanding their pretended conversion. 2. He who is managed by such love, approves his light to be good and genuine, v. 10. He sees the reasonableness of Christian love; and there will be no occasion of stumbling in him; he will be no scandal, no stumbling-block to his brother. Christian love teaches us highly to value our brother's soul, and dread everything that will be injurious to his innocence and peace. 3. Hatred is a sign of spiritual darkness, v. 11. Spiritual light is instilled by the Spirit of grace, and one of the first-fruits of that Spirit is love; he who is possessed with malignity, must needs be

destitute of spiritual light; consequently, he walks in darkness, his life is agreeable to a dark mind and conscience, and he knows not whither he goes; sees not whither this dark spirit carries him, and particularly that it will carry him to the world of outer darkness, because darkness hath blinded his eyes, v. 11. Here observe how effectually our apostle is now cured of his once hot and flaming spirit, calling for fire from heaven on poor ignorant Samaritans, Luke 9: 54. Now, having imbibed the spirit of Christ, he breathes out good-will to man, and love to all the brethren. The Lord Jesus is the great Master of love: his disciples are the disciples of love, his family the family of love.

V. 12—17. This new command of holy love, with the incentives thereto, may possibly be directed to the several ranks of disciples here accosted; or, there being an important dissuasion to follow, the apostle may justly seem to preface it with a solemn address to the several forms or orders in the school of Christ; let all in the Christian institution know, that they must not love this world; and so,

1. We have the address itself made to the various forms and ranks in the church of Christ. All Christians are not of the same standing and stature; but there are precepts and a correspondent obedience common to them all, as particularly mutual love and contempt of the world. The apostle addresses,

(1.) The lowest in the Christian school, *little children*, v. 12. These he may seem to encourage by applying to them first; and it may be useful to the greater proficient to hear what is said to their juniors; elements are to be repeated; first principles are the foundation of all. He addresses the children in Christianity, on two accounts: Because their sins were forgiven them for his name's sake, v. 12. either for God's name's sake, for the praise of his glory, his glorious perfections displayed in forgiveness; or for Christ's name sake, upon account of the redemption that is in Him; and they that are forgiven of God, are strongly obliged to relinquish this world which so interferes with the love of God. Because of their knowledge of God; I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father, v. 13. Children in Christianity must and do know God, Heb. 8: 11. Children in Christ should know,

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—11. The Gospel, when well understood and duly received, sets the heart against all sin, and effectually prevents the allowed practice of it, at the same time that it gives the most blessed relief to the wounded consciences of those who have sinned, by the hope of pardon, through our Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and his all-sufficient propitiation. Thus the divine original of the Scriptures is evinced, by the complete suitableness of the remedy, proposed in them, to the actual state of men in this evil world; while all other schemes are founded on false principles, and, therefore, are totally inapplicable to the case, and cannot effectually bring peace to the conscience, and lead the heart to abhor all iniquity.—While we seek for grace, to make a holy use of the intercession and atonement of our heavenly Advocate, and encourage our fellow-Christians to do the same; we should remember, that 'He is the propitiation, not for our sins only, but for those of the whole world,' and, therefore, if any sinner, in any part of the earth, be willing to accept of this salvation, he will surely be made partaker of it; and we should desire and endeavor, by all the scriptural means in our power, to be the instruments of bringing others

to share with us in so precious a benefit; and of sending the Gospel to all nations.—But we should carefully guard against every sentiment, which tends to pervert the abundant provision of the Gospel, for the forgiveness of our sins, into an encouragement to disobedience.—Christianity, instead of rendering 'the love of God' and men, and good works, superfluous and unnecessary, furnishes us with new motives, and lays us under further obligations to abound in them; and it gives us new directions concerning the love of our neighbors, by requiring love to our brethren for Christ's sake, and to our enemies after the example of his love to us. The degree of our holy love is the proper criterion and standard of our illumination, as well as the best preservative from sin, and the most active principle of obedience. He who 'loveth his brother' most fervently, with a pure heart, abides in the clearest light, and will be best kept from stumbling, or from occasioning the falls of others; not he, who is of a violent, selfish, and malicious temper, however he may boast of his knowledge. These things demand our closest attention, and most serious self-examination; and should lead us earnestly to pray, that God would show us what we are, and whither we are going. Sc.

V. 7—11. In exhorting Christians to obey and imitate their Lord, as the proper evidence of their love to Him, and to the Father who sent Him, the apostle 'wrote no new command' to them; but that which they had received from the beginning, and which, from the first, had been repeatedly enforced by Christ Himself. Nay, in fact, it had been virtually in force from the beginning of the world; as it could not comprise more than was contained in the law, which required Israel 'to love the Lord with all their hearts,' and 'their neighbor as themselves,' and to 'be holy as God was holy.' (Notes, 3: 11—24. Ex. 20: 1—17. Lev. 19: 18. Deut. 6: 5. 2 John 5, 6.) Yet this old commandment, especially that precept which inculcated 'the love of their brethren,' might be called 'a new commandment,' as given to Christians. (Notes, John 13: 31—35. 15: 12—16.) This was true, in respect of Him, their Lord and Savior, in that He had newly shown them the immensity of his condescension, compassion, and self-denying love to sinners; and had laid them under new obligations to obey and imitate Him, especially in 'loving one another, as He had loved them.' The command likewise was now enforced by his mediatorial authority, to the full exercise of which He had been lately exalted. It was also 'true in them;' as their situation was new, and differed widely from that of the Gentiles around them, and

even from that of the people of God under the Mosaic dispensation: and as they were now united by a new bond of union, as fellow-soldiers, fellow-travellers, brethren, and co-heirs of heavenly felicity. (Notes, 1 Cor. 12: 12—26. Eph. 4: 1—6.) So that the love of Christians to each other, as such, though virtually comprised in the love of their neighbors as themselves, and in some things like that of the Israelites to each other, was new in respect of its exercise, motives, rules, and obligations. This arose from the change which had taken place; as the comparative 'darkness' of the preparatory dispensation was past, and the 'true light' shone in full splendor; (Note, 2 Tim. 1: 10.) so that Christians might be expected to be more exact in their obedience, and more full of love to one another, and to all men, than even believers had been, under the darker dispensation of the law.

V. 12—14. The apostle had before addressed Christians in general, as 'his little children,' or, his dear children; but here he spoke of such as were young in years, or newly converted, and distinguished them from those who were further advanced in the life of faith and grace. It does not appear that the clause, 'have known Him that is from the beginning,' has any reference to the personal knowledge of Christ as Man; but is used as the other clause, 'have known the Father,' of knowing



13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him <sup>1</sup>that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the <sup>m</sup>Father.

14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him <sup>that is</sup> from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are <sup>n</sup>strong, and the word of God abideth <sup>o</sup>in you, and ye have overcome <sup>p</sup>the wicked one.

15 Love <sup>q</sup>not the world, neither the things <sup>that are</sup> in the world. If <sup>r</sup>any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that <sup>is</sup> in the world, the lust of the <sup>s</sup>flesh, and the lust of the <sup>t</sup>eyes, and the pride <sup>u</sup>of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And <sup>v</sup>the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that

l c. 1:1.	q Ro. 12:2.	t Ps. 119:37.
m Jn. 14:7,9.	r Mat. 6:24.	u Ps. 73:6.
n Ep. 6:10.	Gal. 1:10. Ja. 4:4.	v Ps. 39:6.
o Jn. 15:7.	s 2 Pe. 2:10.	1 Co. 7:31.
p Re. 2:7, &c.		

that God is their *Father*; they that *know the Father*, may well be withdrawn from the *love of this world*. Then the apostle proceeds,

(2.) To those of the highest station and stature; seniors in Christianity, *fathers*,

v. 13, 14. Acts 21: 16. They that are of longest standing in Christ's school, need further advice and instruction; none are too old to learn; he *writes to them* on the account of their knowledge, v. 13, 14. Old men have knowledge and experience, and expect deference. The apostle is ready to own the knowledge of old Christians, and to congratulate them thereupon. They know the Lord Christ, particularly *Him that was from the beginning*, ch. 1: 1. They who know Him that was from the beginning, before this world was made, may well be induced thereby to relinquish this world. Then,

(3.) To the middle age of Christians, those in their bloom and flower, *young men*, v. 13, 14. These are those that are arrived at the strength of spirit and sound sense, and can discern between good and evil. The apostle applies to them on account of their exploits, v. 13. their strength, discovered in their achievement, and their acquaintance with the Word of God, v. 14. It will be the glory of youthful persons to be strong in Christ and in his grace; and let vigorous Christians show their strength in conquering the world. *And the Word of God abideth in you*, v. 14. *The Word of God must abide in the adult disciples*; and they, in whom *the Word of God dwells*, are well furnished for the conquest of the world.

2. We have the dissuasion thus prefaced and introduced; a caution fundamental to vital, practical religion, v. 15. The several degrees of Christians should unite in being dead to *the world*; were they thus united, they would soon unite on other accounts; their love should be reserved for God; 'throw it not away on the world.' Here we see the

reasons of this dissuasion and caution; they are several, and the first is taken from the inconsistency of this love of the world with the love of God, v. 15. The world draws down the heart from God; and so the more *the love of the world* prevails, the more *the love of God* dwindles and decays. The second is taken from the prohibition of worldly love or lust, v. 16. this love or lust is not appointed of God, but the world is a usurper of our affection. Now here we have the due consideration and notion of the world, according to which it is to be crucified and renounced. (1.) There is *the lust of the flesh*: *the flesh*, here, being distinguished from *the eyes* and *the life*, imports the body; *the lust of the flesh* is, subjectively, the humor and appetite of indulging fleshly pleasures; and objectively, all those things that excite and inflame the pleasures of *the flesh*; this lust is usually called *luxury*. (2.) There is *the lust of the eyes*; *the eyes* are delighted with treasures, riches, and rich possessions; this is *the lust of covetousness*. (3.) There is *the pride of life*; a vain mind craves all the grandeur, equipage, and pomp of a vainglorious life; this is *ambition*, and thirst after honor and applause; this is, in part, the disease of the ear; it must be flattered with admiration and praise. The objects of these appetites must be abandoned and renounced; as they engage and engross the affection and desire, *they are not of the Father, but of the world*, v. 16. *The Father* disallows them, and the world should keep them to itself. The third reason is taken from the vain and vanishing state of earthly things and the enjoyment of them, v. 17. The things of *the world* are fading and dying apace, and desire itself will ere long fail and cease, Eccl. 12: 5.

Him by faith and experience. For, on the earliest date assigned to the epistle, only a few aged Christians, and those principally the inhabitants of Galilee and Judea, could have personally known Jesus Christ; yet the apostle speaks of all the aged Christians whom he addressed, without any limitation. (13) *Little children*.] 18. Mat. 18:2. John 21:5. The word is changed, but the meaning seems the same. SCOTT.

(12—14.) *Bloomf.* thinks there is 'hardly anything to countenance the notion of a distribution of Christians into the different degrees of spiritual progress' being meant here; and *Mackn.* thinks, that the persons written to under the denomination of *fathers*, were 'of the number of eyewitnesses.'—What some, as *Doddr.*, regards as tautology in the addresses, *fathers, little children, and young men*, *Bloomf.* takes in the light rather of *intensive repetitions*. The *little children* in v. 12. he considers, after *Beza* and *Wolf*, 'a general address, comprising all Christians, as at v. 1. and frequently elsewhere in John.' Ep.

(13.) 'The words, *because ye have known Him from the beginning*, are very remarkable: for the best commentators are agreed, that the expression cannot mean *God*, but Jesus Christ, (since, as *Ros.* observes, *He* is in this portion plainly distinguished from *Him*), and denotes his eternal being with God the Father. *Ros.* aptly compares John 1:1. The application is obvious: that they will not prefer to this eternal Being things temporal and speedily to perish, v. 17.' BLOOMF.

(14.) 'Would to God I could make young Christians know what results are depending on them; what interests of the church and of a dying world are involved in their future character and efforts. When I look on the young Christians of this age, and reflect that they are soon to sustain the ancient glories of the church of God,—when I look abroad on the earth, and see the crisis that is at hand,—when I listen to the cries that come from every quarter of the world, summoning the people of God to new efforts and more splendid exhibitions of piety;—I seem to see the hoary generations that are past, rising up from their repose to watch over the progress of the young followers of Christ; I seem to hear the voices of the blest spirits from above, cheering them on in the career of piety;—I seem to see a world in misery, turning its imploring hands to them, and beseeching them to be worthy of their name, their privilege, and their destiny;—I seem to hear, *I do hear* God Himself speaking from the heavens, "*Ye have chosen the better part, be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.*"' Rev. L. BACON.

(14, 15.) *Young men . . . love not the world.*] 'If, before men undertake their plans and enterprises, they would submit them, with the calmness and seriousness of pure devotion, for the approbation of Him on whom they depend for success, how many of them would they relinquish, and with what moderation would they pursue the rest! Seest thou a man hurrying, scrambling, and scuffling for the pelf or the praise of the world? Assuredly, thou seest a prayerless soul. A praying man knows too much concerning the true riches, and the honor which come from God, to discover such miserable insatiation for the things of an hour. Riches cannot exalt nor poverty depress him. He dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, abiding under the shadow of the Almighty,—fearing neither the terror by night, nor the arrow that flieth by day.' Rev. Dr. SKINNER.

V. 15—17. The world, as God created it, is very good, and a proper object of a measure of love, as his work and for his sake; but as sin has marred it, our affections ought to be wholly alienated from it. The *men* of the world, as distinguished from believers, are enemies of God and subjects of Satan; we are, therefore, required to renounce their friendship, to avoid intimate society with them, and to abhor their ungodly

principles and practices, while we pity their miseries, love their persons, and try to do them good. *Jam.* 4:4—6. The *things* of the world may be desired, possessed, and valued, for those uses and purposes, which were intended by God when He created them, and in subordination to his favor, authority, and glory; but for those purposes to which sin has perverted them, and sinners idolize them, we must not desire, seek, or value them, in any measure or manner; and if any man thus 'love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;' his idol has never been dethroned, his heart remains unchanged, he is not reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, and has no true, filial love of Him in his heart. *Mat.* 6:24. *Luke* 14:25—33. *Gal.* 1:3—5. 6:11—14. For a poor, vainglorious worm to be advanced to such dominion over his fellows, or to possess such honor among them, as to be tempted to forget his own mortality, as well as his Creator and Judge, and to be so surrounded with vassals, attendants, and flatterers, or so emblazoned with high-sounding titles, and encumbered with magnificence, as to have nothing on earth which he can behold above him, or equal to him, and thus to disregard Him that is 'higher than the highest;' this is the perfection of the 'pride of life.' And all pre-eminence and distinction above others partakes of the same nature, whether power, splendor, or renown, on any account, be the immediate source of it. . . . All these things, (to which every earthly object, which any man is 'tempted to put in competition with the will, favor, and glory of God, must be referred,) are 'not of the Father;' this idolatrous desire of created things did not attach to them, or to man, as God made them and Him; they do not consist with his prescribed use of them; they are not bestowed for these purposes; nor do the men, who are his children and influenced by his grace, desire, seek, or use them in this manner. But 'they are of the world,' as 'lying under the wicked one;' these desires after created things, and this use of them, are the effects of man's apostasy and subjection to Satan; they are thus made the baits, by which men are seduced into sin, and kept in rebellion against God, and the incentives to all their vile passions. (*Note*, and *P. O. Mat.* 4:3—11.) They suit the taste, and form the supreme good of worldly men, and are their only portion; and for the sake of them the whole earth is filled with violence, fraud, crimes, and misery. (*Notes*, *Ex.* 20:3. *Rom.* 8:5—9.—It is evident the apostle did not speak of the lawful, moderate, subordinate, and holy use, possession, or desire of God's good creatures, for the ends to which He has appointed them; but of the unlawful, inordinate, unholy, and idolatrous hankering after them, and valuation of them, to which in one form or other all men are totally addicted, so long as they remain in an unregenerate state.—Many vain efforts have been made, by limitations, distinctions, and exceptions, to evade the force of this passage; and some have written on it, as if they meant to show, how far we might safely be carnally minded, 'and lovers of the world;' but, in the apostle's evident meaning, we are no more allowed to love the world at all, than we are to worship *Dagon*; for we cannot 'serve God and Mammon;' or love the Lord, and 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.' A man may carry on any business, fill any station, or possess any wealth, as the servant and steward of God, according to his commandments, for his glory, and for the good of mankind; and he may desire food and raiment, and things suitable to his rank in life, and use them with thankfulness, temperance, and humility; but he cannot love or desire them, to gratify his sensuality, pride, avarice, or ambition, or seek his happiness in them, without being an idolater. Every regenerate man is delivered from the dominion and allowed indulgence of 'the love of the world,' and strives and prays against the remains of it, as it rises in his heart, or breaks forth into his life; he desires to love



doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

w 1Pe. 1:2.            y 2 Ti. 2:19.            a 2 Co. 1:21.  
 x Mat. 24:24.        z 2 Ti. 3:9.             b 1 Co. 2:15.

• 1 Ti. 4:1.

The fourth reason is taken from the immortality of the divine lover, the lover of God; *But he that doeth the will of God, which must be the character of the lover of God, in opposition to this lover of the world, abideth for ever, v. 17.* The Object of his love, in opposition to the world that passeth away, *abideth for ever*; his sacred passion or affection, in opposition to the lust that passeth away, *abideth for ever*; love shall never fail; and he himself is an heir of immortality and endless life, and shall in time be translated thither. From the whole of these verses we should observe, the purity and spirituality of the apostolical doctrine; the animal life must be subjected to the divine; the body, with its affections, should be subjugated to the soul; the soul

should be swayed by religion, or the victorious love of God.

V. 18, 19. Here is, 1. A moral prognostication of the time; the end is coming, v. 18. Some may suppose the apostle here addresses the first rank of Christians again; the juniors are most apt to be seduced. But it may be, as elsewhere, a universal appellation, introductive of an alarm to all Christians; *It is the last time*; our Jewish polity is hastening to an end; Daniel's weeks are now expiring, Dan. 9:26. It is meet disciples should be warned of the haste and end of time, and apprised as much as may be of the prophetic periods of time.

2. The sign of this last time, v. 18. many oppose the Person, doctrine, and kingdom of Christ. It is mysterious that antichrists should be permitted; but disciples should be informed of them; ministers should be watchmen to the house of Israel: and it should be no great offence or prejudice, that there are such antichrists: (1.) One great one has been foretold, v. 18. The generality of the church have been informed by divine revelation, that there must be a long and fatal adversary to Christ and his church, 2 Thess. 2:8-10. No wonder then there are many harbingers and forerunners; *even now there are many*; the mystery of iniquity already worketh. (2.) They were foretold, also, as the sign of this last time, Mat. 24:24. And these were the forerunners of the dissolution of the Jewish state, nation, and religion, *whereby we know it is the last time, v. 18.* Let the prediction of seducers arising in the Christian world, fortify us against their seduction.

3. Some account of these seducers or antichrists, (1.) More positively; they were once professors of apostolical doctrine, v. 19.

They went out from our company and communion; possibly from the church of Jerusalem, or some of the churches of Judea, as Acts 15:1. The purest churches may have their apostates. (2.) More privately; *They were not inwardly such as we are; they were not of our union with Christ the Head.* Then here is, [1.] The reason on which it is concluded *they were not of us*, and that is, their actual defection; *for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us, v. 19.* They that apostatize, sufficiently indicate that, before, they were hypocrites. [2.] The reason why they are permitted thus to depart, viz. that their insincerity may be detected; *they went out, that they may be made manifest that they were not all of us, v. 19.* The church knows not well who are its vital members, and who are not; some of the hypocritical must be manifested here, and that for their own shame and benefit, too, in their reduction to the truth, if they have not sinned unto death; and for the terror and caution of others, 2 Pet. 3:17, 18.

V. 20-27. Here,

1. The apostle encourages the disciples to whom he writes, in this hour of seducers, with the assurance of their stability in this day of apostasy, v. 20. We see, (1.) The blessing wherewith they were enriched,—an unguent from Heaven; *Ye have an unction.* True Christians are anointed ones, anointed with gifts and spiritual endowments, by the Spirit of grace, into a similitude of their Lord's offices, as subordinate prophets, priests, and kings, unto God. The Holy Spirit is compared unto oil, as well as to fire or water; and the communication of his salvific grace is our anointing. (2.) From whom this blessing comes,—*from the Holy*

God perfectly, and seek all his happiness from Him alone; and to love all other things in Him, for his sake, and as his bounty; and to use them in submission to his precepts and providence. In proportion as men get this victory over the world, the reality of their grace is evidenced, and they are prepared for laboring and suffering in the cause of Christ; but unless it is begun in the heart, a man 'has no root in himself,' and he will either fall away in time of temptation, or remain a mere unfruitful professor of Christianity. 5:4, 5. Mat. 13:18-23. Rom. 12:2.—*Of life.*] 3:17. Mark 12:44. Luke 8:14. 15:12, 30. 21:4. 1 Tim. 2:2. 2 Tim. 2:4. 1 Pet. 4:3. The means or style of living, rather than life itself, is signified. Notes, Luke 16:13-23.

(16.) *Pride of life.*] 'The phrase refers to that ambitious turn of mind, which prompts men to engage in all those pursuits which will supply materials for their vanity, [and self-esteem,] and enable them to make a figure in the world.'

(17.) 'How often has the remark of Cotton Mather been verified; "When the useful man comes to the hour of his departure, then he, who lived beloved, shall die lamented. It shall be witnessed and remembered of him that 'he was one who did good in Israel,'"—an epitaph, the glory of which is far beyond that of the most stately pyramid. Then the calumniators, who once endeavored to destroy his reputation, shall have nothing to reflect upon, but the impotence of their own defeated malice.'" MATHER.—'Ah! this is a changing world. Its history indeed is but a history of changes. But amidst these scenes of fluctuation is there no object, in heaven or earth, that is unchanging? Yes one: God is unchanging. Here is stability. "His hand the good man fastens on the skies, And bids earth roll, —nor heeds her idle whirl." God is his happiness, therefore his happiness is certain and everlasting. What though earthly comforts are transitory, earthly friends frail and changeable; God is a Friend, sincere, unfeeling, almighty.'

Rev. Dr. PORTER.

V. 18, 19. The love of the world, as unsubdued in professed Christians, gave Satan his greatest advantage, not only in tempting them to open apostasy, but also in seducing them by destructive heresies; through which they were enabled to reconcile a quiet conscience with a carnal mind, and the indulgence of their favorite passion, under the mask of a religious profession. Mat. 7:15-20. Acts 5:1-11. 8:13-24. 2 Pet. 2:1-3. So that the transition was natural, from warning Christians against the love of the 'world,' to putting them on their guard against false teachers. — Some explain 'the last time,' to mean the last age of the Jewish church; but, probably, that had been subverted some years, when John wrote this epistle. The deceivers, predicted by our Lord, Mat. 24:23-25. were men who falsely professed to be the promised Messiah, or to point Him out to others; they had never constituted a part of the Christian church, and had not, therefore, apostatized; they were 'false Christs' and 'false apostles,' not antichrists. — Indeed, it is very unreasonable to interpret antichrist, in the singular, to mean the same as the 'many antichrists' afterwards mentioned; and then to confine the whole, either to the Jewish opposers or Judaizing corrupters of Christianity, as some do, or to the Gnostics, as divided into different sects, as others do. 'Antichrist' signifies, one that opposes Christ, whether he oppose the doctrine of his Deity, or his humanity; or whether he set himself against Him, in respect of his priestly office, by substituting other methods of atoning for sin, and finding acceptance with God; his kingly office, by claiming authority to enact laws, in his church, contrary to his laws, or to dispense with his commandments; or his prophetic office, by claiming authority to add to, alter, or take away from the revelation which He

has given in his holy Word.—'They oppose the Person of Christ, or this doctrine, or both together.' Beza. In this view, there were, at an early period of the church, 'many antichrists;' and the heads of any sect of heretics might be, in a subordinate sense, so called, but the direct and avowed opposers of Christianity could not be meant in this place. 'They went not out from them.'—The term is used in this epistle, and in John's second epistle, and in no other part of the Scripture, nor even in the Revelation; so that, all the controversies concerning 'ANTICHRIST,' as predicted by Daniel, and by John in the Revelation, are merely disputes about a word, and do not at all pertain to the main subject. Dan. 7:8: 11: Rev. 13:14. The 'antichrists' mentioned in these verses, evidently, were persons who had already appeared; but one distinguished antichrist was yet to be expected.—'They went out from us,' i. e. 'they went out from the apostles in Judea.' Whitby. 'But they were not of us;' this must mean, that they were not of us, the apostles. It does not, however, appear that they even professed to be apostles; nor does it appear, that they had previously been teachers in the church. And can it possibly be imagined, that all, either the 'false Christs,' or 'the antichrists,' spoken of by our Lord, and by John, had been personally joined in communion with the apostles, while they continued in Judea? — (19) *From us.*] The same preposition is afterwards rendered 'of us.'

They belonged to us, in one sense, as the unfruitful branches to the Vine, but not in another; 'they were not all clean.' Mat. 22:11-14. 25:1-13. John 13:6-11. 15:3-5. But they professed Christianity, and had been admitted to communion with true Christians; yet their subsequent apostasy proved, that, like Judas, they had from the first been hypocrites. Mat. 7:21-23. John 6:66-71.—*They would, no doubt, have continued.*] *They had indeed continued.* The words do not readily admit of a strictly literal translation. *No doubt, added by the translators, shows how they understood them.*

(18.) *Last time.*] 'Last age of the Jewish church and commonwealth, because then, Christ had foretold, many false Christs would arise.' So some. But Doddr. thinks, from comparing other scriptures, the expression seems to be more extensive. — Out of several different senses which Bl. gives from Ros., Bl. prefers the general one, 'perilous and evil times.' — Respecting the 'antichrist,' he says, 'the best founded opinion is that of most commentators, that it means "false teachers," and that the term is supposed to be synonymous with the, *he that opposeth and exalteth himself, &c.*, of Paul, 2 Thes. 2:4.' — Doddr. prefers to understand it of 'apostates, who had once professed themselves Christians;' Whitby, of 'unbelieving Jews opposing Christianity,' and Dr. A. Clarke, of 'any person, thing, doctrine, system of religion, polity, &c. which is opposed to Christ, and to the spirit and spread of his Gospel.'

(19.) 'It is with professors of religion, especially with those who become such at a time of great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as it is with blossoms in the spring; there are vast numbers of them on the trees, all which look fair and promising, but yet very many of them come to nothing. Many of them soon wither and drop off, while they looked as beautiful and smelled us sweetly as those that remain. We must judge not by the beautiful colors and the beautiful smell, but by the matured fruit.'

V. 20-25. The apostle wrote to his fellow-Christians, to caution, comfort, and establish them, though his observations were also calculated to put all, who professed the Gospel, on self-examination, and to preserve new converts from self-deception.—Some of these heresarchs denied the Deity of Christ; others explained away his incarnation, and so



21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

22 Who is a liar, but he that <sup>c</sup>denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

23 Whosoever <sup>d</sup>denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [*but*] *he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also.*

24 Let <sup>e</sup>that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even eternal* <sup>f</sup>life.

26 These *things* have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.

27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you: and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth <sup>g</sup>you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in <sup>h</sup>him.

28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear,

c c. 4:3. e 2 Jn. 6. g Jn. 14:26.  
d Jn. 15:23. f Jn. 17:3. h or, it.

One; either from the Holy Ghost, or from the Lord Christ, as Rev. 3:7. (3.) The effect of this unction; it enlightens and strengthens the eyes of the understanding; *'and thereby ye know all things, v. 20, all these things concerning Christ and his religion; it was promised and given you for that end,'* John 14:26.

2. The apostle indicates to them the mind and meaning with which he wrote to them. (1.) Not as suspecting their knowledge, or supposing their ignorance in the grand truths of the Gospel, v. 21. A just confidence in religious persons may both encourage and contribute to their fidelity. (2.) As relying on their judgment in these things. They who *know the truth* in any kind, are thereby prepared to discern what is contrary thereto, and inconsistent therewith. Truth and falsehood do not well mix together; and no lie belongs to religion, either natural or revealed. It is a commendation of the Christian religion, that it so well accords with natural religion, which is the foundation of it, that it so well accords with the Jewish religion, which contained

the elements or rudiments of it. *No lie is of the truth:* frauds and impostures then are very unfit means to support and propagate the truth, and it had been better had they never been used; the result of them appears in the infidelity of our age; but the greatest actors and sufferers for the Christian revelation would assure us that *no lie is of the truth.*

3. The apostle further impleads and arraigns these seducers who were newly arisen: (1.) They are *liars*, egregious opposers of sacred truth. The great and pernicious lies that *the father of lies*, or of liars, spreads in the world, were of old, and usually are, falsehoods and errors, relating to the Person of Christ. There is no truth so sacred and fully attested, but some or other will contradict or deny it. It should seem that some, in the tremendous judgment of God, are given up to strong delusions. (2.) They are direct enemies to God, as well as to the Lord Christ, v. 22. He that opposes Christ, *denies* the witness and testimony of the Father, and the seal He hath given to his Son, John 6:27. And he that *denies* the witness and testimony of the Father concerning Jesus Christ, *denies* that God is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ; and consequently abandons the knowledge of God in Christ, and, thereupon, the whole revelation of God in Christ, and particularly of God in Christ *reconciling the world unto Himself:* therefore, the apostle may well infer, *Whosoever denies the Son, the same has not the Father, v. 23. he has not the true knowledge of the Father; for the Son has most and best revealed Him; he has no interest in the Father, in his favor and grace, and salvation; for none cometh to the Father but by the Son. But, as some copies add, he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also, v. 23.* As there is an intimate relation between *the Father and the Son*, so there is an inviolable union in the doctrine, knowledge, and interests of both; so that he who has the knowledge of, and right to, *the Son*, has the knowledge of, and right to, *the Father*, also. They that adhere to the Christian revelation, hold the light and benefit of natural religion withal.

4. Hereupon, the apostle advises and persuades the disciples to continue in the old doctrine, at first communicated to them, v. 24. So sure were the apostles of the truth of what they had delivered concerning Christ, and from Him, that after all their toils and sufferings they were not willing to relinquish it. This exhortation is enforced by these considerations: (1.) From the sacred advantage they will receive by adhering to the primitive truth and faith. They will continue thereby in holy union with God and Christ, v. 24. The truth of Christ, abiding in us, is the mean of severing us from sin, and uniting us to the Son of God, John 15:3, 4. *The Son* is the *Medium*, or *Mediator*, by whom we are united to *the Father*. What value, then, should we put

on gospel-truth! They will thereby secure the promise of eternal life, v. 25. The blessed God puts great value on his Son, and the truth relating to Him, when He is pleased to promise to those who continue in that truth, *eternal life*. Then the exhortation aforesaid is enforced, (2.) From the design of the apostle's writing to them. This letter is to fortify them against the deceivers of the age, v. 26. We should beware, lest the apostolical letters, yea, lest the whole Scripture of God should be to us insignificant and fruitless. (3.) From the instructive blessing they had received from heaven, v. 27. True Christians have an inward confirmation of the divine truth they have imbibed: the Holy Spirit has imprinted it on their minds and hearts, 2 Cor. 1:21. This sacred chrism, or divine unction, is commended on these accounts: It is durable and lasting, v. 27. It is better than human instruction, v. 27. Not that this anointing will *teach you* without the appointed ministry; it could, if God so pleased; but it will not; but it will *teach you* better than we can; *and ye need not that any man teach you, v. 27.* It is a sure evidence of truth; and all that it teaches, is infallible truth; *But as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, v. 27.* the Holy Spirit must needs be *the Spirit of truth*, as He is called, John 14:17. And it is of a conservative influence; it will preserve those in whom it *abides*, against seducers and their seduction, v. 27. It teaches you to *abide in Christ*; and as it teaches you, it secures you: it lays a restraint on your minds and hearts, that you may not revolt from Him. *And He that hath anointed us, is God; who also hath sealed us for Himself, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* 2 Cor. 1:21, 22.

V. 28, 29. From the blessing of the sacred unction, the apostle proceeds in his advice and exhortation to constancy in and with Christ, v. 28. The apostle repeats his kind appellation, *little children*; which, I suppose, does not so much denote their diminutiveness, as his affection; and therefore, I judge, may be rendered *dear children*. He would persuade by love, and prevail by endearment as well as by reason. Evangelical privileges are obligatory to evangelical duties; and they that are anointed by the Lord Jesus, are highly obliged to abide with Him, in opposition to all adversaries whatever. This duty of perseverance and constancy in trying times, is strongly urged by the two following considerations:

I. Of his return at the great day of account, v. 28. It is here taken for granted that the Lord Jesus will come again. This was part of that truth they had heard from the beginning. And when He comes again, He will publicly appear; be manifested to all. When He was here before, He came privately, in comparison; He proceeded from a womb, and was introduced into a

denied his humanity, and the reality of his sufferings, and some opposed his kingly authority. Thus, whilst they retained the name of Christians, they virtually denied his Person, as 'the Christ, the Son of God,' and 'the Son of man; Emmanuel, God with us,' *Is. 7:14. Mat. 1:22, 23.* or his offices, as the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King of his church; they denied that 'God was manifest in the flesh,' to 'ransom the church with his own blood,' *Acts 20:28. 1 Tim. 3:16.* that, in virtue of his one oblation, He might appear in the presence of God, as our great High Priest, and reign over his redeemed people, as his willing subjects, to the end of the world, and for ever. Now, whether they denied his divine or his human nature, his atonement or his authority, they virtually denied Him to be the Christ, as they who had 'the unction of the Holy Spirit' would readily perceive. Such a teacher was, therefore, in fact 'an antichrist,' who 'denied both the Father and the Son;' seeing the Father can only be known, approached, worshipped, and glorified by sinners, in and through his incarnate Son; and they who 'honor not the Son, honor not the Father that sent Him,' *Mat. 11:25-27. John 5:20-23.* The denial of the Son is, therefore, a denial of the Father; and the Supreme Being, the supposed Deity, which ancient or modern deniers of the personal or mediatorial honor of the Son, have professed to worship, is in fact the creature of their own imagination, and not the wise, just, holy, merciful, and faithful 'God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' He, therefore, who 'denies the Son, has not the Father,' as his God, his Friend, and his Portion; but he, who, in true faith, 'acknowledges the Son, hath the Father also.'—This last clause is printed in Italics, be-

cause it is wanting in most copies of the Greek Test.; yet it is found in several manuscripts, so that Beza and many other able critics look on it as genuine.—(20) *An unction.*] All true Christians partake of the Spirit of sanctification, not all of the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit.—*From the Holy One.*] *Mark 1:24. Acts 3:14. Rev. 3:7.*—The Lord Jesus seems especially intended; for through and by Him the Holy Spirit is given to us. *Rev. 22:1.*—(21) *No lie is, &c.*] Lie, here, means, a doctrine contrary to that taught by the apostles, which, being the true doctrine, its contrary must be false, or a lie. *Mackn.*—(22) *Antichrist.*] The article being used, 'the antichrist' is doubtless a more exact tr.; but the apostle was speaking, not so much prophetically, as of the time in which he wrote.—The character described was 'the antichrist' of his own age.—(24) *Abide.*] The same verb is rendered also *remain* and *continue*.

SCOTT.  
(20.) 'A holy disposition and spiritual taste, when grace is strong and lively, will enable a person to determine what notions are right and becoming a Christian, more speedily and far more correctly, than the greatest abilities without them. The tendency of a stone let fall shows the way to the centre of the earth more accurately, and in far less time, than the noblest mathematician could demonstrate it.' EDWARDS.

(23.) 'The latter part of this verse is established on unquestionable authorities, and ought not to be printed in Italics as an addition.' T. H. HOUZE. — *Dod. tr.* also 'believes they made a part of the original, by whatever accident they may have been omitted in some early copy, to which, as it seems, too much regard,' he says, 'has been paid.' ID.



we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

### CHAP. III.

1 He declareth the singular love of God towards us, in making us his sons: 3 who therefore ought obediently to keep his commandments, 11 as also brotherly to love one another.

**B**EHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God! therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

i or, know ye.	Re. 21:7.	2 Pe. 1:4.
j Je. 13:23.	c Jn. 17:25.	f Job 19:26.
Mat. 7:16—18.	d Ro. 8:14, 18.	Ps. 17:15.
a Ep. 2:4, 5.	e I Co. 15:49.	Mat. 5:8.
b Jn. 1:12.	Phi. 3:21.	I Co. 13:12.

stable; but when He comes again, He will come from the opened heavens, and every eye shall see Him; and then they who have continued with Him throughout all their temptations, shall have confidence, assurance, and joy, in the sight of Him. On the contrary, they that have deserted Him shall be ashamed before Him; they shall be ashamed of themselves, ashamed of their unbelief, their cowardice, ingratitude, temerity, and folly, in forsaking so glorious a Redeemer. They shall be ashamed of their hopes, expectations, and pretences, and ashamed of all the wages of unrighteousness, by which they were induced to desert Him. That we may have confidence, and we may not be ashamed. The apostle includes himself in the number. Let not us be ashamed of you,

**PRACT. OBS. V. 12—29.** When there is real 'faith that worketh by love,' even 'little children' and weak believers may be assured, that 'their sins are forgiven them' for the sake of Christ; and though there are different degrees of growth, strength, knowledge, and grace, and some have obtained more victories over the wicked one, or are more fit for active service, or to give wise counsel, than others are; yet all are alike dear to their heavenly Father. But all must be careful 'not to love the world,' or any of its polluting vanities. This idolatry, remaining unsubdued in the hearts of many professors of the Gospel, occasions their apostasy or total unfruitfulness; and, through some remains of it, numbers are kept from comfort and assurance; their spiritual life continues low and feeble; they are mere babes, or dwarfs, to the end of their days, and enter eternity before they obtain any comfortable satisfaction, what their eternal state will be!—Those who have been delivered from that original and universal idolatry, 'the love of the world, and the things in the world,' will be less liable to be deceived by the seductions of those 'many antichrists,' who, in every age and place, endeavor to corrupt the Gospel, and to oppose the honor and cause of Christ. 'The unction from the Holy One' alone can teach that knowledge, which will surely preserve a man from all delusions; and when we are thus established in the great truths of the Gospel, we shall know 'that no lie is of the truth;' and shall, therefore, disregard the eloquence, learning, ingenuity, and confidence, of those who contradict the Bible; and be satisfied with opposing the express testimony of the truth itself,

V. 29. The expression, 'born of Him,' which is here most obviously interpreted of Christ, concerning whom the apostle was speaking, and thus becoming 'the sons of God,' (3:1.) clearly shows what John believed concerning his Lord; and also, that the same individual act is ascribed to God (5:1.), to Christ (29), and to the Holy Spirit. (John 3:5. Notes, Ps. 22:30, 31. Is. 8:18. 9:6, 7. 53:9, 10. Heb. 2:10, 13.)—The Quakers, and some others, have inferred, from v. 27. that a stated ministry is not necessary in the church; as true believers, being 'anointed by the Spirit,' need not such teaching; 'but it may be of moment to observe, that the Christian ministry was in the highest repute in the church, when the gifts of the Spirit were poured down upon it in the greatest abundance.' *Doddr.*—The papists, on the other hand, adhering to the outward form, and the *opus operatum*, (in which they have too many followers, among nominal protestants,) ground their *chrism*, or *anointing with oil*, upon it, which is applied in several ways; but is only an appointed shadow of the true 'unction from the Holy One;' yet, alas, it is too plain, that numbers, seizing on this shadow, come short of the substance.—(29) *Born.*] 3:9. 4:7. 5:1, 4, 18. John 1:13. 3:3—8. In all the passages in this epistle, and in several of the others, the passive perfect is used, which is properly, 'has been born,' or *begotten*.—And no allusion is at all made to *baptism*, in the whole epistle. **SCOTT.**

**NOTES.** CHAP. III. V. 1—3. (Note, John 1:10—13.) The apostle, having declared, that 'they who do righteousness are born of God,' (2:29.) here breaks out into a joyful and admiring view of the love of the

as well as you will not be ashamed of yourselves. Or,—that we be not ashamed, (made ashamed, or put to shame,) by Him at his coming. At his public appearance, He will shame all those who have abandoned Him, Mark 8:38.

2. Of the dignity of those who still adhere to Christ and his religion, v. 29. The particle here rendered *if*, seems to be not so much a conditional particle, as a suppositional one, if I may call it so; a note of allowance or confession; and so of the same import with our English *inasmuch*, or *whereas*, or *since*. So the sense runs more clear. *Since ye know that He is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness, is born of Him. He that doeth righteousness, may here be justly enough assumed as another name for him that abideth in Christ.* Such an one must be born of Him. He is renewed by the Spirit of Christ, after the image of Christ, Eph. 2:10. 'Since then ye know that the Lord Christ is righteous, as I Cor. 1:30. ye cannot but know thereupon,' (or know ye, it is for your consideration and regard,) 'that He who by the continued practice of Christianity abideth in Him, is born of Him.' The new spiritual nature is derived from the Lord Christ. The Lord Christ is an everlasting Father. It is a great privilege and dignity to be born of Him. They that are so, are the children of God. To as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, John 1:12. And this introduces the context of the following chapter.

**CHAP. III. V. 1—3.** The apostle, having shown the dignity of Christ's faithful followers, now here, I. Breaks forth into the admiration of that grace that is the spring of such a wonderful vouchsafement. It is wonderful, condescending love of the eternal Father, that such as we should be made and called his sons; we who by nature are heirs of sin and guilt, and the curse of God; we who by practice are children of corruption, disobedience, and ingratitude! Strange, that the holy God is not ashamed

to be called our Father, and to call us his sons! Thence the apostle, 2. Infers the honor of believers above the cognizance of the world. Little does the world perceive the advancement and happiness of the genuine followers of Christ; or think that these poor, humble, contemned ones are the favorites of heaven, and will be inhabitants there ere long. Little did the world think how great a Person was once sojourning here; He came to his own, and his own received Him not; but crucified Him; but, surely, had they known Him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, 1 Cor. 2:8. Let the followers of Christ be content with hard fare here, since they are in a land of strangers, among those who little know them, and their Lord was so treated before them. Then the apostle, 3. Exalts these persevering disciples, in the prospect of the certain revelation of their state and dignity. Where, (1.) Their present honorable relation is asserted, v. 2. We have the nature of sons by regeneration; the title, spirit, and right to the inheritance of sons by adoption. (2.) The discovery of the bliss belonging and suitable to this relation is defined, v. 2. The glory pertaining to the sonship and adoption is reserved for another world. The discovery of it here would put a stop to the current of affairs that must now proceed. The sons of God must walk by faith, and live by hope. (3.) The time of the revelation of the sons of God in their proper state and glory, is determined; and that is, when their Elder Brother comes to call and collect them all together. *But we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him.* The particle usually translated *if*, is here well rendered *when*; as so it might more naturally and properly be rendered, John 14:3. When the Head of the church, the Only-begotten of the Father, shall appear, his members, the adopted of God, shall appear and be manifested together with Him. The sons of God will be known, and be made manifest by their likeness to their Head; they shall be like Him, like Him in

to their well varnished and ably defended falsehoods. We shall in this manner most clearly perceive, that every man is an antichrist, who denies the Person, or any of the offices of Christ; and that, in denying the Son, he denies the Father also, and has no part in his favor, while he rejects his great salvation. Candor and liberality of sentiment are good words; bigotry, fanaticism, and a contracted mind, sound very harsh; but let us not aspire to the reputation of liberality, or desire to escape reproach, more than the apostles did. While we judge favorably of all, who trust in Christ as a divine Savior, and obey his Word, let us pity and pray for those deluded men, who deny the Deity and atonement of Christ, and the work of his new-creating Spirit, protest against their antichristian doctrine, and refuse all needless intercourse with them. (Note, 2 John 7—11.) Let that abide in all, who have professed the Gospel, or would be deemed Christians, which was taught to the primitive disciples, that they may 'continue in the Son and in the Father,' and that the blessed promise of eternal life may belong to them also. The subjects above treated on, are peculiarly useful at this day, concerning 'those who seduce' the professed disciples of the Savior, and would persuade them, that it is of no consequence what they believe, concerning his Person or doctrine. This fashionable species of infidelity directly contradicts the whole Word of God, and in fact does its utmost to antiquate the Bible, as an useless book, in this age of wisdom and illumination. **SCOTT.**

eternal Father, in having bestowed on them the unspeakable honor and felicity of being 'called his sons,' or *children*. What manner of love was this! By what words could it be described? Whether his majesty, purity, and justice, or their guilt, meanness, pollution, and misery, were considered; whether the blessing conferred on them, or the method in which it was bestowed, were contemplated; the 'love of the Father' in it must be adored, as passing knowledge and comprehension. 4:9—12. John 3:16. Rom. 5:6—10. But, wherever the regenerating Spirit of God had produced this genuine hope in a man's heart, it would certainly induce him to desire and follow after holiness, as the preparation for this final happiness, and the anticipation of it; 1 Pet. 1:3—9. for he, who 'hoped,' or trusted, 'in God,' that He would render him perfectly happy, by fully renewing him to the holy image of the divine Savior, would also be fully convinced, that his present comfort must bear proportion to his sanctification; the assurance, that his labor in following after holiness would not be in vain, would also give energy to his endeavors. Nor would he ever rest satisfied with his attainments, so long as any sin remained in him; but he would use all means, and wait on God for the performance of his promises; till all his affections and powers were fully sanctified, all sinful passions destroyed, all holy dispositions perfected, and all his words and actions made conformable to those of his beloved Lord. As this can never be fully attained in the present life; the true Christian's diligence, in 'purifying himself as Christ is pure,' must be continued till death. 2 Cor. 6:14—18. 7:1. Then the



3 And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.

4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

5 And ye know <sup>g</sup> that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever <sup>h</sup> sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him.

[Practical Observations.]

7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that <sup>i</sup> doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

8 He <sup>j</sup> that committeth sin, is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that <sup>k</sup> he might destroy the works of the devil.

<sup>g</sup> He. 9:26, 28. <sup>i</sup> Eze. 18:5-9. <sup>j</sup> Ju. 9:44.  
<sup>h</sup> 3 Ju. 11. <sup>k</sup> Ro. 2:13. <sup>k</sup> He. 2:14.

honor, and power, and glory, Col. 3:4. Then, (4.) Their likeness to Him is argued from the sight they shall have of Him. Their likeness will be the cause of that sight which they shall have of Him. Indeed, all shall see Him, but not as they do; others shall see Him in his avenging perfections, but they in the smiles and beauty of his face; in the correspondence and amiableness of his glory; in the harmony and agreeableness of his beatific perfections. Their likeness shall enable them to see Him as the blessed do in heaven. Or, the sight of Him shall be the cause of their likeness; it shall be a transformative sight. Then the apostle, 4. Urges the engagement of these sons of God to the prosecution of holiness, v. 3. The sons of God know that their Lord is holy and

pure; of purer heart and eyes than to admit any pollution or impurity to dwell with Him. They then who hope to live with Him, must study the utmost purity from the world, and flesh, and sin; they must grow in grace and holiness. It is a contradiction to such hope, to indulge sin and impurity. And therefore as we are sanctified by faith, we must be sanctified by hope. That we may be saved by hope, we must be purified by hope. It is the hope of hypocrites, and not of the sons of God, that makes an allowance for the gratification of impure desires and lusts.

V. 4-10. The apostle, having alleged the believer's obligation to purity, from his hope of heaven, and of communion with Christ in glory, at the day of his appearance, now proceeds to multiply arguments against sin, and all communion with the impure, unfruitful works of darkness. And so he reasons and argues,

1. From the nature of sin, and the intrinsic evil of it. It is a contrariety to the divine law, v. 4. Sin is the destitution or privation of correspondence and agreement with the divine law; that law that is the transcript of the divine nature and purity, that contains his will for the government of the world, is suitable to the rational nature, and enacted for the good of the world, that shows man the way of felicity and peace, and conduces him to the Author of his nature and of the law.

2. From the design and errand of the Lord Jesus in and to this world, which was, to remove sin, v. 5. The Son of God appeared in our nature, to vindicate and exalt the divine law, and that, by obedience to the precept, and by subjection and suffering under the penal sanction, under the curse of it; to take away the guilt of sin by the sacrifice of Himself, the commission of it by implanting a new nature in us; and to disswade and save from it by his own example. They that expect communion with Christ above, should study communion with Him here in utmost purity.

3. From the opposition between sin and a real union with Christ, v. 6. To sin, here, is to commit sin, v. 8, 9. and to commit sin is to practise sin. He that abideth in Christ, continues not in the practice of sin. As vital union with the Lord Jesus broke the power of sin in the heart and nature; so continuance therein prevents the prevalence thereof in the life and conduct; or the negative expression is here put for the positive. They that abide in Christ, abide in their covenant with Him, and consequently watch against the sin that is contrary thereto. Practical renunciation of sin is the great evidence of spiritual union with, continuance in, and saving knowledge of, the Lord Christ.

4. From the connexion between the practice of righteousness and a state of righteousness; intimating withal, that the practice of sin and a justified state are inconsistent; and this is introduced with a supposition, that a surmise to the contrary is a gross deceit; 'Little children, beware of such self-deceit.' Or righteousness may in several places be justly rendered *religion*, as Mat. 5: 10. *Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake*, that is, for religion's sake. So 1 Pet. 3: 14. and 2 Tim. 3: 16. To do righteousness, then, especially being set in opposition to the doing, committing, or practising, of sin, is to practise religion. Now he who practiseth religion, is righteous; he has that righteousness which consists in pardon of sin and right to life, founded on the imputation of the Mediator's righteousness. 2 Tim. 4: 8. He has communion with Christ, in conformity to the divine law, being in some measure practically righteous as He; and He has communion with Him in the justified state, being now relatively righteous together with Him.

5. From the relation between the sinner and the devil; and thereupon from the design and office of the Lord Christ against the devil. As elsewhere sinners and saints are distinguished, so to commit sin is, here, so

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-6. We can never sufficiently admire the love, which 'the Father hath bestowed upon us,' or rejoice enough in our own felicity, if indeed we are numbered among 'the children of God.' Who and what were we, or what had we done, that the infinite Lord should condescend thus to notice and distinguish us! 'What manner of love is this,' that He should so redeem, regenerate, adopt, and bless such worthless worms, such guilty, polluted rebels! Doubtless it is vast beyond conception, and incapable of being illustrated by any comparison. May we then be 'followers of Him as his dear children;' and thus show our sense of his unspeakable mercy, and express that obedient, grateful, and humble mind, which becomes those who are so highly favored and distinguished. Even in our lowest estate, and under our

heaviest trials, 'we are the children of God,' if we indeed believe in Jesus Christ; and we shall experience such consolations, and possess such hopes, as will support us under our transient sorrows; but none on earth can conceive, in an adequate manner, the nature of 'that exceeding and eternal weight of glory,' into which we shall speedily enter. 2 Cor. 4: 13-18. Yet let none suppose, that they possess 'this hope in Him,' if they do not now desire, pursue, and practise holiness; for every man, without exception, in whose heart this hope is planted by the Holy Spirit, 'purifieth himself,' in dependence on the grace, and in contemplation of the glory, of Christ, unto increasing conformity to his perfect purity. SCOTT.

soil will be admitted into his presence, and perfected in his likeness; but the complete conformity of the Christian to his Lord, in body and soul, will not be possessed till the general resurrection.—'He does not say, "has purified," but "purifieth," that we may understand him to signify, following after holiness, not the perfect attainment of it.' *Beza*, (2) *Appear*.] 2 Cor. 5: 10. *Notes*, 2 Cor. 5: 9-12. Col. 3: 1-4. 'It is not manifested, what we shall be;' something is revealed, but not all fully and clearly; 'but when He shall be manifested, we shall see Him as He is.' (3) *In Him*.] That is, in Christ, who shall appear. *Til*. 2: 13. He who thus hopeth in Christ, &c. *Eph*. 1: 9-12. 1 *Pet*. 1: 17-21. Sc.

(1.) *Sons of God*.] 'Children of God.—When the Danish missionaries appointed some of their Malabarian converts to translate a catechism, in which it was mentioned as the privilege of Christians to become the Sons of God, one of the translators was startled at so bold a saying, as he thought it, and said, "It is too much; let me rather render it, They shall be permitted to kiss his feet." DONDR.

(2.) *When He*, &c.] 'The apostle evidently speaks of Christ, coming to judge the world; for nowhere in Scripture is God said to appear, so as to be the object of men's sight. *John* 4: 12.—'We shall be like Him.] 'Namely, both in body and mind. For, *Phil*. 3: 21. "He will re-fashion our humbled body, in order that it may become of like form with his glorious body." And with respect to our mind, we shall be made like Him in holiness, by seeing Him as He is.' *MACKN*.—'As He is.' 'I. e. not "darkly," but "face to face," as *Paul*, 1 *Cor*. 13: 12. and hence felicity the most complete. The commentators enlarge, but they seem to forget the words just before, *doth not yet appear*.' *BLOOMF*.

V. 4-6. The ceremonial law cannot here be intended. Thus it was taken for granted, that the holy law of God was the rule of conduct to all his true servants, and that none of them, wilfully and habitually, did anything contrary to it.—(4) *Committeth sin*.] 7-9. 1: 6. 2: 20. *John* 3: 21. 8: 34. No single righteous act constitutes 'a doer of righteousness,' but the habitual practice of it: thus a doer of sin, is one who practises it habitually. *SCOTT*.

(4.) *Committeth sin*.] 'Practiseth it.' *DONDR*.—'This sense of the word should be attended to, in order to perceive the justness of the apostle's reasoning in this and the following part of the ch. particularly v. 6. [636]

and 9.' *MACKN*.—'The best commentators are agreed that habitual, wilful, flagitious sin is meant.' *BLOOMF*.

V. 7-10. John here warned his beloved children, as the other apostles had before done, 1 *Cor*. 6: 9-11. *Gal*. 6: 6-10. *Eph*. 5: 5-7. *Jan*. 1: 22-25. 2 *Pet*. 1: 8, 9. not to let any man deceive them by plausible pretences, into an opinion, that they might live in habitual sin and yet be true Christians.—'Was manifested, &c.]—Consequently, the end of his incarnation and humiliation had not been in any degree answered in respect of them; [such as, though they professed to be his disciples, yet lived in sin;] and therefore they could not be warranted to account themselves his disciples. (9) *Cannot sin*, &c.] This [viz. as in *Henry*] must be all the apostle's general words can mean; because, if strictly taken, so as to mean, that the regenerate could not sin in any instance, 4-6. 5: 16-18. *Rom*. 6: 1, 2. *Gal*. 5: 16-18. they would not only prove, that some men are perfect, but that all regenerate persons are incapable of sinning any more for ever; an inference, which no man, who either reads the Bible, or the history of mankind, will ever admit. 1: 8-10. General declarations of this kind, must always be explained, according to the argument of the sacred writer; otherwise, an antinomian may prove, that 'God justifies' those who are in every sense 'ungodly,' and who never do good works of any kind, or for any purpose, as long as they live, *Rom*. 4: 5. and a man who runs into the other extreme may prove, that all the children of God are perfectly sinless, and that no regenerate person can possibly fall into any sin. But Scripture must be explained by itself, and soberly; and the context evidently shows, that the apostle spoke of an allowed practice of some habitual sin; this he declared to be impossible to the regenerate, and a full proof of a man's being 'the child of the devil.' For in this especially 'the children of God, and the children of the devil,' were manifestly distinguished from one another; and he who did not 'practise righteousness was not of God;' whatever his creed, profession, gifts, or experience might be; nay, this was to be carried to so great a strictness, that he who did not 'love his brother,' but showed a selfish, envious, and malignant spirit in his general conduct, was not to be accounted a child of God, but of the devil.—(8) *He that committeth sin is of the devil*.] *Note*, *John* 8: 41-47. 'It is not he, who committeth one or more sins of infirmity, for



9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

[Practical Observations.]

11 For this is the message that we heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

l. c. 5:13. ment. p. Ge. 4:4-8.  
n. l. Pe. 1:23. o. Jn. 15:12. q. Jn. 15:13,19.  
n. or, command-

to practise it, as sinners do, that are distinguished from saints; to live under the power and dominion of it. And he who does so, is of the devil; his sinful nature is inspired by, and agreeable and pleasing to, the devil; and he belongs to the party and interest and kingdom of the devil, the author and patron of sin, a tempter and instigator to it, even from the beginning of the world. And thereupon see how he argues from the design and office of the Lord Christ against the devil, v. 8. The devil has designed and endeavored to ruin the work of God in this world. The Son of God has undertaken the holy war against him. He came into our world, and was manifested in our flesh, that He might conquer him, and dissolve his works. Let not us serve or indulge what the Son of God came to destroy.

6. From the connexion between regener-

PRACT. OBS. V. 7-10. In the vast concern of eternal happiness or misery, how careful should we be not to deceive ourselves! and the argument of the apostle, in these verses, points out a way, in which many, it is to be feared, are self-deceived: for, however we interpret some expressions, they must prove, beyond all reasonable doubt, that they only are 'righteous before God,' as justified believers, who are taught and inclined, and enabled, by 'the renewal of the Holy Spirit,' to practise universal righteousness, in the general tenor of their conduct; and, that a man's conformity to the example of Christ, is the only adequate evidence of his being interested in his redemption. May all pro-

did Christ's disciples while they were with Him; nor he who committeth one great sin, through the power of a strong temptation, of which he bitterly repents, and from which he returns to his obedience, for thus did David and Peter, who yet were not then the children of the devil; but they who comply with the lusts of Satan, and will do them. The other interpretations of these words, including the preceding verses, seem either vain and impertinent, or false and dangerous.' *Whitby*.—Discordant ways of obviating the difficulty, arising from attempting to establish the strictest literal meaning of the apostle's words, all being evidently unscriptural, serve to show, that this was not intended.—1. The regenerate ought not to sin. Ought then others to sin? 2. When the regenerate sin, they cease to be 'children of God.' Yet apostles say, 'In many things we offend all.' 1:8-10. 3. They cannot sin, as their 'sins are not imputed to them.' This deserves no answer.—'He that is born of God proposeth to himself a life as free from sin as possible, nor does he ever of his own accord employ himself in sin; if at any time, contrary to the purpose of his mind, he has offended, he does not persist in the same; but, acknowledging his fault, he speedily returns to his former plan of life, as soon and as much as he can.' *Cataker*.—(7) *He that doeth righteousness.*] 10. 2:29.—(8) *He that committeth.*] *Note*, 4-6.—*Sinneth.*] Is not the devil's sinning habitual? He that sins, after his example, is one of his children, and he who does righteousness habitually after Christ's example, is one of the children of God.—(9) *Seed.*] The apostle could not mean, that this seed which remained in the regenerate, perished. *If baptism be regeneration, or always attended by it; then it may be rendered 'he cannot sin, because he hath been baptized!'*

(6.) *Whosoever sinneth.*] 'Every one who habitually and allowedly sinneth. It seems absolutely necessary to interpret the expression thus, to make one scripture consistent with another, (comp. James 3:2.) and even to reconcile this assertion to other passages in this epistle. See ch. 1:8-10.' *DODDR.*—'This passage is not contradictory to ch. 1:8-10. The one refers to particular deeds, the other to general practice.'

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(7.) *He that doeth righteousness.*] 'He that practiseth it, not performs some one righteous act: no man can be entitled to the character of being righteous, who does not practise universal righteousness.' *DODDR.*—*Righteous.*] 'The apostle does not mean that to be righteous in the sight of God, it is necessary that one be perfectly righteous; but that to be accounted righteous by God, we must endeavor [through pen-

ation and the relinquishment of sin, v. 9. To be born of God, is to be inwardly renewed, and restored to a holy integrity or rectitude of nature, by the power of the Spirit of God. *Such an one committeth not sin*, does not work iniquity and practise disobedience; that is contrary to his new nature, and the regenerate complexion of his spirit. For, as the apostle adds, *his seed, either the Word of God, in its light and power, remaineth in him*, as 1 Pet. 1:23. or, *that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit*, the spiritual, seminal principle of holiness remaineth in him. Renewing grace is an abiding principle. And thereupon the consequence is, the regenerate person cannot sin; that he cannot commit an act of sin, I suppose no judicious interpreter understands. That would be contrary to ch. 1:9. where it is made our duty to confess our sins, and supposed, that our privilege thereupon, is, to have our sins forgiven. *He therefore cannot sin*, in the sense in which the apostle says, *he cannot commit sin*. He cannot continue in the course and practice of sin. He cannot so sin, as to denominate him a sinner in opposition to a saint, or servant of God. Again, he cannot sin comparatively, as he did before he was born of God, and as others do that are not so. And the reason is, *because he is born of God*; which will amount to all this inhibition and impediment: (1.) There is that light in his mind, that shows him the evil and malignity of sin. (2.) There is that bias on his heart, that disposes him to loathe and hate sin. (3.) There is the spiritual, seminal principle or disposition, that breaks the force and fulness of the sinful acts. Then, (4.) There is a disposition for humiliation and repentance for sin, when it has been committed. *He that is born of God, cannot sin*. Here we may call to mind the usual distinction of natural and moral impotency. The unregenerate person is morally unable for what is religiously good. The regene-

rate person is happily disabled for sin. We usually say of a person of known integrity, 'He cannot lie, he cannot cheat, and commit other enormities.' Gen. 39:9. And so they who persist in a sinful life, sufficiently demonstrate that they are not born of God.

7. From the discrimination between children of God and children of the devil. They have their distinct characters, v. 10. The seed of the serpent is known by these two signatures: their neglect of religion; *whosoever doeth not righteousness*; and their hatred of fellow-Christians; *neither he that loveth not his brother*, v. 10. True Christians are to be loved for God's and Christ's sake. They who so love them not, but despise, and hate, and persecute them, have the serpentine nature still abiding in them.

V. 11-13. The apostle, having intimated that one note of the devil's children, is, hatred of the brethren, takes occasion, thence,

1. To recommend fraternal Christian love, and that from the excellence, or antiquity, or primariness of the injunction relating thereto; *And this is the message*, the errand or charge, *which ye heard from the beginning*, (this came among the principal parts of practical Christianity,) *that we should love one another*, v. 11.

2. To dissuade from what is contrary thereto, all ill-will toward the brethren, and that by the example of Cain. *He slew his brother*, v. 12. Sin, indulged, knows no bound. He was vexed with the superiority of Abel's service, and envied him the favor and acceptance he had with God. And for these he martyred his brother. Ill-will will teach us to hate and revenge what we should admire and imitate. And then,

3. To infer, that it is no wonder good men are so served now, v. 13. The serpentine nature still continues in the world. The great serpent himself reigns as the god of this world. Wonder not, then, that the serpentine world hates and hisses at you who

fessors of the Gospel lay these truths to heart, and examine themselves by them: and let all ministers be sure, as they will answer it before the Lord Jesus, at the day of judgment, to insist fully on these topics, and make them plain to their hearers. For numbers are most certainly 'deceived by vain words;' 'sin on, that grace may abound;' make the lamented fact, of a believer's liability to be overcome by temptation, a palliation of their habitual wickedness; and hope for heaven, whilst living in the secret, nay, perhaps, the open commission of those things, 'for which the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.' *Eph. 5:5-7.*

SCOTT.

itence and faith in Christ], to work righteousness habitually, with the assistance of the Spirit of God: it is not a perfect righteousness, otherwise salvation would not be of grace, but of debt.'

MACKN.

(3.) *For this purpose, &c.*] 'The argument here requires a *kaitoi*, and yet. [And yet for, &c.] Indeed, the omission or peculiar use of the particles, is one of the causes of difficulty in John's writings.' *BL.*

V. 9. See on v. 4. *Doth not commit sin.*—doth not habitually practise it. So the best commentators. And 'by translating the phrase thus according to the true import of the original, the argument drawn from this text, to prove the sinless perfection of the saints in the present life, is precluded.' So *Mackn.*; who, further, in relation to *his seed, &c.*, refers to 1 Pet. 1:23. and Ps. 119:11. and says, what is meant by that is, 'that principle of faith which is wrought by God in the hearts of believers, and by which they are said, ch. 4. to obtain the victory over the world.' *BL.*, in relation to 'he cannot sin,' takes it, after 'the most eminent commentators from *Grot.* to *Ros.*, of moral impossibility, implying, that the *born of God* cannot bring himself to commit such sin [i. e. habitual sin]; it is foreign from his disposition.' *EN.*

V. 13-15. Humble, disinterested, active, liberal, and forgiving love of men in general, for the Lord's sake, is indeed a good evidence of regeneration; but it is manifest the apostle spoke here especially of the love of believers towards their brethren in Christ, as such. *No murderer hath eternal life, &c.*] No doubt David, when in one dreadful instance he was guilty of complicated murder, had 'eternal life abiding in him,' 2 Sam. 11:14-17. nor is there any single sin, into which it is impossible for a regenerate man to fall. But the apostle was showing, that no true believer could live in *habitual sin*; and he stated, that he who loved not his brother did in effect hate him; and he, who habitually hated his brother, was constantly of the temper of a murderer; that is, he bore the image, and was of the disposition, of the devil, and therefore was one of his children, and not one of the children of a God of love.—What an awful view do the concluding words give of the state of those numbers, who habitually determine, by duelling, to attempt the commission of murder, whenever an occasion seems to call for it!—'The apostle does not say, that by loving our brethren, we are translated from death to life; . . . but that we may "know that we have passed." *Beza.* It is the evidence and effect, and not the cause. The state of death in sin and condemnation, in which all men are by nature, is here taken for granted, as an undeniable fact; 2 Cor. 5:13-15. *Eph. 2:1-3.* and also, that those who are 'born of God,' have 'eternal life



14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death.

15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

[Practical Observations.]

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

r c. 2:9, 11.  
s Mat 5:21, 22.  
t Ju. 15:13.  
Ro. 5:8.

u De. 15:7.  
v c. 4:20.  
w Eze. 33:31.

Ro. 12:9.  
Ja 2:15, 16.  
1 Pe. 1:22.

belong to the Seed of the woman, that is to bruse the serpent's head.

V. 14—19. The beloved apostle can scarcely touch on the mention of sacred love, but he must enlarge on the enforcement of it; as here he does by divers arguments and incentives thereto; us,

1. That it is a note of our evangelical justification, of our transition into a state of life, v. 14. We are by nature children of wrath and heirs of death. By the Gospel our state towards another world is altered and changed. We pass from death to life; from the guilt of death to the right of life. And this transition is made on our believing in the Lord Jesus, John 3:36. Now this happy change of state we may come to be assured of; *We know*, &c. we may know it by the evidences of our faith in Christ, of which this love to our brethren is one. But this love, (1.) supposes a general love to mankind; *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*. Mankind are to be loved principally on these two accounts; as the excel-

lent work of God, and as being beloved in Christ. The reason God assigns for the certain punishment of a murderer, is a reason against our hatred of any of the brethren of mankind, and consequently a reason for our love to them; *for in the image of God made He man*, Gen. 9:6. And the whole human race should be considered in distinction from fallen angels, as having a divine Redeemer designed, prepared, and given for them, John 3:16. A world so beloved of God, should accordingly be loved by us. And then this love will include all due love to enemies themselves. (2.) It includes a peculiar love to the Christian church, and that for the sake of her Head, as being his body, as being redeemed, justified, and sanctified, in and by Him; and this love particularly acts and operates toward those we have opportunity of being personally acquainted with, or credibly informed of. They are not so much loved for their own sakes, as for the sake of God and Christ, who have loved them. And so this is the issue of faith in Christ; and is thereupon a note of our passage from death to life.

2. The hatred of our brethren is, on the contrary, a sign of our deadly state, of our continuance under the legal sentence of death, v. 14. He yet stands under the curse and condemnation of the law. This the apostle argues by a clear syllogism; 'Ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him; but he who hates his brother is a murderer; therefore ye cannot but know, that he who hates his brother hath not eternal life abiding in him,' v. 15. Or, *he abideth in death*, as it is expressed v. 14. No wonder he who has a considerable acquaintance with the heart of man, or is taught by Him who fully knows it, who knows the natural tendency and issue of vile and violent passions, and knows, withal, the fulness of the divine law, declares him who hates his brother to be a murderer, Rom. 8:6. The apostle, by the expression of *having eternal life abiding in us*, may seem to mean the possession of an internal principle of endless life,—according to that of the Savior, *Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, shall never be totally destitute thereof; but the*

*water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life*, John 4:14. And thereupon some may be apt to surmise, *that the passing from death to life*, v. 14. does not signify the relative change made in our justification of life, but the real change made in the regeneration to life; and, accordingly, that the abiding in death, mentioned v. 14. is continuance in spiritual death, as it is usually called, or abiding in the corrupt, deadly temper of nature. But as these passages more naturally denote the state of the person, whether adjudged to life or death; so the relative transition from death to life may well be proved or disproved by the possession or non-possession of the inward principle of eternal life; since washing from the guilt of sin is inseparably united with washing from the filth and power of sin, 1 Cor. 6:11.

3. The example of God and Christ should inflame our hearts with this holy love, v. 16. The great God has given his Son to the death for us. But since this apostle has declared that *the Word was God*, and that *He became flesh for us*; I see not why we may not interpret this of God the Word. Here is the love of God Himself, of Him who in his own Person is God, though not the Father, that He assumed a life, that He might lay it down for us! Here is the condescension, the miracle, the mystery of divine love, that God would redeem the church with his own blood! Surely, we should love those whom God hath loved, and so loved: we shall certainly do so, if we have any love for God.

The apostle, having proposed this flaming, constraining example of love, and motive to it, proceeds to show us what should be the temper and effect of this our Christian love. And so, 1. It must be, in the highest degree, so fervent as to make us willing to suffer even to death for the good of the church, for the safety and salvation of the dear brethren, v. 16. either in our ministrations and services to them, Phil. 2:17. or in exposing ourselves to hazards, when called thereto, Rom. 16:4. How mortified should the Christian be to this life! How prepared to part with it! And how well assured of a better! 2. It must be, in the next degree, compassionate, liberal, and communicative to the necessities

PRACT. OBS. V. 11—17. In ascertaining our state and character, as well as inquiring after our duty, it behooves us to advert especially to 'the message,' delivered to Christians, 'from the beginning, to love one another.' For the children of God are distinguished by humble, harmless, and self-denying love; as those of the devil are, by proud, selfish, and mischievous hatred: or disregard to the welfare of others, except as connected with their own comfort or enjoyment.—If indeed we 'love the brethren,' we may know, that we have passed from our natural state of enmity and spiritual death and condemnation; and are brought into the company of those, who are 'alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' But if this radical grace be wholly wanting, the most plausible professor of the Gospel 'abideth in death': yea, he is a murderer in his abiding in them; and may 'know that they are passed from death unto life.' 2:3—6.—The true Christian, as such, is the brother, and the object of special affection to all believers; but men in general are our brethren, in Adam. So that hatred of any man, a brother by nature, proves the professed Christian unregenerate; but love of Christians especially, is, in this respect, the most indisputable proof of regeneration. (14) *Passed, &c.*] John 5:24. The words are the same; 'from the death to the life.'—This is said even of the best of men. . . . They are, as it were, born in the land . . . of death; . . . the Gospel finds them in such a condition, as to be liable to condemnation and destruction, to the execution of a capital sentence. . . . Such oblique expressions speak such truths as these, in a manner peculiarly convincing and affecting.' DODD.—*Abideth, &c.*] Not is brought into that state; but continues in his original ruined condition, as unregenerate.—A murderer. SCOTT.

(14.) 'The love which one Christian has for another, is not a blind, enthusiastic passion; it is a rational affection [and sympathy], arising from a previous opinion of him as a Christian. Love to the brethren is the same thing as a love of truth and holiness. It is not our loving another, but our loving that virtue which appears in another, that may be called love to the brethren, as such, and proves our having passed from death to life.'

V. 16, 17. The effects of genuine love toward the brethren required to be ascertained; and this might be understood, by considering 'the love of God' to sinners. Many copies read 'love,' and not 'the love of God;' so that the same weight cannot be laid on this passage, as on a similar one, Acts 20:28.—Every instance and degree of this selfishness, [withholding charity when it might be given to worthy objects,] must weaken the evidence of a man's conversion: and when it is habitual and allowed, it must decide that he does not belong to God, but resembles Cain far more than Jesus Christ; seeing he would rather leave the

heart; he bears the image of Satan, and 'hath not eternal life abiding in him.' If it may, in some cases, be our duty to lay down our lives for our brethren, what shall we say to those persons, professing the Gospel of Christ, who are rich in this world; and either hoard the greatest part of their wealth, or spend it in gratifying 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life,' 2:15—17. whilst they behold their poor brethren in distress, and refuse to pity them, or to part with any due proportion of their abundance, for their relief? How can it be thought that 'the love of God dwelleth in them?' Or how can 'they suppose themselves followers of Christ,' when 'this world's good' is more valued by them, than his example, commandment, glory, and favor, or the comfort and even lives of their brethren? Lu. 16:19—31. 2 Cor. 8:6—9. S.

children of God to suffer or die, than part with his money, or abridge his own indulgences, to alleviate their sorrows, or save their lives. This might also be deemed *constructive murder*; as such a man refused to preserve life, when it was in his power, and when it was his bounden duty to do it; and if the Lord had acted thus towards sinners and enemies, we must all have perished. Prov. 24:11, 12. Rom. 14:13—18. 1 Cor. 8:7—13.—As no higher expression of love is mentioned, than a willingness to 'lay down our lives for our brethren;' it is manifest, that the apostle did not maintain the extravagant notion, that true grace will make us willing to be eternally miserable, for the glory of God and the good of the universe! (17) *This world's good.*] 2:16. Luke 21:4.—Not riches, but things needful, with a little to spare, are meant. Sc.

(16.) *Hereby perceive we the love of God.*] 'The words "of God," being omitted in many MSS. and most printed editions, are put in italics: but Mackn. supplies from v. 8. "the Son of God." Doddr. reads, "Hereby perceive we love," comparo v. 1.' WILLIAMS—Bl. renders the v. thus: 'By this we may know (what) love (is), namely, that He laid down his life for us, and thus ought we to lay down our lives for the brethren.' Ros. renders: 'The true nature of love.' But 'it must surely,' Bloomf. adds, 'be mentioned with reference to Christ.' Ep. Lay down.] 'I. e. when the life and happiness of many are concerned, we ought to be willing to sacrifice our own.'

V. 18—24. According to the law, and the covenant of works, every man's heart must 'condemn him,' in proportion as he knows the rule of duty, and examines himself by it. Even according to the Gospel, his own heart must condemn of hypocrisy every man, who lives in allowed, habitual sin: unless his conscience be seared, and God have given him up to be judicially blinded and hardened. Nay, when true believers are betrayed into any known sin, of omission or commission, they are arraigned at the tribunal of their own hearts, and condemned for it: and



19 And hereby <sup>x</sup> we know that we are of the truth, and shall <sup>y</sup> assure our hearts before him.

20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21 Beloved, if our heart <sup>z</sup> condemn us not, then have we confidence <sup>a</sup> toward God.

22 And whatsoever <sup>b</sup> we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

23 And this <sup>c</sup> is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

24 And he <sup>d</sup> that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby <sup>e</sup> we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

x Jn. 13:35. y *persuade*. z Jn. 27:6. Ps. 101:2.

a He. 10:22. b Ps. 145:18, 19. Pr. 15:29. Ma. 11:24.

c De. 18:15, 19. Ju. 14:1. d Jn. 14:23. 15:10. e Ro. 8:9, 14.

of the brethren, v. 17. It pleases God, that some of the Christian brethren should be poor, for the exercise of the charity and love of those that are rich. And it pleases the same God, to give to some of the Christian brethren this world's good, that they may exercise their grace in communicating to the poor saints. It appears here, that this love to the brethren is founded on love to God, in that it is here called so by the apostle; *How dwelleth the love of God in him?* This love to the brethren is love to God in them, and where there is none of this love to them, there is no true love to God at all. 3. I was going to intimate the third and lowest degree in the next verse; but the apostle has prevented me, by intimating that this last charitable, communicative love, in persons of ability, is the lowest that can consist with the love of God. But there may be other fruits of this love; and therefore the apostle desires that in all it should be unfeigned and operative, as circumstances will allow, v. 18. Compliments and flatteries become not Christians; but the sincere expressions of sacred affection, and the services or labors of love, do. Then,

4. This love will evince our sincerity in religion, and give us hope toward God,

PRACT. OBS. V. 18—24. All Christians, whether rich or poor, should be careful to love one another, 'not in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth;' leaving cheap and hollow compliments to the 'children of the wicked one;' as the necessary varnish and *polishing* of selfishness. But when 'our hearts condemn us,' of acting contrary to our duty, and inconsistently with our profession; the consideration of the greatness, holiness, and omniscience of God, must weaken our confidence, and give us apprehensions of being dealt with after our own measure of penuriousness and severity: while the Spirit of God, being grieved by our selfishness, will leave us disconsolate and full of darkness and terror. Thus we feel, when called by the hour or season to approach the throne of grace, as children, who, being conscious of having acted contrary to the will of their parents, are ashamed and afraid to meet them; seek excuses for shunning them; or appear dejected in their presence, as afraid of rebukes, frowns, and corrections, and not expecting endearments and caresses. Hence, much interruption and neg-

lect of prayer; to our unspeakable detriment! But when our hearts do not condemn us, of allowed deviations from our duty; then, like children who are conscious of having done aright, and, being assured of their loving parents' approbation, rejoice in their approach, we have confidence with God; and 'whatsoever we ask we receive of Him,' because we show that we repent and believe, by 'keeping his commandments, and doing those things which are well-pleasing in his sight.' Thus a gratuitous salvation, and the holy obedience of love, are inseparably connected; as the substance of the command of God to sinners 'is faith in his Son Jesus Christ, and love to one another' for his sake. This obedience, though utterly insufficient for our justification, (for 'we are made the righteousness of God in Christ,') proves that 'we dwell in Him and He in us;' the sanctifying Spirit, which He has given us, forns and maintains the sacred union, and 'seals us the children of God;' and his consolations are the foretastes of our eternal felicity.

SCOTT.

(18.) 'As the affections necessarily belong to human nature, so holy

v. 19. It is a great happiness to be assured of our integrity in religion. The way to arrive at the knowledge of our own truth and uprightness in Christianity, and to secure our inward peace, is, to abound in love, and in the works of love toward the Christian brethren.

V. 20—22. The apostle, having intimated that there may be, even among us, such a privilege as an assurance or sound persuasion of heart toward God, proceeds here,

1. To establish the court of conscience, and to assert the authority of it, v. 20. *Our heart*, here, is our self-reflecting, judicial power, whereby we can take cognizance of our spirits, dispositions, and actions; and accordingly pass a judgment on our state toward God; and so it is the same with conscience, or the power of moral self-consciousness: this power can act both as witness, judge, and executioner of judgment; it is set and placed in this office by God Himself, Prov. 20:27. Conscience acts for God, 1 Pet. 3:21. God is chief Judge of the court; is superior in power and judgment; hence the act and judgment of the court are the act and judgment of God; as, (1.) If conscience condemn us, God does so too, v. 20. *God is a greater Witness, and knoweth more against us than conscience does; He knoweth all things;* and, as He is supreme, so his judgment shall stand, and shall be fully and finally executed. This seems to be the design of another apostle, 1 Cor. 4:4. Or, (2.) If conscience acquit us, God does so too, v. 21. But, possibly, some presumptuous soul may here say, 'I am glad of this; my heart does not condemn me, and therefore I may conclude God does not.' As, on the contrary, on the foregoing verse, some pious, trembling soul will be ready to cry out, 'God forbid! My heart or conscience condemns me, and must I then infallibly expect the condemnation of God?' But let such know, that the errors of the witness are not here reckoned as the acts of the court; the court of conscience is here described in its process, according to the original constitution of it by God Himself; according to which process, what is bound in conscience, is bound in heaven; let conscience therefore be heard, be well-informed, and diligently attended to.

2. To indicate the privilege of those who have a *good conscience toward God*; they have interest in heaven, and in the court above; their suits are heard there, v. 22. It is supposed that the petitioners do not desire, or do not intend to desire, anything contrary to the honor or glory of the court, or to their own intended spiritual good;

and then they may depend on receiving the good things they ask for; and this supposition may well be made concerning the petitioners, or they may well be supposed to receive the good things they ask for, considering their qualification and practice, v. 22. Obedient souls are prepared for blessings, and they have promise of audience; they who commit things displeasing to God, cannot expect He should please them in hearing and answering their prayers, Ps. 66:18. Prov. 28:9.

V. 23, 24. The apostle, having mentioned *keeping the commandments*, and [the] *pleasing of God*, as the qualification of effectual petitioners in and with heaven, here proceeds,

1. To represent to us what those *commandments* primarily and summarily are, in this double one, v. 23. To believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, is, (1.) To discern what He is, according to his name; to have an intellectual view of his Person and office, as the Son of God, and the anointed Saviour of the world; that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life, John 6:40. (2.) To approve Him in judgment and conscience, in conviction and consciousness of our case, as one wisely and wonderfully prepared and adapted for the whole work of the eternal salvation. (3.) To consent to Him, and acquiesce in Him, as our Redeemer and Recoverer unto God. (4.) To trust to Him, and rely on Him, for the full and final discharge of his saving office, Ps. 9:10. 2 Tim. 1:12. This is the first part of the *commandment* that must be observed by acceptable worshippers; the second is, that we love one another, as He gave us commandment, v. 23. The command of Christ should be continually before our eyes; Christian love must possess our souls when we go to God in prayer; to this end we must remember, that our Lord obliges us to forgive those who offend us, Mat. 6:14. and to reconcile ourselves to those whom we have offended, Mat. 5:23, 24.

2. To represent to us the blessedness of obedience to these commands; the obedient enjoy communion with God, v. 24. We dwell in God by a happy relation to Him, and spiritual union with Him, through his Son, and by a holy converse with Him; and God dwells in us by his Word, and our faith fixed on Him, and by the operations of his Spirit: then there occurs the trial of his divine inhabitation, by the sacred disposition and frame of soul He hath conferred on us; which, being a spirit of faith in God and Christ, and of love to God and man, appears to be of God.

affections not only necessarily belong to true religion, but constitute a principal part of it. And, as true religion is of a practical nature, and God has so constituted the human frame, that the affections are the chief spring of men's actions, this also shows that true religion must consist very much in the affections. Faith, hope, charity, or love, are represented as the three great things of which religion consists.

EDWARDS.

(19—24.) 'Though self-examination is a duty of great importance, yet it is not the principal mean, by which the saints obtain satisfaction as to their interest in the favor of God. [It is rather a mean of growing in grace, by finding wherein we offend and come short in duty.] Assurance is not to be obtained so much by self-examination, as by ACTIVE PIETY. Paul sought it thus. So Peter directs, 2 Pet. 1:5—11.'

IN.



## CHAP. IV.

He warneth them not to believe all teachers, who boast of the Spirit, but to try them by the rules of the catholic faith: and by many reasons exhorteth to brotherly love.

**B**ELOVED, believe <sup>a</sup> not every spirit, but try <sup>b</sup> the spirits whether they are of God; because <sup>c</sup> many false prophets are gone out into the world.

2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every <sup>d</sup> spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God:

3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome <sup>e</sup> them: because

<sup>a</sup> Je 29:8.      <sup>b</sup> Re 2:2.      <sup>c</sup> d 1 Co. 12:3.  
<sup>d</sup> Mat. 24:4.    <sup>e</sup> c 2 Pe. 2:8.    <sup>f</sup> e Ro. 8:37.  
<sup>f</sup> b 1 Th. 5:21.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. The apostle, having said that God's dwelling in and with us may be known by the Spirit He hath given us, intimates that that Spirit may be discerned and distinguished from other spirits that appear in the world; and so here,

1. He calls the disciples, to whom he writes, to *caution* and *scrutiny* about the spirits, and spiritual professors now risen. (1.) To caution, v. 1. follow not every pretender. Truth is the foundation of simula-

tion and counterfeits; there had been real communications from the divine Spirit, therefore others pretended thereto. But every pretender to the divine Spirit, or to inspiration, and extraordinary illumination thereby, is not to be believed. Time was, when the *spiritual man* (the man of the Spirit), who made a great boast of the Spirit) was mad, Hos. 9:7. (2.) To *scrutiny*; examine the claims laid to the Spirit, v. 1. a judgment of discretion is allowed in reference to the spirits that would be believed and trusted in the affairs of religion; and a reason is given for this trial. Much about the Savior's time there was a general expectation, among the Jews, of a Redeemer to Israel; and the humiliation, spiritual reformation, and sufferings of the Savior being taken as a prejudice against Him, others set up as prophets and messiahs to Israel, according to the Savior's prediction, Mat. 24:23, 24. It should not seem strange to us, that false teachers set up in the church; it was so in the apostle's times; fatal is the spirit of delusion, sad that men should vaunt themselves for prophets and inspired preachers, that are by no means so!

2. He gives a test whereby the disciples may try these pretending spirits, v. 2. Jesus Christ is to be confessed as the Son of God, the eternal Life and Word, that was with the Father from the beginning; as the Son of God that came into, and came in, our human, mortal nature, and therein suffered and died at Jerusalem. He who confesses and preaches this, by a mind supernaturally instructed and enlightened therein, does it by the Spirit of God, or God is the Author of

that illumination. On the contrary, Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, (or, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh,) is not of God, v. 3. God has given so much testimony to Jesus Christ, that ye may be assured, that any impulse or pretended inspiration that contradicts this, is far from being from heaven and of God. The sun of revealed religion is comprehended in the doctrine concerning Christ, his Person and office. We see, then, the aggravation of a formed opposition against Him and it, v. 3. It was foreknown by God, that antichrists would arise; also that one eminent antichrist would make a long and fatal war against Christ; this great antichrist would have his way prepared, and his rise facilitated, by other and less antichrists, and the spirit of error working and disposing men's minds for him; the antichristian spirit began betimes, even in the apostles' days. Dreadful and unsearchable is the judgment of God, that persons should be given over to such darkness and delusion, as to set themselves against the Son of God, and all the testimony the Father hath given to the Son! But we have been foretold and forewarned that such opposition would arise; we should therefore cease to be offended; and the more we see the word of Christ fulfilled, the more confirmed we should be in the truth of it.

V. 4—6. In these verses, the apostle encourages the disciples against the fear and danger of this seducing, antichristian spirit, and that by such methods as these: 1. He assures them of a more divine principle in them, v. 4. We are of God, v. 6. We are

NOTES. CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. In giving this direction, the apostle did not make his appeal to the miracles wrought by the true prophets. Deut. 13:1—5. 2 Thes. 2:3—12. But he deemed it more decisive, to determine the matter by the agreement or disagreement of their doctrine with that which the apostles had from the first preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. 1 Pet. 1:10—12. For this was confirmed by the Scriptures of the Old Test. by all the miracles of Christ, and all the prophecies fulfilled in Him; by his resurrection, and the accomplishment of his engagements and predictions, and by all the miracles performed by the first preachers and professors of Christianity, during a number of years; and nothing done by those false prophets, who opposed their doctrine, could pretend to equal this multiplied demonstration.—This shows, that Christians who are well acquainted with the Scriptures, may, in humble dependence on divine teaching, know for themselves, who it is that preaches according to the doctrine of the apostles, and who contradicts it; and that they are bound to make this trial of men and their tenets; and so it establishes the right of private judgment. It shows, also, that no pretences to the Spirit, to inspiration, or new revelations, are to be regarded as anything better than Satanical delusions, when they are brought to disprove or oppose the fundamental doctrines delivered by the apostles; that even apparent miracles would be totally insufficient to authenticate an antisciptural doctrine; and consequently, that philosophical reasonings and human authority must be entirely disregarded. These premises conclude equally against Mystics, Enthusiasts, Papists, Socinians, and Deists, who may mutually despise and oppose each other, but all agree in setting up new lights, against the authenticated and complete light of divine revelation.—The apostle, therefore, exhorted his brethren, in examining and deciding, who spake by the Spirit of God, and who did not, to observe, that every spirit which confessed Jesus Christ, as having come in the flesh, was of God. 2:18—25. Mat. 10:32, 33. 11:25—27. John 16:14, 15. 1 Cor. 12:1—3. This must be understood of an intelligent confession of the doctrine, delivered by the apostles, concerning the Lord Jesus, his Person, and his offices. The reality of his human nature was, no doubt, peculiarly adverted to by the expression, 'come in the flesh;' but, who could have doubted of his having been really a Man, if it had been generally understood and believed, that He was merely a Man? And if the apostle had not known, that, as 'the Son of God,' He could have come otherwise than 'in the flesh,' he would scarcely have noticed his 'coming in the flesh,' as an essential part of this confession. For who would have said, that John the Baptist, or John the apostle, came 'in the flesh,' when they were employed in preaching the Gospel? for they must have come in human nature, seeing they had no other nature. 1 Tim. 3:16. Heb. 2:14, 15. But the coming of Christ in human nature, when God 'the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among men,' was indeed essential to the apostle's doctrine concerning his redemption. (Note, John 1:14.) So that they, who did not confess Him as 'come in the flesh,' or who advanced any tenets contrary to his being 'the Christ, the Son of the living God;' or to any of those offices, which, as God manifested in the flesh, He was anointed to perform, were not of God, whatever pretences they advanced to inspiration, or whatever appearances they exhibited of miraculous powers. These heretics, whom the apostle here showed to be the forerunners of the principal antichrist, have been proved by learned men to be the very same persons, whose sentiments the Socinians, and some others, now adopt and patronize as primitive Christianity; and it is not very improbable, that the most fatal prevalence of antichrist, which is yet supposed to be future, will be in the garb of infidelity, or open opposition to the Deity and atonement of Christ; that is, 'denying that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is come in the flesh,' to be 'the propitiation for the sins of the world,' and not in that of gross popery. Rev. 11:7—12. SCOTT.

(1.) Spirit.] 'One who sets up for an inspired teacher; as 1 Tim. 4:1 and 1 Cor. 12:10.' BLOOMF.—'Worthy of imitation is the prudence of the early Christians, in regard to those whom they received as teachers of religion. They exercised a much stricter caution in admitting men to officiate in the ministry, than in admitting private members to commune in the church. In admitting members into the church, they were liberal and candid; but such as became members, were immediately subject to her discipline, and this though tender and kind, was vigilant and strict. But in receiving public teachers, they acted with great caution. They considered no man as having a right to exercise the office of a teacher in the church, unless he could exhibit positive proof of his qualification. They required not only a present personal profession, but a testimony from others of previous good conduct. Paul's account of himself, could not satisfy the disciples at Jerusalem. He must go to the apostles, to the known ministers of Christ, and from them obtain approbation. And they would not admit him to their ministerial fellowship, till they had obtained in his favor the testimony from Barnabas, who had a personal knowledge of his conversion and subsequent conduct. But there are some now, who would invert the primitive order. Before one is admitted to the church, they think there ought to be a course of trial, and positive, unequivocal proof of inward grace. But these same persons will run to hear a man preach, who is an utter stranger to them, in whose favor they have no testimony, and of whom they know not whether he has inward grace, or even external morality. Christ's "sheep follow not strangers, for they know not the voice of strangers."' LATHROP.

(2.) Every spirit that confesseth Jesus Christ, &c.] 'Every spirit that confesseth Jesus Christ, who is come in the flesh. So the words may very well, and, in this connexion, must be rendered. To confess Jesus Christ seems to mean, not barely professing some kind of regard to Him, but yielding a regular, consistent homage; and, as it were, harmonizing and falling in with his design.' DODDR.—'Has come in the flesh.' 'It is remarkable, so many able commentators should have taken up with the interpretation, "was a mere Man," so contrary to John's perpetual assertions in his gospel and epistles, that it cannot be the sense. Adverting to the known opinions of the heretics of that age, which consisted not in a denial of the Divinity, but the humanity of Christ, the best contrs. are agreed, that there is reference to the tenets of the Doctors, [Docetæ?] and others who held Jesus Christ to have been a mere phantasma, and not having a real body. Now the apostle maintains, that He came really (clothed) in the flesh, i. e. in a human body, and subject to all corporal pains and weaknesses. As to the being a mere Man, that is quite another thing; and that John could not mean that, is clear from what has been said above; nay, the passage supplies an inference the very contrary.—As Mackn. observes, the doctors, as well as the people, believed the Son of God to be Himself God. This has been abundantly proved by some learned Jews.' BLOOMF.

(2, 3.) 'The church has been obliged to prove that Christ was Man, against those who have denied it, as well as to prove that He was God; for appearances were as much against one as the other.' PASCAL.

(3.) Antichrist.] 'Not any particular person, nor any particular succession of persons in the church, but a general term for all false teachers in every age.' MACKN.—'The Roman Catholics plead, that the pope cannot be antichrist, because he admits and maintains that Jesus Christ has "come in the flesh;" but John tells us, that there are many antichrists; that is, many who oppose Christ, and his truth, though in different ways.' WILLIAMS.

V. 4—6. 2:20—25. The undeniable and stupendous miracles, as well as holy lives, of true Christians and faithful ministers, had in many places given them decided advantages over the false teachers, and driven them away with disgrace. The apostle might say with confidence, of himself



greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

5 They are of the world: 'therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

6 We are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God.

8 He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.

f Jn. 3:31. h c. 3:11, 23.  
g Is. 8:20. i 2 Co. 13:11. ver. 16.

born of God, taught of God, anointed of God, and so secured against infectious, fatal delusions. 2. He gives them hope of victory, v. 4. 'Ye have hitherto overcome these deceivers and their temptations, and there is good ground of hope that ye will do so still, and that on these two accounts.' (1.) 'There is a strong Preserver within you, v. 4. It is a great happiness to be under the influence of the Holy Ghost. (2.) 'Ye are not of the same temper with these deceivers; the Spirit of God hath framed your mind for God and heaven; but they are

of the world; their heart addicted thereto; therefore speak they of the world: they profess a worldly messiah and savior, they project a worldly kingdom and dominion; forgetting that the true Redeemer's kingdom is not of this world. This worldly design procures them proselytes: the world heareth them, v. 5. (3.) He represents to them, that, though their company might be the smaller, yet it was the better; they had more divine and holy knowledge; 'He that knoweth God, heareth us. He who knows the purity and holiness of God, the love and grace of God, the truth and faithfulness of God, the ancient word and prophecies of God, the signals and testimonies of God, must know that He is with us; and he who knows this, will attend to us, and abide with us.' As, on the contrary, 'He that is not of God, heareth not us. He who knows not God, regards not us. Thus you have a distinction betwixt us and others; Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error, v. 6. This doctrine concerning the Savior's person leading you from the world to God, is a signature of the Spirit of truth, in opposition to the spirit of error. The more pure and holy any doctrine is, the more likely to be of God.'

V. 7—13. As the Spirit of truth is known by doctrine, (so spirits are to be tried,) it is known by love likewise; and so here follows a strong, fervent exhortation to holy, Christian love, v. 7.

1. From the high and heavenly descent

and of his brethren, the other apostles, 'We are of God;' and those who knew the holy and glorious character of God, and had an experimental acquaintance with Him, through regeneration and by faith, adhered to their doctrine and instructions; whereas, those who were not 'born of God,' and did not truly belong to Him, would not hear them, but attended to the more amusing, or flattering, or indulgent speculations of other teachers.—The same is the test and standard of truth to this day; nor can we, by any other rule, 'try the spirits, whether they be of God, or not.' 1—3. *Mat.* 16:18, 19. 'Though the apostles be all dead,' yet, as they speak in their divinely inspired writings, John in this passage declares, that their writings are the test, by which the disciples of Christ, since the decease of the apostles, are to judge both of teachers and of their doctrine.' *Mackn.*

V. 7, 8. The apostle here resumed his exhortation to those, who adhered to the true doctrine of Christ, that they would cultivate the most endeared affection towards one another; . . . For, 'GOD IS LOVE,' or essential goodness and benevolence. It is, as it were, his very nature to be kind, to communicate life, and impart felicity, and to provide for the happiness of his creatures, in all cases and methods, which consist with his infinite wisdom, justice, truth, and holiness; for love must always be exercised in entire consistency with these attributes, by the perfect Source of all excellence. 'The earth is filled with the goodness of the Lord,' and doubtless the immensity of the creation is the same; holy angels derive from God complete and endless felicity, and rebellion alone has made any rational creatures suffer pain and misery. Being and happiness could not have been communicated, in that vast extent and degree, which they are and will be, without the creation of intelligent agents. These form a kingdom to be governed by a perfect law, and a righteous Sovereign. The very law of God is 'love,' as well as his nature; love of Him and of each other, constitutes the sum of its holy, just, and kind requirements, and all would have been perfectly happy had all perfectly obeyed it. *Ex.* 20:8. *Lev.* 19:18. *Deut.* 6:5. *Rom.* 7:9—12. Unless infinite wisdom had seen it proper, that omnipotence should be unremittingly exerted, to prevent free agents from transgression, (which undeniable facts demonstrate that it did not,) this law must be guarded by sanctions; and those who break it must be exposed to a punishment proportioned to the offence. Thus love to creatures, at large, dictated both the law and its sanctions. When angels sinned, a God of love, in kindness to his obedient creatures, turned those from heaven to hell, who would have converted heaven into hell if they had continued there; except some other act of omnipotence had prevented it. When man's apostasy took place, the love of God was shown, not only in sparing sinners, and giving them a rich profusion of temporal benefits, while the sentence denounced against them was in part repented; but, in so ordering it, that even their pains, sorrows, and temporal death were expressive of his wise compassion, and tended greatly to prevent the multiplication of crimes, and the increase of condemnation. Especially, the provision of the Gospel, for the forgiveness of sin and the salvation of sinners, in consistency with the glory of the law and justice of God, whilst present sufferings are made subservient to the final and eternal felicity of believers, undeniably manifests, that 'God is Love.' So immense were the obstacles to be surmounted, and so astonishing the method, by which mercy is honorably exercised to rebels, deserving of eternal misery, that, even if the entrance of sin had been prevented, or impunity and recovery to holiness could have been ensured to all transgressors without any such expedient, the love of God would not so clearly have appeared to be infinite and incomprehensible. Something we can now see of its immensity; and, though impenetrable and incomprehensible mystery rest on many particulars respecting it, yet it will surely at length be seen, resplendent as the noon-day sun, that the most perfect love presided, when, in the infinite wisdom of God, the entrance of sin was permitted, and when infinite justice, holiness, and truth determined to leave many rebels in their impenitency, to be 'vessels of wrath fitted for destruction,' as connected with the election, redemption, and sanctification of the 'vessels of mercy, who are thus

prepared before unto glory.' So that, if wise and holy love, in its most perfect exercise towards universal being, through eternity, had required or even admitted of it, no pain would have been suffered by any creature, much less would any have been left to be finally miserable.—But to argue from hence, that none will be finally miserable, in direct opposition to his testimony, who is TRUTH, and a CONSUMING FIRE, as well as LOVE, is the height of impiety and presumption. What do we know, concerning the purposes of love, to unnumbered millions, through eternal ages, which may be answered, in the infinitely wise counsels of God, by leaving comparatively a small number of rebels, to the merited punishment of their crimes? Men might on the same principles argue, that prisons and executions could not have any place, in the dominions of an eminently benevolent prince; when, in reality, wise and equitable benevolence to numbers, would dictate severity to a few atrocious criminals, who would otherwise make multitudes wretched. *Prov.* 20:8, 26. 24:24, 25. Indeed, we might as reasonably argue, that, since 'God is Love,' there can be no such thing as misery in the creation; for Omnipotence could certainly have excluded it; but if infinite wisdom, justice, holiness, and truth require, that Love Himself should cause his creatures to endure anguish, (and here facts preclude the vain hypothesis which speculation might otherwise have adopted,) no created understanding can determine, in what degree, to what duration, or in how many instances, the wise, righteous, and holy purposes of LOVE, may require the suffering of his rebellious subjects. So that all arguments and calculations of this kind prove nothing, but the vain self-wisdom of foolish man, who deems himself competent to determine, what God ought to do, and what He will do; and, in this presumption, opposes his arguments to the explicit testimony of God Himself; and professes to honor his love, while he treats his truth as a lie, and suppresses his awful threatenings to be terrifying delusions, to frighten the ignorant part of mankind into good behavior, and to be despised by the more discerning! But it is enough for our purpose, that God has so shown Himself to be LOVE in his dealings with us, that, after all our crimes, we cannot come short of eternal happiness, except through our unbelief and impenitent rebellion, while strict justice would have consigned us to hopeless and final misery, as soon as ever we transgressed our Creator's law.

(7.) 'The apostle now returns to the subject of love to others, treated of at 3:23.' *Bloom.*—*Let us love one another.* 'It is reported, that when the apostle was grown old, and past preaching, he used to be led to the church at Ephesus, and only say these words to the people, *Little children love one another.*' *Dodd.*—'This is holy love, which assimilates its subject to God. He is born of God. It is that love which is the fulfilling of the law. It is religion. For every one that loveth knoweth God, and to know God is life eternal,—is religion. This love does not belong to man by nature. It is never a quality of his heart; but is, in all cases, the result of a divine interposition,—otherwise it would not be true, that "every one that loveth is born of God."'

(8.) 'In the words, "God is love," we have a perfect portrait of the eternal and incomprehensible Jehovah, drawn by his own unerring hand. The mode of expression here adopted, differs materially from that usually employed by the inspired writers, in speaking of the divine perfections. They say, God is merciful, God is just, or holy; but never, God is mercy, God is justice, God is holiness. In this instance, on the contrary, the apostle, instead of saying, God is loving, or good, or kind, says, GOD IS LOVE ITSELF. By this, we must understand, that God is all pure, unmixed love, and that the other moral perfections of his character, as his justice, mercy, truth, &c. are only so many modifications of his love. As the light which proceeds from the sun, may easily be separated into many different colors, so the holy love of God, which is the light and glory of his nature, may be separated into a variety of moral attributes and perfections. But, though separated, they are still love. His whole nature and essence are love; his will, his words, and his Word are love; He is nothing, can do nothing but love.' *J. R. FAYSON.*



9 In this <sup>j</sup> was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that <sup>k</sup> we might live through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation <sup>l</sup> for our sins.

11 Beloved, if <sup>m</sup> God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

12 No <sup>n</sup> man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected <sup>o</sup> in us.

13 Hereby <sup>p</sup> know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14 And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

15 Whosoever <sup>q</sup> shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God <sup>r</sup> is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

<sup>j</sup> Jn. 3:16. <sup>k</sup> Jn. 6:51. <sup>l</sup> 1 Co. 2:2. <sup>m</sup> Mat. 13:33. <sup>n</sup> Jn. 15:12,13. <sup>o</sup> 1 Ti. 6:16. <sup>p</sup> 1 Co. 13:13. <sup>q</sup> Ro. 10:9. <sup>r</sup> ver. 8.

for us; He has given his own, only-beloved, blessed Son for us, v. 9. This Person is in some peculiar, distinguishing way the Son of God; He is the Only-begotten. It may well be said, *So* (so wonderfully, so amazingly, so incredibly) *God loved the world.* (3.) That God loved us first, and in the circumstances in which we lay, v. 10. *He loved us*, when we had no love for Him; when we lay in our guilt, misery, and blood; when we were undeserving, ill-deserving, polluted, and unclean, and wanted to be washed from our sins in sacred blood. (4.) That He gave us his Son for such an end, *to be the Propitiation for our sins*; consequently to die for us, to die under the law and curse of God, to be crucified, to be wounded in his soul, and pierced in his side, to be dead and buried for us, v. 10. And then for such an end, v. 9. for such a good and beneficial end to us,—*that we might live for ever through Him, might live in heaven, live with God, live in eternal glory and blessedness with Him and through Him*: Oh, what love is here! Then,

3. Divine love to the brethren should constrain ours, v. 11. This should be an invincible argument. The example of God should press us. We should be admirers of his love, and lovers of his love, and consequently lovers of those whom He loves. The general love of God to the world, should induce a universal love among mankind, Mat. 5:45. The peculiar love of God to the church and to the saints, should be productive of a peculiar love there; *If God so loved us, we ought surely* (in some measure suitably thereto) *to love one another.*

4. The Christian love is an assurance of the divine inhabitation, v. 12. Now *God dwelleth in us*, not by any visible presence, nor immediate appearance to the eye, v. 12. but by *his Spirit*, v. 13. and in that way in which He has thought meet to describe and claim our love; and that is, in the illustration He has given of Himself and of his love, in the members of his church; in them, and in his appearance for them, and with them, is God to be loved; and thus, *if we love one another, God dwelleth in us*; the sacred lovers of the brethren are the temples of God; the Divine Majesty has a peculiar residence there.

5. Therein the divine love attains a considerable end and accomplishment in us, v. 12. It has obtained its completion in and upon us. *God's love is not perfected in Him, but in and with us.* His love could not be designed to be ineffectual and fruitless on us; when its proper, genuine end and issue are attained and produced thereby, it may be said to be *perfected*; so faith is *perfected* by its works, and *love perfected* by its operations. How ambitious should we be of this fraternal, Christian love, when God reckons his own [love] to us *perfected* thereby! To this the apostle, having mentioned the high favor of God's dwelling in us, subjoins the note and character thereof, v. 13. Certainly this mutual inhabitation is something more noble and great than we are well acquainted with, or can declare. One would think, that for *God to dwell in us, and we in Him*, were words too high for mortals to use, had not God gone before us therein. What it is, has been briefly said on ch. 3:24. What it fully is, must be left to the revelation of the blessed world.

V. 14—16. Since faith in Christ works love to God, and love to God must kindle love to the brethren, the apostle here confirms the prime article of the Christian faith as the foundation of such love; where,

1. He proclaims the fundamental article of the Christian religion, which is so representative of the love of God, v. 14. We here

see, (1.) The Lord Jesus' relation to God; He is *Son to the Father*, such a Son as no one else is, and so as to be God with the Father. (2.) His relation and office toward us,—*the Savior of the world*; He saves us by his death, example, intercession, Spirit, and power against the enemies of our salvation. (3.) The ground on which He became so,—by his mission; *the Father sent the Son*, decreed and willed his coming hither, in and with the consent of the Son. (4.) The apostle's assurance of this,—he and his brethren had *seen* it; they had *seen* the Son of God in his human nature, so *seen* Him as to be satisfied He was *the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* (5.) The apostle's attestation of this, in pursuance of such evidence; *'We have seen and do testify; our eyes, and ears, and hands, have been witnesses of it.'* Thereupon,

2. He states the excellency, or the excellent privilege, attending the due acknowledgment of this truth, v. 15. This confession seems to include faith in the heart as the foundation of it; acknowledgment with the mouth to the glory of God and Christ; and profession in the life and conduct, in opposition to the flatteries or frowns of the world. And so he who thus confesses Christ, and God in Him, is enriched with, or possessed by, the Spirit of God, and has a complacental knowledge of God, and much holy enjoyment of Him. Then,

3. He applies this in order to the excitation of holy love, v. 16. The Christian revelation is, what should endear it to us, the revelation of the divine love; the articles of our revealed faith are but so many articles relating to the divine love; the history of the Lord Christ is the history of God's love to us; all his transactions in and with his Son were but testifications of his love to us, and means to advance us to the love of God, 2 Cor. 5:19. Hence we may learn,

(1.) That *God is Love*, v. 16. He is essential, boundless love; He has incomparable, incomprehensible love for us of this world, which He has demonstrated in the mission and mediation of his beloved Son. It is the great objection and prejudice against the Christian revelation, that the love of God should be so strange and unaccountable, as to give his own eternal Son for us; it is the prejudice of many against the eternity and the Deity of the Son, that so great a Person should be given for us. It is, I confess, mysterious and unsearchable; but there are *unsearchable riches in Christ*; it is pity the vastness of the divine love should be made a prejudice against the revelation

V. 9—12. Hence it appears, that Christ is called 'the only-begotten Son of God,' previous to his incarnation, or coming into the world; and that the love of God, in giving his own Son to assume our nature, in order to his expiatory sufferings, was more stupendous, than even in giving Him, as *incarnate*, to the death on the cross for us. *Jn. 1:18. 3:16—21.*—When God, in his infinite compassion and mercy, designed so vast a blessing as 'life eternal' for fallen men; his most perfect justice and holiness rendered it impossible for Him to confer it, (for 'He cannot deny Himself,') except an all-sufficient atonement could be made for their sins; and when no other method, nor none so proper for this end, was perceived by his infinite wisdom, as the sending of his own Son to be our Surety, and the atoning Sacrifice for our sins, 'He spared Him not,' but sent Him 'into the world, that we might live through Him.' *Rom. 3:21—26. 8:32—34. Heb. 7:26—28. 10:3, 4.* None of our words or thoughts can do justice to such gratuitous, abundant, astonishing love, of a holy God towards sinners, to whom He owed nothing, who could not profit, or harm Him, whom He might justly have crushed in a moment; who were most decisively shown to be deserving of his tremendous vengeance, in the very method by which they were saved; and when He could, by his omnipotent word, have created countless worlds, replenished with far more exalted beings, if He had seen good. *Rom. 5:6—10, 15—21.* Search we then the whole universe for LOVE, in its most enlarged and glorious displays? We must at length be constrained to own, that it is to be found in the Person and the cross of Christ. 'Herein is love,' the splendor of which eclipses all, which has been seen elsewhere, from the beginning of the world, and which will be the special subject of admiring and adoring praise to all eternity.—Does love subsist between God and sinners? Here was the origin of it; 'not that we loved God,' for we were enemies to his holy character, law, sovereignty, worship, and providence; but that 'He,' most freely, and with most condescending compassion, forgiveness, and liberality, 'loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' 2:1, 2. *Jn. 15:12—16.* In this great event, all holy beings will for ever see, that 'GOD is

LOVE'; and, the more fully redeemed sinners understand this subject, the clearer views will they have of that love, which can never be perfectly comprehended; whereas, those who exclude this view of the divine benignity, may speculate about the subject, but can scarcely know anything concerning its real nature and glory. SCOTT.

(2, 15, 16.) 'Not that the saints are made partakers of the essence of God, according to the blasphemous notions of some heretics; but they are made partakers of his fulness, that is, of his moral beauty.' EDWARDS.

V. 13—17. The apostles knew, and true Christians might know, that they 'dwelt in God' by faith, and He in them as in his consecrated temple, 'because He had given them of his Spirit.' 3:18—24. *Rom 8:5—17.* For, besides the miraculous powers conferred on some, the Holy Spirit had so changed the hearts of all true believers, and so made them 'partakers of a divine nature,' that they loved the children of God with a holy love, and copied his example in their conduct to each other.—All such general expressions must be interpreted according to the context; for, unless the confession of Christ were sincere, intelligent, and influential, the man could not be a partaker of holy love; and therefore the apostle would have contradicted what he before asserted, if he had meant a mere confession with the lips, without faith and grace in the heart (8). But true Christians had known, understood, and experienced, as well as believed, the love, which God had shown towards them, in the redemption of his Son; and it had had a transforming effect on them, by bringing them to resemble God, in the nature and fruits of their love; and by an habitual exercise of this holy affection towards God, each other, and all men; and to live in the most endeared and intimate union with Him. Thus their love to the Lord was 'made perfect,' or produced its genuine and valuable effects, in their love to one another; and they cultivated this holy disposition, and acted from it, in order that they might have boldness in the day of judgment. (*Notes, 2 2<sup>d</sup>—29. Mat. 25:31—46.*) Because, as Christ was, so were they in this world; like Him, they were influenced by holy love to do good to others in a self-denying



17 Herein is 'our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth, is not made perfect in love.

19 We love him, because 'he first loved us.

20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Love with us. t. Jn. 15:16. u. c. 3:17. v. Jn. 13:34.

and the belief of it. But what will not God do, when He designs to demonstrate the height of any perfection of his? In such a dispensation as that of giving a natural, eternal Son for us and to us, He will commend his love to us indeed; and what will not the God of love do, when He designs to commend his love, and to commend it in the view of heaven, and earth, and hell; and when He will commend Himself, and recommend Himself to us, and to our highest conviction, and also affection, as Love itself? And what if it should appear at last, (which I shall only offer to the consideration of the judicious,) that the divine love, and particularly God's love in Christ, should be the foundation of the glories of heaven, in the present enjoyment of those ministering spirits that comported with it, and of the salvation of this world, and of the torments of hell? This last will seem most strange. But what if therein it should appear, not only that *God is love* to Himself, in vindicating his own law and government, and love and glory; but that the damned ones are made so, or are so punished, because they

despised the love of God, already manifested and exhibited; refused to be beloved in what was further proposed and promised; and made themselves unmeet to be the objects of divine complacency and delight? If the consciences of the damned should accuse them of these things, and especially of rejecting the highest instance of divine love; if the far greatest part of the intelligent creation should be everlastingly blessed through the highest instance of the divine love, then may it well be inscribed on the whole creation of God, *God is love*.

(2.) That hereupon, *he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in Him, v. 16*. There is great communion between the God of love and the loving soul, that is, him who loves the creation of God, according to its different relation to God, and reception from Him, and interest in Him.

V. 17—21. The apostle, having thus excited and enforced sacred love from the great Pattern and motive of it, the love that is and dwells in God Himself, proceeds to recommend it further by other considerations; and in both branches of it, love to God, and love to our brother or Christian neighbor.

I. Love to God; this seems here to be recommended on these accounts:

(1.) It will give us peace and satisfaction of spirit in the day when it will be most needed, or when it will be the greatest pleasure and blessing imaginable, v. 17. There must be a day of universal judgment. Happy they who shall have holy, fiducial boldness, before the Judge at that day; who shall be able to lift up their heads, and to look Him in the face, as knowing He is their Friend and Advocate! So do, and so may do, the lovers of God. Possibly here by *the love of God* may be meant our *love to God*, that is *shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost*; that is the foundation of our hope, or of our assurance that our hope will hold good at last. Or, if by *the love of God* be meant the sense and apprehension of his love to us, yet that must suppose or include us as lovers of Him in this case; and, in-

stead, the sense and evidence of his love to us, *shed abroad in our hearts* love to Him; and, thereupon, we have confidence toward Him, and peace and joy in Him; *He will give the crown of righteousness to all that love his appearing*; and we have this boldness toward Christ, because of our conformity to Him, *because as He is, so are we in this world, v. 17*.

(2.) It prevents or removes the uncomfortable result and fruit of servile fear, v. 18. so far as love prevails, fear ceases. We must here distinguish, I judge, between fear and being afraid; or in this case, between the fear of God and being afraid of Him; the fear of God is often mentioned and commanded as the substance of religion, 1 Pet. 2:17. Rev. 14:7. But then there is a being afraid of God, that arises from a sense of guilt, and a view of his vindictive perfections; so fear here may be rendered *dread*; *there is no dread in love*; love considers its object as good and excellent, and therefore amiable, and worthy to be beloved; love considers God as most eminently good, and most eminently loving us in Christ, and so puts off dread, and puts on joy in Him; and as love grows, joy grows too; so that *perfect love casteth out fear* or dread. That *perfect love casteth out fear*, the apostle thus sensibly argues, that it casteth out torment, casteth out fear or dread, v. 18. Fear is known to be a disquieting, torturing passion, especially such a fear as is the dread of an almighty, avenging God; *but perfect love* teaches the mind a perfect acquiescence and complacency in the beloved, and, therefore, *perfect love casteth out fear*. Or, which is here equivalent, *he that feareth, is not made perfect in love, v. 18*. It is a sign our love is far from being perfect, since our doubts and fears, and dismal apprehensions of God, are so many. Let us long for, and hasten to the world of perfect love, where our serenity and joy in God will be as perfect as our love!

(3.) From the source and rise of it, which is the antecedent love of God, v. 19. His love is the incentive, the motive, and moral cause of ours. We cannot but love

PRACT. OBS. We live in an age, in which but few advance claims to immediate revelations; yet we have at least as much cause to try men's doctrines and religion by the Word of God, as they had in the primitive times. If indeed no teachers, who do not confess the doctrine of the apostles, concerning the Person and salvation of Christ, 'God manifested in the flesh,' 'are of God,' which the apostle expressly asserts; and if all others are actuated by the lying spirit of antichrist, we may truly say, that antichrist did not much more prevail, in the darkest days of popery, than in these times of infidelity, skepticism, socinianism, arianism, mysticism, and antinomianism; whilst the scriptural doctrine concerning the Person, or some of the offices of Christ, seems to be wholly excluded from the religion of a large proportion among his professed disciples! nay, from that of some, who possess high authority and much influence in the church.—*We must not, indeed, take it for granted, as the apostle did, that 'we are of God;' or that 'He who knoweth God heareth us;' but, as far as we can prove, that our doctrine, temper, and conduct, 'accord to the oracles of God,' we may be confident, that He will maintain our cause, and that his friends and children will favor us; and the characters of the persons who adhere to the testimony of preachers, and that of those who reject it, may often go far in deciding, who they are that declare the humbling, holy truths of God, and who speak the dictates of 'the spirit of error.'* For numbers are incapable of doing so much honor to the ministry of the true servants of God in any other way, as they do by forsaking, deriding, and reviling it; whilst their actions show to all, who understand that most emphatical language, the strong reasons of their dislike. *John 3:19—21. 7:3—10.* Again and again, we are exhorted to 'love one another, because love is of God;' in proportion as this love abounds in our heart, and regulates our behavior, we bear the image of God, and show that we are 'born of Him, and know Him.' Thus we anticipate the temper and happiness, and, as it were, breathe the air of heaven: whilst enmity,

manner; and, being treated with contempt, reproach, and enmity, they meekly and patiently endured it, and persevered in 'doing good against evil,' as He had done. Or, 'as God is, so are they;' they bear his image, which the world hates; for this may be the meaning, and it is coincident with the preceding interpretation. SCOTT.

(15.) *Whoever shall confess, &c.* [Bp. Hopkins accounts for this, and such passages, by observing, that in the primitive times there were no temporal inducements to embrace Christianity; and consequently most of the professors of it acted upon conscience, and it might be charitably hoped, that they were indeed regenerate.] DODD.—'The apostle takes it for granted, not only that the profession is sincere, but productive of a suitable conduct. And, indeed, as in times like those, open confession and undaunted profession implied sincerity, it was likely to draw with it the other.' BLOOME.

V. 18. The obedience and good works performed from this principle [love], are not like the servile diligence of one, who reluctantly labors

selfishness, malice and revenge, are from hell, and the beginning of the misery 'prepared for the devil and his angels' and children. But our 'GOD IS LOVE;' and with such displays of this endearing attribute before us, and such obligations as we are brought under to it; how large, liberal, and fervent ought our love of each other to be, and even that of our very enemies! And how should we lay ourselves out, to do good to our fellow-Christians for the Lord's sake! Let us not then think it enough to admire the love of God in Christ Jesus; but, since we cannot profit Him 'whom no man hath seen or can see;' let us show our love and gratitude to Him, by imitating his kind and merciful conduct, in our dealings with our brethren and neighbors. Then it will appear that we have understood the nature and glory, as well as believed the revelation, of 'the love which God hath to us;' and that, as 'God is love,' so 'we dwell in love,' and 'in God, and He in us.' In this way our love will grow unto perfection; and our confidence, before the mercy-seat, will be an anticipation of our 'boldness in the day of judgment;' while we are conscious, that as He, our Lord and Savior was, 'so are we in this evil world.' Nor would there be occasion for our being left to the painful restraint and impulse of terror, if we were more entirely 'constrained by love,' in every part of our duty: so that all our disquieting doubts, and apprehensions, arise from our not being made perfect in love. *Jer. 32:39—41.* Let us then pray without ceasing, that we may more entirely 'love Him, who hath first loved us;' and if it be evident, that our natural enmity is changed into filial affection and gratitude; let us bless the name of our God for this seal and earnest of eternal felicity; and, in return for his mercy, and in obedience to his commandment, let us do good to our brethren also, and to all men, for his sake, and after his example; and thus show, that though our love is imperfect, yet that we essentially differ from all those, who profess 'to love God whom they have not yet seen,' and yet 'hate their brethren whom they have seen.' SCOTT.

from dread of a hated master's indignation; but like that of a dutiful child, who performs services to a beloved father, which conduce to the benefit of his brethren and family, and are, on every account, pleasing, and voluntarily performed. . . . Yet this does not imply, that any Christians are made absolutely perfect in love on earth, to the full demand of the divine law; or that slavish fears prove a man to have no love, or grace; or that exemption from fear of every kind, is the privilege of believers. It is equally true, 'that blessed is he that feareth always,' as that 'perfect love casteth out fear;' for different kinds of fear are meant. *Prov. 22:14. Rom. 11:16—21. Heb. 4:1, 2. 1 Pet. 1:17—21.* SCOTT.

V. 19. Not that their love is merely gratitude for previous benefits, which, abstracted from other exercises of love, would only be a selfish affection, and not at all that holy love, which the law, as written in the hearts of all true Christians, requires; for that love is commanded previous to the consideration of redemption, and our failure in it causes us to need that love of God towards us, of which the apostle was so



## CHAP. V.

1 He that loveth God loveth his children, and keepeth his commandments: 3 which to the faithful are light, and not grievous. 9 Jesus is the Son of God, able to save us, 14 and to hear our prayers, which we make for ourselves, and for others.

**WHOSOEVER** believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him.

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

a Jn. 1:12,13. c Ps. 119:45. d 1 Co. 15:57.  
b Jn. 14:15,21. Mat. 11:30.

so good a God, who was first in the act and work of love; who loved us when we were both unloving and unlovely; who loved us at so great a rate; who has been seeking and soliciting our love at the expense of his Son's blood, and has condescended to beseech us to be reconciled unto Him. Let heaven and earth stand amazed at such love! His love is the productive cause of ours; *Of his own will*, of his own free, loving will, begat He us. The divine love stamped love on our souls; may the Lord still and further direct our hearts into the love of God! 2 Thess. 3:5.

2. Love to our brother and neighbor in Christ; such love is argued and urged on these accounts:

(1.) As suitable and consonant to our Christian profession. In the profession of Christianity we profess to love God as the

Root of religion; *If then a man say, or profess as much as thereby to say, I love God, and yet hate his brother, whom he should love for God's sake, he is a liar, v. 20.* That such an one loves not God, the apostle proves by the usual faculty of loving what is seen, rather than what is unseen, v. 20. How shall the hater of a visible image of God pretend to love the unseen Original, the invisible God Himself?

(2.) As suitable to the express law of God, and the just reason of it, v. 21. Our Christian brethren having a new nature and excellent privileges derived from God, and God having his interest in them, as well as in us, it cannot but be a natural, suitable obligation, *that he who loves God, should love his brother also.*

CHAP. V. V. 1—5. 1. The apostle having, in the conclusion of the last ch., urged Christian love as suitable to Christian profession, and to the divine command, here adds, that such love is suitable to, or, indeed, demanded by their eminent relation; our Christian brethren or fellow-believers are nearly related to God; they are his children, v. 1. Wherein the Christian brother is, (1.) Described by his faith; he *believeth that Jesus is the Christ; Messiah the Prince; the Son of God by nature and office; the chief of all the anointed, priests, prophets, or kings; perfectly prepared for the whole work of the eternal salvation; the believer, accordingly, yields himself up to his care and conduct; and then he is, (2.) Dignified by his descent; he is born of God, v. 1.* This principle of faith, and the new nature that attends it, or from which it springs, are ingenerated by the Spirit of God; and so sonship and adoption are not now from *Abraham according to the flesh*, but spiritually from God; and all believers accordingly are to be beloved; as it is added, v. 1. and so we must first and principally love *the Son of the Father*, as He is most emphatically styled,

2 John 3: the Only (necessarily) begotten, and the Son of his love, and then those that are voluntarily begotten, and renewed by the Spirit of grace: thereupon,

2. The apostle shows, (1.) How we may discern the truth, or the true, evangelical nature of our love to the regenerate; the ground of it must be our love to God, whose they are, v. 2. Our love to them appears to be sound and genuine, when we love them, not merely on any secular account, as because they are rich, or learned, or kind to us, or of our denomination among religious parties; but because they are God's children, bear his image, and so in them God Himself is loved. Thus we see what that love to the brethren is, that is so pressed in this epistle; it is love to them as the children of God, and the adopted brethren of the Lord Jesus.

(2.) How we may learn the truth of our love to God: it appears in our holy obedience, v. 2. Then we truly love God, when we keep his commandments; for this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and the keeping of his commandments requires a spirit inclined thereto, and delighting therein, v. 3. Or, *This is the love of God, that, as thereby we are determined to obedience, and to keep the commandments of God, so his commandments are thereby made easy and pleasant to us.*

(3.) What is and ought to be the effect of regeneration,—an intellectual, spiritual conquest of this world, v. 5. He that is born of God, is born for God, and consequently for another world; his temper and disposition tend to a higher, better world; and he is furnished with arms to conquer this; as it is added, v. 4. Faith is the spiritual armor and artillery by which we overcome; for faith works in and by love to God and Christ, and so withdraws us from the love of the world. Faith sanctifies the heart, and purifies it from those sensual lusts by which the world obtains such sway and do-

ing. If mere gratitude for mercy and personal forgiveness were exclusively intended, no man could love God at all, on good grounds, without some immediate revelation, to assure him that he was the object of his special love. even while he continued altogether impenitent and sinful. (Note, Luke 7:44—50. P. O. 36—50.) But the evident meaning is, that if the Lord had not 'loved them,' before they loved Him, 'even when they were dead in sin,' they must for ever have continued enemies to Him. 9:12.

SEOTT. Concluding Note. V. 7—13. 'God is love:—and the true theory of the universe is, that it is a vehicle or medium constructed expressly for the circulation and diffusion of his love. Full of blessedness Himself, his goodness burst forth, at first, into a celestial creation, replenished with bright intelligences, invested with the high prerogative of approaching as near to the Fountain of excellence as created natures can, to derive their happiness nearly from Himself, and to derive it to the full amount of their capacity for enjoyment.

'But heaven, with all its amplitude, was too confined for Infinite Love; He must enlarge the sphere of his beneficence; again his unmeasured goodness overflowed, and this terrestrial creation appeared,—an enlargement of heaven. On that occasion, however, He chose to diversify the form of his love in the production of man,—a creature whose happiness, though equally with that of angels derived from Himself, should reach Him through more indirect and circuitous channels. By creating, at first, one common father of the species, He designed that each should feel himself allied to all the rest, and pledged to promote their happiness. And, by rendering us necessary to each other's welfare, He sought to train us to an humble imitation of his own goodness; to teach us the divine art of benevolence,—to find and fabricate our own happiness from the happiness of others.

'Now, if the former, the angelic creation, was meant to exemplify how much his creatures could enjoy, the latter was intended to show how much they could impart; for He meant every heart and every hand to be a consecrated channel for his love to flow in. Had his great idea been realized, the world would have exhibited the glorious spectacle of a whole race in family compact; clothed in a robe of happiness, with charity for a girdle; feasting at a perpetual banquet of beneficence; hailing the accession of every new-born member, as the advent of an angel, an addition to their common fund of enjoyment; and finding greater blessedness than that of passively receiving happiness, in exercising the godlike prerogative of imparting it;—a whole order of intelligent beings, having one heart and one mind; a heart beating in concert with heaven, and diffusing, with every pulse, life, and health, and joy, to the remotest members of the body. The mere outline of the scene, as sketched by God in paradise, called forth audible expressions of his divine complacency; on surveying it from the height of the excellent glory, He pronounced it good, and the light of his countenance fell full upon it.

'But the awful invasion of sin frustrated the divine intention, destroyed it, even in its type and model. Man aspired to be as God. . . The standard of revolt was then erected, and the history of all his subsequent conduct has been the history of an insane endeavor to construct an em-

pire, governed by laws, and replenished with resources, independent of God. . . Love to God is the all-combining principle which was to hold each individual in adhesion to all the rest, and the whole in affinity with God; the loss of that, therefore, like the loss of the great law of attraction in the material world, leaves all the several parts in a state of repulsion to each other, as well as the whole disjoined from God. [Note, Jude, v. 10.] Having lost its proper centre in God, the world attempts not to find any common point of repose, but spends itself in fruitless efforts to erect an infinity of independent interests. Every kingdom and province, [every sect and party,] every family, every individual, discovers a propensity to insulate himself from the common brotherhood, and to constitute himself the centre of an all-subordinating and ever-enlarging circle.' *Mammon, a Prize Essay*, by

REV. JOHN HARRIS.

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1—3. Every man, who truly believes Jesus to be the promised Messiah, and receives, honors, and obeys Him in that character, according to the predictions of the Old Test., and the testimony of the apostles concerning Him, is doubtless 'born of God.' John 1:10—13. as this faith must be the effect of divine life, and cannot be separated from repentance, love, and other graces, or those good fruits which spring from them. (Notes, John 14:15—17, 21—24. 15:9—11.) So that these distinct parts of the Christian's character, [i. e. love to God and love to Christian brethren,] must reciprocally prove each other to be genuine. But true Christians are possessed of a principle of divine life, which carries them above all these obstacles and impediments.

SEOTT. V. 4, 5. 'That which is born of God,' that new and heavenly nature communicated in regeneration, tends so powerfully to God and holiness, and includes in its essence such a spiritual judgment, and such heavenly affections; that all, in whom it is found, are by it made victorious over the world; and overcome both their natural love for its honors, riches, pleasures, decorations, and friendship; and their natural fear of the frown, rage, and contempt of worldly men. 2:15—17. 4:4—6. John 16: 31—33. Rom. 12:2. Thus they are prepared for submitting to losses, exercising self-denial, and enduring affliction in the cause of God; and are taught to disregard the maxims, fashions, customs, and opinions of ungodly men, however eminent, numerous, or powerful. This 'new creature,' as 'born of God,' has the ascendancy in the heart of the youngest and feeblest true Christian; and therefore they all aspire after and attain unto this victory. For though the conflict of grace with corrupt nature and the allurements and terrors of the world, is often very sharp; and the regenerate man may be baffled, cast down, nay, apparently slain in the battle: yet the divine life, being again invigorated by the Holy Spirit, will excite him to arise and renew the combat, with redoubled fortitude and resolution. So that at length the victory will be his decidedly; and he will habitually profess the truth, and do the will of God, as far as he knows them, whatever loss, suffering, disgrace, or hardship may ensue; even if he should be exposed to death, in its most terrifying form, by his adherence to his duty. In acquiring this honorable 'victory,' faith is principally concerned: a realizing belief of the testimony of God, concerning invisible and eternal things, operating by



5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God ?

6 This is he that came by <sup>e</sup> water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit <sup>f</sup> that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

7 For there are three that bear record [in heaven, the <sup>g</sup> Father, the <sup>h</sup> Word, and the <sup>i</sup> Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

<sup>e</sup> Jn. 19:34. <sup>g</sup> Jn. 8:18. <sup>Re.</sup> 19:13.  
<sup>f</sup> Jn. 14:17. <sup>h</sup> 1Pe. 4:12,13. <sup>i</sup> 1Jn. 10:30.

minion over souls. It receives and derives strength from the Object of it, the Son of God, for conquering the frowns and flatteries of the world. It obtains, by gospel-promise, a right to the indwelling Spirit of grace, that is greater than he who dwells in the world. It sees an invisible world at hand, with which this world is not worthy to be compared, and into which it tells the soul, in which it resides, it must be continually prepared to enter ; and, thereupon,

3. The apostle concludes, that it is the real Christian that is the true conqueror of the world, *v. 5*. The world lies in our way to heaven, and is the great impediment to our entrance there. But he who believes, must needs by faith overcome the world. For, (1.) He must be well satisfied that this world is a vehement enemy to his soul, to his holiness, his salvation, and his blessedness, *ch. 2:16*. (2.) He sees it must be a great part of the Savior's work, and of his own salvation, to be redeemed and rescued from this malignant world, *Gal. 1:4*. (3.) He sees in and by the life and conduct of the Lord Jesus on earth, that this world is to be renounced and overcome. (4.) He is taught and influenced by the Lord Jesus' death to be mortified and crucified to the world, *Gal. 6:14*. (5.) He is begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to the lively hope of a blessed world above, *1 Pet. 1:3*. (6.) He knows the Savior is gone to heaven, and is there preparing a place for his serious believers, *John 14:2*. (7.) He knows his Savior will come again, will put an end to this world, judge the inhabitants of it, and receive his believers to

his presence and glory, *John 14:3*. (8.) He is possessed with a spirit and disposition that cannot be satisfied with this world, that looks beyond it, and is still tending, striving, and pressing, toward the world in heaven, *2 Cor. 5:2*. So that it is the Christian religion that affords its proselytes a universal empire. And who, in all the world, but the believer on Jesus Christ, can thus overcome the world ?

V. 6—9. The faith of the Christian believer being thus mighty and victorious, it had need be well founded ; and it is so ; the Lord Jesus brings his credentials along with Him, in the way by which He came, and in the witness that attends Him.

1. In the way by which He came ; *i. e.* by water and blood ; or with water and blood ; *even* Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, I say, came thus ; and none but He. I say it again, not by or with water only, but by and with water and blood, *v. 6*. these were as the notes and signatures of the true, effectual Savior of the world ; and as the means by which He would heal and save us. As these show us our double defilement, so they indicate the Savior's twofold purification. On the death of Jesus Christ, his side being pierced with a soldier's spear, out of the wound there immediately issued water and blood. This the beloved apostle saw, and seems to have been affected with the sight ; he alone records it, and seems to reckon himself obliged to record it, as containing something mysterious in it, *John 19:35*. Now this water and blood are comprehensive of all that is necessary and effectual to our salvation. By the water, our souls are washed and purified for heaven, for the region of saints in light. By the blood, God is glorified, his law honored, and his vindictive excellences illustrated and displayed, *Rom. 3:25, 26*. By the blood we are justified, reconciled, and presented righteous to God. By the blood, the curse of the law being satisfied, the purifying Spirit is obtained for the internal ablution of our natures, *Gal. 3:13*. &c. The water and the blood then comprehend all things that can be requisite to our salvation. They will consecrate and sanctify to that purpose all that God shall appoint or make use of in order to that great end, *Eph. 5:25—27*. He who comes by water and blood, is an accurate, perfect Savior. And this is He who comes by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ ! Thus

we see how, or, if you please, with what utensils, He comes. But we see his credentials also,

2. In the witness that attends Him, and that is the divine Spirit ; that Spirit to whom the perfecting of the works of God is usually attributed, *v. 6*. It was meet the commissioned Savior should have a constant Agent to support his work, and testify of Him, that a divine power should attend Him, his Gospel and servants ; and notify the world on what errand and office they came, and by what authority they were sent : this was done in and by the Spirit of God, according to the Savior's own prediction, *John 16:15*. And then the apostle adds the commendation, or the acceptableness of this witness ; *because the Spirit is Truth, v. 6*. One copy would afford us a very suitable reading thus ; *because, or that, Christ is the Truth*. And so it indicates the matter of the Spirit's testimony, that is, the truth of Christ ; and, consequently, that Christianity, or the Christian religion, is the truth of God. But it is not meet that one or two copies should alter the text ; and our present reading is very agreeable, so we retain it. *The Spirit is Truth*. He is indeed the Spirit of truth, *John 14:17*. And that the Spirit is Truth, and a Witness worthy of all acceptance, appears in that He is one of the witnesses that in and from heaven bare testimony concerning the truth and authority of Christ, *v. 7*. And so *v. 7*. most appositely occurs, as a proof of the authenticity of the Spirit's testimony ; He must needs be true, or even truth itself, if He be not only a Witness in heaven, but *even one* (not in testimony only, for so an angel may be, but in being and essence) *with the Father and the Word*.

But here opens the contest about the genuineness of verse 7. It is alleged, that many old Greek manuscripts have it not. We shall not here enter into the controversy. It should seem the critics are not agreed what manuscripts have it, and what not. But some rational surmises seem to support the present text and reading. As,

1. If we admit *v. 8*. in the room of *v. 7*. it looks too like a tautology and repetition of what was included in *v. 6*. This does not assign near so noble an introduction of these three witnesses as our present reading does.

2. It is observed, that many copies read that distinctive clause, *upon the earth ; There*

fear of his wrath, and hope of holy felicity in his favor ; a believing reliance on Christ for redemption, and all the blessings that flow from it, working by love and gratitude ; with an abiding sense of God's presence at all times, to witness every action, and to support, help, and comfort those who trust in Him. These exercises of faith give such a determination to the true Christian's conduct, that he cannot habitually do what he knows to be contrary to the will of God, whatever emolument, credit, or favor he may acquire by so doing ; nor can he habitually neglect what God commands, to whatever loss, reproach, or suffering it may expose him. *Rom. 6:1, 2*. *2 Cor. 4:13—18*. *Gal. 2:17—21*. *Heb. 11:27, 12:2, 3*. *Rev. 12:7—12*. Through temporary weakness of faith, he may be drawn into sins and negligences ; but he will soon find such fear, shame, sorrow, remorse, and self-abhorrence, in his heart and conscience, that he cannot but return into the way of obedience, and reject the wages of transgression, whatever may be the consequence. This is universally the case with true believers ; though the temporary suspension of faith, and a consequent prevalence of worldly affections, may be longer in some cases than in others ; during which lamentable seasons, their evidence of sincerity must be equally weakened. And this is peculiar to believers ; so that we may challenge the whole earth, to produce one instance of a man, who 'did not believe in the Son of God,' that had, in every respect, so 'overcome' the love and fear of all persons and things in the world, as not *habitually*, in one way or other, to act contrary to his own judgment and conscience, from a regard to interest, reputation, ease, liberty, indulgence, friendship, or social and relative comfort and affection ; or in order to avoid derision, reproach, the censure of singularity, or more material losses and sufferings. All men, except believers in Christ, are *habitually* enslaved, in some respect or other, to the customs, opinions, or interests of the world : and who is there, that dares, in all things, to act according to the conviction of his own mind, without being warped by the general influence of society, or that of his own particular circle, or sometimes even of his own domesticity ? He, and he only, can do this, 'who believes that Jesus is the Son of God,' and trusts in Him for salvation, according to the Scriptures : his faith, united with humble love, spirituality, fear of coming short of salvation, hatred of sin, a constant respect to his Lord's example, an indifference for worldly objects, and a deep persuasion of the miserable condition of all worldly men, gives him this victory. *Gal. 6:11—14*. He habitually in all things follows the dictates of his own

conscience, and the commandments of his Lord, whatever consequences may follow, and when he is betrayed into an incidental deviation from this rule, he deeply repents of it, and attempts renewed obedience.—Hence it is, that the world will tolerate all other persons, except true believers, whatever their forms or notions be ; because all others will, in some respects, comply with the humors, and court the friendship, of worldly men. But Christians are so suppliant, and so determined to follow their Lord, according to their own judgment of truth and duty, without regarding the opinions, counsels, attentions, derision, revilings, or enmity of the many, the wise, the great, the learned, or the virtuous ; nay, without being turned aside by persuasion, or the dictates of affection and gratitude, from the line of duty ; they cleave to their religious singularities (as they are deemed) at so great an expense, and often amidst so many sufferings ; and, in so many ways, they 'testify of the world, that its works are evil,' and its wisdom folly, that they can hope for no quarter from worldly men, but must expect to be hated, or despised by all for Christ's sake : even as He was, who perfectly 'overcame the world,' as their Surety and Example.—It may be proper here to observe, that the Christian, in proportion to his knowledge and grace, will be singular, only where truth and duty require him ; and steadfast, according to the certainty or importance of the truth and duty ; but in all things which he deems indifferent, and where his own will or interest alone are concerned, he will endeavor to be pliant, in order to show, that his pertinacious adherence to his rule of duty, is the effect of conscientiousness, and not of obstinacy and affectation. (4) *Whoever is born.* Some read, *every one who is born*. The meaning is nearly the same ; but it is not expressed so exactly and clearly, as in our reading, which is of far superior authority.—How can all these propositions concerning 'him who is born of God,' and 'all that which is born of God,' be explained by those, who suppose that baptism, or something inseparably connected with it, when rightly administered, is exclusively meant ?

V. 7, 8. As the accomplishment of the prophecies contained in the New Test. fully counterbalances the ceasing of miraculous gifts, so these divine attestations to the scriptural doctrine concerning the Person of Christ, and the two grand constituent parts of his salvation, continue to this present day, and shall to the end of the world : and we at present have abundant testimony to those truths, which our Father in heaven, the incarnate Word, and the Holy Spirit, immediately testified to the



8 And there are three that bear witness in earth], the <sup>1</sup> Spirit, and the <sup>k</sup> water, and the <sup>1</sup> blood : and these three agree in one.

[Practical Observations.]

Jn. 15:26. 2 Co. 1:22. He. 13:12.  
k Ac. 2:2-4. 1 Pe. 3:21.

are three that bear record upon the earth ; now this bears a visible opposition to some witness or witnesses elsewhere ; and therefore we are told, by the adversaries of the text, that this clause must be supposed to be omitted in most books that want v. 7. But it should, for the same reason, be so in all. Take we v. 6. It would not now naturally and properly be added, *For there are three that bear record on earth* ; unless we should suppose the apostle would tell us, that all the witnesses are such as are on earth, when yet he would assure us, that one is infallibly true, or even Truth itself.

3. It is observed, that there is a variety of reading, even in the Greek text, as in v. 7. Some copies read,—*are one* ; others, (at least the *Complutensian*,)—*are to one*, or *agree in one* ; and in v. 8. (in that part that it is supposed should be admitted,) instead of the common,—*in earth, the Complutensian* reads,—*upon earth* ; which seems to show that that edition depended on some Greek authority, and not merely, as some would have us believe, on the authority either of the vulgar Latin, or of *Thomas Aquinas* ; though his testimony may be added thereto.

4. V. 7. is very agreeable to the style and theology of our apostle. He delights in the title,—*The Father* ; whether he indicates thereby God only, or a divine person distinguished from the Son : see him, throughout, as 2 John 3. Then the name, *the Word*, is known to be almost (if not quite) peculiar to this apostle. Had the text been devised by another, it had been more easy and obvious, from the form of baptism, and the common language of the church, to have used the name *Son* instead of that of the *Word*. As it is observed, that Tertullian and Cyprian use that name, even when they refer to this verse ; or it is made an objection against their referring to this verse, because they speak of the Son, not the Word ; and yet Cyprian's expression seems to be very clear, by the citation of Facundus himself. '*Blessed Cyprian, the Carthaginian Bishop and Martyr, in the epistle or book he wrote concerning the Trinity, considered the testimony of the apostle John as relating to the Father,*

*the Son, and the Holy Spirit ; for, he says, The Lord says, I and the Father are one ; and, again, These three are one.*' Now it is nowhere written that these are one, but in v. 7. It is probable, then, that Cyprian, either depending on his memory, or rather intending things more than words, persons more than names, or calling persons by their names more usual in the church, (both in popular and polemic discourses,) called the second by the name of the *Son*, rather than of the *Word*. So we are told, that the author of the book,—*De Baptismo Hæreticorum*, allowed to be contemporary with Cyprian, cites John's words, agreeably to the Greek manuscripts and the ancient versions, thus : '*For John, in his epistle, says, concerning our Lord, This is He, Jesus Christ, who came by water and blood, not in water only, but in water and blood ; and it is the Spirit that bears witness, because the Spirit is Truth ; for there are three that bear witness, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one.*' If all the Greek manuscripts and ancient versions say, concerning the Spirit, the water, and the blood, that *they agree in one*, then it was not of them that Cyprian spake, whatever variety there might be in the copies in his time, when he said, it is written, *they are one*. And therefore Cyprian's words seem still to be a firm testimony to v. 7. and an intimation, likewise, that a forger of the text would have scarcely so exactly hit on the apostolical name for the second Witness in heaven,—*the Word*. Then,

As this apostle only records the history of the water and blood flowing out of the Savior's side, so it is he only, or he principally, who registers to us the Savior's promise and prediction of the Holy Spirit's coming to glorify Him, and to testify of Him, and to convince the world of its own unbelief, and of his righteousness, as in his Gospel, ch. 14:16, 17, 26. 15:26. 16:7—15. It is most suitable, then, to the diction and to the gospel of this apostle, thus to mention the Holy Ghost as a Witness for Jesus Christ. Then,

5. It was far more easy for a transcriber, by turning away his eye, or by the obscurity of the copy, it being obliterated or defaced on the top or bottom of a page, or worn away in such materials as the ancients had to write upon, to lose and omit the passage, than for an interpolator to devise and insert it ; he must be very bold and impudent, who could hope to escape detection and shame ; and profane, too, who durst

venture to make an addition to a supposed sacred book. And,

6. It can scarcely be supposed, that, when the apostle is representing the strength of the Christian's faith in overcoming the world, and the foundation it relies on in adhering to Jesus Christ, and the various testimony given to Jesus Christ in the world, he should omit the supreme testimony that attended Him, especially when we consider that he meant to infer, as he does v. 9. *If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater ; for this, that he had rehearsed before, is the witness of God which He hath testified of his Son*. Now in the three witnesses on earth, there is neither all the witness of God, nor indeed any witness who is truly and immediately God. The anti-trinitarian opposers of the text will deny that either the Spirit, or the water, or the blood, are God Himself ; but, on our present reading, here is a noble enumeration of the several witnesses and testimonies supporting the truth of the Lord Jesus, and the divinity of his institution ; here is the most excellent abridgment or breviary of the motives to faith in Christ, of the credentials the Savior brings with Him, and of the evidences of our Christianity, that is to be found, I think, in the book of God ; on which single account, even waiving the doctrine of the divine Trinity, the entire text is worthy of all acceptance.

Having these rational grounds on our side, we proceed. The apostle, having told us that the Spirit that bears witness to Christ is truth, shows us that He is so, by assuring us that He is in heaven, and that there are others also who cannot but be true, or truth itself, concurring in testimony with Him, v. 7. Here is a Trinity of heavenly witnesses ; first, *the Father* ; He set his seal to the commission of the Lord Christ, more especially in proclaiming Him at his baptism, Mat. 3:17. confirming his character at the transfiguration, Mat. 17:5. accompanying Him with miraculous power and works, John 10:37, 38. *avouching at his death*, Mat. 27:54. raising Him from the dead, and receiving Him up to his glory, John 16:10. and Rom. 1:4. The second witness is *the Word* ; a mysterious name, importing the highest nature that belongs to the Savior Jesus Christ ; wherein He existed before the world was, whereby He made the world, and whereby He was truly God with the Father. He must bear witness to the human nature, or to the man

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—8. True faith in Christ always springs from regeneration ; and all, who are not 'born of God,' are either infidels and avowed unbelievers, or have only a dead and unprofitable faith.—Real Christians 'show their faith by their works.' By a new and divine nature, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, and by the exercise of faith in the testimony, the promise, the power, and the love of God, they gradually acquire 'a victory over the world,' and learn habitually to do the will of God, without being seduced, persuaded, or affrighted from it,

primitive Christians.—It is well known, that volumes have been written, concerning part of the seventh verse and the beginning of the eighth, in order to prove, or disprove, the authenticity of the passage enclosed within crochets. It is certainly wanting in many of the ancient manuscripts and versions ; and is not authenticated by many of the fathers : but whether the Trinitarians interpolated it, or the Arians and Unitarians omitted it, is to this day a matter of controversy, and not likely to be fully determined. On such questions men will in general decide, according to their preconceived opinions : yet it is very wrong to deviate from truth in support of system. It is, however, perhaps, somewhat more likely, that the Arians or Anti-Trinitarians should silently omit in their copies a testimony which was so decisive against them, or that it should be left out by the mistake of some ancient transcriber than that the Trinitarians should directly forge and insert it. The Trinitarian, in fact, would be deprived only of one argument out of very many, with which he might attempt the conviction of his opponent, if this text were wholly rejected as spurious ; for his doctrine is abundantly supported by other scriptures : but if this testimony were admitted as the *unerring Word of God*, all the ingenuity and diligence of opponents, would scarcely suffice to explain it away, or to avoid the inference, which must naturally be drawn from it. It has indeed by some, even Trinitarians, been maintained, that the words rendered, 'these three are One,' only mean, that their testimony is one : but the writer of the passage, whoever he was, did not speak of *testimony*, but of *persons* : else, why is the word translated *three*, of the masculine gender ? Or why is the expression so remarkably varied in the next verse ? 'These three,' the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit 'are

by any persons or objects in the world around them. Let then all who profess to believe the Gospel, inquire, whether they have attained, or are contending for, this victory. For we must all, after Christ's example, 'overcome the world,' or it will overcome us, to our final ruin. John 16:33. — Indeed, a worldly religion, exhibiting the appearance of evangelical doctrine, is the peculiar danger of the present day, and gives infidels and heretics of every name their chief advantage, against the great and glorious truths of the sacred Scriptures. SCOTT.

One.' It may also be doubtful, whether the passage connects with so much propriety, if the contested words be omitted, as it otherwise does : for if we read, with the copies in which they are wanting, 'The Spirit beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth : for there are three that bear record, . . . the Spirit, and the water, and the blood, &c.' there seems to be a remarkable repetition, and a want of the apostle's usual energy in the passage ; and it does not appear evident for what reason 'the water and the blood,' or the two great ordinances of the New Testament outward signs of sanctification and justification, by the grace and atoning blood of the Son of God, and as agreeing in One with the testimony of the Spirit, should be mentioned ; and yet nothing should be hinted, concerning the testimony of the Father from heaven to Christ, as his beloved Son ; or that of Christ Himself, as confirmed by his miracles and resurrection, and the fulfilment of his promise, in pouring the Holy Spirit on his assembled disciples. As the words stand in our copies, there is indeed a most abundant concurrence of divine testimonies to the Person and doctrine of Christ, pointed out in a most commendable and energetic manner.—It cannot, however, be expected, that in such a publication as this, a question, which has long employed the attention of the most learned men in Christendom, should be settled : and, after assigning the above reasons in favor of the authenticity of the passage, I confess, that I myself am very doubtful, whether they be sufficient to counterbalance the arguments of those who think otherwise. We need not, however, be anxious on the subject, as we have scriptural evidence in abundance, without this text, to confirm our faith in one God, subsisting in three co-equal Persons, 'the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,' into whose One name we have been baptized. SCOTT.



9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son.

10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness <sup>m</sup> in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

<sup>m</sup> Ro. 8:16.

Christ Jesus, in and by whom He redeemed and saved us; and He bore witness, by the mighty works He wrought, John 5:17. in conferring a glory on Him at his transfiguration, John 1:14. in raising Him from the dead, John 2:19. The third Witness is the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Spirit; an august and venerable name, the Possessor, Proprietor, and Author of holiness. True and faithful must He be, to whom the Spirit of holiness sets his seal and solemn testimony. So He did to the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Christian world; and that in the miraculous production of his immaculate human nature in the Virgin's womb, Luke 1:35. &c. in the visible descent on Him at his baptism, Luke 3:22. &c. in an effectual conquest of the spirits of hell and darkness, Mat. 12:28. in the visible, potent descent on the apostles, to furnish them with gifts and powers to preach Him and his Gospel to the world, after He Himself was gone to heaven, Acts 1:4, 5. 2:2—4. &c. in supporting the name, gospel, and interest of Christ, by miraculous gifts and operations by and upon the disciples, and in the churches for two hundred years, I Cor. 12:7. Concerning which, see Dr. Whitby's excellent discourse, in the preface to the second volume of his *Commentary on the New Test.* These are witnesses in heaven; and they bear record from heaven; and they are one. It should seem not only in testimony, (for that is implied in their being three witnesses to one and the same thing,) but on a higher account, as they are in heaven; they are one in their heavenly being and essence; and, if one with the Father, they must be one God.

To these there is opposed, though with them conjoined, a trinity of witnesses on earth, such as continue here below, v. 8. Of these witnesses the first is the Spirit. This must be distinguished from the Person

V. 9, 10. The principal truth, which 'God hath testified' in his holy Word, is, that which relates to his Son, and to the way of salvation through Him. 11, 12. *John* 5:31—47. 20:24—31. He, therefore, who credits 'the witness' or testimony 'of God,' will 'believe on the Son of God,' and rely on Him for the blessings, which He came into the world to procure for sinners by his righteousness and redemption, and to bestow on them. In consequence of this faith, the Christian receives another, and still more satisfactory testimony to the truth of the Gospel, which also seals to him his interest in Christ and his salvation. For 'he that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness' or testimony 'in himself.' The discoveries made to him of the glory of God in the Person of Christ, and the change thus produced in his judgment, dispositions, and affections, (*Notes*, 20, 21. *2 Cor.* 3:17, 18. 4:5, 6.) the views he has received of the evil of sin, of his own character and condition, of the deceitfulness and wickedness of his heart, and of the wretched state of the world around him, all of which he now perceives to accord exactly with the declarations of Scripture, though once he saw nothing of it; the victory he is enabled by faith to obtain over the world, his own evil habits and propensities, and the temptations of Satan; the evident answers many of his prayers receive, and his experience of the faithfulness of God to his promises, and of his providential regard to him; and, above all, 'the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Spirit of adoption; the peace, hope, and consolation connected with it; the pleasure he finds in communion with God, and obedience to his will; his delight in the society of spiritual persons, and the support he receives when afflicted; these, and similar experiences, form a 'testimony in himself' to which all other men must be strangers. For thus 'the Spirit of God witnesses with his spirit, that he is the child of God,' and gives him sweet earnestness and foretastes of his eternal inheritance. *Rom.* 5:3—5. 8:14—17. This puts the matter out of all doubt with him; (except in hours of peculiar darkness, conflict, temptation, or humiliating correction;) and he can no more be argued out of his belief of the leading truths of the Gospel, respecting the Person and salvation of Christ, by any ingenuity or sophistry of infidels or heretics, than he could be convinced by logic, that the sun is a dark, cold body, when he sees its light, and feels its genial warmth. This testimony proves, that the Scripture is the Word of God, that he rightly understands the most essential parts of it, and that he is a partaker of the blessing thus announced to him. (*Notes*, *John* 14:15—21. *2 Cor.* 1:21, 22. *2 Pet.* 1:19

of the Holy Ghost, who is in heaven. We must say, then, with the Savior, as reported by this apostle, *that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit*, *John* 3:6. The true disciple becomes a new creature. The regeneration and renovation of souls are a testimony to the Savior. It is a testimony on earth, because it continues with the church there, and is not performed in that conspicuous, astonishing manner in which signs from heaven are accomplished. To this Spirit belong not only the regeneration and conversion of the church, but its progressive sanctification, victory over the world, her peace, love, and joy, and all that grace by which she is made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Then the second is, the water. This was, before, considered as a mean of salvation, now as a testimony to the Savior Himself, and intimates his purity and purifying power. And so it seems to comprehend the purity of his own nature and conduct in the world; *He was holy, harmless, and undefiled*; the testimony of John's baptism, who bore witness of Him, prepared a people for Him, and referred them to Him, *Mark* 1:4, 7, 8. the purity of his own doctrine, by which souls are purified and washed, *John* 15:3. the actual and active purity and holiness of his disciples, *1 Pet.* 1:22. and all this signed and sealed by the baptism He has appointed for the initiation or introduction of his disciples; in which He by that sign says, *Except I wash thee, thou hast no part in Me*, *1 Pet.* 3:21. The third witness is, the blood; this He shed; and this was our ransom. This testifies for Jesus Christ; in that it sealed up and finished the sacrifices of the Old Test., confirmed his own predictions, and the truth of all his ministry and doctrine, *John* 18:37. showed unparalleled love to God, in that He would die a sacrifice to his honor and glory, in making atonement for the sins of the world, *John* 14:30, 31. demonstrated unspeakable love to us; and none will deceive those whom they entirely love, *John* 14:13—15. it showed also the disinterestedness of the Lord Jesus, as to any secular interest and advantage. No impostor ever proposes to himself contempt, and violent, cruel death, *John* 18:36. It likewise lays obligation on his disciples to suffer and die for him. No deceiver would invite proselytes to his side and interest, at the rate that the Lord Jesus did, *John* 16:2. *Hcb.* 13:13. Then the benefits accruing and pro-

duced by his blood, must immediately demonstrate that He is indeed the Savior of the world. And then, finally, these are signified and sealed in the institution of his own Supper, *Mat.* 26:28. Such are the witnesses on earth. Such is the various testimony given to the Author of our religion. No wonder, if the rejecter of all this evidence be judged as a blasphemer of the Spirit of God, and be left to perish without remedy in his sins. These three witnesses (being more different than the three former) are not so properly said to be one, as to be for one; to be for one and the same purpose and cause; or to agree in one; in one and the same thing among themselves, and in the same testimony with those who bear record from heaven.

The apostle justly concludes, *If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for, this is the witness of God, that He hath testified of his Son, v. 9. God, that cannot lie*, hath given sufficient assurance to the world, that Jesus Christ is his Son; the Son of his love, and Son by office, to reconcile and recover the world unto Himself; He testified therefore the truth and divine original of the Christian religion, and that it is the sure, appointed way and mean of bringing us to God.

V. 10—13. In these words we may observe,

1. The privilege and stability of the real Christian, v. 10. He hath not only the outward evidence others have, but in his own heart a testimony for Jesus Christ. He can allege what Christ and the truth of Christ have done for his soul, and what he has seen and found in Him. As, (1.) He has deeply seen his sin, guilt, misery, and abundant need of such a Savior; the excellency, beauty, and office of the Son of God, and the incomparable suitableness of such a Savior to all his spiritual wants and sorrowful circumstances. (2.) He sees and admires the wisdom and love of God in preparing and sending such a Savior to deliver him from sin and hell, and to raise him to pardon, peace, and communion with God. (3.) He has found and felt the power of the Word and doctrine of Christ, wounding, humbling, healing, quickening, and comforting his soul; and he finds that the revelation of Christ, as it is the greatest discovery and demonstration of the love of God, so it is the most apt and powerful mean of kindling and inflaming love to the

—21. *Rev.* 2:17.) On the other hand, he who believeth not God, in respect of his testimony to his Son, can never receive 'the witness in himself;' but must expect his heavy displeasure, seeing 'he maketh God a liar,' or treats his Word as a lie, as utterly unworthy of credit or confidence. This is the case of every one, 'who believes not the testimony which God hath given of his Son,' and confirmed in all the ways above enumerated. As all revelation centres in this fundamental doctrine, it is in vain for a man to plead, that he believes 'the testimony' of God in other things, while he rejects it in this. His *opinion* may indeed accord with the doctrine of Scripture, in matters less affronting to human pride, more level with the human understanding, or more reconcilable to the love, friendship, and pursuits of the world. Thus a man assents to scriptural truths, because he thinks they may be otherwise proved, at least there is no other evidence to be opposed to the testimony of God, and nothing to be lost by assenting to it. But if his own reasonings, or those of some philosopher, lead to a conclusion contrary to the Word of God, he will 'lean to his own understanding,' or believe in a philosopher, and treat 'the testimony of God as a lie.' Nay, men professing to believe the Scriptures, will reject doctrines expressly revealed there, or employ a perverse diligence and ingenuity to explain them away, merely because they can find no philosophical arguments, with which to confirm the testimony of God! The light of the sun is not sufficient for them, nor will they be satisfied with it, unless they can see the same objects by their own dim candle! On the other hand, they will profess to believe the Word of God, when it accords with their own reasonings, or the opinion of some philosopher, who perhaps borrowed that glimmering from Scripture, which preserves his scheme from total darkness; and they sometimes suppose themselves doing good service, when they call such witnesses to support 'the testimony of God!' So that, in fact, they do not believe God, but other witnesses, when they assent to scriptural truth; for they directly treat Him as a false Witness, when He contradicts their pre-conceived opinions. It is therefore evident, that no belief of the Bible, or of anything revealed in it, is of any avail to salvation, except a man believe 'the testimony, which God hath given of his Son.' 11:12. *John* 3:12—21, 27—36.

(10.) *Witness in himself.* Not an imaginary conceit,—not an unfounded persuasion, but an evidence in his own heart, from the work of God's Holy Spirit, who has created therein a love to holiness in all its branches.

WILLIAMS.



11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and <sup>n</sup>this life is in his Son.

12 He <sup>o</sup> that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that <sup>p</sup>ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

[Practical Observations.]

14 And this is the confidence that we have <sup>q</sup>in him, That, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us :

15 And if we know <sup>r</sup>that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

n Ju. 1:4. p Jn. 20:31. r Pr. 15:29.  
o Jn. 5:24. q or, concerning. Je. 29:12,13.

holy, blessed God. (4.) He is born of God by the truth of Christ, as v. 1. has a new heart and nature; a new love, disposition, and delight, and is not the man he formerly was. He finds yet such a conflict with himself, with sin, with the flesh, the world, and invisible wicked powers, as is described and provided for in the doctrine of Christ. (5.) Such prospects and strength afforded him by the faith of Christ, that he can despise and overcome this world, and travel on towards a better. (6.) He finds what interest the Mediator has in heaven, by the audience and prevalence of his prayers in his name. Thus he is begotten again to a lively hope, to a holy confidence in God, and to a victory over terrors of conscience, dread of death and hell; to a comfortable prospect of life and immortality, being enriched with the earnest of the Spirit, and sealed to the day of redemption. Such assurance has the gospel-believer; he has a witness in himself. Christ is formed in him, and is growing up to the fulness and perfection, or perfect image of Christ in heaven.

2. The aggravation of the unbeliever's sin; the sin of unbelief, v. 10. He must be-

PRACT. OBS. V. 9—13. Nothing can be more absurd, than the claim of those men, who will be satisfied with nothing but strictly logical demonstration in matters of religion; whilst, in the ordinary affairs of life, they do not hesitate to proceed on credible *human testimony*, and would deem him out of his senses who refused to do so; whereas, if 'we receive the witness of men,' surely 'the witness of God is greater!' Indeed, it is impossible, that the invisible things of God and the eternal world should be known, except by faith receiving the information of divine revelation; for, in what other conceivable way can we know the incomprehensible perfections of God, his inscrutable counsels, or the manner in which He will show mercy to his rebellious creatures? These are not subjects for man to discover, to know, or demonstrate, by speculation or abstract reasonings; but will always be best understood by those, who most simply believe the 'sure testimony of God' respecting them. And, indeed, 'they, who believe in the Son of God,' have an

V. 11, 12. He 'that hath the Son, hath life; he that by true faith receives Christ, as the Son of God, and as his Prophet, High Priest, and King: his 'Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption;' who humbly depends on Him for all these purposes, and is thus interested in Him, and vitally united to Him, and continually seeks and derives the blessings of salvation from Him, through the influences of the Holy Spirit; 'hath life,' is spiritually alive; has the promise of eternal life ratified to him, and the sure earnest of it in his soul, which shall certainly be completed in his everlasting felicity. (Notes, John 1:10—13. 5:24—27. 11:20—27. 14:4—6.) 'And he, that hath not the Son of God, hath not life;' he who denies Him to be truly and properly 'the Son of God,' and refuses to trust and honor Him as such, or who disdains to submit to his teaching as his Prophet, to rely on his atonement and intercession as his High Priest, or to obey Him as his King, 'hath not life;' he is 'dead in sin,' under condemnation, and 'the wrath of God abideth on him;' nor will any morality, learning, philosophy, forms of religion, doctrinal notions, or enthusiastical confidences, at all avail him. Gal. 5:1—6. For Christ is the believer's 'Life,' and if a man do not live in Christ, by 'faith working by love,' and by the supply of his Spirit, he has no life, whether he be an Infidel, a Socinian, or an Arian, a Pharisee, a Mystic, an Enthusiast, or an Antinomian. (Notes, 2:20—25. Mat. 11:25, 26. John 5:20—23.) To have Christ, we must 'receive Him,' and abide in Him, for all the purposes for which He came into the world; we cannot truly receive Him in one character, whilst we reject Him in another. He will not protect, deliver, or accept services, as a King, from those who will not be taught by Him, [643]

lieve, either that God did not send his Son into the world, when He has given us such manifold evidence that He did; or that Jesus Christ was not the Son of God, when all that evidence relates to and terminates on Him; or, that He sent his Son to deceive the world, and to lead it into error and misery; or, that He permits men to devise a religion, which, in all the parts of it, is a pure, holy, heavenly, undefiled institution, and so worthy to be embraced by the reason of mankind, and yet is but a delusion and a lie; and then lends them his Spirit and power to recommend and obtrude it on the world; which is to make God the Father, the Author; and Abettor of the lie.

3. The matter, the substance, or contents of all this divine testimony concerning Jesus Christ, v. 11. This is the sum of the Gospel, the epitome of the whole record given us by all the aforesaid six witnesses. (1.) That *God hath given to us eternal life*, designed it for us, prepared all the means necessary to bring us thither, and made it over to us by covenant and promise. Then, (2.) *This life is in the Son.* The Son is eternal life, in his own essence and Person, John 1:4. 1 John 1:2. He is eternal Life to us; the Spring of our spiritual and glorious life, Col. 3:4. And thereupon it must follow, [1.] *He that hath the Son, hath life, v. 12.* Such honor hath the Father put upon the Son; such honor must we put upon Him, too. [2.] *He that hath not the Son of God, hath not life, v. 12.* He continues under the condemnation of the law, John 3:36. he refuses the Son, who is Life itself, the Procurer of life, and the Way to it; he provokes God to deliver him over to endless death for making Him a liar; since he believes not this record that God hath given concerning his Son.

4. The end and reason of the apostle's preaching this to believers. (1.) For their satisfaction and comfort, v. 13. On all this evidence, and witness, it is but just and meet there should be those who believe *on the name of the Son of God.* God increase their number! How much testimony from heaven has the world to answer for! And to three witnesses in heaven! These believers have eternal life, have it in the covenant of the Gospel; in the beginning and first-fruits of it within them; and in their Lord

and Head in heaven. They may know they have it, and should be quickened, encouraged, and comforted, in the prospect of it; and they should value the Scriptures, so much written for their consolation and salvation. (2.) For their confirmation and progress in their holy faith, v. 13. Believers must persevere, or they do nothing. To withdraw from believing *on the name of the Son of God*, is to renounce eternal life, and to draw back unto perdition. Therefore the evidences of religion, and the advantage of faith, are to be presented to believers, in order to hearten and encourage them to persevere to the end.

V. 14—17. Here we have,

1. A privilege belonging to faith in Christ; and that is, audience in prayer, v. 14. The Lord Christ imboldens us to come to God in all circumstances, with all our supplications and requests. Through Him our petitions are admitted and accepted of God. The matter of our prayer must be agreeable to the declared will of God. It is not fit we should ask what is contrary either to his majesty and glory, or to our own good, who are his, and dependent on Him. And then we may have confidence, that the prayer of faith shall be heard in heaven.

2. The advantage accruing to us by such privilege, v. 15. Great are the deliverances, mercies, and blessings, the holy petitioner needs. To know that his petitions are heard or accepted, is as good as to know that they are answered; and therefore that he is so pitied, pardoned, counselled, sanctified, assisted, and saved, (or shall be so,) as he is allowed to ask of God.

3. Direction in prayer, in reference to the sins of others, v. 16. Here we may observe, (1.) We ought to pray for others as well as for ourselves; for our brethren of mankind, that they may be enlightened, converted, and saved; for our brethren in the Christian profession, that they may be sincere, their sins be pardoned, and they delivered from evils, and the chastisements of God, and preserved in Christ Jesus. (2.) There is a great distinction in the heinousness and guilt of sin, v. 16, 17. All sin, as to the merit and legal sentence of it, is unto death, Gal. 3:10. But there is a sin unto death, in opposition to such sin as is here

inward testimony to the truth, through the illumination, renewal, and consolations of the Holy Spirit, and in their own happy experience, which, when possessed in a large degree, is a rational foundation of the most entire confidence, that can possibly be had by those who have not come to the immediate vision and enjoyment of God. But can it be expected, that this 'secret of the Lord' should be with those, who do not believe his Word, and who treat Him, who is the Truth itself, as a liar and deceiver? Disregarding then the self-wise reasonings of such incompetent judges, let us thankfully receive the record of Scripture, that 'God hath given us eternal life, and that this life is in his Son.' Thus we 'may give diligence' to obtain an assurance of our interest in Christ, and know that we have eternal life; and daily grow stronger in faith, more steadfast and rejoicing in hope, 'and always abounding in the work of the Lord; knowing that our labor is not in vain in the Lord.' SCOTT.

or who despise or neglect his precious redemption and all prevailing intercession; and He will not save, as a High Priest, those 'who will not have Him to rule over them.' SCOTT.

V. 13. (Marg. Ref.) The apostle wrote the things above stated, unto those, who believed on the name of the Son of God, to confirm their faith, and to put them on their guard against the seductions of false prophets; to assure them, that theirs was the true religion of Christ, and that 'in Him they had eternal life;' 1 Pet. 5:12. and to encourage their hope, that they might, more constantly and vigorously, exercise and profess this 'faith in the Son of God,' amidst all the delusions, persecutions, and tribulations with which they met.—The epistle might be, as indeed it has been, very useful to other descriptions of men; but this was the primary intent of it.

V. 14, 15. The confidence, which established Christians had in God, respecting the promise of 'eternal life in his Son,' had an especial reference to his readiness to answer their prayers, through the heavenly Advocate, notwithstanding their sinfulness. In some things their prayers were evidently and speedily answered; in others, they might be satisfied they were granted in the best manner, though not exactly as they expected. 2 Cor. 12:7—10. Even when their requests were for the present denied, they might make themselves sure, that in the best time and way they would at length be answered, in case this was for the glory of God, and their own real and abiding advantage; which would compose their invids, even as if they had already obtained their petitions. (Notes, 3:18—24. Mat. 21:21, 22. Mark 11:22—26. Luke 11:5—15. 18:1—3. John 11:7—14. 16:23, 24. Rom. 8:24—27.) (11) Confli-



16 If any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

19 And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

Mat. 12:31, 32. u c. 3:4. w Ja. 1:27.  
 Je. 7:16. v Ro. 5:20, 21.

said *not to be unto death*. There is therefore, *A sin not unto death*. That surely must be all such sin, as, by divine or human constitution may consist with life; in the human constitution with temporal or corporal life, in the divine, with corporal or with spiritual, evangelical life. In opposition to which there are sins, which, by righteous constitution, are to death, or to a legal forfeiture of life; such as we call *capital crimes*. Then there are sins which, by divine constitution, are unto death; and that either death corporal, or spiritual and evangelical. There may be sin unto corporal death, as in either gross hypocrites, as Ananias and Sapphira, or, for aught we know, in sincere Christian brethren; as when the apostle says of the offending members of the church of Corinth; *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep*, 1 Cor. 11: 30. Then, There are sins, which, by divine constitution, are unto death spiritual and evangelical, that is, are inconsistent with spiritual and evangelical life; with

spiritual life in the soul, and with an evangelical right to life above. Such are total impenitence; as also a blaspheming of the Spirit of God in the testimony He has given to Christ and his Gospel, and a total apostasy from the light and convictive evidence of the truth of Christian religion. These are sins deriving the guilt of everlasting death. Then comes,

4. The application of the direction for prayer, according to the different sorts of sin thus distinguished. The prayer is supposed to be for life; *He shall ask, and He (God) shall give them life*. In the case of a brother's sin, which is not (in the manner already mentioned) unto death, we may in faith and hope pray for him; and particularly for the life of soul and body. But in case of the sin unto death in the forementioned ways, we have no allowance to pray. Perhaps the apostle's expression, *I do not say, he shall pray for it*, may intend no more than, 'I have no promise for you in that case; no foundation for the prayer of faith.' (1.) The laws of punitive justice must be executed, for the common safety and benefit of mankind. (2.) The removal of evangelical penalties, can be prayed for only conditionally or provisionally, that is, with proviso that it consists with the wisdom, will, and glory of God that they should be removed, and particularly such death prevented. (3.) We cannot pray that the sins of the impenitent and unbelieving should, while they are such, be forgiven them; or that any mercy of life or soul, that supposes the forgiveness of sin, should be granted to them, while they continue such. But we may pray for their repentance, for their being enriched with faith in Christ, and thereupon for all other saving mercies, unless it should appear that some have committed the irremissible blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and the total apostasy from the illuminating, convictive powers of the Christian religion, for

whom it should seem we are not to pray at all. Heb. 10: 27. And these last seem to be sins chiefly intended by the apostle by the names of *sins unto death*. Then, (4.) The apostle seems to argue, that there is sin that is not unto death; thus, *All unrighteousness is sin*, v. 17. but were all unrighteousness unto death, then we were all peremptorily bound over to death; but since it is not so, there is pardoned sin; sin that does not derive a plenary obligation to eternal death. If it were not so, there could be no justification, or continuance of the justified state. The gospel-constitution, or covenant, abbreviates, abridges, or rescinds the guilt of sin.

V. 18—21. Here we have,

1. A recapitulation of the privileges and advantages of the sound Christian believers:

(1.) They are secured against sin, against the fulness of its dominion, or the fulness of its guilt, v. 18. as *ch. 3: 6, 9*. and so against that sin that infallibly binds the sinner over unto the wages of eternal death; the new nature, and the inhabitation of the divine Spirit thereby, prevent the admission of such unpardonable sin.

(2.) They are fortified against the devil's destructive attempts, v. 18. that is, the wicked one may not touch him, to death. It seems not to be barely a narration of the duty or the practice of the regenerate; but an indication of their power by virtue of their regeneration; they are thereby prepared and principled against the fatal touches, the sting, of the wicked one; he may prevail too far with them, to draw them to some acts of sin; but it seems to be the design of the apostle to assert, that their regeneration secures them from such assaults of the devil, as will bring them into the same case and actual condemnation with the devil.

(3.) They are on God's side and interest, in opposition to the state of the world, v. 19. Mankind are divided into two great

dence.] See on John 7:4.—*In Him*.] 'Concerning Him.' Marg. 'The Son of God' (13) is the immediate antecedent, and seems especially intended. 3:1—3. 1 Pet. 1:17—21.

V. 16—18. It had been shown, that apostasy, after an intelligent and credible profession of the Gospel, when connected with strong expressions of enmity, could seldom be separated from 'the sin against the Holy Spirit.' Mat. 12:31, 32. 2 Tim. 4:14, 15. Heb. 6:4—8. 10:26—31. This, no doubt, was 'the sin unto death,' which the apostle intended; and, when it appeared evident that any person had committed it, Christians were directed to leave him to the righteous judgment of God, without expecting to see him 'renewed to repentance,' or even praying for him. Jer. 7:16. 14:10—12. 15:1.—Indeed, 'all unrighteousness,' or every deviation from the perfect rule of righteousness, 'is sin,' and so deserves death, or final condemnation, according to the law; 3:4—6. and all who turn aside from the Gospel, or act contrary to it, merit this punishment. Yet 'there is a sin,' even of this kind, 'which is not unto death;' for, being the effect of surprise rather than of deliberate enmity, many, who have been thus overcome in the moment of temptation, have been recovered; so that Christians were admonished to pray for their brethren when grievously fallen, if they did not see in them the marks of determined obstinacy and enmity.—The apostle had before observed that none, 'who had been born of God,' could 'work or practise sin;' 3:7—10. and he here added, that none of them were left to commit the unpardonable sin; for though such apostates 'had gone out from them, they had not been of them.' (2:19.) The man, who, as 'born of God,' does not allow himself in any sin, but watches and prays, in faith, fear, and love, to be preserved from temptation, or supported under it, 'keeps himself,' by the Holy Spirit, out of the way of this fatal transgression; so that 'the wicked one,' by whom hypocrites and formalists are overcome and induced to apostatize, is not allowed access to him, or can make no impression on him.—Satan obtained leave to 'sift' all the apostles, and he grievously baffled and wounded Peter; but he could touch none of them, except hypocritical Judas, so as to prevail with them deliberately to renounce and betray their Lord; (Notes, Luke 22:31—34. Rom. 7:15—17.) for 'the incorruptible seed abode in them,' in the genuine faith, love, and integrity produced by it, and therefore they 'could not' thus 'sin, because they were born of God.' (Notes, 1 Pet. 1:3—5, 23.)—(18) *Born of God*.] 'Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.' (1.) 'Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world.' 'Whosoever is born of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, &c.' 'Every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him.' (2:29.) 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.' (3:9.) 'Every one that loveth is born of God.' (4:7.) Everything forming an essential part of Christianity is inseparably connected with being 'begotten' or 'born of God;' and it is evidently intended, that they all co-exist in the regenerate.—But would the apostle have reversed these propositions? Would he have said, 'He that believeth not that Jesus is the Son of God, is not born of God?' 'That which does not overcome the world is not born of God.' 'He who doeth not righteousness is not born of God.' 'He that committeth sin is not born of God.' 'He who loveth

not is not born of God.' Doubtless he would. But would he have said, 'He has not been baptized?' This is sufficient to expose the absurdity of baptism and regeneration being considered as the same thing, or inseparably connected. SCOTT.

(16.) *Sin unto death*.] 'Such an apostasy from Christianity, as is attended with blaspheming the operations of the Spirit of God, and ascribing them to Satan.' DODDR.—An apostasy like that mentioned by Paul, as irrecoverable, Heb. 6:4—6. and attended with the horrid aggravation of ascribing the operations of God's Holy Spirit to the devil, Mat. 12:31, 32. WILLIAMS.—The consideration of what our Savior says, of the sin against the Holy Ghost, (Mat. 12:31. and 32.) which is doubtless the same as this of which John speaks, led the learned Prof. THOLUCK, of Germany, to renounce the hope of the future restoration of all men to happiness. In a letter to a friend in this country, (see N. Y. Observer, of March 31st, 1838,) dated Dec. 22, 1837, he says, 'I have long been struggling in this respect. I formerly expressed the hope, [of the final restoration of all men,] though I confessed, that I did not know how to reconcile it with the clear passages in Scripture, which made me reluctant to embrace that opinion as unquestionable truth. Dogmatically, [i. e. by argument, or on philosophical grounds,] I felt myself drawn towards this opinion; but exegetically, [by ascertaining the meaning of scripture-texts,] I do not know how to justify it. Mature reflection, however, on the doctrine of the sin against the Holy Ghost, HAS MADE ME SINCE ABANDON THE IDEA OF THE FINAL RESTORATION OF ALL MEN; for what Christ says concerning it, seems too clearly to imply a degree of opposition against holy truth, which leads to ETERNAL unhappiness.' ED.

V. 19. This general declaration includes all unbelievers, whether Jews or Gentiles; idolaters, or hypocritical worshippers of the true God; atheists, infidels, profligates, profane persons, and formalists; the wise and the foolish; the learned and the unlearned; the rich and the poor; the royal and the noble, as well as the base and vile; yea, the moral and virtuous, as well as the vicious. All 'lie in wickedness,' under the power of unrepented and unmortified sin, or 'under the wicked one,' as, in some way or other, doing him service; those only excepted, who 'are delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of the Son of God.' Acts 26:16—18. Col. 1:9—14. Rev. 12:7—12. This, the well-instructed and established Christian knows assuredly; and the criminality, slavery, and misery of the human race excite his lamentations, prayers, and endeavors to spread the Gospel; as the only method, by which they can be delivered from their abject condition. Rom. 10:12—17. Eph. 2:11—13. Yet other men perceive nothing of it; but are exceedingly offended at the declaration, and at the endeavors used, 'to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.'—As the apostle made no exception, in favor of unbelieving Jews in his day; so we can allow of none, in favor of unbelieving, heretical, and worldly and unregenerate men, called Christians, in this present time. SCOTT.

(19.) *Lieth in wickedness*.] 'In this short expression, the horrible state of the world is painted in the most lively colors; a comment on which we have in the actions, conversations, contracts, quarrels, and friendships of worldly men.' WESLEY, in Williams.



20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding; that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

x Lu. 24:45. y Is. 9:6. z 1 Co. 10:14.

parties, that which belongs to God, and that which belongs to the wicked one. Christian believers belong to God; they are of God; from Him, to Him, and for Him, Deut. 32:9. but the rest, *the whole world*, by far the major part, *lieth in wickedness*, in the wicked one, *the god of this world*. Strange, such a knowing spirit should be so implicitly incensed against the Almighty and all his interests, when he cannot but know it must end in his own overthrow and everlasting damnation! How tremendous is the judgment of God on that wicked one! May the God of the Christian world continually demolish his dominion!

(4.) They are enlightened in the knowledge of the true, eternal God, v. 20. 'The Son of God is come into our world, and we have seen Him, and know Him, by all the evidence already asserted; He hath revealed

unto us the true God, as John 1:18. opened our minds, given us internal light in our understandings, whereby we may discern the glories of the true God; and we are assured that it is the true God that He hath discovered to us; infinitely superior in purity, power, and perfection, to all the gods of the Gentiles; the same God that, according to Moses' account, made the heavens and the earth; who took our fathers the patriarchs into peculiar covenant with Himself; brought our ancestors out of Egypt, gave us the law on mount Sinai; gave us his holy oracles, and promised the call and conversion of the Gentiles; by his counsels and works, by his love and grace, by his terrors and judgments, we know that He, and He alone, in the fulness of his being, is the living and true God.' It is a great happiness to know *the true God*; to know Him in Christ, is *eternal life*, John 17:3. It is the glory of the Christian revelation, that it gives the best, clearest, and only account of *the true God*.

(5.) They have a happy union with God and his Son, v. 20. 'The Son leads us to the Father, and we are in both; in the love and favor of both; in covenant and federal alliance with both; in spiritual conjunction with both; by the inhabitation and operation of their Spirit; and that you may know how great a dignity and felicity this is, you must remember, that this true One is *the true God and eternal Life*;' (or rather, as it should

seem a more natural construction;) 'This same Son of God is Himself also *the true God and eternal Life*,' John 1:1. and here, *ch. 1:2*. 'so that in union with either, much more with both, we are united to *the true God and eternal Life*.' Then we have,

2. The apostle's concluding monition, v. 21. Since ye know *the true God*, and are in Him, let your light and love guard you against all that is advanced in opposition to Him, or competition with Him; flee from the false gods of the heathen world; they are not comparable to the God whose you are, and whom you serve; adore not your God by statues and images which share in his worship; your God is an incomprehensible Spirit, and is disgraced by such sordid representations; hold no communion with your heathen neighbors in their idolatrous worship; mortify the flesh, and be crucified to the world, that they, [or self,] may not usurp the throne and dominion in the heart, which is due only to God; the God whom you have known, is He who made you, who redeemed you by his Son, who has sent his Gospel to you, who has pardoned your sins, begotten you unto Himself by his Spirit, and given you eternal life; cleave to Him in faith and love, and constant obedience, in opposition to all things that would alienate your mind and heart from God. To this living and true God be glory and dominion for ever and ever! Amen.'

PRACT. OBS. V. 14—21. We should abound in supplication, especially seeking to the Lord, to pardon and recover the fallen, as well as to relieve the tempted and afflicted; and, as we cannot know, who has 'sinned unto death,' we should not readily yield to discouragement, respecting those whom we once considered as brethren.—If we have so grown in faith and grace, as to 'know that we are of God,' we shall readily perceive, that 'the whole world lieth in wickedness,' and under the power of Satan; this will show us how vast our obligations are to redeeming love, and special grace: and it ought to excite our constant prayers and unremitting endeavors, to promote the preaching of the

V. 20, 21. *This is the true God, &c.* 'This Person is the true God, and eternal life.' 1:1, 2. This language is peculiarly to be noted; it is not obvious to determine, in some of the clauses, whether the Father or the Son was intended; but when 'the Son of God, even Jesus Christ,' had been mentioned, the apostle made use of a personal pronoun, often *improperly* rendered 'this Man,' when applied to Christ, but commonly signifying *this Person*. This demonstrative pronoun has Jesus Christ for its immediate and evident antecedent; and, having said '*this Person is the true God, and eternal Life*,' the apostle concluded, by solemnly cautioning his beloved 'children' to 'keep themselves from idols;' which must imply, that they would do this, by adhering to the worship of the Son, as 'the true God and eternal Life,' and as One with the Father who sent Him. The Scripture, and the New Test. especially, was expressly intended, to draw men off from the worship of idols of every kind, to 'serve the One living, and true God;' and can it possibly be imagined, for a moment, that an *inspired* writer should speak in this manner of Jesus Christ, if He had not been, equally with the Father, the proper object of all adoration? If the worship of the Son of God be idolatry, (as it must be, if He be no more than a creature,) surely the apostle introduced his caution against idols in a very unaccountable manner! But if the triune JENOVAH, 'the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,' three Persons in One undivided Godhead, be the Object, and the only Object, of divine adoration, nothing could be more proper and emphatical; for the Jews, rejecting the Son, and professing to worship God in One Person, (as the Mohammedans, Deists, Socinians, and others in after ages, have done,) had really changed the true Object of worship, the God of the Bible, for an imaginary Being; and could not be exculpated from the charge of idolatry; for they could not be discriminated from those, who worshipped the Supreme Being, under the name of Jupiter, or Baal. (Notes, 1 Kings 18:17—21.) So that nominal Christians, in these days, (and not only in the church of Rome,) have more need to be warned to 'keep themselves from idols,' than it is generally supposed; and to be careful, that they adore the true God, in whose name Christ commanded, that his disciples should be baptized; and that, whilst they 'bow their knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus,' they forget not to 'honor the Son even as they honor the Father who sent Him,' 2:20—25. John 5:20—23. 2 John 7:11. in dependence on the omnipresent and divine Spirit, and under his guidance, that 'the grace of the Lord Jesus, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost,' 'may be with them at all times.' Mat. 28:19, 20. 2 Cor. 13:11—14, v. 14—20. *We know*.] Is there in these clauses nothing like personal assurance of acceptance and salvation, arising from inward consciousness of having been enlightened in that knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, which is eternal life? Sc.

(20.) *This is the true God*.] 'To paraphrase this of the true religion, is quite enervating the force of Scripture, and taking a liberty with plain words by no means to be allowed. It is an argument of the *Deity of Christ*, which almost all those who have written in its defence have urged; and which, I think, none who have opposed it have so much as appeared to answer.' DODDR.—'Athanasius, in the council of Nice, disputing against Arius, called this text of John a *written demonstration*; adding that, as Christ said of the Father, John 17:3. *This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God*, so John said of the Son, *This is the true God and eternal life*. Arius then acquiesced, and confessed the Son of God to be the true God.' GLASSIUS, in *Mackn*.—'That life and eternal life are, by the sacred writers, perpetually ascribed to

Gospel, and the conversion of sinners, at home and abroad, even to the ends of the earth, by every mean in our power. Happy are they, who 'know that the Son of God is come,' and to whom God 'hath given an understanding to know,' and a heart to rely on, 'Him that is true!' May this be our privilege, may we 'dwell in Christ, and Christ in us;' may we be 'one with Him, and He with us;' for '*This is the true God and eternal life*;' thus our fellowship will be with the Father and the Son, through the Spirit; and we shall be preserved from all idols and destructive heresies, and idolatrous love of worldly objects, and 'kept by the power of God, through faith, unto eternal salvation.' SCOTT.

Christ, as the Author, is certain, and the words are nowhere applied to God the Father. However, most recent interpreters think it more agreeable to the context, to refer the *this*, not to the immediate antecedent, but to *his*, [his, before Son.] BLOOMF.—'The confident assurance with which the apostle maintains his conviction of the truth of the two doctrines, concerning the *Divinity and human nature of Christ*, which pervade the epistle, and are summarily confirmed in vs. 7, 8. are strikingly expressed in v. 20.'

Concluding Note. A few words may well be added here on a chief theme of the most spiritually minded of the apostles, from an 'Outline of the Scripture Evidence for the Trinity.' Glasgow, 1831. Not being so much controverted as the Deity of Christ, that of the Holy Spirit has been less treated of by controversialists; but that the believer may have wherewith to answer questions, hereon, the following summary is given from the above closely reasoned work, p. 158, &c.

Having proved that the Holy Spirit is neither to be regarded, with the Sabellians, as only another name for the Father, nor yet, with the Socinians, as only a figure for the virtue or power of God, but as truly an intelligent person [rather, persona], it is unnecessary to repeat the proofs of the divinity of the Spirit, these being involved in the whole of the preceding argument, and not being disputed either by Socinians or Sabellians. We conclude, then, that the Holy Spirit is the most High God, absolutely and properly so called, and yet is revealed as in some *real* manner to be distinguished from the Father and the Son.

Summary. The masculine pronoun is employed in speaking of the Holy Spirit.—The H. S. is described as having a will to choose, understanding to know, and power to execute his purposes.—Is represented as grieved, as interceding, commanding, forbidding, reproving, testifying, instructing.—We are baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and as the first two are persons, so also is the Holy Spirit. We conclude, therefore, the Holy Spirit to be a *distinct, intelligent person*, and not a quality or attribute.

Again, the H. S. is a *Divine person*.—Sin against Him is unpardonable.—He is the Author and Worker of miracles.—He is the Author of all spiritual gifts; the Sanctifier of all hearts.—He is omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal.—He is sometimes called God. Honor and worship are ascribed to Him.—Therefore He is a *Divine person*.

The H. S. is distinguished from the Father and the Son, by the form of baptism, and by the apostolic benediction.—He is said to be sent by the Father and the Son; He is therefore neither the Father nor the Son.—By the Spirit we have access unto the Father; therefore He is not the Father.—The Spirit was distinguished from the Father and the Son at the baptism of Christ; the Son descended into the Jordan, the Father spoke from heaven, and the Spirit descended like a dove and abode on the Son.—The Holy Spirit is, therefore, a *Divine person*, and yet in some way to be distinguished from God the Father and God the Son.

The amount of our Scripture information is, that God is one; that there are two persons, each of whom, with the Father, we are led to consider as God, and to ascribe to all the three distinct, personal properties. The terms, *person, Trinity, substance*, &c. are not to be found in Scripture; they were introduced by controversy into the Christian church. The Nicene fathers were driven to their adoption by the evasions of the Arians, to bind the ever-changing Proteus of heresy. "I could wish," says Calvin, in his Institutes, "such terms might be buried, provided men would agree in believing the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to be one God, yet so as that the Son is not the Father, nor the Holy Spirit the Son, but that they were in some way to be distinguished."

Similar are the sentiments of Dr. Pyle Smith, to whom we are indebted for the most learned and complete illustration of the "Scripture Testimonies to the Messiah."—"With regard to the three divine persons in heaven, these things are affirmed in Scripture. To the Messiah, and to the Holy Spirit, as well as the Father, divine attributes are ascribed; but these are to be combined with another fact, that of the divine unity. The doctrine of the Trinity, three persons in one substance, is the theory by which we attempt to combine these two apparently incompatible things. But some Christians think it more proper and becoming, under the darkness and infirmity of the present state, to say, and I incline to say so too,—I receive all the facts of the case; I believe them upon the authority of inspiration, but presume not to form any hypothesis for enjoining and generalizing them, because I conceive that so to do is beyond the range of my present faculties. I rely, therefore, with perfect assurance upon the veracity of the great Revealer; and am confident, that all the facts, necessarily mysterious as they are to my apprehension, are, in reality, in perfect harmony, and without discrepancy."

These two quotations, from Calvin and Smith, contain all that we know upon the subject, all that Scripture reveals and requires us to believe. Ed.



AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. T. Reynolds.)

HERE we find a canonical epistle inscribed, principally, not only to a single person, but to one also of the softer sex. And why not to one of that sex? *Male* and *female* are both one in *Christ Jesus*; our Lord Himself neglected his own repast, to commune with the woman of Samaria, in order to show her the Fountain of life; and when almost expiring on the cross, He would with his dying lips bequeath his blessed mother to the care of his beloved disciple, and thereby instruct him to respect female disciples for the future: it was to one of the same sex that our Lord chose to appear first after his return from the grave, and to send by her the news of his resurrection to this as well as to the other apostles: and we find afterwards a zealous Priscilla, so well acquitting herself in her Christian race, and particularly in some hazardous service toward the apostle Paul, that she is not only often mentioned before her husband, but to her, as well as to him, not only the apostle himself, but also all the Gentile churches, were ready to return their thankful acknowledgments. No wonder, then, that a heroine in the Christian religion, honored by divine providence, and distinguished by divine grace, should be dignified also by an apostolical epistle.

HENRY.

This short epistle, and that which follows, being written, as it is probable, not long before the apostle's death, and neither to any church by name, nor to the churches at large, but to individuals, were not generally and unanimously known and acknowledged to be written by him, in the earliest ages, in the decided manner, that the preceding epistle was; but their coincidence with it, in sentiment, manner, and language, satisfied all concerned, at an early period, that they were written by the same person. Mill observes, that of the 13 vs. in this epistle, 8 may be found in the first, either in sense or in expression.—The word rendered, 'The elder,' might probably be applied to John, when all the other apostles were dead, as a title of honorable distinction, for he was the senior of the whole church; or he might modestly, yet as claiming authority, assume it on this occasion. Some have conjectured, that the church of Jerusalem was figuratively meant by 'The elect lady;' and that of Ephesus, where John is supposed to have at this time resided, by 'her elect sister;' but it has more generally been thought, that an eminent and honorable Christian matron, well known in the church, was addressed by the title of 'the elect lady,' and that some other honorable Christian woman, nearly related to her, was intended by 'her elect sister' (13). On any supposition, however, the title of *catholic* cannot properly belong to it (*Pref. to 1 Pct.*); as the writer's purpose of visiting, in a short time, those whom he addressed, is alone a sufficient proof.—It is supposed, that the apostle especially intended, in this epistle, to put those to whom he wrote on their guard against such heretics, as affirmed that Jesus was not really a Man, but only *appeared* to be one; and *appeared* to do and suffer those things, which the apostles and evangelists recorded of Him. This heresy was, in its consequences, subversive of Christianity; which accounts for the decided language of the writer against those teachers who held it. (*Note, 7—11.*) The same decided conduct is, however, equally needful, reasonable, pious, nay, charitable, in the true sense of the word, in respect of those who propagate many other opinions, subversive of the Gospel; who yet exclaim against the bigotry of those, however benevolent and beneficent in all other things, who determine not to be 'partakers of their evil deeds.'

SCOTT.

A. D. 90.

1 He exhorteth a certain honorable matron, with her children, to persevere in Christian love and belief, 8 lest they lose the reward of their former profession: 10 and to have nothing to do with those seducers that bring not the true doctrine of Christ Jesus.

THE elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

2 For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

3 Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father; in truth and love.

4 I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.

V. 1, 2. Ancient epistles began, as here, with salutations and good wishes: [thus] religion consecrates, as far as may be, old forms, and turns compliments into real expressions of life and love. Here, we have, as usually,

1. The saluter; not expressed by name, but by a chosen character,—*The elder*. The expression, style, and love, intimate, that the penman was the same with that of the foregoing epistle; he is now *the elder*, emphatically and eminently so; possibly, the oldest apostle now living; the chief *elder* in the church of God. He was now old in holy service and experience, had seen and tasted much of heaven, and was much nearer than when at first he believed.

2. The saluted; a noble Christian matron, and her children. Here is a pattern for persons of quality of the same sex; *the elect lady*; not only a choice one, but one chosen of God; it is lovely and beautiful to see ladies, by holy walking, demonstrate their election of God: *and her children*; probably, the lady was a widow; *she and her children*, then, are the principal part of the family, and so this may be styled an economical [or family] epistle. This *lady and her children* are further notified by the respect paid them, and that, (1.) By the apostle himself; *whom I love in the truth*, or in truth; whom I sincerely and heartily love. (2.) By all her Christian acquaintance, all the religions who knew her; *and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth*. Then here is the ground of this love and respect thus paid to this *lady, and her children*; *for the truth's sake*, (or true religion's sake,) *which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever*. Christian love is founded on the appearance of Christian, vital religion. We should not be religious merely by fits and starts; but constantly and permanently. The Spirit of Christianity, we may suppose, will not be totally extinguished: *which shall be with us for ever*.

V. 3, 4. Here we see, 1. The salutation, which is, indeed, an apostolical benediction, v. 3. Sacred love pours out blessings on this honorable Christian family: these blessings are craved, *from God the Father*, the God of all grace; *and the Lord Jesus Christ*, also distinguished by this emphatical character,—*the Son of the Father*; such a Son as none else can be; such a Son as is *the Brightness of the Father's glory, and the ex-*

*Salutation, to a lady and her children.*

*press Image of his Person*; who, with the Father, is also *eternal Life*, 1 John 1: 2. From these divine Persons the apostle craves *Grace*,—divine favor and good-will, the spring of all good things; *Mercy*,—free pardon and forgiveness; they who are already rich in *grace*, have need of continual forgiveness; *Peace*,—tranquillity of spirit and serenity of conscience, in an assured reconciliation with God, together with all safe and sanctified outward prosperity: and these are desired *in truth and love*; either by sincere and ardent affection in the saluter, or as productive of continued *truth and love* in the saluted; these blessings will continually preserve true faith and love in the *elect lady, and her children*; and may they do so!

2. The congratulation on the prospect of the exemplary behavior of other children of this excellent lady. Happy parent, who was blessed with such a numerous religious offspring! *I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in the truth, as we have received commandment from the Father*. See how good it is to be trained up to early religion! Though religion is not to be founded on education, yet education may be, and often is blessed, and is the way to fortify youth against irreligious infection. Hence, too, let young travellers learn to carry their religion along with them, and practice it; as, possibly, these children of the lady were come to Ephesus where the apostle now was, and saw them. How happy a lady was this, who had brought forth so many children for heaven and for God! And how great a joy must it be to her, to hear so good an account of them from so good a judge! And see, further, it is joyful to good old minis-

NOTES. V. 1—3. The aged apostle seems to have written this short letter, about the time he wrote his general epistle, or something later; and he only styled himself 'the Elder,' (1 Pet. 5:1.) knowing that the honorable matron, whom he addressed, would be satisfied from whom she received it, and properly regard it, without a more explicit declaration of his authority. (1) *Lady*.] *Kuria*: from *kurios*; which is used

in various ways, but always as addressing or speaking of one who is in some respect, an acknowledged superior.

(1.) *The elect lady*.] 'The chosen, excellent, or truly Christian lady.'

V. 4. It is very probable, these children were some sons of this matron, who had come to Ephesus on business, and with whom, while they

SCOTT.

BLOOMF.



5 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

6 And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God: He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

11 For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.

12 Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with

a 1 Jn. 3:23.      Ro. 3:11.      have gained,  
b Jn. 14:15, 21.    f or, gained.      but that ye.  
c 1 Jn. 4:1.      Some copies      g Jn. 15:6.  
d Ma. 13:9.      read, which ye    h Ga. 1:8, 9.  
e Phil. 3:16.      i 1 Ti. 5:22.

ters, and good old disciples, to see a hopeful, rising generation, who may serve God and support religion in the world when they are dead and gone. We see here, also, the rule of true walking; the commandment of the Father. Then is our walk true, our converse right, when it is managed by the Word of God.

V. 5, 6. We come now more into the design and substance of the epistle; and here, we have, 1. The apostle's request; *I beseech thee, lady*. Considering what it is he entreats, the way of address is very remarkable; here he might command or charge; but harsher methods are worse than needless, where milder will prevail; and the apostolical spirit is, of all other, the most tender and endearing. Whether out of deference, or apostolical meekness, or both, he condescends to beseech. He may be supposed speaking as another apostle does to a certain master to whom he writes, Phil. v. 9. Love will avail where authority will not; and we may often see, that the more authority is urged, the more it is slighted. The apostolical minister will love and beseech his friends into their duty.

2. The thing requested of the lady, and her children,—Christian, sacred love; that we love one another, v. 5. They that are

eminent in any Christian virtue, have yet room to grow therein, 1 Thess. 4:9, 10. This love is recommended, from the obligation thereto; it is commanded, from the antiquity of the obligation, v. 5. The command may be said to be a new one, in respect of its new enactment and sanction by the Lord Christ; but yet, as to the matter of it, (mutual, holy love,) it is as old as natural, Jewish, or Christian religion. Then this love is illustrated from the fruitful nature of it, v. 6. This is the test of our love to God, our obedience to Him. *This is love to ourselves, to our own souls, that we walk in obedience to divine commands. In keeping them there is great reward.* Universal obedience is the proof of the goodness and sincerity of Christian virtues; and they that aim at all Christian obedience, will be sure to attend to Christian love; that is a fundamental duty in the gospel-charter, v. 6. The foresight of the decay of this love, as well as of other apostasy, might engage the apostle to inculcate this duty, and this primordial command, the more frequently, the more earnestly.

V. 7—9. In this principal part of the epistle, we find, 1. The ill news communicated to the lady; many deceivers are abroad. This report is introduced by a particle that bespeaks a reason of the report; for there are destroyers in the world; they who subvert the faith, destroy the love. Now here is, (1.) The description of the deceiver and his deceit; he confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, v. 7. he brings some error or other concerning the Person of the Lord Jesus. Strange, that after such evidence, any should deny that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God, and Savior of the world! (2.) The aggravation of the case; such an one is a deceiver and an antichrist, v. 7. he deludes souls, and undermines the glory and kingdom of the Lord Christ.

2. The counsel given to this elect household hereupon, v. 8. The more deceivers and deceits abound, the more watchful the disciples must be. Delusions may so prevail, that even the elect may be endangered thereby. Two things they must beware of: (1.) That they lose not what they had wrought, v. 8. what they have done, or what they have gained; any religious labor, or fair reputation for religion, conviction of the evil of sin, the vanity of the world, the excellency of religion, and the power of God's Word, Heb. 6:4—6. Ga. 5:7. (2.) That they lose not their reward, none of that honor, praise, or glory, they once stood fair for, Rev. 3:11. The way to attain the full reward, is, to abide true to Christ, and constant in religion to the end.

3. The twofold reason of the apostle's counsel, and of their care and caution; (1.) The danger and evil of departure from gospel-light and revelation; it is in effect and reality a departure from God Himself, v. 9. *The doctrine of Christ is appointed to guide us to God; it is that whereby God draws souls to salvation and to Himself; they who revolt from thence, in so doing re-*

volt from God. (2.) The advantage and happiness of firm adherence to Christian truth; it unites us to Christ, and thereby to the Father also; for they are one. The great God, as He has set his seal to, so He puts a value on, *the doctrine of Christ*. We must retain that holy doctrine in faith and love, as we hope or desire to arrive at blessed communion with the Father and the Son.

V. 10, 11. 1. On due warning given, concerning seducers, the apostle gives direction concerning the treatment of such; they are not to be entertained as the ministers of Christ; the Lord Christ will distinguish them from such, and so would He have his disciples. *This doctrine* here is concerning Christ as the Son of God, the Messiah and Anointed of God, for our redemption and salvation. Possibly, this lady was like Gaius, whom we read of in the next epistle, a generous housekeeper, and hospitable entertainer of travelling ministers and Christians. These deceivers might possibly expect the same reception with others, or with the best who came there; but the apostle allows it not; 'Do not welcome them into your family.' Doubtless, such may be relieved in their pressing necessities; but not encouraged for ill service. Deniers of the faith are destroyers of souls; and it is supposed that even ladies themselves should have good understanding in the affairs of religion. 'Bless not their enterprises; Neither bid him God speed. Attend not their service with your prayers and good wishes.' Bad work should not be consecrated or recommended to the divine benediction. God will be no patron of falsehood, seduction, and sin. We ought to bid God speed to evangelical ministration; but the propagation of fatal error, if we cannot prevent, we must not dare to countenance. Then,

2. Here is the reason of such direction, forbidding the support and patronage of the deceiver, v. 11. Favor and affection partake of the sin. We may be sharers in the iniquities of others. How judicious and how cautious should the Christian be! There are many ways of sharing the guilt of other persons' transgressions; it may be done by culpable silence, indolence, unconcernedness, private contribution, public countenance and assistance, inward approbation, open apology and defence. The Lord pardon our guilt of other persons' sins!

V. 12, 13. The apostle concludes this letter, 1. With an adjournment of many things to personal conference, v. 12. Here it is supposed that some things are better spoken than written. A pen and ink may be a merey and a pleasure; but a personal interview may be more so; the apostle was not yet too old for travel. The communion of saints should be by all methods maintained; and their communion should tend to their mutual joy. Excellent ministers may have their joy advanced by their Christian friends, Rom. 1:12.

2. With the presentation of service and salutation from some near relations to the lady, v. 13. Grace was abundant toward

were there, the apostle became acquainted, and found in the right way.' So Ros. and Bloomf., who support it by 3 John 3. Ed.

V. 5, 6. (5) *I beseech, &c.* Mat. 15:23. Luke 5:3. John 14:16. Acts 23:20. Phil. 4:3. 1 Thes. 4:1. 2 Thes. 2:1.—'This sort of address suits a particular person, better than a whole church, consisting of many individuals.' Mackn. What follows entirely accords to that which has already been considered. 1 John 2:7—11. 5:1—5. SCOTT.

(5.) 'The mode of address here shows that it was a person, and not a church, to whom the apostle wrote.' GREENE.

V. 7—11. The influence of the false teachers tended to produce disunion among Christians, as well as to pervert and mislead the unstable. 1 John 2:18, 19. 4:1—6. It therefore behooved those, to whom this epistle was addressed, and all into whose hands it might come, to be on their guard, and 'to take heed to themselves,' to their principles, spirit, and conduct: Mat. 24:4, 5, 23—25. Heb. 12:15—17. lest the labor of their ministers should prove fruitless, and their expectations be disappointed; and lest even their own losses, self-denial, and diligence in the cause of the Gospel, should prove of no use to them. This would be wholly the ease of apostates; and in some degree of those, who were seduced into heretical opinions and an inconsistent conduct. (Notes, 1 Cor. 3:10—15. Gal. 4:8—11. Phil. 2:14—18. Rev. 3:10, 11.) Whereas

the apostle's desire was, that he and they together might receive a full reward; which would be the case, if they were steadfast in the faith and obedience of the Gospel: as this would not present recompense him, by his joy in them, for all his labors on their account; and they would at last be 'his crown of rejoicing in the day of Christ.'—The heretics especially intended, are supposed to be those who denied the real humanity of the divine Word; and explained all that was recorded of his pious and sufferings, as mere delusive appearances. (Note, 1 John 4:1—3.)—(9) *Hath not God, &c.* 1 John 2:23. 5:12. The latter part of the verse, 1 John 2:23, which is printed in Italics, as of doubtful authority, is here fully confirmed. SCOTT.

(7.) 'The apostle here alludes to the rise of those heretics who affirmed that Christ came only in appearance.' Doddr.—'The same he had noted in the first epistle.' Ros.

(9.) 'John no doubt refers to those he had just spoken of, v. 7. who not only denied that Jesus was the Messiah, but taught the expectation of another [Messiah, who should be] potent in war.' Rosenm.; who, on transgresseth, refers to Heb. 2:2. and Bloomf. adds 1 Thes. 4:8.' Ed.

V. 12, 13. We know nothing concerning 'her elect sister,' who sent salutations to them, to which the apostle joined his hearty Amen. But it is probable, that some well-known and eminent family of believers,



paper and ink : but I trust to come unto you, and speak <sup>1</sup> face to face, that <sup>k</sup> our joy <sup>1</sup> may be full.

13 The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.

<sup>j</sup> mouth to mouth. <sup>k</sup> or, your. 1 1 Jn. 1:4.

this family; here are two elect sisters, and, probably, their elect children. How will they admire this grace in heaven! The apostle condescends to insert the nieces' duty, (as we would call it,) or dutiful salutation to their aunt. The duty of inferior relations is to be cherished. Doubtless, the

apostle was easy of access, and would admit all friendly and pious communication, and was ready to enhance the good lady's joy in her nieces as well as her children. May there be many such gracious ladies rejoicing in their gracious descendants and other relations! Amen.

PRACT. OBS. A consistent and fruitful profession of the Gospel is the principal honor, even of those few of the noble and exalted of the earth, who are thus distinguished: and that love is most cordial and permanent, which Christians bear to one another 'in the truth, and for the sake' of it; for this will dwell in their souls to eternity, and be with them as the source of most perfect felicity. Some few families of this kind are found among us: may 'the Lord bless them more and more, and their children after them;' and raise up many others to copy their example! For, alas, most of the superior orders in the community are rapidly diffusing irreligion, infidelity, and vice, in their extensive circles; and preparing to leave them as a fatal legacy to their posterity!—We should employ every argument and persuasion to induce Christians to abound in love of their brethren, and to render obedience to all the Lord's commandments: for those 'many deceivers, who confess not that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is come in the flesh,' 'to redeem us to God with his blood,' will have great success among such professed Christians, as are not 'rooted and grounded in love,' and taught to delight in God's commandments. Let us then equally disregard those, who 'transgress the commandments,' and those, who 'abide not in the doctrine of Christ;' that, by maintaining and obeying the truth, we may 'have both the Father and the Son' for our 'Shield, and exceeding great

Reward.' Let us protest against such teachers, as do not bring with them 'the doctrine of Christ;' lest any should by our means be induced to hearken to their 'damnable heresies,' and so we should be found 'partakers of their evil deeds;' which, though little suspected, are often a thousand times more mischievous to mankind, than those of profligates, or even assassins; as they murder far more souls of men, than the others can do bodies.—In obeying this commandment of God, amidst the clamors which will be raised against our bigotry and uncharitableness, we should be careful to show great candor to those, who differ from us in matters less essential, who hold the doctrine of Christ's Person, atonement, and holy salvation: and we ought to pray for those de-luded men, who deny the fundamentals of Christianity; and show them kindness, in every way, and by every method, which implies no degree or kind of countenance to their heresies, and which consists with an open and decided protest against them. Thus we shall stand at a distance from all appearance of persecution and intolerance, while we strenuously assert the difference between the Gospel of Christ, and the doctrine of every antichrist; and between the love due to enemies, and that which belongs to the saints, in communion with whom we find much of our present joy, as an anticipation of our eternal felicity.

SCOTT.

residing near to the place where the apostle was at this time, is meant. (13) Amen.] Jn. 5:20—23. Phil. 2:9—11. 1 Jn. 5:20,21.—'At the begin-

ning of a sentence, it is an earnest asseveration.—In the conclusion of a sentence, it imports an earnest wish that it may be so.' Benson. SC.

## AN EXPOSITION OF THE THIRD EPISTLE OF JOHN, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. T. Reynolds.)

CHRISTIAN communion is exerted and cherished by letter. Christians are to be commended in the practical proof of their professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ. The animating and countenancing of generous and public-spirited persons, is doing good to many. — To this end, the apostle sends this encouraging epistle to his friend Gaius, in which also he complains of the quite opposite spirit and practice of a certain minister, and confirms the good report concerning another more worthy to be imitated.

'The writer of this epistle speaks with an authority, which the bishop of a particular church could not pretend to.—For if Diotrefes was bishop of one of the churches of Asia, the bishop of Ephesus' (that is, if not an apostle also) 'had no right to say to him, "If I come, I will remember his deeds which he docs." (Note, 9:10.) That language, and the visit made to the churches, denote a man who had a more general jurisdiction, than that of a bishop, and can only suit John the apostle.' *Beausobre and L'Enfant*, in *Mackn.* — All inquiries, whether Gaius, to whom the epistle is addressed, was, or was not, the same person mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the epistles of Paul, have hitherto terminated in uncertainty. (Note, 1—4.) There can be no reasonable doubt, that 'the strangers,' and those 'who for his name's sake went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles,' were evangelists, or missionaries. (Note, 5—8.)

HENRY.

SCOTT.

A. D. 90.

*The apostle congratulates Gaius.*

I commendeth Gaius for his piety, 5 and hospitality 7 to true preachers: 9 complaining of the unkind dealing of ambitious Diotrefes on the contrary side, 11 whose evil example is not to be followed: 12 and giveth special testimony to the good report of Demetrius.

THE elder unto the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love <sup>a</sup> in the truth.

2 Beloved, I <sup>b</sup> wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest <sup>c</sup> in the truth.

<sup>a</sup> or, truly. <sup>b</sup> or, pray. <sup>c</sup> 2 Jn. 4.

V. 1, 2. Here, we see, 1. The sacred penman who writes and sends the letter, *The elder.* Some have questioned, whether this were John the apostle or no: but his style and spirit seem to shine therein. Gaius could not question from whom the letter

came. The apostle might have assumed many more illustrious characters, but it becomes not Christ's ministers to affect swelling, pompous titles. He almost levels himself with the more ordinary pastors of the church, while he styles himself,—*The elder.* Or, possibly, most of the extraordinary ministers, the apostles, were now dead, and this holy survivor would countenance the continued standing ministry, by assuming the more common title,—*The elder.* 1 Pet. 5:1.

2. The person saluted and honored by the letter. He is notified, (1.) By his name, *Gaius.* We read of several of that name, particularly of one whom the apostle Paul baptized at Corinth, who possibly might be also the apostle's host there, Rom. 16:23. if this be not he, it is his brother in name, estate, and disposition. Then, (2.) By the kind expressions of the apostle to him,—*the well-beloved*, and *whom I love in the truth.* Love, expressed, is wont to kindle love. Here seems to be either the sincerity of the

apostle's love, or the religion of it; the sincerity of it,—*whom I love in the truth*, whom I truly, cordially love; the religion of it,—*whom I love in the truth*, for the truth's sake, as abiding and walking in *the truth*, as it is in *Jesus.*

3. The salutation, or greeting; containing a prayer, introduced by an affectionate compellation,—*Beloved*, thou beloved one in Christ. Here is, (1.) The apostle's good opinion of his friend, that his *soul prospered.* (2.) His good wishes for his friend, that his body may *prosper and be in health* as well as his *soul.* We may well wish and pray that they who have *prosperous souls*, may have healthful bodies too; their grace will shine in a larger sphere of activity.

V. 3—8. In these vs. we have, 1. The good report the apostle had received concerning this friend of his, v. 3, 6. Where we may see, (1.) The testimony, or thing testified, concerning Gaius,—*the truth that was in him*; the reality of his faith, evinced

NOTES. V. 1—4. It has been generally supposed, that the Gaius, to whom John wrote, was the same person, of whom frequent mention is made in the writings and history of Paul: (*M. R. b.*—*Note, Rom. 16:21—23.*) and his character may seem to favor the opinion; but it is probable, that John wrote his epistle many years after Paul's death. Gaius was a very common name; and the person, here addressed, appears to have been converted by John's ministry; so that no certainty can be attached to the opinion; nor is it of any consequence.—Gaius was probably of a weak constitution, and had perhaps sustained heavy

losses, from the cruel rapacity of persecutors; while, at the same time, 'his soul prospered' exceedingly, as the apostle well knew. — SCOTT.

(2.) *Even as thy soul prospereth.*] 'It is impossible to say, how much the comfort and usefulness of most of the pious is diminished, by their failing to make greater progress in the divine life. The difference between a lively, growing Christian, and one who makes little or no advancement, is as great, as between a healthy and a diseased body. The motives to growth in grace are of the strongest possible kind.'

Rev. Dr. ALEXANDER.



4 I have no greater joy<sup>d</sup> than to hear that my children walk in truth.

5 Beloved, thou doest<sup>e</sup> faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren and to strangers;

6 Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring<sup>f</sup> forward on their journey<sup>g</sup> after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:

7 Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking<sup>h</sup> nothing of the Gentiles.

8 We therefore ought to<sup>i</sup> receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth.

[Practical Observations.]

9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrophes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence<sup>j</sup> among them, receiveth us not.

10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, <sup>k</sup>prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth<sup>l</sup> them out of the church.

d Pr. 23:24. h 1 Co. 9:15,13. i Ti. 6:3,4.  
e 1 Pt. 4:10. j Mat. 10:40. k Pr. 10:8,10.  
f Ac 15:3. l Mat. 23:4-3. m Is. 66:5.  
g worthy of God.

by his charity, which includes love to the brethren, kindness to the poor, and hospitality to Christian strangers. (2.) The witnesses,—brethren that came from Gaius. A good report is due from those who have received good; though a good name is but a small reward for costly service, yet it is better than precious ointment, and will not be refused by the ingenuous and religious. (3.) The auditory before which the report and testimony were given,—before the church; this seems to be the church at which the apostle now resided; what church that was, we are not sure; what occasion they had thus to testify his faith and love before the church, we cannot tell; possibly, out of the fulness of the heart they could not but testify what they found and felt; possibly, they would engage the church's prayer for the

continued life and usefulness of such a patron, that he might prosper and be in health, as his soul prospered.

2. The report the apostle himself gives of him, introduced by an endearing appellation again, v. 5. (1.) He was hospitable, good to the brethren, even to strangers; or, he was good to the brethren of the same church with himself, and to those who came from far; all of the household of faith were welcome to him. (2.) He seems to have been of a catholic spirit; he could overlook the petty differences among serious Christians, and be communicative to all who bore the image and did the work of Christ. And, (3.) He was conscientious in what he did; 'Thou doest faithfully;' the commendation of what is good in us, is designed, not for our pride, but for our encouragement to continue therein, and should be accordingly improved.

3. The apostle's joy therein, in the good report itself, and the good ground of it, v. 3. The best evidence of our having the truth, is, our walking in the truth. Good men will greatly rejoice in the soul-prosperity of others; and they are glad to hear of the grace and goodness of others; They glorified God in me.

4. The direction the apostle gives his friend concerning further treatment of the brethren with him, v. 6. It seems to have been customary in those days of love, to attend travelling ministers and Christians, at least some part of their road, 1 Cor. 16: 6. and this may be done after a godly sort, in a manner worthy of God, suitable to the deference and relation we bear to God. Christians should do even the common actions of life and of good-will, as serving God therein, and designing his glory. Then,

5. The reasons of this directed conduct; these are two: (1.) Because that for his name's sake these brethren went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. It appears thus, that these were ministerial brethren; that they went forth to preach the Gospel, and propagate Christianity; possibly, sent out by this apostle himself: they went forth, also, to carry a free Gospel, taking nothing; these were worthy of double honor. Those who are not called to preach the Gospel themselves, yet may much contribute to the progress of it. The Gospel should be made without charge to those to whom it is first preached; they who know it not, cannot be expected to value it; the churches and Christian patriots ought to concur to support

the propagation of holy religion in the Pagan countries; public spirits should concur according to their several capacities; they who are freely communicative of Christ's Gospel, should be assisted by those who are communicative of their purses. (2.) We ought, therefore, to receive such, that we may be fellow-helpers to the truth, to true religion. The institution of Christ is the true religion, it has been attested by God; they that are true in it and true to it, will earnestly desire and pray for, and contribute to, its propagation in the world.

V. 9—11. 1. Here is a very different example and character; an officer, a minister in the church, less generous, catholic, and communicative than the private Christians: a Gentile name,—Diotrophes, attended with an unchristian spirit, full of pride and ambition; He loves to have the pre-eminence. It is an ill, unbeseeming character of Christ's ministers, to love pre-eminence, to affect presidency and precedency in the church of God. See his contempt of the apostle's authority, letter, and friends. The deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words. Strange, the contempt should run so high! But ambition will breed malice against those who oppose it. I wrote to the church, v. 9. in recommendation of such and such brethren. But Diotrophes receiveth us not; admits not our letter and testimony therein. This seems to be the church of which Gaius was a member; and the apostle seems to write by and with these brethren. To an ambitious, aspiring spirit, apostolical authority, or epistle, signifies but little. Neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would; and casteth them out of the church, v. 10. There might be some differences, or different customs, between the Jewish and the Gentile Christians. Pastors should seriously consider what differences are tolerable. Church-power and church-censures are often abused. But woe to those who cast out the brethren whom the Lord Christ will take into his own communion and kingdom! Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, v. 10. will remember to censure them. This seems to intimate apostolical authority. But the apostle seems not to hold an episcopal court, to which Diotrophes must be summoned; but will come to take cognizance of this affair in the church to which it belongs. Acts of ecclesiastical domination and tyranny ought to be animadverted upon. May it

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—8. A few, even in these days, are so eminent in grace, and zealous of good works, that the precarious state of their health, gives concern to all who love the Gospel. and they earnestly desire the continuance of their lives, and the increase of their ability to do good, and that they may 'prosper in all things, even as their souls prosper.' The conduct of such Christians, gives a joy to faithful ministers, which counterbalances their grief on account of those who disgrace their profession.—Parents and ministers should be as ready to commend what is well done, as to point out what is wrong, in the conduct of those, whom they superintend; and, indeed, this is far more pleasing to a benevolent mind.—The faithful stewards of Christ, whether they have been intrusted with the mysteries of God, or with talents of another sort, will at length 'obtain a good report; nor can multiplied charities, or hospitality without grudging,' be so concealed, as to remain unknown to the church. Mat. 5:19—16. 6:1—4. 1 Tim. 5:24, 25. Applause properly introduces exhortations, and even needful reproofs; 1

Cor. 11:2—22. and, indeed, it should be considered as an admonition, to proceed in the same commendable behavior.—Ministers and missionaries, who are 'constrained by the love of Christ,' and of the souls of men, to leave comfortable stations, to rend themselves from beloved relatives, submit to many and great privations, and even that of sweet communion with Christian friends, and abundant 'means of grace,' to go forth and encounter perils and hardships in spreading the Gospel; and who are content to struggle with poverty in 'their labor of love,' rather than quit their stations, or do anything to prevent their own success; are peculiarly entitled to the countenance and assistance of their fellow-Christians. Indeed, that money must be well expended, which promotes the faithful preaching of the Gospel, in any part of the world; and it is greatly to be wished, that all Christians would try to save, not only a little, but, if practicable, very much, from their expenses, in order to create a fund for conducting such important designs. SCOTT.

V. 5—8. 'The apostle's sentiment in this precept is, that such of the brethren as had not devoted themselves to the preaching of the Gospel, but followed their ordinary occupations at home, were bound to contribute, according to their ability, towards the maintenance of those who went about preaching the Gospel.' Mackn.—It is manifest, at the first glance, how exactly this accords to the case of those, in this commercial country, who cannot, or do not, become missionaries; and to their conduct respecting those who do. SCOTT.

(6.) Before the church.] 'To wit, at Ephesus.' Ros. and Bl. Ed. (7.) His name's sake.] 'This, referring, as it must, to God, immediately preceding, [godly sort, marg. worthy of God,] Christ is here, as well as elsewhere, termed God.' BLOOMF.

V. 9—12. Some expositors think, the apostle here only meant, that he 'should have written to the church,' had not the report which he had heard concerning Diotrophes, determined him rather to address his letter to Gaius, but it does not appear how the words can admit of that construction. It seems that he had written to the church, to induce them to help on their journey, and assist in a manner becoming their profession, the persons before mentioned; (Note, 5—3.) but Diotrophes (probably a pastor of the church, whose circumstances, or abilities, or eloquence, concurring with his ambition of pre-eminence, had acquired for

him an undue influence over his brethren) refused to entertain or countenance those evangelists or missionaries, whom the apostle had recommended; and even forbid others to do it: and when they regarded the apostle's authority, more than his prohibition, he proceeded to excommunicate them for so doing!—It is indeed most wonderful, that a professed minister of Christ, should thus pertinaciously oppose the aged apostle; and should acquire such authority over the affairs of any church, as to be supported in the disgraceful contest; yet this was most evidently the case.—But while the apostle cautioned Gaius against Diotrophes, he pointed out to him another person of his acquaintance, who was well worthy of his imitation. And Gaius would be sure to honor and imitate so excellent a man. SCOTT.

(9.) Who loveth, &c.] 'Who loveth the presidency,' or chief place, doubtless in the church, of which Diotrophes was most probably an officer; and, being one, magnified himself in his office; he loved such pre-eminence, and behaved haughtily in it.' GREENFIELD.

(10.) Casteth out, &c.] 'As it can hardly be supposed Diotrophes would excommunicate any one on so frivolous a pretext, it is best, with most recent commentators, to take the sense to be, "refuses to receive them as Christians;" for their thus denying them hospitality, compelled them to go elsewhere.' BLOOMF.



11 Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.

12 Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true.

13 I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee:

14 But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace be to thee. Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name.

m Ps. 37:27. n 1 Jn. 3:6-9. o mouth to mouth.

PRACT. OBS. V. 9-14. Alas! we live too much to ourselves, in these lukewarm days; and we need not wonder, if covetous and ambitious men, who 'love to have the pre-eminence' in the church, disdain admonitions from inferior ministers; when even the apostles were not secured from the presumptuous, insolent, and malicious opposition of persons of this description; but their deeds will one day be remembered against them, when 'every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he who humbleth himself shall be exalted.' Let us then not follow that which is proud, selfish, malicious, slanderous, and wicked; though the example be given by eminent, and distinguished, or accomplished persons; but let us be 'followers of God, as dear children, and

(11.) 'Many a man seems to reckon himself destitute of talents to do good, as if there were nothing for him to do. My friend, think again; inquire what your opportunities are; you will certainly find them to be more than you are aware of. "Plain men, dwelling in tents," persons of very ordinary rank in life, may, by their eminent piety, prove persons of extraordinary usefulness. A poor John Ulrich may make a Grotius the better for him. A poor mechanic,—who can tell, what an engine of good he may become, if humbly and wisely devoted to it?'—*He that doeth good is of God.* 'Were a man able to write in seven languages; could he daily converse with the sweets of all the liberal sciences; were he to entertain himself with all ancient and mod-

be better agreed to whom that power belongs! 2. Here is counsel on that different character, dissuasion from copying such a pattern, and, indeed, any evil at all, v. 11. Imitate not such unchristian, pernicious evil; but pursue the contrary good, in wisdom, purity, peace, and love. Caution and counsel are not needless to those who are good already. Those cautions and counsels are most likely to be accepted, that are seasoned with love. The practice of goodness is the evidence of our filial, happy relation to God. Evil-workers vainly pretend or boast it.

V. 12-14. Here, we see, 1. The character of another person, one *Demetrius*; not much known otherwise. But here his name will live. His character was his commendation. Few are well spoken of by all: and sometimes it is ill to be so. But he had a good report of all, nay, even of the truth, also, the same being confirmed by the

apostle's and his friends' testimony; and that with an appeal to Gaius's own knowledge. Probably, this Demetrius was known to the church where the apostle now resided, and to that where Gaius was. It is well for those who are commended, when those who commend them can appeal to the consciences of those who know them most.

2. The conclusion of the epistle: in which we may observe, (1.) The referring of some things to personal interview, v. 13, 14. (2.) The benediction; *Peace be to you*; all felicity attend you. They that are good and happy themselves, wish others so too. (3.) The public salutation sent to Gaius; *Our friends salute thee*. A friend to the propagation of religion deserves a common remembrance. (4.) The apostle's particular salutation of the Christians in Gaius' church or vicinity. He who had lain in Christ's bosom, lays Christ's friends in his heart.

walk in love,' after the example of our Lord, and such as have most closely imitated Him; for he, who thus habitually 'doeth good, is of God;' and he 'that doeth evil hath not seen or known God,' whatever his notions or gifts may be. We should therefore notice those, 'who by well-doing have put to silence the ignorance of foolish men,' and who have good 'report of the truth itself,' and of its most faithful and zealous friends; for, by associating with such Christians, and copying their example, we shall have peace within, and live at peace with the brethren. Thus our communications with the Lord's people on earth will be very pleasant, and we shall at length be 'numbered with them in glory everlasting.'

SCOTT.

ern history; and could he feast continually on the curiosities, which the different branches of learning may discover to him:—all this would not afford the ravishing satisfaction, which he might find in relieving the distresses of a poor, miserable neighbor; nor would it bear any comparison with the heartfelt delight, which he might obtain by doing an extensive service to the kingdom of our Savior in the world, or by exerting his efforts to redress the miseries, under which mankind is generally languishing.'

MATHER.

V. 13, 14. 'The friends,' as a term of mutual address among Christians, adopted especially by the body called Quakers, is found only in this place. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Some copies read, *brethren*. SCOTT.

#### THE Gnostics.

The following account of these early heretics, alluded to in John's gospel, epistles, and perhaps Rev. 9; is principally from *Mosheim*, *Woodhouse*, and *Walsh*.

In the early times of the church, many fanatical and wicked notions sprung up, but they were checked by the efforts of the apostles and their fellow-laborers of a like spirit. Yet the increase of men of such characters was foretold by Paul and Peter, writing under the influences of the Holy Spirit. Soon afterwards they began to swarm through the Christian world. They could not destroy the spiritual life which was in Christ, but they exceedingly corrupted and debased the outward profession of the faith, as had been predicted. See 2 Cor. 11:13, 14. 1 Tim. 6:3-5, 20, 21. 2 Tim. 3:13. 2 Pet. 2:1. 1 Cor. 11:19. 2 Thess. 2:12. 3:2. Col. 2:18.

The first considerable body of heretical corrupters was the *Gnostics*; their beginnings are to be traced even in the apostolic times, and they were distinctly opposed by the apostle John. For Cerinthus, as well as the Nicolaitans, appears to have imbibed the Gnostic doctrines. But they did not prevail till the early part of the second century, when Irenæus, speaking of two of the Gnostic leaders, Basilides and Carpocrates, says, their impure followers are not to be numbered, springing up like mushrooms, and Epiphanius says, that they burst out of the earth together at one time, like mushrooms, the lurking-places of many scorpions. 9:3. Hegesippus, who lived in the times of Adrian, says, that when the sacred company of the apostles was departed, and the generation who heard their divine preaching was gone, then the conspiracy of impious deceit had its open beginning; then to the preaching of the truth did they dare to oppose their *knowledge*, falsely so called. The original documents belonging to those times mostly perished in the Dioclesian persecution, but there is sufficient proof of the general irruption of Gnostic principles about A. D. 120, when they burst from their obscurity into open day; and they continued to prevail about a century and a half. They had nearly disappeared by A. D. 270, although their injurious effects on the Christians, as a body, was felt long after.

The Gnostics are represented by the fathers, as carrying mischievous notions to the utmost excess. They held the wildest dreams of visionary and fantastic philosophy derived from the eastern schools, especially concerning the origin of evil, and the creation of the world; these they incorporated with the doctrines of Christianity, rejecting or corrupting those parts of the sacred writings which most clearly opposed their tenets, and many of them were guilty of the most immoral practices. Whatever might be the difference among their sects, and whether they imbibed or practised more or less of evil, they agreed in looking upon all as weak and simple, who interpreted Scripture in its plain and obvious sense. They affirmed, that the true and hidden meaning was possessed by themselves alone. Hence they assumed the title of *Gnostics*, formed from a Greek word, denoting knowledge, and their interpretations of Scripture were usually founded on the opinions of Plato and Pythagoras, though very much distorted and corrupted. These sects entertained unworthy doctrinal views, both of the Person and offices of Christ. The greater part denied that Christ had a real body, or that He really suffered pains and sorrows, and died on the cross, asserting, that He only appeared to do so. They taught, that He only came to teach mankind how to separate the mind from the body, and render the former worthy of being united to the Father of spirits. The tenets of the Egyptian Gnostics are stated to be, that there was one Supreme Being, perfect in goodness and wisdom, who produced from his own substance seven beings, or *cons*, of an excellent nature; two of these produced the angels of the highest order; many other generations of angels succeeded, until they amounted, as well as their respective heavens, to the number of 365, all of them under the empire of an omnipotent lord, named Abrasax, or Abrasax, a name which contains, in its numeral letters, the mystical number 365. The lowest of these formed a world, and created beings to people it, to whom the Supreme gave reasonable souls, and placed them under the rule of the angels. These angels fell, endeavored to seduce mankind from the worship of the Supreme Being, and warred with each other. To counteract this, the Deity sent the chief of the *cons*, who joined in union with the man Jesus, to destroy the empire of these angelic natures, particularly the most turbulent among them, who presided over the Jews, and at whose instigation the man Jesus was seized, and put to death; but their efforts against Christ were in vain. Others gave greater prominence to the doctrine of two principles, attributing more or less to the evil principle, as their foolish and depraved imaginations might please; but their doctrines need not be pursued further into detail, except to notice, that worshipping of angels was one of their tenets.

The works of several writers remain who have described their tenets, and Epiphanius, who had himself been a Gnostic, relates their rites and practices. Very numerous testimonies also exist, showing that they embraced much that was visionary, fanciful, impious, and licentious. These evidences are coins and engraved gems, which,

being formed of lasting materials, uncorrupted by copyists, not having suffered by the lapse of ages, their devices and inscriptions become witnesses to history, and standards to ascertain its truth. These are very numerous, for the tenets of the Gnostics led them to suppose, that they could construct talismans or charms which would control the powers of evil. They therefore engraved various mysterious words and figures, on stones, or pieces of metal to be worn as amulets. *Walsh*, in his account of ancient coins, medals, and gems, as illustrating the progress of Christianity in the early ages, says, The immense number and variety of these talismans that have been and still are found in many places, very remote from each other, attest the accuracy of the historians who have described these sects, with their opinions, and their great encouragement and wide reception in different parts. They are found not only in the east, where travellers procure them without much difficulty, but in the west they are continually dug up; in Spain, Italy, and other countries; proving that no superstition was more widely spread, or so universally adopted. One author has given 300 fac-similes of these gems, with their different devices and inscriptions. Glancing at the emblems upon them, any one will readily appreciate the views of those modern skeptics, who represent the Gnostics as sublime in their views, rational in their opinions, and pure in their conversation, and rightly claiming a pre-eminence in knowledge or science! From such deceptive statements we must turn at once, and adopt the dark picture drawn by those who saw, and who knew the men and their tenets.

These are easily to be traced to the superstitions of Egypt and other countries. Some outward semblance of Christianity was assumed, under satanic influence, to bring discredit upon the cause of truth and holiness; and while a part of the votaries of the world, and the devil, thus assumed a new outward profession, the other part willingly confounded the followers of the truth with these hateful and atomian characters; and then, as now, refusing to discriminate, subjected the pearl of great price, and the counterfeit, to one common censure. But the early fathers disavowed and exposed the vile opinions and practices of these sects, and contrasted the pure doctrines and holy lives of real Christians with them.

The pretext, however, was too specious to be neglected; and, upon these plausible grounds, the persecutions were renewed, though Gnosticism had begun to decline. Dioclesian issued exterminating decrees, under which such vast numbers perished, that he erected pillars with inscriptions, to commemorate, that "the Christian superstition was exterminated;" and struck coins bearing an emblematical representation of the supposed success of his efforts; the device of a Jupiter, brandishing thunderbolts against a figure prostrate at his feet; intended to designate the Deity of the Christians, but personified with the characteristics adopted by the Gnostics, and thus identified with their Abrasax, having the same serpent-like feet as the figures engraved on their gems with that name; for one part of them adopted serpent-worship.

*Walsh*, referring to the account given by Minutius Felix of the allegations brought against the whole Christian church, says, "When the charges against the early Christians were so distinctly specified, and the whole body was thus identified with these widely-spread sectarians, it does not appear, that the fatal consequences of the doctrines and practices of the latter, and the dreadful injuries they inflicted on the cause of Christianity, have been sufficiently insisted upon, nor the additional proof which it affords of the Divine interposition to preserve it. The final triumph of the religion of the Gospel over all the efforts of the heathens to extinguish it, is no doubt a strong proof of superhuman support; but the argument for Divine interposition is much strengthened, when we add, to the persecutions of its enemies, what it had to encounter from the perverseness of its professed friends.

The work, however, was of God, and could not be stopped by man's vices or efforts. *Woodh.* entering into many details, to show the similarity between these heretics and the locusts. Rev. 9:1-12. says, "The important period of 150 years, during which the infant church was darkened and disfigured by the Gnostic heresies, and on that account exposed to scandal, and misrepresentation, and additional persecution, seems of magnitude sufficient to require the notice of Divine prophecy. The great and leading facts are fully established, and no doubt can be entertained of their extensive and powerful influence on the progress of Christianity. And this is its place in the apocalyptic visions, or it has none."

These principles were connected with the Judaizing views, so strongly opposed by Paul. Cerinthus borrowed many Gnostic terms and fictions from the Jews, and even taught, that a part of the Mosaic law was to be retained. He also endeavored to wrest the doctrine of the resurrection to his purpose; promising the resurrection of the mortal body, to enjoy a series of sensual delights, during an earthly reign of Christ, which was to last 1000 years. He taught, that Christ would one day return upon earth, and, renewing his former union with the man Jesus, reign with his people in the land of Palestine 1000 years. See *Mosheim*.

HENRY, *abr.*



AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE,  
WITH  
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

*(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. J. Billingsley.)*

This epistle (as some few others are) is styled *general* or *catholic*, because not immediately directed to any particular person, family, or church, but to the whole society of Christians of that time; and it is, and will be, of lasting, special use in the church as long as time shall last.

Some of the chief things contained in it summarily, are, 1. An account of the penman of it, a character of the church, the blessings and privileges of that happy society, *v. 1, 2.* 2. The occasion of writing it, *v. 3.* 3. A character of evil and perverse men, who were already sprung up in that infant state of the church, and would be succeeded by others of the like evil spirit and temper in after-times, *v. 4.* 4. A caution against hearkening to, and following after such, from the severity of God toward the unbelieving, murmuring Israelites at their coming out of Egypt, the angels that fell, the sin and punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah, *v. 5—7.* 5. To these the apostle likens the seducers against whom he was warning them, and describes them at large, from *v. 8.* to 13. inclusive. 6. Then he cites an ancient prophecy of Enoch, foretelling and describing the future judgment, *v. 14, 15.* 7. Enlarges on the seducer's character, and guards against the offence honest minds might be apt to take at the so early permission of such things, by showing that it was foretold long before that so it must be, *v. 16—19.* 8. Exhorts them to *perseverance in the faith, fervency in prayer, watchfulness against falling from the love of God, and a lively hope of eternal life, v. 20, 21.* 9. Directs them how to act toward the erroneous and scandalous, *v. 22, 23.* And, 10. Closes with an admirable doxology in the last two verses.

The general scope of the epistle is much the same with 2 Pet. ch. 2. which, having been already explained, the less will need to be said on this.

It is designed to warn us against seducers and their seduction, to inspire us with a warm love to, and a hearty concern for truth, and that in the closest conjunction with holiness, of which charity, or sincere, unbiassed brotherly-love, is a most essential character and inseparable branch.

The truth we are to hold fast, and endeavor others may be acquainted with, and not depart from, has two special characters. 1. *It is the truth as it is in Jesus,* Eph. 4:21. 2. *It is truth after (or which is according to) godliness,* Tit. 1:1. Errors dangerous to the souls of men soon sprang up in the church. But such were the wisdom and kindness of Providence, it was, while some, at least, of the apostles were yet alive, to confute them, and warn others against them. We are apt to think, if we had lived in their times, we should have been abundantly fenced against the attempts and artifices of seducers; but we have their testimony and their cautions, which is sufficient; and if we will not believe their writings, neither would we have believed or regarded their sayings, if we had lived among, and conversed personally with them. HENRY.

The writer of this epistle so expressly describes himself, as Jude, the brother of James, (*M. R. a. l.*) that we must either allow him to have been Jude the apostle, called also Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus, who was brother, or near relation to our Lord, (*Note, Mat. 10:1—4.*) or we must suppose the writer guilty of a direct forgery. Some hesitation, however, as to the authenticity of the epistle, seems for a time to have prevailed in the church, which was at length fully removed, though some learned moderns have, on frivolous pretences, as they appear to me, endeavored to revive it.—He calls himself, not an apostle, 'but a servant of Jesus Christ;' and so does Paul. (*Phil. 1:1.*) He is also supposed to quote apocryphal books; but did not Paul quote heathen poets, and Jewish traditions, when what was true in them might be adduced to good purpose, without at all sanctioning the fables which they contained? (*Notes, Acts 17:26—29. 2 Tim. 3:6—9. Tit. 1:10—13.*) These are the chief objections; and they amount to nothing against the internal evidence, and the general current of antiquity. It is probable, that Jude wrote to caution his brethren against the same deceivers, whom Peter, in his second epistle, had opposed; and nearly at the same time.—Many think they both had access to some ancient book, which is now lost, and that they quoted from it; and likewise, that Jude had seen Peter's epistle; and, in order to add his testimony to the same effect, adopted several of his thoughts, and even expressions. This, however, is uncertain; for the same 'Spirit of prophecy' might lead these two witnesses to oppose the corrupters of Christianity, by similar examples, arguments, and illustrations, without either of them knowing what the other wrote.—There is no ground for the opinion, that it was exclusively addressed to the Jewish converts; on the contrary, it seems to have been properly a *catholic* epistle, intended for all Christian churches throughout the world. The exact time when, and the place from which, it was written, are wholly uncertain. SCOTT.

\* Laurmann, in *Bloomf.*, regards this epistle as 'belonging rather to the species of oratorical writing,' and considers it 'with reference to the three great requisites of the orator, namely, *invention, disposition,* (or arrangement,) and *elocution;*' 'in all of which,' *Bloomf.* says, 'he shows Jude is well versed, nay, occasionally rises to a height not easily paralleled;' also, that 'his Greek is, on the whole, pure: and that, although fifteen words are here found which occur nowhere else in the New Test., yet they are such as are admirably adapted to the comprehension even of the unlearned, as being in general borrowed from the ideas and modes of thinking of common life.' ED.

A. D. 70.

He exhorteth them to be constant in the profession of the faith. 4 False teachers are crept in to seduce them; for whose damnable doctrine and manners horrible punishment is prepared: 20 whereas the godly, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, and prayers to God, may persevere, and grow in grace, and keep themselves, and recover others out of the snares of those deceivers.

JUDE, <sup>a</sup> the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified <sup>b</sup> by God the Father, and preserved <sup>c</sup> in Jesus Christ, and <sup>d</sup> called:

a Lu. 6:16. b Ac. 20:32. c 1 Pe. 1:5. d Ro. 9:30.

V. 1, 2. Here we have,

1. An account of the penman of this epistle, *Jude*, or *Judas*, or *Judah*, a name of worth, eminency, and honor. There was one Judas, (one of the twelve,) surnamed *Iscaiot*, (from the place of his birth,) who was a vile traitor. The same names may be common to the best and worst persons. But our Judas was quite another man, a

sincere disciple and follower of Christ; therefore, here the one is very carefully distinguished from the other. Dr. Manton's note on this, is, that God takes great care of the good name of his sincere and useful servants. Note, further, In that the apostle Jude styles himself a servant, though an apostle, a dignified officer in Christ's kingdom: it is a great honor to the meanest sincere minister, (and it holds proportionably as to every upright Christian,) that he is the servant of Christ Jesus. Away, then, with all pretensions, in the ministers of Christ, to lordly dominion, either over one another, or the flocks committed to their charge. Let us ever have that of our dear Redeemer in actual view, *It shall not be so among you,* Mat. 20:25, 26. And brother of James, to wit, of him whom the ancients style the first bishop of Jerusalem, of whose character and martyrdom Josephus makes mention, and ascribes the horrible destruc-

*Account of the writer.*

tion of that city and nation to this wicked cruelty, as one of its principal causes. Of this James, our Jude was brother, whether in the strictest or a larger (though very usual) acceptation, I determine not. He, however, reckons it an honor to him, that he was the brother of such an one. We ought to honor those who are above us in age, gifts, graces, station; not to envy them; yet neither to flatter them, nor be led merely by their example, when we have reason to think they act wrong. Thus Paul withstood Peter, notwithstanding the high esteem he had for him, and the affectionate love he bare to him, when he saw that he was really blameworthy, Gal. 2:11. and following verses.

2. We are here acquainted, to whom this epistle is directed; namely, to all them who are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. I begin with the last, *called*, that is, called Chris-

NOTES. V. 1, 2. *Preface to James.*—The unusual ascription of 'sanctification to God the Father,' and the arrangement of the sentence, have induced many expositors to explain 'sanctified,' of Christians, having been 'set apart,' or separated 'in the election of grace,' by 'God the Father;' in consequence of which they were 'given to Jesus Christ,' and preserved, in and by Him, from dying in their sins, or falling into fatal delusions, till called, by the Word and Spirit of God, into a state of actual fellowship in the Gospel of Christ. Others suppose the order of



2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

e Tit. 1:4. f Ga. 2:5.

tians, in the judgment of charity, further than which we cannot, nor in justice ought to go, in the judgments or opinions we form or receive of one another; yet we ought to think the best we can of every man till the contrary appear; not being forward to receive or propagate, much less invent, disadvantageous characters of our brethren. This is the least we can make of 1 Cor. 13. and this we ought to make conscience of acting up to, which, till we do, the Christian churches will, as, alas! they are at this day, be filled with *envying and strife, confusion and every evil work*, Jam. 3:16. Or the apostle may speak of their being called to be Christians, by the preaching of the Word which they gladly received, and so were received into the society and fellowship of the church.

Christians are the called, called out of the world, the evil spirit and temper of it; above the world, to higher and better things, heaven, things unseen and eternal; called from sin to Christ, from vanity to seriousness, from uncleanness to holiness; and this in pursuance of divine purpose and grace, Rom. 8:30. Now they who are thus called, are,

1. Sanctified; sanctified by God the Father. Sanctification is usually spoken of in Scripture as the work of the Holy Spirit; yet here it is ascribed to God the Father, because the Spirit works it, as the Spirit of the Father and the Son. Note, All who are effectually called, are sanctified; made partakers of a divine nature, 2 Pet. 1:4. for without holiness no man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12:14. Observe, Our sanctification is not our own work. If any are sanctified, they are so by God the Father, not excluding Son or Spirit, for they are One, one God. Our corruption and pollution are of ourselves; our sanctification and renovation, of God and his grace; therefore, if we perish in our in-

iquity, we must bear the blame; but if we be sanctified and glorified, all the honor and glory must be ascribed to God, and to Him alone.

2. The called and sanctified are preserved in Christ Jesus. As it is God who begins the work of grace in the souls of men, so it is He who carries it on, and perfects it, Ps. 138:8. Let us not, therefore, trust in ourselves, nor in our stock of grace already received, but in Him, and in Him alone; still endeavoring, by all proper and appointed means, to keep ourselves, as ever we would hope He should keep us. All who are preserved, are preserved in Jesus Christ, and solely by virtue of their union with Him.

3. The apostolical benediction; Mercy, peace, and love; these the apostle prays may be multiplied, that Christians may not be content with scraps and narrow scantlings of them; but that souls and societies may be full of them. Note, God is ready to supply us with all grace, and a fulness in each grace. We are not straitened, if we are straitened, in Him, but in ourselves.

V. 3. We have here the design of the apostle in writing this epistle; namely, to establish believers in the Christian faith and practice, and in an open and bold profession thereof; especially in times of notorious opposition, by artful seduction, or violent and inhuman persecution.

But then we must see to it very carefully, that it be really the Christian faith that we believe, profess, propagate, and contend for; not the discriminating badges of this or the other party; not anything of later date than the inspired writings of the holy evangelists and apostles.

Here, observe, 1. The gospel-salvation is a common salvation, that is, in a most sincere offer and tender of it to all mankind to whom the notice of it reaches: for so the commission runs, Mark 16:15, 16. therefore, none are excluded from the benefit of these gracious offers and invitations, but they who obstinately, impenitently, finally exclude themselves, Rev. 22:17.

The application of it is made to all believers, and only to such, to the weak as well as to the strong. Let none discourage themselves on the account of hidden decrees which they can know little of, and with which they have nothing to do. God's decrees are dark, his covenants are plain.

2. This common salvation is the subject-

matter of the faith of all the saints. The doctrine of it is what they all most heartily consent to, a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, 1 Tim. 1:15. the faith once, or at once, once for all, delivered to the saints; to which nothing can be added, from which nothing may be detracted, in which nothing more or less should be altered; from which, if we stir a step further, we are in danger of being either entangled or seduced.

3. The apostles and evangelists all wrote to us of this common salvation. It is enough that they have fully declared to us, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, all that is necessary for every one to believe and do, in order to obtain a personal interest in the common salvation.

4. They who preach or write of the common salvation, should give all diligence to do it well: they should not allow themselves to offer to God or his people that which cost them nothing, little or no pains or thought, 2 Sam. 24:24. This were to treat God irreverently, and man unjustly.

The apostle, though inspired, gave all diligence to write of the common salvation. What then will become of those, who, though uninspired, give no diligence, or next to none, but say to the people, even in the name of God, what comes next? They who speak of sacred things, ought always to speak of them with the greatest reverence, care, and diligence.

5. They who have received the doctrine of this common salvation, must contend earnestly for it. Earnestly, not furiously. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God, Jam. 1:20. Lying for the truth is bad, and scolding for it is not much better. Observe, They who have received the truth, must contend for it. We must not suffer ourselves to be robbed of any essential article of Christian faith, by the cunning craftiness, or specious, plausible pretences of any who lie in wait to deceive, Eph. 4:14. Paul tells us, he preached the Gospel (mind it was the Gospel) with much contention, 1 Thess. 2:2. that is, as I understand it, with great earnestness, with a hearty zeal, and a great concern for the success of what he preached.

We have here the occasion the apostle had to write to this purport; as evil manners give rise to good laws, so dangerous errors often give just occasion to the proper defence of important truths.

the words to have been disregarded: and then the apostle's meaning is, that the persons addressed were regenerated and sanctified, by the grace communicated from God the Father; that they were thus brought home to the good Shepherd, who bought them with his blood; and were preserved by his watchful care; and, being called according to his purpose, they would be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. 1 Pet. 1:3-5.

SCOTT.

V. 3, 4. They could not but know the great fundamentals of that doctrine, respecting the Person and salvation of the Lord Jesus, and his mediatorial authority over his redeemed subjects, and 'as Head over all,' for their benefit. And, as these were violently assaulted, they ought to 'contend earnestly' for them; patiently and constantly professing the faith, and adhering to the commands of Christ, in the midst of hardships and persecution. They should diligently endeavor, notwithstanding all kinds of opposition, to disseminate the knowledge of uncorrupted Christianity in the world; refusing all countenance to those who opposed it; decidedly using all their influence to put others on their guard, and to centre them in the faith and practice of the Gospel; and to show them the falsehood and pernicious tendency of the heresies, which were propagated instead of them. Thus their example, profession, conversation, prayers, and improvement of talents, might be instrumental to stop the progress of fatal delusions; to establish the faith of the weak and wavering; and even to recover some of the fallen. And an earnest 'contending for the faith,' with such weapons as these, would consist with meekness and benevolence; differing widely from that controversy, which has too often been conducted with acrimony, slander, invective, and reciprocal contempt. 2 Cor. 10:1-6. These vigorous measures were peculiarly proper at that time, as certain men had glided in like serpents, with subtlety and plausible pretences, 'unawares' to the people and their pastors: but the Lord had foreseen them; for they 'were of old ordained,' or registered 'to this condemnation.' Many predictions had from the beginning been delivered to this effect, 14-16. Nay, these predictions had been extracts, as it were, from the registers in heaven; even the secret and eternal decrees of God, 'known unto whom are his works from the beginning of the world.' Some have supposed, that these ungodly men denied the doctrine of the apostles, concerning the Person and atonement of Christ; 1 John 2:18-25. and they therefore explain 'turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness,' of some attempts made by them to traduce the doctrines of grace, as tending to licentious-

ness. But this construction is very unnatural: and the whole epistle shows, that they were abominable antinomians, who 'wrought all uncleanness with greediness,' under pretence of exalting free grace. It is, however, very probable, that they also held some wild notions concerning the Person of Christ; for this was generally the case, with the various descriptions of these primitive heretics; whose absurd and presumptuous speculations, concerning these mysterious subjects, would be wholly unworthy our notice, did they not illustrate the folly of man's wisdom, in matters of religion; the perverse disposition of the human heart to prefer any senseless falsehood to the truths of revelation; and the artifice of Satan in suiting the delusions, which he propagates by his ministers, to the tastes and capacities of those whom he means to ruin by them. The intellectual poison, which he administers, in this age of proud reasoning and skepticism, is of a more specious kind, and can be supported with more plausible show of argument; or else it would not be so generally received.—(3) Gave all, &c.] 'I was sedulously devising to write to you concerning the common faith; when the circumstances of the times rendered it necessary, and determined me to this subject.' (3) Earnestly contend.] To contend with the utmost earnestness and zeal.—Faith.] Acts 6:7. Gal. 1:23. 1 Tim. 3:9. Tit. 1:13. Heb. 12:2. Rev. 2:13.—Once. Heb. 9:26-28. 'Once for all;' so that no addition is to be made to the doctrine thus delivered, or alteration in it; and all that either human learning and wisdom, or human folly and ignorance can do in this way, only tends to corrupt it. Rom. 6:16-19. 2 Thes. 2:15.—(4) Crept in unawares.] Pareisidusan. Here only.—Ordained.] Rom. 15:4. Gal. 3:1. Eph. 3:3. Written, or described, beforehand. The character of these deceivers had been drawn, and their doom denounced, by the ancient prophets from the beginning.—(Note, 5-8.) Gr. graphō, without a preposition, is used of those, 'whose names are written in the book of life.' Rev. 13:8-9. and this being generally understood of election, the venerable translators of the Bible rendered προγεγραμμένοι, ordained. This shows what their sentiments were on this subject; but it is not clear, that the decree was here meant, except as connected with the prophetic description. At least, it is not meant, that they were 'ordained' to commit these crimes, by any constraint: but merely, that their wilful sin and impenitence being foreseen, and God for wise reasons determining to leave them to themselves, He 'ordained them to this condemnation;' as He had done Judas, and those who crucified Christ. Mat. 26:21-24. Acts 2:22-24.



4 For there are certain men crept in <sup>g</sup> unawares, who <sup>h</sup> were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning <sup>i</sup> the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that <sup>j</sup> the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed <sup>k</sup> them that believed not.

6 And the angels <sup>l</sup> which kept not their <sup>m</sup> first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting <sup>n</sup> chains, under darkness, unto the <sup>o</sup> judgment of the great day.

7 Even as <sup>p</sup> Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, in like manner giving themselves over to fornication, and going after

<sup>g</sup> 2 Pe. 2:1.      <sup>k</sup> Nu. 14:29,37.      <sup>n</sup> 2 Pe. 2:4.  
<sup>h</sup> Ro. 9:22.      <sup>l</sup> He. 3:15-19.      <sup>o</sup> Re. 20:10.  
<sup>i</sup> Ti. 1:15,16.      <sup>m</sup> 1 Ju. 8:34.      <sup>p</sup> Ge. 19:24.  
<sup>j</sup> 1 Co. 10:5,12.      <sup>n</sup> or, *principality*.

V. 4. Here, observe, 1. Ungodly men are the great enemies of the faith of Christ, and the peace of the church. They who deny or corrupt the one, and disturb the other, are here expressly styled *ungodly men*. Ungodly men raise scruples, start questions, cause divisions, widen breaches, merely to advance and promote their own selfish, ambitious, and covetous ends. This has been the plague of the church in all past ages. Nothing cuts us off from the church, but that which cuts us off from Christ; namely, reigning infidelity and ungodliness. We must abhor the thought of branding particular parties, or persons, with this character; especially of doing it without the least proof, or, as it too often happens, the least shadow of it. Those are ungodly men *who live without God in the world*, who have no regard to God and conscience. They are to be dreaded, and consequently to be avoided, not only who are wicked by sins of commission, but also who are ungodly by sins of omission; who, for example, *restrain prayer before God*, who dare not reprove a rich man, when it is the duty of their place so to do, for fear they lose his favor, and the advantage they promise themselves therefrom, *who do the work of the Lord negligently, &c.*

2. They are the worst of ungodly men, who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, who take encouragement to sin more boldly,

4:23-28. Whatever objection lies against this view of the subject lies at least equally against the whole system of prophecy, as far as the crimes and condemnation of men are expressly foretold.—*The only, &c.* These words may be differently rendered: but our translation seems to give the true meaning; preserving the scriptural distinction between the Father and the Son.

(4.) 'The word *ordained*, here, is supposed to be *forensic*, and the expression, *ordained to this condemnation*, to denote those cited to *trial*, by posting up their names, or those whose names were thus posted up, as required for *condemnation* and punishment. So 2 Pet. 2:3. The expression, therefore, does not imply any *predestination* of the persons, but merely imports that they were long since *foretold*, and thereby *designated* as persons who should suffer.' Bloomf.—'God decreed that condemnation should not be but for sin, nor hardening but for preceding rebellion, nor that the wages of death should be paid without the work of sin. No man is ordained to a just punishment but for some sin; the withdrawal of grace, the blindness and oblation of sinners, are the punishments of preceding sin, as appears, Rom. 1:27. To crown or condemn is an act of judiciary power, and proceeds according to the tenor of the revealed Gospel.—God never appointed that any should stumble at the Word, but for their contempt of it.—Never did God make any decree to condemn any man, though he should believe and live righteously.' Jenkyn, in *Henry, abr.*—*Only Lord God, &c.* 'If the word *God*, be here genuine, the *Lord God* and *Lord* must be understood of the same person, as is done by the Syriac and Coptic translators; i. e. [the expression must read], "denying our only Lord God, Jesus Christ." Comp. 2 Pet. 2:1-3.' Bloomf.

V. 5-8. 1 Cor. 10:1-12. 2 Pet. 2:4-9, 20-22. External privileges, profession, and *apparent* conversion, could not secure, from the severest vengeance of God, those who turned aside from Him in unbelief and dis-

obedience. To evince this, the apostle deemed it proper to remind his readers [of the case of ancient Israel, the fallen angels, and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah.] (6) *First estate.* Either *beginning*, John 8:44. 1 John 3:8. or *dignity*, Eph. 6:12. Rev. 3:14—(7) *In like manner.* They were *rebellious*, as the fallen angels had been *rebellious*; and *condemned* as they were: but the main instance of this rebellion in the inhabitants of Sodom, and in the heretics whom Jude opposed, was such as evil spirits could not commit, [rejecting offered mercy in Christ.]—*Eternal fire.* Mat. 25:46. Is. 33:14. Mat. 25:41-45. Mark 9:43-50. It does not appear in what sense the fire which destroyed Sodom, and then was wholly extinguished, and succeeded by a lake, could be thus called, apart from its effects on the inhabitants. (Rev. 19:3.)—(8) *Dreamers.* 'Perfectly stupified, and destitute of reason, as if their senses had been locked up by a deep sleep, or an inveterate lethargy, from which no terrible example could awake them.' Beza.—The epithet *filthy*, added in our translation, implies that their very dreams were defiled, through the filthiness of their waking thoughts.

because the grace of God has abounded, and still abounds, so wonderfully; who are hardened in their impieties by the extent and fulness of gospel-grace, the design of which is, to reduce men from sin, and bring them unto God.

3. They who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, do, in effect, *deny the Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*; that is, they deny both natural and revealed religion. They strike at the foundation of natural religion, *for they deny the only Lord God*; and they overturn all the frame of revealed religion, *for they deny the Lord Jesus Christ*. Now, his great design in establishing revealed religion in the world, was, to bring us unto God.

Note, They who deny our Lord Jesus Christ, do in effect deny the only Lord God. To deny revealed religion is, virtually, to overcome natural religion, for they stand or fall together, and they naturally yield light and force to each other. Would to God our modern deists, who live in the midst of gospel-light, would seriously consider this, and cautiously, diligently, and impartially examine what it is that hinders their receiving the Gospel, while they profess themselves fully persuaded of all the principles and duties of natural religion!

4. They who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, are ordained unto condemnation; they sin against the last, the greatest, and most perfect remedy; and so are without excuse. But what if our translators had thought fit to render the word in the original, *of old forewritten of*, as persons who would, through their own sin and folly, become the proper subjects of this condemnation, where had the harm been? Is it not enough that early notice was given by inspired writers, that such seducers and wicked men should arise in later times, and that every one, being forewarned of, should be forearmed against them!

5. We ought to contend earnestly for the faith, in opposition to those who would corrupt or deprave it, and such as are *crept in unawares*, a wretched character;—but the more busy and crafty the instruments and agents of Satan are, to rob us of the truth, the more solicitous should we be to hold it fast: always provided we be very sure, that we fasten no wrong or injurious characters on persons, parties, or sentiments. [Observe, next.]

The fair warning the apostle, in Christ's name, gives to those, who, having professed his holy religion, do afterwards desert and prove false to it.

V. 5-7. We have here a recital of the former judgments of God on sinners, with design to awaken and terrify those to whom warning is given in this epistle.

(7.) 'The full sense of the apostle seems to be this: "They are publicly set forth for an everlasting example [in their fiery destruction] of the punishment God sometimes inflicts for sin in *this* world; which is but a faint type of that which He hath reserved for the next." See Prof. Stuart's "Dissertation on Future Punishment," p. 61, sqq.' Bl.

(7.) *Giving themselves over to fornication.* 'Let the seducer and the fornicator remember, that each must stand with his victim and his partner in guilt, before the Judge of quick and dead. Let it be remembered, that a female is a moral and accountable being, hasting with us to the bar of God; that she is made to be the centre of all that is delightful in the domestic relations; that, by her very nature, she looks up to man as her protector, and loves to confide in his hands her hu-

Observe, The judgments of God are often denounced and executed *for warning to others*, rather than from immediate or particular displeasure against the offenders themselves; not that God is not displeased with them, but perhaps not more with them than with others, who, at least for the present, escape.

*I will put you in remembrance.* What we already know, we still need to be put in remembrance of. Therefore there will always be need and use of a standing, stated ministry, in the Christian church, though all the doctrines of faith, the essentials, are so plainly revealed in express words. Preaching [and writing new books] is not [always] designed to teach us somewhat we knew nothing of before; but to *put us in remembrance*, to call to mind things forgotten, to affect our passions, and engage and fix our resolutions, that our lives may be answerable to our faith.

*Though ye know these things*, yet ye still need to know them better; many things we have known, which we have unhappily forgotten. Is it of no use or service to be put afresh in remembrance of them?

Now, what are these things which we Christians need to be put in remembrance of?

1. The destruction of the unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness, v. 5. Paul puts the Corinthians in mind of this, 1 Cor. 10:1-10. which, as the Scripture is always the best commentary on itself, are the best explication of this verse. None, therefore, ought to presume on their privileges, since many who were brought out of Egypt by a series of amazing miracles, yet perished in the wilderness by reason of their unbelief, Rom. 11:20. Heb. 4:1. They had miracles plenty, miracles were their daily bread; yet even they perished in unbelief. We have much greater advantages than they had; let their so fatal error be our awful warning.

2. The fall of the angels, v. 6. A great number of the angels left their own habitation, not pleased with the posts and stations assigned them; but God did not spare them; high and great as they were, He threw them off; for the great, the all-wise God, could not be ignorant, as the wisest and best of earthly princes often are, what designs they were hatching.

After all, what became of them? They thought to dare and outface Omnipotence itself; but God was too hard for them, He cast them down to hell. Here, see, the condition of fallen angels; they are in chains, bound under the divine power and justice, bound over to the judgment of the great day; they are under darkness, who were once angels of light; so horribly in the dark are they, that they continue to fight against God, as if there were yet some



strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

8 Likewise also these *filthy dreamers* defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but

q other. s Da. 12:1. u Ex. 22:23.  
r 2 Pe. 2:19, 11. t De. 34:5. v Zec. 3:2.

small hope, at least, left them, of prevailing and overcoming in the conflict. Dire infatuation! Light and liberty concur; chains and darkness, how well do they agree and suit each other!

The devils, once angels in the best sense, are reserved, &c.

Observe, There is, undoubtedly, a judgment to come; the fallen angels are reserved to the judgment of the great day; and shall fallen men escape it? Surely no. Let every reader consider this in due time.

Their chains are called everlasting, because it is impossible they should ever break loose from them, or make an escape. Hear and fear, O sinful mortals of mankind!

3. The apostle here calls to our remembrance the destruction of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, v. 7. *Even as*, &c. It is in allusion to the destruction of *Pentapolis*, or the five cities, that the miseries of the damned are set forth by a lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; they were guilty of abominable wickedness, not to be named or thought on but with the utmost abhorrence and detestation; their ruin is a particular warning to all people, to take heed of, and fly from *fleshy lusts, that war against the soul*, 1 Pet. 2: 11.

God is the same holy, just, pure Being now, as then; and can the beastly pleasures of a moment make amends for your suffering the vengeance of eternal fire? Stand in awe, therefore, and sin not, Ps. 4: 4.

The apostle next exhibits a charge against deceivers, who were now seducing the disciples of Christ from the profession and practice of his holy religion.

V. 8—13. He calls them *filthy dreamers*, for as much as delusion is a dream, and the beginning of, and inlet to, all manner of filthiness.

ness for life; and that she can only be ruined by abusing that confidence, proving false to that reliance, and using the very loveliest trait in her character, as the instrument of her own undoing. And then let us consider the misery into which a loss of virtue must plunge the victim and her friends for ever; the worth of that soul, which, unless a miracle interpose, must, by the loss of virtue, be consigned to eternal despair; and I ask, whether, in the whole catalogue of human crime, there be one whose atrocity more justly merits the deepest damnation, than that, which, for the momentary gratification of a lawless appetite, will violate all these obligations, outrage all these sympathies, and work out so wide-spreading, so interminable a ruin.

(3.) No difficulty here presents itself, except in *enupniazomenoi*, [translated *filthy dreamers*.] and this the best expositors, from *Beza* down to *Hantein* and *Laurmann*, are justly agreed, that the term must be taken in a figurative sense, denoting the giving away to idle and delusive fancies, promising themselves security and acceptance in courses which the Gospel disallows.

V. 9, 10. 2 Pet. 2: 10—17. It is most probable, that the apostle took this account concerning Michael, from an ancient tradition which was well known among the Jews; and by thus adding it, he has given an attestation to its truth. *Deut.* 34: 6. *Dan.* 10: 10—14, 20, 21. 12: 1. In *Daniel*, Michael has been supposed to be the Son of God Himself, as the great Ruler over all angels, and worshipped by them all: Yet we do not seem authorized to interpret this text of the Son of God, as spoken of in the tradition by the name of Michael; but rather of some created angel, invested with great authority over his fellows, perhaps as *Messiah's* peculiar vicegerent. 1 *Thes.* 4: 13—16. Though the hateful character and atrocious conduct of the devil must have excited the holy abhorrence and indignation of the archangel; he yet dared not to utter any reviling expression; not from fear of the devil; but because, even in those circumstances, it would not have been consistent with the perfection of his character. Yet the heretics, of whom Jude was speak-

These *filthy dreamers* dream themselves into a fool's paradise on earth, and into a real hell at last: let their character, curse, and end, be our seasonable and sufficient warning; like sins will produce like punishments and miseries.

1. They defile the flesh: the flesh or body is the immediate seat, and often the irritating occasion, of many horrid pollutions; yet these, though done in and against the body, do greatly defile and grievously maim and wound the soul; *fleshy lusts do war against the soul*, 1 Pet. 2: 11. and in 2 Cor. 7: 1. we read of *filthiness of flesh and spirit*; each of which, though of different kinds, defiles the whole man.

2. They despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities; are of a disturbed mind and a seditious spirit, forgetting that the powers that be are ordained of God, Rom. 13: 1. God requires us to speak evil of no man, Tit. 3: 2. but it is a great aggravation of the sin of evil-speaking, when what we say is pointed at magistrates, men whom God has set in authority over us, by blaspheming or speaking evil of whom, we blaspheme God Himself.

Or, if we understand it with respect to religion, as some do; such evil-speakers despise the dominion of conscience, and the Word of God, the rule of conscience; the revelations of the divine will go for little with them.

Or, as others account for the sense of this passage, the people of God, truly and specially so, are the dignities here spoken of or referred to, according to that of the Psalmist, Ps. 105: 15.

They speak evil of, &c. Religion and its serious professors have been always and everywhere evil spoken of; though there is nothing in religion but what is good, and deserves our highest regards, both as it is perfective of our natures, and subservient to our truest and highest interests; yet this sect, as its enemies are pleased to call it, is everywhere spoken against, Acts 28: 22.

On this occasion, the apostle brings in Michael the archangel, &c. v. 9.

Interpreters are at a loss what is here meant by the body of Moses. Some think the devil contended that Moses might have a public and honorable funeral, that the place where he was interred might be generally known; hoping thereby to draw the Jews, so naturally prone thereto, to a new and fresh instance of idolatry. Dr. Scot thinks, that by the body of Moses we are to understand the Jewish church, whose destruction the devil strove and contended for, as the Christian church is called the body of Christ in the New Test. style. Others bring other

interpretations, which I will not here trouble the reader with.

Though this contest was mighty eager and earnest, and Michael was victorious in the issue, yet he would not bring a railing accusation against the devil himself; it is said, *He durst not bring*, &c. Not that he was afraid of the devil, but he believed God would be offended, if, in such a dispute, he went that way to work; he thought it below him to engage in a trial of skill with the great enemy of God and man, which of them should out-scold or out-rail the other. A memorandum this to all disputants, never to bring railing accusations into their disputes. Truth needs no supports from falsehood or scurrility. Some say, Michael would not bring a railing accusation against the devil, as knowing beforehand that he would be too hard for him at that weapon. Some think the apostle refers here to the remarkable passage we have *Numb.* 20: 7—14. Satan would have represented Moses under disadvantageous colors, which he, good man, had at that time, and on that occasion, given but too much handle for. Now Michael, according to this account, stands up in defence of Moses, and, in the zeal of an upright and bold spirit, says to Satan, *The Lord rebuke thee!* He would not stand disputing with the devil, nor enter into a particular debate about the merits of that special cause; he knew Moses was his fellow-servant, a favorite of God, and he would not patiently suffer him to be insulted, no, not by the prince of devils; but, in a just indignation, cries out, *The Lord rebuke thee!* like that of our Lord Himself, *Mat.* 4: 10. *Moses* was a dignity, a magistrate, one beloved and preferred by the great God; and the archangel thought it insufferable, that such an one should be so treated by a vile, apostate spirit, of how high an order soever. So the lesson hence is, 'That we ought to stand up in defence of those whom God owns, how severe soever Satan and his instruments are in their censures of them and their conduct.' They who censure (in particular) upright magistrates, on every slip in their behavior, may expect to hear, *The Lord rebuke thee!* and divine rebukes are harder to be borne than careless sinners now think for.

V. 10. But these speak evil of the things which they know not, &c. of religion and godliness. Observe, Men are most apt to speak evil of those persons and things that they know least of. How many had never suffered by slanderous tongues, if they had been better known! On the other hand, retirement screens some even from just censure. But what they know naturally, &c. in those things they corrupt themselves; that

ing, claimed superior eminence, as the favorites of heaven, and dared to speak evil of dignities, whom God had commanded them to honor and obey. Thus they spoke language concerning princes and rulers, which Michael scrupled to use concerning the devil himself; and surely they would not maintain, that they were more privileged than the archangel! or that their rulers were more execrable than that great enemy of God and man! To suppose, as some learned men have done, that the body of Moses, means the Jewish church after the captivity: because the true church is called the body of Christ, and to refer the whole to the transaction recorded in the third of *Zechariah*, merely because the *Lord rebuke thee, Satan,* occurs there, may be ingenious; but it is ingenious trifling, which brings no instruction nor satisfaction to the mind. *Zech.* 3: 1—4. Michael, one of the principal angels, was contented to deliver up the devil, however execrable, to be coerced by the judgment of God: yet these perverse and insignificant men, were not ashamed to reproach "the powers, ordained by God" Himself! *Beza.* 'The angels have no disposition, and I believe they have no talent, or faculty, for railing: the cool consideration whereof should make all men, especially those who call themselves *divines*, and especially in controversies about religion, ashamed and afraid of this manner of disputing.' *Abp. Tillotson.*

(9.) The connexion may be thus traced: "The Gnostics imitate the fallen angels in their rebellious speeches and conduct; but the archangel will afford them a better example, who, even under the greatest provocation, refused to pronounce a harsh sentence of condemnation against a fallen spirit." *Bloomf.*—'If the angel did not rail even against the devil, how much less ought we against men in authority, even supposing them in some things to behave amiss.' *Doddr.*—As to this being only an instructive fable, (as supposed by recent commentators,) *Bl.* adds,—'besides, it is difficult to believe that an inspired apostle would thus enforce his doctrine,—that it is evidently mentioned, not as a fable, but as a fact.'



what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

11 Wo unto them! for they have gone in the way of <sup>w</sup> Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam <sup>x</sup> for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of <sup>y</sup> Core.

12 These are spots <sup>z</sup> in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding <sup>a</sup> themselves without fear: <sup>b</sup> clouds *they are* without water, carried <sup>c</sup> about of winds; trees whose fruit <sup>d</sup> withereth, without fruit, twice <sup>e</sup> dead, plucked <sup>f</sup> up by the roots;

13 Raging waves <sup>g</sup> of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering <sup>h</sup> stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the <sup>i</sup> Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints,

w Ge. 4:5.	b Pr. 25:14.	f Mat. 15:13.
x Nu. 22:7, 21.	c Ep. 4:14.	g Is. 57:20.
y Nu. 16:1, &c.	d Jn. 15:4-6.	h Re. 8:10, 11.
z 2 Pe. 2:13.	e He. 6:4-6.	i Zec. 14:5.
a Phi. 3:19.		

is, in things that lie most open and obvious to natural reason and conscience; even in those things they corrupt, debase, and defile themselves: the fault, whatever it is, lies not in their understandings or apprehensions, but in their depraved wills, and disordered appetites and affections. It is hard, if not impossible, to find any obstinate enemies to the Christian religion, who do not, in their stated course, live in open or secret contradiction to the very principles of natural religion. The apostle likens such to brute beasts, though they often think and boast themselves, if not the wisest, yet at least the wittiest, part of mankind.

V. 11. He represents them as followers of Cain, and in v. 12, 13, as atheistical and profane, as greedy and covetous, who, so they could but gain present worldly advantages, cared not what came next; rebels to God and man, who like Core, ran into attempts in which they must assuredly perish, as he did.

V. 12. *These are spots in your feasts of charity, or love-feasts, so much spoken of by the ancients; these happened, by whatever means or mischance, to be admitted among them, but were spots in them, defiled and defiling. These are spots.* Yet how com-

mon in all Christian societies here on earth, the very best not excepted, are such blemishes! The more is the pity! The Lord remedy it in his due time and way.

*When they feast with you, they feed themselves without fear.* Arrant gluttons, no doubt, they were; they had no regard to Solomon's caution, Prov. 23:2. In common eating and drinking, a holy fear is necessary, much more in feasting; though we may sometimes be more easily and insensibly overcome at a common meal than at a feast.

*Clouds they are without water;* which promise rain in time of drought, but perform nothing of what they promise.

*Carried about of winds;* light and empty, easily driven about this way or that, as the wind happens to sit; such are empty, ungrounded professors, an easy prey to every seducer.

*Trees whose fruit withereth, &c.* Trees they are, for they are planted in the Lord's vineyard, yet fruitless ones.

Observe, They, whose fruit withereth, may be justly said to be *without fruit*. It is a sad thing when men seem to begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh; which is almost as common a ease as it is an awful one.

The text speaks of such, as being *twice dead*. What is the meaning? They had been *once dead* in their natural, fallen, lapsed state; but they seemed to recover, and, as a man in a swoon, to be brought to life again, when they took upon them the profession of the Christian religion; but now they are *dead* again by the evident proofs they have given of their hypocrisy; whatever they seemed, they had nothing truly vital in them.

*Plucked up by the roots;* as we commonly serve *dead trees*, from which we expect no more fruit; they are *dead, dead, dead;* why *cumber they the ground?* Away with them to the fire.

V. 13. *Raging waves of the sea;* boisterous, noisy, and clamorous; full of talk and turbulency, but with little if any sense or meaning.

*Foaming out their own shame;* creating much uneasiness to men of better sense and calmer tempers, which yet will, in the end, turn to their own greater shame and just reproach.

*Raging waves* are a terror to sailing passengers; but when they are got to port, the waves are forgotten, as if no longer in being; their noise and terror are for ever ended.

*Wandering stars.* This allusion carries in it a lively emblem of false teachers, who are sometimes here and sometimes there, so

that one knows not where nor how to fix them.

*To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.* False teachers are to expect the worst of punishments in this and a future world: not every one who teaches by mistake anything that is not exactly true; but every one who prevaricates, dissembles, would lead others into by-paths, to make a gain, prey, or merchandise of them, 2 Pet. 2:3. As for the *blackness of darkness for ever*, I shall only say, that this terrible expression, with all the horror it imports, belongs to false teachers, truly, not slanderously so called, who corrupt the Word of God, and betray the souls of men. If this will not make both ministers and people cautious, I know not what will.

The doom of this wicked people is declared.

V. 14-16. This prophecy of Enoch we have no mention of in any other place of Scripture; yet one plain text of Scripture is proof enough of any one point we are required to believe, especially when relating to a matter of fact; though, in matters of faith, there is no fundamental of Christian religion, truly so called, which is not inculcated over and over in the New Test., by which we may know what the Holy Ghost does, and consequently we ought to lay the greatest stress upon. Some say, this prophecy was preserved by tradition in the Jewish church; others, that Jude was immediately inspired with it: be that how it will, it is certain there was such a prophecy of ancient date, and universally received in the Old Test. church; and it is a main point of our New Test. creed.

Observe, Christ's coming to judgment was prophesied of as early as the middle of the patriarchal age, and was therefore even then a received and acknowledged truth.

*The Lord cometh with his holy myriads;* including both angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. What a glorious time will that be, when Christ shall come with ten thousand of these! and we are told for what great and awful ends and purposes He will come so accompanied and attended, namely, *to execute judgment upon all*.

Observe, It was spoken of then, so long ago, as a thing just at hand; '*Behold the Lord cometh.*' He cometh, 1. *To execute judgment on the wicked.* 2. *To convince them.*

Observe, Christ will condemn none without trial, and conviction; such conviction as shall at least silence even themselves; then *every mouth shall be stopped*, the Judge and his sentence shall be approved; even

(10.) *But what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.* Go to the people of another planet, over whom the hold of allegiance to their Maker is unbroken,—in whose hearts the Supreme sits enthroned, and throughout the whole of whose history there runs the perpetual and the unailing habit of subordination to his law. It is conceivable, that with them, too, there may be varieties of temper and of natural inclination, and yet all of them be under the effective control of one great and imperious principle; that, in subjection to the will of God, every kind and every honorable disposition is cherished to the uttermost; and that, in subjection to the same will, every tendency to anger, [selfishness,] malignity, revenge, [&c.] is repressed at the present moment of its threatened operation; and that, in this way, there will be the fostering of a constant encouragement given to the one set of instincts, and the struggling of a constant opposition made against the other. Now, only conceive this great bond of allegiance to be dissolved; the mighty and subordinating principle, which went to wield an ascendancy over every movement and every affection, to be loosened and done away; and then would this loyal, obedient world, become what ours is,—independent of Christianity. *Every constitutional desire would run out, in the unchecked spontaneity of its own movements.* The law of heaven would furnish no counteraction to the impulses and the tendencies of nature. And tell us, in these circumstances, when the restraint of religion was thus lifted off, and all the passions let out to take their own tumultuous and independent career,—tell us, if, though amid the uproar of the licentious and vindictive propensities, there did gleam forth at times, some of the finer and lovelier sympathies of nature,—tell us, if this would at all affect the state of that world, as a state of *enmity against God*; where his will was reduced to an element of utter insignificance; where the voice of their rightful Master, fell powerless on the consciences of a listless and alienated family; where humor and interest, and propensity, at one time selfish and at another social, took their alternate sway over those hearts, from which there was excluded all effectual sense of an overruling God. . . The way, then, to assert the

depravity of man, is, to fasten on the radical element of depravity, and to show how deeply it lies incorporated with his moral constitution. It is not by an utterance of rash and sweeping totality, to refuse him the possession of what is kind in sympathy, or of what is dignified in principle,—for this were in the face of all observation. It is to charge him direct with his utter disloyalty to God. It is to convict him of treason, against the majesty of heaven. It is to press home upon him the impiety of not caring about God. It is to tell him, that the hourly and habitual language of his heart is, *I will not have the Being who made me, to rule over-me.* *The Mercantile Virtues without Christianity.* Disc. 1. vol. 2.

V. 11-13. The word rendered *spots*, primarily means, the tops of the rocks, appearing above the water, which give the sea the appearance of being *spotted*, and on which ships are wrecked. Thus the disgraceful appearance of these heretics, and the danger arising from them, may be at once exhibited.—The word rendered '*wandering stars,*' signifies *planets*; but it may be questioned, whether the apostle used it in the strict astronomical sense; or not, rather, according to the popular meaning of it, which best suited his purpose.—The horrible enormities, ascribed to the heretics who are supposed to be here intended, are almost incredible; but, if true, it is by no means proper to speak of them in the detail.

(12.) *Feasts of charity.* '*Agapae*, those sacred meals which at first, among the primitive Christians, preceded the Eucharist, and afterwards succeeded it, and to which all, especially the richer, furnished their contributions.'—*Twice dead.* This is explained by the best commentators, doubly, i. e. altogether dead.

V. 14. On the question, whether Jude quotes here from the book called *Enoch's Prophecy*, commentators differ. Bloomf. thinks, he did, but Horne and Doddr. think he did not,—though the latter says, '*a precious fragment of antediluvian history is here preserved to us, as it seems by the special providence of God, who taught Jude to distinguish between what was genuine, and [what was] spurious in the tradition.*'—



15 To execute judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches <sup>k</sup> which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

16 These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18 How that they told you <sup>l</sup> there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These be they who separate <sup>m</sup> themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

20 But ye, beloved, building <sup>n</sup> up yourselves on your most holy faith, <sup>o</sup> praying in the Holy Ghost,

21 Keep <sup>p</sup> yourselves in the love of God, looking <sup>q</sup> for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

l Re. 20:13. m He. 10:25. p Ia. 15:9,10.  
k Ps. 73:9. n Col. 2:7. q Tit. 2:13.  
l Ti. 4:1. o Ep. 6:18.

the guilty shall be speechless, though at present they want not bold and specious pleas, which they vent with all assurance and confidence.

Observe, How often, here, v. 15. and how emphatically, the word *ungodly* is repeated; no less than four times! Godly or *ungodly*

This apocryphal book of Enoch, often quoted by the fathers, but supposed to be lost, was discovered, a few years since, in an Æthiopic Version, and edited, with a translation, by Ahp. Laurence, Oxford, 1821, who refers the composition to the time of Herod the Great. Ed.

V. 14, 15. 'It is observable, that Enoch, the first of all the prophets, prophesied of the last event that is the subject of prophecy. "The Lord cometh," &c.' Edwards. Id.

V. 15. 'Carry back your thoughts, fellow sinner, to the earliest period upon which your memory can fasten; let a solemn hour of meditation be occupied with the unnumbered mercies which you have received, at the hand of Providence; let another hour be devoted to a recall of those dangers, from which you have been rescued; let another be occupied in recounting the calls of God's Word, which have sounded in your ears,—the opportunities of grace and salvation, which you have enjoyed and abused; let all the warnings, promises, and threatenings of Jehovah, which you have slighted, come up together, in remembrance; and not even the deceitfulness, and the desperate depravity of the heart, can hide from you the solemn truth,—"Thou hast destroyed thyself."'  
Rev. G. T. BENELL.

V. 16. *Having men's persons in admiration.*] Deut. 10:17. 2 Kings 5:1. 2 Chr. 19:7. Sept.—It is the general term in the Sept. for 'respecting the persons of men.' SCOTT.

V. 17—19. 2 Pet. 3:1—4. These warnings and predictions related to those persons, who, at that time, separated from the apostolical churches, to form heretical sects: being 'sensual,' or *natural, unregenerate* men, who, not having the Spirit of God dwelling in them, as the Author and Preserver of divine life and holy affections, were entirely actuated by pride, ambition, avarice, malignant and licentious inclinations. (19) *Separate themselves.*] Luke 22:22. Acts 2:23. 10:42. 11:29. 17:23, 31. Rom. 1:4. Heb. 4:7. 'Singling and separating themselves from the church, and consequently making sects to themselves.' Leigh. *Sensual.*] A careful examination of the places, in which the Gr. word *suchikos* occurs, 1 Cor. 2:14. 15:44, 46. Jam. 3:15. will confirm the conclusion, that it signifies *natural, i. e. unregenerate*; without determining into what channel natural depravity was diverted by special circumstances. 1 Cor. 2:14—16. Jam. 3:15—16. It is absurd to suppose, that the apostle would class with these abominable heretics, all those professed Christians who had not the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit; and if that interpretation be set aside, as inadmissible, 'not having the Spirit' most mean being *unregenerate*, not having the Holy Spirit as a Sanctifier. Rom. 8:5—11.—It should be observed, that Jude, as well as Peter and John, appeals to the 'word of the apostles,' as the standard according to which all ought to be regulated: but this word of the apostles, can be found in their writings only. SCOTT.

(18, 20, 21.) 'To an attentive observer of the signs of the times, it will appear one of the most extraordinary phenomena of this eventful crisis, that, amid the ravages of atheism and infidelity, real religion is evidently on the increase. *The kingdom of God, we know, cometh not with observation*; but still there are not wanting manifest tokens of its approach. The personal appearance of the Son of God was an-

signifies little with men now-a-days, unless to scoff at and deride even the very expressions; but it is not so in the language of the Holy Ghost.

Observe, Omissions as well as commissions, must be accounted for in the day of judgment.

Observe, further, *Hard speeches* of one another, especially if ill-grounded, will most certainly come into account at the judgment of the great day. Let us all take care in time. 'If thou,' says one of our good old puritans, 'smite (a miscalled heretic, or) a schismatic, and God find a real saint bleeding, look thou to it, how thou wilt answer it.' *It may be too late to say before the angel, that it was an error*, Eccl. 5:6. I only here allude to that expression of the divinely inspired writer.

In v. 16. the apostle enlarges further on the character of these evil men and seducers; they are *murmurers, complainers, &c.*

Observe, A murmuring, complaining temper, indulged and expressed, lays men under a very ill character; such are very weak at least, and, for the most part, very wicked. Such *walk after their own lusts*, their will, their appetite, their fancy; they who please their sinful appetites, are most prone to yield to their ungodly passions.

Lastly, The apostle here gives exhortation to those to whom he wrote, which, with the doxology in the last two verses, concludes the epistle.

V. 17—25. V. 17. *But, beloved, remember, &c.* 'Remember, take heed, that ye think it not strange, that such people as the seducers before described and warned against should arise in the Christian Church, seeing all this was foretold by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. They who would persuade, must make it evident that they sincerely love those whom they would persuade.

2. The words of inspired persons, duly remembered and reflected on, are the best preservative against dangerous errors; this

will always be so, till men have learnt to speak better than God Himself.

3. We ought not to be stumbled, if errors and persecutions prevail in the Christian church; this was foretold, therefore we should not think worse of Christ's Person, doctrine, or cross, when we see it fulfilled. See 1 Tim. 4:1. and 2 Tim. 3:1. and 2 Pet. 3:3. We must not think it strange, but comfort ourselves with this, that Christ will make good his promise to his church, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*, Mat. 16:18.

4. The more religion is ridiculed and persecuted, the faster hold we should take and keep of it; being forewarned, we should show that we are forearmed; under such trials we should stand firm, and *not be soon shaken in mind*, 2 Thess. 2:2.

V. 19. *These are they who separate, &c.* Observe, 1. Sensualists are the worst separatists; *they separate themselves from God, and Christ, and his church, to the devil, the world, and the flesh, by their ungodly courses and vicious practices.* 2. *Sensual men have not the Spirit*, that is, of God and Christ, the Spirit of holiness, which, *whoever has not, is none of Christ's*, does not belong to Him, Rom. 8:9.

V. 20. *Building up, &c.* Observe, Having laid our foundation well in a sound faith, we must make further progress continually; and we should take care with what materials we carry on our building, 1 Cor. 3:12. *Praying in the Holy Ghost.* Observe,

1. Prayer is the nurse of faith; the way to *build up ourselves in our most holy faith*, is, *to continue instant in prayer*, Rom. 12:12.

2. Our prayers are then most likely to prevail, when we *pray in the Holy Ghost*, under his guidance and influence, according to the rule of his Word, with faith, fervency, and constant, persevering importunity; this is *praying in the Holy Ghost*.

V. 21. *Keep yourselves, &c.* 'Keep up the grace of love to God in its lively, vigor-

nounced by the shaking of nations; his spiritual kingdom, in all probability, will be established in the midst of similar convulsions and disorders. The blasphemous impiety of the enemies of God, as well as the zealous efforts of his sincere worshippers, will doubtless be overruled to accomplish the purposes of his unerring providence. While, in inflicting the chastisements of offended Deity on corrupt communities and nations, infidelity marks its progress by devastation and ruin, by the prostration of thrones and concessions of kingdoms; thus appalling the inhabitants of the world, and compelling them to take refuge in the church of God, the true sanctuary; the stream of divine knowledge, unobserved, is flowing in new channels, winding its course among humble valleys, refreshing thirsty deserts, and enriching, with far other and higher blessings than those of commerce, the most distant climes and nations, until, agreeably to the prediction of prophecy, *the knowledge of the Lord shall fill and cover the whole earth.*' Rev. ROB. HALL.

(19.) *Who separate themselves.*] 'God will not walk with any man who is so unlike Him as the retired monk; who, with all his prayers, will not give a cent, or put forth his hand, to save a world from death.' Dr. GRIFFIN.

V. 20, 21. The doctrine of faith is 'most holy' in its nature and tendency; leading men to repent, and hate all sin, to love and obey God, and to lead a sober, righteous, and godly life; by which it may be distinguished from all false doctrines. The *grace* of faith 'is most holy,' as it 'worketh by love,' 'purifieth the heart,' and 'overcometh the world,' by which it is distinguishable from a false and dead faith. Adhering, therefore, to the holy doctrine of the Gospel, by a living, obedient faith, Christians ought continually to be seeking an increase in knowledge of the truths of God, and in the experience of the power of them on their hearts, that they may be more and more established, in a realizing and efficacious belief of them, and in all those holy dispositions, and that obedient practice, which depend on it, as the superstructure rests upon the foundation. 1 Cor. 3:10—15. Eph. 2:19—22. Note, Gal. 5:1—6.—Certainly, 'praying in the Holy Ghost,' does not mean extemporaneous prayer, as distinguished from a liturgy; for both those who pray without a form, and those who read words previously put together, often come short of 'praying by the Holy Spirit.' But how is the whole of this most beautiful passage enervated, by explaining the words in question, of inspiration, or miraculous gifts! Whether with a written form, or without, no man can pray spiritually, except by the teaching and assistance of the Holy Spirit, exciting, in the mind and heart, holy desires, affections, and expectations; and this is wholly independent of miracles, and of inspiration, properly so called. All Christians are commanded to pray *in*, or 'by, the Holy Spirit'; but, for at least fifteen hundred years, no Christians have had the Spirit of miracles and inspiration. Have none, then, during this period, prayed according to the exhortation of the apostles and prophets? John 4:21—24. SCOTT.

(20.) 'No wonder God hears prayer, when it is the Holy Ghost that prays. What an awful place is the Christian's closet. The whole Trinity are about it every time he kneels. There is the Spirit praying to the Father, through the Son.' Dr. GRIFFIN.



22 And of some have compassion, making a difference :

23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire ; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

25 To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

r Zec. 3:2-5.      t Ro. 16:25-27.      v Col. 1:22.  
s Re. 3:4, 18.      u 2 Ti. 4:18.      w 1 Ti. 1:17.

ous actings and exercises in your souls.' Looking for the mercy, &c. *Eternal life* is to be looked for only through mercy ; not only through the mercy of God as our Creator, but through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, as Redeemer ; all who come to heaven, must come thither through our Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 4:12. compared with v. 10. A believing expectation of *eternal life* will arm us against the snares of sin, 2 Pet. 3:14. a lively faith of the *blessed hope* will help us to mortify our lusts.

V. 22, 23. *And of some have compassion, &c.* Observe, here, We ought to do all we can to rescue others out of the snare of the devil, that they may be saved from dangerous errors, or pernicious practices. We are not only, under God, our own keepers ; but every man ought to be, as much as in him lies, his brother's keeper ; none but a wicked Cain will contradict this, Gen. 4:9.

PRACT. OBS. When the servants of Christ address those, who 'are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called,' and for whom they pray, 'that mercy, peace, and love may be multiplied unto them,' they must not only instruct them, 'with all diligence,' in things pertaining to 'the common salvation,' but select such subjects as more especially suit the circumstances of the times, and tend to put them on their guard against prevailing delusions.—Whilst we 'contend earnestly' for the truths which relate to the Person and Salvation of Christ, we should guard with equal caution against every perversion of them : for, though the infidel or the Pharisee will as surely come short of salvation, as the Antinomian, yet he does not so immediately dishonor the Gospel, or in general do so much to set mankind against it. We ought, therefore, to remind the people, not to rest in any profession, knowledge, or experience, which does not bring the soul into subjection 'to the obedience of Christ ;' 2 Cor. 10:1-6. for nothing, but the renewal of our souls to the divine image, by the Holy Spirit, can secure us from being destroyed among the enemies of God. Whilst we are on our guard against 'filthy dreamers, who defile the flesh,' let us also stand aloof from those, whether moral or immoral in other respects, who revile their rulers. When we deem anything amiss in the conduct of our governors, and wish well to sober, and regular, and peaceable

V. 22-25. The latter [others who were more hardened and profane] they were directed 'to save with fear,' being cautious, lest by attempting their recovery, they should be themselves entangled.—*Garment spotted, &c.* It has been observed by some writers, that such ornamental or improper clothing, as serves to tempt others to sinful inclinations or practices, or is purchased with the wages of licentiousness, may very properly be called 'garments spotted with the flesh,' and, as such, however rich, elegant, or becoming, it ought to be detested and loathed, more than the meanest rags, by all those who would be thought Christians.—As the Lord Jesus alone will visibly appear at the day of judgment, to 'present his saints' unto Himself, it has been thought by some expositors, that this doxology was addressed personally to Him. (*Marg. Ref.*) But others suppose, that the apostle had the 'One true and living God' in his mind, without exclusive respect to any of the Persons in the sacred Trinity : as 'God is become our Savior,' in Jesus Christ, and the *glory* 'of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' in the salvation of believers, will be displayed at the day of judgment : though Christ alone will visibly and personally, appear to judge the world. 1 Tim. 1:17. Rev. 5:9-14. 7:9-12. Seorr.

(22, 23.) *Pulling out of fire.* 'When asked, "How it came to pass that the clergy, who spoke of things real, affected the people so little,

This must be done with *compassion, making a difference.* How is that ? We must distinguish between the weak and the wilful.

1. *Of some, we must have compassion ;* treat them with all tenderness, *restore them in the spirit of meekness ;* if God has forgiven them, why should not we ? We infinitely more need his forgiveness than they do, or can do, ours ; though perhaps neither they nor we are justly or sufficiently sensible of this.

2. *Others save with fear ;* urging on them the terrors of the Lord ; 'Endeavor to frighten them out of their sins ; preach hell and damnation to them.'

But what if prudence and caution in administering even the most just and severe reproofs, be what are primarily and chiefly here intimated ; (I do but offer it for consideration ; ) as if he had said, 'Fear, lest you frustrate your own good intentions and honest designs by rash and imprudent management ; that you do not harden, instead of reclaiming, even where greater degrees of severity are requisite, than in the immediately foregoing instance.'

*Hating even the garment, &c.* that is, keeping yourselves at the utmost distance from what is or appears evil, and designing and endeavoring that others may do so too ; avoid all that leads to sin, or that looks like sin, 1 Thess. 5:22.

Lastly, The apostle concludes this epistle with solemn ascription of glory to the great God. Note, Whatever is the subject or argument we have been treating of, ascribing glory to God is fittest for us to conclude with, v. 24, 25.

Note, further, God is able, and as willing as able, to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory ; not as those who have never been faulty, but

as those whose faults shall not be imputed, to their ruin, which, but for God's mercy and a Savior's merits, they might most justly have been.

*Before the presence of his glory.* Observe, 1. The glory of the Lord will shortly be present ; *every eye shall see Him*, Rev. 1:7. This is now the object of our faith, but hereafter, (and surely it cannot now be long,) it will be the object of our sense ; whom we now believe in, Him we shall shortly see, to our unspeakable joy and comfort, or inexpressible terror and consternation. See 1 Pet. 1:8.

Observe, 2. All real, sincere believers shall be presented, at the Lord Redeemer's appearance and coming, by Him their glorious Head, to the Father, in order to his approbation, acceptance, and reward ; they were given Him of the Father, and of all that were so given Him, He has lost none, nor will lose any one, not a single soul, but will present them all perfectly holy and happy, when He shall surrender his mediatorial kingdom to his God, and our God ; his Father, and our Father, John 6:39. with ch. 17:12. 1 Cor. 15:24.

Observe, 3. When believers shall be presented faultless, it will be with exceeding joy. Alas ! now our faults fill us with fears, doubts, and sorrows ; but be of good cheer ; if we are sincere, we shall be, our dear Redeemer has undertaken for it, we shall be presented faultless ; where there is no sin, there will be no sorrow ; where there is the perfection of holiness, there will be the perfection of joy. Surely, the God who can and will do all this, is worthy to have *glory, majesty, dominion, and power*, ascribed to Him, both now and for ever !—And to this we may well, with the apostle, affix our hearty Amen.

plans of securing liberty, and redressing grievances, let us by no means lose sight of 'the meekness of wisdom,' but leave every matter to the Lord in the use of proper means. Nay, even if oppressed and persecuted, we should, without 'rendering evil for evil,' 'commit ourselves to Him that judgeth righteously.'—The way of Cain, of Balaam, and of Korah, has, in every age and place, been frequented : and enmity against God, concurring with avarice, ambition, and sensuality, drives men headlong in similar courses to their own destruction. The 'men of God,' from the beginning of the world, have declared the doom, which will be denounced on all such persons, when Christ shall come 'with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment on all the ungodly,' for all their wicked works, and for all the impious words, which they have spoken against Him, by reviling his truths, servants, providential appointments, righteous decrees, and holy commandments. We should therefore avoid those 'murmurers and complainers, who walk after their ungodly lusts,' and want a religion to suit such a course of life ; and we ought to disregard their 'great swelling words of vanity ;' whilst we mark, how they have 'men's persons in admiration' for their own secular advantage ; especially such as are rich, and can afford to purchase, at a high rate, flattery, authority, and influence in the visible church. Seorr.

and the players, who spoke of things barely imaginary, affected them so much," one said, "My lord, I can assign but one reason ; we players speak of things imaginary, as though they were real, and too many of the clergy speak of things real as though they were imaginary." Thus it was in his, and all know it to be too much the case, in our time. Hence it is, that even on our most important occasions, the worthy gentlemen concerned in our public churches, generally find themselves more obliged to musicians than the preachers. *Whitfield's* maxim was, "to preach, as Apelles painted, for eternity."—He was first struck with this maxim, at the table of Abp. Boulter, in Ireland, where the great Dr. Delany said to him, "I wish, whenever I go up into a pulpit, to look upon it as the last time I shall ever preach, or the last time the people may hear." He never forgot this. He often said, "Would ministers preach for eternity, they would then net the part of true Christian orators, and not only calmly and coolly inform the understanding, but, by persuasive, pathetic address, endeavor to move the affections, and warm the heart. To act otherwise, bespeaks sad ignorance of human nature, and such an inexcusable indolence, and indifference in the preacher, as must constrain the hearers to suspect, whether they will or not, that the preacher, let him be who he will, only deals in the false commerce of unfeeling truth." *Phillip's Life and Times of Whitfield.*

#### MARRIAGE. 1 Pet. 3:7.

*Giving honor.* See Wayland's Elts. Mor. Sci. in 'Law of Marriage.' *Heirs together of the grace of life.* 'Virtue in the present life, perhaps, never reaps so large and exquisite a reward, as when it goes to enhance the pleasures of love. None but the virtuous have power to admit more than a transient, passionate, capricious joy ;—a joy that alights upon an hour ; and is gone in search of other sweets. But souls fraught with goodness find, that every noble sentiment, every high principle, every generous energy, every grace, every softness, and every sparkling

adornment of mind or person, when it meets its corresponding sentiment, and principle, and purpose, and grace, and beauty, in the being beloved, becomes a power inculcably productive ; so that every pleasure creates and re-creates itself, a thousand times, and without end.—If the beneficence of the Supreme is seen, suffusively shedding its glories over the ample fields of the material world, and is mildly reflected from myriads of points through earth and air, are not its benms brought to an intensity upon that circle, wherein virtuous love takes its bliss ?—*Temple of Melekartha.* Ed.



# AN EXPOSITION OF THE REVELATION OF JOHN, THE DIVINE, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES.

(Henry's Exposition, completed by Mr. William Tong.)

It ought to be no prejudice to the credit and authority of this book, that it has been rejected by men of corrupt minds, such as Cerdon and Marcion, and doubted of by men of a better character; for that has been the lot of other parts of holy writ, and of the divine Author of the Scripture Himself.\* The image and superscription of this book are truly sacred and Divine, and the matter of it agreeable with other prophetic books, particularly Ezekiel [which it exceedingly resembles, says Lightfoot, in method and things spoken] and Daniel [in that, says Lightfoot, it repeats the same history, in varied and enlarged expressions]; the church of God has generally received it,† and found good counsel and great comfort in it.

From the beginning, the church of God has been blessed with prophecy; that glorious prediction of breaking the serpent's head, was the stay and support of the patriarchal age; and the many prophecies of the Messiah to come, were the Gospel of the Old Test. Christ Himself prophesied of the destruction of Jerusalem; and about the time in which that was accomplished, He intrusted the apostle John with this book of revelation, to deliver it to the church, as a prediction of the most important events that should happen to it, to the end of time, for the support of the faith of his people, and the direction of their hope. It is called the *Revelation*, because God therein discovers those things which could never have been sifted out by the reasonings of human understanding; those deep things of God, which no man knows, but the Spirit of God, and those to whom He reveals them. HENRY.

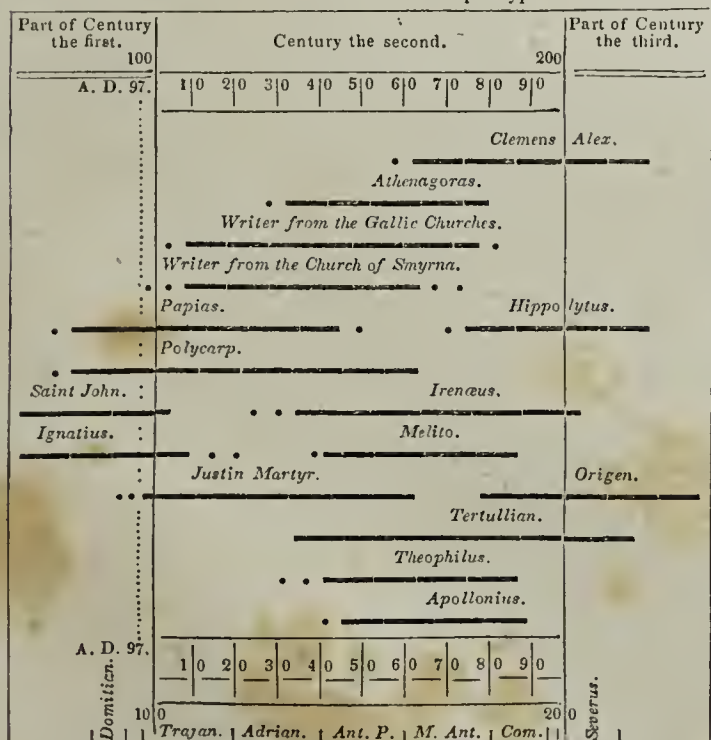
It is a singular circumstance, concerning this book, that its authenticity was very generally, if not universally acknowledged, during the first two centuries; and yet, in the third century, it began to be questioned! This seems to have arisen from some absurd opinions concerning the millennium, which were grounded on it by those who maintained them: and therefore their opponents injudiciously and presumptuously endeavored to discredit their tenets, by denying the authority of the book itself. But it was then too late for the success of such an attempt; and its divine original and authority have been fully established by the clearest, and most decisive evidence.—Indeed, the prophecies contained in it have, in so many undeniable instances, been most circumstantially accomplished through a long series of ages, that it stands as little in need of external evidence, as any book in the whole Scripture.

No doubt it was written by John, the apostle, to whose name the title of 'The Divine,' or the Theologian, (*Theologos*), was added, some time after; either because of the deep and mysterious truths with which his writings abound; or because he spoke so much concerning the divine Person and glory of the Lord Jesus. (*Theos Logos*).—The book is styled, 'The Apocalypse,' or 'The Revelation;' consisting of matters chiefly prophetic, which were immediately revealed to John, from Jesus Christ. This took place when he was in the isle of Patmos, in the Ægean Sea, whither he was banished, as is generally thought, by the emperor Domitian, A. D. 94, or 95, [96, or 97.] Some, indeed, maintain, that this happened much earlier, even during the persecution of Nero, A. D. 67 or 68, or even before that time: but the arguments adduced in support of this opinion are by no means conclusive: and, as it stands last in the sacred canon, so it seems to have been written last, and to have been intended to occupy that place. (Notes, 6: 1, 2. 22: 18—21.)

The Revelation opens with the apostle's account of an extraordinary vision he had of the Lord Jesus, appearing to him in glory. Then follow seven short epistles, from Christ Himself, to the seven principal churches in Asia: ‡ *Acts* 19: 8—12. and after them it

\* 'Of the authenticity of the Book of the Revelation there can be no doubt. Yet in the third century it began to be questioned, which seems to have arisen from some notions respecting the millennium, which a few well-meaning, but fanciful expositors of that day endeavored to support from this book. No one can peruse the Revelation without being forcibly struck by the peculiar sublimity of its composition, so superior to any other writings, that it could have been written only by a man divinely inspired. It is likewise so suitable as a continuation of the prophecies of Daniel, that the N. T. dispensation would have appeared incomplete without this prophetic book; for it has been the uniform plan of the Divine proceedings, to give a more distinct view of interesting future events, as the time of their accomplishment approaches. A succession of living prophets not having been continued to the church, by this book a succession of prophecy is continued, always speaking to us, especially by the vastly enlarged circulation of the SS, since the discovery of the art of printing, and speaking by a witness, whose testimony as to future events cannot be called in question, since so many have already occurred to verify parts of the predictions it contains.' HENRY, *abr.*

A Biographical Chart of Writers in the early Christian Church, who appear to have afforded evidence in favor of the Apocalypse.



The dotted line marks the year 97, when the Apocalypse was published. The lines under each name show the years when the writers lived, to be measured upon the scale below. When the birth or death of a writer is uncertain, that uncertainty is expressed by dots, before or after the line. Woodhouse.

† 'The external evidences for the genuineness of the book, are clearly stated by T. H. Horne, from the testimony of the earliest Christian writers; which are so strong as fully to satisfy any candid mind, that it is to be received as Divine Scripture, communicated to the church by John the evangelist.' [See table, from Woodhouse, opposite.]

‡ In the words of Woodhouse, "We may see its rise, as of a pure fountain, from the sacred rock of the apostolic church. We may trace it through the first century of its passage, flowing from one fair field to another, identified through them all, and everywhere the same. As it proceeded lower, we see many attempts to obscure its sacred origin, to arrest or divert its course, or lose it in the sands of antiquity, or bury it in the rubbish of the dark ages. We see these attempts repeated in our own times, and by dexterous adversaries, but it has at length arrived to us, such as it flowed forth at the beginning."

The internal evidence is equally indisputable. T. H. Horne reduces it to three points, which he states as follows, entering fully into the details. 1. The Apocalypse corresponds in doctrine and imagery with other books of divine authority. 2. The sublimity of the ideas and imagery is another striking, internal evidence of the genuineness and divine origin of the Apocalypse. 3. The style of the Apocalypse coincides with that of the undisputed writings of St. John. HENRY, *abr.*

‡ As the pictures of the present state of the more or less ruined towns of Asia, where the '7 churches' were situated, face this page, comparative descriptions of the ascertained sites of those interesting towns are here given (from Henry, *abr.*), to be compared with the engraved views.

### The Present State of the Seven Churches.

*Ephesus*, in the time of the Romans, was the metropolis of proconsular Asia. This celebrated city, the vast remains of which give a high idea of its former beauty, extent, and magnificence, is situated in that part of Asia anciently called Ionia, (but now Natolia,) about 5 miles from the Ægean sea, on the sides and at the foot of a range of mountains, overlooking a fine plain, watered and fertilized by the river Cayster. Ephesus was particularly celebrated for the temple of Diana, a most magnificent edifice, erected at the common expense of the inhabitants of Asia Proper, and reputed one of the seven wonders of the world: but the very site of this magnificent and celebrated edifice is now undetermined, though some stupendous columns in the large mosque, there is reason to believe, once graced that structure. Widely scattered and noble ruins attest the splendor of the theatre, mentioned in Acts 19:31. built on mount Prion. The loud shouts of the immense multitude, reverberated from the neighboring mount Corissus, would augment the uproar occasioned by the populace rushing into the theatre. Just below it, is the public place where the law proceedings were going forward, to which the town clerk referred Demetrius and his companions. In the time of Paul, this city abounded with orators and philosophers; and its inhabitants, in their Gentile state, were celebrated for their idolatry and skill in magic, as well as for their luxury and licentiousness. The present state of Ephesus affords a striking illustration of the accomplishment of prophecy. After a protracted struggle with the sword of Rome, and the sophisms of the Gnostics, Ephesus at last gave way. The beginnings of indifference, censured by the warning voice of the prophet, increased to a total forgetfulness; till at length the threatenings of the Apocalypse were fulfilled, and Ephesus sunk with the general overthrow of the Greek empire, in the 14th century. Ephesus is now in a state of almost total ruin; innumerable inscriptions are lying about in disorder and neglect, or built into the Turkish structures. The plough has passed over the city; and in March, 1826, green corn was growing, in all directions, amidst the forsaken ruins; and one solitary Greek only was found, who bore the Christian name, instead of its once flourishing church. Where once assembled thousands exclaimed, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," now the eagle yells, and the jackal moans. As for the stork, the ruins of Ephesus are her house. This bird is seen perching in all directions upon the summits of the buildings, or hovering round them in the air, or fixing its immense nest, like the capital of a column, on the large masses of ruins.

*Smyrna*, a city of Asia Minor, is situated about 40 miles to the N. of Ephesus. It is still celebrated for the number, wealth, and commerce of the inhabitants. Its population is estimated at about 75,000 inhabitants; 45,000 are Turks, 15,000 Greeks, 8,000 Armenians, 3,000 Jews, and less than 1,000 Europeans. There are more than 20 mosques in Smyrna, and 3 Greek churches, and the Jews have several synagogues. The angel of the church of Smyrna, addressed in the 2d apocalyptic epistle, is supposed to have been Polycarp, the disciple of John, by whom he was appointed bishop of Smyrna. As he afterwards suffered much, being burnt alive at Smyrna, A. D. 166, the exhortation in Rev. 2:10. would be peculiarly calculated to support and encourage



## REVELATION. — INTRODUCTION.

contains a series of prophecies, chiefly emblematical, relating to events which would take place, in the church, and the nations of the earth, through all the subsequent generations of mankind, to the end of the world, the day of judgment, and the eternal state.\* This series is sometimes interrupted by explanatory digressions, which will be noted as we proceed: such predictions as are supposed by the author to be already fulfilled, will be compendiously stated, with the events to which they relate, according to the judgment of the most approved writers: and an endeavor will be thus far made, to render the great outlines of the book as plain as possible to the unlearned reader, whose edification must principally be considered. But in respect of those things, which seem not to be yet fulfilled, a judgment must be formed, and an opinion ventured, with very great caution, and in a very general manner. Many, indeed, have objected to every attempt to explain a book, so extremely abstruse, and, as they think, unintelligible; nay, some professed Christians, and ministers of the Gospel, have even derided these endeavors.† No doubt, many have affected to be 'wise above what is written,' and have applied general prophecies, by a 'private interpretation,' in a very unwarrantable manner: (*Note, 2 Pet. 1: 20, 21.*) and this should teach others modesty, reverence, and a simple dependence on the teaching of the Holy Spirit, in all their inquiries, whatever helps or advantages they may possess for such investigations. But, if we are enabled to study, write, and read, in this manner, there can be no doubt, that we shall derive most abundant, practical instruction, and obtain increasing vigor to our faith and holy affections, by attending carefully to every part of this most surprising discovery of the Lord's purposes, respecting his church and the world, which was made so many ages before the period of their accomplishment.

They who censure and dissuade the study of it, do it, for the most part, because they have not studied it themselves; and imagine the difficulties to be greater than they are in reality. It is still "the sure word of prophecy;" and men of learning and leisure cannot better employ their time and abilities, than in studying and explaining this book, provided they do it, as Lord Bacon adviseth, *with*

him. Smyrna will ever interest the real Christian. On the firmness of the early martyrs depended, under Divine Providence, the transmission of the truth to the latest generations.

*Pergamos* was the ancient metropolis of Mysia, and the residence of the Attalian kings: it still preserves many vestiges of ancient magnificence. Against the church at Pergamos, was adduced the charge of instability, Rev. 2:14, 15, but to its feeble faith was promised the all-powerful protection of God. The errors of Balaam and the Nicolaitans have been purged away. Pergamos has been preserved from the destroyer; and 3,000 Christians (out of a population of about 15,000 inhabitants) now cherish the rites of their religion in the same spot where it was planted by the hands of Paul, though, alas! their religion has little in common with the faith taught by the apostle, but the name and profession. Of these Christians, about 200 belong to the Armenian communion; the remainder are members of the Greek church. They have each one church, but the other churches of Pergamos have been converted into mosques, and are profaned with the blasphemies of the false prophet, Mohammed. There are about 100 Jews, who have a synagogue. Pergamos, or Bergamo, as it is now called, is about 64 miles N. of Smyrna.

*Thyatira* is a considerable city in the road from Pergamos to Sardis, about 48 miles eastward of the former. It is called by the Turks, Akhisar, and is embosomed in cypresses and poplars; it is now, as anciently it was, celebrated for dyeing, and large quantities of cloths, dyed scarlet, are sent weekly to Smyrna. In 1826, the population was estimated at 300 Greek houses, 30 Armenian, and 1,000 Turkish. The two former have churches. The streets are narrow and dirty.

*Sardis*, the metropolis of the region of Lydia, in Asia Minor, is situated near mount Tmolus, between 30 and 40 miles E. from Smyrna. It was celebrated for great opulence, and for the voluptuous and debauched manners of its inhabitants. Considerable ruins still attest the ancient splendor of this once celebrated capital of Croesus and the Lydian kings, which is now reduced to a wretched village, called Sart, consisting of a few mud huts, inhabited by Turkish heidsmen. A great portion of the grounds once occupied by this imperial city, is now a smooth, grassy plain, browsed over by the sheep of the peasants, or trodden by the camels of the caravan, and only a few disjointed pillars, and the crumbling rock of the Acropolis, remain to point out the site of its glory. The ruins are more entirely gone to decay than in most of the ancient cities in those parts. No Christians reside on the spot: two Greek servants of a Turkish miller, in 1826, were the only representatives of the church at Sardis; the present state of which affords a striking illustration of the accomplishment of the prophetic denunciation against the church in that city.—A name to live, while dead.

*Philadelphia* is situated about 27 miles S. E. of Sardis, on a rising ground, beneath the snowy mount, Tmolus. The houses are embosomed in trees, which gives a pleasing effect to the scene. Not long before the date of the apocalyptic epistle, this city had suffered so much from earthquakes, that it had been in a great measure deserted by its inhabitants; which may in some degree account for the poverty of this church, as described in this epistle. Philadelphia appears to have resisted the attacks of the Turks in 1312, with more success than the other cities. At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperor, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant citizens defended their religion and freedom above fourscore years, and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans, Bajazet, in 1390. In these words Gibbon, the skeptical historian, bears a testimony, perhaps unconsciously, to the truth of Scripture: he states, that "among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect; a column, a pillar, in a scene of ruins." Whatever may be lost of the spirit of Christianity, there is still the form of a Christian church in this city, which is now called "Allah Shelah," or the "City of God." It contains about 1,000 Christians, chiefly Greeks, most of whom speak only the Turkish language. They have 25 places of public worship, 5 of which are large and regular churches, with a resident bishop and inferior clergy. In 20 others of a smaller description, the Greek liturgy is read once a year. The lamp still exists, but where is its oil? When the very epistle to their own church is read, they understand it not! The remains of antiquity here are not numerous.

*Laodicea* is about 42 miles to the S. of Ephesus. This city was often damaged by earthquakes, and restored, either by the opulence of its inhabitants, or by the munificence of the Roman emperors. From the researches of modern travellers, it appears to have been seated on a volcanic hill, of moderate height, but of considerable extent. Its ruins attest that it was large, opulent, and splendid; and there are still to be seen the remains of an amphitheatre, an aqueduct, and many other buildings. In the primitive time of Christianity, as appears from Paul's epistle to the Colossians, in which the Laodiceans are twice mentioned, this place possessed a flourishing church. But the doom of Laodicea seems to have been more severe and terrible than that of the other 6 apocalyptic churches, as its state was more degraded; and its present condition is in striking conformity with the rebukes and threatenings of God. Not a single Christian resides at Laodicea! Not even a Turk has a fixed residence on the spot. A fox, discovered by its ears peeping over a brow, was the only inhabitant seen by Chandler. It is even more solitary than Ephesus: the latter has a prospect of a rolling sea, or a whitening sail, to enliven its decay; the former sits in widowed loneliness. Its temples are desolate; the stately edifices of ancient Laodicea are now peopled only by wolves and jackals. The prayers of the Moslem are the only prayers heard near the still splendid ruins of the city, on which the prophetic denunciation seems to have been fully executed in its utter rejection as a church. "Its crime was pride; its punishment, desolation. Infidelity itself must confess, that the menace of the Scriptures has been executed and accomplished; it now stands rejected of God, and deserted of men; its glory a ruin, its name a reproach." — From *Hortley, Arundell, Emerson, and T. H. Horne.*

\* The book consists of two principal divisions.

I. Relates to "the things which are," that is, the then state of the church, and contains the epistle of John to the 7 churches, and his account of the appearance of the Lord Jesus, and his direction to the apostle to write what he beheld, ch. 1:9—20. Also the addresses or epistles to 7 churches of Lydian or Proconsular Asia. These doubtless had reference to the state of the respective churches, as they then existed, but contain excellent precepts and exhortations, commendations and reproofs, promises and threatenings, which are calculated to instruct the Christian church at all times.

II. Contains a prophecy of "the things which shall be hereafter," and describes the future state of the church from the time when the apostle beheld the apocalyptic visions. *Fraser* thus expresses the arrangement recommended by *Vitringa*, and now generally adopted. The series of events is carried on in the Apocalypse, by 7 seals opened in their order, 7 trumpets sounded in their order, and 7 vials poured out in their order. The 7 trumpets are the evolution of the 7th seal, the 7 vials are the evolution of the 7th trumpet. The 7th vial introduces the millennium, from which period the aspect of the church and the world is uniform

until the day of judgment, except a short interruption at the close of the millennium.

This prophecy may be arranged under the following sections:—

1. The representation of the divine glory, ch. 4.
  2. The sealed book, and the Lamb that opens it, ch. 5.
  3. The opening of the first 6 seals, ch. 6.
  4. The sealing of the 144,000, and the presentation of the palm-bearing multitude before the throne, ch. 7.
  5. The opening of the 7th seal, and the first 6 trumpets, and the prophetic commission to John, ch. 8. and 9. including also the vision of the open little book, with the measuring of the temple, and the two witnesses, ch. 10. and 11:1—14.
  6. The sounding of the 7th trumpet; the vision of the woman persecuted by the dragon, and of the wild beasts from the sea and the land, ch. 11:15—19. ch. 12. and 13.
  7. The vision of the Lamb and 144,000 elect on mount Zion, and the proclamations or warnings, ch. 14.
  8. The 7 vials; the harlot of Babylon and her fall, ch. 15: to ch. 19:10.
  9. The great conflict, the millennium, the conflict renewed, the judgment, and the new creation, ch. 19:11—21. and ch. 20.
  10. Description of the new Jerusalem, ch. 21. 22:1—5. The conclusion, ch. 22:6—21.
- The 2d portion of the Apocalypse, according to *Mede*, is the prophecy of Daniel, expanded and opened into detail, the great topics being the same, and the termination exactly identical.

HENRY, *abr.*

† Respecting the scope and design of this book, the variety of opinions is almost incredible. No two commentators agree in the interpretation of it, every one forming in some respects a different hypothesis, while no entire exposition has yet been offered, in which the cool and cautious inquirer will altogether acquiesce. *Holden*.—But this book represents to us, as in a small but exact map, the steadiness and exactness of Providence, and Christ's government of the world. For here we see the various and seemingly confused events of Providence so exactly methodized, as to make up one uniform and noble piece. Here piety and wickedness, angels and devils, the church and antichrist, act various and contrary parts; and yet Christ makes use of all for noble purposes, and carries all on for one great end. *Fleming*.

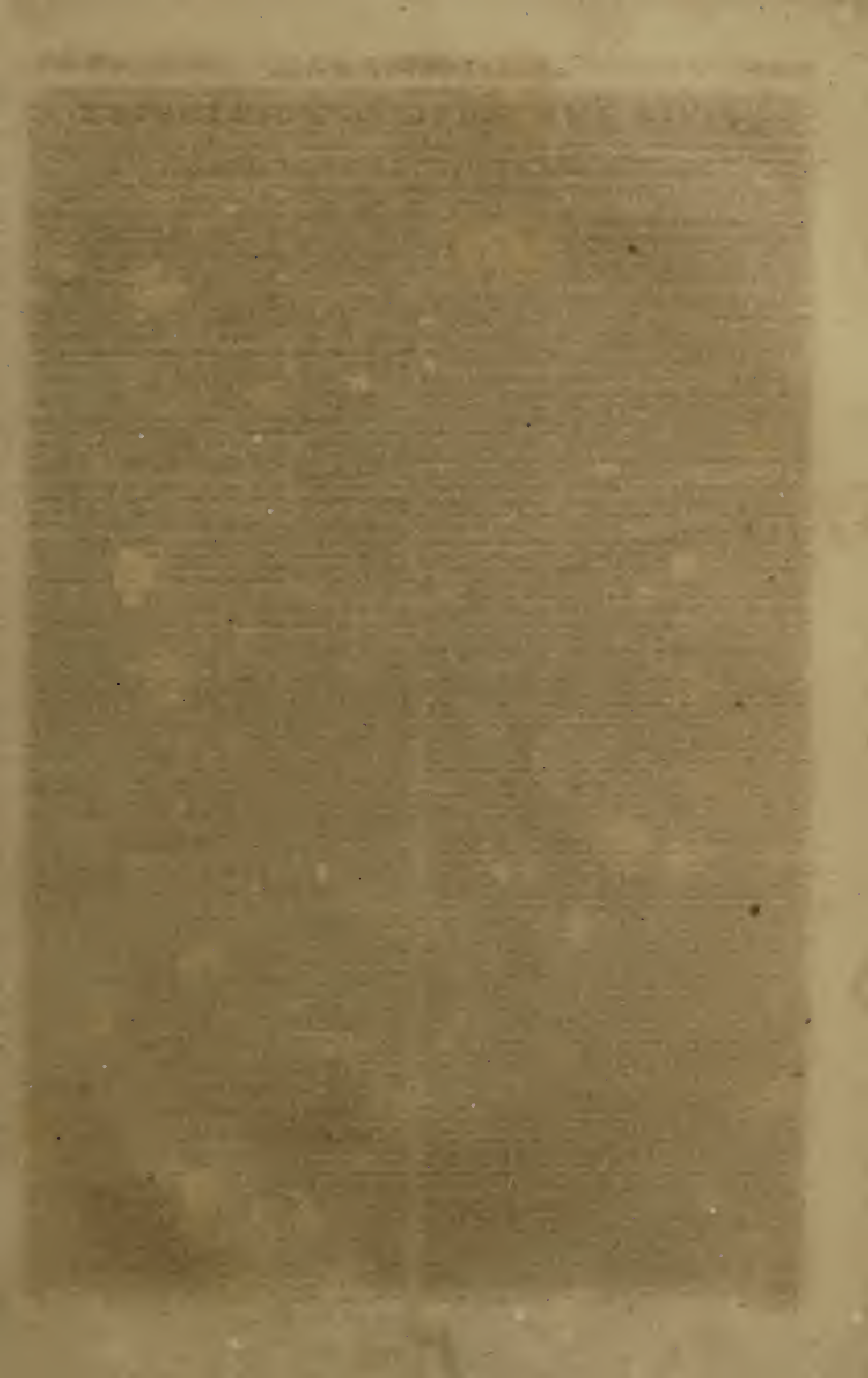
No book has been more commented upon, or has given rise to a greater variety of interpretations, and it has ever been accounted the most difficult portion of the N. T. The figurative language in which the visions are delivered; the variety of symbols under which the events are signified; the extent of the prophetic information, which appears to include all ages of the Christian church, afford little hope of its perfect elucidation, till a further process of time shall have ripened more of the events foretold in it. *T. H. Horne*.

It was wise and proper, by a prophesy in the Christian church, to support the minds of good men under afflictions, with assurances of Christ's second coming, and of the watchful providence of God over the cause of true religion in the mean time. Thus the prophecies of this book are of the like use to the Christian church, that the prophecies of Christ's first appearance were to the ancient church,—and the obscurity of this book is not so much owing to anything in the book itself, as to the methods taken by several to explain it; and nothing has really so much darkened it, as the common attempts made to interpret it. *Lowman*.

Although many parts of the Apocalypse are thus obscure, yet enough is clear to convey to us the most important religious instruction. This book is to us, what the prophecies of the O. T. were to the Jews. No prophecies in the Revelation can be more clouded with obscurity, than that a child should be born of a virgin, that a mortal should not see corruption, that a person despised and numbered among malefactors should be established for ever on the throne of David. Yet still the pious Jew preserved his faith entire amongst all these wonderful, and, in appearance, contradictory intimations. He looked into the holy books in which they were contained, with reverence; and with patient expectation "waited for the consolation of Israel." We, in the same manner, look up to the prophecies of the Apocalypse, for the full consummation of the great scheme of the Gospel; when Christianity shall finally prevail over all the corruptions of the world, and be universally established in its utmost purity. *Gilpin*. Any impartial reader, if he has been a doubting Christian, must gain an assurance; or, if atheistically inclined, a conviction, that it was impossible, without a divine prophetic Spirit, to foretell some of the things that have come to pass. *Wall*.

It is much to be regretted, that commentators on this book have usually gone into extremes; that they either have attempted to apply all the various symbolical representations, and to interpret them according to some preconceived system, or else they have wholly shrunk from the work, and, hastily concluding that all which has been written is conjecture, have assumed merit to themselves for refusing to indulge in a similar course. Thus *Calvin* and *A. Clarke* declined to comment upon this book. Would it not have been preferable, to confine themselves to noticing the general bearing of these symbols, according to their usual meaning in Scripture, and then to proceed to the application only of those which appear most clearly developed by the lapse of time? HENRY, *abr.*









Beyroot, Station of Syrian Mission.



Joppa.



Gaza.



Larneca, Mission Station, ancient Kitum, in Cyprus.



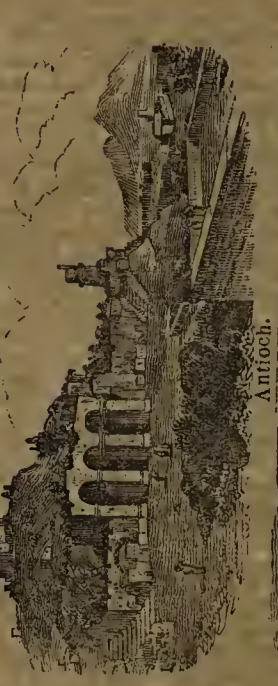
Troas, Gymnasium.



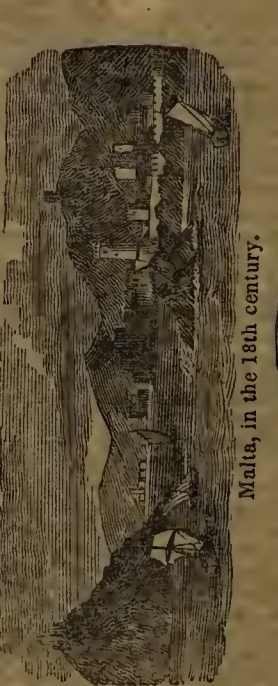
Philadelphia.



Patmos, and Convent of St. John.



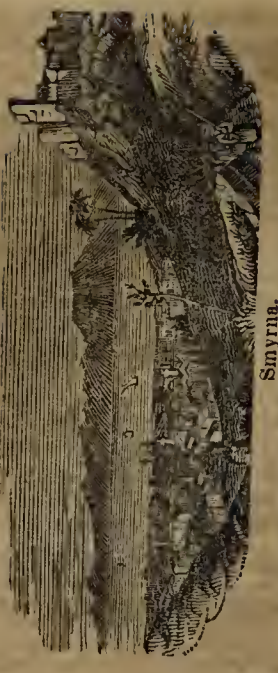
Antioch.



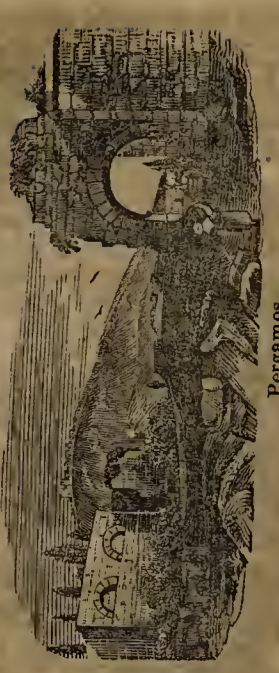
Malta, in the 18th century.



Samaria.



Smyrna.



Pergamos.



Thyatira.



Sardis.



Laodicea.

Prof. to Rev.



*great wisdom, sobriety, and reverence.*—The folly of interpreters has been, as Sir Isaac Newton observes, to foretell times and things by this prophecy, as if God designed to make them prophets. By this rashness, they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the prophecy, also, into contempt. The design of God was much otherwise. He gave this, and the prophecies of the O. T., not to gratify men's curiosities, by enabling them to foreknow things; but that, after they were fulfilled, they might be interpreted by the event; and his own providence, (or foresight,) 'not the interpreter's, might be manifest thereby to the world.\* Bp. Newton. It is worthy of notice, in respect of the Revelation, that the views given in it of God and heavenly things, of the kingdom of providence and grace, of the Redeemer's glory, the happiness and character of his people, with the wickedness and the ruin of his enemies, are set forth in so striking and peculiar a manner, that even those who do not at all understand the prophetic meaning, are uniformly interested and edified by reading it, in proportion to the degree of their humility, faith, and piety.

In the notes to Revelation, the Ed. must confine himself, generally, to a statement of the views of the last English and American writers on the book, in addition to those of Henry and Scott; and, to avoid confusion, other views, partly in a tabular form, will be given at the end of Revelation. A list of some works upon Revelation will be seen in the note below;† and the length of it will prove the necessity of the course adopted.

As to the style of Revelation, it is very prophetic and hebraizing. Exceeding much of the old prophets' language and matter is adduced, to intimate new histories, and exceeding much of the Jews' language and allusion to their customs and opinions, thereby to speak the things better to be understood.—Lightfoot. Its writer employs Hebrew phrases, and often has Jewish customs and observances in his mind, even in passages where it may be but little suspected.—Tulloch.

A principal aim [we should keep in view in reading the book] too often is forgotten, in the longest and most elaborate treatises on it, namely, the design and object, for which, assuredly, it has been given to the Christian church; that, like the other books of Scripture, it is intended for our spiritual improvement,—to warn the careless sinner, point out the way of salvation to the awakened inquirer, build up the weak believer, comfort the afflicted and tempted Christian, and, we may especially add, to strengthen the martyr of Christ under the cruel persecutions and sufferings inflicted by Satan and his followers.

\* It should, however, be admitted, that to give the attentive and pious reader a general assurance of the final and most glorious victory, which the cause of God, of truth and righteousness, shall certainly acquire even on earth, for his encouragement, during the triumphs of superstition, idolatry, heresy, infidelity, and wickedness, which on every side have hitherto been witnessed, or reported from all quarters, was one most important end for which this revelation was given.—But when even the most learned and respectable men attempt, with particularity and exactness, to explain those predictions which are not evidently fulfilled; it commonly happens, that others oppose their interpretation by some counter scheme, supported also by plausible arguments. And while several are thus engaged, each in defending his own conclusions against those who combat them, the readers in general are perplexed, instead of being convinced; the difference between that part which is fulfilled, and may clearly be explained, and the unaccomplished predictions, seems to disappear; the evidence, arising from the fulfilment of prophecy, as demonstrating the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, fails of producing its full effect; and not unfrequently, the whole is laid aside, as uncertain or inexplicable, seeing the most learned writers advance such discordant opinions on the subject. In most other controverted topics, truth is generally supposed to lie on one side or the other, or to be divided between the disputants; but in this particular, the debates often produce a kind of *skepticism* in the minds of very many readers; so that they are led to doubt about the whole and every part of it. In order to avoid this, great care should be taken, to mark *strongly* the difference between what is fulfilled, and what is not fulfilled; and to draw the line between these, as *exactly* as may be; that the uncertainty, as to the grand outlines, may not appear to attach to those parts, which have already received their accomplishment, but be wholly confined to the other part.—In respect of those predictions, especially, which are supposed to be fulfilling in the eventful period during which we live, peculiar caution is necessary; for an unexpected turn in the affairs of nations may, after a very few years, confute some of the most plausible and confident assumptions of the expositors; and weaken the credibility, in the minds of men, even of those interpretations which are well founded. In fact, I apprehend this has been, in many instances, strikingly verified since these remarks were first written. It does not, indeed, appear probable, that the prophecies, fulfilling in any age, should be clearly understood by the contemporaries; any more than that impartial histories should be written by men, of *their own* times. The events, in which our interests, and those of the country or party to which we belong, are deeply concerned, must have such an effect on our minds, as to deduct from that cool and impartial judgment, which is absolutely requisite in inquiries of this nature. It cannot so soon be known, how the successes and advancement of some, and the subversion of other powers, may terminate; and, till that be known, the application of the transactions of our own age to the events predicted in Scripture, must be attended with a great degree of uncertainty. Our *nearness* to the objects, likewise, tends to magnify them to us; and we are apt too readily to conclude, that such important transactions must have a *prominent* place in prophecy. But, I apprehend, that prophecy (especially that contained in this book) resembles a map of the world, on a small scale; in which only countries, and capital cities, and some

very remarkable places, are noticed; so that they, who dwell near considerable cities and large towns, are disappointed at not finding them in the map. Thus the events of a century, through whole continents, being foretold in a few verses, or at most in a single short ch. we certainly shall look in vain for many transactions, which appear to us of very great importance. But those who shall come after us, on reviewing the history of the century, or the continent, and comparing it with the prophecy, will doubtless perceive a sufficient coincidence, to enable them to say, 'Thus it was written, and thus it must be;' yet, probably, they will find this accomplishment of prophecy, materially differing from what the most sagacious of us now suppose. Since the author first printed his thoughts on this book, (in 1792,) most extraordinary changes indeed have taken place, in the state of the nations, and of the visible church, which he doubts not will be found accomplishments of the predictions contained in it. Many books also have been written on the subject; several of which he has considered, and means further to consider, and to make such use of as he is able. But he purposes still to adhere to his former plan; and to be very cautious and general, in attempting to explain what has not hitherto allowedly been fulfilled; and merely supplying this deficiency, (if it be one,) by a few quotations from those who have ventured to be more particular. He does not indeed write for the learned. These may and will consult the several authors, who have purposely and exclusively treated on this subject, and judge for themselves; nor has he the presumption to attempt the office of an umpire, between those who maintain different opinions respecting it. The plan and method, on which he proceeds, will appear to the best advantage, in the notes on the several parts of the prophecy; and a general analysis, or outline of the whole, will be more properly introduced towards the conclusion, than at the beginning of the book.

Scott. † List of writers on Rev., &c. whose works are in the hands of the Ed. Bloomfield (in his N. T.), Tong, Scott, Doddridge, Vitringa, Mede, Brightman, More, Allwood, Woodhouse, Dodd, D'Oyley and Mant, Greenfield, A. Clarke, Assembly's Ann., Davenant, Cox (on Dan.), Hurd, Bp. Newton, I. Newton (on Dan.), Molinaus, Rev. Ethan Smith, Whithy on the Millennium, Cogswell's Harbinger of do., Emerson on do., Bush on do., Lowman, Gray, Park, Langdon, Henry and Scott, abr., by London Tract Society, Durham, Wemyss's Symbol Dict., Beverley, Keith, Daubuz, Croly, Judge Winthrop, Townsend, Faber, &c., &c. 60 writers are quoted in Henry and Scott, abr. on this book. The 5 principal systems adopted in its explication, are given in the 'Guide to the Study of the Bible,' forming part of the 'Supplement' to this Comprehensive Commentary. The task of the critic, says Bp. Middleton, scarcely yields in difficulty to that of the expositor: for, as *BL* remarks, the *textus receptus* is in a worse state in this, than in any other book of the Scriptures: adding, after promising a more full work on Rev. hereafter, that in his N.T. he himself 'presents as correct a text as he can, from the use of all the critical materials extant:' and that in it he generally and sedulously notices 'any differences of readings adopted, respectively, in the standard texts of Bengel, Wetstein, Matthæi, and Griesbach: in all doubtful cases the text of Matthæi being, for good reasons, preferred.' *BL* also bestows 'great pains on the *punctuation*. All these corrections of the text, which are of any importance, will be noted by the Editor. Ed.

Origination of the book.

A. D. 95.

CHAP. I.

4 John writeth his revelation to the seven churches of Asia, signified by the seven golden candlesticks. 7 The coming of Christ. 14 His glorious power and majesty.

THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. We have, I. The pedigree of this book.

1. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ; the

whole Bible is so; for all revelation comes through and centres in Him. Christ, as King, has thus far let his church know by what rules and methods He will govern; and, as Prophet, He has made known the things that shall be hereafter.

2. It is a revelation God gave to Christ. Though Christ is Himself God, yet, as He sustains the office of Mediator between God and man, He receives his instructions from the Father; the human nature of Christ, though endowed with the greatest sagacity, judgment, and penetration, could not, in a way of reason, discover these great events, which, wholly depending on the will of God,

could be the object only of divine presence, and must come to a created mind only by revelation.

3. This revelation Christ sent and signified by his angel. Observe, here, the admirable order of divine revelation. God gave it to Christ, and Christ employed an angel to communicate it to the churches. The angels are God's messengers; ministering spirits; Christ's servants; principalities and powers all worship Him.

4. The angel signified it to the apostle John; some think the only apostle surviving, the rest having sealed their testimony with their blood. John was the beloved dis-

NOTES. CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. An infinity of the divine designs or decrees remain impenetrably concealed in the mind of God, till the event discovers them, but He has seen good previously to make known some of his purposes respecting future ages, in order to confirm the faith, encourage the hope, and enlarge the views of his people, and that the ac-

complishment of them, in after times, might demonstrate the truth of the Scriptures to every diligent inquirer. (Note, Deut. 29:29.)—This book was therefore called 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ,' because its principal subject is, 'A previous discovery of the purposes of God, respecting the affairs of the church, and of the nations as connected



2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

3 Blessed <sup>a</sup> is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time <sup>b</sup> is at hand.

4 JOHN to the seven <sup>c</sup> churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him <sup>d</sup> which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven <sup>e</sup> Spirits which are before his throne;

<sup>a</sup> Lu. 11:23.  
<sup>b</sup> Ja. 5:8,9.  
<sup>c</sup> 1 Pe. 4:7.

<sup>c</sup> ver. 11.  
<sup>d</sup> ver. 8.

<sup>e</sup> Zec. 4:10  
<sup>c</sup> 3:1. and 4:5.

ciple; under the N. T., as Daniel under the Old, a man greatly beloved; the servant of Christ; an apostle, evangelist, and a prophet; he served Christ in all the three extraordinary offices of the church. James was an apostle, but not a prophet or evangelist; Matthew was an apostle and evangelist, but not a prophet; Luke was an evangelist, but neither a prophet nor apostle; but John was all three; and so Christ calls him, in an eminent sense, *his servant John*.

5. John was to deliver this revelation to the church; to all his servants, not only extraordinary servants the ministers, but all the members of the church; all have a right to the oracles of God, and all have their concern in them.

II. Here we have the subject-matter of this revelation, namely, the things that must shortly come to pass. These are showed, not in the clearest light in which God could have set them, but in such a light as He saw

most proper, and which would best answer his wise and holy purposes; they are foretold more darkly, to beget veneration, engage attention, and excite inquiry; we have in this revelation a general idea of the methods of Divine Providence and government in and about the church, and many good lessons may be learned hereby. These events, it is said, were such as should come to pass not only *surely*, but *shortly*; i. e. they would begin to come to pass very shortly, and the whole would be accomplished in a short time; for now the last ages of the world were come, [and all time is short compared with eternity.]

III. Here is an attestation of the prophecy, v. 2. John bare record. It is observable, that the historical books of the O. Test. have not always the name of the historian prefixed to them, as in the books of *Judges, Kings, Chronicles*; but in the prophetic books the name is always prefixed, as *Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c.* So in the N. Test., John did not prefix his name to his first epistle, yet does to this prophecy, as ready to vouch and answer for the truth of it; and he gives us not only his name, but his office. Nothing recorded in this revelation was his own invention or imagination; but all the record of God, and the testimony of Jesus; and as he added nothing to it, so he kept back no part of the counsels of God.

V. 3—8. We have here an apostolical benediction, given more generally and more especially.

I. More generally, to all who either read or hear the words of prophecy. This blessing seems to be pronounced with a design to encourage us to study this book, and not weary of the obscurity of many things in it. Observe, It is a blessed privilege to enjoy the oracles of God. It is not sufficient to our blessedness, that we read and hear the Scriptures, but we must *keep* the things that

are written; we must keep them in our memories, in our minds, in our affections, and in practice, and we shall be blessed in the deed. The nearer we come to the accomplishment of the Scriptures, the greater regard we shall give to them. The time is at hand, and we should be so much the more attentive as we see the day approaching.

II. More especially, and particularly to the seven Asian churches, v. 4. These are named, v. 11. and distinct messages sent to each respectively in the chs. following. The apostle's blessing is more expressly directed to these, because nearest to him, and perhaps under his peculiar care and superintendency. Here observe,

1. His blessing,—*grace and peace*, holiness and comfort: *grace*, i. e. the good-will of God towards us, and his good work in us; and *peace*, i. e. the sweet evidence and assurance of this grace.

2. Whence it is to come; in whose name,—that of God, of the whole Trinity. And here,

(1.) The Father is first named; which may be taken either essentially, for God as God, or personally, for the first Person in the ever blessed Trinity, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and He is described as the Jehovah who is, and who was, and who is to come, eternal, unchangeable, the same to the Old Test. church which was, and to the New Test. church which is, and who will be the same to the church triumphant which is to come.

(2.) The Holy Spirit, called the *seven spirits*, not seven in number, or in nature, but the infinite, perfect Spirit of God, in whom there is a diversity of gifts and operations.

(3.) The Lord Jesus Christ. He mentions Him after the Spirit, because he intended to enlarge more on the Person of Christ, as God manifested in the flesh, whom

with it, from the time when it was given, even to the end of the world. *Signified.*] *John* 12:33. 13:32. 21:19. *Acts* 11:29. 25:27. In whatever way the angel was employed, doubtless the immediate revelation was made by the Holy Spirit, and not by any creature.—The angel Gabriel, indeed, brought a verbal message to Daniel, containing an extraordinary prophecy: *Dan.* 9:21—27. but the visions and revelations of this book, were not verbal messages. 9—11. 2:6, 7. 4:1—3. 1 *Cor.* 2:10—13. 2 *Pet.* 1:20, 21.

(1) 'A human spirit, sent from heaven on this message, as well answers to the term angel here, as would an intelligence of a superior order. And some, from 22:9. have thought this messenger was the prophet Daniel, sent to give an enlarged view of his own former prophecies.' [But see the original Greek. *Ed.*] Rev. BRUNN SARRI.

(2) *Bare record*, Hath (herein) solemnly testified and recorded. *Ed.*

V. 3. Nothing tends more to fortify the mind against the cavils of infidels and skeptics, or the incursions of unbelief, or to produce patient hope amidst trials and difficulties, than the observation and experience of the fulfilment of the Scriptures, in the events which take place around us: an acquaintance therefore with this revelation, concerning the purposes of God, respecting his church to the end of time, when connected with humility, sobriety, and the obedience of faith, must greatly conduce to the Christian's stability, constancy, hope, peace, and patience. It must exceedingly enlarge his views of the great, and glorious, and stupendous plan of the Lord's providential government of the world, as combined with the redemption of mankind, and direct or encourage his prayers, for those prosperous days of the church, in which all her tribulations shall terminate, and animate his exertions in the glorious cause. It also must greatly conduce to reconcile his mind to those events, which, though distressing in themselves, form a part of one vast design, already in a considerable measure accomplished, and evidently hastening to an entire completion, to the eternal glory of God our Savior, the final victory of his cause over all opposition, and the endless felicity of all his faithful servants. Nay, the very mysteries and difficulties of this book are wonderfully, yet inseparably, united with such grand and interesting discoveries of the glory of God, and the work and worship of heaven, as are peculiarly suited to impress with awe, and to enliven and purify, the soul of the humble and attentive reader, even when he cannot discover the prophetic meaning of the passage. Nor is it any objection to say, that many have read it in another spirit, and got much harm by it; for this is the case with other scriptures; especially with those passages, which may be called 'strong meat,' being peculiarly strengthening to the faith, love, and gratitude of such as can digest them; though not suitable nourishment for babes, and even capable of being turned into a fatal poison, by the vicious affections of a proud and carnal mind. *Heb.* 5:11—14. 2 *Pet.* 3:14—16.—The reasons which induce infidels and profane 'mockers, who walk according to their own ungodly lusts,' to deride all attempts towards explaining this prophecy, are obvious; for so much of it has most manifestly been already fulfilled, as must for ever ruin their cause, could the attention of men be drawn to the subject, in proportion to its vast importance; and no part of Scripture more awfully denounces the doom of all impenitent sinners, and all opposers of the Gospel. But pious men could never have been led to object to the study of it, as some have done, in strong, nay, rather contemptuous language; had not the misconduct of many

in this respect filled them with prejudice, and formed an association, in their minds, of ideas which have no necessary relation to each other. The Lord grant, that the writer and the readers of the present attempt, to render this mysterious book more intelligible and instructive to Christians in general, may rely on and pray for the participation of the blessing here promised, in every part of their progress through it; that, in faith, humility, reverence, and expectation of great advantage, they may read, hear, meditate on, and keep, the things which are written in it; 'for the time is at hand,' when the further accomplishment of them will render them so plain, that they shall no longer be either neglected or misunderstood.

(3.) *Readeth, &c.*] 'This refers to the ancient custom when books were scarce, for some one to read to a considerable number of listeners. —*Time.*] I. e. of their being, or beginning to be fulfilled.' BLOOMF.

V. 4—6. *From Him which is, &c.*] The original is peculiar, perhaps unexampled, and almost, if not absolutely incapable of an exact tr., the preposition governing the genitive case of the article, and yet all the subsequent words being in the nominative. It is supposed to refer to the name of God revealed to Moses, and with a similar disregard to the ordinary rules of grammar. *Ex.* 3:14. *John* 8:54—59.—Thus is here especially meant of the Person of the Father. 8—11. 22:13. *Heb.* 13:7, 8.—As 'the One true and living God' communicates blessings to sinful man, through the mediation of the incarnate Son, and by the agency of the eternal Spirit; it is almost unavoidable, under such an economy, to speak of the Father in the absolute style of Deity, and of the Son and the Spirit with relation to their assumed characters and offices, though in language evidently implying a participation in all divine perfections, and co-equality with the Father, in their original and essential nature and dignity.—*The seven Spirits, &c.*] This is generally, and doubtless justly, interpreted of 'the divine Spirit,' with respect to the abundance, sufficiency, and variety of his gifts, graces, and operations; and in relation to 'the seven churches,' with each of which, and all others, the One and self same Spirit dwelt, as the Fountain of life, grace, and peace; being omnipresent and omnipotent, and One with the Father and the Son, 'God over all, blessed for evermore.' 3:1—3. 5:5—7. This manner of expression well accords with the enigmatical or emblematic style of this book; and it is absurd to suppose any created spirits to be joined, in this solemn benediction, with the eternal Father, and Jesus Christ the Son of the Father; and indeed it would fully sanction the worship of created angels. *Mat.* 23:19, 20. 2 *Cor.* 13:11—14.—This declaration of the Redeemer's sovereignty over all 'the kings of the earth,' was a proper introduction to the prophecies which were about to be delivered, of the opposition which would be made to his cause, and his final triumph over all his enemies. 11:15—18. 17:9—14. 19:11—16. *Psa.* 2:7—12. 72:8—11. 89:19—37. *Pr.* 8:15, 16. Animated with a view of the glory of his beloved Lord, and contrasting it with the vastness of his condescension, and the depth of his self-abasement; the inspired writer broke out in adoring praises, 'to Him who,' great and glorious as He was, 'had loved them,' when defiled with the loathsome stains of guilt and sin, and when deserving the final wrath of God; and whose love had been so immense, that He had 'washed them from their sins in his own blood,' which He had willingly shed on the cross, to make satisfaction to divine justice, and to procure all the blessings of salvation for them. The apostle ascribed unto Christ, *personally*, the glory and dominion



5 And from Jesus Christ, *who is the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,*

6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

f Jn. 8:14.	1 Pe. 2:5-9.	m Zec. 12:10.
g Col. 1:19.	k He. 13:21.	n Mat. 24:30.
h Jn. 13:1.	l Da. 7:13.	o c. 22:20.
i He. 9:14.	Mat. 26:64.	p Is. 41:4.
j Ex. 19:6.		q Is. 9:6.

he had seen dwelling on earth before, and now saw again, in a glorious form. Observe this particular account of Christ, v. 5.

[1.] He is the faithful Witness: from eternity a Witness to all the counsels of

God, John 11:18. and in time a faithful Witness to the revealed will of God, who has now spoken to us by his Son; on his testimony we may safely depend, for He is faithful, cannot be deceived, cannot deceive.

[2.] He is the First-begotten or First-born from the dead, or the first Parent and Head of the resurrection, the only one who raised Himself by his own power, and who will, by the same power, raise up his people from their graves to everlasting honor; for He has begotten them again to a lively hope by his resurrection.

[3.] He is the Prince of the kings of the earth; from Him they have their authority; by Him their power is limited, and their wrath restrained; by Him their counsels are overruled, and to Him they are accountable. This is good news to the church, and it is good evidence of the Godhead of Christ, who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

[4.] He is the great Friend of his church and people; one who has done great things for them, and this out of pure, disinterested affection; *Washed them from their sins in his own blood.* Sins leave a stain on the soul, and, rather than it should not be washed out, Christ was willing to shed his own blood, to purchase pardon and purity for them. He has made them kings and priests to God and his Father. Having justified and sanctified

them, He makes them kings to his Father; that is, in his Father's account, with his approbation, and for his glory. He hath made them priests; given them access to God, enabled them to enter into the holiest, and to offer spiritual and acceptable sacrifices; He has given them an unction suitable to this character; and for these high honors and favors they are bound to ascribe to Him dominion and glory for ever.

[5.] He will be the Judge of the world, v. 7. This book, the Revelation, begins and ends with a prediction of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. We should set ourselves to meditate frequently on the second coming of Christ, and keep it in the eye of our faith and expectation. John speaks as if he saw that day; *Behold He cometh.* He shall come, to the terror of those who pierced Him and have not repented; and of all who have wounded and crucified Him afresh by their apostasy from Him; He shall come, to the astonishment of the pagan world. For He comes to take vengeance on those who know not God, as well as on those that obey not the Gospel of Christ.

[6.] This account of Christ is ratified and confirmed by Himself, v. 8. Here our Lord Jesus justly challenges the same honor and power that is ascribed to the Father, v. 4.

for ever and ever; *Phil. 2:9-11. 2 Pet. 3:17,13.* and in thus 'honoring the Son,' he especially 'honored the Father that sent Him,' as all do, who cordially add, Amen. *Jn. 5:20-23.* Some, indeed, apply the doxology to the Father; but the construction is by no means so obvious and natural. S.

(4.) *Asia.* 'The Lydian or Proconsular Asia, is said to have contained 500 great cities, at that time. Of these, Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamos, contended for pre-eminence.—Seven.] A number frequently and symbolically used in this book ['where we find at least 7 septenaries']: as 7 Spirits, angels, seals, trumpets, vials, heads, &c. In which passages, for the most part, as in others of Scripture, this number appears to represent a large, complete, yet undefined quantity. Thus, at 1 S. 2:5. it means a large but indefinite number; and God threatens to punish Israel 7 times, i. e. very completely and severely. In Heb. etymology, it signifies fullness and perfection. (*Daubuz.*) *Philo* styles it, *telesphoros*, the completing number; and so *Cyprian*. It was thus important with the Israelites, because God, having completed his work of creation in 6 days, and added thereto the 7th, a day of rest, commanded them, in memorial thereof, to reckon time by *sevens*. Through the Orientals, this computation passed to the Greeks and Romans. By the 7 churches of Asia, are implied [also] all the churches of Asia, and, it may be, all the Christian churches, in whatever situation or period of the world. So the most ancient contrs. who lived near the time of the Rev. See *Andreas Cæsariensis*, *Arethas*, *Victorinus*, *Cyprian*, &c. who profess to follow them. These particular churches being now sunk, all the Christian churches at this day, and to the end of time, inherit the prophetic knowledge revealed, the advice given, the threatenings denounced, and the blessings promised, by their divine Lord? *WOODR.*—*Bl.* rejects the *Theou* of some MSS. but would retain the article, translating, 'the I am,' &c. *Seven.* [*Wolfius* fully and ably maintains the interpretation (*Scott* gives), as does *Poole*; from whose statements it is evident it was so understood by ancients and moderns, till the middle of the 18th cent. This old and preferable view is also maintained by *Dean Woodhouse*, and *Dr. Pye Smith.* *Bl.* 'In the eastern style, the perfection of any quality is expressed, by the application of the number 7, which came to be regarded as a dignified and sacred number. Thus, this expression conveys to us the representation of the One Divine Person, called in Scripture the Holy Spirit, in his own original and infinite perfections, in the consummate wisdom of his operations, and the gracious munificence of his gifts.' *PYE SMITH.*

(5.) *Seven Spirits.* 'No other power can be here intended but that perfect, universal, holy Spirit of God, which proceeds from the Father and the Son, and, in the form of fire, descended upon the apostles at the great day of Pentecost. There is a striking resemblance in "the cloven tongues, like as of fire," to the lights heaving from [the rag, or unsupported wick, laid carelessly in] oil, on the branches of the lamp-bearer, [as was and is still the custom in those countries.]' *WOODR.*

(6.) *Kings.* *Bl.* reads kingdoms, i. e. people, priests, &c. En.

V. 7. The prophecy of this book principally relates to the opposition, which, in one form or other, would be made to the cause of Christ, the temporary success of his enemies, and his final triumph over them all; and therefore, at the very opening of it, the reader's attention is called to that great day, when these scenes will be closed, and when all will see the wisdom and happiness of the friends of Christ, and the madness and misery of his enemies. The intervening space would soon pass away, and it might even then be said, 'He cometh!' *Jude 14-16.* Then, all nations, being raised from the dead, will be gathered before his tribunal, and 'every eye shall see Him,' in human nature, exercise omnipotence, omniscience, and all divine perfections, who once lay prostrate in unknown agony at Gethsemane, and was numbered with malefactors on mount Calvary! Then, they especially, 'who pierced Him,' shall be compelled to witness his glory, as well as to feel the power of his avenging indignation. *Zech. 12:9-14. John 19:31-37.* Judas the traitor, Caiaphas and the chief priests, 'Herod and his men of war,' Pilate and his soldiers, with all concerned in his condemnation and crucifixion, and those in every age, who, by their infidelity, apostasy, persecutions, heresies, and daring crimes, have 'crucified Him afresh, and put Him to open shame,' shall then with unutterable terror behold Him, preparing to pronounce and execute the righteous sentence of their eternal condemnation. And, as 'all the kindreds of the earth,' through

successive generations, hitherto have combined in opposing, despising, perverting, or neglecting Him and his great salvation, with the exception only of a small remnant, so will they at that time 'wail because of Him,' in horror and despair; for neither their numbers nor their power can defend them from his omnipotent vengeance. 6:15-17. The apostle, however, assured of the justice of these awful proceedings, and knowing that then the redemption of all true Christians will be completed, subjoined to this awful declaration, 'Even so, Amen,' 'Thus let all things' implacable 'enemies perish, O LORD.' 22:18-21.—*Wail.* 18:9. *Mat. 11:17. 24:30. Luke 23:27.*—The word signifies to cut, or smite; *Mat. 21:8.* and is used figuratively for wail, or lament.—'They shall smite themselves,' i. e. on their breasts, [face, &c.] *SCOTT.*—*Comp. notes, Gen. 50:10, and 31:27.*

(7.) 'It will be a day of lamentation and woe to all the enemies of Christ; but a day of joyful exultation and triumph to all his faithful followers. He will own them as his, and openly acquit them in the judgment. And oh! what sovereign and unmerited grace will then appear! When the saints shall reflect, that the awful sentence now passed on the wicked, was deserved by themselves as richly as by the vilest of them; when they think on that love which made the difference, and on that precious blood which washed them from their sins, and delivered them from this wrath; what transports of joy, love, and gratitude will fill their souls! *Bossuet* pertinently observes: "In the gospel of John, we read the life of Christ on earth; and we there see a Man conversing with men, humble, weak, and suffering: we behold a sacrifice ready to be offered by One appointed to sorrows and death; but in the book of Revelation by John, we have the Gospel of Christ, now raised from the dead. He speaks and acts as having conquered the grave, and triumphed over death and hell, and so having entered into the place of his glory, angels, principalities, and powers being made subject to Him; and exercising the supreme, universal power He has received from the Father, to protect his church, and ensure the happiness of his faithful servants to the end." *W. JONES.*

(7.) 'The Jews, descendants of the tribes of the holy land, continuing their fathers' rejection of Christ, seem more particularly described here.' *WOODR.*—'Here is prefixed the great moral, which the whole book is designed to illustrate; namely, that though there should be great opposition made against the kingdom of Christ, it should ultimately and illustriously triumph. *Comp. 22:20.*' *WOODR.*

V. 8. As the Lord Jesus was evidently spoken of in the preceding v. it is obvious to conclude, that 'the Lord,' who speaks in this, is the same Person; nor can any sufficient reason be assigned, why it should be understood of 'the Father' personally; except that men are reluctant 'to honor the Son, even as they' ought to 'honor the Father that sent Him.' The whole vision related to Christ, from whom immediately the revelation was given; 1, 2. most of the expressions here used, or others equivalent to them, are afterwards spoken by Him, and concerning Himself, and the construction and arrangement of this passage, and the context, would be very intricate, if we were to suppose the Father to be the Speaker.—The Lord Jesus, therefore, here declared, 'that He is the Alpha and the Omega,' which are the names of the first and the last letters in the Greek alphabet, the language in which the apostle wrote. This implies, that He is the First Cause and the Last End, the Author and Finisher of all things, in creation, providence, and redemption; 'the Beginning and the Ending,' the Source of existence, of life, of holiness, and of felicity, and the Completion of them, in every sense, and in all respects.—'Who is, and who was, and who is to come,' as One with the eternal Father; 4-6. 'the Almighty,' the omnipotent and sovereign Ruler of all worlds, by and 'for whom all things were made, and by whom all things consist.'—No words can more strongly express eternal power and Godhead, than these do. 9-11. 22:13. *The Almighty.* 'No pantokrator.' 4:8. 11:17. 15:3. 16:14. 19:6. 21:22. 2 Cor. 6:18. 'He who has dominion over all.' (*Note, Eph. 1:15-23.*) Se.

(8.) *The beginning and the ending.* *Bl.* rejects the three Gr. words thus tr., also the article before 'Lord.'—*Which is, &c.* 'Hereby is defined the sense in which the Gr. word [*Kurios*] Lord is used, when employed to represent the Heb. name *Jehovah*. Other explanatory terms are added by the writer, under the divine guidance, thus fully defining the meaning of the word, and not leaving it under any uncertainty'



9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks.

r 2 Co. 12:2. u c. 2:8. y c. 3:7.  
 s Ju. 20:23. Ac. v c. 2:12. z c. 3:14.  
 20:7. 1 Co. 16:2. w c. 2:18. u Ex. 25:37.  
 t c. 2:1. x c. 3:1. Zec. 4:2.

He is the Beginning and the End; all things are from Him and for Him; He is the Al-

mighty; He is the same eternal and un-  
 changed One. And surely, whosoever pre-  
 sumes to blot out one character of this name  
 of Christ, deserves to have his name blotted  
 out of the book of life. Them that honor  
 Him, He will honor; but they who despise  
 Him, shall be lightly esteemed.

V. 9—20. Here is the glorious vision  
 the apostle had of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
 when He came to deliver him this revela-  
 tion.

I. The account of the person favored with  
 this vision. He describes himself,

1. By his present state and condition,  
 v. 9. He was, at this time, as the rest of  
 true Christians were, a persecuted man,  
 banished, and perhaps imprisoned, for his  
 adherence to Christ. He was their brother,  
 though an apostle; he seems to value him-  
 self on his relation to the church, rather  
 than his authority in it. By this account he  
 gives of his present state, he acknowledges  
 his engagements to sympathize with them,  
 and to endeavor to give them counsel and  
 comfort; and bespeaks their more careful  
 attention to what he had to say to them from  
 Christ their common Lord.

2. By the place where he was when favor-  
 ed with this vision,—in the isle Patmos; he  
 does not say who banished him thither; it  
 becomes Christians to speak sparingly and  
 modestly of their own sufferings. Patmos

is one of the Cyclades, about 35 miles in  
 compass; but under this confinement it was  
 the apostle's comfort that he did not suffer  
 as an evil-doer, but that it was for the testi-  
 mony of Jesus, for bearing witness to Christ  
 as the Immanuel, the Savior. This was a  
 cause worth suffering for; and the Spirit  
 of glory and of God rested on this persecuted  
 apostle.

3. The day and time in which he had  
 this vision,—the Lord's day; the day Christ  
 had set apart for Himself, as the Euchar-  
 rist is called the Lord's Supper. Surely this  
 can be no other than the Christian Sab-  
 bath; the first day of the week, to be ob-  
 served in remembrance of the resurrection  
 of Christ. Let us who call Him our Lord,  
 honor Him on his own day,—the day which  
 the Lord hath made, and in which we ought  
 to rejoice.

4. The frame his soul was in at this time;  
 he was in the Spirit; not only when he receiv-  
 ed the vision, but before he received it; he  
 was in a serious, heavenly, spiritual frame,  
 under the blessed, gracious influences of the  
 Spirit of God. God usually prepares the  
 souls of his people for uncommon manifesta-  
 tions of Himself, by the quickening, sancti-  
 fying influences of his good Spirit. Those  
 who would enjoy communion with God on  
 the Lord's day, must endeavor to abstract  
 their thoughts and affections from flesh and

ty.' TILLOCH.—'The sense is very applicable to God, the Father, as most recent contrs. interpret (to which purpose similar expressions are cited from the classical and rabbinical writers); but the context, (see v. 7, 17, 18. and 2:8.) plainly shows, that it is applied to God the Son, who, indeed, applies those titles to Himself, 21:6. 22:13. which fully establishes the Deity of Christ.'

BLOOMER.  
 V. 9—11. It is recorded, that he [the apostle] was confined to the mines, and compelled to labor in them, [a most miserable condition, note, Is. end.] notwithstanding the infirmities of his extreme old age.—While in this situation, 'he was in the Spirit,' or brought under the immediate impulse of the Spirit of prophecy, as Ezekiel, Daniel, and others had been, when favored with visions of the Almighty. (Note, 4:1—3.) This [I was in the Spirit, &c.] is conclusive proof, that the first day was set apart, and kept holy, by the primitive Christians, in commemoration of that great event [the resurrection of Christ], for on what other account could it have been thus mentioned? Ju. 20:19—23. Acts 10:7—12.—They [Alpha and Omega, &c.] (8) must here be understood of Christ, and this is an additional reason for interpreting the others of Him; and the immediate recurrence of them, in this connexion, gives energy to the arguments drawn from them. But if any should still be disposed to understand the foregoing passage of the Father; they cannot but admit, that Christ and the Father are One; for otherwise, how can it be conceived that Christ would have used the same words of Himself, which had just before been spoken by the Father, as descriptive of his eternal Godhead? So that, on either interpretation, they are conclusive, in respect to the Deity of Christ.—The voice then ordered John to write what he saw, in a book, and send it to the seven churches in Asia, which... seems to confirm the ancient tradition of John's having resided and labored at Ephesus, and in that vicinity, for a considerable time before his banishment to Patmos.—(10) The Lord's day. Kurialē is an adjective from Kurios, Lord. 1 Cor. 11:20.—The first day of the week is 'the Lord's day,' as the Eucharist is 'the Lord's supper,' and to be distinguished from other days, as that from other meals.

SCOTT.  
 (9) Bl. suspects 'St. John wrote, in the tribulation and patience and kingdom;' and he remarks, that 2 Tim. 2:12. is the best comment on the passage.

Ed.  
 (10.) 'As to the change of the Sabbath from the 7th to the 1st day of the week; the prophet Isaiah, predicting the mission of Christ on earth, as a rod from the stem of Jesse, Is. 11. says, "his rest shall be glorious;" in the Heb. "His Sabbath shall be glorious;" Christ then should have a special, and a glorious Sabbath. The psalmist, predicting the rejection of Christ, and his yet becoming the Head of the corner, as He did, indeed, by his resurrection from the dead, says, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will be glad and rejoice in it." Ps. 113. These prophecies, it is thought, give the change of the Sabbath from the 7th day of the week, as kept by the Jews, to the first day, to be kept by Christians. Accordingly, our Lord made special visits to his disciples, after his resurrection, on the 1st day of the week. See Ju. 20:19—23. where the 1st day of the week is repeatedly noted as the time of the gracious visits of Christ to his disciples, as well as the day of their convocations for his worship. Paul, at Troas, waited some time for the arrival of the 1st day of the week, when Christians would convene, that he might preach to them. And to the Corinthians, Paul gave directions for their performance of their charities and pious donations on that holy day. These, together with the testimony in our text, of John's being in the Spirit on this day, and having on this day his Revelation, afford ample testimony to the divinity of the change of the Sabbath from the 7th to the 1st day of the week. [The day's being called the Lord's day, seems the strongest argument.] The example of the inspired apostles is equal to a command of God. And when we add to these arguments, the considerations that the day of Pentecost was on the day following the Jewish 7th day Sabbath, or was on the 1st day of the week, answering to the Christian Sabbath; as was also the ancient jubilee; and the arguments in favor of this change of the Sabbath are most complete. On this day was changed the dispensation of the covenant of grace, from the Mosaic to the Christian; when the Holy Ghost came like a rushing, mighty wind, and 3,000 were converted to Christ. And this 1st day of the week gives the true antitype of the ancient jubilee trumpet, pro-

claiming liberty and salvation! On this holy day, John was in the Spirit. If Christians now better imitated him in this, they would, no doubt, have more and richer interviews with heaven.'

E. SMITH.  
 (11.) Alpha, &c.] 'This text has done more than any other in the Bible, toward preventing men from giving into that scheme, which would make our Lord Jesus Christ no more than a deified creature.—Seven.] Mentioned, it may be, as best harmonizing with the rest of the book, viz. the 7 seals, trumpets, &c.' DODD.—Bl. rejects the words, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending;' as also the words, 'those in Asia.' For the present state of the cities mention-  
 ed, see the preface to Revelation and engravings.

Ed.  
 V. 12—20. When the apostle had distinctly heard the words which have been considered, he turned to see from whom the voice proceeded; and he then had a vision of 'seven golden candlesticks,' in allusion to the golden candlestick with seven branches, which was made for the tabernacle, (Notes, Ex. 25:31—40. Zech. 4:2, 3, 11—14.) and in the midst of them, as presiding over and taking care of them, he 'saw One like unto the Son of man.' The apostle had been well acquainted with Jesus, when He was on earth, 'a Man of sorrows,' (Note, Ju. 13:18—30.) and honored as his peculiar friend; but, while he perceived Him in human form, and with some resemblance of his former appearance, he saw Him in such resplendent glory, that He seemed quite another person. (13) Clothed, &c.] Perhaps representing his perfect mediatorial righteousness and royal priesthood. Girt, &c.] May denote the preciousness of his love, and the cordiality with which He maintains the cause of his people. Ez. 23:15—30. Dan. 10:4—9.) (14) His hairs, &c.] May signify his majesty, purity, and eternity. Dan. 7:9—14. His eyes, &c.] May represent his omniscient acquaintance with the secrets of all hearts, and with the most distant events. 2:18, 19. 19:11—16. Heb. 4:12, 13. (15) His feet, &c.] May denote the stability of his appointments, and the transcendent excellency of all his proceedings. (M. R. d.) Fine brass.] Chalkolibanō. 2:18. It is not agreed what kind of brass, or mixed metal, formed principally of copper, was meant. His voice, &c.] May represent the energy of his Word, to astonish and terrify, or its invincible efficacy to convert or destroy, as He sees good. Ez. 1:15—25. 43:1—5. Heb. 4:12, 13. (16) The sharp two-edged sword, &c.] Seems to represent his awful and irresistible justice, in cutting down his enemies on every side, and 'slaying them by the breath of his mouth.' Is. 11:2—5.

SCOTT.  
 (12.) Candlestick.] The lamp-stand (for candles were not then used), lamp-stand, or, as it is improperly tr. candlestick, was an ancient and universal symbol of a wife; and ephraim, as bodies, are said to be married to Christ, while the Church universal is spoken of as the Lamb's wife. See Wemyss' Symbol. Dict. So Artemidorus also says, that the light of the lamp represents the master of the house because he overlooks it; stars also symbolized inferior princes or governors, ruling under a supreme. Candlesticks.] 'Rather, lamp-bearers: [comp. the eut,



of some of that age.] These are explained, in v. 20. to signify the seven churches, or the universal Church of Christ, [the Lamb's Wife, see Symbol. Diet. in Suppl., under the word 'candlestick,'] which bears aloft the spiritual light of divine knowledge, for the information and direction of the world, note, v. 4. The Lord Jesus has Himself supplied this light, and is, therefore, fitly represented as in the midst of these lamp-bearers, this his universal Church. So Frenæus.

WOODHOUSE.



13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* <sup>b</sup> like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes <sup>c</sup> were as a flame of fire;

15 And his feet <sup>d</sup> like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice <sup>e</sup> as the sound of many waters.

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a <sup>f</sup> sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun <sup>g</sup> shineth in his strength.

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18 *I am* he that <sup>h</sup> liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys <sup>i</sup> of hell and of death.

19 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

20 The mystery of the seven <sup>j</sup> stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches:

<sup>b</sup> Eze. 1:26-28. <sup>c</sup> Eze. 43:2. <sup>d</sup> Ro. 6:9.  
<sup>e</sup> Da. 7:9, 13. <sup>f</sup> Is. 49:2. <sup>g</sup> Ps. 68:20.  
<sup>h</sup> 10:5, 6. <sup>i</sup> He. 4:12. <sup>j</sup> c. 20:1, 2.  
<sup>k</sup> c. 2:13, 19:12. <sup>l</sup> Ac. 26:13. <sup>m</sup> ver. 16.  
<sup>n</sup> d. Eze. 1:7. <sup>o</sup> c. 10:1.

fleshly things, and be wholly taken up with things of a spiritual nature.

II. The apostle heard an alarm, given as with the sound of a trumpet, and then he heard a voice, the voice of Christ applying to Himself the character before given, *the First and the Last*, and commanding the

apostle to commit to writing the things now to be revealed to him, and to send it immediately to the seven Asian churches, whose names are mentioned. Thus our Lord Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, gave the apostle notice of his glorious appearance, as with the sound of a trumpet.

III. We have now an account of what he saw; he turned to see the voice, whose it was, and whence it came; and then a wonderful scene of vision opened to him.

1. He saw a representation of the church, under the emblem of seven golden candlesticks, as it is explained in the last v. of the ch. The churches are compared to candlesticks, because they hold forth the light of the Gospel to advantage; they are golden candlesticks, for they should be precious and pure, comparable to fine gold; not only the ministers, but the members of the churches ought to be such; their light should so shine before men, as to engage others to give glory to God.

2. He saw a representation of the Lord Jesus Christ in the midst of the golden candlesticks; for He has promised to be with his churches always to the end of the world, filling them with light, and life, and love, for He is the very animating, informing Soul of the church. And here observe,

(1.) The glorious form in which Christ appeared in several particulars. [1.] He was clothed with a garment down to the foot; a princely and priestly robe, denoting righteousness and honor. [2.] He was girt about with a golden girdle; the breastplate of the High Priest, on which the names of his people are engraven; He was ready girt to do all the work of a Redeemer. [3.] His head and hairs were white like wool or snow; He was the Ancient of days; his hoary head was no sign of decay, but it was indeed a crown of glory. [4.] His eyes were as the flame of fire, piercing and penetrating into the very hearts and reins of men, scattering terrors among his adversaries. [5.] His feet were like unto fine burning brass; strong and steadfast, supporting his own interest, subduing his enemies, and treading them to powder. [6.] His voice was as the sound of many waters; of many rivers falling in together. He can and will make Himself heard to those who are afar off, as well as

to those who are near. His Gospel is a profuent and mighty stream, fed by the upper springs of infinite wisdom and knowledge. [7.] He had in his right hand seven stars; the ministers of the seven churches, who are under his direction, have all their light and influence from Him, and are secured and preserved by Him. [8.] Out of his mouth went a two-edged sword; his Word, which both wounds and heals, strikes at sins on the right hand and on the left. [9.] His countenance was as the sun shining; its strength too bright and dazzling for mortal eyes to behold.

(2.) The impression this appearance of Christ made on the apostle, v. 17. He fell at the feet of Christ as dead; overpowered with the greatness of the lustre and glory in which Christ appeared, though he had been so familiar with Him before. How well is it for us, that God speaks to us by men like ourselves, whose terrors shall not make us afraid. For none can see the face of God, and live.

(3.) The condescending goodness of the Lord Jesus to his disciple, v. 17. He laid his hand upon him; raised him up, did not plead against him with his great power, but put strength into him, and spake kind words to him,—words of comfort and encouragement; Fear not:—words of instruction; telling him particularly who He was, that thus appeared to him. And here He acquaints him, [1.] With his divine nature; *the First and the Last*. [2.] With his former sufferings; *I was dead*; the very same that his disciples saw on the cross dying for the sins of men. [3.] With his resurrection and life; *I live, and am alive for evermore*; have conquered death, and opened the grave, and am Partaker of an endless life. [4.] With his office and authority; *I have the keys of hell and of death*; a sovereign dominion in and over the invisible world. [5.] With his will and pleasure; *that John should write both the things he had seen, and the things that are, and that should be hereafter*. [6.] With the meaning of the seven stars, *that they are the ministers of the churches; and of the seven candlesticks, that they are the seven churches, to whom Christ would now send, by him, particular and proper messages*.

(13.) *Girdle*.] 'The priests, for coolness and decency, were required to gird higher than others, and the girdles crossed the breast, also, and fell to the feet.' DODDR.—'From the writer of this vision having noted this likeness to the Son of man, we are led to conclude, that he was one of the disciples who had seen the Lord in his human appearance. And what John could this be, at so late a period as when this Revelation was written, but John the apostle and evangelist?' Woodhouse. But, says Bl., 'though most recent commentators, arguing from the absence of the article, render, "a Son of man;" i. e. human being, yet its absence will not prove this to be the sense; and though Woodhouse adopts this interpretation, and ingeniously accounts for the expression being used of Christ; yet there is no reason to abandon the opinion of the ancient and most modern comtrs. that it means the Son of man. See on Heb. 1:2.'

(14.) *White*.] 'To be understood of splendor, not of age.' BL. (15.) 'Whether *chalkolibanos* means smelting brass, (from *chalcos* [brass] and *clibanos* [a furnace], or *chalcos*, and *Libanus*, mt. Lebanon,) or the *oreichalcos* (a sort of fine brass more valuable than gold), as Hesiod describes Hercules' feet, is not agreed. The expression happily designates irresistible power, as the voice like many waters, is a most noble image of Christ's grandeur and majesty.' Id.

(16.) *In his right hand*.] 'On his right hand, rather; the allusion is to the custom of wearing many rings on the fingers, each studded with diamonds, or other sparkling gems' Bl. The Ed. of the *Pict. Bib.* asserts, that these rings were usually worn on the wrist; if so, the brilliants would be larger, and the simile more apposite. Ed.

(17.) *Right hand*.] 'This, in Scripture, bestows protection, and conveys spiritual gifts. Ps. 18:35. 20:6. Ac. 8:18. The touch felt palpably by the apostle, agrees with that part of holy writ which represents our Lord's body an object of feeling after his resurrection. The passage is sublime. Mahomet has imitated it, but with a vicious excess.' WOODH.—'The minute accuracy, simplicity, and sublimity of this stupendous representation, must have been drawn from the life; no human fancy could furnish such details.'

(18.) *Hell*.] From *helan*, to cover, 'the word *helle*, to cover, is still used in W. England. The Gr. *hades* means here, the unseen world.' DODDR.—*Hell*.] 'Hades, the region of dead.' Stuart. Comp. the ents in the Concordance, (forming part of the Supplement to the Comp. Comrs.) under the words *gates of death*; and note and cut, Is. 22:22. 'Power over death and the dead, to unlock the gates of Hades, and make my disciples triumph over it, by giving them both life and salvation.' Bl. 'I have entered the region of Hades, (Ac. 2:17, 18.) and am come forth living; yea, in possession of everlasting life.' Stuart. Ed.

(19.) *Write therefore*.] So it should be tr.; and it divides the subject. See Woodh. Ed.—'The Apoealypse has a number of grand divisions, as will be seen, each in its place. Here is one of interest. (1.) "The things which thou hast seen," on this introduction of the book, in ch. 1. (2.) "The things which are" consist of the 7 epistles to the 7 churches, which follow in chs. 2 and 3. (3.) "The things which shall be hereafter;" all the events then future, which shall be found contained in the book. The great events of salvation to the church, and of destruction to her enemies, from that time to the end of the world. These are subdivided; the first 6 seals give a course of judgments on Pagan Rome, for the last quarter of the 1st cent. till about the close of the 1st quarter of the 4th; the first 4 of the trumpets then commence a following course of judgments on the Christian empire after the revolution under Constantine, from paganism; fulfilled in the northern invasions of the empire, till the dethroning of its last emperor, Momylus;—the 1st of the 3 woe-trumpets then sounded in the rise of Mohammedism; the 2d in the rise of the grand supporter of it, the Turkish empire; the 3d will destroy Antichrist;—and the vials of the 7 last plagues, in the 2d division, will occupy the space between the 2d and 3d woe-trumpets, the 7th of which and the 3d woe-trumpet will be the same.' E. SMITH.

(20.) *Mystery*.] 'Musterion: in Scripture language it generally means hidden and recondite knowledge, accessible only by divine revelation. But here, as in ch. 17; it is used to signify the meaning concealed under figurative resemblances. . . In Mal. 2:7. the priest of the Lord is styled the angel or messenger of the Lord. And the chief minister of the Jewish Synagogue was styled Sheliach Zibbor, the angel of the synagogue or congregation. In conformity with this, the presidents (or bishops, as they were afterwards called) of the ancient Christian church, were so denominated. The words *apostolos* and *kēruax*, principally used in the N. T., have a similar meaning. They imply, that such persons act by a delegated authority from the Lord Christ, as his messengers or ambassadors; who are therefore fitly represented under the emblem of stars, placed in his hand, under his direction, being the lights supplied by Him to illumine and instruct the churches, which are represented as the candlesticks or lamp-bearers, on which the sacred light or doctrine is placed, and held forth to the world.' Woodh.—*Angels*.] 'Aggeloi: an allusion to the Jewish economy, [comp. 'Guide,' pt. iii.] wherein the priests or rulers of the synagogues were styled by this name, as bringing the commands of God to the people, and conveying their prayers to God. Abp. Newcome, however, explains *aggetoi* as denoting, either the ministering spirits employed in the invisible government of these churches; or their visible governors who presided over them.' BLOOMF.



and the seven candlesticks <sup>k</sup> which thou sawest, are the seven churches.

## CHAP. II.

What is commanded to be written to the angels, that is, the ministers of the churches of 1 Ephesus, 8 Smyrna, 12 Pergamos, 18 Thyatira: and what is commended, or found wanting in them.

UNTO the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that <sup>a</sup> holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

2 I know <sup>b</sup> thy works, and thy labors.

<sup>k</sup> Mat. 5:15, 16. <sup>b</sup> Ps. 1:6. <sup>a</sup> c. 1:16, 20. <sup>c</sup> 3:1, 8, 15.

CHAP. II. V. 1—7. We have here,

I. The inscription; to the church of Ephesus, a famous church planted by Paul, Acts

PRACT. OBS. The revelations of God, by Jesus Christ, were intended to inform his servants about as much of his designs, respecting them and others, through the short period of time, and to the countless ages of eternity, as it was useful and useful for them to know; . . . and the times may speedily arrive, when the dispensations of Providence will fully illustrate the meaning of obscure prophecies, to the most unlearned readers.—The 'grace and peace,' which come from the everlasting and unchangeable love of the Father, by the communion of the omnipresent Spirit, who dwells in all believers; and through 'Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the First-born from the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth;' belong to all those, and to those only, whom He had 'washed from their sins, in his own blood;' nor can they sufficiently admire 'his love which passeth knowledge,' or rejoice in the dignity and felicity, to which He has advanced them; or devote themselves too much to the sacred duties of their royal priesthood; or ascribe too great honor to their divine Redeemer, 'to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever.' Amen. This will soon appear: for, 'behold He cometh in the clouds, and every eye' of man, however averse to the sight, 'shall see Him' placed on the dread tribunal, from which there can be no appeal. And they, who will not believe Him to be the great I AM, and who refuse to honor Him as co-equal with the Father, will discover their awful mistake, when made to feel the weight of his anger, and the power of that eternal vengeance, which they now despise.—A peaceful conscience, and the consolations of the Holy Spirit, will enable

NOTES. CHAP. II. V. 1. Many expositors have imagined, that these epistles, to the seven churches, were mystical prophecies of seven distinct periods, into which the whole term, from the apostle's days to the end of the world, would be divided. But there is no proof from Scripture, that seven such periods, and no more, were to be expected, in the state of the church; unless the epistles themselves be admitted as proofs of it: nor are there any distinct traces in ecclesiastical history, in respect of such as are supposed to be already past; though a lively imagination, and a prompt invention, may advance plausible things on the subject. It cannot be conceived, if the concluding part of this book itself be recollected, that the last period of the church will be worse than any that has gone before, as the Laodicean church was far more corrupt than any of the rest. (Notes, 20:1—10.) Nor can it be true in fact, that a more flourishing period succeeded that of the church in the apostle's days, or that immediately subsequent to their death; yet the state of the church of Smyrna was far purer and more excellent, than that of Ephesus, nay, perhaps, than that of Philadelphia, which on this hypothesis must accord to the Millennium. So that there seems no ground at all for this sentiment, though it has been sanctioned by many respectable names.

An opinion has been held by some commentators of note, which may be given in the words of *Vitrina*: "That under this emblematical representation of the seven churches of Asia, the Holy Spirit has delineated seven different states of the Christian church, which would appear in succession, extending to the coming of our Lord, and the consummation of all things. That this is given in descriptions taken from the names, states, and conditions of these churches, so that they might behold themselves, and learn both their good qualities and their defects, and what admonitions and exhortations were suitable for them." *Vitrina* has given a summary of the arguments which may be alleged in favor of this interpretation. Some of them are ingenious, but they are not now considered sufficient to support such a theory. *Gill* is one of the principal of the English commentators who adopt this view, that "they are prophetic of the churches of Christ, in the several periods of time until He appears again." He applies them as follows, finding also some allusion in the name of each, to the age described. Ephesus represents the church in the apostolic age, and under the abatement of the fervency of the love of the primitive Christians towards the close of that state. Smyrna represents the state under the persecutions of the Roman emperors, expressing the bitter afflictions and persecutions of that interval. Pergamos, the church from the time of Constantine, rising up to great riches and honor, introducing the popes and their haughty actions and corruptions. Thyatira takes in the darkest and most superstitious times, to the Reformation. Sardis, the state from the Reformation to the reign of Christ, being emblematical of the reformed churches. Philadelphia, the period in which will be the spiritual reign of Christ. Laodicea, from the end of the spiritual reign of Christ till his coming to judge the quick and dead, when there will be formality, spiritual sloth, and security. *Girdlestone* makes another division as to the eras signified, by causing them to end previously to the millennial period.

HENRY, abr.

The churches, here addressed, were in such different states, in respect of purity of doctrine, and 'the power of godliness;' that the words of Christ to them will always be suitable to the case of other churches and professors of Christianity, in all ages and places, to the end of the world: and some of them contain the proper message or instruction to those of

19. and after that watered and governed by John, who had his residence very much there. We can hardly think Timothy was the angel or sole pastor and bishop of this church at this time; that he, who was of a very excellent spirit, should become so remiss as to deserve the rebukes given to the ministry of this church. Observe,

From whom this epistle to Ephesus was sent; here we have one of those titles given to Christ, in his appearance to John, in ch. 1: 13, 16. It consists of two parts:

1. He that holdeth the stars in his right hand. The ministers of Christ are under his special care and protection. It is the honor of God, that He knows the number of the stars, and calls them by their names; and the honor of the Lord Jesus Christ, that the ministers of the Gospel, who are greater blessings to the church than the stars are to the world, are in his hand; He directs all

their motions, disposes of them into their several orbs, fills them with light and influence, supports them, or else they would soon be falling stars.

2. He walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks. This speaks his relation to his churches, as the other his relation to his ministers. Christ is in an intimate manner present and conversant with his churches; though in heaven, He walks in the midst of his churches on earth, observing what is amiss in them, and what it is that they want; this is a great encouragement to those who have the care of the churches,—that the Lord Jesus has graven them on the palms of his hands.

II. The contents of the epistle, in which, as in most of those that follow, we have,

1. The commendation Christ gave this church, ministers and members.

(1.) For their diligence in duty, v. 2. I

ble the afflicted Christian to be more joyful in communion with God, when immured in a prison, than ungodly men can be in the most prosperous circumstances. If believers are confined, on the Lord's holy day, from public ordinances and the communion of saints, by necessity and not by choice, they may expect great comfort in meditation and secret duties, from the influences of the Spirit; and by hearing the voice and contemplating the glory of their beloved Savior, of whose gracious visits no confinement or circumstances can deprive them. The name itself shows how this sacred day should be observed: surely 'the Lord's day' should be wholly devoted to the Lord; and none of its hours employed in a secular, sensual, or dissipated manner.—We may well be satisfied to walk by faith, during our continuance here on earth; for could we now see the Lord 'as He is,' the displays of his glory, even as dwelling in human nature, would overwhelm us: *Is. 6:1—7. John 12: 37—41.* and we must be totally changed in body and soul, before we can hear the effulgency of his majesty, and find unalloyed happiness in that beatific vision. Let us then at present hearken to his voice, lean on his arm, and receive the encouragements of his love to obviate our fears: for what can He, 'the First and the Last,' even the eternal Son of the Father, withhold from those, for whom He became incarnate, that He might die for their sins; and what can be too hard for Him, who has 'the keys of death and hell,' and lives as our almighty Friend for evermore? *John 14:18—20. Acts 7:51—54. Rom. 5:6—10. 8:32—39. Col. 3: 1—4.*

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one character, and some to those of another, in all the variety which they [possess].—The Lord Jesus Himself, appearing in vision to John, directed him what to write to each of these seven churches: so that, in fact, they may be considered as 'the epistles of Jesus Christ;' even as those which the apostle wrote by an amanuensis, are called properly 'the epistles of Paul.'—Each of these was addressed to 'the angel of the church,' the stated messenger or ambassador of Christ among them. *2 Cor. 5:18—21.* It is more natural to understand this of one presiding minister, than of several elders or pastors spoken of collectively, because one in office; and thus it countenances the opinion, which has been advanced, concerning the introduction of a moderate kind of episcopacy in the primitive church, even in the days of the apostles. *Acts 20:17. 1 Tim. 5:21, 22, 24, 25. Tit. 1:5—9.* It is also undeniable, that there were several elders, or pastors, in the church at Ephesus, before this time; so that some ruler, or minister, presiding over the other pastors, must be intended.—There is no proof that Timothy ever staidly resided there: *Acts 20:1—6. Pref. to 1 Tim.* nearly 30 years seem to have elapsed, since 2 Tim. was written; various changes had doubtless taken place in that time: and it was longer since Paul wrote to the Ephesians. John himself is also recorded to have abode at Ephesus, and to have superintended that and the neighboring churches for several years. [It has been remarked, that the churches are mentioned in the order in which a person journeying from Ephesus might come to them, respectively.] Ephesus was the capital of the province called Asia; *Acts 19:8—12.* and the apostle was directed to write the first epistle to the church in that city, as a message from 'Him that holdeth the 7 stars in his right hand, and walketh amidst the 7 golden candlesticks.' *1:12—20.* This intimated the absolute authority of Christ over his ministers, with their entire dependence on Him; and his constant, though invisible presence with his churches, in which He had fixed the light of his Word and ordinances; *Mat. 28:19, 20.* his attention to their whole conduct; his readiness to help and bless them, whilst they made a proper use of their light; and his power and purpose to remove it, if provoked by their perversion or neglect of it.—They shine by his light, and are absolutely under his control, and at his disposal. [But see note, 1 Pet. 5:2.]

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(1.) Angel. 'Or presiding officer. That there was one pastor who presided in each of these churches, is indeed evident from the expression here used; but that he was a diocesan bishop, or had several congregations of Christians under his care, can by no means be proved. Nor is there the least hint of it, that I know of, in any of these epistles. Many have shown, from ancient Jewish writings, that there was an officer of the synagogue who had the name of angel. See *Vitr.* And *Lightf.* adds, that, from his overlooking the reader of the law, he was called *thouz*, or *episcopus*. *Comp. Mal. 2:7.* [Note, 1 Pet. 5:2.] *Doddr.*—'We learn in church history, that in the first Christian ages, contiguous churches were led to form themselves into a kind of consociation, for their mutual benefit; each consociation having a standing moderator; which moderator might be the person denoted by the angel of the church. Whether this were the case, or whether this angel means the eldership of that church, meaning to include all its officers, is not essential. . . . This order [?] of ministers thus arose, (see *Mosheim*.) only by human discretion and custom, and were only first among equals in office.' *Rev. Ethan Smith.*—There is not the slightest proof, however, that even this was done in the apostles' times.

Ed.

V. 2—5. There is some difficulty in conceiving, how the persevering diligence and patience of this church, could consist with that abatement



hor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

3 And has borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted.

4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen; and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

c. Ju. 4:1. g. Mat. 21:41, 43. ver. 11:17, 29.  
d. 2 Co. 11:13. h. ver. 15. j. Ge. 2:9.  
e. Ga. 6:9. i. Mal. 1:15. c. 22:2, 14.  
f. Je. 2:2, 3.

know thy works and thy labor. This may more immediately relate to the ministry of this church. Those that are stars in Christ's hand, need be always in motion, dispensing light to all about them. Christ keeps an account of every day's work, and every hour's work, his servants do for Him, and their labor shall not be in vain in the Lord.

(2.) For their patience in suffering, v. 2. *Thy labor and thy patience.* It is not enough that we be diligent, but we must be patient, and endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ. Ministers must exercise great pa-

in love, with which it is charged. But observation and experience combine to prove, that in many instances, while the affections are lively and fervent, men engage zealously in services, and form habits of exertion, self-denial, patience, and courageous disregard to opposition and reproach; in which, as to the outward conduct at least, they persevere, from various motives, and often conscientiously; though it is lamentably true, and they know it, that their hearts are not so thoroughly engaged in what they do, as they once were. Many are well aware, that this is their case: they have zeal enough to retain them in their former course of active service, which is become habitual, and in some circles creditable: but, had they not been more 'servant in spirit, serving the Lord,' in former days, those habits would never have been formed, those services had never been engaged in. Perhaps most Christians are too apt to take encouragement from such diligence, and to silence the remonstrances of their consciences by it: but it is plain, that our Savior and Judge considers this as a very criminal state of heart and conduct. (2) *Bear.* To bear or carry a burden; to sustain what is wearisome. Primarily, it relates to the body; and figuratively, to the mind; the Ephesians could carry the cross though heavy; but they could not endure wicked persons, who were a burden to them, which they resolutely threw off.

(2.) *I know.* Christ knows the thoughts, the secret springs of action, and the whole moral character of men. The knowledge thus asserted in the solemn message to each of the churches, is clearly shown to include the most perfect acquaintance with the sincerity or hypocrisy of individuals, and with all the complication of human feelings and actions. This is real omniscience, and is again asserted in the strongest and plainest terms, v. 23. and we find in v. 6. and elsewhere, the Lord Jesus purifying, correcting, and rewarding the professors of religion, in pursuance of his perfect knowledge of their hearts and characters. The very nature of the acts specified, implies a complete dominion over the arrangements of Providence in the present life, and its fullest powers in reference to the future state. *Pye Smith.*—*Canst not bear.* 'Limborch has sufficiently shown the absurdity of opposing such a text as this to the great Christian doctrine of toleration, which some have madly endeavored to prejudice, by trifling inferences from such detached and perverted clauses, in opposition to the whole tenor of the N. T. But the pretending to enforce such ecclesiastical censures, as the laws of Christ do indeed in some cases require, with those secular terrors which the magistrate, by virtue of his office, is to inflict on immoralities prejudicial to society, has been the destruction of Christian discipline in popish countries universally, and generally in all Protestant establishments too.' *Doddr.—Tried.* 'I. e. by the Word of God; for these impostors, as all false teachers do, pretended they were sent of God.'

Rev. E. SMITH.

(4.) *First love.* By some, this former love is understood, of that of God, by others, of the love of man. But the expression comprehends both, for neither can be complete without the other. The love of God is seen and proved by keeping the commandments, which are fulfilled only by charity. In the next v. the Ephesians are called to re-

pentance, and no Christian can be without it. There must be bearing patience, to endure injuries; and waiting patience, that, when they have done the will of God, they may receive the promise. We shall meet with such difficulties in our way and work, as require patience to go on and finish well.

(3.) For their zeal against what was evil, v. 2. *Thou canst not bear them that are evil.* This their zeal was the more to be commended, because it was according to knowledge; true zeal proceeds with discretion; none should be cast off till they are tried. Some were risen up in this church, that pretended to be not ordinary ministers, but apostles; their pretensions had been examined, and found to be vain and false.

2. The rebuke given to this church, v. 4. Those that have much good in them, may have something much amiss in them; and our Lord Jesus, as an impartial Master and Judge, notices both; though He first observes what is good, and is most ready to mention that, yet He also observes what is amiss, and will faithfully reprove them for it. The sin Christ charged this church with, is, their decay and declension in holy love and zeal. The first affections of men toward Christ, and holiness, and heaven, are usually lively and warm. These will abate, if great care be not taken to preserve them in constant exercise. Christ is grieved and displeased with his people, when this is the case, and will one way or other make them sensible He takes it ill.

3. The advice and counsel given them from Christ, v. 5. (1.) They must remember whence they are fallen, and consider how much peace, strength, purity, and pleasure they have lost, by leaving their first love. (2.) They must repent; must be inwardly grieved and ashamed for their sinful declining; must humbly confess it in the sight of God, and judge and condemn themselves for it. (3.) They must return and do their first works; must revive and recover their first zeal, tenderness, and seriousness, pray as

earnestly, and watch as diligently, as they did when they first set out in the ways of God.

Now this advice is urged, [1.] By a severe threatening, if it should be neglected; *I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick out of its place.* If the presence of Christ's grace and Spirit be slighted, we may expect the presence of his displeasure. [2.] By an encouraging mention made of what was yet good among them, v. 6. The Nicolaitans were a loose sect, who sheltered themselves under the name of Christianity; they held hateful doctrines, and were guilty of hateful deeds, hateful to Christ, and to all true Christians. Indifference between truth and error, good and evil, may be called *charity* and *mekness*, but it is not pleasing unto Christ. Our Savior subjoins this kind commendation to his severe threatening, to make the advice more effectual.

III. The conclusion of this epistle, in which, as in those that follow, we have,

1. A call to attention, v. 7.

Observe, What is written in the Scriptures, is spoken by the Spirit of God. What is said to one church, concerns all, in every place and age. We can never employ our faculty of hearing better, than in hearkening to the Word of God; and they who will not hear the call of God now, will wish at length they had never had a capacity of hearing anything at all.

2. A promise of great mercy to those who overcome. The Christian life is a warfare against [selfishness,] sin, satan, the world, and the flesh. It is not enough that we engage in it, but we must pursue it to the end; never yield, but fight till we gain the victory, as all persevering Christians shall do; and the warfare and victory shall have a glorious triumph and reward, even that confirmation in holiness that Adam would have had, if he had gone well through the course of his trial; then *he would have eaten of the tree of life, which was in the midst of paradise;* not the earthly, but the heavenly, ch. 22:1, 2.

penitance, and the performance of the first or former works of charity.' [But recur to *Scott*, above. *Ed.*]

(5.) *Candlestick removed.* The Ephesian church, so defective in love and good works, shall cease to be a Christian church of eminence, giving light and example to the surrounding regions. By Ignatius' testimony, (Epist. ad Eph. Sect 9.) given 10 or 20 years after, and just before his martyrdom, we learn, that this severe threatening produced a good effect, for when others were corrupting, this flourished in a pure faith and practice. She continued for some ages in high account among the churches of Christendom, but gradually sunk into the common corruption.

Id. V. 6, 7. *Nicolaitans.* This was a sect of avowed and most abominable Antinomians. 14—16. 2 *Tim.* 2:14—18. 3:1—9. (7) *He that hath an ear.* This, added to every epistle, is a most emphatical call to ministers and Christians, in every age, carefully and diligently to study these epistles to the churches; as replete with most important instruction, not only to those immediately addressed, but to all others, 'even to the end of the world.' (M. R. a.) [and so *Guise.*] *Eat of the Tree of Life.*—This is a figurative expression, taken from the account of the garden of Eden, *Gen.* 2:8, 9. 3:22—24. and denoting the pure, satisfactory, and eternal joys of heaven; and the anticipation of them in this world, by faith, communion with Christ, and the consolations of his Holy Spirit. 22:2—5. *Ez.* 47:12. Every victory over sharp temptation would be graciously rewarded with foretastes of this fruit; [for men are like healthy or poisonous fruit-bearing plants, and trials are like medicines or poisons, according as they are eaten, i. e. received as nourishment into the spiritual body;] and the final victory, with the eternal fruition of the happiness intended by it, in heaven itself, and in the presence and love of God. 10, 11, 17, 26—28. 3:4—6, 12, 13, 20—22. 7:9—12. (7) *Paradise.* *Paradeisos.* *Luke* 23:43. 2 *Cor.* 12:4. *Neh.* 2:8. *Ec.* 2:5. 'Orchards planted for the sake of pleasure and delight.'

*Leigh.* (6.) The Nicolaitans, from the general testimony of the ancients, were 'impious in doctrine, and impure in life,' says *Woodh.*; 'denied Christ's humanity and real sufferings in the flesh, and are meant by Jude, v. 7. and Peter. It is of their practice Christ speaks.' 'They pleaded for a licentious community of wives. It is improbable, that Nicholas, one of those 7 deacons said to have been full of the Holy Ghost should have been their infamous leader.'

(7.) 'Adam, in Eden, (we are led to believe,) was, at the close of his term of trial, to "put forth his hand, and eat of the tree of life, and live for ever." This act was to have been the sealing of his active, personal righteousness, and his legal title to an eternal confirmation in holiness and bliss; alluding to which order, our text assures us, that all who overcome shall find, at the close of their season of trial, something in their second Adam well answering to this. Jesus Christ.—"the Lord our Righteousness,"—"the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,"—will he to them the tree of life, indeed, to fix them in eternal holiness and bliss.' *E. Smith.*—*Bl.* omits 'midst' reading. 'in the paradise.'



8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the <sup>k</sup> first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

9 I know thy works and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art <sup>l</sup> rich,) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are <sup>m</sup> Jews, and are not, but are the synagogues <sup>n</sup> of Satan.

10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried: and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful <sup>o</sup> unto death, and I will give thee a crown <sup>p</sup> of life.

11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second <sup>q</sup> death.

k c. 1:8,17. n c. 3:9. p Ja. 1:12.  
l 1 Ti. 6:13. o Mat. 10:22. q c. 20:14.  
m Ro. 2:23,29.

V. 8—11. I. The preface or inscription; to the angel of the church in Smyrna, a place well known at this day by our merchants, a city of great trade and wealth, perhaps the only city of all the seven still known by the same name, now however, no longer distinguished for its Christian church, being overrun with Mohammedism, [except as modern Christian missionaries are beginning to plant again, in that ancient city, the true religion of the Gospel.] Here we have also another of the glorious titles of our Lord Jesus, *The First and the Last, He that was dead, and is alive*, taken out of *ch. 1:17, 18*. This surely is the title of God from everlasting and to everlasting, and of an unchangeable Mediator between God and man, *Heb. 13:8*. He laid the foundation of the church in the patriarchal state; and by Him the top-stone will be brought forth and laid in the end of time. *He was dead, and died*

V. 8, 9. 'The First and the Last.' Note, 1:8—11. These words were spoken by JEHOVAH of Himself, when declaring his own eternal Deity, and asserting, 'that beside Him there was no God, yea, He knew not any;' *Is. 44:6—8*. so that the repeated use of them by the Lord Jesus must be allowed by all, who reverence the words of the prophets and apostles, to be a full proof, that He is the self-existent and eternal God. And, as the distinction between the Father and the Son is everywhere established, whilst it is declared, that there is but 'One living and true God,' it might easily be proved in form, that there can be no consistent alternative, between rejecting the Bible, or denying it to be the unerring Word of God, and acknowledging a plurality of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead. For the same has repeatedly been shown concerning the Holy Spirit, in respect of the attributes and operations peculiar to Deity, and his distinct, personal subsistence. *John 14:15—17, 16:8—13, 1 Cor. 2:10—13, 3:16, 17, 12:4—11*. [Note, end of Jude.] Thus the doctrine of the Trinity is fixed on the firm basis of divine revelation; and it will always be found, that no other scheme, however modified, can be supported by any learning, ingenuity, or diligence of man, except with a proportionable disregard to the oracles of God; and the full establishment of such doctrine, must be the effect of a total disbelief of the Scriptures, in respect of the nature, subsistence, and perfections of the Godhead. The church, indeed, as built on the Person of Christ, cannot be subverted by 'the gates of hell;' *Mat. 16:18*. and though we may well be concerned for our children, and the cause of the Gospel in these lands; and should therefore use every proper method of earnestly contending for the truth once delivered to the saints; yet we may be free from anxiety about the event of the contest, and predict, that the triumphing of those, who strive against 'the First and the Last,' will assuredly be short.—He who thus asserted his own essential Deity, in the same place gave an intimation of his incarnation, death, resurrection, and everlasting intercession; (*1:13*.) and, in the character of the omnipotent Friend and Savior of his people, He assured the Christians at Smyrna, that He noticed and accepted their works, and was well acquainted with their trials and poverty; for though Smyrna was a rich and populous city, either the poorest of the inhabitants alone had been converted, or the Christians there had been impoverished by persecution. Moreover, he knew the blasphemy of certain persons, who 'said they were Jews,' and reviled both them and Him. Some think, that these men professed Christianity; but in their zeal for the Mosaic law, they spoke such things of the Person and righteousness of Christ, as amounted to constructive blasphemy; but it is more obvious to conclude, that they were virulent opposers and persecutors, who 'contradicted and blasphemed,' as the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia had done, at the time when Paul preached among them. (*Acts 13:45*.) They professed to be Jews, and the people and worshippers of God, but they were not what they professed to be. Whether they were of the Jewish nation or not, God did not allow of them as his congregation; the rites for which they contended were no longer of any validity; their

for our sins; *He is alive*, for He rose again for our justification, and He ever lives to make intercession for us. By dying He purchased salvation for us; and by his life He applies it to us. *Rom. 5:10*.

II. The subject matter,—after the common declaration of Christ's omniscience, and the perfect cognizance He has of all the works of men, and especially of his churches, He notices,

1. The improvement they had made in their spiritual state. This comes in, in a short parenthesis; yet is very emphatical; *but thou art rich*, *v. 9*. poor in temporals, but rich in spirituals. Many, rich in temporals, are poor in spirituals, so the church of Laodicea. Some who are poor outwardly, are inwardly rich; rich in faith, in good works, in privileges, in bonds and deeds of gift, in hope; rich in reversion: spiritual riches are usually the reward of great diligence. Where there is spiritual plenty, outward poverty may be better borne; and when God's people are impoverished in temporals, for the sake of Christ and a good conscience, He makes all up to them in spiritual riches, which are much more satisfying and enduring. [Note *Jas. 2:5*.]

2. Of their sufferings; *I know thy tribulation and thy poverty*; the prosecution they underwent, even to the spoiling of their goods. In all the afflictions of his people, He is afflicted, and He will recompense tribulation to those who trouble them, but to them that are troubled, rest with Himself.

3. He knows the wickedness and the falsehood of their enemies; *I know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, but are not*; Of those who pretend to be the only peculiar, covenant people of God, as the Jews boasted themselves to be, even after God had rejected them; those who would be setting up the Jewish rites and ceremonies, now not only antiquated, but abrogated. Observe, (1.) As Christ has a church in the world, the spiritual Israel of God, so the devil has his *synagogue*; those that oppose the truths of the Gospel, and promote damnable errors. (2.) For the *synagogues of*

*Satan* to give themselves out to be the church or Israel of God, is no less than *blasphemy*; and He has a high resentment of it, and will take a just revenge on those who persist in it.

4. He foreknows the future trials of his people, forewarns them of them, and forearms them against them, *v. 10*. The people of God must look for troubles in this world, and their troubles usually rise higher; they had been impoverished by their *tribulations* before, now they must be imprisoned. Observe, It is *the devil* that stirs up his instruments, wicked men, to persecute the people of God. But Christ forearms them against these approaching troubles; (1.) By his counsel: *Fear none of these things*; this is not only a word of command, but of efficacy, not only forbidding slavish fear, but subduing it, and furnishing the soul with strength and courage. (2.) By showing them how their sufferings would be alleviated and limited. [1.] They should not be universal; it would be *some of them*, not all, who should be *cast into prison*. [2.] They were not to be perpetual, but for a set time, and a short time, *ten days*, *Mat. 24:22*. [3.] It should be to *try* them, not to destroy them; that their faith, and patience, and courage, might be proved and be found to honor and glory. (3.) By proposing and promising a glorious reward to their fidelity.

Observe, 1. The sureness of the reward; *I will give thee*. He has said it, that is able to do it.

2. The suitableness of it; *A crown*, to reward their poverty, their fidelity, and their conflict. *A crown of life*, to reward those who are *faithful even unto death*, are *faithful* till they die, and who part with life itself, in fidelity to Christ; that life, so worn out in his service, or laid down in his cause, shall be rewarded with another, and a much better *life*, that shall be eternal.

III. The conclusion of this message, and that, as before, 1. With a call to universal attention, that all men, all the world, should hear what passes between Christ and his churches; how He commends them, how

worship was carnal and hypocritical; they violently opposed the truth and cause of God; and they were in fact 'the synagogue of Satan,' a company of people, bearing the image, [receiving the influences,] copying the example, doing the works, and combining together to support the kingdom of the devil. *3:8, 9, John 8:41—47*. SCOTT.

(9.) *Poverty*.] Polycarp, Bp. of Smyrna, had, indeed, as many of the primitive bishops did, reduced himself to voluntary *poverty*, by selling his estate, and distributing it to the poor, but, says *Doddr.*, the next *v.* proves this is not referred to. *Jews*.] 'That is, of God's peculiar people; and this instance may help us to explain many prophetic phrases, where Jewish rites are spoken of with as great a latitude, viz. for rites God's peculiar people should use.' *Doddr.*—*Bl.* inserts 'but rich,' after 'poverty.' ED.

V. 10, 11. These concluding vs. intimate, that the persons above mentioned were fierce persecutors, and not subtle deceivers; for Christ did not warn his people to beware of false doctrine; but to prepare for the cross.—*Ten days*.] This may either mean ten years, which is recorded to have been the duration of Domitian's persecution; or a considerable but limited time; [and so *Guyse* takes it for an indefinite number;] during which space, many of them might be called to suffer martyrdom for the truth.—This epistle also concerned all, who could hear and understand; as no one, who conquered in this spiritual warfare, should be hurt by 'the second death;' though he might die in winning the battle.—Nothing of reproof or warning is contained in this epistle; and it is remarkable, that there are more Christians, at this day in Smyrna, than at any other place in all that part of the world; the candlestick has not *wholly* been removed from them; but some glimmerings of light are still continued to the harassed remnant of this church. SC.

(10.) 'The word "crown," is used by our translators for both the "stephanos," and the "diadem." The "diadem," *Parkh.* states to have been a swathe, or fillet of white linen, bound about the heads of the ancient eastern kings, [see cuts, 2 Chr. 12:2—3, &c.]—and as the ensign of royal authority this word is used, 12:3, 13:1, 19:12. The "stephanos," was a crown or garland, bestowed on the victors in combats, or given to conquerors, as 2 Tim. 4:8. See *Mackn.* This occurs, 2:10, 3:11, 4:4, 10, 6:2, 9:7, 12:1, 14:14.—'There is no proof that the persecution at Smyrna, in 169, when Polycarp suffered there, continued 10 years, or days, and this was 70 years and more after the prophecy. Diocletian's did not last 10 years, and was universal. More probably, that foretold took place in that generation, during 10 days, and among the Smyrneans only, and from the Jews mentioned. Thus fulfilled, this prophecy could not fail to authenticate itself and the rest, to those 7 churches, and so they would revere and carefully transmit the book, uncontaminated; as they appear to have done.' WOODH.

(11.) 'The second death, is an expression peculiar to the Apocalypse. Irenæus, who lived very near the time of St. John, explained it to mean the Gehenna, or eternal fire, the place of punishment for incorrigible sinners.' ID.



12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

17 Hear that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the

r c. 1:16. u Nu. 31:16. x Is. 11:4.  
s ver. 9. v Ac. 15:29. y ver. 7.  
t 2 Ti. 2:12. w 1 Co. 6:13,18. c. 3:6,13,22.

He comforts them, how He reproveth their failures, how He rewards their fidelity; it concerns all the inhabitants of the world to observe God's dealings with his own people; all the world may learn instruction and wisdom thereby. 2. With a gracious promise to the conquering Christian, v. 11. Observe, There is not only a first, but a second death; a death after the body is dead. This second death is unspeakably worse than the first death, both in the dying pangs and agonies of it,—agonies of the soul, without any mixture of support, and in duration eternal; this is hurtful, indeed, fatally hurtful to all who fall under it. From this hurtful, this destructive death, Christ will save all his faithful servants; the second death shall have no power over those who are partakers of the first resurrection; the first death shall not hurt them, and the second death shall have no power over them.

V. 12—17. Here also we are to consider,

I. The inscription; to the angel of the church of Pergamos; whether a city raised up out of the Ruins of old Troy, or some other city of the same name, is neither cer-

V. 12, 13. Pergamos was a city north of Smyrna. Where Satan's seat is must denote, that Pergamos was not only a very wicked city, but also that it was, as it were, the head quarters of both persecution and heresy; the two principal engines of the devil, in opposing the pure Gospel of Christ; and that from thence these dire evils diffused their baleful influence to other cities. Acts 20:29—31. Antipas, probably, was a pastor of the church. SCOTT.

(13.) Martyr. 'Martus: rather, witness, (and so Neuc.) for martyr would involve an incongruity. The phrase occ. often, as Ps. 89:17. Prov. 14:5. Jer. 42:5. Rev. 1:5. 3:14. Antipas is supposed to have suffered in the recent persecution, under Dioclesian.' BL.—'The primitive Gallican martyrs were unwilling to take the name, considering it belonged peculiarly to the Lord Jesus. 1:5.' WOODH.

V. 14—16. Hence it is evident, that the teachers of this sect, [Nicolaitans,] sought 'the wings of unrighteousness,' by endeavoring to corrupt and pervert professed Christians; and that, in order to obtain them, they laid 'stumbling-blocks' in their way, and, on some pretence or other, encouraged and enticed them to join in the idolatrous feasts of their neighbors; and on those occasions, and at other times, to commit fornication. Num. 25: 1 Cor. 8:7—15. 10:23—28. They might, perhaps, inculcate the lawfulness of dissembling their religion to escape persecution, which is an occasion of falling to numbers in circumstances which expose men to it; and joining in the idolatry and excess of the heathen worship would effectually answer this end. They, however, certainly grafted this prevarication on more general principles; and an erroneous and perverted view of the evangelical doctrine of 'salvation by grace,' and concerning Christian liberty, constituted 'the root of bitterness,' from which their evil practices naturally grew. 'They turned the grace of God into lasciviousness,' and taught others to do the same, and were the Antinomians of the primitive church; a heresy, which, in one form or other, has always hitherto sprung up, when the

tain nor material. In the message sent, the same Jesus describes Himself as one that hath the sharp sword with two edges, ch. 1: 16.

Some have observed, that, in the several titles of Christ prefixed to the several epistles, there is something suited to the state of those churches; as, in that to Ephesus, what could be more proper to awaken and recover a drowsy and declining church, than to hear Christ speaking as one that held the stars in his hand, and walked in the midst of the golden candlesticks? &c.

The church of Pergamos was infested with men of corrupt minds, who did what they could to corrupt both the faith and manners of the church; and Christ, being resolved to fight against them by the sword of his Word, takes the title of Him that hath the sharp sword with two edges. The Word of God is a sharp sword, offensive and defensive; a sword with two edges, the edge of the law against transgressors of that dispensation, and the edge of the gospel against the despisers of that; an edge to make a wound, and an edge to open a festered wound, in order to its healing; an edge, if ye turn aside to the right hand, on that side; if on the left hand, an edge on that side; it turns every way.

II. From the inscription we proceed to the contents of this epistle, in which the method is much the same as in the rest. Here,

1. Christ notices the trials and difficulties this church encountered, v. 13. The circumstance which added very much lustre to the good works of this church, was, that of the place where it was planted, a place where Satan's seat was. As our great Lord notices all the advantages and opportunities we have for duty by the places we dwell in, so He notices all the temptations and discouragements we meet with from them, and makes gracious allowances. This people dwelt where Satan's seat was, where he kept his court; some think the Roman governor in this city was a most violent enemy to the Christians; and the seat of persecution is Satan's seat.

2. He commends their steadfastness, v. 13. These two expressions,—*holdest fast, and hast not denied*,—are much of the same sense; the former may signify the effect, and the latter the cause or means. Our faith will have a great influence on our faithfulness; it has been seldom known that those who let go the true faith, retain their fidelity; usually, on that rock on which men make shipwreck of their faith, they make shipwreck of a good conscience too: and here our blessed Lord aggrandizes the fidelity of this church, from the circumstance of the times, as well as of the place where they

true Gospel of Christ has been successfully preached; being a kind of tare, which the enemy will at all times sow among the good seed, as far as he is permitted.—Many have supposed, that this sect derived its name from Nicholas, one of the primitive deacons; and such a tradition prevailed early in the church. Yet the name was then so common, and might be given to the sect on so many other accounts, that there is no certainty in it. We read nothing of Nicholas in Scripture, to warrant so unfavorable an opinion of him; neither Peter nor Jude, who opposed heretics of the same stamp, called them by this name; and it may thence, almost with certainty, be concluded, that it was afterwards given them. Some have noted, that *Nicolaus*, in Greek, signifies the same as *Balaam* does in Hebrew, namely, 'the conqueror of the people;' and have thence inferred, that they were so called from the influence which they obtained over men's minds, and the fatal use which they made of it, as Balaam had done before them.—Pergamos is at present in a very ruinous condition; very few professed Christians are found in it, and they are wholly dependent on the church at Smyrna; being in a most abject state, and having scarcely anything of our holy religion, except the empty name. [The reader is, once for all, referred to the Pref. to Rev. for an account, with engravings, of these places, as they now are. Eo.] (14) *Them that hold.* 13, 25. 3:11. Mark 7:3. 2 Thes. 2:15. 'Holding, i. e. strictly, studiously, and with all their might, the traditions of the elders.' Leigh, on Mk. 7:3. SCOTT.

(15.) *Whom I hate.* *Ho misō*: rather *homaiōs*, 'likewise.' BL. after Beng., Wets., Griesb., Mat., Tittm., and Vater. ED.

V. 17. What the Spirit spake by John, to the church at Pergamos, was meant for the instruction of all, who should ever hear or read it; for whilst judgments impended over the head of the impenitent, blessings were prepared for those, who overcame the multiplied temptations to which they were exposed.—The expression, [No man knoweth, &c.] may also signify, that the felicity which awaits the children of God,

lived; they had been steadfast *even in those days wherein Antipas his faithful martyr was slain among them.* Who this person was, and whether there be anything mysterious in his name, we have no certain account; he was a faithful disciple, and sealed his faith and fidelity with his blood, in the place where Satan dwelt; and though the rest of the believers there knew this, and saw it, yet they were not discouraged nor drawn away from their steadfastness; this is mentioned to their honor.

3. He reproveth them for their sinful failures, v. 14. There were some who taught, that simple fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols, was no sin; they, by an impure worship, drew men into impure practices, as Balaam the Israelites. Observe, *The filthiness of the spirit and of the flesh* often go together; corrupt doctrines and corrupt worship often lead to corrupt conversation, [every doctrine makes its own nest.] It is very lawful to fix the name of the leaders of any heresy on those who follow them; it is the shortest way of telling whom we mean. To continue in communion with persons of corrupt principles and practice, is displeasing to God, draws a guilt and blemish on the whole society; and, though the church, as such, has no power to punish the persons of men, either for heresy or immorality, with corporal penalties; yet it has power to exclude them from their holy communion; and if it do not so, Christ, the Head and Lawgiver of the church, will be displeased with it.

4. He calls them to repentance, v. 16. Observe, here, Repentance is the duty of saints as well as sinners; the duty of churches and communities as well as particular persons; Christian societies, even, must repent of other men's sins, as far as they have been accessory to them, though but so much as by connivance. When God comes to punish the corrupt members of a church, He rebukes that church itself for allowing such to continue in its communion, and some drops of the storm fall on the whole society. No sword cuts so deep, nor inflicts so mortal a wound, as the sword of Christ's mouth; let but the threatenings of the Word be set home on the conscience of a sinner, and he will soon be a terror to himself; let these threatenings be executed, and the sinner is utterly cut off: the Word of God will take hold of sinners, sooner or later, either for their conviction or their confusion.

III. We have the conclusion of this epistle, where, after the usual demand of universal attention, there is the promise of great favor to those that overcome, v. 17. 1. *The hidden manna*, i. e. the influences and comforts of the Spirit of Christ in communion



churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

18 And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;

19 I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.

20 Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

z Ps. 25:14. f Ex. 31:15. k Zep. 1:11.
a Is. 59:4. 65:15. l Co. 10:20, 23. m 1 Ch. 28:9.
c 3:12. 19:12, 13. g Ro. 2:4. n 2 Ch. 6:20.
b 1 Co. 2:14. h 2 Pe. 3:9. o Ps. 7:9.
c. c. 1:14, 15. h c. 9:20. p Ju. 17:10.
d ver. 2. i Eze. 16:37, 39. m Ps. 62:12.
e 1 K. 16:31. j c. 6:8.

with Him; this is hidden from the rest of the world; a stranger intermeddles not with

this joy; and it is laid up in Christ, the Ark of the covenant, in the holy of holies. 2. The white stone, with a new name engraven on it, is absolution from the guilt of sin, alluding to the ancient custom of giving a white stone to persons acquitted on trial, and a black stone to those condemned. The new name is the name of adoption; adopted persons took the name of the family into which they were adopted: none can read the evidence of a man's adoption but himself; he cannot always read it; but, if he persevere, he shall have both the evidence of sonship and the inheritance.

V. 18—29. The form of each epistle is much the same; and in this, as the rest, we have to consider the inscription, contents, and conclusion.

I. The inscription; To the angel of the church of Thyatira, a city of the proconsular Asia, bordering on Mysia on the N. and Lydia on the S., a town of trade; from whence came the woman named Lydia, a seller of purple; whether by her means the Gospel was brought here, is not certain; but that it was successful to the forming of a gospel-church, this epistle assures us.

The Son of God, who sent the epistle, is here described in two characters: 1. His eyes are like unto a flame of fire, signifying his piercing, penetrating, perfect knowledge, a thorough insight into all persons, and all things, v. 23. 2. His feet are like fine brass; that the outgoings of his providence are steady, awful, and all pure and holy: as He judges with perfect wisdom, so He acts with perfect strength and steadiness.

II. The contents of this epistle.

1. The honorable character and commendation Christ gives of this church, ministry, and people. (1.) Of their charity; either more general, a disposition to do good to all men; or more special, to the household of faith. There is no religion where there is no [love in action, or] charity. (2.) Their service, or ministration; this respects chiefly the officers of the church, who had labored in the Word and doctrine. (3.) Their

faith, which was the grace that actuated both their charity, and their service. (4.) Their patience; for those that are most charitable, and most faithful, must yet expect to meet with that which will exercise their patience. (5.) Their growing fruitfulness; their last works were better than the first: it should be the ambition and earnest desire of all Christians, that they may be better and better every day, and best at last.

2. A faithful reproof for what was amiss; this is not so directly charged on the church itself, as on some wicked seducers among them; these wicked seducers are compared to Jezebel, a great patroness of idolaters and false prophets, and called by her name: their sin was, they attempted to draw the servants of God into fornication, and to offer sacrifices to idols; they call themselves prophets, and so would claim a superior authority and regard to the ministers of that church. Two things aggravated their sin: they made use of the name of God to oppose the truth of his doctrine and worship; and they abused the patience of God to harden themselves in their wickedness. God gave them space for repentance, but they repented not; and, where the space for repentance is lost, the sinner perishes with a double destruction.

Now the wickedness of this Jezebel is charged on the church of Thyatira; not that as a church, they had civil power to banish or imprison her; but they had ministerial power to censure and to excommunicate her; and it is probable, that their neglect to use the power they had, made them sharers in her sin.

3. The punishment of this seducer, this Jezebel, v. 22, 23. In these words is couched a prediction of the fall of Babylon: the bed is a bed of pain, not of pleasure; and the death is the second death, which leaves no hope of future life, but only shame and everlasting contempt.

4. The design of Christ in the destruction of these wicked seducers; and that was, the instruction of others, especially of his churches; All the churches shall know, &c.

when they shall have obtained a complete victory over all their enemies, can never be understood, but by the enjoyment of it; yet I apprehend, that present consolations, as the gracious recompense of victory over particular, urgent temptations, were principally, though not exclusively intended.

(17.) Manna. That, hidden and laid up in the tabernacle, free from corruption, was considered a type of the spiritual bread of life, John 4: 26, &c. namely, the benefits derived to the faithful by Christ's offering,—forgiveness, and eternal life. So WOODH. It was never seen but by the high priest, says Schoettgen; and the spiritual manna may be said to be hidden, as being enjoyed in the heart of the true Christian. Comp. John 6:32—35. 1 Pet. 3:4. BL.—Stone. Many consider the allusion here is, to the stones used for balloting in judicial proceedings, to declare guilt or innocence; but T. H. Horne thinks a tessera is alluded to, which was a stone, shaped in the form of an oblong square, divided into two parts, upon each of which, one of two parties wrote his name, and exchanged it with the other. [Cut, Gal. 2:9. So Dr. Ward, Heinrichs, Prof. Lee, and BL. think, there is allusion to these tessere hospitalitatis; a sort of carte blanche, entitling the person who showed it, to ask for and receive what he might want.] Each party, and their descendants, on producing these at the house of the other, were recognized and hospitably received. These tokens were kept with much care and privacy, that they might not be used by others. This practice, it is known, prevailed among the ancient Christians. Valpy thinks, it referred to the judges, who presented to conquerors in the games, a white stone, assigning and containing the name and the prize of him that conquered. HENRY, abr.—As God's favored servants in the O. T. are frequently honored with new names, [comp. the oriental custom,] this new name is a token of spiritual benefit, so surpassing, it can be known only by being enjoyed. WOODH.—No man knoweth. Is this an allusion to the anagrammatic method of writing names on seals, &c., which is now and has ever been common in the E., and to counterfeit which is capital? The Sultan of Turkey has a secretary, whose sole business it is to write the Sultan's tooghra, or cypher containing his name, and numerous titles. EN.—Princes sometimes gave particular names, expressing familiarity and delight, to distinguish favorites, by which to call them in the greatest intimacy of converse. DONR. I incline to think "new name" merely figurative, importing a title to heaven, and thus agreeing to the "white stone" on which it is written. As the latter indicates an acquittal from guilt, or the blessing of justification; the former may denote the believer's title to life, or blessing of adoption into the family of God, and a right to all the privileges and immunities connected with being sons and heirs of God, and joint heirs of the eternal inheritance with Christ.—The hidden manna, white stone, and new name, imply privileges of the same nature with "the fruit of the tree of life;" but the style may be varied to teach us, that though spiritual blessings are all the same in kind, they are adapted to the diversified wants and capacities of men.

V. 18. Son of God. Comp. 1:13, 14. SCOTT.

V. 20—23. It is not agreed, whether 'that woman Jezebel,' is a literal or figurative expression. From the reading in some manuscripts it has been thought, that the wife of the presiding minister was intended; that she had obtained great influence in the affairs of the church, and made bad use of it; that she pretended to prophetic gifts, and under that sanction propagated abominable principles, and though her conduct was disapproved by many, yet no proper decision was used in censuring her, or preventing the mischiefs which she occasioned.—The figurative meaning, however, seems more suited to the style and manner of this book; and in this sense, we may understand it to denote a company of persons, of the spirit and character of Jezebel, within the church, under one principal deceiver; as the Roman antichrist is represented by the emblem of an abandoned harlot. 17:1—5. Jezebel, a Zidonian, and a zealous idolater, being married to the king of Israel, contrary to the divine law, used all her influence to seduce the Israelites from the worship of JEHOVAN into idolatry, with which the vilest licentiousness was connected; and this greatly aided the temptation. (M. R. a.) Thus these persons at Thyatira, having, through the fault of the pastors and members of the church, found admission among them, and by their artifices and blandishments attached a party to their cause, employed their whole influence to draw men from the pure religion of Christ, into carnal and spiritual fornication and adultery, and to poison their minds with abominable doctrines. Yet they had not been duly censured and opposed; and it is evident, that neither the fatal tendency of their opinions, nor the atrociousness of their conduct, had been fully noticed and understood, till this epistle was sent. 1 Cor. 5: All the churches, &c.] Here again the peculiar style of Deity is employed by 'the Son of God.' It is far more expressive to say, 'I am He, who searcheth the heart,' than 'I search;' nor can such language be accounted for, on any other ground than the trinitarian doctrine, whatever pains and ingenuity may be employed in the attempt. M. R.—Note, Jer. 17:9, 10. In.

(20.) Jezebel. Grot., &c. understand a person of rank and influence, who seduced them to join heathen impurities in their worship. But in scripture allegory, the body of a nation is often designated under the name of a woman. Therefore, Ham., Durham, Vitruv., &c., following Andreas Cesariensis, (who professes to give the explications of Papias, Irenæus, Methodius, &c.,) Arctas and Bede, understand a sect or body of misleading teachers, harbored in the church at Thyatira. It was, doubtless, clear to the church addressed: at v. 23. children are spoken of, which confirms the idea, that a sect and its proselytes are meant. For the innocent children of a bad woman might justly be spared. WOODH. (20, 21.) Few. Olga: this is marked as spurious by BL., as also ek tēs porneias autēs (of her fornication, i. e. heresy), in v. 21. 'Balden epiklin n (throw upon a bed), is, as Heintz. observes, a Syriac phrase, for, to bring sickness upon. morbum immittere, 2 S. 13:5.' BL. Ed.

(21.) BL. reads, 'and wills not to repent of her prostitution.' In.

(22.) Their. Rather, 'her.' BLOOMF.



24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths<sup>n</sup> of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

25 But that<sup>o</sup> which ye have already, hold fast till I come.

26 And he that<sup>p</sup> overcometh, and keepeth my works<sup>q</sup> unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

27 And<sup>r</sup> he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I<sup>s</sup> received of my Father.

28 And I will give him the<sup>t</sup> morning star.

29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

### CHAP. III.

<sup>2</sup> The angel of the church of Sardis is reproved, <sup>3</sup> exhorted to repent, and threatened if he do not repent. <sup>8</sup> The angel of the church of Philadelphia. <sup>10</sup> is approved for his diligence and patience. <sup>15</sup> The angel of Laodicea, rebuked, for being neither hot nor cold, <sup>19</sup> and admonished to be more zealous. <sup>20</sup> Christ standeth at the door and knocketh.

AND unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven<sup>a</sup> Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know<sup>b</sup> thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, <sup>c</sup> and art dead.

n 2 Th. 2:9-12. q Jn. 6:29. t c. 22:16.  
o c. 3:11. Ja. 2:20. a c. 5:6.  
p ver. 7, 11, 17. r Ps. 49:14. b c. 2:2, &c.  
c. 3:5, 12, 21. s Ps. 149:5-9. c 1 Ti. 5:6.  
21:7. s Ps. 2:9.

PRACT. OBS. The Lord Jesus alone can uphold and prosper his ministers; it therefore behooves all those, who are favored with able and faithful teachers, to be thankful for them, to walk in the light thus vouchsafed them, and to be careful that they do not provoke the Lord to remove it. And all, who sustain that important and arduous office, should remember their dependence on Christ, and their accountability to Him; and 'take heed to themselves, and to their doctrine,' and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers; to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with his own blood.' Acts 20:28. 1 Tim. 4:11-16.—The manifold evils, which abound in every part of the church, in a very great degree, arise from the misconduct and negligence of its rulers and pastors, who ought especially to weigh with great seriousness, and much self-examination, as in the prospect of the last decisive day, the import of these epistles of Christ; and frequently they will find cause to apply to themselves a great part of the reproof and warning, which they contain.—Surely this single mention in Scripture, of Christians 'forsaking their first love,' when the context and consequences are well considered, most awfully reproves those numbers, who speak of this as a common case; who excuse lukewarmness and sloth, in themselves and others, as a thing of course, by words to this effect; 3:14-16. and who, speaking of Christians as 'in their first love,' mean that this is a low attainment; and that they will, as a thing of course, grow 'less fervent in spirit, in serving the Lord,' as they get above the infancy of Christianity! When the

V. 24-23. *With a rod of iron.* The quotation is as nearly from the Sept. (Ps. 2:9.) as the application of the passage will admit. *The morning star* may mean, either the earnestness of the Spirit, as introductory to the felicity of heaven, as the morning-star to the rising of the sun, 2 Pet. 1:19-21. or the ineffable glory, with which He will invest his victorious disciples, in the presence and enjoyment of Him, their Lord and Savior, and in conformity to his glory. 22:13, 17. SCOTT.

(26.) *Power.* 'Not temporal dominion.' DONNA.—'I. e. to convert: and those who teach Christ's Gospel, by word and example, as these, will be favored by being selected as the instruments of this saving power. All worldly and abused power shall fall before Christ. Is. 40:11.' WOODH.

(27.) 'This is predicted of Christ, in Ps. 2: relative to the heathen: which has a special allusion to "the battle of that great day of God Almighty," which shall sink the antichristian world. And this event Christ sees fit to ascribe to the persevering, triumphant saints. They are noted as doing this work of judgment, in the same sense in which they are to "judge the world." They will have perfect fellowship with Christ in those mighty operations; and He will do these things in answer to their prayers for the salvation of Zion. Christ thus puts upon his children the honor of his operations of judgment, even as the two witnesses are said to have the power to shut heaven, and smite with plagues, &c. The psalmist gives the same view of this "honor all the saints have," Ps. 149. Received.] I. e. officially.' E. SMITH.

(28.) 'Since Christ, 22:16. calls Himself the bright morning star, some (as Woodh. and Burton) assign the same sense here, q. d. "that He will give Himself, i. e. his light and truth." It is, however, the general opinion of learned comtrs., that the sense is, "I will give Him glories

God is known by the judgments that He executeth; and, by this revenge taken on seducers, He would make known his infallible knowledge of the hearts of men, and his impartial justice, in giving every one according to his work, that the name of Christians should be no protection, their churches should be no sanctuaries, for sin and sinners.

5. The encouragement given to those who kept themselves pure and undefiled, v. 24. Observe, The seducers called their doctrines depths, profound mysteries; amusing the people, and endeavoring to persuade them they had a deeper insight into religion than their own ministers had. But Christ called them depths of Satan, satanical delusions and devices, diabolical mysteries; for there is a mystery of iniquity, as well as the great mystery of godliness. How tender Christ is of his faithful servants, v. 25. Christ is coming to put an end to all the temptations of his people; and if they hold fast faith and a good conscience till He comes, all the difficulty and danger are over.

III. We now come to the conclusion of this message, v. 26-29. Here we have, 1. The promise of an ample reward to the persevering, victorious believer, in two parts: (1.) Very great power and dominion over the rest of the world; power over the nations; which may refer either to the empire's turning Christian, as in Constantine's time; or to believers sitting down with Christ on his throne of judgment, in trying, and condemning, and consigning over to punishment, the enemies of Christ and the church. *The upright shall have dominion in the morning.* (2.) Knowledge and wisdom, suitable to such power and dominion; Christ is the Morning Star; He brings day with Him into the soul, the light of grace and of glory; and He will give his people that perfection of light and wisdom requisite to the state of dignity and domin-

ion they shall have in the morning of the resurrection. 2. This epistle ends with the usual demand of attention; in the foregoing epistles, it comes before the concluding promise; but in this, and all that follow, it comes after, and tells us, that we should all attend to the promises as well as to the precepts that Christ delivers to the churches.

CHAP. III. V. 1-6. Here is,

I. The preface; to the angel of the church of Sardis, an ancient city of Lydia, on the banks of the mountain Timolus, said to have been the chief city of Asia the Less, and the first city in that part of the world converted by the preaching of John; and, some say, the first that revolted from Christianity, and one of the first laid in ruins, in which it still lies, without any church or ministry.

This message was sent by the Lord Jesus, who here assumes the character of Him that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars, as ch. 1: 4. where the seven Spirits are said to be before the throne. 1. He hath the seven Spirits, i. e. the Holy Spirit with his various powers, graces, and operations; for He is personally one, though efficaciously various; and may be said here to be seven, which is the number of the churches, and of the angels of the churches, to show that to every minister, and to every church, there is a dispensation and measure of the Spirit given for them to profit withal. 2. He hath the seven stars, the angels of the churches; they are disposed of by Him, and accountable to Him; which should make them faithful and zealous. He has ministers to employ, and spiritual influences to communicate to his ministers, for the good of his church; the Holy Spirit usually works by the ministry, and the ministry will be of no efficacy without the Spirit; the same divine hand holds them both.

majority in any church adopt such notions, and accustom themselves and each other to such expressions, it is a certain sign, that they will speedily provoke Christ to 'remove their candlestick, unless they repent.' nay, it is the natural language of stony-ground hearers, whose joy and affection have subsided, and who, 'having no root in themselves,' are gradually withering away. Mat. 13:20-22. P. O. 18-23. For, though the aged, flourishing Christian may feel less vigor of affection, than he did at some times, soon after his conversion, in which novelty and self-love had no small share; yet there is far more constancy and energy in his love, influencing him to habitual self-denying obedience, and exertion in the cause of God, apart from all selfish motives, than there was before. The former resembles the transient, noisy flame of thorns; the latter is like the constant, vehement, penetrating, and efficacious heat of a fire made by substantial fuel.—As 'the First and the Last, who was dead and is alive,' is the believer's Brother and Friend; he must be rich in the deepest poverty, honorable amidst the lowest abasement, and happy under the heaviest tribulations. Mat. 12:46-50. 25:34-40. John 15:12-16. But this confidence cannot be supported, without steady obedience. When we are tempted to sin, let us recollect what consolations He has promised to the victorious combatant; and, looking to Him for help, let us aspire to 'the hidden manna,' 'the joy that a stranger intermeddeth not with,' the assurance of acceptance, the Spirit of adoption, and the earnest of eternal glory. SCOTT.

of which that Star is an emblem," Dan. 12:3. See Sc.'s *Morning Star.*—'A Star is a teacher, 1:16. our Lord is eminently such, and so entitles Himself, 22:16. "the shining, morning Star;" as such He was foretold, Num. 24:17. and a star, in the eastern or morning quarter, preceded his birth. "He was the true light, (Jn. 1:9.) to lighten the Gentiles," Lu. 2:32. and of this light which was in Him, He imparted a share to the first preachers of his Gospel, for converting the nations. Taken in this sense, the gift of the morning star, is in connexion with the "power over the nations," which is mentioned before it. Some refer it to a future life; because to obtain it the Christian must keep his Lord's works, "even unto the end." But all the prospects of a Christian will have reference to eternal life, as promised to the faithful; and the dawnings and first light of such splendid blessings, taking possession of his mind, even during his sojourn here, will be a source of infinite delight, "shining more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. 4:13. WOODH.

V. 29. This concerned all other professed Christians, as such as those to whom it was immediately written. (M. R.)—This church is at present wholly extinct, and the city is in a very desolate condition. [See Pref.]—Each epistle begins with 'These things saith the Son of God, &c.' and each ends with the call, 'Let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.'—What 'Christ saith,' that 'the Spirit saith;' the same individual words and works are ascribed to each; as in many instances to the Father and to the Son. 'For the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit' are three; and 'these three are one.' SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. III. V. 1-3. Sardis lay to the S. of Thyatira, and was once the renowned capital of Lydia, the kingdom of Creesus.—The bishop, or presiding minister, [but see notes, 2:1. and 1 Pet. 5:2.] it is probable, had, by his misconduct, his bad example, or want of vigilance



2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard; and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and no man openeth;

d c. 2:4  
e Da. 5:27.  
f He. 2:1.  
g ver. 19.

h c. 16:15.  
i c. 7:9. 19:8.  
j c. 17:8.  
k Lu. 12:8.

l Ac. 3:14.  
m 1 Jn. 5:20.  
n Is. 22:22.  
o Job 12:14.

II. The body of this epistle; there is this observable in it, that, whereas, in the other epistles, Christ begins with commending what was good in the churches, and then proceeds to tell them what was amiss; in this (and in the epistle to Laodicea) He begins,

1. With a very severe reproof; *I know thy works, &c.* This church had gained a great reputation; we read not of any unhappy divisions among themselves; everything appeared well, as to what falls under the observation of men. But it was not really what it was reputed to be; they had a name to live, but were dead; had a form of godliness, but not the power; there was a great deadness in their souls, [in their spiritual affections,] and in their services; a great deadness in the spirits of their ministers, and in the people, in hearing, prayer, and conversation; what little life was yet left among them, was, in a manner, expiring, ready to die.

and activity, greatly contributed to reduce the church to a very declined and withering condition. (1 *He that hath the seven spirits of God.*) This accords with the several texts, in which our Lord promises to send the Holy Spirit to his disciples; but who is He that has the Spirit of God, and sends Him to men, even as He Himself was sent by the Father? (2 *Be watchful.*) *Become watchful*, though now unwatchful. Sc. (1.) 'Sardis had great natural advantages for acquiring riches; but riches are corruptive, and lead to that supineness in religion, and profligacy of morals, in this address so alarmingly rebuked.' Woodh.—'Yet what town, what individual, fears being too rich?' Ed.—*Livest, &c.*] 'By a frequent scripture-metaphor, a person, living in the defilements of this world, and neglectful of preparation for another, is said to be "dead while he liveth," while he who meets death in the discharge of his Christian duty, is pronounced "living though he die." Jn. 11:25, 26. 1 Tim. 5:6. 1 Jn. 3:14. Jude 12. Thus Christ commanded, to "let the dead bury the dead," Mat. 23:29.'

V. 4—6. Even at Sardis there were a few Christians, whose names would be at length mentioned with distinguished honor, on account of their holy singularity; as they had not 'defiled their garments,' or disgraced their profession by the worldly lusts, and sinful practices, to which the rest were addicted. And Christ assured them, that they 'should walk with Him in white,' the emblem of perfect purity, triumph, and joy; and so be his accepted, holy, and honored companions, in heavenly felicity. Notes, 6:9—11. 7:9—17. 19:7, 8, 11—16. *Eth. 3:15. Ec. 9:7—9.*—All this related to other bishops, pastors, and churches also, who were, or should hereafter be placed in similar circumstances.—This once flourishing city now lies in ruins; a few persons called Christians are found there; but they are reduced to the most abject slavery, and have neither church nor minister among them. SEOTT.

(1.) *Garments.*] 'By an obvious metaphor, what raiment is to the

2. Our Lord proceeds to give this degenerate church the best advice, v. 2. (1.) He advises them to watch; whenever we are off our watch, we lose ground, and therefore must return to our watchfulness against sin and Satan, and whatever is destructive to the life and power of godliness. (2.) To strengthen the things that remain, and that are ready to die. Some understand this of persons; there were some few who had retained their integrity, but they were in danger of declining with the rest. Or it may be understood of practices, as it follows.—*I have not found thy works perfect before God*, not filled up; there is something wanting in them; the kernel, the soul, the substance, the inward thing,—thy works are hollow and empty; prayers are not filled up with holy desires, almsdeeds with true charity, sabbaths with suitable devotion of soul to God; there are not inward affections suitable to outward acts and expressions; now when the spirit is wanting, the form cannot long subsist. (3.) To recollect themselves, and remember how they have received and heard, v. 3. not only to remember what they had received and heard, what messages from God, what tokens of his favor, what sermons; but what impressions the mercies of God had made on their souls at first, what affections they felt working under the Word and ordinances, the love of their espousals, the kindness of their youth, how welcome the Gospel and the grace of God were to them when they first received them; where is the blessedness they then spake of? (4.) To hold fast what they had received, that they might not lose all, and repent sincerely that they had lost so much of the life of religion, and had run the risk of losing all.

3. Christ enforces his counsel with a dreadful threatening, in case it should be despised, v. 3. Observe, When Christ leaves a people as to his gracious presence, He comes to them in judgment; and his judicial presence will be very dreadful to those who have sinned away his gracious presence; to a dead, declining people, it will be surprising; their deadness will keep them in security, and, as it procures an angry visit from Christ to them, it will prevent their discerning it, and preparing for it. Such a visit from Christ will be to their loss; He will come as a thief, to strip them of their remaining enjoyments and mercies, not by fraud, but in justice and righteousness; taking the forfeiture they had made of all to Him.

4. Our blessed Lord does not leave this sinful people without some comfort and encouragement, v. 4. and here, (1.) He makes honorable mention of the faithful remnant in Sardis, though but small; they had not given into the prevailing corruptions and pol-

lution of the day and place in which they lived. God notices the smallest number of those who abide with Him; the fewer the more precious. (2.) He makes a very gracious promise to them; the white robes of justification and adoption, and comfort; or the white robes of honor and glory in the other world; they shall walk with Christ in these, in the pleasant walks of the heavenly paradise; and what delightful converse will there be between Christ and them when they thus walk together! This is an honor proper and suitable to their integrity; not a legal, but a gospel worthiness, is ascribed to them; not merit but meetness; they who walk with Christ in the clean garments of real, practical holiness here, and keep themselves unspotted from the world, shall walk with Christ in the white robes of honor and glory in the other world; this is a suitable reward.

III. The conclusion of this epistle; 1. A great reward promised to the conquering Christian, v. 5. much the same with what has been already mentioned; the purity of grace shall be rewarded with the perfect purity of glory; holiness, when perfected, shall be its own reward; glory is the perfection of grace, differing not in kind, but in degree; now to this is added another promise very suitable to the case; *I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.* Observe, Christ has his book of life, a register, a roll of all who shall inherit eternal life. Men may be enrolled in the registers of the church, as baptized, as making a profession, as having a name to live, and that name may come to be blotted out of the roll, when it appears it was but a name, a name to live, without spiritual life. Christ will produce this book of life, and confess the names of the faithful who stand there, before God and all the angels; He will do this as their Judge, when the books shall be opened; do it as their Captain and Head, leading them with Him triumphantly to heaven, presenting them to the Father; Behold Me, and the children that Thou hast given Me. How great will this honor and reward be! 2. The demand of universal attention finishes the message: every word from God deserves attention from men; that which may seem more particularly directed to one body of men, has something in it instructive to all.

V. 7—13. In this 6th letter, observe,

I. The inscription; *to the angel of the church of Philadelphia*, a city in Asia the Less, seated on the borders of Mysia and Lydia; it had its name from that brotherly-love for which it was eminent; we suppose it was its ancient name, before it received the Gospel; such love and kindness was

body, namely, its covering and ornament, such is the habit of practice to the soul.' Woodh.—*White.*] 'White robes were worn on occasion of great joy, and sometimes in triumphant processions. Some see an allusion to the Sanhedrim's giving a white garment to a candidate for the high-priesthood, if found worthy when examined; if unqualified, he was sent out from them in mourning. L'Enfant.' DODR.

(5.) *Blot out.*] 'Spoken after the manner of men, but the literal fact is, apostates discover only that they never were truly of the righteous; and their names were never in the book of life. Had they been there, they never would have been suffered fatally to apostatize. Prov. 24:16. Rom. 8:35, 39.' E. Smith. 'In states and cities, they who obtained freedom and fellowship, were enrolled in the public register, and thence proved their title to citizenship.' Woodh.—'Others think the allusion is to names of the cashiered, expunged from the military muster-roll.' BLOOMF.

(6.) *He that hath, &c.*] 'This is the form of bespeaking spiritual attention to figurative language, so frequently used by our Lord in the Gospels. It is used for the same purpose at the close of all the 7 addresses; in that particular part of them where the language changes from plain to figurative; where attention is required to gain and apply the spiritual knowledge conveyed by symbols.' WOODH.

V. 7. 'He that is holy,' 'He that is true,' or 'the Holy One,' and the 'True One,' are words which contain a very conclusive proof of the Deity of Christ; for what mere creature can with propriety speak of himself in this language? 4:6—8. 6:9—11. 15:1—4. Is. 6:1—4. 30:8—14. 57:15, 16. It was also sent in the name of Him, "that hath the key of David." 1:18. Notes, 3, 9. 5:1—10. Is. 22:20—25. SEOTT.

(7.) *Holy, &c.*] 'This is so peculiarly the prerogative of God, I am surprised, no greater stress has been laid upon it, in proof of Christ's Deity. *Openeth.*] The office of lord steward of the household, who



8 I know thy works : behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it : for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie ; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11 Behold, I come quickly : hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God ; and he shall go no more out : and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God : and I will write upon him my new name.

p 1 Co. 16:9. r Is. 60:14. t Zep. 1:14. v c. 21:2, 10.  
q c. 2:9. s 2 Pe. 2:9. u ver. 3.

excellent, and, when sanctified by the grace of the Gospel, would render them an excellent church, as indeed they were ; for here is no one fault found with this church ; and yet, doubtless, it had faults of common infirmity ; but love covers such faults. This letter was signed by the same Jesus, who is alone the universal Head of all the churches. Observe, by what title He represents Himself ; *He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, &c.* You have his personal character, *holy, and true ; holy* in his nature, and therefore *true* to his Word ; you have also his political [governmental] character, *He hath the key of David, He openeth, and no man shutteth ; He hath the key of the house of David, the key of government and authority in and over the church.*

1. Observe, the acts of his government ;

hath the power of *openin*g and *shuttin*g what apartments of the palace he pleaseth, is described by these terms.

V. 8, 9. Perhaps the unexpected success of the Gospel, in Philadelphia and the neighborhood, rendered the Christians so powerful, that the Jews and their adherents were glad to seek their protection, from the rage of the multitude, by which vast numbers of them were frequently massacred in those turbulent times. The language leads us also to conclude, that many were converted to Christianity by means of those events. Some indeed think, that *Judaizing Christians* were meant ; but it is far more natural to understand the word 'Jews' in its ordinary sense ; and to consider them as open opposers, rather than as false professors of the Gospel.

(8.) *Door.*] For spreading the Gospel by preaching, &c. 1 Cor. 16:9. 2 Cor. 2:12. *Little strength.*] Has not numbers, wealth, and power to repel persecution, say *Newc.* and *Bloomf.* But faith, nearness to God, constancy, purity, and singleness of heart, are a greater 'strength' than all the other three against persecution, and increased by it where they really exist.

(9.) *Make, &c.*] 'Cause some of them to come over to Christianity, and so honor thee. *Burton.* See Rom. 11:1. And Prof. Lee says, the v. is a remarkable instance of the language used under the old dispensation, being applied even to the *new* ; for it is taken from Is. 49:23. or 60:14. which belongs exclusively, from first to last, to the times of the Christian dispensation.

V. 10, 11. *The hour of temptation.*] This relates to some remarkable season of persecution, heresy, or apostasy, which was about to come on all the churches in the world, especially through the whole Roman empire, to try and prove the sincerity and strength of their faith and love. On this trying occasion, the Lord Jesus would shelter the church in Philadelphia from the fury of the storm, and not let them be so sharply tried or tempted, as other churches were ; which might, in some respects, have more strength, but had also more need of correction, and of being proved and purified. It is generally supposed to refer to Trajan's persecution, which was more general and violent, than the persecutions under Nero and Domitian. But, at this city was the last of all the seven, which was taken by the Mohammedans ; and as there has been a succession of Christians there, in every generation, to this time ; some have applied this to their preservation from that awful delusion, which almost extirpated Christianity in those regions.—It is indeed to be

*He opens, opens* a door of opportunity to his churches, of utterance to his ministers,—of entrance to the heart, of admission into the visible church, nay, into the church triumphant. *He shuts* the door, *shuts* it when He pleases ; He leaves obstinate sinners shut up in the hardness of their hearts ; *He shuts* the door of church-fellowship against unbelievers and profane persons ; the door of heaven against the foolish virgins who have slept away their day of grace ; and against the workers of iniquity, how vain and confident soever they may be.

2. The way and manner in which He performs these acts, that is, absolute sovereignty, independent on the will of man, and irresistible by the power of men ; *He openeth, and no man shutteth ; He shutteth, and no man opens.* These were proper characters for Him, when speaking to a church that had endeavored to be conformed to Christ in holiness and truth, and that had enjoyed a wide door of liberty and opportunity under his care and government.

II. The subject-matter of this epistle :

1. Christ puts them in mind of what He had done for them, v. 8. Learn here, Christ is to be acknowledged as the Author of all the liberty and opportunity his churches enjoy. He notices, and keeps account, how long He has preserved their spiritual liberties and privileges for them. Wicked men envy the people of God their door of liberty, and would be glad to shut it against them. If we do not provoke Christ to shut this door against us, men cannot do it.

2. This church is commended, v. 8. In this there seems to be couched a gentle reproof ; *'Thou hast a little strength,* a little grace, not proportionate to the wide door of opportunity I have opened to thee, yet true, and that hath kept thee faithful.' True grace, though weak, has the divine approbation, and will do more than the greatest gifts, or highest degrees of common grace, for it will enable the Christian to keep the Word of Christ, and not to deny his name. Obedience, fidelity, and a free confession of the name of Christ, are the fruits of true grace, and pleasing to Christ as such.

3. The great favors God would bestow on this church, v. 9, 10. They consist in two things :

(1.) Christ would make this church's enemies subject to her. They are described to be such as said they were *Jews, but lied* in

saying so ; being really *the synagogue of Satan.* Their subjection to the church is described ; *They shall worship at thy feet ;* shall be convinced they have been in the wrong, and the church in the right, beloved of Christ, and they shall desire to be taken into communion with her, that they may worship the same God after the same manner. How shall this great change be wrought ? By the power of God on the hearts of his enemies, and by signal discoveries of his peculiar favor to his church ; *They shall know that I have loved thee.* Observe, [1.] The greatest honor and happiness any church can enjoy, consist in the peculiar love and favor of Christ. [2.] Christ can discover this his favor to his people, in such a manner, that their very enemies shall see it, and be forced to acknowledge it. [3.] This will, by the grace of Christ, soften the hearts of their enemies, and make them desirous to be admitted into communion with them.

(2.) Another instance of favor that Christ promises to this church is, persevering grace in the most trying times, v. 10. and this as the reward of their past fidelity ; *To him that hath, shall be given.* Observe, The Gospel of Christ is the Word of his patience ; the fruit of God's patience to a sinful world ; sets before men the exemplary patience of Christ in all his sufferings for men ; it calls those who receive it to the exercise of patience in conformity to Christ. This Gospel should be carefully kept by all that enjoy it ; in doing which they must expect an hour of temptation ; and this sometimes is more general, it comes on all the world, and when it is so, it is usually the shorter. They who keep the Gospel in a time of peace, shall be kept by Christ in an hour of temptation ; by keeping the Gospel they are prepared for the trial ; and the same divine grace that has made them fruitful in times of peace, will make them faithful in times of persecution.

4. Christ calls the church to that duty which He before promised He would enable her to do, and that is, to persevere, *to hold fast that which she had.* The motives are taken from the speedy appearance of Christ ; *'Behold, I come quickly.'*

III. The conclusion of this epistle, v. 12, 13. Here, after his usual manner, our Savior promises a glorious reward to the victorious believer, in two things :

feared, that the professed Christians at Philadelphia, have at present but little of the power of godliness ; yet we may hope, that Christ has had a few real disciples in every age, and has some even at present in this city.—'The captivity or ruin of the seven churches of Asia was consummated,' (viz. by the Ottomans,) 'A. D. 1312 ; and the barbarous lords of Ionia and Lydia still trample on the monuments of classic and Christian antiquity. In the loss of Ephesus, the Christians deplored the fall of the first angel, the extinction of the first candlestick of the Revelation : the desolation is complete ; and the temple of Diana, or the church of Mary, will equally elude the search of the curious traveller. The circus, and three stately theatres of Laodicea, are now peopled with wolves and foxes ; Sardis is reduced to a miserable village ; the God of Mohammed, without a rival, . . . is invoked in the mosques of Thyatira and Pergamos ; and the populousness of Smyrna is supported by the foreign trade of the Franks and Armenians.' Philadelphia alone had been saved *by prophecy or courage.* (Such is the insidious language of this infidel writer, who sneers at the prophecy, while he records its accomplishment !) 'At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperors, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant sons defended their religion and freedom, above fourscore years, and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies, and churches of Asia, *Philadelphia is still erect ; a column in a scene of ruins ;* a pleasing example, that the paths of honor and safety may sometimes be the same.' *Gibbon.*—Some readers may need to be informed, that Gibbon wrote a much admired history of 'The Decline of the Roman Empire,' in which he has, with great skill, infused an abundant proportion of infidelity and impiety, in a peculiarly plausible and imposing manner. [See the above, in part, p. 664.] *SCOTT.*

V. 12. *Pillar.*] 'Few texts in the N. T. are more illustrated by antiquity than this. Many inscriptions commemorating victories, have come down to us. Some were placed near, others inside the temples, to be under the protection of the gods, whose names, as well as the conqueror's, were inscribed on them ; also the names of their cities and generals. Much more do these circumstances suit the victories obtained in the games. See *West.*' *DODDR.*—'On the columns of temples it was the ancient custom to inscribe names, the honorable names of benefactors, and of their cities.' *WOODR.*—Perhaps there is allusion to the columnar images of men supporting the ancient temples. *Cut, Vol. III. Ed.*



13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

14 And unto the angel of the church <sup>w</sup> of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the <sup>x</sup> Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God:

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would <sup>y</sup> thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.

17 Because thou sayest, I <sup>z</sup> am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

18 I counsel thee to buy <sup>a</sup> of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness <sup>b</sup> do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.

19 As <sup>c</sup> many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

<sup>w</sup> or, in Laodicea. <sup>z</sup> Ho. 12:8. <sup>b</sup> c. 16:15.  
<sup>x</sup> Is. 65:16. <sup>a</sup> Is. 55:1. <sup>c</sup> He. 12:5,6.  
<sup>y</sup> I K. 18:21.

I. He shall be a monumental pillar in the temple of God; a monument of the free and powerful grace of God, a monument that shall never be defaced nor removed.

2. On this there shall be an honorable inscription; *The name of God*, in whose cause he engaged, and *the name of the city of God*, the church of God, *the new Jerusalem*, which came down from heaven; on this pillar shall be recorded all the services the believer did to the church of God. And then another part of the inscription is, *The new name of Christ, the Mediator, the Redeemer, the Captain of our salvation*; by this it will appear under whose banner this conquering believer was enlisted, under whose conduct he acted, by whose example he was encouraged, and under whose influence he fought the good fight, and came off victorious. The epistle is closed with the demand of attention; *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*, how Christ loves and values his faithful people, how He commends, and how He will crown their fidelity.

V. 14—22. We are now come to the last and worst of all the seven Asian churches,

V. 14—16. Laodicea lay to the S. of Philadelphia, and in the road from that city to Ephesus, for the seven churches were situated in a kind of circle; and the progressive journey from one to another of them, in rotation, might be made in the order of these epistles. He sent to the Laodiceans also, under the title of 'the Beginning of the creation of God,' or the *Origin, Author, and Ruler* of the whole universe, who has authority and power to dispose of all things as He sees good. Col. 1:15—17.—While they were called by his name, and reluctantly performed a scanty measure of external duties, with an evident indifference, and weariness in them, their evil tempers, unholy actions, and attachment to the world, and to its pleasures, company, and interests, dishonored Him more than their apostasy could do; and, in the event, it would be equally fatal to their own souls. Because in this manner they would give numbers an unfavorable opinion of Christianity, as if it had been an unholy religion; while others would conclude that it could afford no real satisfaction, otherwise its professors would not have been so heartless in it, or so ready to seek pleasure or happiness from the world; or that it was not of much value, seeing they would not give up anything of supposed value for the sake of it.—In short, professed Christians of this character are traitors in the camp, who are always more dangerous than open enemies; or wicked servants, who disgrace and rob their masters more, than they can do after they quit, or are turned out of, the family.—Unless, therefore, they became more 'servent in spirit, in serving the Lord,' He was determined to show his contempt and abhorrence of them, by rejecting them; even as a man, whose stomach nauseates water which is lukewarm, casts it out of his mouth with loathing and disgust. Jer. 14:19—22. 15:1—4. Zech. 11:7—9. SCOTT.

(15.) *Would, &c.* 'It simply expresses great dislike.' LOWMAN.

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the reverse of the church of Philadelphia; for as there was nothing reprov'd in that, here is nothing commended in this; and yet this was one of the seven golden candlesticks; for a corrupt church may be still a church. Here we have, as before,

I. The inscription; *to the angel of the church of Laodicea*, once a famous city near the river Lycus; it had a wall of vast compass, and three marble theatres, and, like Rome, was built on seven hills. It seems, Paul was very instrumental in planting the Gospel in this city, and from hence he wrote a letter, which he mentions, Col. 4:16. and sends salutations to them, as being not above 20 miles distant. In this city was held a council in the 4th century; but it has been long since demolished, and lies in its ruins to this day, an awful monument of the wrath of the Lamb.

Here, as the one who sends the message, our Lord Jesus styles Himself *the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God*. As such He is steady and unchangeable in all his purposes and promises; his testimony of God to men ought to be received and fully believed, and his testimony of men to God will be so believed and regarded, and will be a swift but true witness against all indifferent, lukewarm professors. As *The Beginning of the creation of God*, He is either of the first creation, and so the Beginning, i. e. the first Cause, the Creator, and the Governor of it; or of the second creation, the church; and so He is the Head of that body, the First-born from the dead, as ch. 1:5. whence these titles are taken.

II. The subject-matter; in which observe,

1. The heavy charge against this church, ministers and people, v. 15. Lukewarmness or indifference in religion is the worst temper in the world. If religion be a real thing, it is the most excellent thing, and therefore we should be in good earnest in it; if it be not a real thing, it is the vilest imposture, and we should be earnest against it; indifference is inexcusable. Christ expects that men should declare themselves in earnest either for Him or against Him.

2. A severe punishment threatened; *I will spue thee out of my mouth*. As lukewarm water turns the stomach, and provokes to a vomit, lukewarm professors turn the heart of Christ against them; therefore they shall be rejected, finally rejected; far be it from the holy Jesus to return to that which has been thus rejected.

3. We have one cause of this indifferency and inconsistency in religion assigned, and that is, self-conceit'dness and self-delusion, v. 17. Here observe, what a difference there was between the thoughts they had of themselves, and the thoughts Christ had of them.

(1.) They had high thoughts of themselves; *Thou sayest, I am rich, &c.* rich, and growing richer, and increased to that degree, as to be above all want or possibility of wanting. How careful should we be not to cheat our own souls! Doubtless, many are in hell, that once thought themselves in the way to heaven. Let us daily beg of God, that we may not be left to flatter and deceive ourselves in the concerns of our souls.

(2.) Christ had mean thoughts of them; and He was not mistaken. He knew they were *wretched and miserable, &c.* their state was such as called for pity and compassion from others. They were *poor*; really poor, when they said and thought they were *rich*; they had no provision for their souls. They were *blind*; they could not see their state, way, nor danger; yet they thought they saw; and the very light that was in them, was darkness; and then how great must that darkness be! They could not see Christ, though evidently set forth, and crucified, before their eyes; they could not see God by faith, though always present in them; they could not see death, though just before them; they could not look into eternity, though they stood on the very brink of it continually. They were *naked*; without clothing, house, or harbor for their souls; had neither the garment of justification, nor of sanctification; their nakedness both of guilt and pollution had no covering; they were without God, and He has been the Dwelling-place of his people in all ages; in Him alone the soul of man can find rest and safety, and all suitable accommodations; the soul is different from the body, and must have accommodation suitable to its nature, or else, in the midst of bodily prosperity, it will be wretched and miserable.

4. We have good counsel given by Christ to this sinful people, and that is, that they drop their vain and false opinion of themselves, and endeavor to be that really which they would seem to be, v. 18. Observe, Our Lord continues to give good counsel to those who have cast his counsels behind their backs. These people were *poor*; Christ counsels them *to buy of Him gold tried in the fire, that they might be rich*; He lets them know where they might have true riches,—from Himself. But they must buy it, Is. 55:1. Something indeed must be parted with, but it is nothing valuable, it is only sin and self-sufficiency. These people were *naked*; Christ tells them where they might have clothing, and such as would cover the shame of their nakedness. This they must receive from Him; his own imputed righteousness for justification, and the garments of holiness and sanctification. They were *blind*; and He counsels them to give up their own wisdom and reason, which are but blindness in the things of God, and re-

(15, 16.) 'True religion, which God requires and will accept, does not consist in weak and lifeless inclinations, raised a little above a state of indifference. God, in his Word, insists upon it, that we should be in earnest, "servent in spirit," having our hearts vigorously engaged in religion. Without this, we are nothing as to religion. The things of religion are so great, that there can be no suitability, in the exercises of our hearts, to their nature and importance, unless they are lively and powerful. In nothing is lukewarmness so odious. Religion is frequently compared to those exercises in which the mind and strength are much engaged, as running, wrestling, and fighting.'

PRES. EDWARDS.

(16.) Persons whose spiritual affections are deadened after being once excited, are less likely to have them excited, than those who have never been aroused; perhaps, because spiritual truths and feelings will not then have to them the additional charm and power of novelty. EP.

V. 17. *Thou art wretched, &c.* The original is peculiarly emphatical; for the article is prefixed to the first epithet, so that the passage may be thus rendered, 'Thou art the wretched one, the miserable one, &c.' and thus alone were they distinguished from all the other churches. SCOTT.

V. 18, 19. The counsels of Christ are commands, invitations, and promises.—These warnings and exhortations were not given them in indignation, but in mercy; for it was the general rule of his conduct, to 'rebuke and chasten those whom He loved.' Notes, Heb. 12:4—11. and they might consider these rebukes as tokens of his favor, for such they would prove if properly attended to. ID.

(18.) 'This 7th church cannot symbolize the last glorious state of Christianity, nor can the sad state of the Christian church in the middle ages, answer to the description of Pergamos and Thyatira.' DODDR.



20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 To him that overcometh I will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

d Ca. 5:2. f I Jn. 5:4,5. g Lu. 22:30.  
 Lu. 12:36. c. 12:11. h Jn. 16:33.  
 e Jn. 14:23. i c. 2:7.

sign themselves to his Word and Spirit; and their eyes shall be opened to see their way, their end, their duty, their true interest, and this light would be marvellous to them who were but just now delivered from the powers of darkness. This is the wise and good counsel Christ gives to careless souls; and if they follow it, He will judge Himself bound in honor to make it effectual.

5. Here is added great and gracious encouragement to this sinful people, to take the admonition and advice well that Christ had given them, v. 19, 20. He tells them, it was given them in true and tender affection,

**PRACT. OBS.** When He, who has 'the fulness of the Spirit,' and who rules over all means and instruments, reproves, counsels, or commands; his words imply the promise of all needful assistance, to those who obediently attend to them. But how many professed Christians does that heart-searching Judge, who 'knoweth our works,' behold, 'who have a name that they live,' and perhaps much celebrity in the church, and 'yet are dead in trespasses and sins!' Alas! it is to be feared, that in some cases both national establishments, regularly constituted, with rulers and teachers, but many more select religious societies, who have exact forms and notions, and who profess the truths of the Gospel with some reputation, consist almost entirely of such persons, and have very little vital godliness among them. We should, therefore, be very diligent and impartial in examining ourselves by the rules of Scripture, very earnest in prayer to the Lord to show us what we are, and very careful not to rest satisfied with the opinion of men, even of the wisest and most discerning of the human race, respecting us.—In seeking a revival, in our own souls, or in those of others, it is incumbent on us, 'to remember what we have received and heard;' that, by comparing our advantages and profession with our proficiency, we may be humbled and quickened, and so excited, 'to hold fast' what we retain, and to 'repent and do our first works.'—If we would escape those severe corrections and violent temptations, which, from time to time, are permitted to try the churches throughout the earth; we must patiently adhere to the truth and will of Christ, and shrink from no cross, with which we meet, when following his example; for an unwatchful conduct makes way for temptation, and unfits men to resist it. Alas! how many are there of the Laodicean stamp in every place! Did we suppose these epistles to be prophetic, as to the church in general, we might be induced to conclude, that the end of the world was nigh; for amidst the abounding of iniquity and infidelity, 'the love of many waxed cold;' and the state of religion, *Mat.* 24:9—14, even in this highly favored nation, too much resembles that of this 7th church. The Lord knows, that very many professors of evangelical doctrine at

Whom I love, I rebuke and chasten. Sinners ought to take the rebukes of God's Word and rod, as tokens of his good-will to their souls, and should accordingly repent, and turn to Him that smites them; better are the frowns and wounds of a friend, than the flattering smiles of an enemy. If they would comply with his admonitions, He was ready to make them good to their souls, v. 20. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock,* &c. Here, observe, Christ is graciously pleased to come to the door of the heart of sinners, to make them a kind visit; and, though He finds the heart is by nature shut against Him, by ignorance, unbelief, and sinful prejudices; yet He does not immediately withdraw, but waits to be gracious, uses all proper means to awaken them, calls by his Word, and knocks by the impulses of his Spirit on their conscience. They who open to Him, shall enjoy his presence, to their great comfort and advantage. Alas! what do careless, obstinate sinners lose, by refusing to open the door of the heart to Christ!

III. We now come to the conclusion of this epistle; and here, as before, is the promise to the overcoming believer. It implies, that, after all, it was possible, that, by the reproofs and counsels of Christ, they might be inspired with fresh zeal and vigor, and might come off conquerors in their spiritual warfare; and that, if they did so, all

former faults should be forgiven, and they should have a great reward, v. 21. Here it is intimated, that Christ Himself had met with his temptations and conflicts; that He overcame, and, as the reward of his conflict and victory, is set down on his throne, to appear in his divine glory equal to the Father; while those also who are conformed to Christ in his trials and victories, shall likewise be conformed to Him in his glory, shall sit down with Him on his throne; on his throne of judgment at the end of the world, on his throne of glory to all eternity; shining in his beams by virtue of their union with Him, and relation to Him, as the mystical body of which He is the Head. All is closed up with the general demand of attention, v. 22, putting all, to whom these epistles shall come, in mind, that what is contained in them is not of private interpretation, but intended for all the churches of Christ in all ages and parts of the world; so that they may expect God will deal with them as He dealt with these; yea, that God's dealings with his churches may afford useful instruction to the rest of the world, to put them on considering, *If judgment begin at the house of God, what shall the end of them be that do not obey the Gospel of Christ?* I Pet. 4:17. Thus end the messages of Christ to the Asian churches; the epistolary part of this book. We now come to the prophetic part.

present are 'neither cold nor hot;' except as their indifference in essential matters is strangely counterpoised by a hot and fiery spirit of disputation about things of far inferior moment! No doubt, the Laodicean state of the Christian churches, in most parts of the world, is one grand hindrance, nay, the grand hindrance of all, to the propagation of the Gospel among the nations; who can scarcely conceive that religion to be from heaven, the professors of which are so 'earthly, sensual, devilish;' and certainly the state of those who 'hold the truth,' too often 'in unrighteousness,' and generally in a lukewarm manner, forms one grand objection and prejudice against the Gospel, in the minds of numbers in this land; and gives *moral and decent* Infidels, Socinians, and Arians, their chief advantage against us. Yet the persons, who are chiefly reprehensible, are least likely to regard such admonitions; for whilst the Lord is saying, 'I would thou wert cold or hot; but because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth;' they are boasting 'that they are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing!' The Pharisaical spirit is indeed always odious and dangerous; whilst it renders men ignorant of their wretchedness, poverty, nakedness, and blindness, and insensible of the preciousness of Christ and his salvation; yet the legal Pharisee is a hopeful character, compared with those, who graft the Pharisee on an evangelical profession, and strangely connect it with Antinomian principles and laxity of morals! The gracious Savior, however, still continues to declare to all men their lost estate [and to counsel them]; may we then hear the voice of his Word and his rod, while, with infinite compassion and condescension, He continues to stand waiting and knocking at the door of our hearts; that He may enter in, and bring salvation with Him. Let us earnestly beseech Him to put forth his almighty power, and thus break down all obstacles to his own admission; and so take entire possession of our whole souls; that we may be ashamed of our folly and ingratitude, in allowing any creature to rival Him in our affections, or attempting to divide our hearts between Him and worldly objects. SCOTT.

V. 20—22. In short, to every conqueror over such strong temptations as the Laodiceans were exposed to, the Lord promised a blessing proportioned to the difficulty of the conflict; for He engaged to 'grant him to sit with Him in his throne;' and, by an inconceivable union and fellowship with Him in all his glory, and an interest in all the benefits of his mediatorial authority and power, to possess an honor and felicity which can never be explained or conceived, except by those who experience it. The same inexpressible dignity would also be bestowed on other conquerors in like difficult circumstances, for the warnings and instructions were intended for the benefit of all who heard them, in every age and nation.—The ruins of this city show that it once was most magnificent; but at present no human creature dwells there. So that the state of these seven cities, both respecting Christianity, and their outward prosperity, exactly accords to the commendation or rebuke, which were given to the churches established there, by the Spirit of prophecy, near 1800 years ago! which remarkable coincidence contains an instructive lesson, and a solemn warning to all other cities and nations favored with the Gospel, and to their rulers ecclesiastical and civil, not to neglect or trifle with so great a blessing.—Nothing, in these short epistles, is said, concerning distinct congregations in any of the cities mentioned; though some time before, there were several elders (*presbiteroi* or *episcopoi*) at Ephesus; on the other hand, nothing is introduced respecting any dependent churches in the neighboring towns, or villages, as under the authority of the angel, or presiding minister, in each of these churches. Hence it appears, that men of discordant sentiments, on the subject of ecclesiastical government, in vain attempt to support their several systems, in every part, by this portion of Scripture.

SCOTT.  
 (20.) The kingdom of Christ is described as 'a feast to all people,' Is. 25:6. *Mat.* 8:11. He is the Bread of life, and none who come to Him shall hunger or thirst, *Jn.* 6:35. *Rev.* 7:16. Yet, if Christ prepares the

Supper, it may be said, why is He represented as standing at the door and knocking for admittance? This is agreeable to the office He bears in the allegory, or parable, *Lu.* 12:33—35. He is the Bridegroom, and his servants sit in his house to a late hour, waiting his arrival; when, after the eastern customs, 'He cometh and knocketh,' and they open to Him, and He maketh them to sit down to meat with Him. See *Jn.* 14:23. ED.

(21.) *Sit with Me.* 'The throne of eastern potentates is so ample, as to admit persons highly favored to sit upon it beside their king.'

DE DIEU.

**Concluding Note.** With this chap. closes that part of the Apocalypse, in the explanation of which, as to the chief matters, most are agreed. The letters are addressed to the 7 Asiatic churches in particular; and I through them to the universal Christian church, in all times and places. Such is the figurative import of 7; and in this sense, this part of *Rev.* was understood and applied by the most ancient expositors, who have been followed by Grotius, Hammond, Daubuz, Bengel, Ep. Newton, &c. A few, among whom are the respectable names of Henry More, and Vitringa, have thought, that they have discovered a yet deeper prophetic mystery in these addresses, viz. the state of the church to the end of the world, divided into 7 successive and similar periods. Vitringa has discussed this mystical interpretation, with superior learning, and ability; but it has insuperable difficulties. No description of any of the 7 will be found to quadrate with the long period of Gothic darkness preceding the Reformation. Nor do any, especially the last, contain ought applicable to that victorious and pure period, which, from the prophecies of this sacred book, we are entitled to look forward to in the latter days. Besides, Vitringa closes the Christian church as yet to come, before its end on earth.—Bede, and some others, further, fancifully find the successive character of the universal church to be hidden beneath the Greek name of each; thus he finds *myrrh* in Smyrna, and so applies its quality, &c. Woodh.

The same careful and sober author makes the following important remark:—'The greater part of the comra. have entirely disregarded, or very little noticed the first 3 In these, as the productions of a divine interpreter, I expected to find such specimens of the symbols and language of the Apocalypse, as might materially lead to the interpretation of the remainder. I studied them accordingly, as the means of obtaining a safe *Clavis Apocalyptica*, and was not disappointed.'



CHAP. IV.

CHAP. IV. V. 1-7. Here is an account of a second vision, with which the apostle John was favored. Observe,

I. The preparation for the apostle's having this vision, 1. A door was opened in heaven. Whence, we learn, (1.) Whatever is transacted on earth, is first designed and settled in heaven. There is the model of all the works of God; all of them are there-

fore before his eye, and he lets the inhabitants of heaven see as much of them as is fit for them. (2.) We can know nothing of future events but what God is pleased to discover to us; they are within the veil, till God opens the door. But, (3.) So far as God reveals his designs, we may and ought to receive them, and not pretend to be wise above what is revealed. 2. To prepare John

2 John seeth the throne of God in heaven. 4 The four and twenty elders. 6 The four beasts full of eyes before and behind. 10 The elders lay down their crowns, and worship Him that sat on the throne.

AFTER this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which

NOTES. CHAP. IV. Prefatory Remarks on this 2d part of the Apocalypse. After the first terrestrial vision, others still more amazing were vouchsafed to the enraptured apostle by successive openings in heaven, affording new and more extended prospects of futurity: (1.) A door was opened in heaven, which gave him a view of the spiritual church and worship, 4:1. (2.) The spiritual sanctuary was opened, 11:19. (3.) Again, 15:5. (4.) Heaven itself was fully opened, 19:11. Hence, the remainder of the book naturally resolves itself into 4 celestial visions. The first and grand division, ch. 4:—11:18.; 2d, 11:19. to 14:20.; 3d, ch. 15 to 19:10.; 4th, 19:11. to 22:5. Hales.

Explication. Woodhouse seems to have pursued the best course; in taking care to fix the precise import of the symbols from their use by the old prophetic and other writers of the O. and N. T.; also, in understanding them, for the most part, in a spiritual, not a literal sense. Bp. Hurd; who gives these as the chief reasons why Woodhouse's book is the best. Woodhouse adopts the following rules:

1. As in inspired writings a mutual relation must exist, we should compare the language, symbols, predictions, of Rev. with those of former revelations; and admit only such interpretation, as should appear to have the sanction of divine authority.

2. Unless the language and symbols of Rev. should in particular passages direct, or evidently require another mode of application, the predictions are to be applied to events occurring in the progressive kingdom of Christ. For whenever sacred prophecy is seen to deviate from its peculiar object, it is in such instances only, wherein the fortunes of God's people have become necessarily involved with those of the heathen nations; and thus we find in the boundless mass of history to what kind of history prophecy is to be applied. When the people of God were to become subservient to the four monarchies, the character and succession and fates of these monarchies were predicted: but the main object continually kept in view in the sacred history, was their deliverance from these successive yokes by the superseding dominion of the Messiah. This supreme and universal dominion, gradually and finally to prevail, appears to be the grand object of all sacred prophecy: and revolutions of worldly power, among the Gentiles, seem noticed only at those times when they impede or promote it. Sec Hurd, serm. 2. 3. And the extension of divine prophecy to the nations, may be observed to take place in exact proportion to their increasing connexion with the Jews. First Moab, Edom, Amalek, the Philistines, &c. are noticed; then Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, Egypt, &c.; afterwards the 4 great monarchies; lastly, the Gog and Magog, the distant and barbarous nations.

3. As Christ's kingdom, the object of the apocalyptic prophecies, is spiritual, so they are to be understood in a spiritual sense. Spiritual are to be compared with spiritual, as says Paul, 1 Cor. 2:13. It is a kingdom not of this world, John 18:36. not established by the means and apparatus of worldly power and pomp, Lu. 17:20. not with observation, nor bearing the external ensigns of royalty; but governing the inward man, by possession of the ruling principles; the kingdom of God, says our Lord, Lu. 17:21. is within you.

'Such a kingdom,' continues Woodh., (and it is an admirable remark,) 'may be in a great degree independent of the fates and revolutions of empires; affected only by those changes in the political world which are calculated to produce the increase or decline of religious knowledge, and of pure profession and practice. Wars, therefore, and conquests, and revolutions of vast extent, and of great political import, may be supposed to take place, even in the Christian world, without becoming the proper object of Christian prophecy. The inhabitants of the Christian world may be subdued by a ferocious conqueror; the sufferings of the vanquished may be such as result from ferocious conquest: the faithful servants of Christ may undergo their common share in this calamity, may suffer grievously in their property and persons; yet, in such times of general distress, if their religion be not denied them; if they enjoy those consolations, which, under such afflictions, their religion is designed to bestow; if, corrected by the awful visitation, not only they, but Christians of looser practice, and the inhabitants of the earth in general, shall be seen to turn to their God, and allow to his purifying religion its divine influence on their hearts and lives:—shall we expect, that such a revolution should be predicted as a calamity, as a woe? Our conception of the nature of Christ's kingdom, (the object of such prophecy,) will determine us to answer in the negative. But if such a conqueror, after having subdued the bodies of men, should proceed to extend his usurped dominion over their souls; should require them to renounce their allegiance to the heavenly King; to deny their God and Redeemer,—then will succeed a conflict of another nature, and a resistance deserving the notice and interference of divine prophecy. Then will be employed those arms, which properly belong to this spiritual warfare, Eph. 6:16; then will the kingdom of God be truly advanced or diminished.'

'In adopting the rule, I have obeyed the Scripture; which requires a spiritual interpretation of its mysteries, 1 Cor. 2:12-15.; they are not to be taken according to the bare letter, 2 Cor. 3:6. nor in a carnal or worldly acceptance, Jn. 6:26-63. The warfare of the Christian kingdom. (the subject of these prophecies,) is not to be carried on by worldly arms and battles, Jn. 18:36. they who entertain such notions of this religion, "know not what manner of spirit it is of," Lu. 9:55. As the Captain of our salvation conquered by suffering, and refused the sword of Peter, and the legions of angels, ready for his defence, Heb. 2:10. Mat. 27:52-55. so neither by external force must his followers expect to prevail. The kingdom of God is not advanced by crusades; nor is the sword of man employed successfully to seat the Messiah on his throne. To obtain his destined dominion, Christ must reign in the hearts and consciences of his far-extended subjects. His reign is advanced when Christian principles, when faith, and righteousness, and charity, abound. It is retarded when [selfishness,] ignorance, impurity, idolatrous superstition, infidelity, and wickedness prevail.'

As the prophecies of the O. T., interpreted carnally by the Jews, to

designate a worldly conqueror, have been seen to lead that infatuated people into egregious error; so, in these days of superior light, when, by experience, as well as divine direction; a spiritual interpretation is so clearly recommended and enforced, it seems extraordinary that any sober and well-informed Christian can look to any other.' Woodh. Indeed, principles are eternal, and infinite, while occurrences are but for a moment, and many a year may pass over a nation, as over an individual, while not one hour of spiritual progress is made. Christians, however, are beginning to view in prophecy, and record in history, not battles and pomps, but the silent march of principles, giving (a thing hitherto the reverse) lines to one, and pages, as is fit, to the other.

4. The 4th rule adopted by Woodh., is, Not to attempt the particular explanation of those prophecies which remain yet to be fulfilled.

Rev. E. Smith remarks, 'One thing is found in the prophetic part of the Rev. of essential interest in its correct exposition.' It is this, that the prophetic part is found in two great and general divisions; each having a plan peculiar to itself. After a notable preparation, in chs. 4 and 5. for an unfolding of the events of futurity, prophecies in the first division commence, in ch. 6. with the opening of the 1st seal, giving an event near the commencement of the Christian era. It thence moves onward through a period of about 2000 years, and closes in the end of ch. 11. in presenting the battle of the great day of God, under the 7th trumpet, and the millennial kingdom of Christ.

'A second general division then commences, like the first, with a plan peculiar to itself,—commencing with the Christian era, and passing onward, as did the first division, and others, not there noted. When it reaches the millennium, where the first division closes, and gives the battle of the great day of God, and the millennium; it thence proceeds to describe that happy period; an apostasy at the close of it; the general judgment; and heaven.'

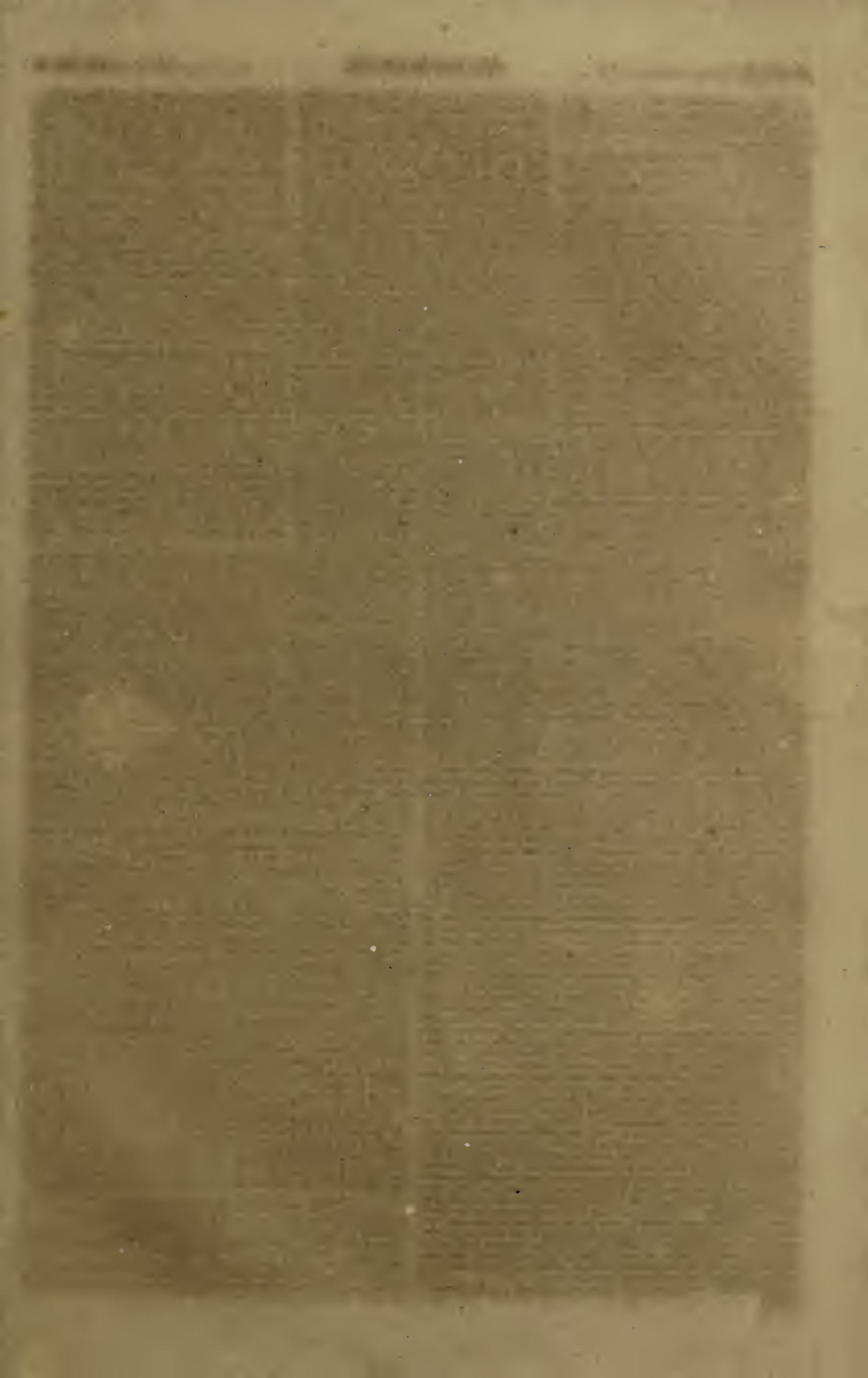
'This duality of courses over the same period, affords a most happy facility in the exposition of the book. Place the two courses of the divisions side by side; and place by them, as a third column, the history of the church, internal and external, during the same period; add these, with the knowledge of the prophetic, figurative language of the Rev., together with the aid furnished in the prophecy of Daniel, of which a portion of the Rev. is but an inspired exposition,—and a pious, intelligent expositor is happily prepared for his work. E. Smith: whom see, on the 'duty, benefits, and encouragement of a devout and diligent study' of Rev. pp. 23-29.

The same writer pertinently asks... 'May one decide... that no notice is taken in Rev. of the flight of our pilgrim fathers [ &c. ] to this new world, and planting here a cause of salvation, which was to convert the world? no notice taken of the flight of the present missionary angel round the earth to preach the Gospel to all nations? ... To which we may add, that expositors seem also to have quite overlooked another combination of the beast and dragon, a union of oppressive civil power with ecclesiastical despotism, which compels idolatrous regard to its 'autocratic' temporal head, crushing civil liberty and freedom of conscience together,—we mean the portentous power of that vast northern empire which overhangs the west and east, whose imperial will may soon be able to dictate to Europe, on the one hand, and China on the other! Why, too, forget China, containing from a third to a half of the population of the earth? Ed.

Vocabulary of the Symbol. Language of Prophecy; (from HENRY, abr.)

Table with two columns: Symbol and Interpretation. Includes sections for 'The natural world temporally considered', 'The natural world ecclesiastically considered', and 'A wild beast temporally considered'. Symbols include sun, moon, stars, earth, mountains, trees, waters, seas, floods, eclipses, earthquakes, etc.









Zodiac of Denderah, showing the symbols in use in the age of the first Cesars.

Rev. ch. 4: end.





I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come <sup>b</sup> up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

2 And immediately I was in <sup>c</sup> the Spirit: and, behold, a throne <sup>d</sup> was set in heaven, and one <sup>e</sup> sat on the throne.

3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine-stone: and *there was* a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

4 And round about the throne were four and twenty <sup>f</sup> seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white <sup>g</sup> raiment; and they had on their heads crowns <sup>h</sup> of gold.

b c. 11:12. d Is. 6:1. Je. 17: f c. 11:16.  
c Eze. 3:12-14. 12. Eze. 1:26, 28. g c. 3:4, 5.  
c. 17:3. 21:10. e Da. 7:9. He. 8:1. h ver. 10.

for the vision, a trumpet was sounded, and he was called up into heaven, to have a sight of

the things to be hereafter: into the third heavens.

3. To prepare for this vision, the apostle was in the Spirit; in a rapture, as before, *ch. 1:10*. all bodily actions and sensations were for a time suspended, and his spirit was possessed with the spirit of prophecy, and wholly under a divine influence. The more we abstract ourselves from all corporeal things, the more fit we are for communion with God. We should, as it were, forget the body, when we go in before the Lord in duty, and be willing to drop it, that we may go up to Him in heaven. This was the apparatus to the vision. Now observe,

II. The vision itself; it begins with the strange sights the apostle saw, such as these.

1. A throne set in heaven, the seat of honor, and authority, and judgment. 2. A glorious One on the throne; One who filled it, God, who is here described by those things that are most pleasant and precious in our world; not by any human features, so as to be represented by an image, but only by his transcendent brightness. The jasper is a transparent stone, which yet offers to the eye a variety of the most vivid colors, signifying the glorious perfections of God; the

sardine-stone is red, signifying the justice of God; that essential attribute which He never divests Himself of, but gloriously exerts in the government of the world, and especially of the church, through our Lord Jesus Christ. 3. A rainbow about the throne, like unto an emerald, *v. 3*. The rainbow was the seal and token of the covenant of providence God made with Noah and his posterity, and is a fit emblem of that covenant of promise God has made with Christ as the Head of the church, and all his people in Him; which covenant is as the waters of Noah unto God, an everlasting covenant ordered in all things, and sure. This rainbow looked like the emerald; the most prevailing color was a pleasant green, to show the reviving and refreshing nature of the new covenant. 4. He saw four and twenty seats round about the throne, not empty, but filled with four and twenty elders, presbyters, representing, very probably, the whole church of God, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament state; not the ministers of the church, but rather the representatives of the people. Their sitting denotes their honor, rest, and satisfac-

A wild beast ecclesiastically considered.

A wild beast denotes . . . } A persecuting church having temporal authority.  
A horn of such a beast . . . } Temporal or spiritual power.  
Two-horned beast . . . } A church having temporal and spiritual power.  
The head . . . } The governing polity.  
The body . . . } The constituents of such an empire.

A city, &c.

The great city Babylon denotes . . . } The Roman empire, secular and ecclesiastical.  
The streets . . . } Kingdoms.  
Ten streets . . . } The ten kingdoms of the modern Roman empire.  
The throne . . . } The tyrannical domination of the reigning head.  
The merchants and shipmasters . . . } The great men of the earth.  
The articles of trade, such as gold, silver, &c. } Spiritual traffic in relics, masses, absolutions, &c.  
The holy city denotes . . . } The church of Christ.  
The temple with its inner courts } The spiritual church.  
The daily sacrifice . . . } The prayers and praises of God's people.  
The outer court . . . } Christians in name, but Gentiles in practice.  
Treading it under foot . . . } Introducing pagan heresies and apostasies.  
Profaning the sanctuary, and abolition of the daily sacrifice } Setting up the apostasy of desolation, or of pagan abominations.  
An olive tree, or a candlestick . . . } A church.  
Oil, lamps . . . } The graces of the Holy Spirit.  
Incense . . . } The merits of Christ giving efficacy to prayer.  
The ark of the testament . . . } The holy Scriptures.

A woman.

A woman denotes . . . } A community, or body politic.  
A chaste woman . . . } The true church, or Lamb's wife.  
A harlot or adulteress . . . } An apostate or idolatrous church.  
The flesh of such a harlot . . . } Her temporal possessions.  
Her intoxicating cup . . . } Her seducing arts.  
Her riding a wild beast . . . } Her influence over the temporal empire.  
A woman drunken with the blood of the saints } A persecuting church.

A vine and corn.

A vine denotes . . . } The church.  
A vine bearing good fruit . . . } A faithful church.  
A vine bearing sour grapes . . . } A corrupt church.  
The treading of the wine-press . . . } The effusion of God's wrath upon apostates, &c.  
A vineyard enclosed . . . } A church hedged in from the world.  
A vineyard with broken enclosures . . . } A degenerate church.  
A wilderness . . . } Spiritual barrenness, or a state of affliction.  
The wilderness and solitary place made glad } Conversion and prosperity.  
Corn denotes . . . } The seed of the gospel-kingdom.  
A field of corn . . . } The church.  
A harvest . . . } Mercy or wrath, according to circumstances.  
The harvest of the earth being ripe . . . } The time of judgment or mercy being come.  
A sickle . . . } Judgments.

Various symbols.

Thunder and lightning denote . . . } Wars and hostile invasions.  
Locusts and caterpillars . . . } Destroying armies.  
Tempestuous winds . . . } Wars and invasions.  
White and clean robes . . . } Righteousness and prosperity.  
Sackcloth . . . } Humiliation and persecution.  
Nakedness . . . } Dishonor.  
A yoke—A famine . . . } Spiritual bondage—Spiritual sterility.  
A day . . . } A year.  
A year . . . } 360 years.  
A week—A month . . . } Seven years—Thirty years.  
Angels . . . } Divine agents, celestial or terrestrial.  
The two witnesses . . . } The true church.  
Dragon . . . } The devil.  
Red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns } The devil, influencing the councils of the empire.  
A Time—Times . . . } 360 years—The double of a time.  
Time, times, and half a time . . . } 1260 years.  
Rainbow . . . } God's faithfulness and mercy.  
Parturition . . . } The birth of a community, civil or ecclesiastical.  
Life . . . } Moral or political existence.  
Sore . . . } Calamity, natural or moral.  
Sickness . . . } A low state of moral or political health.  
Death . . . } Extinction of moral or political existence.  
Slaying . . . } The infliction of moral or political death.  
Revival . . . } The recovery of moral or political life, once lost.  
Resurrection . . . } The resurrection of a body, moral or political.

The lying unburied for a short time . . . } Its being dead or subdued for a short time.  
Ascension to heaven . . . } Power and authority.  
To measure the temple of God . . . } To take it under protection.  
To seal or set a mark . . . } Separation to his service who seals.  
To devour flesh . . . } Plundering of substance.  
To eat . . . } To meditate.  
To seal up a prophecy . . . } Allowing it to remain unintelligible till accomplished.  
Third part—Fourth part . . . } Limitation, in opposition to universal.

From Daubuz, Faber, T. H. Horne, Hutcheson, and Wemyss.

V. 1-3. When the Lord Jesus had dictated to his apostle the preceding epistles, and thus instructed him to write 'the things which then were,' a short interruption of his visions seems to have taken place. But afterwards, looking and waiting for further discoveries, he beheld 'a door opened in heaven,' the holy habitation of God; and then another vision was introduced, which made way for his being shown 'things which must be hereafter.' 1:12-20. For this *ch.* and the next constitute an introduction to the prophetic part of the book, especially to the 'opening of the seals,' in *chs. 6 and 7. In the spirit.* It is not to be supposed, that any external objects were presented to the senses of the prophet, on such occasions: but, the natural use of all their faculties being suspended, their minds were supernaturally impressed with the ideas of such things, as were particularly suited to illustrate the subjects, which they were employed to reveal. *Ez. 1:1-3. 8:1-4. 11:22-25. Acts 22:17-21. 2 Cor. 12:1-6.* It should not therefore be supposed, that the objects, afterwards mentioned, have a real existence in heaven: but they were visionary emblems, suited to give proper instruction to the apostle, and to his readers: and the chief business of the expositor is to develop the meaning of them, and, as it were, to read the hieroglyphics. This [the throne and He that sat upon it] was emblematical of the universal, absolute, and eternal dominion of JEHOVAH; and of his exaltation far above all creatures, as their great Creator and Sovereign Lord. 4-11. 5: 7:9-17. *Is. 6:1-4. Ez. 1:26-28.* There is throughout these visions an allusion to the temple, its furniture, and services. 'The rainbow' was a well-known emblem of the covenant of grace. On [the signification of these emblems] the author writes with great diffidence. He conceives, that all the scriptural emblems have some distinct meaning, especially those of this book: but, whether he has pointed out that meaning, or not, in general, and in particular instances, forms another question. See the 'Symbolical Dictionary,' given in the 'Supplement' to this Commentary. Ed.

(1.) After this.] 'Rather, after these things: comp. on 1:19. A new inspiration is here mentioned, as it is a new vision; as the best comrs. are agreed. Door opened.] Comp. *Ez. 1:1. 10:1. Mat. 3:16. Ac. 7:56. Daubuz.* WOODH.

(2.) In the spirit signifies, to be under a strong and supernatural impulse, caused by the miraculous operation of the Spirit of God acting on the imagination in such a manner, as to open extraordinary scenes, which had not any exact external archetype. It is much illustrated by Ezekiel's trance. (*Ez. 8:1.*) during which he was insensible to all that passed around him. Ed. 'To the visions by Moses, *Ex. 14:9. 10.* by Isaiah, *6:1. 2.* by Ezekiel, *1:1. 26.* by Daniel, *7:9.* this has a general resemblance, but such a dissimilarity, as shows they are not copied from each other, but from one common original, varied by circumstances, as portraits of the same person will appear, when drawn by different hands and in varied attitudes. Jasper.] A pellucid, watery gem, so *Pliny*: it has at 21:11. the epithet, crystal-like, which *Schl.* refers to the diamond. The clear brilliancy of the divine appearance, seems to have suggested this likeness at first to the prophet's mind; but there was a fiery tinge in it, as *Ez. 1:27.* so he adds, perhaps, the sardine, which (so *Pliny*) has a fiery glow.' WOODH.—'We are not to suppose these are real, existing beings, though represented as such.' DODD.

(3.) 'The rainbow would be seen in a circular form, could the whole of it come into view at the same time in our hemisphere.' *Vitr.*—Such circular halos are sometimes seen around the moon in our climate. The 'bow,' as at *Ez. 1:27.* indicates a brightness too great to be transmitted by the atmosphere around it, and thus compelled to add to its beauty and glory. Ed.—'The circular session of the 24, is entirely new, (*Vitr.*) though there is an intimation of it, *Is. 24:23.* where for "ancients," the Sept. has the word of the text, *presbuteroi, elders.* Perhaps they represent the spiritual priesthood of both Testaments, and so *Mede.* See *Woodh. Comp. 1:5. Ps. 8:5. Rev. 2:10. 3:5, 12, 21. Mat. 19:28. Dan. 12:3. 1 Cor. 6:3.* Ed.

V. 4, 5. The 24 seats, or thrones of an inferior order, on which were seated 24 elders, are generally allowed to have been the emblematic rep-



5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

6 And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.

8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

i c. 8:5. 16:13. k c. 1:4. 10:14.  
j Ge. 15:17. l c. 15:2. n Is 6:2, &c.  
Ex. 37:23. m Eze. 1:5, &c. o have no rest.  
Zec. 4:2.

tion; their sitting about the throne, signifies their relation to God, their nearness to Him, the sight and enjoyment they have of

representatives of the whole church of God, both under the old and the new dispensation. The number of these elders may refer to the 24 courses, into which the priests were divided, 1 Chr. 24: or to the 12 patriarchs, and 12 apostles, as the heads of the Old and the New Test. churches. SCORR.—There were also 24 courses of sacred Levite musicians.

(5.) Lamps.] Not lamp-stands, as before; these are explained, Zech. 4:1, 7—10, as the Holy Spirit; of this the antitypes of the lamp-bearers are the receptacles. See Woodh.

V 6—8. Various opinions have been held concerning 'the four beasts,' or 'living creatures;' as it certainly ought to have been tr., in order to adhere to the exact meaning of the original, and to preserve the truth of the emblem. The unaccountable notion, that the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead was represented by them, while two emblems were given of the Son, because of his incarnation and sacrifice, can have no other support, than the names which have sanctioned it; for this plain reason; that 'these living creatures' are, throughout, represented as the principal worshippers, not as the Object of worship. Nor can the far more general and plausible opinion, that they were representatives of the angels, as the cherubim in Ezekiel's vision evidently were, be supported by any sufficient proof. Ez. 1:5—14, 10:1, 2. Angels indeed are personally introduced, in the subsequent part of this vision; but 'these living creatures' are spoken of, as adoring 'the Lamb that was slain, who had redeemed them to God with his blood.' 5:3—10. They must therefore, undeniably, represent some part of the church of redeemed sinners, of the human race. Perceiving this, some expositors have supposed them to be representatives of the whole church, and the 24 elders of its rulers and pastors: but it is surely far more reasonable to reverse this arrangement, and to conclude that 'the four living creatures' represent a part, the 24 elders the whole, of the church, than that the larger number should represent only a part, and the smaller the whole. In short, it seems evident that they were emblems of the true ministers of Christianity, in the different parts of the earth, through successive generations.—Ezekiel, being about to predict providential dispensations respecting the nation of Israel, had a vision emblematical of the ministry of angels, by which those events would be accomplished: but John's predictions relating chiefly to the church in the different regions of the earth, and to the affairs of nations only in subserviency to it, he had a vision emblematical of the ministers of religion, by whom the interests of the church would principally be maintained. As the heavenly temper of mind, and the spiritual endowments which qualify men for this arduous work, accord in great measure, though in a far lower degree, to the affections and endowments of angels; it is not at all wonderful to find a coincidence in the hieroglyphics, by which they were represented. But each cherub, in Ezekiel's vision, had four faces; while John's 'living creatures' had the same four appearances, divided among them; for angels may be supposed to possess singly the several excellences, which are given to many of the most eminent ministers.—In various particulars, the emblem teaches what true and able ministers are and do: and thus it serves to instruct and remind them of their important duties.—(6.) Of glass.] *Hyalinē*. 15:2. *Hyalos*, 21:18, 21. The laver at the tabernacle was formed of the brass, which had been used as mirrors by the women of Israel. Ex. 39:8.—The brazen sea was, no doubt, highly polished; but this sea was formed of materials transparent as crystal; for the vessel seems here to be intended—Beasts.] *Zōa*. Any living creatures may be intended. *Beast, Therion*. Dan. 7:3. *Sept*. Se.

(6.) A sea.] The best MSS. add *hōs, as*; and so *Griesh*. As it were, a sea, glassy, like unto crystal. [It seems to refer, says *Scott*, 'to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness,' [represented by the water of baptism,] in which all the spiritual priesthood must wash, previously to their acceptable, spiritual sacrifices.'] *Vitr.* refers it to the pavement, Ez. 122. Ex. 24:10. Rev. 15:2. but St. John calls it here a sea, and not a pavement; before, not under the throne; and, at 22:1. water is also represented, as here, by crystal. *Four beasts.*] 'I. e. living creatures.' No part of the Apocalypse has afforded a greater variety of opinions,' says *Woodh*, whom see, pp. 111—113. 'By referring to other passages

Him, and their continual regard to Him. They are clothed in white raiment, the righteousness of the saints, both imputed and inherent; they had on their heads crowns of gold, signifying the honor and authority given them of God, and the glory they have with him. All these may in a lower sense be applied to the gospel-church on earth, in its worshipping assemblies; and in the higher sense, to the church triumphant in heaven. 5. He perceived lightnings and voices proceed out of the throne; i. e. the awful declarations God makes to his church of his sovereign will and pleasure. 6. He saw seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are explained to be the seven Spirits of God, v. 5. See on 1:4. 7. He saw before the throne a sea of glass, like unto crystal. In the temple there was a great vessel of brass filled with water, in which the priests were to wash when they went to minister before the Lord, called a sea; so in the gospel-church, the sea or laver for purification is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, who cleanses from all sin, even from sanctuary-sins. 8. He saw four animals, living creatures, between the throne and the circle of the elders, (as seems most probable,) standing between God and the people; these seem to signify the ministers of the Gospel, not only because of this their situation nearer to God, and between Him and the elders or representatives of the Christian people, and because fewer in number

than the people; but as they are here described, (1.) By their many eyes, denoting sagacity, vigilance, and circumspection. (2.) By their lion-like courage, their great labor and diligence, in which they resemble the ox; their prudence and discretion becoming men, and their [moving on God's errands, with alacrity, as well as their] sublime affections and speculations, by which they mount up with wings like eagles toward heaven, v. 7. and these wings full of eyes within, to show that in all their meditations and ministrations they are to act with knowledge, and especially should be well acquainted with themselves and the state of their own souls, and see their own concern in the great doctrines and duties of religion, watching over their own souls as well as the souls of the people. (3.) By their continual employment, and that is, praising God, and not ceasing to do so night and day. The elders sit and are ministered unto; they stand, and minister, they rest not night and day. This now leads to the other part of the representation.

V. 8—11. We have considered the sights the apostle saw in heaven: now let us observe the songs he heard there. 1. He heard the song of the four living creatures, of the ministers of the church, which refers to the prophet Isaiah's vision, ch. 6. And here, they adore (1.) One God, the One only, the Lord God Almighty. (2.) The three Holies in this one God, the Holy Father,

in this sacred book, where mention is made of these *zōa*, (5:6, 14, 6:1, &c. 7:11, 15:7.) it plainly appears, that their station is, as in part here described, "round about the throne." They encompassed it on every side, and are within the encircling body of the elders. But in this passage, they are said also to be "in the midst of the throne,"—the position of the great Father, and afterwards (ch. 5.) of the Lamb, in union with Him; and it can only be applied to the *zōa*, as expressing their very near approach to the throne. Like the cherubim, in the midst of which the God of Israel, under the O. T., is represented as sitting, they seem to occupy a part of the throne.—But this passage can be understood only by comparing it with similar descriptions of the appearance of the divine glory to mortal eyes, as delivered in the prophecies of Is. 6. and Ez. 1. In Is. angelic beings, called by him *seraphim*, surround the divine throne, and each of them has 6 wings, like those in the Apocalypse, and they sing *Holy, Holy, Holy*, in the same manner. In the vision of Ez., the angelic beings are, like them, 4 in number; and, together with one human appearance, they have the faces of the 4 animals to which these in Rev. are likened. And Ez. has pronounced that the *zōa* he saw and described, were *cherubim*, and that he knew them to be such.—These two descriptions, though differing from each other in the name, and in some few particulars, are of the same divine original. The variety is because the throne in Is. is stationary, in Ez. movable. But in Rev. they are brought to a closer similitude, by a common measure of comparison resembling them both. This comparison of the 3 visions, so necessary to a right understanding of the *zōa* in Rev., may be seen to advantage in *Vitr.*—As to the objection to consider them thus,—as *cherubim* or *seraphim*, the most exalted of created beings, the nearest to the throne of the Almighty King, his inseparable attendants, not *angels* (messengers), but superior beings, of angelic nature,—drawn from the expression 5:9. we must restore the text from the MSS. of highest authority, which read, 5:10. *them*, instead of us. Besides, they sing their song in behalf of the universal church, uniting with the elders, to whom, as ministers from the Christian church on earth, this song more peculiarly belongs. 4:9, 5:8—14. *Woodh.*—*Newc.* explains, 'the whole body of the church, who serve God in heaven, with the strength of affection, perseverance, reason, swiftness.' It is the hypothesis of Dr. J. R. Park, that, in these 'living creatures,' the lion is symbolical of the Hebrew race, from which the Messiah was Himself descended, styled, ch. 5. 'the Lion of the tribe of Judah.' The calf he applies to the Pagan race, as a noted object of Egyptian worship. The 3d creature, represents, he thinks, the race of Ishmael; and the eagle, the Romans. See his book.

(7.) 'The ancients dealt much in hieroglyphics: Middleton gives a gem, having a man's face, an elephant's head, a peacock and a sceptre joined together. This he thinks symbolized Socrates, whom the man's face resembled; while the other figures showed the beautiful and divine images in his mind. The peacock would mean the beauty of his virtue; the sceptre, his majesty and authority; the elephant, the strength and fortitude of his mind. Or, it may express the philosopher, especially the Stoic's wise man, who was furnished with all kinds of virtues and perfections, being the only beautiful and valiant man, and a king, whatever his circumstances might happen to be.' *Doddr.*—Comp. the 'Symbol Dictionary,' given in the 'Supplement'; also the list of scripture-symbols prefixed to the notes on this ch.; and compare the engraving there given of the famous Zodiac of Dendera, which contains a large proportion of the symbols in use in the apostolic age, especially in Egypt. the mother of mysteries. This tablet was taken from the ceiling of a temple in Dendera, the ancient Tentyris, in Egypt, and is supposed to represent the horoscope of Octavius Cæsar. Much controversy was aroused on its removal to the hall of the great French Library at Paris, where it now is; and some, taking it for a zodiac, made out by labored calculations, that the date of its drawing must overture the Bible account of the deluge. The premature triumph of the infidel was checked, however, when Champollion read the name of the Cæsar, (see repeated again and again in our ent.) who caused his own nativity to be east, and here drawn out. See the Encyc. Am. &c.

Id.



9 And when those beasts give glory, and honor, and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

#### CHAP. V.

<sup>1</sup> The book sealed with seven seals: 9 which only the Lamb that was slain is worthy to open. <sup>12</sup> Therefore the elders praise Him, 9 and confess that He redeemed them with his blood.

AND I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

p c. 5:14. r c. 5:12. a Eze. 2:9,10.  
q ver. 4. s Col. 1:16. b Is. 29:11.

the Holy Son, and the Holy Spirit; and these are one infinitely Holy and Eternal Being, who sits upon the throne, and lives for ever and ever. In this glory the prophet saw Christ, and spake of Him. 2. He heard the adorations of the 24 elders, that is, of the Christian people represented by them; the ministers led, and the people followed, in the praises of God, v. 10, 11. Here, observe, (1.) The Object of their worship, *Him that sat on the throne*, the eternal, ever-living God. (2.) The acts of adoration. *They fell down before Him that sat on the throne*; they discovered the most profound humility, reverence, and godly fear. *They cast down their crowns before the throne*; they gave God the glory of the holiness where-with He had crowned their souls on earth, and the honor and happiness with which he crowns them in heaven. (3.) The words of adoration: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power, v. 11.*

PRACT. OBS. The Lord Jesus, 'having overcome the sharpness of death, hath opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers;' and if we look unto Him by faith, and obediently attend to his voice, whilst He calls us to 'set our affections on things above;' we shall, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, behold the glory of our reconciled God on his 'throne of grace;' he encouraged by the engagements of his everlasting covenant, and draw nigh in humble boldness with our worship; notwithstanding the terrors of his justice, and the awful curses of his brok-

V. 9—11. In the next ch. we shall find the same company, worshipping the Son, as the Redeemer of sinners, and joined by the angels in that sacred service. 4:8—11. SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. V. V. 1—4. *A book.*] Ez. 2:9, 10. It appeared as a roll, consisting of several parchments, according to the custom of those times; and though it was supposed to be written within, yet nothing could be read till the seals were loosed. It was afterwards found to contain 7 parchments, or small volumes, each of which was separately sealed: but if all the seals had been on the outside, nothing could have been read till they had all been loosed; whereas the loosing of each seal was followed by some discovery of the contents of the roll: yet the appearance on the outside seems to have indicated, that it consisted of 7, or at least of several parts. ID.

(1.) 'The most judicious comtrs. are generally agreed on this ch.' WOODH. *Right, &c.*] 'As being of divine original, and infallibly true.' *Bl. Book.*] Most of these volumes, or books (for the ancients arranged them both in leaves and rolls, note end of Jer.) were only written inside, those written outside also were called *opisthographoi*, as here. So *Bl.*; who thinks the notice of its being written on both sides, is to intimate 'the copiousness of the matter.' *Sealed.*] Mede supposes them to

Observe, They do not say, *We give Thee glory, and honor, and power*; for what can any creature pretend to give unto God? But they say, *Thou art worthy to receive glory*. In this they tacitly acknowledge, that God was exalted far above all blessing and praise; He was worthy to receive glory, but they were not worthy to praise, nor able to do it according to his infinite excellences. (4.) We have the ground and reason of their adoration, which is threefold. He is the Creator of all things, the first Cause; and none but the Creator of all things should be adored. He is the Preserver of all things, and his preservation is a continued creation. He is the final Cause of all things; *for thy pleasure they are and were created*. It was his will and pleasure to create all things; He was not put on it by the will of another; there is no such thing as a subordinate creator, that acts under, and by the will and power of another; and if there were, he ought not to be worshipped. As God made all things at his pleasure, He made them for his pleasure; to deal with them as He pleases, and to glorify Himself by them one way or other. Though He delights not in the death of sinners, but rather that they should turn and live, yet *He hath made all things for Himself*, Prov. 16: 4. Now if these be true and sufficient grounds for religious worship, as they are proper to God alone, Christ must needs be God, one with the Father and Spirit, and be worshipped as such; for we find the same causality ascribed to Him, Col. 1: 16, 17. *All things were created by Him, and for Him, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist*.

CHAP. V. V. 1—5. Hitherto the apostle had only seen the great God, Governor of all things; now, 1. He is favored with a sight of the model and methods of his government, as written in a book He holds in his hand; and this we are now to consider as shut up and sealed in the hand of God. Observe, (1.) The designs and methods of Divine Providence toward the church and the world are stated and fixed; as that which is written in a book. The great design is laid, every part adjusted, all determined, and everything passed into decree, and made a matter of record. The original and first draft of this book, is the book of God's decrees, laid up in his own eternal mind: but there is a transcript of so much as was necessary to be known, in the book of the Scripture in general, in the prophetic part of Scripture especially, and in this prophecy in particular. (2.) God holds this book in his right hand, to declare the authority of the book, and his readiness and resolution to execute all the counsels and purposes therein recorded. (3.) This book

in the hand of God, is shut up and sealed; it is known to none but Himself, till He allows it to be opened. (4.) *It is sealed with seven seals*. This tells us with what inscrutable secrecy the counsels of God are laid, and also points to us seven several parts of this book of God's counsels; each of which seems to have its particular seal, and, when opened, discovers its proper events; these seven parts are not unsealed and opened at once, but successively, one scene of Providence introducing another, and explaining it, till the whole mystery of God's counsel and conduct be finished in the world.

2. He heard a proclamation made concerning this sealed book. (1.) The crier was a *strong angel*; who seems to come out not only as a crier, but as a champion, with a challenge to any, or all the creatures, to try the strength of their wisdom in opening the counsels of God; thus he cried with a loud voice, that every creature might hear. (2.) The challenge proclaimed, was, v. 2. 'If any creature thinks himself sufficient either to explain or execute the counsels of God, let him stand forth, and make the attempt.' (3.) None could accept the challenge; none in heaven; none of the glorious, holy angels, though before the throne of God, and the ministers of his providence; none on earth; no man, none of the magicians and soothsayers; none of the prophets of God, any further than He reveals his mind to them: none under the earth; none of the fallen angels, none of the spirits of men departed, though they should return to our world, can open this book. Satan himself, with all his subtlety, cannot do it; the creatures cannot open it, nor look on it; they cannot read it, God only can do it.

3. He felt a great concern about this matter, so that he *wept much*; it was a great disappointment to him. Observe, Those who have seen most of God are most desirous to see more; those who have seen his glory, desire to know his will; and they may be too eager and too hasty to look into the mysteries of divine conduct; so much so, as to be greatly grieved that their desires are not presently answered.

4. The apostle was comforted, and encouraged to hope this sealed book should yet be opened. God had revealed it to his church; *one of the elders*. God can make his people to instruct and inform their teachers when He pleases. It was the Lord Jesus Christ who would do the thing; called, *the Lion of the tribe of Judah*, according to his human nature; alluding to Jacob's prophecy, Gen. 49: 10. and *the root of David*, according to his divine nature, though a branch of David, according to the flesh. He who is a middle Person, God and Man, and bears the office of Mediator between God and man, is fit

en law. For blessed are all they who belong to his church, in heaven, or on earth. If we are baptized with the illuminating, purifying, and transforming influences of the Holy Spirit, washed in the pure fountain of the Redeemer's blood, and clothed in the sacerdotal robe of his righteousness; we shall ere long have done with conflict and suffering, receive the victor's honorable crown, and join in the rapturous adoration of the heavenly worshippers. (Note, 7:13—17. P. O. 9—17.) SCOTT.



have been arranged somewhat as given in the cut. *Seven.*] 'I.e. an abundance of seals showing the difficulty of arriving at the knowledge within it.' WOODH. Ed. 'The 6 first seals give a course of judgments on Pagan Rome, from the last quarter of the 1st cent., till about the close of the 1st quarter of the 4th. The 4 first trumpets then commence a following course of judgments on the Christian empire, after the revolution under Constantine, from Paganism; fulfilled in the northern invasions of the empire, till the dethroning of its last emperor Momylus. The 1st of the 3 woe-trumpets then sounded, in the rise of Mohammedism, the 2d, in the rise of the grand supporter of it,—the Turkish empire. The 3d will destroy Antichrist. And the vials of the 7 last plagues, in the 2d division, [see pref. note to ch. 4, near the end,] will occupy the space between the 2d and 3d woe-trumpets; the 7th of which, and the 3d woe-trumpet, will be the same, as has been seen.' E. SMITH.

(4.) *Wept.*] 'A tenderness agreeable to the character of John.' WOODH. *Bl.* marks 'and to read' as spurious; so he marks, in v. 6. the words for 'loose,' and 'and lo'; as also 'the book,' in v. 7. ED.



5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

6 And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.

9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

10 And hast made us our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

and worthy to open and execute all the counsels of God toward men. And this He does in his mediatorial state and capacity, as the King and Head of the Israel of God; and He will do it, to the consolation and joy of all his people.

V. 6—14. Here,

I. The apostle beholds this book taken into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to its being opened and executed by Him. Where Christ is described, 1. By his place and station; in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and of the elders; on the same throne with the Father; Christ, as Man and Mediator, is subordinate to God the Father, but nearer to Him than all the creatures, for in Him all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily. The ministers stand between God and the people; Christ, as Mediator, between God and both ministers and people. 2. The form in which He appeared. Before, He is called a Lion; here, He appears as a Lamb slain: a Lion, to conquer Satan; a Lamb, to satisfy the justice of God. He appears as a Lamb, having seven horns and seven eyes; perfect power to execute all the will of God, and perfect wisdom to understand it all, and to do it in the most effectual manner; for He hath the seven Spirits of God, He has received the Holy Spirit without measure, in all perfection of light, and life, and power, by which He is able to teach and rule all parts of the earth. 3. He is described by his act and deed; He came and took the book, &c., v. 7. not by violence, nor by fraud, but prevailed to do it, as v. 5. prevailed by his merit and worthiness; He did it by authority, and by the Father's appointment.

II. The apostle observes the universal joy and thanksgiving that filled heaven and earth on this transaction. And, indeed, it is just matter of joy to all the world, to see that God does not deal with men in a way of absolute power and strict justice, but in a way of grace and mercy through the Redeemer.

The song of praise offered on this occasion, consists of three parts; one sung by the church, the other by the church and the angels, the third by every creature.

1. The church, as being more immediate-

ly concerned, v. 8. the four living creatures, and the 24 elders, the Christian people, under their minister, they lead up the chorus; where, observe, (1.) The object of their worship,—the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ; all men should honor the Son as they honor the Father; for He has the same nature. (2.) Their posture; they fell down before Him; gave Him not an inferior worship, but the most profound adoration. (3.) The instruments used in their adorations; harps and vials; the harps, instruments of praise, the vials full of odors or incense, which signify the prayers of the saints. (4.) The matter of their song; suited to the new state of the church, the gospel-state introduced by the Son of God. They acknowledge the infinite fitness and worthiness of the Lord Jesus for this great work of opening and executing the counsel and purposes of God, v. 9. They mention the grounds and reasons of this worthiness; and though they do not exclude the dignity of his Person as God, without which He had not been sufficient for it, yet they chiefly insist on the merit of his sufferings, which He had endured for them; these more sensibly struck their souls with thankfulness and joy. Here, They mention his suffering; Thou wast slain, and the fruits of his sufferings; Thou hast made us, &c. redemption to God, from the bondage of sin, guilt, and Satan; and high exaltation, kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth, v. 10.

2. The angels; they take the second part, in conjunction with the church, v. 11. they are said to be innumerable, and to be the attendants on the throne of God, and guardians to the church; though they did not need a Savior themselves, yet they rejoice in the redemption and salvation of sinners; and they agree with the church in acknowledging the infinite merits of the Lord Jesus, as dying for sinners; that He is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

3. This doxology, thus begun by the church, and carried on by the angels, is resounded and echoed by the whole creation; v. 13. the whole fares the better for Christ, by Him all things consist; and that part that (by a prosopopœia) is made for the whole

c Ge. 49:9,10. f Zec. 4:10. 1:7. He. 9:12. Nu. 24:9. g c. 4:4,8,10. 1 Pe. 1:13,19. He. 7:14. h c. 15:2. m c. 7:9. d Is. 11:1,10. i or, incense. n c. 1:6. e. 2:2:16. j Ps. 141:2. o c. 22:5. e Is. 53:7. k c. 14:3. p Da. 7:10. Jn. 1:29,36. l Ac. 20:28. Ep. He. 12:22.

V. 5—7. The elders [were] the emblematical representatives of the church. A Lion, &c.] Num. 2:2. A Lamb slain, &c.] This was an emblematical representation of the Savior's High Priesthood, before God, in our nature, as risen from the dead, through the merit of his sacrifice, in behalf of 'all who come to the Father through Him;' so that it was in consequence of that atonement, which the sacrificing of spotless lambs had prefigured from the beginning, that He prevailed to open the book. Seven Spirits, &c.] Notes, 1:4—6. 4:4, 5.—Several eminent expositors suppose, that 7 superior angels, or archangels, are meant; but the texts referred to, and the emblematical style of the book, are inconsistent with that interpretation. 2 Chr. 16:7—10. Zech. 3:9, 10, 4:8—10. 6:1—3.

(6.) And lo.] 'Probably interpolated.' Bl. As it, &c.] 'The Gr. implies, that the Lamb appeared with a wounded neck and throat, as if smitten at the altar, as a Victim. Seven is a number expressive of universality, fullness, and perfection, (1: 4.) and as a horse is power, so the 7 horns signify omnipotence, as the 7 eyes do his omnipresence and omniscience. "All power," says our Lord to his disciples, "is given to Me in heaven and in earth." And this He said immediately after He had vanquished the formidable enemies of man, Sin and Death, under this form of a victim. Mat. 28:18.' WOODR.

V. 8—10. When Christ, as 'the Lamb which had been slain,' had received the book, and was preparing to loose 'the seals,' the 'four living creatures, and the elders,' who had before prostrated themselves in adoration of the great Creator, 4:9—11. now fell down in like manner to worship the Lamb, or the incarnate Son, as the Savior of sinners; thus rendering Him divine honor, even in the presence of the Father's manifested glory. Harps, golden vials, &c.] Though heaven is the scene of these visions, yet they had continual reference to the temple and its worship; and the state of the church on earth is throughout particularly adverted to: harps were emblems of praise and thanksgiving; and the golden vials, or small censers, or cups, represented the acceptableness of the prayers of the saints, through the intercession of Christ, and by the influences of his sanctifying Spirit. Moreover, they all joined in a song of praise, which was not only most excellent, but it was also new, in respect of the occasion and composition: for the O. T. church celebrated the praises of JEHOVAN, their Redeemer from Egypt, and anticipated the coming of the expected Messiah; but the N. T. church adored Christ, as actually come, as having finished his work on earth by his sacrifice on the cross, and as entered into his mediatorial glory. M. R. z.—Notes, 7:9—12. 14:1—5. 15:1—4. It is indisputably manifest, that the 'four living creatures' join in, or rather lead, the worship of the Lamb, as 'having redeemed them to God;' and this proves, beyond controversy, that part of the redeemed church is meant by this

emblem; and not angels, whose worship is next described, but in language evidently different. 11—14. 4:4—11. SCOTT.

(8.) Vials.] 'Phialas: rather, cups, pateras, something like our dishes.' Bl. Comp. the eat of a classical patera, for sacrificial libations. Prayers.] 'This denotes that the prayers of God's



trac worshippers are highly acceptable spiritual sacrifices.' Bl. ED.

'How delightful to contemplate the honors which encircle the Lamb of God in the midst of his Father's throne! We will embalm his name in our grateful hearts. We will embalm it by our praise, which shall live while we have breath, and sink away upon our dying lips. And we will embalm it among the songs of the upper world. If we are permitted to come and stand where the elders now, how will we bow and sing. When we shall look down to hell, and see our old companions there, and then back to Calvary, and then look up and read the touching traces of love in those melting eyes, and among the prints of the nails and thorns, we will embalm his name, if love and songs can do it. If ever new inhabitants should come in from other worlds, they shall hear the story of Calvary. If commissioned, in remote ages of eternity, to visit other systems, we will carry the amazing tidings to them. While gratitude and truth remain, the name and love of Jesus shall never be forgotten.' REV. DR. GRIFFIN.

(9.) 'Thou art worthy, axios ei, was a sort of acclamation, usual in ancient times, and often employed to hail a newly elected emperor.' Bl.—'Redemption by the blood of Christ, (mark it well, Oh my soul!) is the ground work of the majestic, triumphant song of praise in heaven; and a disposition to join in it, our chief capacity for, and actual happiness in time and eternity.' ADAMS.

(10.) Us.] Rather, 'them.' BLOOME.

V. 11—14. While these adoring praises were rendered, by the representatives of the church of redeemed sinners, to their divine Savior; the apostle heard likewise 'the voice of many angels round about the throne,' and encircling without the living creatures and elders, whose number amounted to many millions, and could not be ascertained. Yet they all, in perfect harmony, with a loud voice of adoration confessed, that 'the Lamb, who had been slain,' for the redemption of sinful men, was 'worthy to receive power,' in his mediatorial character, and in human nature, over all creatures in heaven and earth; and 'riches,' even all the treasures of grace and glory, for the benefit of his people, and that 'wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing,' should be vested in Him, and ascribed to Him, as the Object of universal adoration, praise,



12 Saying with a loud voice, <sup>a</sup> Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

13 And <sup>r</sup> every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, <sup>s</sup> Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

14 And <sup>t</sup> the four beasts said, Amen. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

### CHAP. VI.

The opening of the seals in order, and what followed thereupon, containing a prophecy to the end of the world.

AND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the <sup>a</sup> seals; and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts, saying, Come and see.

2 And I saw, and behold a white <sup>b</sup> horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth <sup>c</sup> conquering, and to conquer.

q c. 4:11.            1 Ti. 6:16.            a c. 5:5.  
r Pm. 2:11.        1 Pe. 4:11.            b Zec. 6:3, &c.  
s 1 Ch. 29:11.      t c. 19:1.              c Ps. 45:3-5.

PRACT. OBS. How vain and presumptuous must all man's endeavors be, to discover future events, beyond the discernment of a sagacious probable conjecture, or as instructed by 'the sure word of prophecy;' seeing that all things respecting the future are sealed up in impenetrable secrecy; and no creature in heaven, earth, or hell, is able or worthy to disclose the least tittle of them, except the incarnate Son of God alone! We need not indeed weep, that we cannot foresee the future events respecting ourselves in this world; as the eager expectation and prospect of distant prosperity would unfit us for present duties and conflicts; and the foresight of future calamities would render our most prosperous days distressing. Yet in this distracted, evil world, we may properly desire to learn, from the promises and prophecies of Scripture, what will be the final event to believers, and to the church; and in both

gratitude, and admiring love. Thus 'the innumerable company of angels,' though they do not stand related to the Savior as partakers of the same nature, and have no *immediate* concern in his redemption, are yet represented, as beholding such divine excellency and glory in Him, and his mediatorial work, (for 'into these things they desire to look,') that they adore and honor Him with most rapturous ascriptions of praise; rejoice in his exaltation 'far above all principality and power,' and his authority in human nature over all of them, and seem to vie with redeemed sinners in his worship! *Notes, Eph. 3:9-12. 1 Pet. 1:10-12.*—In this they were immediately joined by all the inhabitants of heaven and earth, and the souls of those in the separate state, whose bodies were under the earth, or in the sea; or by all creatures in the universe, according to their several capacities, with the exception of none but the determined enemies of God. (*Notes, Ps. 148:*) These, indeed, the nature of the case, and the whole tenor of Scripture, as well as other visions in this book, necessarily exclude; yet they too, though reluctantly, shall bow to Christ, and be put under his feet. (*Notes, Is. 45:20-25. Rom. 14:10-12. 1 Cor. 15:20-28. Phil. 2:9-11.*) All the rest, however, rendered and ascribed 'blessing, and honor, and glory, to Him that sat on the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever,' to which 'the four living creatures' joined a cordial 'Amen.' Thus the whole church, by its representatives, fell down and worshipped the eternal God. 1:8-11. 4:9-11. *John 5:20-23. 1 John 5:20, 21.*—What words could more fully and emphatically declare, that Christ is and ought to be worshipped, equally with the Father, by all creatures, to all eternity? Will any one, after reading this, assert, that He is a mere Man, or a created Being? or that it is idolatry to worship Him? Or will such persons profess to believe, that this book is the *unerring Word of God*? If they waver as to this point, can they disprove the divinity of a book, the prophecies of which have already been so remarkably accomplished? Or can any man, who opposes the worship of Christ, or the doctrines of his Deity and atonement, and of salvation through faith in his blood, suppose that he can ever enter heaven? or, if this might be, that he could join in the work and worship of that blessed world, or even so much as endure it?—But there can be no dissentients, no discordant voices, in that world of light and love! (*Note, Col. 1:9-14.*)—(11) *Ten thousand, &c.* Not 'ten thousand times ten thousand;' but 'ten thousands of ten thousands,' both being plural. 9:16.—(14) *Him that liveth for ever and ever.* 1:18. 4:9. Here the same language is undeniably used of Jesus Christ, along with the Father. SCOTT.

(12.) 'This seven-fold praise is supposed to correspond to the seven-fold attributes above.' BLOOME.

(13.) *Blessing, &c.* 'Rather, the blessing, or praise, &c. i. e. the particular and supreme praise, &c. In the Lord's prayer, the article is tr. with proper effect.' WOODH.

(14.) *Bl.* marks as spurious the Gr. for '24,' and for 'Him that liveth for ever and ever.' EN.

creation, is a song of blessing, and honor, and glory, and power; (1.) *To Him that sits on the throne*, to God, as God; or to God the Father, as the first Person in the Trinity, and the first in the economy of our salvation; and, (2.) *To the Lamb*, as the second Person in the Godhead, and the Mediator of the new covenant; not that the worship paid to the Lamb is of another nature, an inferior worship, but their parts in the work of our salvation being distinct, they are distinctly adored. We worship and glorify one and the same God, for our creation, and for our redemption.

We see how the church that began the heavenly anthem, finding heaven and earth join in the concert, closes all with their *Amen*, and end as they began, with a low prostration before the eternal and everlasting God. Thus we have seen this sealed book, passing, with great solemnity, from the hand of the Creator, into the hand of the Redeemer.

CHAP. VI. The book of the divine counsels being thus lodged in the hand of Christ, He immediately enters on the work of opening the seals, and publishing the contents; but this is done in such a manner, as still leaves the predictions very abstruse, and difficult to be understood: now, therefore, we are to launch into the deep; and our business is, not so much to fathom it, as to let down our net to take a draught. We shall only hint at what seems most obvious; the prophecies of this book are divided into 7 seals opened, 7 trumpets sounding, and 7 vials poured out. It is supposed that the

opening of the 7 seals discloses those providences that concerned the church in the first three centuries, from the ascension of our Lord and Savior to the reign of Constantine; this was represented in a book rolled up, and sealed in several places, so that when one seal was opened, you might read so far of it, and so on, till the whole was unfolded. Yet we are not here told what was written in the book, but what John saw in figures enigmatical and hieroglyphic; and it is not for us to pretend to know the times and the seasons, which the Father has put in his own power.

V. 1, 2. Here, 1. Christ, the Lamb, opens the first seal; He now enters on the great work of opening and accomplishing the purposes of God toward the church and the world. 2. One of the ministers of the church calls on the apostle, with a voice like thunder, to come near, and observe what then appeared. Whereupon, 3. We have the vision itself, v. 2. *White horses* are generally refused in war, because they make the rider a mark for the enemy; but our Lord Redeemer was sure of the victory and a glorious triumph, and He rides on the *white horse* of a pure but despised Gospel, with great swiftness through the world. The bow in his hand may denote convictions impressed by the Word of God, which are as sharp arrows; ministers of the Word may draw the bow, but it is God who directs it, and makes it effectual. When Christ was going to war; one would think a helmet had been more proper than a crown; but a crown is given Him as the earnest and emblem of victory. So He went forth conquering and to

respects, the Incarnate Son has prevailed to procure us all the information which our circumstances need. May we then value, and study to become acquainted with, every part of that revelation, which He has given us.—The whole universe could never, in any other instance, show such a union of unsearchable riches and deep poverty, of sovereign authority and willing, entire subjection, of divine dignity and immense humiliation and condescension, of majesty and meekness, of holiness and love of sinners, of justice and mercy, of desert of honor and happiness, with patient endurance of most complicated sufferings. In these, and various other respects, He is altogether worthy of our admiration, confidence, and imitation, as far as it is possible for us to be placed in similar circumstances. SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. Upon the establishment of Constantine the Great on the Imperial throne, as the first Christian emperor, the persecutions of Pagan Rome ceased, and Christianity became the established and favored religion, throughout the empire.—When the Lord Jesus, as 'the Lamb that had been slain,' 'opened the first seal,' the apostle's attention was excited, by a voice like thunder, and one of 'the four living creatures' called on him to come and see what passed. This was the voice of him who was 'like a lion;' and the same took place, respecting the other living creatures in their order, after the opening of the next three seals; but the meaning of the emblem does not clearly appear. 4:6-8.—Those who suppose the apostle to have had this vision in the reign of Nero, about A. D. 68, explain this emblem [the 'white horse,' &c.] of the victories gained by Vespasian and Titus, among which the taking and destruction of Jerusalem was most considerable. But it is almost incredible, that this most important event should be only thus obscurely hinted at, if it had been then in futurity; and it is far more likely, that the apostle wrote this book a considerable time after that event. Others, therefore, explain this discovery, of some victories, obtained by the Emperor Trajan, over the surrounding nations; but these events had no immediate connexion with the affairs of the church, and Trajan, who was a persecutor, however celebrated in other respects, was not aptly described by one mounted 'on a white horse.' *Zech. 1:7-11. 6:1-8.* This emblem rather denotes righteousness and purity; and the mild, beneficent victories of Christ, by his Word and Holy Spirit, in the conversion of sinners to 'the obedience of faith,' seem to have been thus predicted. After his advancement to his mediatorial throne, He had gone forth, as a merciful and beneficent Conqueror, and had obtained many victories; but both Jews and Gentiles opposed the progress of his Gospel; yet the opening of this seal showed, that He would still go on with his conquests, and more widely than ever extend his spiritual dominion. Accordingly, accurate historians are of opinion, that Christianity spread more rapidly and extensively among the Gentiles just after this time, than it had before done. SC.

(1.) *Doddr.* in general adopts Lowman's scheme, (see 'Tabular View,' &c. Rev., end,) and remarks, 'I am vastly more obliged to that ingenious and excellent commentator, for what I understand of this book, than to any other writer whatsoever;' while Woodhouse entertains the same high opinion of Vitringa's work. EN.

(1, 2.) *One.* 'Put, by a common Heb. idiom, for *first*. Some have supposed a reference of or mystical connexion between the characteristics of each living creature, and the scene it summons the apostle to behold. The bow, white horse, and crown, are emblems of victory, triumph, and royalty. Come and see.] A form of speaking to excite any one to attention, occurring Ez. 8:9, and often in the Rabbins.' BL. 'At Christ's death, (when He said, "Lo, I am with you always," &c.) the divine religion, in primitive purity, goes out (comp. 19:11-17.) crowned, having the divine favor resting upon it, armed spiritually



3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

4 And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

d The word *Chaz-niz* signifieth a measure containing one wine quart, and the twelfth part of a quart. e c. 94.

against its foes, and destined to be victorious in the end. So nearly, Andr. Cæs., Methodius, Arethas, Vict., Primasius, Grot., Ham., Mede, Durham, Forbes, Daubuz, Vitr., Hales, Lowman, Faber.' This state lasted, perhaps, for 3 centuries. Two periods seem designated: the 1st when the Christian religion, preached in purity by its apostles, overcame the powers of darkness and all human opposition. The 2d, when, after a long warfare, during which this holy religion has been corrupted and debased, it will at length be seen to overcome all opposition, and to conquer. These two periods are plainly distinguished in Dan. 2:34, 35.'

WOODH.

(2.) It is impossible to enumerate any considerable part of the very numerous interpretations of the symbolic horses. Mede, Newton, and many others, consider they point out four periods in the latter history of the Roman empire, and select successive events which they consider to correspond with the personifications. Keith applies them respectively to the four religious systems; Christianity, Mohammedism, Popery, Infidelity. That of Woodh. is adopted by Cuninghame, W. Jones, and others. This idea seems also to have been long since recommended by Pareus. See the general [tabular] note, for further particulars of the views of the leading modern commentators on this and the other symbolical representations.

ED.

V. 3, 4. The Lord Jesus, in his righteous providence, seems to be here represented, as commissioning and employing the executioners of his vengeance on his obstinate enemies. (Marg. Ref. i-1.) Accordingly historians record, that insurrections, bloody battles, massacres, and devastations of a most extraordinary kind, took place, between A. D. 100, and A. D. 138. 580,000 Jews are computed to have been slaughtered, in different places, during that period; and even a larger number of the Romans and Greeks seem to have been butchered by them, in the most barbarous manner imaginable. So that the two parties of the enemies of Christ and the Gospel, the Jews and idolaters, seemed to vie with each other, in executing his righteous vengeance on their competitors. Notes, Is. 10:5-15. Jer. 27:4-9. 51:20-24. Ez. 30:20-26.—Some make this period to have lasted longer than is above stated; but such difficult questions cannot be particularly discussed, in this compendious view of these comprehensive prophecies.

SCOTT.

(4.) 'The second delineation, unrolled by the breaking of the seal, exhibits a fire-colored horse, 12:3. 9:17. Zech. 1:8. Take peace.] Rather, the peace of the earth, see on v. 1, 2. and to place in its stead hatred, variance, wrath, strife, bloodshed, (not of nations, but of "hethren and companions," among themselves, for such is the force of the Gr.) the effects of a fiery zeal, without knowledge and charity, the bond of peace: to this, had the pure, and loving, and unselfish Christianity degenerated in that age. [Perhaps the great sword denotes civil power, and nothing is more disastrous to the purity of the church than this union.] Shall we date this period from the close of the 2d century; when the rulers of the western church, and the wise and moderate Irenæus, were seen to interpose in tumults of this tendency, and to exhort the furious bishop of Rome to cultivate Christian peace? (Euseb.) The fiery, intolerant character which marks this seal, was indeed too visible in these transactions; but the hue from white to fire color, changed gradually. The persecuting hand of the common enemy, of the heathen still in power, restrained this factious spirit for a time; and although, previous to the Dioclesian persecution, in 302, there were shameful divisions among the Christians, which Euseb. mentions with a becoming mixture of indignation and tenderness, (Ecc. Hist. 3. 1.) yet the change cannot be deemed complete, so as to produce the full character of this 2d seal, till a later period. But, when the Roman empire became Christian; when a Christian emperor bore [that powerful] "sword;" when, relieved from the terrors of Pagan persecution, the Christians became possessed of civil influence, their animosities increased. Worldly prosperity is corruptive; and, instead of those halcyon days of peace and happiness, which the church promised to itself from the acquisition of power, a period succeeded from which history is seen to date its degeneracy and corruption; (see on last vs. of ch. 7.) at this time manifested in the mutual enmity and feuds of Christians; which were so notorious in the 4th century, that a contemporary author reports of them, (with some hyperbole, perhaps, for he was a Pagan,) that "the hatred of Christians to each other, exceeded the fury of wild beasts against men." Amm. Marcel. 22:5. This was a great change from the times of Tertullian, in the 2d cent.; when the Pagans said, "See, how these Christians love one another." Tertull. Apol. c. 39. It is a change powerfully expressed by fire-color succeeding to white. The contests for power

conquer. As long as the church continues militant, Christ will be conquering; He conquers his enemies in his people, in the progressive work of sanctification; and He conquers them in the world, wicked men, some by bringing them to his foot, others by making them his footstool. Observe, From this seal opened, the successful progress of the Gospel of Christ in the world is a glorious sight. Whatever convulsions and revolutions happen in states and kingdoms, the kingdom of Christ shall be established and enlarged, in spite of all opposition.

V. 3-8. The next three seals give us a sad prospect of the great and desolating judgments with which God punishes those who either refuse or abuse the everlasting Gospel: some understand them of the persecutions that befel the church of Christ, and others of the destruction of the Jews; but they rather represent, more generally, God's terrible judgments, by which He avenges the quarrel of his covenant on those who make light of it.

1. Who this was, that sat on the red horse, whether Christ Himself, as Lord of hosts, or the instruments He raised up to conduct the war, is not clear; but this is certain,—

those who will not submit to the bow of the Gospel, must expect to be cut in sunder by the sword of divine justice; for Jesus Christ rules and commands, not only in the kingdom of grace, but of providence; and the sword of war is a dreadful judgment.

2. The black horse signifies famine, and the pair of balances signify, that men must now eat their bread by weight, as threatened, Lev. 26:26. What follows in v. 6, has made some expositors think this was not a vision of famine, but of plenty; but if we consider the quantity of their measure, and the value of their penny, at the time of this prophecy, the objection will be removed; their measure was but a single quart, ['rather more,' Scott,] and their penny our sevenpence-halfpenny, and that is a large sum to give for a quart of wheat; however, it seems this famine, as all others, fell most severely on the poor; whereas the oil and the wine, which were dainties of the rich, were not hurt; but if bread, the staff of life, be broken, dainties will not supply the place of it. Here, observe, When a people loathe their spiritual food, God may justly deprive them of their daily bread. One judgment seldom comes alone, and the judgment of war natu-

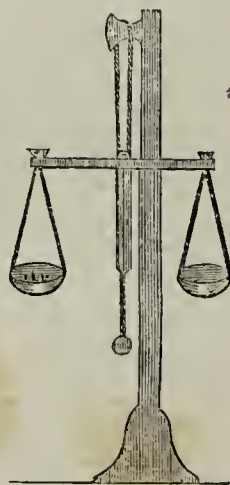
and promotion among Christian bishops, and rulers, were not concluded without mutual slaughter; [see the sneering Gibbon;] and in the controversies occasioned by the schisms of the Donatists, and of the Arians, many thousands of Christians perished by the weapons of each other. See Mosheim, cent. 4, 5. The evil continued to increase until it produced a further change, from bad to worse, which will appear under the next seal.'

WOODH.

V. 5, 6. 'The black horse' was a proper emblem of calamity and mourning; and the balances in the hand of the rider denoted, that, in the times referred to, there would be a great scarcity of provisions; so that men would have their food weighed out to them, with great exactness, as it is done when any company is reduced to short allowance. Lev. 26:26. Note, Ez. 4:9-17. The voice, also, which proclaimed the price of corn, has the same meaning; though, to an English reader, it seems to denote the contrary.—Yet the orders given to the emblematical executioner of this sentence, to 'spare the oil and the wine,' may imply, that there should not be a total failure of the fruits of the earth. Perhaps the luxuries were not so much injured as the bread-corn. Gen. 43:11, 12.—This seal is supposed, by some expositors, to have reached from A. D. 138, to A. D. 193; though others state it differently. There is, however, no material disagreement between them; and there are accounts, in the history of those years, of long-continued scarcities, through the whole Roman empire; during which, all the care of the emperors, and their ministers, could only just prevent the horrors of entire famine.—This was another method, by which Christ fought against the persecutors of his church.

SCOTT.

(5.) Black.] Denoting mourning, woe, darkness, and ignorance.—Balances.] Zugos: the cut is of an ancient Egyptian balance: but as the balance was precisely like a yoke, which was simply a stick, passing over the neck, with a chain to its middle, &c. Woodh. tr. yoke, and refers it to slavery, and subjugation; as Gen. 27:40. Nah. 1:13, &c. ED.—In the N. T., zugos is used metaphorically, to signify the burden of slavery, 1 Tim. 6:1. and more especially to represent the burden some ceremonies enjoined by the law of Moses, from the observance of which the Christian "law of liberty," had delivered the converts. Ac. 15:10. Gal. 5:1. Ja. 1:25. 2:12. Col. 2:16. 1 Pet. 2:16. The same application of zugos, in the Greek fathers, and of jugum in the Latin, was by them continued. See Socrat., Euseb., Grabe, Augustin. From the history of the church, we learn, that attempts were made, at different times, to put a yoke of superstitious observances on the necks of the disciples; and every attempt seems to have made some little progress



towards the system of [spiritual] slavery. As the stream of Christianity flowed further from its pure fountain, it became more and more corrupt; as centuries advanced, ignorance and superstition increased; and unauthorized mortifications and penances, rigorous fastings, vows of celibacy, monkish retirement and austerities, stylitism, the jargon and repetition of prayers not understood, tales of purgatory, pious frauds, and the worship of saints, relics, and images, took the place of pure and simple Christianity: till at length, the Book of God being laid aside for legendary tales, and the "traditions of men," all these corruptions were collected into a regular system of superstitious oppression, well known by the name of the Papal yoke. The Eastern church kept pace with the Western for some time, in the introduction of burdensome and unauthorized observances; and the Mahometan religion, derived from the corrupted Jewish and Christian, has imposed a similar kind of yoke on its numerous followers, in those extensive regions of the world where it prevails.'

WOODH.

(5, 6.) 'The proportion between the bread-corn, i. e. wheat, and barley was, it seems, the usual one. It is not agreed, if the command is, not to injure the wine and oil, or not to do wrong in [selling] them. The latter seems best, and so Mede, Daubuz, Jaspis, and Heintz. Perhaps it means, do not adulterate it. The four articles mentioned, then formed the main support of life.'

BLOOMF.



7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him: And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

f or, to him. h c. 8:3 j c. 1:9. 12:17.  
g Ec. 14:21. l c. 20:4.

rally draws after it that of famine. The famine of bread is a terrible judgment; but the famine of the Word is more so, though careless sinners are not sensible of it.

3. Upon opening the fourth seal, there appears another horse, of a pale color; the name of the rider, *Death*, the king of terrors; the pestilence, which is *death* in its empire, *death* reigning, *death* on horseback, marching about, and making fresh conquests every hour. The attendants, or followers, of this king of terrors are,—*hell*, a state of eternal misery to all those who die in their sins; and, in times of such a general desolation, multitudes go down unprepared into the valley of destruction. It is an awful thought, and enough to make the whole world to

(6.) 'From Tacitus, and Mat. 20:2. a penny, (7½ pence,) [12 to 15 cents] appears to have been the daily wages of a laborer. From Herod., Diog. Laert., Hippocr., Athen., it seems the *measure* here was no more than was allowed to the slave for his daily food. What would become of families, when a man by his labors could gain no more, and that only of bread, than might suffice for his own subsistence?' DoddR.—'During the progress of this black horse, the necessities of life should be attainable, though at an excessive price, and the more costly commodities should not be injured. According to the tenor of prophetic language, these articles signified that food of religious knowledge, (Am. 8:11.) by which the souls of men are sustained unto everlasting life; such we are invited to buy, Is. 55:1. Comp. Rev. 3:18. But when the dark clouds of ignorance and superstition, denoted by the black horse, spread over the face of the Christian world, the knowledge and practice of true religion became scarce. Yet, during the long continuance of these dark times, the prophetic command has always been fulfilled, there always has been some spiritual food, however scanty the supply; and that invaluable repository of Divine knowledge, of spiritual wine and oil, the Word of God, has been accessible to some, and wonderfully preserved uninjured, and by the art of printing will thus be delivered to posterity.' WoodR.—A chenix, or measure of wheat, was just enough for the daily food of a poor family, [Herod. 7. 186.] and the price of it is here stated as a denarius, the whole amount of a day's wages. Mat. 20:2. But in times of plenty a denarius would usually purchase from 16 to 20 measures of wheat. In Cicero's day, 16, in Trajan's, 20. Expositors have written much upon this head. Cuninghame censures the expositions which would apply these seals to certain vicissitudes of no great moment in the secular affairs of the Roman empire, during the first three centuries. He asks, in terms which might be used in reference to other literal and individual applications of the symbols of this book, 'Was it then for the purpose of discovering to the church, the state of the Roman markets for corn and oil, or the efficiency of its police in apprehending thieves, that all these mighty preparations were made in heaven?' Vitringa, in reference to *Mede*, made similar remarks. 'This spiritual famine shall, notwithstanding, be accompanied with great fleshly pleasures and commodities, represented by wine and oil.—Diodati. He considers this seal to denote spiritual hunger, after the bread of life, which is the true and pure Word of God.' HENRY, abr. En.

V. 7, 8. The pale horse, on which Death rode as a terrific conqueror, followed by hell, (or the grave, and the state of departed souls,) was an apt emblem of the several divine judgments, which are afterwards enumerated; and through which, it is said, that 'power was given to death and hell,' over the fourth part of the earth; or a large proportion of its inhabitants, especially throughout the whole Roman empire. Some expositors make this seal to reach from A. D. 193, to A. D. 270; others include only 50 years of that time under it. However, within the shorter period, there were more than 20 Roman emperors, who for a time ruled with great power, and most of them with great tyranny and cruelty, as long as their dominion continued; there were also above 30 usurpers in different parts of the empire, who supported their claims by war, and perished with multitudes of their adherents. Amidst such intestine convulsions and fierce contests within the several provinces of the empire, 'death on his pale horse,' must have destroyed immense numbers with the sword. This universal war and confusion, by taking men off from the cultivation of the earth, and destroying the fruits of it when produced, naturally made way for famine; which grievously prevailed in every place. The scanty, low, and unwholesome diet, occasioned by hunger or famine, naturally introduced *pestilence*, which is often called *death* by the eastern writers; and the most learned men have declared, that so extensive and destructive a pestilence, as that which during this period wasted the empire for 15 years together, is

tremble, that eternal damnation immediately follows on the *death* of an impenitent sinner. Observe, There is a natural as well as judicial connexion between one judgment and another: war is a wasting calamity, and draws scarcity and famine after it; and famine, not allowing men proper sustenance, and forcing them to take that which is unwholesome, often draws the pestilence after it. God's quiver is full of arrows; He is never at a loss for ways and means to punish a wicked people. In the book of his counsels He has prepared judgments for scorners, as well as mercy for returning sinners; threatenings against the wicked, as well as promises to the righteous; and our duty is to observe and believe the threatenings as well as the promises.

4. After the opening of these seals of approaching judgments, and the distinct account of them, we have this general observation, that God gave power to them, v. 8. that is, those instruments of his anger, or those judgments themselves; to these He gave power. And here to war, famine, and pestilence, is added, *the beasts of the earth*, another of God's sore judgments; Ezek. 14: 21. mentioned here last; because, when a nation is depopulated by the sword, famine, and pestilence, the small remnant that continued in a waste and howling wilderness, encourage the wild beasts to make head against them, and they become an easy prey. Others, by *the beasts of the field*, understand brutish, cruel, savage men, who, having divested themselves of all humanity, delight to be the instruments of the destruction of others.

V. 9—17. In the remaining part of this ch. we have the opening of the fifth and the sixth seals.

I. *The fifth seal*; no mention is made of any who called the apostle to make observation, either because the decorum of the vision was to be observed, and each of the four living creatures had discharged its duty of a monitor before; or because the events here opened lay out of the sight, and beyond the time, of the present ministers of the church; or because it does not contain a new prophecy of any future events, but rather opens a spring of support and consolation to those who had been, and still were, under great tribulation for the sake of Christ and the Gospel. Here observe,

1. The sight this apostle saw at the opening of the fifth seal; a very affecting sight, v. 9. *the souls of the martyrs under the altar*; at the foot of the altar of incense, in the most holy place; in heaven, at the foot of Christ. Note, Persecutors can only kill the body, and God hath provided a good place in the better world for those who are faithful to death, and are not allowed a place any longer on earth. Holy martyrs are very near to Christ in heaven; they have the highest place there; not their own death, but the sacrifice of Christ, gives them reception, and a reward there; they do not wash their robes in their own blood, but in the blood of the Lamb. The cause they suffered in was, *the Word of God, and the testimony they held*; for believing the Word of God, and attesting or confessing the truth of it; this profession of their faith they held fast without wavering, even though they died for it. A noble cause;

not met with in universal history. These desolations must also have given opportunity to wild beasts to increase on the residue of the inhabitants; and accordingly we read, that they were forced to wage war with wolves, lions, and tigers, and that many were devoured by them. Ez. 5:14—17. 14:13—21. SCOTT.—'One account records the entrance of 500 wolves at once into a depopulated city.' Bl. Comp. note, Jer. 5:6. Ed.—(3) *Pale.*] *Chlōros*. 3:7. 9:4. Mark 6:39.—The word more generally signifies green; but the meaning of *pale* is also of full authority, and must be here intended.—*Death.*] *Thanatos*. Note, 20:11—15. 1 Cor. 15:55—58.—*Hell.*] *Hadēs*. Note, Ps. 16:8—11. SCOTT.

(3.) 'The period of the 4th seal is one of great slaughter and devastation, but not confined to the lives of men; these extend their destructive influence over whatever may tend to make life happy, making ravages on the spiritual lives of men. When, under the 2d seal, uncharitable controversies and ambitious animosities had banished that peace which true religion cannot fail to promote; and dark ignorance and superstition, and domineering priestcraft (under the 3d seal) had fixed a burdensome yoke on the necks of the disciples, and made pure Christian knowledge of difficult attainment, then greater evils naturally ensued. Ignorance became blind submission, and priestcraft advanced into civil tyranny. Thus the mystery of iniquity was completed, and the usurpation extended both over the lives and consciences of Christians. To profess pure religion became a crime. Severe and murderous laws were enacted against those who deviated from the standard of doctrine established by corrupt rulers. Whole nations of Christians, under the name of heretics, were subjugated or extirpated. Thus, under the auspices and direction of the professed ministers and rulers of the Christian church, death and hell were seen to devastate a great part of the Christian world, destroying the lives of men, both literally and spiritually, and rooting out the pure doctrines of the Gospel. The precise periods of these 4 seals, cannot be exactly ascertained, for the changes were gradual.—*Pale.*] *Chlōros*: here is a sublime climax, or seal of terrific imagery in the colors of the horses. From the application of the imagery of horses in Scripture (comp. Zech. chs. 1 and 6. Rev. 19: 11—17, &c.) it may appear, that a man on horseback, in scriptural vision, represents the going forth of some power divinely commissioned to effect changes upon earth; and that the character of the change is to be collected from the color of the horse; the red, denoting war and slaughter; the black, mourning and woe; the white, victorious innocency and blissful peace. The seals denote the progressive character of the Christian times, from its pure beginning, to its greatest corruption. It begins with *pure white*; then changes to *fiery* and *vengeful*; then to *black*, or mournful; and when we suppose that nothing more dreadful in color can appear, then comes another gradation still more ghastly and terrific, even this *deadly pale*, the *livid, greenish hue* of corruption. The number *four* implies universality or completion.' WOODR.

V. 9—11. *Under the altar.*] Continual reference [is had] to the appearance of the divine glory in the sanctuary, and to the peculiarities of the Jewish worship; Is. 6:1—3. 'the souls of those persons, who had been slain' for believing and obeying the Word of God, and 'for the testimony which they' had borne to the truth of the Gospel,—these appeared as sacrifices, which had newly been offered; to show their fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, Note, 5:5—7. and the acceptableness of their faithfulness unto death, through his propitiatory oblation: for it is probable, that the altar of burnt-offering is intended; though some understand it of the golden altar for incense, within the sanctuary. These souls appear to have represented, not only such persons as had suffered martyrdom before the apostle had this vision; but the whole multitude, who were slain previous to the prophetic period referred to, beginning about A. D. 270. They however, with one consent and a loud



10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How <sup>k</sup> long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge <sup>t</sup> our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

11 And white <sup>m</sup> robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest <sup>n</sup> yet for a little season, until <sup>o</sup> their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great <sup>p</sup> earthquake; and the sun <sup>q</sup> became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

13 And the stars <sup>r</sup> of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her <sup>s</sup> untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

14 And the heaven <sup>t</sup> departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every <sup>u</sup> mountain and island were moved out of their places:

15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves <sup>v</sup> in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

16 And said <sup>w</sup> to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

the best that any man can lay down his life for,—faith in God's Word, and a confession of that faith.

2. The cry he heard; it was a loud cry, and contains a humble expostulation about the long delay of avenging justice against their enemies, v. 10. Observe, *Even the spirits of just men made perfect* retain a proper resentment of the wrong they have sustained by their cruel enemies; though they die in charity, praying, as Christ did, that God would forgive them. They commit their cause to Him to whom vengeance belongeth, and are not for avenging themselves. There will be joy in heaven at the destruction of the implacable enemies of Christ, as well as at the conversion of other sinners. When Babylon falls, it will be said, *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her*, Rev. 18: 20.

3. He observed the kind return made to this cry, v. 11. both what was given them, and what was said to them. There were given them white robes, the robes of victory and of honor; their present happiness was an abundant recompense of their past sufferings. It was said to them, they should be satisfied, easy in themselves, for it would not be long but the number of their fellow-sufferers should be fulfilled; this is a language rather suited to the imperfect state of the saints in this world, than to the perfection of their state in heaven; there is no impatience, no uneasiness, no need of admonition; but in this world there is great need of patience.

II. We have here the sixth seal opened, v. 12. Some refer this to the great revolutions in the empire in Constantine's time, the downfall of paganism; others, with great probability, to the destruction of Jerusalem, as an emblem of the general judgment, and destruction of the wicked, at the end of the world; and, indeed, the awful characters of this event are so much the same with those signs mentioned by our Savior, as foreboding the destruction of Jerusalem, that it hardly leaves any room for doubting but that the same thing is meant in both places; though some think that event was

past already. See Mat. 24: 29, 30. Here observe,

1. The tremendous events that were hastening; several occurrences contribute to make that day and dispensation very dreadful: (1.) *A great earthquake*; it may be taken politically; the very foundations of the Jewish church and state would be terribly shaken, though they seemed to be as stable as the earth itself. (2.) *The sun became black as sackcloth of hair*; either naturally, by a total eclipse, or politically, by the fall of the chief rulers and governors of the land. (3.) *The moon should become as blood*; the inferior officers, or their military men, they should be all wallowing in their own blood. (4.) *The stars of heaven should fall to the earth*, v. 13. The stars may signify all the men of note and influence among them, though in lower spheres of activity; there should be a general desolation. (5.) *The heaven should depart as a scroll, when it is rolled together*. Their ecclesiastical state shall perish and be laid aside for ever. (6.) *Every mountain and island shall be moved out of their places*. The destruction of the Jewish nation should affect and affright all the nations round about, a judgment that should astonish all the world. This leads to,

2. The dread and terror that would seize on all sorts of men in that great and awful day, v. 15. Neither authority, nor grandeur, nor riches, nor valor, nor strength, would be able to support men at that time; yea, the very poor slaves, who, one would think, had nothing to fear, because they had nothing to lose, would be all in amazement at that day. Observe, The degree of their terror and astonishment; it should prevail so far as to make them like distracted, desperate men; they would be glad to be no more seen; yea, to have no longer any being. The cause of their terror was, the angry countenance of Him that sits on the throne, and the wrath of the Lamb. Observe, That which is matter of displeasure to Christ, is so to God; they are so entirely one. Though God be invisible, He can make the inhabitants of this world sensible of his awful frowns. Though Christ be a Lamb, yet

k Zec. 1:12.	q Joel 2:10, 31.	Ha. 3:6, 10.
l De. 32:41—43.	3:15. Mat. 24:29.	c. 16:20.
c. 11:18.	r c. 8:10.	v Is. 2:19.
m c. 7:9, 14.	s or, green.	w Ho. 10:8.
n c. 14:13.	t Ps. 102:26.	Lu. 23:30.
o He. 11:40.	Is. 34:4.	c. 9:6.
p c. 16:18.	u Je. 4:23, 24.	

voice, inquired of the Lord, as 'holy and faithful,' or 'the holy and the true One,' (Note, 3:7.) how long He would endure the provocations of the persecutors, before He proceeded to judge their cause, and avenge their blood on the inhabitants of the earth, by the subversion of the persecuting power of Pagan Rome. This was the language of their zeal for the honor of God, and their desire of the prevalence of the Gospel. 18: 20. Deut. 32:34, 35. Ps. 94:1—7. Rom. 12:17—21. The 'white robes given' to each of them denoted, that they were immediately admitted into a state of felicity, as accepted and holy: but they were required to 'rest,' and wait a short space for 'the avenging of their blood,' as there were many others of their brethren, who would suffer death in the same cause, before the purposes of God respecting the destruction of their persecutors were fulfilled. 7:13—17. 12:7—12. 18:20. 19:1—6. 'Mr. Lowman observes very well, that this representation seems much to favor the immediate happiness of departed saints, and hardly to consist with that uncomfortable opinion, the insensible state of departed souls, till after the resurrection.' Bp. Newton.—This seal seems to have been a prediction of the terrible persecution of the church, under Dioclesian, which reached much further, and was far more bloody, than any of those that had preceded it. The fury of it lasted for ten years, which was called by Christians, 'The Era of Martyrs;' but this seal is supposed by some expositors to relate to the whole time between A. D. 270, and 304.—Here also there are immaterial differences of opinion among learned men: and, as so many interesting events are hinted at in a few vs., it can scarcely be supposed that, after so many centuries, we should be able to determine these matters with exactness; especially as the historians of those times were uncommonly inaccurate and confused in their writings.

(9.) *Altar.*] 'Perhaps the brazen altar of burnt sacrifice, was pictured on the roll, and so unfolded when the 5th seal was broken.'

WOODH.

(10.) 'There seems no reason why this seal should be restricted to any particular body of martyrs of any particular period. All are to be avenged: and it may, perhaps, be most fitly understood to comprehend all the martyrs to the Christian cause, from the apostolical age to the happy time when such sufferings shall finally cease.'

Id.

(11.) 'Nothing could more encourage Christians to endure their sufferings with steady patience than this, that it was appointed of God, that a certain number of martyrs should be put to death, and that the season of their triumph was [as certainly] to succeed.'

DODD.

V. 12—14. The great earthquake, &c., was emblematical of extraordinary revolutions, in the civil and religious state of the world, attended with vast commotions of every kind, [and resulting in] the total subversion of the Pagan persecuting dominion, by the victories of Constantine, and by his accession to the imperial throne; and the entire and universal change, which took place at that time. 'The great lights of the hea-

then world, the powers civil and ecclesiastical, were all eclipsed and obscured, the heathen emperors and Cæsars were slain, the heathen priests and augurs were extirpated, the heathen officers and magistrates were removed; the heathen temples were demolished, and their revenues were appropriated to better uses.' Bp. Newton.—M. R. i.—Is. 13: 9, 10. Jer. 4:19—27. Ez. 33:7, 8. Mat. 24:29—35. Such bold metaphorical descriptions of great revolutions abound in the prophecies of Scripture; for these events are emblems and anticipations of the end of the world, and the day of judgment: nor could any revolution be more properly represented by this language, than the entire and final subversion of the greatest fabric of Pagan idolatry, tyranny, and persecution, which ever existed on earth. 20:11—15. (12) *Earthquake.*] See on Mat. 8:24. The similitude of the figs, in a strong wind, falling from the fig-tree, is highly energetic.

SCOTT.

(12—17.) 'The earthquake, and other natural commotions, and phenomena, as they often denote revolutions and changes, so they are here generally supposed to mark the violent commotions, which agitated the empire, from the reign of Maximian, to that of Constantine. [See Scott.] Woodh. and Burton, however, suppose this vision to relate to the end of the world, and the final triumph of the Gospel over its enemies. Comp. Mat. 24:29. Prof. Lec is of opinion, that the whole manifestly relates to the progress of the persecutions, and the judgments, poured out and witnessed during the first ages of the church. Sackcloth.] The coarse hair-cloth, of a blackish color, then in common use.'

BLOOMF.

(14.) As they read their scrolls, by unrolling one end as they rolled up the other, (cut Jer.: end,) it would happen, that in the middle of the roll, if it was cut across, the parts would each curl over its respective roll. This consideration renders the simile peculiarly lively and magnificent.

Ed.

V. 15—17. This unexpected change would throw all the persecuting and opposing party into the utmost consternation and despair: and the apostle, in his vision, saw them all, even the slaves and freed-men, as well as the kings, captains, and great or rich men, endeavoring to shelter themselves in dens and caverns, and vehemently wishing to be crushed by rocks and mountains; if that might but cover them from the power and manifested presence of God, and from 'the wrath of the Lamb,' whose Gospel they had opposed, and whose servants they had persecuted. For the prevalence of Christianity, and the accession of a Christian emperor, would lead them to conclude with desperation, that Jesus was indeed the Lord; that the time was come when He would take full vengeance on his enemies; and that none could resist Him, escape from Him, or pacify Him. 9:6. Josh. 10:16—18. Is. 2:19—22. Hos. 10:7, 8. Luke 23:26—31. The series of prophetic events requires us to interpret this seal, of the victories and accession of Constantine; when the Christian church gained a complete triumph over the perse-



17 For <sup>a</sup>the great day of his wrath is come; and who <sup>b</sup>shall be able to stand?

## CHAP. VII.

<sup>3</sup> An angel sealeth the servants of God in their foreheads. <sup>4</sup> The number of them that were sealed: of the tribes of Israel a certain number. <sup>9</sup> Of all other nations an innumerable multitude, which stand before the throne, clad in white robes, and palms in their hands. <sup>14</sup> Their robes were washed in the blood of the Lamb.

AND after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds <sup>a</sup> of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal <sup>b</sup> of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt <sup>c</sup>not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have <sup>d</sup>sealed the servants of our God in their <sup>e</sup>foreheads.

4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four <sup>f</sup>thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

5 Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed-twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.

6 Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthaliim were sealed twelve

thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.

7 Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.

x Is. 13:6, &c. a Da. 7:2. d Eze. 9:4.  
Zep. 1:14, &c. h 2 Ti. 2:19. e c. 22:4.  
c. 16:14. c c. 6:6. f c. 14:1.  
y Ps. 76:7.

He can be angry, even to wrath, and the wrath of the Lamb is exceeding dreadful; for if the Redeemer, that appeases the wrath of God, Himself be our wrathful enemy, [through our rejection of his atonement,] where shall we have a friend to plead for us? They perish without remedy, who perish by the wrath of the Redeemer. As men have their day of opportunity, and their seasons of grace, so God has his day of righteous wrath; and when that day comes, the most stout-hearted sinners will not be able to stand before Him: all these terrors actually fell on the sinners in Judea and Jerusalem, in the day of their destruction; and they will all, in the utmost degree, fall on impenitent sinners, at the general judgment of the last day.

CHAP. VII. The things contained in this ch. come in after the opening of the 6 seals, which foretold great calamities in the world; and before the sound of the 7 trumpets, which gave notice of great corruptions arising in the church; between these comes in this comfortable ch. which secures the graces and comforts of the people of God in times of common calamity.

V. 1—3. By these winds, v. 1. we suppose are meant those errors and corruptions in religion which would occasion great trouble and mischief to the church of God: they are four, and contrary one to another,

PRACT. OBS. The ministers of the Gospel ought to call men's attention to the prophecies of Scripture, and to the events in Providence, which accomplish them.—Our prayers should continually be presented before 'the throne of grace,' that our exalted Redeemer may still 'go forth, conquering and to conquer.'—But He fights in another manner against the despisers of his salvation, and the opposers of his glory: He can raise up and employ sanguinary potentates, or insurgents, to execute his vengeance on his enemies, Mat. 22:1—10, and when He gives them power, and leaves them to their 'own hearts' lusts,' they soon execute multitudes to kill one another by 'the force of the sword.' He can also withhold the influences of the heavens, and restrain the earth from yielding its increase; and so visit the nations with distressing scarcity,

and thus tended greatly to fill the church with hypocrites, which introduced a worldly spirit, and at length caused manifold evils: yet this prophecy fully proves, that real religion was at first greatly promoted by the advancement of a Christian emperor; and that it obtained an establishment in many places, which before had little regarded it.—I saw another Angel, even the great Angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus, ascending up from the eastern coasts, where Jerusalem stood; who, by virtue of his Mediatorship, had in his hand that Seal, or mark of the living God, which in his eternal decree is set upon his elect, whereby they are sealed both to salvation in the end, and to a gracious protection till then: who did, by the mighty voice of his word, command these four angels, . . . saying, Hold your hands, &c.' Bp. Hall.—9:3—5. Ez. 9:1—7.

cutting power of Rome Pagan: but the passage may profitably be accommodated to the day of judgment. Ps. 2:7—12. 21:6—12. SCOTT.

(17.) 'Viringa considers, that the 6th seal foretells, that great commotions would suddenly arise, both in the empire of papal Rome, and in the other kingdoms and states of Europe,—that, in common with the 7th vial, it foretells the destruction of the antichristian empire. This was the opinion of several early writers. Daubuz applies it to the downfall of paganism. HENRY, *abr.*

NOTES. CHAP. VII. V. 1—3. This ch. is a continuation of the sixth seal. (Notes, 6:12—17. 8:1—6.)—The 'four angels, standing on the four corners of the earth,' and their 'restraining the winds,' that no destructive tempests might be excited by land or sea, is supposed to be an emblem of the tranquillity of the Roman empire, and of all nations, subsequent to Constantine's accession to the imperial throne, which was the more delightful, as it succeeded such long-continued and terrible convulsions and desolations.—At the same time 'another angel came up from the east.' This angel seems to have been an emblem of Christ Himself; for who else could have 'the seal of the living God,' even the Holy Spirit, by which his people are 'sealed unto the day of redemption?' 2 Cor. 1:21, 22. Eph. 1:13, 14. 4:30—32.—By his Gospel, He came from the eastern nations, where his religion was first published; as the rising sun proceeds from the east to west: and He diffused that heavenly light to the western, or European, provinces of the empire, and accompanied it by his new-creating Spirit; and thus 'sealed' great numbers as 'the servants of God.' This great 'Angel of the covenant,' as one having sovereign authority, called to the other angels, to whom a commission had been given, to bring calamities on mankind by land and sea; ordering them not to execute it, till He and his ministers, as the instruments of his grace, had sealed the 'servants of God in the forehead;' that they might be evidently distinguished from others, and so be preserved during the approaching calamities. This signified, that great numbers would be baptized, and profess themselves disciples of Christ, during the happy tranquillity which followed Constantine's accession; and that very many would be really converted, and renewed to the image of God, by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.—The Gospel was very extensively preached during this period, and immense multitudes embraced Christianity. The favor, indeed, shown to the converts to Christianity, in an indiscriminate and injudicious manner, induced numbers, from secular motives, to profess themselves Christians;

or destructive famine, and death, when commissioned by Him, and pestilences, sweep away millions into the grave, and their eternal state; till at length the beasts of the earth seem to acquire the dominion of the desolated lands, and add to the miseries of the few remaining inhabitants. How mad must it then be for the potsherds of the earth to contend against his iron rod!—But let us be thankful for our exemption, in this highly favored land, from these dire calamities, and for our peace, liberty, plenty, and manifold advantages; and let the rich be reminded, even in times of comparative scarcity, to give more liberally to the relief of their poor neighbors, and needlessly spend much less on themselves. SCOTT.

and thus tended greatly to fill the church with hypocrites, which introduced a worldly spirit, and at length caused manifold evils: yet this prophecy fully proves, that real religion was at first greatly promoted by the advancement of a Christian emperor; and that it obtained an establishment in many places, which before had little regarded it.—I saw another Angel, even the great Angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus, ascending up from the eastern coasts, where Jerusalem stood; who, by virtue of his Mediatorship, had in his hand that Seal, or mark of the living God, which in his eternal decree is set upon his elect, whereby they are sealed both to salvation in the end, and to a gracious protection till then: who did, by the mighty voice of his word, command these four angels, . . . saying, Hold your hands, &c.' Bp. Hall.—9:3—5. Ez. 9:1—7.

(1.) For *epi pan*, 'nor on any,' Bl. suggests the reading, *episeien*, 'to stir.' See his reasons, N. T. vol. 2, p. 578. Ep.

(2.) 'Omens from the E. were thought favorable; for the E. was reckoned the chief cardinal point, as being the quarter where the heavenly luminaries rise.' Woodh. Bl. Seals, among the ancients, were used to designate property, to mark for each his own. 2 Tim. 2:12. Id.

V. 4—8. This account of the numbers sealed from the 12 tribes, cannot be understood in a literal sense; . . . the times of Constantine seem intended. 6:12—14. As therefore the tribes of Israel were numbered, after they were formed into a nation, so the numbers added to the church, in consequence of this establishment, were figuratively declared to be 144 thousand, or 12 times 12 thousand; a large definite number, probably, being put for an indefinite: and this being divided into 12 parts, one of them was assigned to each of the tribes of Israel; intimating, that these persons succeeded to their privileges, and occupied their place: for, I apprehend, the Gentile converts, as well as those of Israel, were intended, Note, 9—12. since none else are mentioned as having been sealed. The tribes are here arranged differently than in any other place. Judah is placed first, in honor of Christ, who sprang from him: Dan is wholly omitted, perhaps because idolatry was first publicly established by that tribe. Judg. 18: Others, however, think that the tribe of Dan had long before become nearly extinct: and, indeed, the tribe is not expressly mentioned in the genealogies contained in the first of the Chronicles. Levi is numbered with the rest: and Joseph is placed instead of Ephraim, while Manasseh is likewise continued. The order of primogeniture is neglected; nor is any regard shown



8 Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

9 After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

g Ro 11:25, c.5:9. c. 19:1. h c. 6:11. i Le. 23:40. j Zac 4:7. k Is. 43:11. l Jude 25. c. 5:13, 11. m Jn 16:33. c. 6:9. n I Co. 6:11. He. 9:14. o I Jn. 1:7. c. 1:5. p c. 21:3, 4.

Jews; more are the children of the desolate than of the married woman. 2. The Lord

knows who are his, and He will keep them safe in times of dangerous temptation.

V. 9—12. Here we have the songs of saints and angels on this occasion; where observe,

1. The praises offered up by the saints, (as it seems to me, Gentile believers,) for the care of God in reserving so large a remnant of the Jews, and saving them from infidelity and destruction. Observe, (1.) Their posture; they stood before the throne, and before the Lord; before the Creator, and the Mediator. In acts of religious worship, we come nigh to God, and we must come by Christ; the throne of God would be inaccessible to sinners, were it not for a Mediator. (2.) Their habit; they were clothed with white robes, were invested with the robes of justification, holiness, and victory, and they had palms in their hands, as the conquerors used to appear with in triumphs; \* such a glorious appearance will the faithful servants of God make at last, when they have fought the good fight of faith, and finished their course. (3.) Their employment; they cried with a loud voice, &c. This may be understood either as a *hosannah*, wishing well to the interest of God and Christ in the church, and in the world; or as a *hallelujah*, giving to God and the Lamb the praise of the great salvation; both the Father and the Son are joined together in these praises; the Father contrived this salvation, the Son purchased it; and they who enjoy it, must and will bless the Lord and the Lamb; and they will do it publicly, and with becoming fervor.

2. The song of the angels, v. 11, 12. Observe, (1.) Their station,—before the throne of God, attending on Him, and about the saints, ready to serve them. (2.) Their posture; very humble, and expressive of the greatest reverence; they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God. Behold the most excellent of all the creatures, who never sinned, who are before Him continually, not only covering their faces, but falling down on their faces before the Lord! What humility, then, and what profound reverence, become us vile, frail creatures, when we come into the presence of God! (3.) Their praises; they con-

\* Comp. cut, under the word 'gird,' in the Concordance, given in the 'Supplement' to this Commentary. Ed.

presented to the praises of the saints, said their Amen thereto; there is in heaven a perfect harmony between the angels and saints; and then they added more of their own, saying, Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. Here they acknowledge the glorious attributes of God,—his wisdom, his power, and his might,—declare that for these his divine perfections He ought to be blessed, and praised, and glorified, to all eternity; and then they confirm it by their Amen. We see what is the work of heaven, and we ought to begin it now, to get our hearts tuned for it, to be much in it, and to long for that world where our praises, as well as happiness, will be perfected.

V. 13—17. Here we have a description of the honor and happiness of those who have faithfully served the Lord Jesus Christ, and suffered for Him; where observe, 1. A question asked by one of the elders, for John's instruction. Now the question has two parts: *What are these?* and *Whence came they?* It seems to be spoken by way of admiration, as Cant. 3:6. The apostle tacitly acknowledges his own ignorance, in the answer, and sends to this elder for information; *Thou knowest*. Those who would gain knowledge, must not be ashamed to own their ignorance, nor to desire instruction from any able to give it. The elder informs; where notice, 1. The low and desolate state these now so arrayed had formerly been in; *great tribulation*, persecuted by men, tempted by Satan, sometimes troubled in their own spirits; they had suffered the spoiling of their goods, the imprisonment of their persons, yea, the loss of life itself. The way to heaven lies through many tribulations; but tribulation, when gone through well, will make heaven more welcome and more glorious, [exercising to that character, which is to be ours there.] 2. The means by which they had been prepared for the great honor and happiness they now enjoyed, v. 14. It is not the blood of the martyrs themselves, but the blood of the Lamb, that can wash away sin, and make the soul pure and clean in the sight of God; other blood stains; this only makes white and clean. 3. The blessedness to which they are now advanced, being thus prepared for

needs hate something] they began to quarrel among themselves, and to persecute one another. Woodh.—Why will Christians prefer to carry scourges for one another, rather than the palm-branches of joyful victory over our common enemy? Ed.

(10.) 'It should be tr. "the salvation." Thus it expresses that peculiar deliverance, and state of safety, which this palm-bearing multitude of Gentile converts, together with the chosen Israelites, now experienced from the great tribulation. Woodh.—Some suppose, the 144,000 represent Jewish converts; the great multitude, Gentile believers.—See the general note. Guyse considers the 1st to be converts, both Jews and Gentiles; the 2d, the martyrs. Vitr. considers, that the full accomplishment is yet to come, as no period can be assigned when the destruction of Christ's enemies, and the exaltation of his servants in perfect purity and happiness, have borne a satisfactory resemblance to what is here depicted.' HENRY, abr.

V. 13—17. The scene, thus presented to the apostle's mind, related to events which did not occur till above 200 years afterwards, namely, in the time of Constantine: as he was, therefore, receiving prophetic information, one of the representatives of the universal church [to fix his attention] inquired of him, whether he knew who they were, thus 'arrayed in white robes,' or whence they came. And the apostle having respectfully replied, that he was persuaded the elder well knew, thus intimating his desire of instruction; he was shown, that 'these were persons who had come out of great tribulation.'—This could not be meant of the Gentiles, converted to Christianity after the accession of Constantine; for they had come out of no great tribulation, peculiar to them rather than others: and though it might be accommodated to the state of the church at large in those peaceful days, which had succeeded to a season of extreme tribulation; yet it far more aptly and emphatically represented the case of those multitudes, who had been 'faithful unto death,' amidst the harassing persecutions of the foregoing ages, 6:9—11. Acts 14:19—23. 1 Thes. 3:1—5. 2 Thes. 1:5—10. 2 Tim. 3:10—12.—Nothing on earth can fully answer to such language as this: and indeed the prosperity of the church at the time predicted very soon terminated as a dream; (Notes, 12.) and cannot be reasonably considered, as exclusively, or primarily, nor indeed at all intended, by this most energetic and rapturous language. But such a view of the immediate felicity of those, who followed Christ faithfully in the predicted season of persecution, was very proper to reconcile the minds of Christians to their trials, and to animate them to face death in its most terrifying forms. Accordingly, the church, during these times, seems to have studied this book more, and even to have understood this first part of

to the children of the free-women, above those of the bond-women, as both are alike in Christ.—No satisfactory reason for these variations can be assigned. Gen. 29:32—35. 30:1—22. 49: Num. 1:26. Deut. 33. Sc.

(5—8.) Dan, early apostatizing, became a common receptacle of idolatry, and thus the means of corruption; therefore, it is thought, the tribe (as that of Ephraim, for a similar reason) is omitted. Levi is substituted, who, being dispersed among the other tribes as ministers, received no allotment in Canaan. But now, being to enter on the heavenly Canaan, where there is no temple, and all are priests to God; (21:22. v. 10.) the service of this tribe, as priests, is no longer needed; and therefore it resumes its ancient station among the brethren. WOODH.

V. 9—12. Many suppose the preceding vs. relate exclusively to the Jewish converts, who were at this time added to the church; and that these refer to the Gentiles who embraced the Gospel during the same period; and others explain them of the peace and prosperity of the church during those days. But it appears to me evident, that the happy estate of those, who had adhered to Christ during the preceding calamities, and had been 'faithful unto death,' was intended: for though they had been slain, or had otherwise been removed, before the favorable change took place; they were by this no losers, nay, exceedingly benefited; and the language of the subsequent verses is so energetic, that nothing short of heavenly felicity can answer to it. (Note, 13—17.)—A multitude so large, that no man could number it, collected from the several nations of the earth, known in those days, appeared to 'stand before the throne,' as accepted worshippers of God; and 'before the Lamb,' as his redeemed people. 5:8—10. 19:1—6. This view and interpretation give us enlarged conceptions of the success of the Gospel, during the first three centuries; and may encourage the hope, that vast numbers lived by obedient faith, and died in Christ, unknown to history; notwithstanding the lamentable account transmitted to us, of the heresies, contentions, and corruptions which prevailed at that early period. For these form by far the most prominent subjects in the ecclesiastical records of those times.—[As to their habit, and the concurrence of the angels in their praise, Scott writes as in Henry.] SCOTT.

(9.) These palm-bearers cannot denote that race of degenerate and nominal Christians in Constantine's times, of whom Bp. Newton says, 'though Constantine's success (the "little help") added much to the temporal prosperity, yet it contributed little to the spiritual graces and virtues of the Christians. It enlarged their revenues, and increased their endowments, but proved the fatal mean of corrupting the doctrine and relaxing the discipline of the church. No sooner were they delivered from heathen fury, than [for alas, it seems as if all of us must



16 They shall hunger <sup>a</sup> no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any <sup>r</sup> heat.

17 For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall <sup>s</sup> feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe <sup>t</sup> away all tears from their eyes.

### CHAP. VIII.

1 At the opening of the seventh seal, 2 seven angels had seven trumpets given them. 6 Four of them sound their trumpets, and great plagues follow. 3 Another angel putteth incense to the prayers of the saints on the golden altar.

AND when he had opened the seventh <sup>a</sup> seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

2 And I saw the seven angels which stood <sup>b</sup> before God; and to them were given seven <sup>c</sup> trumpets.

3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should <sup>d</sup> offer it with the <sup>e</sup> prayers of all saints upon the golden <sup>f</sup> altar which was before the throne.

4 And the smoke of the <sup>g</sup> incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it <sup>h</sup> into the earth: and <sup>i</sup> there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an <sup>j</sup> earthquake.

6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

PRACT. OBS. The intervals of peace on earth are caused by a positive divine interposition, to restrain the furious [selfishness] of men, and the agency of Satan; which at all times naturally tend to confusion, discord, mischief, and misery.—When the Lord Jesus sees good to grant his church seasons of rest, and to raise up men endued with authority, to countenance and concur in promoting the Gospel; He commonly 'seals' many by his converting grace, 'unto the day of redemption;' Acts 9:31. But human depravity, and the artifices of Satan, often pervert peaceful and prosperous days into an occasion of negligence and hypocritical profession; and this makes way for the ministering angels, being again commissioned to bring calamities upon the earth.—It is encouraging to those, who are decidedly on the Lord's part in this evil world, to hear of the increase of 'the true Israel of God;' and they will pray Him to add to their numbers 'a hundred-fold more, how many so-

ever they be;' and, though they, who offer these fervent prayers, may not live to witness this blessed change, they must exult to recollect what multitudes are gone before them to heaven; and what accessions are daily making to the number from all the nations of the earth: and what glorious times are coming, according to the sure word of prophecy.—Could we ascend into heaven, and inquire, 'who they are that are arrayed in white robes, and whence they came;' amidst ten thousand differences in other matters, we should learn, that every one of them had come out of sorrow, and out of sin; that they had all been in conflict and tribulation; and that they had all 'washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'—Not one discordant voice will be heard in heaven for ever; nor could those who expect salvation in any other way, join the praises of that blessed world, or even say, Amen, to them.

it far better, than Christians in succeeding generations have generally done.—'With God is the fountain of life;' but it is 'the Lamb that was slain,' who 'leads sinners unto that fountain of living waters.' (Note, 22:1.)—(14) *Washed, &c.*] How could such an idea ever enter the human mind, as washing linen garments in blood, and so rendering them white; apart from the doctrine of the atonement, and the efficacy of faith in that atonement, to cleanse the soul from sin? 1:4—6. 1 Pet. 1:17—21. 1 John 1:5—7.

(14.) 'Such passages as this and 1:5. and 5:9. are so strong for the atonement of Christ, that they cannot be invaded.' GILPIN.

(17.) 'Divine prediction often sketches out in one prophecy, and then fills up the outline in another. Comp. those of Dan. The 6 seals may synchronize with the latest prophecies of Rev. and Christ's final coming.' WOODH.

NOTES. CHAP. VIII. V. 1—6. The last of the 7 seals contains under it far more than all the others; as it introduces, and indeed included that period which fell under the 7 trumpets. 'The placing of this circumstance [the silence and the other angel coming and having a censer, &c.] immediately before the sounding of the trumpets, suggests, that the subject of these prayers was the occasion of something to be called for by these trumpets; and what could this be, but that of the destruction of the Roman empire? It is plainly suggested, that the petition for some delay would be accepted; yet all further applications, on that head, are discouraged by a most significant emblem, the censer being cast away.' Whitaker. Ez. 27:1—8. 30:1—8. Lev. 10:1, 2. 16:11—14.

(1.) 'Is not the silence, to prepare for a change in the mode of exhibition and series of events? So of the change from 4 to 7 angels. Throughout the scenery of the trumpets, heaven is kept wholly distinct from the earth.' Woodh. 'Keith, with some others, considers that the 7th seal is manifestly of a different character from the 6 that preceded. He thinks, that the spiritual state of the world was described previous to the political; and that, as the outline of the former is contained in

7 The first angel sounded, and <sup>k</sup> there followed hail and fire min-

q Is. 49:10. a c. 5:1. g Ez. 30:1.  
r Ps. 121:6. b Lu. 1:19. h or, upon.  
Is. 4:6. c 2 Ch. 29:25—28. i c. 16:13.  
s Is. 23:1, 2, 5. d or, add it to. j 2 Sa. 22:3.  
36:8. Is. 40:11. e c. 5:8. k Eze. 58:22.  
t Is. 25:8. f c. 6:9.

it. They are happy, (1.) In their station, before the throne of God night and day, in that presence where there is fulness of joy. (2.) In their employment; for they serve God continually; heaven is a state of service, though not of suffering; of rest, but not of sloth; it is a praising, delightful rest. (3.) In their freedom from all the inconveniences of this present life; from all want, and sense of want; They hunger and thirst no more; from all sickness and pain; The heat of the sun shall no more scorch them. (4.) In the love and conduct of the Lord Jesus; He shall feed them, He lead them to living fountains of waters; put them in possession of everything pleasant and refreshing to their souls; therefore they shall hunger and thirst no more. (5.) In being delivered from all sorrow, or occasion of it; God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. They have formerly had their sorrows, and shed many tears, both on account of sin and of affliction; but God Himself, with his own gentle and gracious hand, will wipe those tears away, and they shall return no more for ever; this should moderate the Christian's sorrow in his present state, and support him under all its troubles.

CHAP. VIII. We now come to the opening of the 7th seal, which introduced the sounding of the 7 trumpets; a direful scene now opens. Most expositors agree, that the 7 seals represent the interval between the apostle's time and the reign of Constantine, but that the seven trumpets are designed to represent the rise of antichrist, some time after the empire became Christian.

V. 1—6. In these vs. we have the prelude to the sounding of the trumpets in several parts: 1. The opening of the last seal; this

was to introduce a new set of prophetic iconisms, images, and events. 2. A profound silence in heaven for the space of half an hour, which may be understood either, of the silence of peace, that for this time no complaints were sent up to the ear of the Lord God of sabaoth; or, of expectation; great things were on the wheel of Providence, and the church of God, both in heaven and earth, stood silent, as became them, to see what God was doing, Zech. 2:13. 3. The trumpets were delivered to the angels, who were to sound them. As the angels of the churches are to sound the trumpet of the Gospel, the angels of heaven are to sound the trumpet of Providence, and every one has his part given him. 4. To prepare for this, another angel must first offer incense, v. 3. very probably this other angel is the Lord Jesus, the High Priest of the church, here described in his sacerdotal office, having a golden censer, and much incense, a fulness of merit in his own glorious Person, and this incense He was to offer up, with the prayers of all the saints, upon the golden altar of his divine nature. Observe, All the saints are a praying people; and times of danger should be praying times; yet the prayers of the saints themselves stand in need of the incense and intercession of Christ to make them acceptable and effectual, and He has his incense, his censer, and his altar; so that no prayer, thus recommended, was ever denied audience and acceptance. These prayers, thus accepted in heaven, produced great changes on earth, in return to them; the same angel that in his censer offered up the prayers of the saints, in the same censer took of the fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth, and this presently caused strange commotions, voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake; these were the answers God gave to the prayers of the saints, and tokens of his anger against the world, and that He would do great things to avenge Himself and his people of their enemies; and now all things being thus prepared, the angels discharge their duty.

V. 7—13. Observe, I. The first angel

ever they be;' and, though they, who offer these fervent prayers, may not live to witness this blessed change, they must exult to recollect what multitudes are gone before them to heaven; and what accessions are daily making to the number from all the nations of the earth: and what glorious times are coming, according to the sure word of prophecy.—Could we ascend into heaven, and inquire, 'who they are that are arrayed in white robes, and whence they came;' amidst ten thousand differences in other matters, we should learn, that every one of them had come out of sorrow, and out of sin; that they had all been in conflict and tribulation; and that they had all 'washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'—Not one discordant voice will be heard in heaven for ever; nor could those who expect salvation in any other way, join the praises of that blessed world, or even say, Amen, to them.

the first 6 seals, the 7th seal, under the 7 trumpets, begins to open up the latter. It does not follow, that what is recorded under each successive seal, can only refer to events that follow in order of time.' HENRY, *abr.*

(5.) 'Three earthquakes are mentioned in the Apocalypse:—1. Ch. 8:5. *Cuninghame* refers this to the downfall of paganism, in the time of Constantine. 2. Precedes the passing away of the second woe, and is identified with the period of the Reformation. 3. That of the day of wrath. 6:12—17. 11:18, 19. 16:18. The first shock of this he considers to be the French revolution, in 1792; but that its most tremendous concussions are yet future.' HENRY, *abr.* 'The scene is in heaven, to which John was called up, 4:1. and the earth is in view below. The significant action, here, prepares us for the kind of history to follow. The Christian worship and religion, pure and heavenly in its origin and nature, represented by the incense thus burning, when sent down to earth, and conflicting with the passions and worldly projects of sinful men, produces signal commotions, expressed in prophetic language, (here generally, afterwards particularized,) as our Lord Himself declared, that, in sending forth his holy religion to the earth, He had cast fire thereon, i. e. divisions and discords, Lu. 12:49.'

(6.) 'The best meaning given to these disputed trumpets, seems that of hostile attacks, and so Woodh., who thinks, that, throughout, the object is the same,—the pure Christian Church; and that the assailants are not only its infidel and acknowledged foes, but also those, its most formidable enemies, who, professing to belong to its body, have taught doctrines, and pursued measures, contrary to its purity, destructive of its peace, and almost of its existence, the heretics and antichristian corrupters. For in those visions of the trumpets whose meaning can be most accurately ascertained, as the 5, 6, and 7th, the church is evidently the object of assault. Woodh.' *Bl.* 'They designate, 1. Persecution in Judea; 2. the Pagan, designated by a burning mountain; 3. heresies, &c.; 4. the consequent failure, in part, of the light originally beaming from the Gospel.'

V. 7. The emblematical predictions, following the first 4 trumpets,



gled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees <sup>1</sup> was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain <sup>2</sup> burning with fire was cast into the <sup>3</sup> sea: and the third part of the sea became <sup>4</sup> blood;

9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died: and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell <sup>5</sup> a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters:

1 Is. 2:12. n Am. 7:4. c. 16:3, &c.  
m Je. 51:25. o Ex. 7:19-21. p Is. 14:12. c. 9:1.

sounded the first trumpet, and the events which followed were very dismal, v. 7. Here was a terrible storm, whether of heresies, a mixture of monstrous errors falling

on the church, (for in that age Arianism prevailed,) or of war falling on the civil state, expositors are not agreed. Mr. Mede takes it to be meant of the Gothic inundation, that broke in on the empire in the year 395, the same year that Theodosius died, when the northern nations, under Alaric, the king of the Goths, brake in on the western parts of the empire. However, here we observe, (1.) It was a very terrible storm,—fire, and hail, and blood; a strange mixture! (2.) The limitation of it; it fell on the *third part of the trees*, and on the *third part of the grass*; that is, say some, on the *third part of the clergy*, and the *third part of the laity*; or, as others, who take it to fall on the civil state, on the *third part of the great men*, and on the *third part of the common people*; either on the Roman empire itself, which was a third part of the then known world, or on a third part of that empire. The most severe calamities have their bounds and limits set them by the great God.

2. The second angel sounded, and the alarm was followed, as in the first, with terrible events, v. 8. By this *mountain* some understand the leader or leaders of the heretics; others, as Mr. Mede, the city of Romè, which was five times sacked by the

Goths and Vandals, within the compass of 137 years; first by Alaric, in the year 410, with great slaughter and cruelty. In these calamities, a *third part* of the people (called here *the sea*, or collection of waters) were destroyed: here was still a limitation to the third part, for, *in the midst of judgment, God remembers mercy*. This storm fell heavy upon the maritime and merchandising cities and countries of the Roman empire.

3. The third angel sounded, and the alarm had the like effects as before, v. 10. Some take this *star* to be a political star, some eminent governor, and they apply it to Augustulus, who was forced to resign the empire to Odoacer, in the year 480. Others, to be an ecclesiastical star, some eminent person in the church, compared to a *burning lamp*, and they fix it on Pelagius, who proved, about this time, a falling star, and greatly corrupted the churches of Christ. Observe, Where this star fell, and its effect; on a *third part of the rivers*, and upon the *fountains of waters*, v. 10. turning those springs and streams into *wormwood*; either the laws, which are the springs of civil liberty, property, and safety, were poisoned by arbitrary power; or the doctrines of the Gospel, the

principally related to the gradual, but complete subversion of the Roman empire, in the western part of the world; though this was connected with multiplied calamities in the eastern provinces, which are also implied. Constantine the Great built Constantinople, and made it his residence, and the metropolis of the empire; and, by a concurrence of circumstances some time after his death, that vast fabric, the Roman empire, was divided into two parts, governed by two distinct successions of emperors. But the western and eastern empires, when thus separated, were not wholly unconnected: so that the ruin of the western empire was attended by great convulsions in the eastern; and the subsequent subversion of the latter occasioned manifold evils in the countries, which had constituted the former. As therefore the events, which related to the two divisions of the empire, were thus involved with one another, it was proper that the predictions of them should be so likewise: yet the residue of the ch. primarily predicts the subversion of the western, and the next ch. that of the eastern empire. (Notes, 9.)—The calm, which followed Constantine's accession to the throne, did not last long: even the latter part of his life was far from being undisturbed; and after his death many bloody wars were waged within the empire, by his sons with each other, and other competitors, for the imperial authority; whilst the church was disturbed by various descriptions of heretics; and unnatural persecutions were raised, by men who called themselves Christians. These and other evils weakened both the church and the state; and after a time, the Huns and Goths from the northern regions of Europe, broke in upon the distracted empire, and made terrible ravages in many of its provinces. The latter events seem to have been especially intended by the storm of 'hail and fire mingled with blood,' by which a third part of the productions of the earth were destroyed; i. e. multitudes were killed, both high and low, grown persons and infants, through the whole Roman empire, which might be deemed a third part of the earth, as discovered at that time. (Ex. 9:22-25. M. R.)—This period is supposed by some approved expositors, to reach from A. D. 338, to 412: but others explain it principally of the incursions of the Goths under Alaric, who entered the empire A. D. 395; and after spreading desolation by fire and sword through the provinces, A. D. 410, took and plundered Rome, with circumstances of barbarity very correspondent to these emblems, as contemporary writers have testified: especially in that he slew without distinction, princes, nobles, priests, and people, and showed no mercy even to the tender infants; thus destroying 'the trees and the green grass,' or smaller vegetable productions, indiscriminately.—The first four trumpets describe the removal of that power, which, in the days of Paul, . . . prevented the development of "the man of sin;" namely, the western imperial dignity of Rome.' Faber.—'On the decease of Theodosius, that great prince, A. D. 395, the northern cloud, which had been so long gathering, discharged itself. He died in the month of January, and, before the end of the same year, the Gothic nation was in arms.—The barriers of the Danube were thrown open; the savage warriors of Scythia issued from their forests; and the uncommon severity of the winter, (the season in which natural hail and snow are generated,) allowed the poet to remark, that they rolled their ponderous wagons over the broad and icy back of the indignant river. The fertile fields of Phœcis and Bœotia were covered with a deluge of barbarians, who massacred the males, of an age to bear arms, and drove away the beautiful females, with the spoil and cattle of the flaming villages.' Gibbon.—I have adopted the language of the historian. Unconscious that he was bearing his testimony to the truth of prophecy, he has used the same allegorical language, as that employed by St. John. The correspondence of nations, says he, 'was in that age so imperfect and precarious, that the revolutions of the N. might escape the knowledge of the court of Ravenna; till the dark cloud, which was collected along the coasts of the Baltic, burst in thunder upon the banks of the upper Danube.' Faber.—The nature of this publication must exclude most of the quotations, which might be made from Gibbon, the elegant and infidel historian of the decline of the Roman empire: but he has certainly, without intending it, shown the exact completion of these prophecies, in many instances.—Different opinions prevail, as to the duration of the events, predicted by the sounding of the first trumpet; but it cannot be expected, that these topics, which, after all, very slightly affect the main subject, should be here particularly noticed. Some think, that all the calamities brought on the empire, by the northern invaders, and especially those of Attila,

mentioned in the ensuing note, were intended by the general language of this v.; though other eminent expositors place a part of them under the second trumpet.

(7.) 'The land, (or earth,) as opposed to the sea, frequently signifies the holy land, the people of Israel; while the Gentiles, especially those of the W., are spoken of by the word sea. Is. ch. 24. Gen. 10:5. Mat. 12:21, &c. Between these, there was early a marked line of distinction. See Gal., also Ac. 4:7. Rom. 15:10, 11. Upon the Christian Israelites, therefore, we may suppose, came the storm of hail, fire, and blood; i. e. persecutions even unto death.' Woodh. Bl. inserts, 'and a third of the earth was burnt up.'

(7-12.) Recent foreign contrs. say, 'in all this, the extreme calamity simply is meant, in an ornamented and amplified diction;' but this course, properly adds Bl., too common with them, though it saves much trouble, in general, tends to anything but real and sound knowledge; only summarily despatching matters we are unable to explain. By the trees, Woodh. understands, genuine Christians, Is. 61:3. Eph. 3:17. many of them (a third, i. e. a considerable part) destroyed by the fire of persecution: by green grass, Mk. 4:17. those Christians who make a fair show, but in time of persecution fall away. Heresies, and their consequences, darkness and ignorance, he thinks meant in the rest of this ch.; which Bl. thinks less probable than other views. Id.

V. 8, 9. 'A great burning mountain' is an emblem of a mighty destructive warrior, and has been so used by the most celebrated poets. Jer. 51:25. The Roman empire, with its vast multitude of people and nations, might be aptly compared to the sea. (17:15.) This 'great mountain, burning with fire,' therefore, being 'cast into the sea,' with the effects produced by it, represented, most emphatically, the irruption of the barbarous nations, under ferocious leaders, into the Roman empire, and their shedding of the blood of immense multitudes, and destroying the cities, or desolating the country with fire and sword. After Alaric, with his Goths, had finished his depredations, Attila, at the head of a vast army of Huns, ravaged the empire during the space of 14 years, destroying all before him, in the most barbarous manner; nor did any part of the empire wholly escape his fury. These events seem to have been principally intended; but we may include under this trumpet the various calamities, which befel the empire from A. D. 412, to 450. If these devastations under Attila from the N., belong to the first trumpet, those under Genserick, king of the Vandals, from Africa, to the S. must be here intended. (Note, 10, 11.)—But, whether Attila or Genserick were meant, it is manifest, that the 'third part of the sea turned into blood,' is the emblem of the Roman empire, supposed to contain a third part of the world; and the burning mountain must consequently mean the conqueror, who produced these effects, and not the conquered; else in the same v., there are two emblems of the latter, and none of the former. (Notes, 16:3-7. Ex. 7:15-21.)

V. 10, 11. The 'great star falling from heaven,' is explained by some, of the Arian and Pelagian heresies, and the contests and persecutions connected with them. And, no doubt, such events might very aptly be represented by 'the falling of a star,' and the church was miserably corrupted, and deformed by heresy, during that period. Ex. 15:22-24. 2 Ks. 2:19-22.—Yet the series of the prophecy favors the interpretation of those, who explain these vs. to predict the continuation of those calamities, which subverted the empire. An eminent prince, suddenly appearing in the heart of the empire, and conspicuous even in the mischiefs which he occasioned, might be aptly represented by 'a great star,' or luminous meteor, shooting 'from heaven, and burning as a lamp.' The name 'Wormwood,' and the effect of its falling on the waters, denoted the further desolations of the empire, and the ruin of the remaining comforts, which were left to the relics of the miserable inhabitants; who were so harassed and afflicted, that they could not seek for the necessary support of life, without exposing themselves to the fury of the invaders. Judg. 5:11. Lam. 5:3-10. Thus the imbittering and poisoning of the rivers and fountains, completed the former judgment of turning the sea into blood.—Accordingly, very soon after Attila's retreat, Genserick unexpectedly invaded the empire with 300,000 Vandals and Moors from Africa; besieged and took Rome, and abandoned that city to the cruelty, avarice, and licentiousness of his troops; and by this success he so weakened the empire, that it was soon after subverted. As this assault was made at the very source of the Roman power and prosperity, it might on this account likewise be represented, as poisoning



11 And the name of the star is called <sup>a</sup> Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became <sup>r</sup> wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun <sup>s</sup> was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying <sup>t</sup> through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound.

### CHAP. IX.

<sup>1</sup> At the sounding of the fifth angel, a star falleth from heaven, to whom is given the key of the bottomless pit. <sup>2</sup> He openeth the pit, and there come forth locusts like scorpions. <sup>12</sup> The first woe past. <sup>13</sup> The sixth trumpet soundeth. <sup>14</sup> Four angels are let loose, that were bound.

AND the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star <sup>a</sup> fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him

**PRACT. OBS.** The intervals of peace, which the church has hitherto enjoyed, have commonly been of short continuance.—Amidst the confusion occasioned by the vices of mankind, we should rejoice that 'the Lord reigneth'; and that the prayers of all true believers, being presented through the meritorious intercession of our great High Priest, will surely be accepted and answered.—While the present wrath of God and of the Lamb, through those executioners of vengeance who mean not so, fills countries with misery, destroys the wretched inhabitants,

the rivers and fountains of waters.—Genserick was also a bigoted Arian, and a cruel persecutor of the orthodox Christians; and in this sense, too, he poisoned the fountains. These events occurred between A. D. 450, and 456. **SCOTT.**

10, 11. 'A star, in prophetic language, signifies a prince, or eminent leader,—a leader in doctrine, Num. 24:14. Mat. 2:2. Rev. 2:28. 22:16. 1:16. Such an one falling from heaven, as did Satan, (Lu. 10:18. 2 Pet. 2:4. Jude 6. and Rev. 12:4. 9:1—12. when he and his fallen angels are thus symbolized,) corrupts the third part of the rivers and fountains of waters; i. e. the streams and sources of pure doctrine, thus expressed by our Lord, Jn. 4:10. &c. 7:37—39. The corruption of pure doctrine and introduction of heretical tenets are commonly attributed in Scripture to Satan and his angels, (Mat. 13:29. 2 Cor. 11:14, 15. Eph. 2:2. 2 Th. 2:9. 1 Tim. 5:15.) and the corrupting doctrine, producing heresies, is expressed by the metaphors wormwood, gall, bitterness, (De. 29:18. Am. 5:7. 6:12. Ac. 8:23.) and the death there described is spiritual. Note, 3:1.—Under this trumpet, therefore, we seem to obtain a *general description* of those corruptions, which, at the instigation of Satan, were seen to invade and subvert a great part of the Christian church by the preaching of *splendid* heretics. Such, in the early times, were Simon, Menander, Cerinthus, &c. The corruption of Christianity produced Gothic darkness and superstition; and no greater calamity than the corruption, rejection, and loss of true and saving religion, can happen to man. Antichrist, already come when this vision was seen, (1 Jn. 2:18, 22. 4:3. 2 Jn. 7. beginning to work, 2 Th. 2:7. waxing worse and worse, 2 Tim. 3:13.) now the warfare comes (ch. 9.) to be exhibited more openly, will soon stand confessed.' **WOODH.**

V. 12. Under the 4th trumpet, the sun, moon, and stars, or the great luminaries of the Roman empire, were eclipsed and darkened: (Notes, 6:12—14. Mat. 24:29—31.) for the third part, though spoken of the luminaries, or the time of their shining, seems still to refer to the extent of the empire, as containing one third of the then known world. While the splendor of the eastern empire was greatly tarnished, and it shone but with a feeble and almost expiring light; that of the western was gradually extinguished. 'Genserick left it in a weak and desperate condition; it struggled hard, and as it were gasped for breath, during 8 short and turbulent reigns, for the space of 20 years, till at length it expired, A. D. 476, under Momyllus, who was, in derision, called Augustulus, or the diminutive Augustus.' Bp. Newton. Still, however, though the Roman sun was extinguished, its subordinate luminaries faintly shone, while the senate and consuls continued. But, after several other changes, at length, A. D. 566, the whole form of the ancient government was subverted, and Rome itself was reduced, from being the empress of the world, to be a poor dukedom, tributary to the Exarch of Ravenna.—The events of above 200 years are here predicted in 6 vs.; events peculiarly important in themselves, and in their consequences, yet recorded by historians in the most disorderly and intricate manner. However therefore it may suit the design of those, who confine their labor to this one part of Scripture, to enter into particulars, or to argue either for or against any interpretation, it cannot fall in with the design of a practical exposition of the whole Word of God. The author observes, with satisfaction, that the interpreters agree in the grand outline; and even the testimony of infidels, when writing the history of these times, demonstrates the exact accomplishment of the prophecy.—'I have now accomplished the laborious narrative of the decline and fall of the Roman empire, from the fortunate age of Trajan and the Antonines, to its

was given the key of the bottomless <sup>b</sup> pit.

q De. 29:18. Je. 9:15. 23:15. t c. 14:6  
Am. 5:7. s Is. 13:10 Je. 4: a Lu. 10:18  
He. 12:15. 28 Eze. 32:7, 8. c. 8:10.  
r Ex. 15:23. Joel 2:10. Am. 8:9. b c. 17:8. 20:1.

springs of spiritual life, refreshment, and vigor, were so corrupted and imbittered by a mixture of dangercous errors, that the souls of men found their ruin where they sought for their refreshment.

4. *The fourth angel sounded*, and the alarm was followed with further calamities. Observe, (1.) The nature of this calamity,—darkness; it fell on the great luminaries of the heaven, that gave light to the world,—*the sun, and the moon, and the stars*; either the guides and governors of the church, or of the state, who are placed in higher orbs than the people, and are to dispense light and benign influences to them. (2.) The limitation; it was confined to a *third part* of these luminaries; there was some light of both, but it was only a *third part* of what they had before. Without determining what is matter of controversy in these points among learned men, we rather choose to make these plain and practical remarks: [1.] Where the Gospel comes to a people, and is but coldly received, and has not its proper effects on their hearts and lives, it is usually followed with dreadful judgments. [2.] God warns men of his judgments before He sends them; so that if a people be sur-

prised, it is their own fault. [3.] The anger of God against a people makes dreadful work among them; imbitters all their comforts, makes even life itself bitter and burdensome. [4.] God does not in this world stir up all his wrath, but sets bounds to the most terrible judgments. [5.] Corruption of doctrine and worship in the church, are themselves great judgments, and the usual causes and tokens of other judgments coming on a people.

5. Before the other three trumpets are sounded, here is solemn warning given to the world, how terrible the calamities would be, that should follow them, and how miserable those times and places would be, on which they fell, v. 13. Here are three woes, to show how much the calamities coming should exceed those that had been already, or to hint how every one of the three succeeding trumpets should introduce its particular and distinct calamity. If less judgments do not take effect, but the church and the world grow worse under them, they must expect greater; and *God will be known by the judgments that He executes.*

CHAP. IX. V. 1—12. Upon the sounding of this trumpet, the things to be observed are, 1. *A star falling from heaven to the earth.* Some think this star represents some eminent bishop in the Christian church; but who this is, expositors do not agree. Some understand it of Boniface, the 3d bishop of

and imbitters and poisons all the comforts of life, till the greatest prosperity is totally darkened and extinguished, and all ranks and orders of men involved in one common and dire calamity; the messengers of the Lord are ordered to proclaim aloud, in all the world, that still more dreadful woes are in reserve for all the impenitent 'workers of iniquity'; for what are all temporal evils, compared with 'the destruction of body and soul in hell?' **SCOTT.**

utter extinction in the west, about 5 centuries after the Christian era. At that unhappy period, the Saxons fiercely struggled with the natives for the possession of Britain; Gaul and Spain were divided between the powerful monarchies of the Franks and the Visigoths, and the dependent kingdoms of the Suevo and Burgundinus; Africa was exposed to the cruel persecution of the Vandals, and to the savage insults of the Moors; Rome and Italy, as far as the banks of the Danube, were afflicted by an army of barbarian mercenaries, whose lawless tyranny was succeeded by the reign of Theodorick the Ostrogoth. All the subjects of the empire, who, by the use of the Latin language, more particularly deserved the name and privileges of Romans, were oppressed by the disgrace and calamities of foreign conquest; and the victorious nations of Germany established a new system of manners and government, in the western countries of Europe.' *Gibbon*.—Can there now be the shadow of a doubt, concerning the exact accomplishment of these compeudious prophecies, some hundreds of years after they were written? And who can then hesitate to say, that John wrote by the inspiration of that God, who sees the end from the beginning? **SCOTT.**

V. 13. *Angel.* Bl. reads, eagle, *aitou*; put for 'angel like an eagle.' *Midst of heaven.* Rather, between the heavens and the earth, *in the sky.* So *Woodh.* and Bl. 'Under the first 4 trumpets, which have their beginning from this period, the storm increases, (says *Woodh.*) and under the last 3, it advances to its maturity, and produces the most special and desolating effects, by 3 distinct explosions. The 3 wars correspond to the last 3 trumpets, which, or the *war*-trumpets, are generally regarded as predicting the miserable state of the church in the dark ages. See also Bp. Newton's Bl. Ed. 'Keith says, comtrs. with considerable variance in the details, are mostly of one mind, that the first 4 trumpets denote the successive events which caused the downfall of Rome, and the 5th and 6th characterize the Saracen and Turkish power. Authority here, in some measure, supersedes the necessity of lengthened discussion, and few could elucidate the texts more clearly, or expound them more fully, than has been done by the skeptical philosopher, *Gibbon*! Keith follows other writers in extracting largely from the "History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," and notices the manner in which all the industry and genius of *Gibbon* were unconsciously devoted to the task, of showing the form in which a portion of the revelation of Jesus Christ was developed. He who strove to show, that the Gospel was propagated by secondary causes, has himself proved, by the toil of 20 years, and by numbers of accumulated facts, that such causes hold but a subordinate rank even in the revolutions of earthly kingdoms! To the purposes of the Most High, the labors of skeptics, as well as the ravages of heathens, may all be made alike subservient. And they who, following *Gibbon*, would consign the work that was of God to the sole agency of secondary causes, and think that the Gospel of his Son was the device of human wisdom, and its propagation through the world the mere effect of human means, may look to the result of all this skeptic's labors, which fix *him* for ever as a commentator on the Apocalypse!' **HENRY, abr.**

NOTES. CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. (Note, 8:10, 11.) There can scarcely remain a doubt, that these vs. predict the rise and progress of Mohammed [the great destroyer of idols, and asserter of God's unity] and his successors, as ruling over the Arabians or Saracens. Early in the 7th century, (about A. D. 606—609,) Mohammed began to aver a very extraordinary intercourse with God; declaring, that the angel Gabriel was frequently sent to him, to teach a religion, which he was to propagate



2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened <sup>c</sup> by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3 And there came out of the smoke locusts <sup>d</sup> upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions <sup>e</sup> of the earth have power.

4 And it was commanded them <sup>f</sup> that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal <sup>g</sup> of God in their foreheads.

5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

6 And in those days shall men <sup>h</sup> seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

7 And the shapes <sup>i</sup> of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were <sup>j</sup> crowns like gold, and their faces <sup>k</sup> were as the faces of men.

8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth <sup>l</sup> were as the teeth of lions.

Rome, who assumed the title of universal bishop, by the favor of the emperor Phocas, who, being a usurper and tyrant in the state, allowed Boniface to be so in the church, as the reward of his flattery. 2. To this fallen star was given the key of the bottomless pit. Having now ceased to be a minister of Christ, he becomes the antichrist, the minister of the devil, and his turnkey, to let loose the powers of hell against the churches of Christ. 3. Upon the opening of the bottomless pit there arose a great smoke, which darkened the sun and the air. The devils are the powers of darkness, hell is the place of darkness. The devil carries on his designs by

blinding the eyes of men, by extinguishing light and knowledge, and promoting ignorance and error; he first deceives, then destroys; wretched souls follow him in the dark, or they durst not follow him. 4. Out of this dark smoke there came a swarm of locusts, one of the plagues of Egypt, the devil's emissaries headed by antichrist, all the rout and rabble of antichristian orders, to promote superstition, idolatry, error, and cruelty; and these had, by the just permission of God, power to hurt those who had not the mark of God in their foreheads. 5. The hurt they were to do to them was not a bodily, but a spiritual hurt; they should not, in a military way, destroy all by fire and sword; the trees and the grass should be untouched, and those they hurt should not be slain; it should not be a persecution, but a secret poison and infection in their souls, which should rob them of their purity, and afterward of their peace. 6. They had no power so much as to hurt those who had the seal of God in their foreheads. God's electing, effectual, distinguishing grace will preserve his people from total and final apostasy. 7. The power given to these factors for hell is limited in point of time,—five months, a certain season, and but short, though how short we cannot tell: gospel-

in the world, being an improvement and a perfecting both of the religion of Moses and of Jesus, as at first delivered, and a reformation of them from subsequent perversions and corruptions. His fabled journey to heaven was announced some yrs. after. He pretended, that he had been predicted in the books of Moses; but that the Jews had expunged these predictions. He also declared, that Jesus had foretold his coming, under the name of *Ahmed*, which signifies *Paraklētōs*, very illustrious, and is nearly allied to *Mohammed*. (It is supposed that he mistook *Paraklētōs*, the Comforter, for *Periklētōs*, very illustrious.) These pretences are here, as it is generally agreed, described by 'a star falling from the heaven to the earth;' and the emblem is the more appropriate, because he shone with a very conspicuous, though pestiferous light. The key given to him, to 'open the bottomless pit,' or the abyss of hell, was a very suitable emblem of the power and influence God was pleased to permit him to acquire, for the propagation of his satanical delusions. 3:7. For this most artful, politic, and prosperous impostor gradually acquired such ascendancy among the Arabians, or Saracens, to whom he belonged, that they not only received his religious system, but enlisted under his banner, and he led them forth to conquest, that they might by this method compel others to receive his doctrine. In this enterprise, he and his successors were so prosperous, that the light of Christianity was obscured; and many nations, where once it had shone, were almost totally darkened, and infected with this smoke from the abyss. Or, since the emblem of 'a star' marks out the ministers of Christianity; (Note, 1:12—20.) and so cannot apply to Mohammed: and since the apostate Nestorian monk, Sergius, or Bahcira, cannot on account of his obscurity, be meant, as some have supposed, if 'the fallen star,' &c. means some agent distinct from Mohammed, who was his forerunner, as I conceive it does; I should fix on the western corrupter of Christianity, whose 'mystery of iniquity' had been long working, but burst forth almost at the same time with the imposture of Mohammed. 2 Thes. 2:3—7. The worship of images, saints, and angels, prayers for the dead, and many other of the corruptions of popery, had at this time made very great progress in Christendom. These corruptions, of which the bishop and church of Rome were the source, centre, or principal support, evidently prepared the way for Mohammed, in connexion with the wickedness of the professors and ministers of Christianity; and furnished him with his most plausible pretences; and so the 'fallen star,' the western antichrist, (if that name may for brevity's sake be used,) opened the door for Mohammed and his imposture, i. e. for the eastern antichrist. It appears clearly, that not an individual, no, not Mohammed, as considered apart from the Caliphs his successors, is meant, either by 'the fallen star,' or 'the angel of the abyss;' but a succession of men, or associated bodies of men, carrying on from generation to generation the same design. And, as the corrupters of Christianity made way for the imposture of Mohammed, and the apostasy which it occasioned; who can more properly be designated by 'the star fallen from heaven to earth,' 'and opening the abyss,' than they? (See *Faber*, Vol. II. 29—33.)—The Christians of the 7th century relapsed into a semblance of Paganism; their public and private vows were addressed to the relics and images, that disgraced the temples of the east. The throne of the Almighty was darkened by a crowd of martyrs, and saints, and angels, the objects of popular veneration; and the Collyridian heretics, who flourished in the fruitful soil of Arabia, invested the Virgin with the name and honors of a goddess. *Gibbon*.—(1) *Bottomless pit*.] Gr. *The pit, or well, of the abyss*. 11. 11:7. 17:8. 20:1, 3. *Luke* 8:31. *Gen.* 1:2. *Ps.* 106:9. *Sept.*

(1.) *Bottomless pit*.] That part of Hades or hell, called Gehenna, the place of prison and punishment for wicked angels and men. This key, its Master (1:18.) commits to him for a time, for a special purpose only.

V. 3—5. 'Out of the smoke' above mentioned, 'came locusts;' i. e. great armies of Arabians, or Saracens, were raised, by means of Mohammed's imposture, to spread desolations through the nations. *Ex.* 10:6, 13. *Joel* 1:4—7. 2:4, 5, 7—9, 18—20. They resembled locusts in their numbers, and they came from the same regions, whence the largest swarms of those destructive insects have in all ages arisen. Locusts are said to be bred in pits and caverns, and these proceeded from 'the smoke, which came out of the bottomless pit.' Yet, at the same time, they also resembled scorpions, the sting of which gives extreme pain,

and often proves mortal. Thus, whilst locusts destroy the fruits of the earth, yet do not hurt the bodies of men; these mystical locusts were commanded not 'to hurt the grass,' or other vegetable productions; but only 'those men, who had not the seal of God upon their foreheads; and it is remarkable, that the Saracen armies were expressly laid under a similar injunction.—When Yezed was marching with his army to invade Syria, Abuheker charged him with this, among other orders, Destroy no palm trees, nor burn any fields of corn; cut down no fruit-trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat.' *Ep. Newton*. Corrupt and hypocritical professors of Christianity were especially meant by 'those men, who had not the seal of God in their foreheads;' which fully proves, that something wholly distinct from outward baptism, and exclusively belonging to true Christians, is denoted by that emblem. 6:5, 6. 7:1—3.—Now, it is well known, that the Saracens extended their conquests principally in those countries, where the worship of saints and angels, and other corruptions of Christianity, prevailed; whilst the places where religion was preserved more pure, were sheltered from their fury; and, no doubt, God permitted this scourge to come on the nations, where his Gospel was perverted, for their correction or punishment.—It was also predicted, that they would be restrained from killing those, whom they were commissioned to torment; but as immense multitudes were slain by these cruel victors, this cannot with propriety be interpreted *literally*; and it evidently means, that they would be empowered *durably* to ravage, harass, and disturb the nations and the church; but not utterly to destroy them.—'They might kill them as individuals, but still they should not kill them as a political body, as a state, or empire.' *Bp. Newton*.—Accordingly, they miserably desolated and oppressed, both the Greek and Latin churches, and the nations in which they were established, but they could not totally extirpate them; they repeatedly besieged Constantinople, but were always repulsed; they even plundered Rome, but they could not make themselves permanently masters of it; they took from the eastern empire many of its richest provinces, but they could not utterly subvert it.—Moreover, it was predicted, that they should distress and torment mankind, during 'five months,' according to the term of life, which naturalists assign to locusts (10). These months consisting of 30 days, and each day denoting a year, amount to 150 years; and Mohammed first began publicly to propagate his imposture, A. D. 612; and A. D. 762, (just 150 years afterwards,) the city of Bagdad was builded, the Saracens ceased from their ravages, and became a settled people; they made no more rapid conquests, and obtained no further accession to their power, which thenceforth began to decline. They then ceased to be *locusts*; though this 'woe-trumpet' continued much longer, as it will presently be seen.—These invaders speedily conquered Palestine, Syria, Armenia, almost all Asia Minor, Persia, India, Egypt, Nubia, Barbary, Spain, Portugal, part of Italy, and the principal islands in the Mediterranean sea.

(3.) *Locusts*.] See a full account of these in *Rob. Calm.* *Eo.*

(5.) *Five months*.] With allusion, it is supposed, to the very period of locusts, which are hatched in spring, and die at the end of summer. *Bl.*—*Not kill*.] 'The whole description is highly metaphorical, and so, as it may reasonably appear, is this *death*. Why not here as well as at 11:7—9, &c. The persons who suffer under this plague, do not die *spiritually*. They lose not altogether their life in Christ, whose name they profess, although they have renounced his purer doctrines and laws: they may yet repent, and return to Him and *live*. But the horrible superstitions they adopt, under the influence of their hellish teachers, take away from them the comforts of pure Christianity, and render the religion that is left, though it may perchance be nominally Christian, a torment, from which they wish to be relieved, but in vain.' *Woodh.*, who differs from others as to these 'locusts.'

V. 7—10. The shape of these figurative 'locusts,' was next described. Now the Arabians were remarkable for their skill in horsemanship, and their chief force lay in cavalry. *Joel* 2:1—6. The 'crowns on their heads like gold,' may denote the turbans, which the Arabians have always worn; or it may refer to the many kingdoms they subjected to their dominion. They had 'faces, like men,' but they wore their hair like women, plaited, or flowing down their backs; and the Arabians are known to have done this. The 'teeth, as of lions,' which are ascribed to them, represented their strength and fury to de-



9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of many horses running to battle.

10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.

11 And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

12 One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the

four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

m Na. 2:4. p That is, a de- r Ge. 2:14. Jo. 51:63. c. 16:12.  
n ver. 5. s trayar.  
o Ep. 2:2. q c. 8:13.

seasons have their limits, and times of seduction a limit too. 8. Though short, it would be very sharp, inasmuch, that those who were made to feel the malignity of this poison in their consciences, would be weary of their lives, v. 6. 9. These locusts were of a monstrous size and shape, v. 7, 8, &c. They were equipped for their work like horses prepared to battle; had crowns like gold on their heads, indicative of assumed authority and seeming victory; had the show of wisdom and sagacity, the faces of men, though the spirit of devils; had all the allurements of seeming beauty, to ensnare and defile the minds of men, hair like women; their way of worship was very gaudy and ornamental: though they appeared with the tenderness of women, they had the teeth of lions, were really cruel; they had the defence and protection of earthly powers, breastplates of iron; they made a mighty noise in the world, from one country to another, like that of an army

with chariots and horses; at first they soothed and flattered, but there was a sting in their tails; the cup of their abominations, though luscious at first, would at length bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder. The king and commander of this hellish squadron is here described as an angel; so he was by nature, once an angel of heaven; and he is an angel still, but a fallen angel, fallen into the bottomless pit, vastly large, and out of which there is no recovery. In these infernal regions he is a sort of prince and governor, and has the powers of darkness under his rule and command. His true name is Abaddon, Apollyon, a destroyer, for that is his successful business, in which he takes a horrid, hellish pleasure; about this destroying work he sends out his emissaries and armies to destroy the souls of men. And now here we have the end of one woe; and where one ends, another begins.

V. 13—21. I. The preface, v. 13, 14. The power of the church's enemies is restrained, till God gives the word to have them turned loose. When nations are ripe for punishment, those instruments of God's anger, before restrained, are now let loose

stroy; whilst their 'breastplates of iron,' [in which their artists had great skill,] showed their care to protect themselves, by defensive armor, i. e. by the most effectual public measures. The sound of their wings figured the fury with which they assailed their enemies, and the rapidity of their conquests. But though they devoured and caused desolations, like locusts, yet the principal mischief which they did was effected by their tails, in which they had 'stings like those of scorpions;' for, wherever they extended their conquests, they left behind them the poison of their abominable religion; so that the consequences of their victories were far more mischievous, than the slaughter made by them. Sc.

(7.) *Faces of men.* Ignatius, who wrote at the time the Gnostic heresy began to prevail, calls these deceivers *thēria anthrōpomorpha*, wild beasts, under the appearance of men. 'Such invaders, led on by an evil angel, (probably Satan,) from the depths of hell, must have for their object the Christian church, the heritage of Christ. If they assail by force of arms, how can the sealed escape? Under such circumstances, the faithful undergo their share of common calamity, but from a pestilential heresy they might and would be secure. Their principles and practice, and the seal of God, would save them. We collect from Scripture, that such heresies were pre-ordained to try and prove the Christians, 1 Cor. 11:19. And we find early writers, who plainly refer this to the first great host of corrupters who overspread the Christian church.' WOODH.

(7—10.) 'Niebuhr remarks, "an Arab of the desert, near Bassorah, informed of a singular comparison of the locust with other animals. The terrible locust of Rev. 9. not then occurring to me, I regarded the comparison as a jest of the Bedouin Arab, and paid no attention to it, till it was repeated by another from Bagdad. It was thus:—he compared the locust's head to that of a horse; its breast to that of a lion; its feet to those of the camel; its body to that of the serpent; its tail to that of the scorpion; its horns, (antennæ,) I think, to the locks of hair of a virgin, &c. The Italians call them *cavallette*, little horses; and the Germans, *Heupferde.*' Robinson's *Calmet*. Ed.

(10.) 'The face in its perfection is peculiar to man, the tail to brutes: the brutal part is employed to overthrow pure religion, by the indulgence of brutal passions. Sheltered under the Gnostic doctrines, the most loose and debasing morality prevailed in a great part of the world, professedly Christian.' WOODH.

V. 11. The king over these locusts, who was 'the angel of the abyss,' or a messenger from the abyss, may signify their Caliphs in succession, who were the chief priests of their religion, the commanders of their armies, and their emperors. The name of this king, even 'the destroyer,' (for so the word means in both languages,) was peculiarly suitable to a succession of rulers, who murdered both the bodies and souls of men, by the same malignant expeditions, as they seemed to be Satan the first murderer's vicegerents and visible representatives upon earth.—Every circumstance of this emblematical prediction so exactly accords to the Saracens, and so little suits the church or hierarchy of Rome, or any of their religious orders, (who gained their advantage by priestcraft, not by arms,) that there can be no propriety in attempting to explain it of them, especially as they are described with sufficient precision in what follows. Prophecies have a determinate meaning, and by giving loose to a lively imagination, to find distant resemblances, we are more like to perplex, than to satisfy the inquirer. SCOTT.

(11.) 'Woodh. considers, that the prophetic representation of the locusts, was probably fulfilled by the first general and extensive apostasy, that of the Gnostics. He enters into the particulars, showing their fulfillment in some striking instances. [See note, end of ch.] [but with less success than usual, says BL.] Horsley considers, that the apocalyptic locusts represent heretics, not soldiers. The generality of the commentators, however, apply the 5th trumpet to the Saracens, restricting the 6th to the Turks. Woodh. considers, that the 6th includes the ravages of Mohammedism generally. A few of the commentators refer these trumpets to the monastic orders, but almost all the writers of the middle ages, and many in the reformed churches, understood the swarms of locusts as denoting swarms of heretics. Mede seems to have been the first expositor of note who interpreted the 5th trumpet of Mohammed. Hutcheson would still apply it to the pope.' HENRY, *abr.*

V. 12. After the apostle had seen these things, he was informed, that 'one woe was past, and two' others were coming.—'This is added, not only to distinguish the woes, and to mark more strongly each period, but also to suggest, that some time will elapse between

this first woe of the Arabian locusts, and the next of the Euphratean horsemen.' Bp. Newton. 13—15. It also serves to fix the order of time, in respect of the predicted events. SCOTT.

V. 13—15. The 'voice from the horns of the altar,' on which incense used to be burned, strongly indicated, that the judgments about to be predicted, were appointed to punish men for corrupting the Gospel, and so turning it into 'the savor of death' and condemnation. 2:1—6. 2 Cor. 2:14—17.—After the 6th angel had sounded his trumpet, he was ordered to 'loose the 4 angels, who had been bound near the Euphrates;' which was done accordingly. This is explained, by the most approved interpreters, according to the emblematical style of the prophecy, to be a prediction, that the Turks, or Othmans, who had hitherto been restrained beyond the Euphrates, would be released from that restraint, and proceed to make conquests to the W. of that river. The only material objection to this interpretation is drawn from the distance of time, which intervened between the events before predicted, and the victorious invasions of the Turks. But this is readily answered, by observing, that 'the 3 woe-trumpets' must necessarily take in all the intervening time, between the subversion of the western empire, and the destruction of the heath, which is yet to be expected. Note, 11:13, 14. The Saracens continued to possess, though they did not extend, their dominions, till the Turks supplanted them, and all this time properly belongs to the 1st woe-trumpet. Indeed, no other events can be found in history, satisfactorily correspondent to the discoveries made after this 2d woe-trumpet; nor any other, which will not leave a far greater distance, between it and the 3d woe-trumpet, than this interpretation leaves between the 1st and the 2d. (Note, 11:15—18.)—The Turks pouring into Persia, and the regions bordering on the Euphrates, in the 11th century, established 4 sultanies, or kingdoms, in those parts: but they were prevented from making further conquests; especially by the Croisades, or religious wars, waged in that and the 2 following centuries, by the western Christians, who attempted to wrest Palestine out of the hands of the infidels. But when these ruinous projects were finally abandoned, the '4 angels which had been bound in the Euphrates,' who were emblems of these 4 sultanies, 'were loosed.' Then the Turks, uniting together, began their ravages and victories; and made great havoc among the inhabitants of that part of the world, which had constituted the Roman empire, and which we have often read of, as 'the third part of men.' (Note, 8:7.) The western empire had been broken to pieces under the first 4 trumpets, (Notes, 8:) the eastern had been nearly ruined under the 5th; and under the 6th it was finally subverted. The Turks conquered all the countries, which had belonged to it. A. D. 1453 they took Constantinople, and thus brought to an end the whole Imperial power, which originally belonged to Rome.—These powers were prepared for a certain fixed time, which, being computed by a year for each day, according to the prophetic manner, and 12 months, of 30 days each, being allowed to the year here mentioned, i. e. 360 days, or years; 30 more being added for the month, and 1 for the day; the whole amounts to 391 years and 15 days. Now the first conquest of the Turks over the Christians took place, A. D. 1281; and the last success, by which they extended their dominions, was A. D. 1672; being exactly 391 years from the one to the other. So that one of their historians (Prince Cantemir) here divides his narrative, calling the former part 'The growth of the Othman Empire,' the latter, 'The decay of the Othman Empire.' Since that period, they have had little success in any of their wars; and their power is so much weakened and straitened at present, by the rival power of Russia, that it is not at all probable, they will ever recover their ascendancy, or renew their conquests. Had we records of these events sufficiently exact, we should no doubt find, that the half hour, or 15 days, was fixed with the same punctuality by the Spirit of prophecy.—Though the term of their 'slaying the 3d part of men, or that during which they would extend their ravages and conquests, was predicted; yet that of the duration of their empire was not; but it will end after the sounding of the third woe-trumpet. (11:14.)—'Dr. Lloyd, . . . bishop of Worcester, who has now for above twenty years, been studying the Revelations with an amazing diligence and exactness, had long before this year said, The peace between the Turks and the papal Christians, was certainly to be made in the year 1693, which he made out thus; the 4 angels mentioned in . . . Rev. that were bound in the river Euphrates, which he expounds to be the captains of the Turkish forces, that till then were subject to the sultan at Babylon, were to be loosed, and freed from that yoke, and set up for themselves. And these were prepared to slay the third part of men,



15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

16 And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions: and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone.

18 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

19 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

20 And the rest of the men, which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of

wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

a or, at. w c. 7:4. z Je. 5:3. 8:6.  
t c. 8:7-9. x 1 Ch 12:8. a Le. 17:7.  
u Eze. 38:4. Is. 5 28,29. 1 Co 10:20.  
Da. 11:40. y Is. 9:15. b Ps. 135:15.  
v Pa. 68:17. Ep. 4:14. Is. 40:19,20.

on them, v. 14. The instruments God makes use of to punish a people, may sometimes lie at a great distance from them, so that no danger may be apprehended from them. These four messengers of divine judgment lay bound in the river Euphrates, a great way from the European nations. Here, the Turkish power had its rise, which seems to be the story of this vision.

II. The vision itself, v. 15, 16. The time of their military operations and executions is limited to an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year. Prophetic characters of time are hardly to be understood by us; but in general the time is fixed to an hour, when it shall begin, and when it shall end; and how far the execution shall prevail, even to a third part of the inhabitants of the earth. The army to execute this great commission, is mustered, and the number of horsemen found; but we are left to guess what the infantry must be. In general, it tells us, the armies of the Mahometan empire should be vastly great; and so it is certain they were. We have their formidable equipage and appearance, v. 17. horses fierce, like lions, and eager for the battle; riders clad in bright and costly armor, with all the ensigns of martial courage, zeal, and resolution. They make vast havoc and

desolation in the Roman empire, now become antichristian; a third part were killed. The artillery, by which they made such slaughter, is described by fire, smoke, and brimstone, issuing out of the mouths of their horses, and stings in their tails. Mr. Mede's opinion is, that this is a prediction of great guns, those instruments of cruelty, which make such destruction: he observes, These were first used by the Turks at the siege of Constantinople, and, being new and strange, were very terrible, and did great execution. However, here seems to be an allusion to what is mentioned in the former vision, that, as antichrist had his forces of a spiritual nature, like scorpions, poisoning the minds of men with error and idolatry; so the Turks, who were raised up to punish the antichristian apostasy, had their scorpions and their stings too, to hurt and kill their bodies, who had been the murderers of so many souls. Lastly, Observe the impetuosity of the antichristian generation under these dreadful judgments, v. 20. the rest of the men who were not killed, repented not, they still persisted in those sins for which God was so severely punishing them: Their idolatry; they would not cast away their images: Their murders, v. 21. committed on the saints and servants of Christ. Popery is a bloody religion, and seems resolved to continue such. Their sorceries; they have their charms, and magic arts, and rites in exorcism, and other things. Their fornication; they allow both spiritual and carnal impurity, and promote it in themselves and others. Their thefts; they have, by unjust

for an hour, a day, a month, and a year. He reckons the year, in St. John, as the Julian year of 365 days: a month is 30 of these days, and a day makes one: which, added to the former number makes 396. Now, he proves, from historians, that Ottoman came, and began his conquests at Prouse, in the year 1302; to which the former number, in which they were to slay the third part of men, being added, it must end in the year 1698. And though the historians do not mark the hour, or the 12th part of the day, or year; yet he is confident, if that ever is known, that the prophecy will be found, in that, to be punctually accomplished. After this, he thinks, their time of hurting the papal Christians is at an end. They may, indeed, still do mischief to the Muscovites, or persecute their own Christian subjects, but they can do no more hurt to the papalists. Bp. Burnet's Hist. of his own Time.—In several subordinate particulars, this statement differs from that above given; which seems to be the more exact, both as to the beginning of the Othman's successes, and the close of them; and also of the method by which the time should be computed. Yet the grand outline of interpretation is the same: and, considering the date of Bishop Lloyd's conclusions, which preceded the final successes of the Othmans, but which have, for substance, been verified for much above 100 years, they may justly be considered as extraordinary; and as an important proof of the true meaning of the prophecy, and of its exact accomplishment. (Note, 16:12-16.) SCOTT.

(13, 14) 'The voice passed from the throne, through the horns of the altar: it bespeaks the wrath of God, kindling on a religious account, and a severe visitation on the Christian church.' Woodh. Four angels.] 'Denoting four governments of Turks, located near Euphrates. Four governments of Seljukian Turks were indeed found there; at Aleppo, Iconium, Damascus, Bagdat.' E. Smith. But, says Vitr., the leaders are meant, as in the forgoing trumpet-woe, when the host of assailants have an evil angel for their leader or king. Bound.] I. e. not permitted to move in the execution of the commission, till a certain hour, day, month, year, when the iniquity of the men should be ripe for such a punishment. The number four is used in prophecy indefinitely for a large and perfect number. Dan. 11:4. Mat. 24:31. Rev. 7:1. The decree was full, and not a horn of the altar left on which to make an expiation for its reversal.' WOODH.

V. 16. The number of the army of horsemen was declared to be 200,000,000, twice ten thousand times ten thousand; i. e. an immense multitude, a very large definite number being put for an indefinite. (Note, 5:11-14.) Accordingly, the Turks brought vast armies into the field, often to the amount of 4, 5, 6, or 700,000 men, chiefly cavalry: and when the whole multitude of those is considered, who were employed in this manner during the conquests of 391 years, we shall see the propriety of the apostle's strong prophetic language. SCOTT.

V. 17-19. The apostle likewise saw both 'the horses and their riders,' in his vision, as having 'breastplates of fire, hyacinth, and brimstone;' which may be considered as representing the scarlet, blue, and yellow colors, for which they have always been remarkable. The horses' heads, like those of lions, denoted their strength, courage, and fierceness: and 'the fire, smoke, and brimstone, which issued out of their mouths, and killed the third part of men,' appears to me an evident and most astonishing prediction of the use of gunpowder and of artillery, which were first invented about this period, and which the Turks employed with great success in their wars, especially in the siege of Constantinople; when immensely large guns were used, so that one of them is said to have carried a stone of 300 pounds weight. By these, the walls of that city were at length battered down, which made way for the final destruction of that empire.—These tremendous conquerors, before whom desolation marched, and from whose mouths 'fire, and smoke, and brimstone issued,' not only slew men in battle, when they faced them; but they had tails like serpents, with heads on them, with which they hurt men, as by an envenomed bite. That is, the Othmans or Turks left

behind them, wherever they went, the same poisonous and ruinous religion, which the Saracens had done before them; and this proved more durably mischievous than their most bloody conquests. So that the remains of the Greek church, and of Christianity in those countries, were almost wholly extirpated; and Mohammedism became universally prevalent, and, indeed, continues so to this day, in that part of the world, in which the Gospel had been for a long time most signally successful. Sc. (18, 19.) Mouths.] 'Indicating doctrine, Is. 11:4. 49:2. Rev. 2:16. 13:2, 5. 12:15, 16. 16:13. So that corrupt and blasphemous doctrine joins with armies in this warfare. By fire, in the figurative language of Scripture, devastating warfare is denoted; by smoke, (see under the 5th trumpet,) dark ignorance, covering dangerous doctrine; and brimstone, in union with fire, implies, an infernal origin of the mischief. Rev. 19:20. 21:8. As it issues from brutes, we infer, that the doctrine is founded, not so much on rational arguments, as on promises of animal gratifications, which is the motive of beasts. The tail, too, in prophetic Scripture, denotes baseness, degradation, and subjection to impure passions, Is. 9:15. Deut. 28:13. Rev. 12:4.' WOODH.

V. 20, 21. 'The rest of the men,' who were not destroyed, or compelled to become Mohammedans, by the above mentioned calamities, did not repent of their evil works. The Latin or Roman church, which escaped this destruction, still persisted in the idolatrous worship of demons, or angels, and departed saints, real or fictitious, by which devils are virtually worshipped; (Notes, Dan. 11:38. 1 Tim. 4:1-5.) in their stupid adoration of senseless images, for which they have no better plea to use than the Pagans had; in their 'murders,' massacres, and bloody wars with heretics, so called, and their execrable persecutions; in their 'sorceries,' or pretended revelations and miracles: and in 'their fornication;' forbidding marriage, yet conniving at concubinage in the clergy; binding numbers by vows to a single life, and yet licensing brothels by public authority of the Pope, in Rome itself: and in 'their thefts,' or those exactions and impositions, by which they fraudulently, oppressively, and iniquitously drew immense treasures from the nations. (Notes, 13:11-17. 16:10, 11. 17:1-6. The eastern church, in which many corruptions first prevailed, was punished by the first woe of the Saracens; and as this did not bring them to repentance, the second woe of the Turks or Othmans completed its ruin. But the western church, not repenting of her abominations, will at length be overwhelmed with the third woe. For the reformation from popery, and all that has hitherto taken place in those western regions, has amounted only to the 'two witnesses,' (Note, 11:3-6.) protesting against the prevailing abominations: and the prevalence of infidelity, skepticism, and heresy, in proportion to the supposed decline of popery and superstition, gives no just room to suppose, that matters are very much improved in the western church. In this skeptical, profane, licentious, and superficial age, indeed, Satan has evidently changed his ground; but the scriptural Christian will readily perceive, that he has, hitherto, in great measure, maintained it.—The persevering idolatry in the remains of the Greek church and elsewhere, and the iniquity of professed Christians, notwithstanding the desolations made among them by the Saracens and Turks, renders the prophecy more circumstantial, and the exact accomplishment of it more wonderful. The very things which infidels urge, as objections to the divine original of Christianity, are expressly predicted in the N. T. and demonstrate its divine inspiration. SCOTT.

(20, 21.) 'The sins are: 1. worship of daimonia, daemons, shown by Vitr. &c. to be fictitious gods, and deified mortals; 2. idols; 3. all manner of impurity, injustice, and immorality, under the scriptural designations of "murders, sorceries, fornication, and thefts." This was not the character of the Christian man in the first 3 centuries. The degeneracy began then, but was of slow procedure. The low estate of the church in temporal enjoyment, and its exposure to frequent and severe persecutions, preserved it, in a considerable degree, from the intrusion of the



21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their 'sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

## CHAP. X.

1 A mighty strong angel appeareth with a book open in his hand. 6 He sweareth by Him that liveth for ever, that there shall be no more time. 9 John is commanded to take and eat the book.

AND I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow <sup>a</sup> was upon his head, and his face <sup>b</sup> was as it were the sun, and his feet, as pillars of fire:

2 And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,

3 And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders <sup>c</sup> uttered their voices.

c c. 22:15.      b Mat. 17:2.      c c. 8:5. 14:2.  
a Eze. 1:23.      c. 1:15,16.

PRACT. OBS. The Lord [punishes] the abuse of spiritual advantages, by spiritual judgments, leaving the word of the Gospel to be withdrawn, or corrupted, by the artifices of Satan; because men would not walk in the light, while they enjoyed it. 'A fallen star,' some apostate, endowed with abilities and possessed of influence, often proves Satan's instrument in blinding and deceiving mankind. This judgment, however, would for the present be little regarded, if other visitations were not connected with it; but, sooner or later, the prevalence of false religion against the truth of Christ will make way for such calamities on guilty nations, as may render life itself a burden, and death the only apparent and desired relief.—As we ought to 'fear Him, who is able to destroy

worldly, who afterwards made it subservient to their ambition. And in the two centuries preceding, the lamentable change from divine knowledge to ignorance, and from purity to corruption, was gradual, so that one cannot fairly apply a general character of so deep a dye to the Christian church, before the 6th cent.; but at the latter part of this, and beginning of the 7th, the measure of this iniquity came to its full.—And at this time history records a dreadful invasion of the Christian world, by numerous armies assailing it at once, by corrupt, blasphemous doctrines, and by the terror of their arms; and with such amazing success, as to cut off, from the hope and comfort of Christianity, and from the communion of the church, so large a body of Christians as may fairly be accounted one third, yet leaving the remaining parts idolatrous, impure, and unrepentant.—But as Mohammedism enlarged, the Christian powers made corresponding acquisitions in the West.' WOODH.

NOTES. CHAP. X. V. 1. In the conclusion of the former ch., the apostle had received some intimations, concerning the pernicious corruptions of the western church, and other professed Christians, during the period of the two preceding trumpets: but before he was made acquainted with the events which would follow the sounding of the 7th trumpet, he was shown something more of the state of that church, in the ages previous to this grand event. This mighty Angel must be either Christ Himself, or an emblematical display of his glory. SCOTT.

(1.) 'In 8:13. 3 grand woes, 3 distinct periods of successful attack upon the church by the antichristian powers, are announced. The 1st of these takes place immediately, and in 9:12. is said to be past, and the 2d follows: but this, though it begins, like the first, with an hostile invasion, does not end in like manner. No period (as in the 1st woe of 150 years) is assigned for its continuance; and when the description of the invasion is finished, no similar notice is given that the woe is ended. On the contrary, it seems to continue till the 7th trumpet sounds, (11:14.) when it is declared to be past. The whole prophecy had now begun to appear as drawing to its close, for the 7th and last trumpet was expected. But a new and enlarging scene opens under the remains of this 6th trumpet, and before the end of the 2d woe. The famous period of 42 months, or 1260 days, is here presented to view; the usurped dominion of the Mahomedans continues with it. But there is another antichristian usurpation, belonging to the same period, which is now to be prefigured.—Angel.] This appearance was pronounced by Sir W. Jones, to equal in sublimity any description to be found in the inspired writers, and to be far superior to anything of the kind produced by human composition. This messenger has now a new commission; it is another angel, not the Son of God, for He is already upon the scene in his emblem of the Lamb of God, on the great Father's throne, where He continues even to ch. 14: and before the throne is the Holy Spirit, 4:5. It is now generally allowed, that the prophecies of the little book belong in a great measure to the 6th trumpet. See *Vitr.*' WOODH.

V. 2—4. The Angel, thus introduced, held in his hand 'a little book,' as containing the Revelation of the purposes of God, which he was about to communicate to his servant. This was distinct from the larger book before mentioned, being a kind of appendix or codicil to it. (Note, 5:1—4.) Or it might be one of the 7 parts of that book, which, as some think, might each be called 'a little book.' It had been sealed, but appeared as having been opened: and contained a part of 'the book before spoken of,' though thus introduced separately, to call and fix the attention. At least, it perfectly coincided with the contents of it. Several respectable interpreters suppose this little book to have contained all the following parts of 'the Revelation;' and thus they make it much greater than all the rest of the book, of which Christ opened the seals; containing (as some of them suppose) all which should take place after the sounding of the 7th trumpet; whereas, the former part of the next ch. and all the two following chs. at least, belong to the 6th trumpet. These are objections against that arrangement, to which I

means, heaped together vast wealth, to the injury and impoverishing of families, cities, princes, and nations. These are the flagrant crimes of antichrist and his agents; and though God has revealed his wrath from heaven against them, they are obstinate, hardened, and impenitent, and judicially so, for they must be destroyed. From this sixth trumpet learn, 1. God can make one enemy of the church to be a scourge and plague to another. 2. He who is the Lord of hosts, has vast armies at his command, to serve his own purposes. 3. The most formidable powers have limits set them, which they cannot transgress. 4. When God's judgments are in the earth, He expects the inhabitants thereof should repent of sin, and learn righteousness. 5. Impenitency under divine judgments is an iniquity that will be the ruin of sinners; for where God judges He will overcome.

CHAP. X. This ch. is an introduction to the latter part of the prophecies of this book. Whether what is contained between this and the sounding of the 7th trumpet, ch. 11:15. be a distinct prophecy from the

other, or only a more general account of some of the principal things included in the other, is disputed by our curious inquirers into these abstruse writings.

V. 1—7. Here we have an account of another vision the apostle was favored with, between the sounding of the 6th and of the 7th trumpet. And we observe,

1. The person principally concerned in communicating this discovery to John,—an angel from heaven, another mighty angel, so set forth as would induce one to think it could be no other than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For, He was clothed with a cloud; He veils his glory, and his dispensations; A rainbow was upon his head; He is always mindful of his covenant; and when his conduct is most mysterious, yet it is perfectly just and faithful. His face was as the sun, all bright, and full of lustre and majesty, ch. 1:16. His feet were as pillars of fire; all his ways, both of grace and providence, are pure and steady.

2. His station and posture; his right foot on the sea, and his left on the earth; to show the absolute power and dominion He had over the world. And He held in his hand a

both body and soul in hell,' far more 'than them that can only kill the body;' so those destroyers are most to be dreaded, who act as 'angels of the bottomless pit,' and vicegerents of Satan, by diffusing pernicious heresies and impostures, contrary to the pure doctrine of Christ. For that grand deceiver, which, 'transformed into an angel of light,' and his ministers, when they appear to be teachers of righteousness, do far more mischief to mankind, than the most barbarous and successful warriors could ever accomplish; but he who murders at once both the souls and bodies of men, most completely merits the title of *Abaddon, Apollyon, the Destroyer.* SCOTT.

could never find a satisfactory answer: besides, the great book would end abruptly in the middle of the 6th trumpet; and the same subject would be as abruptly taken up in 'the little book.' It therefore appears to me, that this little book contained no more, than the former part of the next ch.; (*Notes*, 11:1—14.) which was an important appendix to ch. 9. as it gives a general account of the state of the western church, and all connected with it, during the period of the 5th and 6th trumpets. Then the former subject proceeds, the 7th trumpet is sounded, and a compendious view is given of the subsequent events to the end of the world. (11:15—18.) After this, the second part of the book is introduced; (11:19.) and the apostle is shown a great variety of events, tending to explain those, which had before been predicted, in a more summary manner, but chiefly relative to the state of the church, as the former part had been to those which concerned the empire. This arrangement which is nearly the same with that adopted by Bp. Newton, makes no material alteration in the plan of the celebrated Mr. Mede, and those who have followed him; while it avoids the difficulty of making the little book by far the largest, and the necessity of dividing the 6th trumpet between the two books. Still, every event is referred to the times, to which, according to the *synchronisms* of that able and laborious writer, it belongs, and which are evidently deduced, not from vague hypotheses, but from the internal construction of the prophecy itself. And the observation of another learned writer, Bp. Hurd, stands equally good: 'The knowledge of this order is a great restraint on the fancy of an expositor, who is not now at liberty to apply the prophecies to events of any time to which they may appear to suit; but to events only falling within that time, to which they belong in the course of this predetermined method: and if to this restriction we add another, which arises from the necessity of applying not one, but many prophecies, to the same time; we can hardly conceive how an interpretation should keep clear of all these impediments, and make its way through so many interfering checks, unless it were the true one. Just as when a lock (to use Mr. Mede's allusion) is composed of many and intricate wards; the key that easily turns within them, and opens the lock, can be that only which properly belongs to it.'—Since I first wrote these remarks, expositors have arisen, (especially the pious and learned Mr. Faber,) who suppose, that the little book contained the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th chs. of Rev. But, after very much consideration, I feel constrained to dissent from this opinion, however respectably supported. (1.) Because it makes the little book, or codicil, bear a too great proportion to the whole prophecy. The prophetic chs. properly speaking, are only 12; namely, the 6th, 8th, 9th, 11th, to the 14th inclusive; and the 16th to the 20th inclusive; for the 7th, 10th, and 15th, contain not much explicit prediction; and the last two chapters, succeeding, as it appears to me, the day of judgment, are rather descriptive of the heavenly state, than prophetic, in the ordinary sense of the word. Now the four chapters assigned to the little book, not being very short, yet crowded with most important predictions, contain at least a third of the whole prophecy; which is more than can properly be assigned to 'the little book.' (2.) The 11th ch. evidently carries on the prediction, in a general manner, to the millennium, and indeed to the end of the world. (*Note*, 11:15—18.) Now, the succeeding chs. to the 20th, plainly treat of times previous to the millennium. The prophet must, therefore, somewhere go back, to take a more particular view of his subject, than he at first gave: but no place can be assigned for this, so satisfactorily, as the close of ch. 11. The course of predicted events cannot be successive, in those chs.; therefore some of them must be coincident. (3.) No interpretation of the former vs. of ch. 12. gives the least satisfaction, except that which recalls the reader's attention to the events, which took place when Pagan persecution terminated, the Roman emperors professed Christianity; and further corruptions, calamities, and persecutions, sprang from that very source, which seemed to



4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write : and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal<sup>d</sup> up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

5 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth<sup>e</sup> lifted up his hand to heaven,

6 And sware by him<sup>f</sup> that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, <sup>g</sup> that there should be time no longer :

7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh<sup>h</sup> angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery<sup>i</sup> of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

8 And the voice<sup>j</sup> which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take<sup>k</sup> it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as

honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

11 And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

d Da. 8:26. f Ne. 9:6. i Ro. 11:25.  
12:4,9. c. 14:7. Ep. 3:5-9.  
e Ex. 6:8. g Da. 12:7. j ver. 4.  
De. 32:40. h c. 11:15. k Eze. 3:1-3,14.

little book opened, probably the same before sealed, but now opened, and gradually fulfilled by Him.

3. His awful voice, v. 3. a voice as echoed by seven thunders, seven solemn and terrible ways of discovering the mind of God.

4. The prohibition given to the apostle, that he should not publish, but conceal, what he had learned from the seven thunders, v. 4. the time was not yet come.

5. The solemn oath taken by this mighty angel; He lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever; by Himself, as God often has done; or by God, as God, to whom He, as Lord, Redeemer, and Ruler of the world, now appeals. The matter of the oath was, there shall be time no longer; either, (1.) There shall be now no longer delay in fulfilling the predictions of this book, than till the last angel should sound; then everything should be put into speedy execution, v. 7. Or, (2.) When this mystery of God is finished, time itself shall be no more, as being the measure of things mutable, but all things shall be at length for ever fixed, and so time itself swallowed up in eternity.

V. 8-11. Here, 1. The apostle is charged by the same voice from heaven, to go and take the little book out of the hands of that mighty angel mentioned before; and then, by the

Angel Himself, to eat the book; hinting to the apostle, that, before he should publish what he had discovered, he must more thoroughly digest the predictions, and be in himself suitably affected with them.

2. We have an account of the taste and relish this little book would have, at first, while in his mouth, sweet. All persons feel a pleasure in looking into future events, and in having them foretold; and all good men love to receive a word from God, of what import soever it be. But when this book of prophecy was more thoroughly digested by the apostle, the contents would be bitter; these were things so awful and terrible, such grievous persecutions of the people of God, and such desolation made in the earth, that the foresight and foreknowledge of them would not be pleasant, but painful to the mind of the apostle: thus was Ezekiel's prophecy to him, ch. 3: 3.

3. The apostle's discharge of the duty he was called to, v. 10. He took, ate, and found as was told him. It becomes God's servants to digest, in their own souls, the messages they bring to others in his name, and to be suitably affected therewith themselves; also, to deliver every message with which they are charged, whether pleasing or displeasing to men.

4. The apostle is made to know, that this book of prophecy was not given merely to gratify his own curiosity, or to affect him with pleasure or pain, but to be communicated to the world; here his prophetic commission seems to be renewed, and he is ordered to prepare for another embassy, to convey those declarations of the mind and will of God, which are of great importance to all the world, and to the highest and greatest men in the world, and such should be read and recorded in many languages;

PRACT. OBS. The divine Surety of the new covenant, who 'purchased the church with his own blood,' manages all things in heaven and earth with uncontrollable authority.—The final salvation of the righteous, and the final prevalence of true religion on earth, are engaged for by the same unfailing Word of the Lord; and, though 'the time shall not be yet,' we have solid ground to conclude, that 'the sounding of the

7th trumpet' is near at hand, when glorious scenes will be exhibited. Very soon, however, to us, 'time shall be no more;' but, if we are believers, a happy eternity will follow; and we shall look down from heaven, to behold and rejoice in the triumphs of Christ, and his cause on earth. SCOTT.

promise far happier days. I therefore am most decidedly of opinion, that 'the little book' contains only the first 14 vs. of the next ch. to the close of the 8th trumpet; being coincident, as to the state of things in the W., with that of the eastern empire, as predicted in ch. 9. I am not, however, unwilling to concede, that the following vs., to the close of the 18th, may be assigned to it, as a general pre-intimation of the final success of that cause, which had so long been trampled under foot. Several objections to this interpretation will be obviated as we proceed. The mighty Angel, above described, 'set his right foot on the sea, and his left on the dry land,' to denote his sovereign authority over the whole terraqueous globe; and perhaps intimating his determination of spreading the Gospel through every part of it: and he demanded attention with a loud voice like the roaring of a lion; to show the power and terror of his word to his obstinate enemies. After this 7 thunders were heard, which, in the most majestic manner, uttered intelligible voices: these either related to matters proper for the apostle to know, but not proper to be published; or else they are coincident with some things, which are afterwards more clearly revealed. They were, however, ordered to be sealed up, and it does not become us to inquire any farther concerning them. (2) Little book.] 8, 9, 10. 'A very little book.'—(3) Roareth.] It is used without distinction, of a lion, an ox, a camel, or an ass.' Leigh. SCOTT.

(2.) Little.] Not as to its contents, but so that it might be eaten, and digested spiritually; unsealed, 5:9. probably a part of the larger sealed book, for it comes under the yet unemptied seals. It may be the same with Dan. 12:4, 9. The scene is in heaven, the earth being visible below, extended as a plain, and containing the divisions before marked of land, sea, and rivers. The right foot's being placed on the sea, seems to intimate, that (as before the eastern, so now) the western nations, or Gentiles, are to be a principal object of the remaining prophecy, under this trumpet.' Woodh.—'There is much difference of opinion as to the contents of this little book. Most commentators suppose that it contained a part of the prophecies of the Apocalypse. Some suppose it one of the 7 parts of the sealed book, others that it contained all the rest of the apocalyptic visions. Faber thinks the contents were ch. 11 to 14. Scott considers it included only ch. 11. 1-14. Others have thought, that the little book did not contain any of the apocalyptic prophecies, but was itself an emblem.' HENRY, abr.

(4.) 'All we can fairly collect from the transaction is this, that there are great events in history, and probably relating to the Christian church, which are not made the subject of open prophecy.' WOODH.

V 5-7. Time no longer: or, as it may be rendered, 'the time should not be yet;' i. e. the time of those glorious things, with which 'the mystery of God would be finished.' Further delays must be expected: till at length, in 'the lays of the 7th angel,' after he had begun to sound his trumpet, that would be accomplished, according to the predictions of former prophets; namely, as it may be supposed from the subsequent part of the book, in the destruction of every opposing power, and the universal prevalence of true religion, which would continue, with [698]

little interruption, to the consummation of all things, and so terminate in the eternal state. (Notes, 11:15-13. 18;-20.) But before those events began to take place, other preparatory transactions must occur; and this solemn declaration seems to have been intended to teach Christians, in the intervening ages, to wait with patience, and to expect a happy event of the calamities of the church, though the time of it seem long delayed. (Notes, Dan. 7:9-14, 23-27, 8:13, 14, 12:5-13.)—If we adhere to our tr. the meaning must be, that all the subsequent events, to the end of time, would fall under the period of the 7th trumpet.—(7) Declared.] Proclaimed the Gospel, referring to the glad tidings of the millennium. SCOTT.

(5.) This ancient mode of swearing (Gen. 14:22. Ez. 20:5.) is still in use in Scotland and America. ED.

(6.) For ouk estai eti, Bl. reads ouketi estai, and understands, 'there should be no more delay.' Time no longer.] See Doddr. ID.

(7.) 'Bp. Middleton proves, that the words should be rendered, "and (rather than) the mystery of God shall be finished. This, he shows, is according to the Heb. idiom of giving to a past tense the sense of a future, [with] a Van Converse. [Nothing is more common in the E. now. See Roberts.] Thus Jud 4:3. "If thou wilt go with me, then I will go," lit. "and I went." Woodh. Bl. Ed.—Mystery of God.] 'Bp. Butler understands, the great mystery of Providence, in suffering vice and confusion to prevail so much in the world.' DODDR.

V. 8-11. Ez. 3:1-3, 12-15. The apostle, by publishing the contents of this little book, and the rest of the predictions he was about to receive, has indeed 'prophesied before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings,' and does so to this very day, in all the languages into which the Scriptures have been, or shall be, translated; and in all the countries in which they are circulated. (9) Make bitter.] 8:11. Col. 3:19. It is used figuratively for whatever excites uneasy and painful sensations. SC.

(10.) 'Forbes supposes the little book is the Scriptures, and its being open, denotes the bold and powerful preaching of the Word. It is open for that clear understanding of holy Scripture which now Christ should bring; whereas, in antichrist's darkness, the same was buried in ignorance, it being held a capital crime for common laymen to read the Scripture in the vulgar tongue. Quesnel refers v. 9. to the understanding the truths of the Divine Word. Keith considers this vision as pointing to the Reformation. The open book he refers to the Bible. And that the translation or opening of it, especially of the N. T., unfolding the precepts of Jesus, and the doctrines of the Gospel, gave a character to the time, which, in respect to the widely extended diffusion of the Scriptures by the then recent art of printing, the days of the apostles scarcely equalled. The Gospel, as a book, may be said to have been for the first time open to the world. The 7 thunders he considers to be, 7 wars which succeeded the Reformation, and which fill up the chasm after it, till the pouring out the vials of the wrath of God. But it is at least useless to speculate upon a point which the Divine Word expressly states is not to be investigated. When the apostle tasted the good Word of God, and knew the meaning of the descent of the angel, it was sweet to



## CHAP. XI.

3 The two witnesses prophesy. 6 They have power to shut heaven, that it rain not. 7 The beast shall fight against them, and kill them. 8 They lie unhurt, 11 and after three days and a half rise again. 14 The second woe is past. 15 The seventh trumpet soundeth.

AND there was given me a reed <sup>a</sup> like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure <sup>b</sup> the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

2 But the court <sup>c</sup> which is without the temple <sup>d</sup> leave out, and measure it not; for <sup>e</sup> it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under <sup>f</sup> foot forty and two months.

3 And I will <sup>g</sup> give power unto my <sup>h</sup> two <sup>i</sup> witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in <sup>j</sup> sackcloth.

4 These are the two <sup>k</sup> olive-trees, and the two candlesticks <sup>l</sup> standing before the God of the earth.

a Zec. 2:1.	f Da. 7:25.	i e. 20:4.
c 21:15	g or, give unto	j Is. 22:12.
b Eze. 40:48.	my two witness-	k Je. 11:16.
c Eze. 40:17-20.	es that they may	Zec. 4:3,11,14.
d cast out.	prophesy.	l e. 1:20.
e Lu. 21:24.	h Mat. 18:16.	

this, indeed, is the case; we have them in our language, and are all obliged to attend

to them, humbly to inquire into the meaning of them, and firmly to believe that everything shall have its accomplishment in the proper time; and when the prophecies are fulfilled, the sense and truth of them will appear, and the omniscience, power, and faithfulness of the great God will be adored.

CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. This prophetic passage about measuring the temple, is a plain reference to what we find in Ezekiel's vision, Ez. 40:3, &c. Observe,

1. How much was to be measured. (1.) *The temple*; the gospel-church in general. (2.) *The altar*. That which was the place of the most solemn acts of worship, may be put for religious worship in general; whether the church has the true altars, whether they take Christ for their Altar, and whether the Altar be in the *holiest*; that is, whether they worship God in the *Spirit and in truth*. (3.) The worshippers, too, must be measured; whether they make God's glory their end, and his Word their rule; whether they come to God with suitable affections, and whether their *conversation be as becomes the Gospel*.

2. What was not to be measured, v. 2. *The court without the temple*. Why was not the outer court mentioned? This was no part of the temple, according to the model either of Solomon or Zerubbabel, therefore God would have no regard to it. Both that and the city were trodden under foot 42 months: which some would have to be, the

whole time of the reign of antichrist. They who worship in the outer court, are either such as worship in a false manner, or with hypocritical hearts; and these are rejected of God, and will be found among his enemies. From the whole, observe, God will have a temple and an altar in the world, till the end of time. *The holy city*, the visible church, is very much trampled on in the world; but the desolations are for a limited, short time, and she shall be delivered out of all her troubles.

V. 3—13. In this time of treading down, God has reserved to Him his faithful witnesses, who will not fail to attest the truth of his Word and worship, and the excellency of his ways. Here, observe,

1. The number of these witnesses; small, yet sufficient: many will own Christ in prosperity, who will desert Him in persecution; one witness, when the cause is on trial, is worth many at other times: sufficient; in the mouth of two, every cause shall be established: these, some think, are *Enoch and Elias*, who are to return to the earth for a time: others, the church of the believing Jews, and that of the Gentiles: they should rather seem, God's eminent faithful ministers, who shall not only continue to profess, but to preach the Gospel, in the worst of times.

2. The time of their prophesying, or bearing their testimony for Christ, 1260 days, i. e. (as many think) to the period of the reign of antichrist; and if the beginning of

his heart; yet when he knew the ungodly rancor, murderous wars, and fierce animosity which would follow, grief succeeded to his joy,—his heart was bitter, was afflicted.

(11.) *Mede* infers, that the apostle is about to go again over the same period he had before discoursed of, giving an account of the state of the church as he had done of the empire; but the new descriptions and new events to which they refer, which follow, may be sufficient to explain the expression.

NOTES. CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. It has before been supposed, that the former part of this ch. exhibits the contents of the little book; (Notes, 10-2-4.) which represents the state of the western church, during the two preceding woe-trumpets, and before the sounding of the 7th trumpet (15); and this fixes the chronology of it.—The discoveries of this little book are related under emblematical appearances and actions, as before. The scene is the temple; and 'a reed,' like a 'measuring rod,' being given to the apostle, he was ordered to measure the temple, the altar, and the worshippers in the inner court. (Notes, Ex. 27:9—19. Ez. 40:3.) This denoted that, in the predicted period, there would be a small number, whose doctrine, worship, and behavior, would bear measuring by the Word of God; and that these only would be acceptable, interior worshippers; whereas, 'the outer court' being left, by express command, unmeasured, and 'given unto the Gentiles,' emphatically showed, that the greatest number of professed Christians would be formal, superstitious, and idolatrous worshippers; Christians only in name, but Gentiles in wickedness, and even in idolatry. The 'holy city' also, being 'trodden under foot' by them, implied that the church at large, and its most lucrative and eminent places, would be filled with idolaters, infidels, and hypocrites, and that true Christians would be oppressed in a grievous manner. The duration of these evil times was fixed to 42 months, or 1260 days, which, by prophetic computation, are so many years. (Notes, Dan. 7:23—27. 8:9—14. 12:5—13.) The whole of Daniel's prophecies should be compared with the subsequent parts of this book, as the same events and dates are intended in both; and this gives a measure of certainty to the interpretation. Daniel also fixes these events to the remains of the fourth monarchy, after it was broken to pieces, and formed ten kingdoms; and this determines the geography of them, especially to the western empire, which was properly the seat of that monarchy. So that the outlines, both of the *time* and *place*, to which these prophecies belonged, are unalterably determined, by the prophets themselves; nor can the accomplishment of them be referred to any other times or places, without doing the most manifest violence to them in both respects. Indeed, the prophecies of Daniel, and those of the apostle, when properly explained, and compared with each other and with their accomplishment, constitute the fullest imaginable demonstration of the truth of the Scripture. But demonstration itself cannot convince those, who will not bestow due pains to examine it.—The beginning of these 1260 years must be placed subsequent to the first four trumpets, on the subversion of the Western empire, which was completed A. D. 566. This made way for the pope, in process of time, to acquire a vast accession of ecclesiastical dominion. (Note, 2 Thes. 2:3—7.) He became universal bishop, A. D. 606; and was fully established as a temporal prince, A. D. 756. Did we know exactly at what time to date the beginning of the 1260 years, we might show with certainty when they would terminate; but this would not consist with that wise obscurity, which always, in some respects, rests on prophecies, before they are fulfilled. Till the event, therefore, shall explain this matter, it must be left undetermined; but perhaps the *beginning* of the rise and of the fall of this antichristian tyranny, and the *completion* of them, may both be at the distance of 1260 years from each other; as in more than one way the Babylonish captivity lasted 70 years. (Notes, 2 K. 21:1, 8—16. Ezra 1:1—4. Dan. 1:1, 2.) The beginning, however, of these years cannot well be fixed sooner than A. D. 606, nor later than A. D. 756. It is, indeed, far from probable, that the beginning fell so late as this; but that it did not much precede 606, will, I think, after-

wards appear. (Note, 7—12.)—*Measuring* the servants of God, is equivalent to *sealing* them.—The unmeasured tenants of the outer court, and the unsealed men throughout the Roman empire, are alike the votaries of the apostasy; while they that were measured, and they that were sealed, are the saints who refused to be partakers of his abominations.

(1, 2.) *And the angel stood*.] 'The best authorities (from the most authentic MSS.) reject these words from the text. The temple of God, after the coming of the Messiah, and the rejection of the Jews, is the Christian church, (1 Cor. 3:16. 2 Cor. 6:15. 1 Tim. 3:16. Heb. passim.) The altar represents the worship therein duly performed; and by those who dwell therein, we must understand the true worshippers. And by comparing Ez. 40:3, 4. and Zech. 2:1—5. with this passage, we may deduce, that, by such appointed mensuration, the places measured are appropriated to the worship of God. *Tread under foot*.] This tr. would require *kat-patēsousi*, but the Gr. is simply *patēsousi*, which means *tread*, i. e. by frequenting, for the purpose of worship; so the Sept. in Is. 1:12. 25:10. Ps. 65:4. not *trample* in contempt. And we learn from history, that the treading of the Gentiles in the Christian church, though marked with ignorance and superstition, has not been vindictive or contemptuous. [But see *Bloomf.*]

V. 3—6. It would be tedious even to mention the conjectural explanations, which have been given of this prophecy concerning the witnesses; but they generally and notoriously violate the apostle's rule; (Notes, 2 Pet. 1:20, 21.) not proceeding on a large and comprehensive view of the subject, but confining the interpretation to *private*, and comparatively *little* events. A 'king,' in prophetic language, commonly means a *succession* of monarchs: a 'witness,' therefore, must be explained by the same rule; and not individuals, but a *succession* of men, who, during the period referred to, bore testimony to the truth, must be intended by the prophecy. 'Two witnesses' were mentioned, because one was insufficient for the legal proof of any fact. (Notes, Deut. 17:2—7. v. 6. 19:15—21. v. 15.) For these 'witnesses' would be as few as could suffice to attest the true Gospel, and to enter a public protest against the antichristian perversions of it: perhaps Moses and Aaron, Elijah and Elisha, and the apostles and 70 disciples, sent forth 'two and two,' might be alluded to. All real Christians, who boldly professed their religion, may be considered as uniting in this testimony; yet ministers, and especially bold and zealous men, who attempted reformation, were 'the witnesses' primarily intended. The Angel before mentioned (1), even the Lord Jesus, declared, that He would 'give them power,' or authority, 'to prophesy,' during the assigned time; yet 'in sackcloth,' as expressive of their afflicted, persecuted state, and of their deep concern and sorrow of heart, on account of the abominations against which they protested.—It has been shown, by many writers, that, during the darkest ages of popery, men were raised up, who bore a decided testimony against the prevailing corruptions of the Roman church, and for the leading doctrines of the Gospel. It was, indeed, the interest and the constant practice of their opponents, to silence their testimony, to blacken their characters, or to destroy them as heretics; yet, after all their endeavors to suppress, misrepresent, and mutilate their writings, enough remains to show, that Christ had a remnant of faithful witnesses and disciples, through all the ages intended, even to this day. From the 8th to the 11th century inclusive, we find accounts of individuals, or collective bodies, who, under the brand of heresy, and in the face of persecution, evidently held, and openly professed, the great doctrines of salvation by faith in Christ, and through his mediation, merits, and grace; and protested against the abuses of popery; and these, who just prevented the total darkness of that gloomy period, could by no means be extirpated. On the contrary, they continued to increase in many places: in the valleys of Piedmont, especially, vast multitudes were collected, and called *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, who were evidently Calvinists, (to speak in modern language,) more or less moderate, and consistent in their views; and their lives were generally exemplary, as some of the



5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

m Ps. 13:8. p Ex. 7:19. s He. 13:12.  
n Nu. 16:35. q c. 17:8. t Is. 1:10.  
o Ho. 6:5. r Da. 7:21. u Ex. 20:2.  
o 1 K. 17:1. Zec. 14:2, &c.

that interval could be ascertained, this number of prophetic days, taking a day for a year, would give us a prospect when the end shall be.

3. Their habit and posture; they prophesied in sackcloth, as those that are deeply affected with the low and distressed state of the churches and interest of Christ in the world.

4. How they were supported and supplied during the discharge of their great and hard work; they stood before the God of the whole earth, and He gave them power to prophecy, made them like Zerubbabel and Joshua, the two olive-trees and candlestick in the vision of Zechariah, ch. 4:3, &c. gave them the oil of holy zeal, courage, strength, and comfort; oil, not only in their lamps, but in their vessels; habits of spiritual life, light, and zeal.

5. Their security and defence during the time of their prophesying, v. 5. Some think, this alludes to Elias's calling for fire from heaven, to consume the captains and their companies that came to seize him, 2 Kings 1:12. God promised the prophet Jeremiah, ch. 5:14. *Behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people shall be wood, and it shall devour them.* By their

praying and preaching, and courage in suffering, they shall gall and wound the very hearts and consciences of many of their persecutors, who shall go away self-condemned, and be even terrors to themselves; like Pashur, at the words of Jeremiah, ch. 20:4.

6. The slaying of the witnesses, to make their testimony more strong; they must seal it with their blood. Observe, (1.) The time when they shall be killed; *when they have finished their testimony.* Some think it ought to be rendered, *when they were about to finish their testimony;* when they had prophesied in sackcloth the greatest part of the 1260 years, then they should feel the last effect of antichristian malice. (2.) The enemy that should overcome and slay them; *the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit.* Antichrist, the great instrument of the devil, should make war against them, not only with the arms of subtle and sophistical learning, but chiefly with open force and violence; and God would permit his enemies to prevail against his witnesses for a time. (3.) The barbarous usage of these slain witnesses; the malice of their enemies was not satiated with their blood and death, but pursued even their dead bodies. They would

papists themselves have allowed. These subsisted during the 12th and 13th, and the following centuries, though they were persecuted with such unrelenting fury, and pursued with such cruel and destructive wars, that, in France alone, a million of them are computed to have been slain, for the sole crime of protesting against the tyranny of the pope, and the corruptions of the church of Rome! They, however, continued to 'prophesy in sackcloth;' and, when driven from Piedmont, they settled in other places, propagated their religion, and prepared the way for the Reformation. Connected with them, and agreed in their leading doctrines, and in opposition to the church of Rome, were the Lollards in England; and the Bohemians, from among whom arose John Huss and Jerom of Prague, who were burnt in the 15th century, by the council of Constance. Multitudes embraced the doctrines of the Gospel in different places, during those times, and professed or preached it at the hazard of their lives; and great numbers were burnt or put to death in the most cruel manner, for so doing.—'The visible assemblies of the Paulicians, or Albigens were extinguished by fire and sword; and the bleeding remnant escaped by flight, concealment, or Catholic conformity. But the invincible spirit which they had kindled still lived and breathed in the western world. In the state, in the church, and even in the cloister, a latent succession was preserved of the disciples of Paul, who protested against the tyranny of Rome, embraced the Bible as the rule of faith, and purified their creed from all the visions of the Gnostic theology. The struggles of Wickliff in England, and of Huss in Bohemia, were premature and ineffectual; but the names of Zuinglius, Luther, and Calvin, are pronounced with gratitude, as the deliverers of nations!' *Gibbon*.—How striking a testimony is here given, by an enemy of Christianity, to the fulfillment of prophecy! *Gibbon*, writing an involuntary comment on St. John! *Cuninghame*. At length Luther arose, and the Reformation took place; since which time, the same testimony for the truth of Christ, and against the errors of antichrist, has been maintained. Nor does it appear, that the term is yet expired; for 'they shall prophesy 1260 days clothed in sackcloth.' The term of their 'prophesying in sackcloth,' before they 'are slain and rise again,' (Note, 7—12.) must extend through the whole of the 42 months, and cannot terminate till these are ended. This is wonderfully overlooked by many expositors, who inconsistently suppose the witnesses to have finished their 'testimony in sackcloth,' and, having been slain, to have risen again, at a time, when, by their own computation, the 1260 years were not closed. The witnesses are not, indeed, at present exposed to such terrible sufferings, as in former times; but those scenes may be repeated before long, for what any man can foreknow; and they have abundant cause 'to prophesy in sackcloth,' on account of the declined state of religion even in the Protestant churches.—However, though men despised and hated the witnesses, they were in reality 'the two olive-trees,' endued with spiritual gifts and grace, that, through their instrumentality, others, also, might receive 'the anction from the Holy One;' and 'the two candlesticks,' to hold forth the light of divine truth in this benighted world; they stood to minister, with acceptance, 'before the God of the earth,' the Proprietor and Governor of all mankind; and were the champions, as it were, of his cause, and the heralds of his glory, in the countries where they lived. (Notes, 1:12—20. *Zech.* 4:2, 3, 11—14.) Moreover, if any man, being enraged by their testimony, and emboldened by their apparent weakness, should attempt to injure them, 'fire proceedeth from their mouths, and devoureth their enemies,' who would in this manner be slain; that is, the Lord would certainly plead and avenge their cause, and resent the injuries done to them, as done against Himself. (Notes, *Zech.* 2:6—9. *Acts* 9:3—6.) Their warnings and instructions would tend to the condemnation of those, who hated them on that account; the denunciations of divine vengeance, uttered by them, would infallibly be accomplished; and even their prayers would be answered in judgments on those, who persisted in their enmity. For, in this respect, they would have power, like Elijah, 'to shut heaven, and to restrain the rain from falling,' during 'the three years and a half' of their prophesying; (Notes, 1 K. 17:1. *Jam.* 5:16—18.) or to prevent blessings coming from above on those, who rejected their testimony, and persecuted them for it; as well as to 'turn the waters into blood,' or to inflict all other plagues at their pleasure, as Moses did upon the Egyptians. (Notes, *Ex.* 7:15—25.) That is, they would have as great an interest in heaven, as the most eminent of the prophets; and God would as surely punish these nations, princes, or persons, who injured them,

as He did those who had formerly oppressed his people, or murdered his messengers.

(3.) 'I will give unto my two witnesses that they may prophesy.'

SCHOLEFIELD.

(3, 4.) 'The true spiritual church of Christ, or collective body of the faithful, is here presented to our view, under 3 different emblems. 1. That of 2 witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, the garb of mourning, during the period of 1260 days, and testifying against the general corruption and degeneracy of the professing church. 2. Under the symbol of the 2 candlesticks, as holding forth the light of truth to a world involved in spiritual darkness. 3. As two olive trees, to denote the abundant supplies of the Holy Spirit, at all times given to the true church. The meaning of the whole passage seems to be, that in the midst of the general corruption of the visible church, God would raise up a small number of faithful men, a truly spiritual church, who should witness for the truth, during the whole 1260 days, which is the same as the 42 months, when the Gentiles were to occupy the holy city.—*Cuninghame*. This is the view of many of the old commentators, but *Faber* adopts that of Bp. *Lloyd*, that the Waldenses and Albigenses are specially meant, and their slaughter in 1685. *Viringa, Fleming*, and others, thought that interpretation worthy of attention.—The number "two" does not relate to their number, but to their witness-bearing; two being the number God ordained as sufficient to establish evidence. We must not think any particular church intended here.—*Pool's Annotations*.

HENRY, *abr.*

BLOOMF.

(4.) *God's* 'Rather, Lord, *Kurios*.'  
V. 7—12. When these witnesses 'shall have finished,' or 'shall be about to finish,' their testimony; 'the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit,' i. e. the persecuting power, which will afterwards be more fully described, (Notes, 13:1—7. 17:7, 8.) shall fight against them, and 'kill them.' Many private interpretations (for so they appear to me) have been given of this passage, as if it related to the martyrdom of individuals, or partial persecutions, in past times; and some strangely imagine, that it only denotes the constant persecution of true Christians, through the whole period of 1260 years; I cannot, however, but think, that it relates to events yet future; and the fulfilment of it must be nearly at the same time, as the sounding of the 7th trumpet.—'The great city,' in the street of which the dead bodies of the witnesses shall lie unburied, does not seem to mean either Rome or Jerusalem literally; but Jerusalem mystically; i. e. the professing church of God, as possessed by Gentiles (2); and so become the rival of 'Sodom' in lewdness; or of 'Egypt' in cruelty to the children of God; and of 'Jerusalem' at the time when Christ was there crucified, in general enmity to Him, and his cause. Yet the arrangement of the prophecy in other respects shows, that the countries, which belonged to the church of Rome, when at the height of its power, and most prosperous in its rage 'for crucifying our Lord afresh' in his people, were principally intended; and indeed it is worthy of notice, that though our Lord personally was crucified at Jerusalem, it was by the authority of the Roman emperor, when Judea was a province of that empire. Present appearances, indeed, in some degree may seem to favor the opinion, that this general and successful war of the beast against the witnesses of Christ, will be conducted under another form, and other pretences, and perhaps by other instruments and means, than former assaults have been. Papal persecutors were often concealed infidels; and infidels concealed under any other mask, and so opposing vital Christianity within the same district, may perhaps equally answer to the prediction; for the peculiar opinions of this antichristian power are not here specified, and the apostle elsewhere speaks of antichrist as one, who opposes the doctrine, the authority, or glory of Christ. (Notes, 1 John 2:18—25. 4:1—3.) The prevalence of infidelity in different forms, throughout Europe, and the zeal, with which principles of that tendency are everywhere propagated, when contrasted with the declining state of popish superstition, renders it not wholly improbable, that 'the beast' may change his ground and method of attack, before he thus prevails against the witnesses; for that time approaches; though popery itself is far more deeply rooted in a vast proportion of professed Christians, than is generally supposed; and seems at present (1815) greatly prevailing against open infidelity, nay, I fear, nominal Protestantism. [Now, 1838, the case is greatly altered, and appears more in accordance with the suggestion of the author in the preceding paragraph. Ep.] It likewise



9 And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in <sup>v</sup> graves.

10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11 And after three days and an half the Spirit <sup>v</sup> of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a <sup>x</sup> cloud; and their enemies <sup>y</sup> beheld them.

<sup>v</sup> Ps. 79:3.      <sup>x</sup> 1 Th. 4:17.      <sup>y</sup> Mat. 3:18.  
<sup>w</sup> Eze. 37:5-14.

appears from the prediction, that the temporary victory of this enemy over the truth will be so entire, throughout the extent of the western church, that there will be scarcely any open profession or preaching of the true Gospel, or steady opposition to the prevailing antichristianity, in all that part of the world; so that the different nations of Europe, and others as connected with them, will have nothing to do, but to contemplate and insult <sup>v</sup> over the dead bodies of the witnesses, which they will not suffer to be buried. This may signify, that they will revile and deride all those, who before had professed and preached the truth; and thus preserve them from oblivion, by exposing them to ignominy. At the same time, they will use the customary methods of mutual congratulation on an event, which they deem so joyful; supposing that they have at last finally extirpated a race of men, whose examples, doctrines, warnings, and reproofs, alarmed and disquieted their minds, and prevented them from proceeding, without disturbance, in their ungodliness and iniquity. (Notes, Judg. 16:23-31. Mic. 7:8-10. Mat. 27:39-44. John 7:3-10.) But the 'triumphing of these wicked men' shall be short; for 'after three days and a half,' prophetically computed, the witnesses shall rise again from the dead, to the great consternation of their insulting murderers. I. e. the Lord will speedily raise up a competent number of witnesses, to stand up for his pure Gospel; to the terror of its opposers, who hoped that it was finally extirpated. (Note, 20:4-6.) Nay, these witnesses will be called by 'a voice from heaven, to ascend thither,' which they will accordingly do, in the sight of their enemies. I. e. the apparent extirpation of genuine Christianity in the western church, (the bounds of which are considered in their largest dimensions; for all true protestants are only 'witnesses' for the truth, within the dominions of the beast,) will make way for more glorious times, when the ministers and professors of the Gospel shall be far more zealous, honored, and prospered, than before; even as the ascension of Christ to glory was subsequent to his death and resurrection, and preparatory to the success of the Gospel. [Does not the present state of Mohammedism, popery, and infidelity, respectively, strikingly correspond to the representation in this paragraph? Ed.] The outline of the above interpretation was given in the first edition of this work; and since that time, during 24 years, the author has had abundant opportunity of reconsidering his interpretation; and of comparing it with those of many other commentators, and with events which have occurred in Providence. He must, however, still avow his full conviction, that the transactions, predicted under the emblems of these vs., have not hitherto taken place.—It is generally agreed, that this ch. coincides in time with ch. 9.; (Notes, 9.) and that the state of the church, and of the nations in the western empire is here predicted, as that of the eastern empire had before been. The whole testimony, therefore, against idolatry and popery, in the ten kingdoms, during 'the 1260 years,' must be intended; and till that testimony is generally suppressed, the witnesses are not slain. The triumphs of the persecutors, in Germany, Bohemia, Spain, or Italy, did not amount to anything, which can, with the least propriety, be called 'the slaying of the witnesses;' so long as a public testimony against papal corruptions, and for the true Gospel, was borne in any other parts of the western empire.—However we explain the expression, 'when they shall have finished their testimony,' we must make it agree with this part of the prediction; 'they shall prophesy 1260 days, clothed in sackcloth.' Now, if the witnesses were slain at the council of Constance, or by the total ruin of the league at Smalcalde, or at any of the times, which different expositors fix upon, it inevitably follows, that they prophesied one, two, or three, 'hundred days in sackcloth' less than the predicted period, except any will say, that they 'prophesied in sackcloth,' after their resurrection and ascension into heaven.—The different opinions of eminently learned and able men on the subject, and the extreme difficulty which they all seem to find, in making one part of their interpretations consistent with the others, are powerful arguments in my mind, that they have not *fact* and *truth* to bear them out.—The fulfilment of the prophecy seems to me indispensably to require the following particulars: 1st. The general suppression of the public testimony for the truth, and against the grosser perversions of Christianity, in doctrine and worship, throughout all the kingdoms of the western empire; but no such general suppression has taken place, especially in the latter ages of the period in question. 2dly. The *open, avowed, and general* triumph of enemies, however distinguished; as if the hated cause of true Christianity were finally ruined; but this has never yet been the case, throughout the ten kingdoms, however a part, and comparatively a small part, vainly exulted in some of them. 3dly. The very speedy and unexpected 'revival of the wit-

nesses; and the immediate, general, and extraordinary triumphs of the Gospel, in all those countries, where it was supposed to be extirpated. Whether this will be, as some with much probability think, the last persecution before the millennium, the event must determine; but *the war of the beast against the witnesses*, is surely a widely different thing, from *the war of Christ against the persecutors*, which, I apprehend, is meant by the pouring out of the vials, at the opening of the 7th trumpet. (Notes, 16.) During the former, the enemy triumphs, and 'the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth,' till slain; during the latter, the witnesses and their cause triumph, and their enemies are destroyed by tremendous judgments. Yet these distinct events have, by some respectable expositors, been apparently confounded.—The death and resurrection of the witnesses, whatever events may be intended thereby, happen, as we learn from the concluding clause of the above passage, before the end of the second woe, and before the coming of the third woe. *Cunninghame*. Had this writer, in company with many others, forgot v. 3. when he wrote this, and when he dates the slaying of the witnesses A. D. 1546? Were the 1260 days of 'their prophesying in sackcloth' terminated at that time? Or from what year does he date the beginning of the 1260 years? Certainly this calculation dates it from A. D. 286; earlier, by several centuries, than the date hitherto, by almost general consent, assigned to it; or by himself in other places. (Notes, 1, 2. Dan. 7:23-27. 8:13, 14. 12:5-9.) Indeed, it makes it precede the times of Constantine. (Note, 14:3-6.)—If the slaying of the witnesses be future, it is of vast importance that Christians should be aware of it, and act accordingly. It does not follow, from the suppression of the public testimony, viz. the general silencing of faithful ministers, and inhibiting the public administration of ordinances, in the purity and simplicity of Christian worship, through the ten kingdoms, that there will be no true Christianity in those kingdoms. Nay, it is not improbable, that the prevalence of true Christianity will provoke this persecution; that there will be thousands, and tens, nay hundreds of thousands, who *secretly*, at the hazard of their lives, will meet together, for the worship of God; that books, previously circulated, containing clear and practical religious instruction, will in a very great degree supply the want of public ordinances, during this short interruption; that the persecution itself, and the suppression of the testimony, will so show the odiousness of the persecutors, and the excellency of true Christians, as, by the divine blessing, exceedingly to multiply real believers, during the interdiction; and, in short, that the means previously used, nay, the seed which we are now sowing, may be abundantly prospered, in bringing forward the glorious times which shall succeed this event. The term of three years and a half, according to the prophetic calculation of the days, in which the testimony shall be suppressed, and the energy and success with which it shall then burst forth, from the ashes under which it had been smothered, and this, through all the ten kingdoms, appear to me to give an astonishing interest to this view of the subject; as well as most animating motives, now to sow to the utmost that seed, which will then produce the glorious harvest. In many other cases, we should 'rejoice with trembling;' but in this, while we cannot but tremble, at the prospect before us, we should *tremble with rejoicing*. Like the believer's death, it will be a dark and painful entrance on scenes inexpressibly delightful; and the approach of it, if perceived, will assure the intelligent Christian, that the final triumphs of the church are at hand, even at the door.—In what way the accomplishment will take place, the event must show; and it is in vain to argue against the improbability of it; for the dispensations of Providence commonly subvert all our preconceptions of probability.—It should also be noted, that this exceedingly depressed state of real Christianity seems only to relate to the western church exclusively; and probably in America, in Africa, in the East Indies, or other parts of Asia, there may be very flourishing churches at the same time.

7. The resurrection of these witnesses, and the consequences thereof. Observe, (1.) The time of their rising again; after they had lain dead *three days and a half*, v. 11. a short time, in comparison of that in which they had prophesied. God's witnesses may be slain, but they shall rise again; not in their persons, till the general resurrection; but in their successors. God will revive his work, when it seems to be dead in the world. (2.) The power by which

they were raised; *The spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood on their feet*. The Spirit of life from God quickens, shall quicken, his dying interest in the world. (3.) The effect of this on their enemies; *Great fear fell upon them*. The reviving of God's work and witnesses will strike terror into the souls of his enemies. Where there is guilt there is fear; and a persecuting spirit, though cruel, is not a courageous, but a cowardly spirit. Herod feared John the Baptist.

8. The ascension of the witnesses into heaven, and the consequences thereof, v. 12, 13. (1.) By heaven, understand, either some more eminent station in the church, the kingdom of grace in this world, or a high place in the kingdom of glory above. The former seems to be the meaning; *They ascend to heaven in a cloud*, in a figurative, not in a literal sense, and *their enemies saw them*. (2.) The consequences of their ascension; a mighty shock and convulsion in the antichristian empire, and the fall of *a tenth part of the city*. Some refer this to the beginning of the reformation from popery; when many princes and states fell off from their

(11, 12.) 'We must not look for a *literal* accomplishment of this prophecy; but bear in mind, that these things are a "*mystery*," 1:2. 17: which word teaches us to look for a hidden and allegorical meaning.' *Woodh.* See this meaning beautifully drawn out in his *Annott.* (1828,) pp. 229-236. 'Of the 3 scenes of *fire, rain, and blood*, the 1st may be deemed essentially (spiritually) fulfilled, if the enemies of the witnesses, and of their pure religion, are in many instances dismayed, confounded, frustrated, and subdued by the heavenly words of their mouth. The 2d, if the rain from heaven, which, spiritually interpreted, is the blessing from heaven upon the growth of true religion generally in the world, (Ps. 68:9. 72:6. Is. 55:10. Hos. 6:1. Ez. 34:26. Heb. 6:7.) is suspended during their prophecy. The 3d, if, in the contest, the enemies



13 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city <sup>z</sup>fell, and in the earthquake were slain <sup>a</sup> of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave <sup>b</sup> glory to the God of heaven.

14 The second <sup>c</sup>woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

15 And the seventh <sup>d</sup>angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms <sup>e</sup> of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he <sup>f</sup>shall reign for ever and ever.

16 And the four and twenty <sup>g</sup>elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which <sup>h</sup>art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast <sup>i</sup>reigned.

18 And the nations were <sup>j</sup>angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time <sup>k</sup>of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward <sup>l</sup>unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, <sup>m</sup>small and great; and shouldst destroy them which <sup>n</sup>destroy the earth.

19 And the temple <sup>o</sup>of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were <sup>p</sup>light-

nings, and voices, and thunderings, and an <sup>q</sup>earthquake, and great hail.

z c. 16:19.	f Da. 2:44.	l c. 22:12.
a <i>names of men.</i>	g 7:14, 18, 27.	m c. 19:5.
b Is. 26:15, 16.	h c. 4:4.	n or, <i>corrupt.</i>
c. 14:7.	i c. 15:5.	o c. 15:5, 8.
e c. 8:13.	j c. 19:6.	p c. 8:5.
d c. 10:7.	k ver. 9.	q c. 16:18, 21.
e c. 12:10.	l He. 9:27.	

subjection to Rome; all the western world felt a great concussion, the antichristian interest received a great blow, and lost a great deal of ground and interest, [1.] By the sword of war, which was then drawn; and many of those who fought under the banner of antichrist, were slain by it. [2.] By the sword of the Spirit; *The fear of God fell upon many.* They were convinced of their errors, superstition, and idolatry; and, by true repentance, and embracing the truth, *they gave glory to the God of heaven.* Thus, when God's work and witnesses revive, the devil's work and witnesses fall before Him.

V. 14—19. We have here the sounding of the 7th and last trumpet. Observe the effects and consequences.

1. Loud and joyful acclamations of the saints and angels in heaven. Observe, The manner and matter of their adorations; they rose from their seats, and fell on their faces, and worshipped God; they did it with reverence and humility. They thankfully recognise the right of our God and Savior, to rule and reign over all the world, v. 15. They give Him thanks because He had asserted his rights, exerted his power, and so turned his title into possession. They rejoice that this his reign shall never end, and that all enemies shall be put under his feet.

2. Angry resentments in the world, at these just appearances and actings of the power of God, v. 18. *The nations were angry;* not only had been so, but were so still. It was a time when God was taking a just revenge on the enemies of his people,

and beginning to reward his people's faithful services and sufferings; and their enemies could not bear it, they fretted against God, and so increased their guilt, and hastened their destruction.

3. The opening of the temple of God in heaven. By this may be meant, that here is now a more free communication between heaven and earth; but it rather seems to intend the church of God on earth, a heavenly temple. It is an allusion to the various circumstances of things in the time of the first temple; under idolatrous and wicked princes, it was shut up and neglected; but under religious and reforming princes, opened and frequented. So, during the power of antichrist, the temple of God seemed to be shut up, and was so in a great degree; but now it was opened again. At this opening of it, Observe,

(1.) What was seen there; *the ark of God's testament.* As, before Josiah's time, the law of God had been lost, but was then found; so, in the reign of antichrist, God's law was made void by their traditions and decrees; the Scriptures were locked up from the people, and they must not look into these divine oracles; now they are opened, now they are brought to the views of all. This was an unspeakable and invaluable privilege; and this, like the ark of the testament, was a token of the presence of God returned to his people, and his favor toward them in Jesus Christ, the Propitiation.

(2.) What was heard and felt there; *Lightnings, voices, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.* The great blessing of the Reformation was attended with very awful providences; and by terrible things in righteousness God would answer those prayers that were presented in his holy temple, now opened. All the great revolutions of the world are concerted in heaven, and are the answers of the prayers of the saints.

PRACT. OBS. The Lord measures his professed worshippers by the rule of his Word, and weighs them in his balance. His ministers must also use the same standard; for mere nominal professors are accounted Gentiles before God; and 'the holy city' has frequently been trodden under foot by such enemies of the Lord, in the habit of worshippers!—Indeed, for many ages, a small number of 'witnesses, prophesying in sackcloth,' have appeared on the part of Christ and the truth; whilst multitudes, in great splendor and power, have been rucked on the side of antichrist, in one form or another. But it is most honorable to unite with these witnesses, however few, despised, or persecuted they may be; and to enter a public protest, connected with a holy and exemplary conduct, against the prevailing corruptions of the age and place in which we live. Yet we cannot obtain this honor, without

courage, self-denial, and patience. Many woes await the impenitent in this world; but the most dreadful woe will, as it were, cause all the rest to be forgotten; and it will arrive quickly. For the 7th angel shall sound; and the inhabitants of heaven will rejoice, because 'the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, and He shall reign for ever.' At present, prayer for that blessed revolution in the state of the world, is the duty of all real Christians; but shortly, they will be called to join in songs of loud thanksgiving, and humble adoration, 'to the Lord God Almighty, who is, and was, and is to come.' Oh may the name of our heavenly Father be thus hallowed; may his kingdom thus come, and may his will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

SCOTT.

of the witnesses, instead of the peaceful enjoyment expected to accrue from their apparent destruction, behold their tenets, and the open profession of them, revive with power irresistible.' Woodh. Ed. 'Mede considers, that the slaughter of the witnesses can only be referred to about the end of the 1260 days, and that it will not be such as to extinguish the persons, or whole materials, of the reformed churches, but only the public fabric of the Reformation.'

HENRY, *abr.*

V. 13, 14. Immediately after the events, intended by the resurrection and 'ascension of the witnesses,' some terrible judgment will befall a large part of the antichristian city, in which they were slain and lay unhuried, especially some one of the ten kingdoms; which will destroy a great number of persons, and so alarm others, as to tend to their conversion, and to 'the glory of God' in it.—The original expression, 'seven thousand names of men,' Note, Acts 1:15. induces many to think, that this refers to the degradation and destruction of the most renowned and powerful supporters of the papal antichrist; but the event alone can determine the precise meaning of this. Thus the 2d woe, or the 6th trumpet will terminate; and behold, the 3d woe will speedily approach.—Whether the revolutions and desolations in France, and on the Continent, during the last 20 years, are specially meant, (as some expositors confidently decide,) our descendants will be more competent to determine, than we are. But if the whole, concerning the slaying of the witnesses, be yet unfulfilled, as I decidedly think, that cannot be.—(13) *Same hour.* The destruction implied in this v. must be coincident with the ascension of the witnesses, at the very same time, or when the prophecy is fulfilled.

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V. 15—18. 'The little book' has been shown to contain such extensive and important predictions, as abundantly to account for the solemnity with which it was delivered to the apostle. (Note, 10:2—4.) If this be not addressed to Christ personally, (as some think,) it must be allowed to include Him, as One with the Father and the Holy Spirit, in the Unity of the Godhead. (Note, 1:3, 8—11.) What follows, is explained by some persons, to relate to the execution of the wrath of God on the nations before the millennium, (Notes, 18: 19: 20:4—6.) but others suppose it to refer to the temporary opposition raised against the Gospel, after the millennium, and just before the general resurrection, and the final judgment. (Notes, 20:7—10.) The account, however, in this place is very brief; for it will be explained and dilated on afterwards, in several chs.; and perhaps both events are comprehensively

hinted at. (M. R. a, b.—Notes, Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45. 7:9—14, 19—27.)—'Thus we are arrived at the consummation of all things, through a series of prophecies, extending from the apostle's days to the end of the world. This series has been the clue to conduct us in our interpretation of these prophecies: and though some of them may be dark and obscure, considered in themselves, yet they receive light and illustration from others, preceding and following. Altogether they are, as it were, a chain of prophecies, whereof one link depends on and supports another. If any parts remain yet obscure and unsatisfactory, they may, perhaps, be cleared up, by what the apostle has added by way of explanation.

SCOTT.

(15.) 'Vitrina and others trace an analogy between the effects of the seals and the siege of Jericho: as that city fell after 7 times sounding a trumpet, which 7th time of sounding was made up of 7 blasts; so they consider, that the mystical Babylon, the great oppressing city of these days, is to fall at the sound of the 7th trumpet, which contains the pouring-out of the 7 vials. Thus the 7th trumpet may be considered as sounding at the 1st vial, as well as at the last.'

HENRY, *abr.*

(17.) *Arè to come.* 'Bl. marks this clause as doubtful.' Eo.

(19.) 'Lowman considers, that the word rendered "judged," is rather to be understood to mean a vindication of the cause of the martyrs for the Christian religion, by some act of providence in its favor. It is frequently used in this sense, and, according to the order of the prophecies, the general judgment was not till afterwards.'

HENRY, *abr.*

V. 19. This v. introduces a new subject, and should have been placed at the beginning of the next ch. (Notes, 4:1—3. 15:5—8. 16:17—21. Is. 6:1—4.) The scene of the vision was laid at the temple, which was so far opened, that 'the ark of the covenant' became visible: this denoted, that further discoveries were about to be made, relating to the interior parts of religion; for the preceding chs. chiefly referred to the affairs of the empire, and the external concerns of the church. 'The lightnings, and voices, and thunderings,' were tokens of the special divine presence; and emblems of the terrible judgments, which were about to be revealed. (M. R. q. v.) The next ch. seems to go back to the primitive ages of the church; and we must pass a second time through many of the succeeding periods as before: though principally with relation to the times of the 5 last trumpets, called the woe-trumpets. (Note, 12:1, 2.)

SCOTT.



## CHAP. XII.

1 A woman clothed with the sun travaileth. 4 The great red dragon standeth before her, ready to devour her child. 6 When she was delivered she fleeth into the wilderness. 7 Michael and his angels fight with the dragon, and prevail. 13 The dragon being cast down into the earth persecuteth the woman.

AND there appeared a great <sup>a</sup> wonder in heaven; a woman <sup>b</sup> clothed with the <sup>c</sup> sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

3 And there appeared another <sup>a</sup> wonder in heaven; and behold a great red <sup>d</sup> dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

4 And his tail <sup>e</sup> drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

5 And <sup>f</sup> she brought forth a man child, who <sup>g</sup> was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

a or, sign. Mal. 4:2. f Is. 7:14.  
b Is. 54:6. d ver. 9. g Ps. 2:10.  
c Ps. 84:11. e Is. 9:15.

CHAP. XII. It is generally agreed by the most learned expositors, that the narrative we have in this and the two following chs.,

from the sounding of the 7th trumpet to the opening of the vials, is not a prediction of things to come, but rather a recapitulation and representation of things past; which, as God would have the apostle to foresee while that they were past, that he might have a more perfect idea of them in his mind, and might observe the agreement between the prophecy and that Providence that is always fulfilling the Scriptures. In this ch., we have an account of the contest between the church and antichrist; the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent.

V. 1—11. Here we see that early prophecy, Gen. 3: 15. eminently fulfilled. Observe,

I. The attempts of Satan and his agents to prevent the increase of the church, by devouring her offspring *as soon as it was born*; of this we have a very lively description in the most proper images.

1. The church is represented, (1.) As a woman, the weaker part of the world, but the spouse of Christ, and the mother of the saints. (2.) As clothed with the sun, the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Sun of righteousness. (3.) As having the moon under her feet; that is, the world; her heart and hope set not on sublimary things, but on heaven; [or, as Scott, 'to denote her superiority to the reflected and feebler light of the Mosaic dispensation.'] (4.) As having on her head a crown of 12 stars, i. e. the doctrine of the Gospel, preached by the 12 apostles, which is a crown of glory to all true believers. (5.) As in travail, crying out, and pained to be delivered; desirous that what was begun in the conviction of sinners, might end in their conversion; [or, as in Scott, it

seems to be, 'an emblem of the afflicted state of the church in the first three centuries.']

2. The grand enemy of the church is represented, (1.) As a great red dragon; a dragon, for strength and terror; a red dragon, for fierceness and enmity. (2.) As having 7 heads, i. e. placed on 7 hills, as Rome was; therefore probably pagan Rome is meant. (3.) As having ten horns, divided into ten provinces, as the Roman empire was by Augustus Cesar. (4.) As having 7 crowns upon his heads, which is after expounded to be 7 kings, ch. 17: 10. (5.) As drawing with his tail a third part of the stars in heaven, and casting them down to the earth; turning the ministers and professors of the Christian religion out of their places and privileges, and making them as weak and useless as he could; [or, as in Scott, it 'represented the power of the Romans, which had cast down the princes of one third part of the earth, and reduced their countries to subjection, 8: 7.'] (6.) As standing before the woman, to devour her child as soon as it should be born; very vigilant to crush the Christian religion in its birth, and entirely to prevent the growth and continuance of it in the world.

II. The unsuccessfulness of these attempts against the church; for, 1. She was safely delivered of a man child, v. 5. by which some understand Christ, others Constantine; but others, with greater propriety, a race of true believers, strong and united, resembling Christ, and designed, under Him, to rule the nations with a rod of iron; i. e. to judge the world by their doctrine and lives now, and as assessors with Christ at the great day. 2. Care was taken of this child; it was caught up to God, and to his throne;

NOTES. CHAP. XII. V. 1, 2. The prophecies of this book, as it appears to me, naturally divide themselves into two parts; the second of which begins with the last v. of the preceding ch.: though some begin it with v. 1 of this ch. So that we are here brought back to the primitive ages of the church; though they are far more briefly mentioned, than those are which followed. Inattention to this circumstance has occasioned much perplexity, in many attempts to explain these predictions: for if we do not keep hold of the clue, which has properly been called the internal geography and chronology of the book, imagination will rove at large; and supposed allusions to detached events, in different ages and places, will disjoint the interpretation, and render the whole ambiguous and suspicious. (2) Pained.] 9:5. 14:10. 20:10. Mat. 3:29. 2 Pet. 2:8. The word shows the extreme sufferings, or tortures, by which the faith and patience of the church were proved, previously to her deliverance, especially immediately before it.

(1.) 'The sounding of the 7th trumpet has now prepared us to expect a figurative exhibition of that great conflict and victory, by which the Christian church will at length be placed in security from her enemies. To describe this, in all its parts, and to enable us to understand the conflict, by ascertaining the combatants, the Holy Spirit begins the figurative history from the earliest times of the church; and past events are represented in the same allegory, which is continued to foretell those which are to come. 'The church (arrayed in pure and heavenly light) was placed upon earth in her infant form, when it pleased God to bless with religion our first parents.'

V. 3—5. 'Red,' purple, or scarlet, was the distinguishing color of the Roman emperors, consuls, and generals; even as it has been since of the popes and cardinals. (Note, 17:3—5.) 'The 7 crowns on the dragon's heads,' and not '10 crowns on his horns,' showed, that the whole power was yet vested in the emperors and senate, at Rome; and not, as afterwards, in the monarchs of the 10 kingdoms. This circumstance, which many have not observed, precisely fixes the date of the prophecy, and undeniably proves, that it related to the pagan emperors, and not to the antichristian power afterwards mentioned. (Note, 13:1.)—The Roman emperors and magistrates jealously watched the progress of Christianity from the first, and harassed the church with constant persecutions.—But, at length, the woman was delivered of a male child. During the time of the persecuting emperors, the church was greatly increased; until one sprang from her, who ascended the imperial throne, being appointed to be the vicegerent of Christ, in ruling the nations, and crushing the enemies of the Gospel, 'as with a rod of iron.' (Notes, 2: 21—23. 6:12—17. Ps. 2:7—9.) Thus the offspring of the church, even Christians in general; and Constantine, with the Christian emperors, who succeeded him in particular, escaped the rage of the red dragon; and the latter was exalted to very great honor and authority, under the immediate protection, and by the special favor of God.—New trials, however, awaited the woman; ... the termination of pagan persecution made way for those events, which at length terminated in the antichristian power, the continuance of which was fixed to 1260 years. (Notes, 11:1—14. 2 Thes. 2:5—7.) But God had provided a place where He would sustain the church when the time arrived; and her flight into the wilderness is here mentioned by way of anticipation.—This interpretation has been objected to, because v. 6. is supposed to be introduced by anticipation: but, in fact, it is manifest, that the apostle thus introduces it; else, why does he resume it, with some additional circumstances, after several vs. predicting most important events? (14) Yet even then, the church is represented only as prepared to fly, not as yet actu-

ally fled.—The author has before shown his decided opinion,—and stated his reasons for it, that 'the little book'—contained no more than part of 11 ch.: that the slaying of the witnesses is yet future: and that the concluding part of the preceding ch., to the end of v. 18. brings the series of predicted events to the millennium, and indeed to the end of the world. (Notes, 10: 11.) If, then, this and the following chs. relate, as undoubtedly they do, to events preceding the millennium; the sacred writer must in some place go back, and resume his subject: and no part can be selected, in which this can so naturally be fixed, as the last v. of the preceding ch., which introduces the beginning of this.—'We would also divide the Revelation into two parts; or rather the book so divides itself. For the former part proceeds, as we have seen, in a regular and successive series, from the apostle's days to the consummation of all things. Nothing can be added, but it must fall somewhere or other within the compass of this period; it must be a resumption of the same subjects: and this latter part may most properly be considered as an enlargement and illustration of the former. Several things, which before were only touched upon, required to be more copiously handled, and placed in a stronger light. It was said, that 'the beast should make war against the witnesses, and overcome them.' and who or what the beast is, we may reasonably conjecture; but the apostle himself will more surely explain. The transactions of the 7th trumpet are all summed up and comprised in a few vs.; but we shall see the particulars branched out and enlarged on into as many chs. In short, this latter part is designed, as a supplement to the former, to complete what was deficient, to explain what was dubious, to illustrate what was obscure: and as the former described more the destinies of the Roman empire, so this latter relates to the fates of the Christian church.' Bp. Newton.—Nothing more fully confirms my opinion, that Bp. Newton's outline is the true interpretation, than the dissatisfaction which permanently rests on my mind, after carefully considering those expositions, which have been substituted in the place of it. While objections are stated, I hesitate, not at once perceiving how they can be answered; but when the interpretation, substituted in its place, has excited my attention, still more insuperable objections crowd on my mind.—'The man child is the mystic Word of God, which is described as the Son of the church, because it is the incorruptible seed, from which all true believers are born.' Faber. The 'mystic Word,' according to this statement, is in fact the parent, not the son, of the church: but waiving this, if the respectable writer, here cited, could not make out his system, without having recourse to so indefinite and allegorical an interpretation, of an event evidently most important in the prophecy, I cannot but conclude, that his plan of interpretation is, in this respect, erroneous: and I must give that of Bp. Newton the decided preference. Most certainly, the subversion of the pagan persecuting Roman empire, and that of the immense ancient system of idolatry, as supported by all the genius, influence, and power of Greece and Rome, was no inconsiderable event, in the prophetic history of the Christian church; and, had it not been specially and prominently marked, it might have been thought an extraordinary omission. (Note, 6:11—14.) Whatever the character of Constantine or that of his successors was, the revolution was wonderful, and indeed one of the most extraordinary recorded in universal history. (Note, Zech. 8:20—23.) The whole pagan system was cast down from its 'heaven,' its authority and persecuting domination; and the ruler, or rulers, of the nations professed Christianity, and protected the church. Subsequent corruptions, terminating in still more dire and destructive persecutions, indeed followed, and are particularly foretold: but surely,



6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there <sup>h</sup> a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days.

7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old <sup>i</sup> serpent, called the <sup>j</sup> Devil, and <sup>k</sup> Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now <sup>l</sup> is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

11 And they overcame <sup>m</sup> him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives <sup>n</sup> unto the death.

12 Therefore <sup>o</sup> rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe <sup>p</sup> to the inhabitants of the earth,

and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because <sup>q</sup> he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

h e. 11:3. i Ge. 3:1,4. j Jn. 8:44. k Zec. 3:1. l e. 11:15. m Ro. 8:33,37. n Lu. 14:26. o Ps. 96:11. Is. 49:13. p e. 8:13. q c. 10:6.

i. e. taken into his special, powerful, and immediate protection. The Christian religion has been from its infancy the special care of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. 3. Care was taken of the mother as well as of the child, v. 6. She fled into the wilderness, a place prepared, both for her safety and her sustenance; the church was in an obscure state, dispersed; and this proved her security, through the care of divine Providence; this her obscure and private state was for a limited time, not to continue always.

III. The attempts of the dragon not only prove unsuccessful against the church, but fatal to his own interests; for, upon his endeavor to devour the man child, he engaged all the powers of heaven against him, v. 7. heaven will espouse the quarrel of the church. Here observe, 1. The seat of this war,—in heaven; in the church, the kingdom of heaven on earth. 2. The parties,—Michael and his angels, on one side; and the dragon and his angels, on the other; Christ, the great Angel of the covenant, and his faithful followers; and Satan and all his instruments. 3. The success of the battle: there was a great struggle, but the victory fell to Christ and his church, and the dragon

and his angels were cast out; the pagan idolatry, which was worshipping devils, was extirpated out of the empire in the time of Constantine. 4. The triumphant song that was composed, and used on this occasion, v. 10, 11. Here observe,

(1.) How the Conqueror is adored; Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; Now God has showed Himself to be a mighty God; now Christ has showed Himself to be a strong and mighty Savior.

(2.) How the conquered enemy is described; [1.] By his malice; as the accuser of the brethren, he accused them before their God night and day; continually bringing in indictments and accusations against them, whether true or false; thus he accused Job, and thus he accused Joshua the high priest, Zech. 3: 1. [2.] By his disappointment and defeat, he, and all his accusations, are cast out, the indictments quashed, and the accuser turned out of the court, with just indignation.

(3.) How the victory was gained; the servants of God overcame Satan, By the blood of the Lamb, as the meritorious cause; By the word of their testimony, as the great instrument; the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; by a resolute, powerful preaching of the everlasting Gospel, by their courage and patience in sufferings; when the love of life stood in competition with their loyalty to Christ, they could give up their lives; and this their courage and zeal helped to confound their enemies, to convince many of the spectators, to confirm the souls of the faithful, and so contributed greatly to this victory.

it is natural to suppose, that the prophet, if indeed he resumed his subject, to give a more particular account of the periods which he had compendiously mentioned, should go back to the first ages, and, in a few words, mark the deliverance of the church from pagan persecution, and the revolution in the empire from pagan to Christian. I by no means think, with Bp. Newton, that Galerius, or any personal enemy to Constantine, is meant, by the red or fiery dragon; but the whole pagan authority and influence, instigated by the devil, (as the papal power and influence afterwards was,) and seeking the destruction of Christianity, and of the Christian rulers and princes who supported it. So that we may understand as literally, as we choose, the language concerning 'the old dragon'; only remembering, that he 'works in' and by 'the children of disobedience.' (Notes, Eph. 2:1, 2. 1 John 4:4—6. 5:19.)—Christians are spoken of, as exercising the authority of Christ, and ruling the nations with a rod of iron: (2:27.) it can therefore be no objection, that the same allusion is made, in respect of the first Christian emperors, under whom the most entire revolution, from persecuting idolatry, in full domination, to the establishment of Christianity, as the religion of the Roman empire, took place.—Some commentators, indeed, would interpret this man child to be Christ Himself; but this cannot be meant, for He was born of the church of Israel, not of the Christian church; nor is He ever spoken of as 'the Son of the church,' but rather as the Husband, or even the Father of it. (Notes, Ps. 22:30, 31. Is. 9:6, 7. 53:9, 10. 54:1, 5. 59:20, 21. John 3:27—36.) The apostle also spake as a prophet, not as a historian; therefore, events, future to him, must exclusively be intended. (3) Red.] 6:4. Fiery red.] Red like fire, Mat. 16:2. 3.—Dragon.] Drakōn. 4, 7, 9, 13, 16, 17. 13:2, 4, 11. 16:13. 20:2. (Notes, Is. 27:1. 51:9, 11. Jer. 51:34—37. Ez. 30:3—5.) The largest and most terrible of the species of serpents.—(5) Man child.] A son, a male. This repetition of the same idea seems to imply the vigor and manliness, so to speak, of this son of the church.

(5) Man child.] 'Allwood makes this to be the English.' Ed. (6) 'Wilderness denotes a place of habitation scanty of sustenance, where food miraculously given is necessary for support of life; but where such support, united with the correction which is the effect of a desolate and perilous situation, produces excellent fruits of religious improvement. Is. 41:17—20. Ez. 20:35—39. Hos. 2:14—20. Mat. 4: 1—11. Thus the church was 40 years in the wilderness of Sinai; and fled again to the wilderness with Elijah. 1 K. 17: 13.' Woodn.

V. 7—12. The events here foretold, preceded, and made way for the flight of the church into the wilderness; (Note, 13—17.) and therefore cannot possibly mean the Reformation, which took place many ages after that event. The strenuous and combined efforts of the pagans against the establishment of Christianity, and the destruction of their idolatrous worship, was, as I apprehend, represented by 'the dragon and his angels' warring in heaven against 'Michael and his angels;' perhaps with some reference to the expulsion of Satan and his adherents from heaven, on their original apostasy. (Luke 10:17—20. John 12:27—33. 2 Pet. 2:4—9.) Michael may represent Christ; (Marg. Ref. u;) and 'the Devil, and Satan,' the old slanderer, adversary, and murderer of mankind, was the invisible commander of the opposite army. The former employed as his instruments Christian magistrates, faithful ministers, and believers, as well as holy angels; the latter fought by persecuting emperors, such as Julian the apostate, idolatrous priests, and heathen philosophers. (Note, Gen. 3:14, 15.) The total defeat of Satan was represented, by the devil being cast out of heaven: for, by the power of idolatrous emperors and magistrates, he had maintained that false religion, by which he had deceived all the world, and seduced them to be his subjects and worshippers; but, by the subversion of that authority, and the subsequent demolition of idolatry, he was cast down from his dignity,

as 'god and prince of this world,' for a time and in a measure. When the pagan emperors were dethroned, Satan's angels were cast out with him: for both the instruments and ministers of idolatry were laid aside, and even their very idols were destroyed with contempt and execration.—It is remarkable, that Constantine himself, and others of his time, describe these events under the same image of the dethroning of the dragon. 'Moreover, a picture of Constantine was set up over the palace-gate, with a cross over his head; and under his feet, the great enemy of mankind, (who persecuted the church by means of impious tyrants,) in the form of a dragon, transfixed with a dart through the midst of its body, and falling headlong into the depth of the sea.' Bp. Newton. This shows, how Christians then understood the prophecy; and, no doubt, they rightly interpreted it.—Upon this great victory, the apostle heard songs of praise in heaven; because 'salvation and strength were come,' the church was delivered from persecution, and its friends advanced to authority; the kingdom of God was openly established, and the power of his anointed Son most gloriously displayed. (Note, 19:1—6.) But this victory was not ascribed to the sword of war, which was only a subordinate mean, when matters were brought to a crisis: for it was acquired through the merit and efficacy of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, by faith in his blood, and a bold and holy profession of his Gospel; and if Christians had continued to fight with these weapons, and such as these, their victories would have been more numerous and glorious, and the effects of them more durable. But at the same time a woe was denounced on the inhabitants of the earth and the sea, or the nations in general; because the devil, and his dethroned agents, would not rest in their disgraced condition: though idolatry was suppressed, it was not destroyed, and its partisans would surely excite fresh commotions.—(9) His angels, &c.] Note, Mat. 25:41—46.—(12) A short time.] This is made an objection to interpreting the prophecy of the ruin of pagan idolatry: but any limited time is short, compared with the eternal doom awaiting the great enemy of the church and all its coadjutors.—They who interpret it of the Reformation, strangely forget, that the dragon had, at the time of his being cast out, 'the crowns on his seven heads,' and not on his ten horns: (Notes, 3—6. 13:1.) and that this event preceded the 1260 years of the church's abode in the wilderness. (9) That old serpent called the devil.] 20:2. 2 Cor. 11:3. A learned commentator has lately endeavored to prove, that the animal, by which the devil deceived Eve, was an ape, or some animal of the ape species.—It is, however, evident, that the Hebrew word, used Gen. 3:1. never means an ape, in the O. T. The Arabic word, adduced, is, indeed, one name of the devil; and some words, from the same root, signify an ape; but they also signify a lion, a wild cow, or any animal, with a peculiar kind of nose. (Richardson's Arabic, Persian, and English Dict.)—Wavering this, however, are we to suppose, that the inspired writers of the N. T. kept up, by express words, when not quoting from the Sept. the false opinion, derived from that version, that Satan deceived Eve, as conceived in a serpent, when in fact he was concealed in an ape? Is this our reverence for the words of the living God!—(10) Now.] Arti. Mat. 3:15. 26:29. Hitherto. 'Hitherto the Lord has helped us.' (Note, 1 S. 7:12.)—The church, and all her friends, might praise God, very properly, for deliverance from pagan persecution, though other trials still awaited her.

SCOTT. (7—13.) 'This passage should be read as in a parenthesis, because it is plainly no part of the prophecy, but of a date far prior to the history related therein, such as is alluded to in Jude 6, and 2 Pet. 2:4; for v. 6. and 14. contain the same matter, and give the same information, showing the junction to be complete. It is a warfare or rebellion, of which Satan was the leader in heaven, whence, being expelled, he attempts to pursue the same course on earth.—He made use of the Roman empire, its



13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

r Is. 40:31.

s Is. 59:19.

V. 12—17. We have here an account of this war, so happily finished in heaven, or in the church, as it was again renewed and carried on in the wilderness, the place to which the church was fled, and where she had been for some time secured by the special care of her God and Savior. Observe,

I. The warning given of the distress and calamity that should fall upon the inhabitants of the world in general, through the wrath and rage of the devil. His malice is chiefly bent against the servants of God, yet he is an enemy and hater of mankind as such; and, being defeated in his designs against the church, he is resolved to give all the disturbance he can to the world in general, v. 12.

II. His second attempt on the church, now in the wilderness, v. 13. Observe,

1. The care God had taken of his church; he had conveyed her, as on eagles' wings, into a place of safety provided for her, where she was to continue for a certain space of time; couched in prophetic characters, taken from Dan. 7: 25.

2. The continual malice of the dragon against the church; her obscurity could not altogether protect her; the old, subtle serpent, which at first lurked in paradise, now follows the church into the wilderness, and casts out a flood of water after her, to carry her away. This is thought to be meant of a flood of error and heresy, which was breathed by Arius, Nestorius, Pelagius, and many more, by which the church of God was in danger of being overwhelmed and carried away. The church of God is in more danger from heretics, than from perse-

capital city, and kingdoms, as instruments of his successful attack on the Christian church.

Woonn.

Ed.

(12.) *The inhabitants.*] *Bl.* rejects these words.

V. 13—17. While the idolatrous party, who were the agents of the devil, were constrained to submit to the power of Christian rulers, they still persisted in their persecuting enmity to the church, and tried various methods of re-establishing their ancient worship. Several attempts were made of this kind, during the reign of Constantine. Julian, afterwards the apostate, left no method untried, by which he could hope to effect it. He endeavored to hinder the liberal education of the Christians, that their ignorance might expose them to contempt, and render them incapable of defending or propagating their religion; he employed writers, of great learning and ingenuity, to ridicule, revile, and reason against Christianity: he excited Arian princes to persecute their orthodox subjects; and in many other ways he attempted to undermine the cause of Christ. At the same time, the devil, and his agents, prevailed to corrupt the church with manifold heresies, to deform it with various scandals, and to rend it in pieces with fierce contentions; and these evils grew worse and worse, during the period of the first 4 trumpets. (*Notes*, 8.) Thus the way was preparing for the erection of another idolatrous, persecuting power, which will be shortly considered. In the mean time, 'two wings, as of a great eagle, were given to the woman; that she might be ready to fly to her place in the wilderness, when the time came. (*Note*, *Ex.* 19:4.) These are supposed by some writers to refer to the eastern and western empires, the standard of which was an eagle, and the protection afforded by them was the means of preservation to the church, till the prefixed time of her obscurity arrived. In the midst of the preceding convulsions and heresies, the church was, as it were, preparing to flee away to her retreat, from the fury of her opposers: where she was at length to be nourished, 'for a time, and times, and half a time,' or 3½ years, 42 months, or 1260 days; but her flight was not completed, till the establishment of the antichristian power spoken of in the next ch. (*Notes*, 13:1.) Her continuance in the wilderness, therefore, exactly accords to the time during which the 'two witnesses prophesied in sackcloth;' both relate to the same events, and both began and must end together. (*Note*, 11:3—6.) If the beginning of this term of time be fixed, A. D. 606, it will terminate A. D. 1866; and, whatever dates 'the slaying of the witnesses' earlier than that time, removes proportionably backward the commencement of this term. (*Note*, 3—6.) If this event took place in 1546, as Mr. Faber and Mr. Cunningham suppose; then, beyond all controversy, the 1260 years began about A. D. 286; yet Mr. C. afterwards dates them A. D. 533. I do not presume to say, when it began; but consistency is essentially requisite in our interpretations. (*Note*, 11:1,2.)—To prevent the escape of the woman, 'the dragon cast out of his mouth a flood of water,' to carry her away. This is explained by many expositors, with great propriety, of the inundation of the Huns, Goths, Vandals, and other barbarous nations, by which the western empire was overwhelmed: (*Notes*, 8:) for it is known, that the strenuous adherents to paganism encouraged these irruptions, in hopes of subverting Christianity by their means; and no doubt Satan expected to overwhelm the church, when idolaters overturned the empire. But the event proved entirely contrary to all their expectations. 'The earth helped the woman, and swallowed up the flood;' the victorious barbarians united themselves to the vanquished Romans, and formed one people with them, in the several provinces of the empire; they even embraced, in form, at least, the Christian religion. Ungodly men, of various descriptions, from regard to their secular interests, protected the church amidst these convulsions: and the subversion and dismembering of the western empire did not at all help the cause of idolatry; nay, it tended to the propagation of Christianity!—But the dragon-being disappointed in this attempt, was the more enraged, and took another method of making war against true Christians, as 'the seed of the church.' (*Note*, *Gen.* 3:14, 15.) These were but 'a remnant;' for superstitions and heresies of various kinds, and corruptions, had long before this increased exceedingly, which afforded the enemy his opportunity for the assault and success predicted in the next ch.—If the plan of interpretation, before laid down, be well grounded, these verses must, as has been stated, predict the events which made way for the establishment of the persecuting domination of nominal Christians; the flight of the church into the wilderness, and the prophesying of the witnesses in sackcloth, during 1260 days. The particulars of these latter events are predicted in the two following chs; with several things relating to the approach and earnestness of the church's delivery, and the destruction of her grand enemy. In ch. 15: there is a solemn pause, as introductory to the subsequent events; and then the prediction proceeds, in regular order, to the millennium, the day of judgment, and the heavenly world. Thus, from the beginning of this ch. where the prophet resumes his subject, a series of events, succeeding to each other, is predicted; and every part casts light on all that which precedes or follows. But, if the predictions of these vs. be referred to any part of the 1260 years, or to the end of them; this order is, as it appears to me, without necessity, and without proof, disturbed and deranged; and, indeed, an entirely new interpretation of all the subsequent chs., showing that they

relate to future events, seems indispensably necessary to preserve the consistency of the interpretation.—As I am fully persuaded, that the transactions predicted in the next two chs. (the concluding part of ch. 14: alone excepted) are already fulfilled, I must adhere to the outlines of Bp. Newton's interpretation, in preference to later systems. *Scott*.

(13, 14.) The following is a new and reasonable view, in the main, of this important escape of pure principles to a new world of trial, action, and triumph: for the colonization of America may be regarded, as the most important event since the Christian era.

'Satan, in the events of the antecedent vs., found himself and his legions cast out, by the Reformation, from the symbolic heaven of high prosperity in the Romish church, to the earth of open opposition to Christ. This forced upon him a keen conviction, that his remaining time on earth was short: and he therefore sets himself to invent new forms of opposition. And his infernal court soon gave birth to that most detestable order, the Jesuits, who proved powerful supporters of the sinking popery. This code of imposition, was the masterpiece of the kingdom of darkness, till the deeper scheme of illuminism arose, as copied from it with vast improvements, and having infidelity, instead of popery, for its latent object. By the aid of the dragon, he now instigated new and horrid persecution; to which the first v. of our text alludes. He 'persecuted the woman,' the Protestant church [see *Scott*]. Her flight followed, v. 14., 1000 years after her being depressed to a wilderness state, at the rise of popery. The account of the duration of the 2d flight, must be *elliptically* expressed. It is as though the writer had said, thus flew to her new retreat, for the 1260 years, i. e. the remaining part of that well known period: for this flight is near the close of this noted period. And we find language similar, as to the 1260 years, in Dan. 12:6. Rev. 13:5.

'What then was this 2d flight?—Suppose a new continent had been lately discovered, where these Protestants were thus persecuted; a continent [nearly uninhabited, and in all the wildness of nature] far from the face of the old papal, Roman earth; a wilderness 9000 miles in length, embracing all the climes, fertilities of soil, beautiful varieties, and natural conveniences, desirable for the habitation of the greatest, and most happy people on earth. Suppose it to have been put into the minds of the best of the Protestants, under their cruel persecutions, [from temporal power united with spiritual, the beast and the dragon,] to flee over a vast ocean, to form their settlement in this new world, in order to find a peaceful asylum for the rights of conscience, and the rights of man. Suppose them entering on the flight, and, by the signal protection of heaven, safely reaching that far distant continent. Suppose God then protects them, increases them, and causes them to become an [active], great, and renowned nation; [having the freest intercourse with every corner of the globe;] established in the enjoyment of [a church separated from civil power,] the rights of conscience, and civil liberty, [setting examples of reform to nations.] Suppose their descendants soon to multiply into a great nation, to become the [hope of the oppressed] of all other nations, and to bid fair to be [a] great mean of the conversion and bliss of the world. Suppose the church of Christ there to flourish far beyond all other churches on earth, and to form there a seat for the commencement of the special showers of the Spirit of grace in the last days, and to seem to be clearly destined to give a new and correct model to the whole militant church of Christ. Let these things be supposed, and then let the question be asked, What and whither is the second flight of the woman in Rev.? Would you not immediately point to this new region of the church, and say, thither was her flight, and there is her gracious lodgment, assigned by propitious heaven? This is all reality, as the American [branch of Christ's] church can testify.' The above is from the 'Key to the Rev.' in 36 lectures, by Rev. Ethan Smith; which see, for his arguments, since they cannot be quoted here, for want of space. Ed.

It was currently said, by the pious in England, at the time New England was settled, that 'God had sifted three kingdoms to plant his wheat in America.' See this proved in 'Bancroft's History of the U. S.' where will be seen the other principles (of free trade in New York, of civil liberty in Virginia, toleration in Maryland, the peace principle in Pennsylvania, &c.) which colonized N. America. Id.

No other considerable place remains on the globe where a second effort [in the cause of social progress] can [ever] be made under like auspices. Id.

Could so vast an event [of this kind] be overlooked? and, too, when things far less interesting are detailed in Rev.? *Edwards* was confident (see his *Hist. of Redemption*), that the churches in America must have a place among the prophecies. And we have, in one of his volumes, a labor of 7 pages, to find something in the prophecies clearly alluding to it. But he, and all others, strangely failed of fixing their eye upon our text as a striking prediction of it. Rev. 12: which sketches the course of the most interesting events, for the part of the Christian era antecedent to the millennium, is the part of this book where this prediction might be expected. And it is found in the very part of this ch. where it might have been expected;—an event following and occasioned by the persecution which followed the Reformation in the 16th century. *Fix*



16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

t Ge. 3:15.

PRACT. OBS. True Christians, being of heavenly birth, and expecting a heavenly felicity, have 'put on Christ,' are 'clothed in his righteousness,' irradiated by his light, beautified by his image, and taught to put earthly things beneath their feet; and they deem it their honor to profess, adorn, and recommend the doctrine of the holy apostles. All who are thus minded should pray fervently, and labor diligently, in their several places, for the increase, prosperity, and purity of the church;

your eye, then, as I attempted to do, on the places and time when the Puritans were driven to extremities by the persecutions of Jesuits, [a church with temporal power,] and other enemies of the pure, evangelical truth; and see to what region the body of the best of that people, did in fact flee from the face of the papal dragon, [and those who exerted the spiritual, selfish tyranny denoted by dragonism,] in some far distant realm. And this great event, then occurring, does most fully accord with the prediction in our text. "The church of the exiles," says *Mather*, "were driven out into the horrible wilderness, merely for being well-wishers to the Reformation. . . . Our Lord Jesus Christ carried some thousands of reformers into the retirements of the American desert, that He might give a specimen of good things to which He would have his people elsewhere aspire and rise;" [and their European brethren often looked to them for counsel and example in spiritual matters, as the annals of those times fully show, their sufferings for truth having made them clear-sighted in it. "Out of small beginnings," said the pilgrim Bradford, "great things have been produced; and as one candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled hath shone to many, yea, in some sort to our whole nation."] "This is, at last, the spot of the earth, which the Lord of heaven spied out, for the seat of such transactions as require to be noted in history. Here it was, that our Lord intended a resting-place for the reformed church." And that great observer of divine Providence, adds, "193 ships were employed in their passing the perils of the seas, in the accomplishment of this renowned settlement; and but one miscarried." E. SMITH.

Three several attempts of French Catholics were ineffectually made to settle Massachusetts Bay; and at last the natives were cleared off by Providence, to give room for the Plymouth colony. 'Had New England,' remarks *Bancroft*, 'been colonized immediately on the discovery of the American continent, the old English constitutions would have been planted under the powerful influence of the Roman Catholic religion; had the settlement been made under Elizabeth, it would have been before activity of the popular mind in religion had conducted to a corresponding activity of mind in politics. . . . Who will venture to measure the consequences of actions, by the apparent humility or the remoteness of their origin? [The kingdom of God, the great theme of prophecy, cometh not, indeed, with observation.] The mysterious influence of that Power which enchains the destinies of states, overruling the decisions of sovereigns, and the forethought of statesmen, often deduces the greatest events from the least commanding causes. A Genoese adventurer, discovering America, changed the commerce of the world; an obscure German, inventing the printing press, rendered possible the universal diffusion of increased intelligence; an Augustine monk, denouncing indulgences, introduced a schism in religion, and changed the foundations of European politics; a young French refugee, skilled alike in theology and civil law, in the duties of magistrates, and the dialectics of religious controversy, entering the republic of Geneva, and conforming its ecclesiastical discipline to the principles of republican simplicity, established a party of which Englishmen became members, and New England the asylum. The enfranchisement of the mind, from religious despotism, led directly to inquiries into the nature of civil government; and the doctrines of popular liberty, which sheltered their infancy in the wilderness of the newly-discovered continent, within the short space of two centuries, have infused themselves into the life-blood of every rising state, from Labrador to Chili, have erected outposts on the Oregon, and in Liberia, and, making a proselyte of enlightened France, have disturbed all the ancient governments of Europe, by awakening the public mind to resistless action, from the shores of Portugal to the palaces of the czars.' *Bancroft*.

Ed.

'A church in the West, then, was to be planted, to commence the millennium. . . . Great is our debt of gratitude to God! Surely, then, such a people should attempt, by prayers, alms, and all their talents and influence, great things in behalf of the kingdom of the Redeemer. Great things are to be accomplished for the "conversion of the world," [at last acknowledged as the comprehensive aim of the Christian.] And great should be the zeal, piety, faithfulness, and perseverance of the seed of the woman here, to have a most exalted agency in the great work of salvation at this momentous period.' E. SMITH.

(14.) 'This prophecy shows, that the true church of Christ would be invisible, as a community, for a period of 1260 days; and during all that time a harlot, pretending to be the spouse of Jesus Christ, was to propagate her idolatries successfully and extensively throughout the world. The several Protestant churches, having no connexion with each other in government ordinances, like the ancient church, constitute only individual members of the universal church, which, as a body politic, is as invisible now as it was in the tenth century. *Fraser*.' HENRY, *abr*. 'This is the same narration with v. 6. varied only by the difference of mood and tense.'

WOODH.

(15.) *Flood*.] Rev. E. Smith refers this to 'that masterpiece of infidelity, first known to the world under the name of *Illuminism*; the system of Voltaire, Weishaupt, &c. Their dependence was on poisoning

contors; and heresies are as certainly from the devil, as open force and violence.

3. The reasonable help provided for the church in this dangerous juncture, v. 16. Some think, we are to understand the swarms of Goths and Vandals that invaded the Roman empire, and found work for the Arian rulers, who otherwise would have been as furious persecutors as the pagan had been, and had exercised great cruelties already.

4. The devil, being thus defeated in his

designs on the universal church, now turns his rage against particular persons and places; his malice against the woman pushes him on to make war with the remnant of her seed. Some think hereby are meant the Albigenses, who were first by Dioclesian driven up into barren and mountainous places, and afterward cruelly murdered by popish rage and power, for several generations; and for no other reason, than, because they kept the commandments of God, and held the testimony of Jesus Christ.

and ministers should especially abound in these holy employments. For the devil and his instruments are vigilant, united, hold, and unwearyed, in their efforts to destroy the religion of Christ; and too generally the 'kingdoms of the world' have been seduced into their service; surely, then, the servants of God ought not to be timid, heartless, [disunited,] or negligent, in opposing their designs! SCOTT.

the sentiments of mankind, obtaining the management of the means of education, of governments, and of armies, to promote their designs. They managed the French revolution. Its professed object was to render the human race happy, by freeing them from all restraints upon their lusts and passions. But the real object of this horrid scheme was cautiously concealed from their candidates, and men of the lower orders of their system; and it was gradually revealed to candidates for the higher degrees, as it was found they could endure it without alarm. They labored with sly intrigue to fill, with men of their own order, all places of trust and of interest.' The attempt was made, and is now making, in this country, it is thought; and certainly, where opinion has such free scope, it becomes the church here to know these serpent devices, and to pray God to enlighten their minds, and warm their hearts with pure principles and godly affections; directing them how best to meet the wiles of the adversary,—with whom a fearful struggle is yet to be had! Ed.

(16.) *The earth helped the woman.*] 'In the W. division of the Roman empire allotted to Constantine Chlorus, the father of Constantine, the Christians obtained an earlier respite from the severities of this persecution [by the heathen emperors, and those opposed to Constantine's succession] than in the other divisions, in consequence of which they had greatly increased in estimation and influence, at the time when Constantine succeeded to that throne; (Euseb. de Martyr. Pal. c. 3;) and, being joined by those who had taken shelter among the barbarians, they formed a large, united, and resolute body, which it was the interest of the new emperor, now saluted as such by his army, to conciliate and attach; such an edict in their favor followed this transaction; and a standard of the cross was carried before his victorious army. But whether this conduct of Constantine, which delivered the Christians from apparent destruction, was the result of his political interest only, or of a miraculous vision of a cross, followed by a dream, in which Christ exhorted him to this measure; whether it was of earthly or heavenly production, has been a subject of historical debate, from that time to this. (See it ably and candidly discussed by *Mosheim*, and his learned translator.) I will avow myself satisfied on this head, by a perusal of Eusebius's "Life of Constantine." This was written by a Christian bishop, and is professedly a panegyric, at the beginning of which the writer announces, that he will omit the mention of the greater part of his actions, confining his narration to those which lead to piety and virtue. Yet it is very extraordinary, that, in this narration, we very seldom meet with any examples of the emperor's faith in Christ, or of such virtues as are accounted purely Christian, and these only in the latter period of his life. And referring to the edicts, speeches, and letters of the emperor,—a man supposed to have been favored with personal communication from Christ,—we are surprised, at the rare mention of his Savior's name; though he frequently magnifies, with great piety and zeal, the only supreme God, in opposition to the pagan deities. So that his religion appears, at the time of his supposed conversion, to be that of Deism, with little or no addition of Christian belief. But, is this consistent with the profession of one who had formed his religion on a miraculous intercourse with the Redeemer? Or, can we suppose otherwise than that he made this profession to be believed by others, though he had no conviction of it himself? This will account for his deferring the sacrament of baptism to the latest period of his life, when it is not improbable that he may have died a convert to the faith. His own words, addressed to the bishops, will show that, before that period, he had not accounted himself a true member of the church. (b. 4. c. 62.) Here is sufficient proof, that the relief of the Christians, from the overwhelming violence of imperial persecution, was the result rather of earthly politics, than immediate heavenly interference, and that, in this respect, it has fulfilled that part of prophecy now under our consideration. The arch-fiend, thus foiled in his attempts against the church, renews the war against the remnant of the woman's seed, as will be detailed in the ensuing chapters.' WOODH.

(17.) 'As this alludes to things future, time will best unfold them.' SMITH.—Popery is a system in which science and ignorance, refinement and barbarism, wisdom and stupidity, taste and animalism, mistaken zeal and malignant enmity, may sanctoriously pour out their virulence against the Gospel, and cry, Hosanna, while they go out to shed the blood of the saints. And though by revolutions it has been shaken, and compelled by motives of policy to cease a little from blood, not a principle of this system has been abandoned. All the wiles of ages past are put in requisition now, to heal the fatal wounds the beast has received, and to render the system still more powerful and terrific. The heaven is in secret and open operation in this country; and the quick action of the beast to the touch of the spear in Palestine, shows, that he is neither dead nor asleep. And, considering the civilization, wealth, and science, which the system comprehends, it is from popery, that the Gospel is destined to experience the last and most determined resistance.' BICKNER.—*Bloomf.* rejects (17) the word 'Christou,' and marks 'tou' as doubtful. Ed.



CHAP. XIII.

1 A beast riseth out of the sea with seven heads and ten horns, to whom the dragon giveth his power. 11 Another beast cometh up out of the earth: 14 causeth an image to be made of the former beast, 15 and that men should worship it, 16 and receive his mark.

AND I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast <sup>a</sup> rise up out of the sea, having <sup>b</sup> seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the <sup>c</sup> name of blasphemy.

2 And the beast which I saw was <sup>d</sup> like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon <sup>e</sup> gave him his power, and his <sup>f</sup> seat, and great authority.

3 And I saw one of his heads, as it were <sup>g</sup> wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered <sup>h</sup> after the beast.

4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who <sup>i</sup> is able to make war with him?

5 And there was given unto him a mouth <sup>j</sup> speaking great things and

a Da. 7:2, &c. d Da. 7:4-7. h c. 17:8.  
b c. 12:3. e c. 12:9. i c. 17:14.  
c 17:3, 9, 12. f c. 16:10. j Da. 7:8, 11, 25.  
or, names. g slain. 11:36.

NOTES. CHAP. XIII. V. 1. The apostle saw a savage 'beast,' i. e. a tyrannical, idolatrous, and persecuting power, springing up out of the commotions which took place in the world. All interpreters agree, that the Roman empire, in one form or other, was here intended: and papists, continuing such, must contend, though against the most conclusive evidence which can be imagined, that *pagan Rome* was meant. But Rome pagan had existed many hundred years, when the apostle had this vision, and yet he saw 'the rise of this beast.'—It may indeed be said, that Daniel, in vision, saw the rise of the Babylonian empire, though the rise of it preceded his prophecy; (*Notes, Dan. 7:1-3.*) so that, this circumstance alone may not be altogether conclusive in the argument: but the reign of this beast, during 1260 years, from whatever period it be dated, must be conclusive; for the pagan Roman empire, properly speaking, did not continue 300 years, from the time when this prophecy was delivered, and the very last remains of it were subverted in about 400 years. Indeed, the whole time, from the building of Rome, to the time of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, was considerably less than 1100 years; and even to Augustulus, the last emperor, A. D. 476, i. e. from its birth to its death, it lasted at the most only 1228 years; and for the first 5 or 600 years of this term, the Romans had not the smallest concern in anything, which respected the church of God. It is therefore *absolutely certain*, that the Roman power, as professing Christianity, and not that of pagan Rome, is meant. The dragon, before mentioned, had '7 crowns on his heads,' but this 'beast has 10 crowns on his horns.' (*Note, 12:3-6.*) This plainly showed, that a revolution would take place before the time predicted should arrive, and that the dominion would be removed from the imperial city, and divided among 10 kingdoms.—The 7 heads had indeed lost their crowns, but they had preserved, or acquired, a name, or names, 'of blasphemy.' *Dan. 2:40-43. 7:6-8, 19-27. 8:9-12.* Imperial Rome was often called the 'eternal city,' and the 'goddess of the earth,' with other blasphemous titles; and altars, temples, and sacrifices were assigned to her, as a deity; and it will appear in the sequel, how anti-Christian Rome, after the loss of the imperial dignity, obtained or resumed similar names of blasphemy. (*Note, 2 Thes. 2:3, 4.—Out of the sea.*) 11:7. *Notes, 17:7, 8. Dan. 7:23.*

V. 2-4. This beast was the same with Daniel's fourth beast, the same empire, but in one special form; for 'the dragon had now given his power, throne, and great authority,' to the beast. The dragon may here mean, either the devil, or his vicegerent, the idolatrous Roman empire. (*Notes, 12:3-12.*) So that, when another idolatrous persecuting power had succeeded to that of the heathen emperors, then 'the dragon' had transferred his dominion to 'the beast,' or the devil had appointed another vicegerent; and all the world knows, that this accords to the history of the Roman empire, pagan and papal.—The project of re-establishing the old idolatry having failed, a new species was invented; saints and angels succeeded to gods and demi-gods, and persecution was the mean employed for supporting it. (*Note, 12:13-17.*) 'The head of the beast, wounded to death,' represented the entire subversion of the imperial authority in the time of Augustulus, or when Rome became a dukedom to the Exarchate of Ravenna. (8:12.) Five of the heads of the beast, or the dragon, (for in this respect they are the same,) were superseded, before the apostle's time, namely, kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and military tribunes, but, at the time above mentioned, the sixth received a deadly wound. (*Note, 17:9-14.*) It was, however, afterwards healed, by the revival of the imperial name and dignity, in the person of Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, who was proclaimed Augustus, A. D. 800; and this head subsisted ever since in the emperors of Germany, or of 'the holy Roman empire,' till subverted by recent revolutions. For the emperor of Austria, doubtless by constraint, has resigned the title; and the present ruler of France (1813) has *usurped it for a season.* But many things seem now (1815) to be reverting

CHAP. XIII. We have, in this ch., a further discovery and description of the church's enemies; not other enemies than are mentioned before, but described after another manner, that the methods of their enmity may more fully appear. They are represented as two beasts. By the first some understand Rome pagan, and by the second, Rome papal; but others understand Rome papal to be represented by both; by the first in its secular power, by the second in its ecclesiastical.

V. 1-10. We have here an account of the rise, figure, and progress of the first beast; and observe,

1. From what situation the apostle saw this monster; though probably still in a rapture, he seemed to himself to stand on the seashore, in the island Patmos, but whether in the body, or out of the body, he could not tell.

2. Whence this beast came,—out of the sea; yet, by the description, it should be more like a land monster; but the more monstrous everything about it was, the more proper an emblem it would be to set forth the mystery of iniquity and tyranny.

3. The form and shape of this beast; it was for the most part like a leopard, but its feet were like the feet of a bear, and its mouth as the mouth of a lion; it had seven heads, and ten horns, and upon its heads the name of blasphemy; a most horrid, hideous monster! In some part of this description here seems to be an allusion to Daniel's vision of the four beasts, which represented the four monarchies, *Dan. 7: 1-3, &c.* This beast

was a sort of composition of those three, lion, bear, and leopard, with the fierceness, strength, and swiftness of them all; the seven heads and the ten horns seem to design its several powers; the ten crowns, its tributary princes; the word blasphemy on its forehead, proclaims its direct enmity and opposition to the glory of God, by promoting idolatry.

4. The source and spring of his authority,—the dragon; he was set up by the devil, and supported by him to do his work, and promote his interest; he lent him all the assistance he could.

5. A dangerous wound given him, and yet unexpectedly healed, v. 3. Some think, by this wounded head we are to understand the abolishing of pagan idolatry; and by the healing of the wound, the introducing of the popish idolatry, the same in substance with the former, only in a new dress, and which as effectually answers the devil's design as that did.

6. The honor and worship paid to this infernal monster; all the world wondered after the beast, they all admired his power, and policy, and success, and they worshipped the dragon that gave power to the beast, and they worshipped the beast, they paid honor and subjection to the devil and his instruments, and thought there was no power able to withstand them; so great were the darkness, degeneracy, and madness of the world!

7. How he exercised his infernal power, and policy; he had a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies; he blasphemed God, the name of God, the tabernacle of God, and

into their former channel; and it is too early to judge how this revolution may terminate. After Charles had been thus proclaimed emperor, the temporal and ecclesiastical rulers mutually strengthening each other, the Roman power became again formidable, and 'all the world,' or all the earth, was astonished to behold that empire revived, which seemed to be totally extinct; so that a superstitious and idolatrous obedience was rendered to this temporal authority, as engaged to support the ecclesiastical tyranny of the Romish church. Thus they virtually 'worshipped the dragon, who gave his power to the beast;' by submitting, without reserve, to the same idolatrous, persecuting power as before, only in another form; and they 'worshipped the beast' as one, who never had his equal on earth, or in heaven, and who would surely crush all that presumed to oppose him. Thus the old idolatry was fully re-established, with new names; and the worship of idols, or creatures, is in effect worshipping the devil.—Some explain 'the deadly wound,' inflicted on one head of the beast, to mean the revolution which took place, when Christian emperors succeeded the pagan, persecuting emperors, and the healing of this deadly wound, the subsequent establishment of another idolatrous, persecuting power, bearing the Christian name. The two interpretations agree in the grand outline, and the nature of this work precludes the particular consideration of subordinate questions.

(2.) 'We must look out for the beast, to find him by the properties of his nature, and by the effects of his government upon earth. The beast, or brutal nature of the life of man, is what the dragon exalts and empowers with all his might, as his vicegerent, to have dominion over the inhabitants of the earth, for by this nature only he can have access now to us, and power over us. The general properties of this nature, as here personified, are, to be led without reason, by mere sense, to satisfy the sensual imaginations and lusts of the flesh, and to do all by British violence and force, and to destroy all that opposes its selfish will. The government this nature affects is absolute, to have all in subjection to its will: so it rules over others, as men rule over beasts, guiding them by mere sensual and imaginary inducements, which have no relation to the will of God. [Notes, Jude 10. 1 John 5:4.] How many rulers have made these properties of their way to be their glory, is apparent. But the lamb-like nature of the [renewed] life of man, and the way of government suitable thereto, is what Christ, as spiritual, exalts in the societies of men.' Durie.

(3.) His deadly wound was healed. 'The Christian leaders, [when the head of Daniel's 4th beast, become John's persecuting power, was snitten by Constantine's accession,] seizing, too eagerly, the power and riches of the world, and ensnared in the temptation, contributed most effectually to heal the deadly wound of the beast; they restored him again to life and to power; to a power tenfold more dangerous than before, when a corrupt administration of civil tyranny began to be supported, and abetted, by ecclesiastical authority: under which new form he became an object of wonder, and of worship, to the deluded inhabitants of the world.' Woodh. Let those, then, who would mite church and state, be warned from it, for they do the work of the beast. Ed.

(4.) 'Whoever, to attain worldly eminence, relinquishes his trust in God, and deviates from the path of the divine laws, withdraws his allegiance from God, and transfers it to the devil. Mat. 4:8, 9.' Woodh.

V. 5-7. To this monstrous, savage beast 'was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.—It will soon be stated as the author's opinion, that the ecclesiastical power of Rome was the agent, and the pope the speaking image of this beast; (*Notes, 11-17.*) and every one knows what blasphemous and enormous claims of 'His Holiness,' 'Infallibility, Sovereign of kings and kingdoms,' 'Christ's vicegerent on earth,' yea, 'God upon earth,' have been spoken by this mouth of the beast. Power also, or authority, even the secular empire, was given him, to continue, or rather to practise, or to prosper in his undertak-



blasphemies; and power was given unto him to <sup>k</sup>continue 'forty and two months.

6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his <sup>m</sup>tabernacle, and them that <sup>n</sup>dwell in heaven.

7 And it was given unto him to make war <sup>o</sup>with the saints, and to overcome them: and power <sup>p</sup>was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book <sup>q</sup>of life of the Lamb slain from <sup>r</sup>the foundation of the world.

9 If any man have an ear, let him hear.

10 He <sup>s</sup>that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he <sup>t</sup>that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the <sup>u</sup>patience and the faith of the saints.

11 And I beheld another <sup>v</sup>beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

k or, make war.	o Da. 7:21.	r c. 17:8.
l c. 11:2,3. 12:6.	c. 11:7. 12:17.	s Is. 33:1.
m Col. 2:9.	p Lu. 4:6.	t Ge. 9:6.
He. 9:11,24.	q Da. 12:1.	u He. 6:12.
n He. 12:22,23.	c. 2:1:27.	v c. 11:7.

all them that dwell in heaven; and he made war with the saints, and overcame them, and gained a sort of universal empire in the world. His malice was principally levelled

at the God of heaven, and his heavenly attendance; at God, in making images of Him that is invisible, and in worshipping them [and setting self in God's place]; at the tabernacle of God, that is, say some, at the human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ, in which God dwells as in a tabernacle; this is dishonored by their doctrine of transubstantiation, that will not suffer his body to be a true body, and will put it in the power of every priest to prepare a body for Christ; and against them that dwell in heaven, the glorified saints, by putting them into the place of the pagan demons, and praying to them; which they are so far from being pleased with, that they truly judge themselves wronged and dishonored by it. Thus the malice of the devil shows itself against heaven, and the blessed inhabitants of heaven; these are above the reach of his power; all he can do, is, to blaspheme them; but the saints on earth are more exposed to his cruelty, and he sometimes is permitted to triumph over them, and trample upon them.

8. The limitation of the devil's power and success, and that both as to time and persons. (1.) Time; his reign is to continue 42 months, v. 5. suitable to the other prophetic characters of the reign of antichrist. (2.) Persons; it will be only those whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. Christ had a chosen remnant, redeemed by his blood, recorded in his book, sealed by his Spirit; and though the devil and antichrist might overcome their bodily strength, and take away the natural life, they could never conquer their souls, nor prevail with them to forsake their Savior, and revolt to his enemies.

9. We have a demand of attention to what is here discovered of the great sufferings

and troubles of the church; and an assurance given, that when God has accomplished his work on mount Zion, his refining work, then He will turn his hand against the enemies of his people, and they who have killed with the sword, shall themselves fall by the sword, v. 10. and they who led the people of God into captivity, shall themselves be made captives. Here now is that which will be proper exercise for the patience and faith of the saints; patience under the prospect of so great sufferings, and faith in the prospect of so glorious a deliverance.

V. 11—18. Those who think the first beast signifies Rome pagan, by this second understand Rome papal; those that understand the first beast of the secular power of the papacy, take the second to intend its spiritual and ecclesiastical powers, which act under the disguise of religion and charity to the souls of men.

1. All agree it must be some great impostor, who, under a pretence of religion, shall deceive the souls of men: the papists would have it to be Apollonius Tyaneus; but Dr. More fixes it on the ecclesiastical powers of the papacy. The pope shows the horns of a lamb, pretends to be the vicar of Christ on earth, and so to be vested with his power and authority; but his speech betrays him; for he gives forth those false doctrines, and cruel decrees, which show him to belong to the dragon, and not to the Lamb.

2. The power he exercises; all the power of the former beast, v. 12. he promotes the same interest, pursues the same design in substance, which is, to draw men off from worshipping the true God, to worship those who by nature are no gods, and subject the souls and consciences of men to the [selfish] will and authority of men, in opposition to the [love and] will of God; this design is

ings, for 42 months, or 1260 years. Some copies read, 'make war' (7); and no doubt that is included. This term coincides exactly with that during which 'the two witnesses prophesied in sackcloth.' (Notes, 11:3—12.) This beast would, during this period, 'open his mouth in blasphemies against God;' combining with the ecclesiastical power in its usurpations, and in encroaching on the peculiar honors and prerogatives of God Himself. 'He would blaspheme the name of God,' by requiring all men, at the instigation of the ecclesiastical power, to render that worship to creatures, which belongs to God alone, 'and his tabernacle,' or true Christians, by stigmatizing, anathematizing, and murdering them, as heretics; 'and them that dwell in heaven,' by scandalizing angels and departed saints, as if they sacrilegiously sought and were pleased with the idolatrous worship rendered to them, and by ascribing to the saints a variety of ridiculous actions, which they never did. (Note, 18:20.) It was also 'given to the beast to wage war against the saints, and to overcome them;' and no computation can reach the numbers who have been put to death, in different ways, on account of their maintaining the profession of the Gospel, and opposing the corruptions of the church of Rome. 1,000,000 of the poor Waldenses perished in France; 900,000 orthodox Christians were slain, in less than 30 years after the institution of the Jesuits; the duke of Alva boasted of having put 36,000 to death in the Netherlands, by the hands of the common executioner, during the space of a few years; and the Inquisition destroyed by various tortures 150,000 Christians, within 50 years. These are a few specimens, and but a few, of those which history has recorded; but the total amount will never be known, till 'the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.' (Note, Is. 26:20, 21.) These were put to death by the secular arm; by that power, of which the empire was the head, and which subsisted in ten kingdoms; for the persecuting, ecclesiastical power, condescended to employ kings and emperors, as the executioners of its murderous decrees!—Mr. Faber has here very justly pointed out an inaccuracy in Bp. Newton, who seems to confound this beast, or the secular empire, in all the ten kingdoms, with the little horn predicted by Daniel, which accords to the second beast, afterwards mentioned. (Note, 11:12.) Yet, as the secular power executed the persecuting decrees of the ecclesiastical, and gave its power to that beast; the things, stated by Bp. Newton as accomplishments of this prophecy, were evidently such; though he has not, with his usual accuracy, marked the manner in which this took place. (Notes, Dan. 7:7, 8, 23—27. 11:36.)

(5.) 'Whitaker and others fully expose these blasphemies. Doddridge says, they must have very little acquaintance with the blasphemous titles assumed or admitted by the popes, who discern not in them a very remarkable illustration of this circumstance of the prophecy.' HENRY, *abr.*—Bl. marks 'war,' as probably spurious.

V. 8—10. By the means above mentioned, the beast maintained his dominion over the inhabitants of the western world, and, indeed, in many other places; and all worshipped him, by the most abject submission of body, soul, and conscience, except 'the remnant according to the election of grace,' (Note, Rom 11:1—6.) 'whose names were written in the book of life,' belonging to 'the Lamb that had been slain, from the foundation of the world.'—It is not, indeed, quite clear, whether Christ be here said to 'have been slain from the foundation of the world;' i. e. in the purpose of God, and the efficacy of his blood to the salvation of all believers; or whether the names of the persons spoken of were 'written in the book of life, from the foundation of the world,' as the

elect of God: but the language is in a parallel text more explicit. (17:8.—Notes, 20:11—15. 21:22—27. 1 Pet. 1:17—21.)—This prophecy was of that importance, to the encouragement and direction of believers, during 'the reign of the beast,' as well as for the due understanding of the greatest part of this book, that the attention of every one was especially called to it. (Notes, 2:10, 11. Mat. 13:9.—Marg. Ref. f.) For the persecutors would assuredly be destroyed, in the same manner as they had destroyed others: (Notes, 17:—19;) yet here would be the trial of 'the faith and patience of the saints;' to bear up under such complicated dangers and sufferings, and of so long continuance, beyond the example of all former times; and to persevere in faith and obedience through them.—Faith and patience would be more wanted by the saints, and have more to try and exercise them, and for a longer time, than in any other persecution whatever.

(10.) *Kilieth*, &c.] See this exemplified in the sufferings and death of the most noted persecutors, by Dr. Jortin, in his Remarks on Eccl. Hist. vol. 3. pp. 246—322.

V. 11, 12. This second 'beast' did not come up out of the sea, or from winds and tumults, as the first did; (Note, 1.) but 'out of the earth,' silently and gradually, as plants spring up: (Note, 2 Pet. 2:1—3.) and it 'had horns like unto a lamb;' denoting that it was a spiritual dominion, professedly derived from Christ, and exercised in a gentle manner. It was, therefore, the emblem of the Roman hierarchy; and his two horns have, very probably, been supposed to signify the regular and secular clergy of that church: as the other 'beast' was the emblem of the temporal authority exercised in the ten kingdoms of the empire, in support of that spiritual tyranny. The second beast is elsewhere called 'the false prophet' (16:13. 19:20.) which abundantly confirms this interpretation. 'In the language of symbols, horns are kingdoms; consequently the horns of an ecclesiastical beast must be ecclesiastical kingdoms. Now I know not what idea we can annex to an ecclesiastical kingdom, subservient to the head of an ecclesiastical empire, except that of a regularly organized body of ecclesiasties, subject primarily to their own immediate superior, and ultimately to the head of the whole empire.' Faber. Thus the regular clergy, or the different orders of monks, are subject each to the principal of his order, who himself is subject to the church and bishop of Rome: and, in like manner, the secular clergy, or parochial ministers and others connected with them, are subject primarily to their ordinary, or diocesan bishop; he, to the archbishop, primate, metropolitan, or patriarch; but all to the church and bishop of Rome. And, as they are enjoined celibacy, this subjection, and their devotedness to the common cause of that church, are most entire and efficacious.—But though the beast 'had two horns, like a lamb,' yet 'he spake as a dragon,' or with all the tyranny and cruelty of the persecuting Roman emperors. (Note, 12:3—6.) And the high claims of authority, and the pre-emptory commands, menaces, and decisions of the Roman hierarchy, are well known. The second 'beast' is likewise the minister, adviser, or agent, of the first beast, and 'exerciseth all his power before him.' Accordingly, the different orders of monks, as well as the secular clergy of Rome, have always possessed immense influence in the affairs of the kings and nations, belonging to that communion: their principal ministers of state have generally been cardinals, or other ecclesiastics: the magistrate has been engaged to use his sword to enforce their decrees, or execute their sentences against heretics; and bloody wars, without number, have been waged in support of their antichristian domination. In return for these services, they 'cause the earth







16 And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to <sup>b</sup>receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number <sup>c</sup>of his name.

18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his num-

ber is Six hundred threescore and six.

<sup>b</sup> give them. <sup>c</sup> c. 15:2.

etics to dwell in their countries, or to make any bargains, use any trades, or bear any civil offices; which is a very clear interpretation of this prophecy.

4. We have here the *number of the beast*, given in such a manner, as shows the infinite wisdom of God, and will sufficiently exercise all the wisdom and accuracy of men; *The number is the number of a man*, computed after the usual manner among men, and it is 666. Whether this be the number of

the errors and heresies that are contained in popery, or rather, as others, the number of the years from its rise to its fall, is not certain, much less what that period is, which is described by these prophetic numbers; the most admired dissertation on this intricate subject, is that of Dr. Potter, where the curious may find sufficient entertainment: it seems to me to be one of those seasons which God has reserved in his own power; only this we know,—God has written *Mene, Tekel*, on all his enemies; He has numbered their days, and they shall be finished; but his own kingdom shall endure for ever.

PRACT. OBS. The enemies of the church carry on their designs, under a variety of odious and terrifying forms: but if it will answer their purpose better, they appear as gentle 'lambs,' in order that, when they have opportunity, they may speak 'as dragons,' and 'lord it over God's heritage' with cruel tyranny. (*Notes, Mat. 7:15—20. 1 Pet. 5:1—4.*) They have commonly possessed great power; and when any of the heads of this Leviathan seemed to be broken in pieces, they have been again healed; and in another form they, even to this day, return to the combat.—Ungodly priests, and tyrannical rulers, support each

other's usurpations, iniquities, exactions, and oppressions, whilst the one by war, or cruel executions, destroy all opposers; and the other deceive or terrify men by lying miracles, false doctrines, anathemas, and ecclesiastical censures. But all these evils should be considered as illustrative of the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart, (*Note, Jer. 17:9, 10.*) and as endearing to us the love of God in Christ Jesus. The review ought also to make us thankful for our civil and religious liberties, in this highly favored land. SCOTT.

both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed, &c.' It is indeed argued, that the original should be rendered, 'made an image to the beast, or for his use;' and not of him: but instances may be brought from the Greek writers of exactly similar expressions, where the meaning is indisputably according to our tr. of this passage. Indeed, if a *literal* image, or *literal* images, be meant; and yet the beasts are not supposed to be *literal* beasts, or the horns to be *literal* horns; this blending of the *literal* with the *figurative*, in the same prophecy, is not only contrary to the rules of sound interpretation, but a direct violation of that laid down by the respectable writer, who has adopted this interpretation. 'The whole book, excepting those few passages which are avowedly descriptive, must be understood either *literally* throughout, or *figuratively* throughout: otherwise it will be impossible to ascertain the meaning designed to be conveyed.' *Faber*. On the other hand, if the pope be really this image, the language is both natural, and extremely expressive; and it has been fully verified in numerous instances, by papal interdicts, excommunications, and similar measures. The objections of late brought against this interpretation, have led me to perceive, that, if preceding expositors could have foreseen, what their successors would have objected to their statement, they would have expressed themselves more cautiously and accurately; but they have produced no hesitation as to the meaning of the emblem.—It is true, that the pope may be considered as, in some sense, the head also of the two-horned beast: yet, that beast continues to exist, when there is no pope; and the cardinals, as representing the whole ecclesiastical power, are, during that vacancy, the head of the beast; and in that character they create the pope, to be the image both of the secular and the ecclesiastical idolatrous persecuting power, the representative of the whole. He does not derive his dominion from any hereditary right, or from popular election, or from regal appointment; but he is the *creature* of the Romish clergy: yet, being *created* by them, he is the object of their worship, and exercises, or at least claims a right to exercise, absolute authority over both them and the kings of the earth. Indeed, this claim was long generally admitted by the ten horns of the beast, though in some instances it was disputed. (*Notes, 17:9—13.*) This seems sufficient for the purpose, and, amidst so many emblems, it could hardly be supposed, that no shadow of coincidence should appear.—It may be observed, that when the first, or secular beast is represented, as making war with the saints, and overcoming them; it is nowhere said, that the second, or ecclesiastical beast, should do more than cause them to be killed. The little horn has always worn out the saints, by delivering them over to the secular arm, not by slaying them himself. The inquisitors, with a disgusting affectation of lamb-like meekness, are wont to beseech the civil magistrates to show mercy to those unfortunate victims, whom they themselves have given up to be consigned to the flames.' *Faber*. (*Note, 5—7.*)—There are various other interpretations, by different writers, of several things in these chs., chiefly explaining them of recent events in France; but, not judging any of them either well grounded, or even supported by probable arguments, I did not think it needful to introduce them in this work. The books, written expressly on the subject, must be referred to: and, in general, the writers succeed better in attempting to refute each other's interpretation, than in establishing their own; where they materially differ from the expositors, who wrote before these late transactions.—Mr. Cumingham, if I rightly understand him, supposes the corrupt church itself to be the *image*; as formed by the joint consent of the clergy and laity: but of *what* is the corrupt church the image? It cannot be the image of the beast, or the secular idolatrous persecuting power, (*Notes, 1—7.*) as this image is expressly said to be (11); nor, as it appears to me, of anything, except itself, or of those who made it, who are nearly or quite the same persons. 'It was a common fashion in St. John's time, for every heathen god to have a particular society or fraternity belonging to him: and the way of admitting any into these fraternities was: 1. By giving him some hieroglyphic mark in the head, or forehead, [*cuts, Deut. 32:5. Ps. 18:5.*] which was accounted sacred to that particular god; as that of an ivy-leaf to . . . the fraternity of Bacchus: 2. By sealing themselves with the name of that god: and, 3. with that *number* which the Greek letters of their name did make up.' *Grotius*, in *Cressener*. I suppose, *the name of their idols*. Slaves also were generally branded with the name of their owners. SCOTT. Animals sacred to the Hindoo god Siva, are marked with his trident, or branded with the Tamul letter S; some have the weapons of their gods. Cows that belong to a Pandaram, have a figure like that annexed. The heathens print marks on their bodies (by puncturing the skin), so as to represent birds, trees, and the *gods* they worship.

Ed.

(14.) 'The image of the beast, which is to be worshipped, seems to be that absolute greatness which the second beast attributes to itself, and exercises over the subjects of the first beast in his presence, as v. 12.

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He sets up a way of government, as absolute as that of the first beast, who is, in conformity thereto, to establish it; and has power, by the first beast's permission, to give life to the image of his absoluteness, and to give the exercising of his power into the hands of the second beast, to make his power give sentence of death, and to cause sentence to be executed against all that would not acknowledge his authority. *Durie*. HENRY, *abr.* 'The image of the beast, we apprehend to be a counterpart of that system of idolatry and intolerance which prevailed in ancient Rome. To this system, popery has given life, and caused it to speak so loud, that all were compelled to obey its power. *Hutcheson*. Any tyrannous spirit of ecclesiastical dominion, conforms to the description; let us be warned from thus uniting beast and dragon, a selfish spiritual, and a jesuitical temporal power. Ed.

(14, 15.) 'To make an image to the beast, whose deadly wound was healed, would be, to give visibility and authority to his worship, or to require implicit obedience to his commands. To give life unto an image is, to convert it into a living agent; and so this image is said to speak and to act, and with such effect, as to cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be destroyed. To worship the image of the beast, implies deference and subjection to those things which stamp the character of the picture, and render it the image of the beast.'

A. FULLER.

(15.) *Worship*.] 'What less was the humiliating practice of princes and nobles leading the horses on which these ecclesiastical tyrants were mounted, or the yet more degrading custom of kissing the caliph's sleeve (daily, by all the nobles), or the feet of the Roman pontiff?'

WOMER.

(17.) *Forbes* says, 'All that follow antichrist have his name, but in diverse manner. Some have the character thereof, that is, the name, imprinted, and are his proper goods, as having his brand and mark. Some have his name, yet so as they have not his mark, who have not learned the deepness of Satan, neither are antichrist's sworn bondmen. And some have but the number of his name,—are not his sworn, marked slaves, but are counted to be so, and are numbered amongst his. He desires to have all men in one of these sorts, and within these who have the number of his name, both the other sorts are included.' HENRY, *abr.* Or.] This word *Ed.* rejects.

V. 12. Mention having been made of 'the number of the beast,' or that 'of his name,' the apostle next proposed to men's consideration the number itself; introducing it by saying, 'Here is wisdom,' or intimating, that the discovery of the *name of the beast from the number*, would be a proof of a man's discernment. 'Let him,' therefore, 'that hath understanding, count the number of the beast;' who then shall censure or ridicule those who attempt to do it? (*Note, 1:3.*) For it was 'the number of a man,' either such a number as men use, or a number implying in it the name, title, or distinguishing characteristic 'of a man.' Now the Greek word *Lateinos* signifies the *Latin man*; or the *man of Latium*, from which city the Romans derived their original and their language; and this word, according to the genuine orthography, contains, in numerical letters, exactly the 'number 666.' The church of Rome is properly the *Latin* church, and they use the Latin language in everything. The beast, therefore, or the authority exercised through the ten kingdoms in support of that church, of which the pope is the living image, may well be called LATEINOS. But, though the apostle wrote in Greek, he yet used a few Hebrew names in this book; so we may perhaps think he alluded to a name in that language; and it is most astonishing, that the word *Romiith* in Hebrew, which answers to *Lateinos*, signifying *Roman*, contains in numerical letters exactly 666. Nor can any other two words be produced from two different languages, which so nearly agree together in meaning, and exactly stand for the same number in numerical letters; the coincidence is really most surprising. As John could only refer to the Greek or the Hebrew language in this matter; and as the number of the *name of the Latin man*, or the *Roman*, in both languages is exactly the number of the beast; I see no occasion to doubt, either about the beast or his number, especially as Irenaeus, in the second century, put the same construction on it.—*Romiith* is indeed feminine; but it may signify either the *Roman church*, or *kingdom*, the Heb. words for both which are feminine. The word *Latinus*, or *Lateinos*, is, however, in all respects by far the most satisfactory, notwithstanding this coincidence.—'No name, though it may possibly comprehend the number 666, can be the name of the beast, unless it equally answers in every other particular to the prophetic description of that name.—*Lateinos* is at once the name of a man, (the ancient king of Latium, whence Rome had its origin,) the title of an empire, and the distinguishing appellation of every individual in that empire; and when the sum of its numerical letters is taken in the Greek language, . . . it amounts to 666. On these grounds, then, I do not hesitate to assert, that *Latinus*, and nothing but *Latinus*, is the name of the beast; for in no other word, descriptive of the re-



## CHAP. XIV.

<sup>1</sup> The Lamb standing on mount Zion with his company. <sup>6</sup> An angel preacheth the Gospel. <sup>8</sup> The fall of Babylon. <sup>15</sup> The harvest of the world, and putting in of the sickle. <sup>20</sup> The vintage and wine-press of the wrath of God.

AND I looked, and, lo, a Lamb <sup>a</sup> stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty <sup>b</sup> and four thousand, having his Father's name <sup>c</sup> written in their foreheads.

<sup>2</sup> And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice <sup>d</sup> of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers <sup>e</sup> harping with their harps:

<sup>3</sup> And they sung as it were a <sup>f</sup> new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the <sup>g</sup> hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

<sup>4</sup> These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are <sup>h</sup> virgins. These are they which follow <sup>i</sup> the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were <sup>j</sup> redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits <sup>k</sup> unto God and to the Lamb.

<sup>5</sup> And in their mouth was found no <sup>l</sup> guile: for they are without <sup>m</sup> fault before the throne of God.

<sup>6</sup> And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the

<sup>n</sup> everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every <sup>o</sup> nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

a c. 5:12. g ver. 1. i Ps. 32:2.  
b c. 7:4. h Ch. 1:3. 6:8. m Ep. 5:27.  
c c. 3:12. 2 Co. 11:2. Jude 24.  
d c. 19:6. i Jn. 10:27. n 2 Sa. 23:5.  
e c. 5:8,9. j bought. 1 Co. 6:20. Is. 40:3.  
f c. 15:3. k Ja. 1:13. o Ep. 3:9.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—5. 1. Here we have one of the most pleasing sights that can be viewed in this world,—the Lord Jesus Christ at the head of his faithful adherents and attendants.

Mount Zion is the gospel-church. Christ is with his church, in the midst of her, therefore she is not consumed. Here Christ appears as *the true paschal Lamb*, to show that his mediatorial government is the fruit of his sufferings, and the cause of his people's safety and fidelity.

2. His people appear very honorably: (1.) In numbers, they are many, even all who were saved. (2.) Their distinguishing badge; *the name of God written in their foreheads*: they made a bold and open profession of their faith in God and Christ; and this being followed by suitable actings, they are known and approved. (3.) Their congratulations and songs of praise, which were peculiar to the *redeemed*, v. 3. their praises were loud as *the thunder*, or as *the voice of many waters*; melodious, as of *harpers*; heavenly, *before the throne of God*; and a secret to others; *none could learn it*. (4.) Their character and description: 'They are

described, [1.] By their chastity and purity; *they had not defiled themselves*, either with corporal or spiritual adultery; they had kept themselves clean from the abominations of the antichristian generation. [2.] By their loyalty and steadfast adherence to Christ; *they follow the Lamb whithersoever He goes*. [3.] By their former designation to this honor, v. 4. Here is plain evidence of a special redemption; *redeeming mercy distinguished them from others*; *they were his choice ones*, eminent in every grace, and the earnest of many more who should be *followers of them, as they were of Christ*. [4.] By their universal integrity and conscientiousness, v. 5. they were *freely pardoned in Christ*; this is the happy remnant who attend on the Lord Jesus as their Head and Lord; He is glorified in them, and they in Him.

V. 6—12. In this part of the ch. we have three angels or messengers sent from heaven, to give notice of the fall of Babylon, and of those things that were antecedent and consequent to that great event.

1. The first angel was sent on an errand antecedent to it, and that was, *to preach the everlasting Gospel*, v. 6, 7. Observe, *The Gospel is everlasting*; is so in its nature, and shall be so in its consequences. It is a work fit for an angel, *to preach this everlasting Gospel*; such is the dignity and difficulty of that work! Yet we have this treasure in earthen vessels. *The everlasting Gospel* is of great concern to all the world, *every nation, kindred, tongue, and people*. It is the great mean by which men are brought to *fear God, and to give glory to Him*. When

vived temporal beast, or the papal Roman empire, can such a fatal concurrence of circumstances be found? *Faber*.—The mark of the beast is the sign of the cross, used in endless superstitions, and even idolatries. S.

(18.) 'From the definition of antichrist, 1 John 4:3, it appears, that the antichrist cannot be a man, or a single person, but a moral body; which, in the time of the apostles, had begun to constitute itself by the side of, and along with the mystical body of Christ; and which, from that time, began to exist in the world, of which the apostle said, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work;" which has existed till our times; which exists at present, well grown and robust, and which, in the end, will let itself be seen in the world, perfect and entire in all its parts, when the mystery of iniquity is entirely accomplished.—*Ben Ezra*.'—Although himself a Romanist and a Jesuit, *Ben Ezra* considers that the beast with two horns is the Romish priesthood.' HENRY, *abr.*—'The common method of interpretation has been that of ascertaining names, which contain the numeral letters of the Greek alphabet, amounting to the number 666. But this method of calculation has fallen into discredit, by the fact, resulting from experience, that there is no end to the multitude of names, which may be thus composed. "Scarcely has a single controversy started up to which this number may not be applied," and it may reasonably be doubted, whether the true mode of calculation has yet been discovered. No conjecture is such as to flash conviction on the mind like truth.' WOODH.

NOTES. CHAP. XIV. V. 1—5. The apostle, having been shown the foregoing particulars concerning papal Rome, the antichristian secular and ecclesiastical domination of the Beast, and its image, with all idolatry and tyranny connected with them; had next a vision of the true 'church in the wilderness,' during the same period: which had special reference to the darkest times, previous to the dawning of the Reformation. The 144,000 seems a mystical number, the 12 patriarchs multiplied by the 12 apostles, and both multiplied by a thousand; as if the 144 were leaders of thousands; so that there was a considerable number of true Israelites, and of those who held the apostle's doctrine, and marched under their banner, in the most degenerate times; being the successors of that remnant, which was found, in the first three centuries, during the persecutions of the heathen emperors. (7:9—17. *Rom.* 11:1—6.) As the worshippers of the beast 'were marked with his name and number;' (*Notē*, 13:13—17.) so these disciples of Christ had 'the name of his Father' written in legible characters on their foreheads.—It is evident from history, that there were such persons, in the darkest times, who ventured and laid down their lives for the truth and worship of the Gospel. Indeed, these were the same as the two witnesses during the times in which they lived, only represented under another emblem. (*Notes*, 11:1—14.)—The new song was sung in the presence of the emblematical representatives of the church and its ministers, 4:6—8. and none could learn it, but the redeemed. (*Note*, 2:17.) For, as it related immediately to redemption; the proud, the impenitent, the unbelieving, and the carnal, could not understand the nature or the glory of this subject: nor could angels join in it, not being 'redeemed to God by the blood of the Lamb;' though they unite in worshipping Him, as worthy to receive all honor and blessing. 5:11—14.—The antichristian church at an early period discouraged and reviled marriage, enjoined celibacy on priests, immured numbers of both sexes in convents, extolled virginity as almost essential to piety and purity, and ranked its virgins with the saints and martyrs of the primitive times. (*Note*, 1 *Tim.* 4:1—5.) But these unnatural restrictions, and attempts to introduce a kind of life on earth, which, in general, only suits the inhabitants of heaven, made way, not only for exorbitant, spiritual pride, but also for the most unnatural and detestable licentiousness, and for crimes too horrid to be specified: and at the same time, the church was polluted with the most manifest and abominable idolatry, or spiritual fornication. (*Notes*, 17:1—6.) But,

says the apostle by the Spirit of prophecy, these true Christians 'are they who are not defiled with women.' 'Marriage being honorable in all, and the bed undefiled,' the clause may be understood in the literal sense, and also figuratively: 'For,' says he, 'they are virgins,' even such as the Scripture commends, who are espoused to Christ, and unfeignedly love Him, who are faithful and obedient to Him; and, deeming themselves his alone and wholly, wait for the completion of their sacred union with Him; and in the mean time prefer suffering and death to the spiritual fornication and adultery to which all others are given up. (*Notes*, 19:1—6. *Cant.* 1:3. 2 *Cor.* 11:1—6.) They, therefore, 'followed Him, whithersoever he went,' through persecutions and tribulations, into obscurity, or into prisons, with self-denial, obedient faith, and patient hope; 'taking up their cross,' and copying his example of meekness, purity, and love. (*Notes*, *John* 10:26—31. 12:23—26.) These were the persons, 'who had been redeemed from among men,' being actually interested in the atonement of Christ; and they were consecrated to God 'as first-fruits,' (for whose sake He spared others,) and to the Lamb, 'as purified unto Him, to be his peculiar people, zealous of good works.' (*Notes*, *Tit.* 2:14.) They were not hypocrites, but upright in their repentance, faith, and love. 'By these 144,000, I understand peculiarly *the depressed church in the wilderness*, previous to the time of the Reformation; for history sufficiently demonstrates, that there have been, in every age, some faithful worshippers, who consented not to the general apostasy, but who prophesied, although in sackcloth, against its abominations.' *Faber*.—They who object to this, saying, that the church was then in a depressed state, but here exulting and triumphing with joyful praises, seem to forget the Christian's motto, 'sorrowful, but always rejoicing.' 'We glory in tribulations also,' &c. (*Notes*, *Is.* 24:13—15. *Rom.* 5:3—5. 8:32—39.)—Zion [shone,] as indeed a conspicuous place in the church; but not like the celebrated cities of Greece and Rome. It is very obscure, and little noticed in profane history. SCOTT.

(3.) *Bl.* rejects 'as it were.'

(5.) *Bl.* rejects 'before the throne of God.'

V. 6, 7. It is generally admitted, by the best interpreters, that the three angels, introduced in these and the following vs. were emblematical heralds of the progressive reformation from popery. Some explain the proclamation of the 1st angel, of the 9th, 10th, or 11th centuries; and no doubt there were, even then, princes, and bishops, and councils, who struggled against the worship of images, and the other grosser abominations of the church of Rome. Yet they generally concurred in supporting the dominion of the beast; though they were earnest that it should be exercised in a different manner as to some particulars. Such, however, as were real Christians, and entered a proper protest against the prevailing corruptions of the church, whether in the imperial palace, or in the conclave, (if that was ever done,) may properly be ranked in the number mentioned in the preceding vs.; for these evidently relate to a later and more public and general protestation. Others, however, seem to fix the time of their accomplishment too late; and so leave a large vacant space in the series of predicted events; and then crowd too many into the remaining periods. We may, therefore, I apprehend, interpret this 'first angel,' messenger, or herald, to be an emblem of those who first publicly erected the standard of reformation, and who contended for 'the everlasting Gospel' of Christ, in opposition to all the innovations and usurpations of the beast, his image, and the false prophet. This honor seems to belong to the Waldenses and Albigenses, who had the true Gospel among them; avowed its everlasting obligation and excellency; opposed it to the authority of popes, councils, and persecuting princes; declared the pope to be antichrist; and propagated their doctrines with zeal and success, and multiplied into a vast number of churches. And, after immense slaughter had been made of them by persecutions and bloody wars, the residue still retained their tenets, and,



7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

8 And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

p c. 154.

q Is. 21:9. Je. 51:7, 8. c. 18:2,3.

idolatry creeps into the churches of God, it is by the preaching of the Gospel, attended by the power of the Holy Spirit, that men are turned from idols to serve the living God, as the Creator of the heaven and the earth, and

the sea, and the fountains of waters, v. 7. To worship any God beside Him who created the world, is idolatry.

2. The second angel follows the other, and proclaims the actual fall of Babylon. The preaching of the everlasting Gospel had shaken the foundations of antichristianism in the world, and hastened its downfall. By Babylon is generally understood Rome, which was before called Sodom and Egypt, for wickedness and cruelty; and is now first called Babylon, for her pride and idolatry. Her crimes are recited as the just cause of her destruction.

3. A third angel follows the other two, and gives warning to all of that divine vengeance which would overtake all those that obstinately adhered to the antichristian interest, after God had thus proclaimed its downfall, v. 9, 10. If after this, any should

persist in their idolatry, professing subjection to the beast, and promoting his cause, they must expect to drink deep of the wine of the wrath of God; they shall be for ever miserable in soul and body; Jesus Christ shall inflict this punishment on them, and the holy angels shall behold it, and approve of it. Idolatry, both pagan and papist, is a damning sin in its own nature, and will prove fatal to those who persist in it, after fair warning given by the word of Providence; they who refuse to come out of Babylon, when thus called, and resolve to partake of her sins, must receive of her plagues; and the guilt and ruin of such incorrigible idolaters will serve to set forth the excellency of the patience and obedience of the saints; these graces shall be rewarded with salvation and glory; when the treachery and rebellion of others shall be punished with ev-

being dispersed into other countries, they rapidly carried 'the everlasting Gospel' with them; as an angel, a messenger of peace to men, flying through the midst of heaven; so that the Lollards in England, and the Bohemians in Bohemia, and the adjacent regions, and many others in different places, seem to have principally learned the Gospel from them; nay, the Reformation itself appears to have sprung from the seed which they sowed, and watered with rivers of their blood. So exact was the prophecy, that they had 'the everlasting Gospel to preach to the inhabitants of the earth!' (Note, 11:3-6.) They also loudly called on men to fear and glorify God, as the hour of his judgment was at hand; and to worship the Creator of all things, as revealed in the Gospel, by refusing to join the worship of idols, and that of the beast and his image. (Notes, 19:9, 10. Acts 14:11-18. 17:22-29.)—Some respectable commentators explain these vs. of Luther, almost exclusively; and suppose, that many things, in his situation, character, and testimony, remarkably answered to it. I cannot, however, think, that the previous public testimonies against the beast are wholly passed over, or that an individual, however illustrious, occupies so conspicuous a station in this concise prophecy. But I am much farther from being convinced, that more modern events, or the present zeal for missions, is meant; because the testimony of the angel, or messenger, was evidently borne against popery, not heathen idolatry; and the worship of saints and angels, and of images of God, is as real idolatry, as that of the pagans.—It is objected, that the reformers did not 'preach to every nation, kindred, and tongue;' and it may be answered, that neither did the apostles, in the strict, literal import of the words; (Col. 1:6, 23.) nor have any others to this day. But it was the doctrine and desire of the reformers, that the Gospel should be preached throughout the earth.—The angel 'had the everlasting Gospel.' This is, by Mr. Cuninghame, supposed to be the book containing the Gospel, and he seems principally to explain it of the British and Foreign Bible Society.—Far be it from me to withhold or deduct from the honor justly due to that Society; when, by the astonishing success of atheists and infidels, 'the enemy came in like a flood,' 'the Spirit of God has' surprisingly 'lifted up a standard against him;' and the Bible Society has been honored, in this, as in no small degree THE STANDARD-BEARER. But we must not interpret prophecy by our partialities, or even most legitimate affectations; and the order of events, in the whole arrangement of the prophecy, requires a far different interpretation.

SCOTT.

(6.) 'What an interesting scene is opening upon earth! It is more than 30 years (1826) since Christians in Great Britain awoke, and that little island now bestows more than a million of dollars upon strangers. It is 14 years since New England broke her slumbers, and now the mass of her (Christian) population, seems drenched in the missionary spirit. I saw the day cover the plains of Europe. I saw the westward traveling light, spread itself over the eastern states. Nine years ago, I saw the rays of morning tip the Presbyterian horizon. I saw the dawn blush deeper and deeper. Already the influence of heaven has dropped upon the wilderness, and changed the war-whoop to notes of praise. Many prophets and kings desired to see this day. One spirit has seized the Christian world, to send the Gospel to all the nations. Missionary and Bible Societies have risen so rapidly, that, in contemplating them, we are "like them that dream." They have accomplished wonders. On the burning sands of Africa, where Christian feet never trod, there is the holy band of missionaries, struggling amidst dangers and death, to lead the sable sons of Ethiopia to stretch out their hands to God. On the plains of Hindostan, a consecrated host are translating the SS. into more than 30 different languages. On the borders of China, they have produced a version, which will give the oracles of God to one quarter of the population of the globe. In the southern islands, a nation is born in a day. From the hill of Zion,—from the top of Calvary,—they are freighted every caravan of pilgrims with Bibles, for all the countries of the east. Certainly the angel has begun his flight.'

GRIFFIN.

The circumstances attending the production of the specimen of Japanese writing (from the farthest verge of the earth), given on the colored page, opposite, deserve commemoration, and will be regarded as appropriate to the missionary text, we are now considering. When about two days' sail from Jeddo, Dr. Parker, a beloved Missionary, who recently accompanied Mr. Gutzlaff and his seven Japanese pupils on their benevolent, but perilous and abortive errand to that capital, addressed a letter to the Ed. He stated that, having mentioned to Mr. G. the fact, that a female association existed in Boston, formed for the purpose of seeking the conversion of Japan to Christ, he proposed giving the information to their Japanese fellow-passengers. It was done, and produced the annexed letter, with their signatures. The letter is written in the Herakana alphabet. The signatures have, besides, the explanation in the Katkana. As the translation given is perfectly literal, the meaning is also given in ordinary English. No friend of God, and of man, can read this Macedonian call without emotion, nor, it is hoped, without some renewed excitement and exertion in behalf of evangelical missions. God grant, that its design and object be speedily answered, in the opening of Japan to the Gospel of Christ!

[712]

Bostonno	Tenjoyodomo	atszmate	wagakooninomonono	tameni
Boston's	ladies	assemble	our countrymen	for
tanonde	ogamoo	nawo	kiite	shiteoroo
beseechingly	pray	it	hear	understand
wagakooninomonono	shakae	no	monowoo	skooon
our countrymen	world	's	inhabitants	Redeemer's
Christosno	ohositskeno	tayori	yorokobi	mada
Christ's	doctrines	tidings	glad	not yet
Tenjoyo	kiyamnte	idzsdemo	ogamao	Ten
ladies	ought	always	pray	heaven's
wagakooninomonono	tenkara	kukayaku	kiyo	monno
our countrymen	from	heaven	enlighten	holy
osoiite	taminshinwo	skoonowoo	koodasareto	koon.
teaching	soul	redemption	grant	(this)

is (our) request. ' [We] hear [and] understand, [that] the ladies of Boston earnestly pray for our countrymen. [We are] very glad [of it]. Our countrymen do not yet know the doctrines of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the world's Redeemer; therefore the ladies ought always to pray the Son of the Lord of heaven [and] earth, to enlighten our countrymen from heaven [in] the sacred Book, teaching the redemption [of the] soul. [That He may] grant [this] is [our] request.'

Mr. Gutzlaff, as is well known, had translated into Japanese, by the aid of these men, and caused to be printed, the Gospel of John; a copy of which is in the hands of the Ed.

(6, 7.) See E. Smith's Key, &c. pp. 247—254. 'The progress of the Reformation seems here prefigured.' Woodh.—'Especially that most desirable part yet to come;' when the missionary spirit, which has so long slumbered among protestants, shall be aroused in every church, and every individual. And, thanks be to God! it is now waking up,—the angel is now on the wings of every wind, and many a ship is bearing angels, messengers, or missionaries, to 'kindreds, and tongues, and peoples;' and into many a language is the Gospel translated, and many a press is scattering its precious seed. 'May every ship that leaves the crowded ports of Christendom, bear these messengers, and this message, to the two thirds of our race yet in heathen darkness! See Rev. Dr. Cogswell's 'Harbinger of the Millennium.'

V. 9. If we explain the first angel, as the herald of the dawning of the Reformation, in the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries, we may properly explain this of the Bohemians and others in the 15th, who were their genuine offspring and successors. Some of these persons, with still greater confidence and vehemence, than the Albigenses, declared Rome to be mystical Babylon, and the pope and church there to be antichrist; and they endured severe persecutions for these protestations, and for their profession of the Gospel. John Huss and Jerom of Prague, especially, were perfidiously and cruelly burned by the council of Constance; which council was, in fact, the united power of the whole antichristian host. These heralds announced the fall of mystical Babylon, as the ancient prophets had done that of literal Babylon, long before the event. (Notes, Is. 21:6—9. Jer. 50:2, 3. 51:7—9.) Neither was this doom more certain, than it would be just; as she had corrupted and intoxicated the nations, not only with her love-potions, as a seducing harlot, but by the wine of the wrath of her fornications, terrifying men into idolatry by fierce persecutions. (Notes, 17:1—6. Jer. 25:15—26. 51:7.) As Rome was mentioned under the name and emblem of a Gentile city, so her idolatry was called fornication rather than adultery; as it generally is in Scripture, when committed by the professed worshippers of God. (17:2.)—Bp. Newton explains this v. of the Waldenses, and the foregoing vs. of more ancient events; on the contrary, Mr. Faber interprets those vs. of Luther, and this of Calvin and his associates. This, however, seems to me, to render individuals far too prominent in so concise a prophecy. Nor should I have mentioned the names of John Huss and Jerom of Prague, except as they were the mouth, or voice, of a very large body of men, delivering its testimony in the most public manner conceivable, and sealing it by martyrdom.—Still, I observe, that the grand outlines are clear: and commentators in general are agreed about them; so that the subordinate differences of opinion do not affect the main argument.—Some, indeed, would explain this v. of future times, because Babylon is not yet totally fallen; but this deranges the whole plan of interpretation, adopted by the ablest expositors, which is the only clue that can lead us through its mazes; and this would introduce perplexity and uncertainty. Nothing is more common, in prophecies, than for future events, as absolutely determined, to be spoken of in the present or past time; and the same words were spoken of literal Babylon, long before her destruction. (Marg. Ref. h.)—The clue that has principally conducted me through both parts of the Revelation, is following the series of history, and the successive order of events. After the description of the two beasts, secular and ecclesiastical, whose power was established, according to my hypothesis, in the 8th century, but, according to most commentators, much sooner; there would be a very large chasm, without the prediction of any memorable event, if these prophecies relate to the time immediately preceding the fall of antichrist, and the millennium.—What a long interval would there be without



Boston Boston's Tenjyodomo ladies assemblé assembly

wagakoonimomono our countrymen tamemi for tanohé beechingly

oramoo now pray kiite hear shiteoro understand hanahada very

yotokobe glad wagakoonimomono our countrymen shaké world

nomonowo 's inhabitants akou-stono Redeemer's Jesus Jesus

Christiano Christ's onastakeno doctrines tayori things

yorokobi glad imada not yet alliranu know

15 sore-yuye therefore Tenjyo ladies kiyamate ougchi izsitemo always oemao pray

10 Ten Heavens's juno earth's akasuno Lord's musuko son watakoonimomono our countryman

tenkara from heaven kativaku enlighten kiyô holy

18 monno matter's iunwa book osotete teaching tamashinwo soul

skounonowo redemption kouuastete grant (in's) kouu is (our) request

Rockichi, or Lucky Rock, aged 33 years, is from Owari, town of Mia; has one son.

Kirikichi, or Lasting Happiness, aged 20, is from principality of Owari, town of Siagori.

Otokichi, or Happy Sound, is 19 years old, from the principality of Owari, town of Siagori.

Shiozan, or Heart, the captain of the second junk, is 23 years old; has a son and daughter; from the principality of Higo town of Kawashiri.

Kumataru, or Bear, is aged 28, from the principality of Hisen, town of Simabara.

Gisacharu, or Fortunate, is aged 25, from the principality of Higo, town of Takashe.

Kikimatz, or Strong Fir, is 16 years old, from the principality of Hisen, town of Simabara.







9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth:

Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.

14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap: for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

erlasting destruction, then it will be said, to the honor of the faithful, (v. 12.) Here is the patience of the saints; you have before seen their patience exercised, now you see it rewarded.

V. 13—20. Here we have the vision of the harvest and vintage, introduced with a solemn preface.

1. What it principally intended, is, to show the blessedness of all the faithful saints

and servants of God, both in death and after death; *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth*, &c. Here observe, The description of those that are, and shall be, blessed; such as die in the Lord, either die in the cause of Christ, or rather die in a state of vital union with Christ, such as are found in Christ when death comes. The demonstration of this blessedness is,—they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them. They are blessed in their rest, they rest from all sin, temptation, sorrow, and persecution. They are blessed in their recompense, their works do not go before them, as their title, or purchase, but they follow them, as their evidence of having lived and died in the Lord; and the memory of them will be pleasant. They are happy in the time of their dying; they have lived to see the cause of God reviving, the peace of the church returning, and the wrath of God falling on their idolatrous, cruel enemies; such times are good times to die in; they have Simeon's desire. And all this is ratified and confirmed by the testimony of the Spirit witnessing with their spirits, and with the written Word.

II. The vision itself,—a harvest and a vintage.

1. A harvest, v. 14, 15, an emblem that sometimes signifies the cutting down of the wicked, when ripe for ruin, by the judg-

any prophecy; and how thick would the events follow afterwards! For all the particulars . . . to the end of ch. 19: must be fulfilled before the millennium.' Bp. Newton.—It is also worthy of notice, that about the era above mentioned, the opinion began to be publicly avowed, by several persons, that the church, court, and city of Rome, were Babylon, and so inevitably doomed to destruction.

(8.) *BL* marks 'the city,' and 'of the wrath,' as doubtful. Ep.

V. 9—11. This third angel, and his proclamation 'with a loud voice,' may be explained of Luther, and his loud, rough, and vehement protestation against the idolatries of the church and bishop of Rome, and that whole antichristian fabric; yet we must also take in all his coadjutors and successors, and all the effects of this combined and persevering protestation, to this day, and even beyond it. His voice, with that of those who were raised up in divers countries to join him, and to follow up the assault, was indeed very 'loud.' They attacked the beast with far more vehemence, than any who went before had done. They not only declared him to be antichrist; but they carried their researches into the idolatries, iniquities, and impostures of the whole papal system, and showed that it was utterly incompatible with the religion of the Scriptures, and founded in ignorance, usurpation, avarice, and hypocrisy; and they insisted strongly on the necessity of separating from so corrupt a church; holdly retorting the charge of heresy and schism, which the popish party brought against them, and fully proving it against their opponents. Thus they induced whole nations to cast off all regard to the church of Rome, and engaged vast multitudes to protest against popery, as a *damnable* religion, not only in the persecuting tyrants who imposed it, but in all who, even from dread of persecution, or from more corrupt motives, conformed to it; and this was exactly the purport of the third angel's proclamation. They loudly insisted on it, that all who adhered, with a blind and devoted attachment, to the beast and his image; (*Notes*, 13:11—17.) professing their abominable doctrines, conforming to their idolatries, and impostures of the whole papal system, and reducing their principles to practice, (being intoxicated with 'the wine of the wrath of her fornications,') would drink of the unmingled wine of God's wrath, from the cup of his indignation. (*Notes*, 16:17—21. *Ps.* 75:8. *Is.* 51:17—20. *Jer.* 25:15—17.) Yea, that they would be tormented with fire and brimstone, or be cast into hell, to be tormented in that flame; that this would be 'in the presence of the holy angels,' who would applaud the justice of their punishment; 'and in the presence of the Lamb,' who would pronounce and execute the sentence on them, for their opposition to his Gospel, and for giving his mediatorial glory to saints and angels; and 'that the smoke of their torment would ascend up for ever and ever.' The words *tr.* 'for ever and ever,' are the most energetic which are found in the whole Greek language, to signify *eternity*, and seem incapable of any other meaning. (*Note*, 7:9—12.) The passage, therefore, evidently predicts the clear and strong manner, in which these reformers would protest and argue against *purgatory*; and insist on it, that the wicked will be 'tormented in hell for ever;' and a subsequent v. evidently opposes the same doctrine, by showing the immediate happiness of believers after death, (*Note*, 12, 13.)—Every one, who is at all conversant with the writings of the reformers and their successors, knows that they generally declared, without hesitation, that popery was a *damnable* religion. Mr. Hooper, in Queen Elizabeth's time, brought himself into suspicion, and was engaged in a controversy, because he asserted, with much caution, and many distinctions, that *papists might be saved*; and, whatever contempt may be cast on their bigotry, in this day of false candor, liberality, and disregard to the Scriptures, it is worthy of serious consideration, whether this passage do not warrant by far the greatest part of what these reformers advanced on that subject; though they might not always exactly distinguish between those 'who hated the light,' and those whose eyes were too weak to endure its effulgence, when it broke in on them all at once.—To explain this most energetic passage, (which beyond doubt predicts a general and most awful protestation against the leading tenets of popery as *damnable*, in all who embrace and adhere to them, as well as in the inventors and imposers of them,) to signify any testimony, or protest made in a single kingdom, as for instance in England, seems to me a total departure from the grand scale, on which these prophecies

should be interpreted; and as in all respects inadmissible. Nor can any *temporal* judgments on *collective bodies*, be the fulfilment of the awful denunciation, which evidently relates to *individuals*, and to each individual who is guilty; and if words can convey the idea of eternal punishment, it is here denounced. (*Marg. Ref.* p.—t.—*Notes*. 19:17—21. 20:7—10, 11—15. *Mat.* 25:41—46.)—It may also be very well worth inquiring, whether there be not some remains of the papal superstition and corruption, even in protestant churches? And how far they, whose grand object it seems to be, to contend *most*, and most *vehemently*, not to say *virulently*, for that which admits of the *least* scriptural proof, or no scriptural proof, keep at a proper distance from this tremendous warning.

(10.) 'A third angel proclaims just and eternal vengeance upon those who "worship the beast;" who, knowing their duty and allegiance to God, sacrifice them to their worldly views and interests. The wine which is at first strong of itself, unmingled, (*akraton*;) has no diluting liquor put to it to reduce its strength, as was common in the eastern nations of antiquity. But, 2dly, it is *kekermasmenon*, rendered still stronger by the mixture of powerful intoxicating ingredients; as *Is.* 51:17—23. *Ps.* 75:8, &c.'

V. 12. *BL* rejects 'here are,' also 'unto me,' v. 13.

V. 13. This v. has much perplexed many commentators, in respect of its prophetic meaning and connexion: but, on the plan we are now pursuing, nothing can be more obvious. The doctrine of *purgatory*, with indulgences, human merits to be sold by the church, masses, and prayers for the dead; was one principle source of wealth, influence, and authority to the clergy of the church of Rome. This also first stirred up the spirit of Luther, who began his attack by protesting against these atrocious practices: and, by examining the Scriptures, he and his followers established it as a *certain truth*, in the judgment of immense multitudes, that there was no such place as *purgatory*; but that the wicked, when they die, go directly to hell, and believers immediately enter heaven. Now what words could more aptly predict this change in the sentiments of a large proportion of professed Christians, than these do? It is evident, from the internal chronology of the book, and from the series of predicted events, that the Reformation was here intended; and the apostle was ordered to write, just in this place, (probably he knew not on what account,) 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth:' i. e. from this period believers will generally understand that enouraging truth; and not have to encounter the fears of *purgatory*, or to apprehend a delay of their felicity, when seized with the agonies of death, or called to suffer martyrdom for Christ's sake. Indeed, it is an undeniable fact, that the expectation of *immediate* happiness, was the joy and support of those numbers, who were burned alive, or otherwise cruelly martyred, during those times.—This 'voice from heaven' was attested by an internal suggestion of the Holy Spirit, who assured the apostle, that believers rested after death from all their labors and sufferings, and consequently could have no *purgatory* to fear; and that their works followed them, to prove the sincerity of their faith, and to ensure a gracious reward. (*Notes*, *Mat.* 25:34—40. *Rom.* 2:7—11. 2 *Cor.* 5:9—12. *Marg. Ref.* f.—13) Rest ] 11. *Note*, *Heb.* 4:3—11.—To explain this of any state of the church on earth, is doing the greatest violence imaginable to the words of the apostle.—'Dying in the Lord,' and being immediately happy, must refer to individuals, and to another world. (*Notes*, 2 *Cor.* 5:1—8. *Phil.* 1:21—26.)

V. 14—20. Thus far we have generally proceeded, by the guidance of past events, and considerable satisfaction seems to have been obtained in explaining these prophecies; but here, I apprehend, that direction almost wholly fails us. This supposition is confirmed by the evident inability of expositors to make any regular and consistent application of the subsequent chs., except as coincident with those things which have been already considered. Under this persuasion, of which further reasons will be afterwards assigned, I shall not obtrude mere conjectures on the reader, nor attempt to pry into 'things not seen as yet.' Hitherto, in general, the ground has seemed good, and the road in a measure plain; and I have felt some confidence, as well as used caution, in the progress: but caution must be almost my only companion and monitor in what now remains: for the country is unknown, and no



16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire: and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, <sup>c</sup>Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press <sup>d</sup> of the wrath of God.

20 And the wine-press was <sup>e</sup> trodden without <sup>f</sup> the city, and blood <sup>g</sup> came out of the wine-press, even <sup>h</sup> unto the horse-bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

## CHAP. XV.

1 The seven angels with the seven last plagues. 3 The song of them that overcome the beast. 7 The seven vials full of the wrath of God.

AND I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, sev-

PRACT. OBS. The Lord reserves a remnant to Himself in the worst of times, who dissent from the prevailing idolatries and abominations; who profess his truth and bear his image; who sing the praises of redeeming grace, in strains which none else can learn.—May it be our prayer, our endeavor, yea, our ambition, to be found in this honorable company! If we have a good hope, that we are thus distinguished; we ought to do everything in our power, as well as beseech the Lord continually, that faithful ministers, like beneficent angels, 'flying through the midst of heaven,' may carry 'the everlasting Gospel,' and preach it to 'all people, nations, and languages;' that so sinners may fear and glorify God; and turn from all their idols and iniquities, to worship the

guide is to be found, who understands anything with certainty concerning the road. The exact and surprising fulfilment of many and complicated predictions, through the course of about 1700 years, has been shown; which is a real demonstration of the truth of the Scriptures; but we must bequeath to posterity the satisfaction of understanding, and being filled with adoring wonder at witnessing the accomplishment of the remainder. The prophecy has been evidently traced down to the Reformation; and this may include all, which has intervened to this day, or shall intervene, till 'the slaying of the witnesses,' and their resurrection; if these events be, as I firmly believe, yet future. (Notes, 11:7—14.) Whether the events here predicted precede or follow the sounding of the 7th trumpet, or the 3d woe-trumpet, I cannot absolutely determine; but they seem evidently to relate to the fall of popery; and perhaps give a succinct intimation of what is more fully predicted in the next and following chs. (Notes, 16:—19:—) The preceding judgments and transactions not having produced a voluntary and effectual reformation in the kingdom of the beast; the iniquity of the nations of which it is constituted is filled up, and they become ripe for judgments. (Notes, Gen. 15:16. Zech. 5:5—11. Mat. 23:29—39. 1 Thes. 2:13—16.) These judgments are emblematically described as a harvest and a vintage: and, as the latter succeeds to the former in the course of nature, so it is subsequent to it in the prophecy, and will be by far the most terrible. (Note, Joel 3:9—17.)—Christ appeared to the apostle in vision, 'like unto the Son of Man,' in human nature; on 'a white cloud,' the emblem of his holy, righteous, and mysterious dispensations; his 'golden crown' signifies his supereminent authority, and 'his sharp sickle' his terrible vengeance on his enemies. 'The angel out of the temple' may signify the ministers of the Gospel, as employed to announce the approach of these judgments: and 'the second angel coming out of the temple,' to reap the vintage, may represent some executioner, or succession of executioners, of the wrath of Christ on the opposers of his authority: while the third angel from the altar, who had power over fire, giving orders to the second angel to reap the vintage, implies, that these judgments would constitute a sacrifice to divine justice, and consume, as with fire, those who had despised or perverted the atoning sacrifice of Christ. (Notes, 8:1—6. Ez. 9:1—7.) The 'casting of the vintage into the wine-press of God's wrath,' and the 'treading of it without the city,' (as being no part of the true church,) can only be explained by the event. (Note, 11:1, 2.) But it is remarkable, that 1600 furlongs, or 200 miles, is exactly the length of the papal dominions in Italy; and probably these will be deluged with blood, in a most awful manner, which is represented by language tremendously hyperbolical. (Notes, Is. 34: 6:3:1—6. Jer. 51:33. Mat. 13:36—43.)—Some expositors, who have written since this interpretation was first made, (A. D. 1791,) decide with confidence, that the bloody scenes, lately exhibited in France and on the Continent, are the fulfilment of the prophecy concerning 'the harvest;' though the vintage may be yet future; nor do I at all doubt, posterity will clearly see, that these events began to accomplish the prediction. I cannot however think, either that at so early a stage we are capable of determining on the subject; or that a more general and almost universal display of divine vengeance, on all

en angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath <sup>a</sup> of God.

2 And I saw as it were a sea <sup>b</sup> of glass mingled with <sup>c</sup> fire; and them that had gotten the victory over <sup>d</sup> the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps <sup>e</sup> of God.

c ver. 15. d c. 19:15. e Is. 63:3. f He. 13:11, 12. g Is. 34:7. h c. 19:14. a c. 14:10. b c. 4:6.

ments of God; and sometimes the gathering in of the righteous, when ripe for heaven, by the mercy of God. This seems rather to represent God's judgments against the wicked.

2. A vintage, v. 17. Some think these two are only different emblems of the same judgment; others, that they refer to distinct events of Providence before the end of all things. But here we are left to doubtful conjectures; perhaps this great event has not yet had its accomplishment, but the vision is for an appointed time; and, therefore, though it may seem to tarry, we are to wait for it.

CHAP. XV. Hitherto, according to the judgment of very eminent expositors, God had represented to his servant John the state of the church under the pagan powers, in

the six seals opened; its state under the papal powers, in the vision of the six trumpets that began to sound on the opening of the seventh seal; then a more general and brief account of its past, present, and future state, in the little book, &c. Now He proceeds to show him how antichrist should be destroyed, in the vision of the seven vials.

This ch. contains an awful introduction or preparation for the pouring out of the vials; in which we have, 1. A sight of those angels in heaven, who were to have the execution of this great work, and with what acclamations of joy the heavenly hosts applauded the great design, v. 1—5. 2. A sight of these angels coming out of heaven, to receive those vials which they were to pour out, and the great commotions that this caused in the world, v. 5. &c.

V. 1—4. The work they had to do was, to finish the destruction of antichrist. The spectators and witnesses of this their commission were,—all that had gotten the victory over the beast, &c. The sea of glass represents this world, as some think, a brittle thing, that shall be broken to pieces; or, as others, the gospel-covenant, alluding to the brazen sea in the temple, in which the priests were to wash; or, as others, the Red Sea, that stood, as it were congealed, while the Israelites went through; and the pillar of fire reflecting light on the waters, they would seem to have fire mingled with them; and this to show, that the fire of God's wrath against Pharaoh and his horses should dissolve the congealed waters, and destroy

great Creator, and to wait for his Son from heaven, who shall speedily come to be our Judge. These events faith anticipates, as if they were already accomplished. The modern quietus of a purgatory, after the day of judgment, is as destitute of scriptural foundation, as the purgatory before that awful season, which is maintained by the church of Rome; and they who die in their sins, will too late find, that the punishment of hell will endure 'for ever and ever.' 'Here then is the patience of the saints,' to venture or suffer anything, in 'obeying the commandments of God,' and professing 'the faith of Jesus;' may God bestow this patience on us, that we may be ready, should times of persecution overtake us!

the kingdoms of the beast, (those perhaps excepted, but those only, who have fallen and decidedly cast off its dominion,) is intended by the harvest; as well as still more tremendous scenes by 'the vintage.' 19:17—21. Ps. 149:7—9. Ez. 39:1—20. Mic. 7:14—17. SCOTT.

(18.) 'The symbolical reaping of the harvest, appears to signify the gathering together the elect: see Mat. 24:31. The action of reaping is, in the gospels, more than once used as a symbol of the gathering in of Christ's elect, but not of the execution of Divine judgments, while the vintage everywhere in the prophetic writings is used as a symbol of the wrath of God.—Cuninghame. Herein he takes this view with Sir I. Newton and Horsley. Pareus says, the harvest shall not only gather the wheat out of the Lord's field into the garner, but also burn the tares that are gathered. But the vintage shall cast and tread all the grapes in the lake of God's wrath. Therefore, by the vintage, the punishment of the wicked seems only to be represented.—The bare reaping of the corn, which is a good fruit, seems to denote no more than the separation of it from the earth.—Daubuz. / So Gill.' HENRY, abr.

NOTES. CHAP. XV. V. 1—4. This ch. introduces the 7 vials, all of which fall under the 7th trumpet, as the 7 trumpets were included under the 7th seal: for they contain 'the 7 last plagues,' in which the wrath of God is filled up, or accomplished, on the persecuting idolatrous power, assuming, and disgracing, beyond expression, the sacred name of CHRISTIAN. These plagues must, therefore, be coincident with the last woe-trumpet, in great measure at least. (Note, 11:15—18.) The 2d part of this prophecy, has been traced from the latter years of the 6th trumpet, to the Reformation, nay, to the present era; and, to go back into former ages, to find out events which may answer to the subsequent predictions, deranges the whole plan of the book, and reduces the interpretation to ambiguity and uncertainty. Our key has hitherto opened the most intricate wards of these predictions, without violence; i. e. as far as to the latter part of the 8th trumpet: but no writer, as it appears to me, has yet (A. D. 1815) succeeded in what follows. For the commencement of it is, according to my view, precisely the time in which we live; as appears from a due consideration of the 1260 years of the reign of the beast.—Different computations, indeed, have been made of the period, when these years will end: yet none seem to have proved that they will terminate more early than A. D. 1840: while many think they will not end till A. D. 2000. But, whether sooner or later, it seems probable, that the time is not arrived: and, therefore, that 'the pouring out of the vials' has not yet begun.—Some indeed, of late, have fixed the beginning of this period (the 1260 days) to A. D. 533; when the emperor Justinian issued certain edicts, acknowledging and supporting the pope, or the bishop of Rome, head of the whole church: and thus they compute, that they terminated A. D. 1792, the era of the French revolution.—If they be correct, of which I presume not to judge, then the pouring out of the vials has indeed begun: but they, who shall live at the latter end of this century, or the beginning of the next, will, I have little doubt, know, that it has but just begun.—The apostle had mentioned great woes, which would come under the 3 last trumpets: 12:13. 13:7. 14:19, 20. yet when the 7th trumpet was sounded, he mentioned, almost exclusively, the happy effects of it, to



3 And they sing the song of Moses 'the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

5 And after that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:

6 And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

CHAP. XVI.

2 The angels pour out their vials full of wrath. 6 The plagues that follow thereupon. 15 Christ cometh as a thief. Blessed are they that watch.

AND I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

f Ex. 15:1-19.	ages. c. 17:14.	m c. 11:19.
De. 32:1-43.	Je. 10:7.	n Is. 6:4.
g c. 14:3.	k 1 Sa. 2:2.	o Ps. 29:9.
h Ho. 14:9.	l Is. 45:23.	a c. 15:1,7.

i or, nations, or,

them thereby; to which there seems to be an allusion, by their singing the song of Moses; in which they extol the greatness of God's works, and the justice and truth of his ways, both in delivering his people, and destroying their enemies; while they call on all nations to render unto God the fear, glory, and worship, which were due to such a discovery of his truth and justice, v. 4. Who shall not fear Thee?

V. 5-8. Here we have a sight of these angels coming out of heaven to execute their commission, v. 5. Allusion is had to the holiest of all, in the tabernacle and temple, where was the mercy-seat, covering the ark of the testimony, where the high priest made intercession, and God communed with his people, and heard their prayers. By this we may understand how, in the judgments God was now about to execute on the antichristian interest, He was fulfilling the prophecies and promises of his Word and covenant, which was there always before Him, and of which He was ever mindful; that in this work He was answering the prayers of the people, which were offered to Him by their great High Priest; that He was herein avenging the quarrel of his own Son, and our Savior, Jesus Christ, whose offices and authority had been usurped, his name dishonored, and the great designs of his death opposed, by antichrist and his adherents; and, finally, that He was opening a wider door of liberty for his people to worship Him in numerous, solemn assemblies, without the fear of their enemies. Observe,

1. How they are equipped and prepared for their work; they were clothed with pure and white linen, and had their breasts girded with golden girdles, v. 6. This was the habit of the high priests when they went in to inquire of God, and came out with an answer from Him; this showed that these angels were acting in all things under the divine appointment and direction, and that they were going to prepare a sacrifice to the Lord, called the supper of the great God, ch. 19:17. Their artillery, by which they were to do this great execution, was seven vials filled with the wrath of God; the meanest

creature, but much more an angel, when armed with the anger of God, will be too hard for any man in the world. This wrath of God was not to be poured out all at once, but was divided into seven parts, which should successively fall on the antichristian party. Now from whence did the angels receive these vials? From one of the four living creatures, one of the ministers of the true church, i. e. in answer to the prayers of the ministers and people of God, and to avenge their cause, in which the angels are willingly employed.

2. The impressions these things made on all who stood near the temple; all were, as it were, wrapped up in clouds of smoke, which filled the temple, from the glorious and powerful presence of God; so that no man was able to enter into the temple, till the work was finished. The interests of antichrist were so interwoven with the civil interests of the nations, that he could not be destroyed without giving a great shock to all the world; and the people of God would have but little rest and leisure to assemble themselves before Him, while this great work was doing; for the present, their sabbaths would be interrupted, ordinances of public worship intermitted, and all thrown into a general confusion. God Himself was now preaching to the church, and to all the world, by terrible things in righteousness; but when this work was done, then the churches would have rest, the temple would be opened and the solemn assemblies gathered, edified, and multiplied. The greatest deliverances of the church are brought about by awful and astonishing steps of Providence.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1-7. We had, in the foregoing ch., great and solemn preparation made for the pouring out of the vials on antichristianism; now, we have the performance of that work. Where, observe,

I. That though everything was made ready before, yet nothing was to be put in execution without an immediate, positive order from God; and this He gave out of the temple, answering the prayers of his people, and avenging their quarrel.

PRACT. OBS. The fuller knowledge we acquire concerning the wonderful works of God, the more zealously we shall celebrate his infinite greatness and excellency, as 'the Lord God Almighty,' the Creator and Ruler of all worlds: but his title of Emmanuel, the 'King of saints,' will peculiarly endear Him to us. May 'all nations,' therefore, 'come and worship before Him,' and accept of his salvation! This prayer

will be answered, when his tabernacle shall be opened, the executioners of his vengeance on obstinate rebels shall have executed their commission, and the seven vials have been poured out. In the mean time, let us adore his justice and truth, and not dare to object to his deep designs: for when we shall witness the completion of the whole, we shall see Him perfectly glorious both in mercy and in judgment. SCOTT.

the end of time, without speaking particularly about the woes. (Note, 11:15-18.) But here he resumes that subject, and prophetically shows what woes would follow the sounding of that trumpet. Nothing is more important, in explaining prophecies, than to determine, as far as we can, which events are past, and which are to come: under this conviction, I must proceed to consider what follows, in general, as in futurity; and shall, therefore, not detail any of the interpretations, or conjectures, which have been made of them, with relation to past events; because I cannot myself find any satisfaction from them.—The 'sea of glass, mingled with fire,' (Note, 4:6-8.) is very differently explained: but, as the persons referred to, stood upon it, we cannot so well understand it of the Fountain, in which they had washed away their sins. Perhaps it was emblematical of the tempestuous times, during which believers then lived; the slippery and fragile nature of their standing, considered in itself, and the fiery trials which they endured. Some think that *epi* (tr. on) may be tr. at: and that being 'mingled with fire,' denotes the purifying influences of the Holy Spirit. Mat. 3:11, 12. Sc.

(2.) 'This glassy sea has been already displayed as standing before the throne of God, (4:6.) where it was seen to represent the purifying blood of the Redeemer; the price of human redemption, in which alone the vestments can be washed white; by which alone the Christian can be presented pure before God. But the Redeemer has two characters, conformably to his offices on earth; the one of meekness, in which He came to suffer; the other, of exaltation, in which He returns to reign, and to pour out vengeance on his enemies. We are now arrived at that point of the prophetic history, in which his vengeance begins to be poured out. We therefore see the glassy sea mingled with fire; its waves flashing flame; symbolically expressive of anger and vengeance.' Woodh. Bl. marks 'over his mark,' as doubtful; and, with Scholefield, tr. by the sea. Ed.

V. 5-8. (Note, 11:19.) The appearance of glory above the mercy-seat in the most holy place, 'the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven,' was an emblem of the appearance of God in heaven as reconciled to sinners, through Jesus Christ. 'The 7 angels,' coming forth thence, showed, that these judgments would be executed on the enemies of the church, in mercy to the people of God; while the white clothing and golden girdles, worn by these ministers of vengeance, represented their holiness, and the righteousness and excellency of these awful dispensations. 'The living creature,' I of the 4, an emblem of

the gospel-ministry, (Note, 4:6-8.) giving the vials to the angels, implied, that the preaching of the truth would be instrumental in bringing the judgments, which were written, upon antichristian opposers: and the temple being filled with smoke, showed the darkness of those dispensations, and the horror, which would envelope the enemies of God, whilst these plagues were executing. (Notes, Ex. 40:34, 35. Lev. 3:22-24. 1 K. 8:10-14. 2 Chr. 5:12-14.)—It is also highly probable, that the same judgments, by which the antichristian power, and other enemies of the church, shall be destroyed, will be employed to purify even the less corrupt parts of it: and in proportion to the degree in which unscriptural usages are contended for and imposed, or scriptural truths and duties are neglected, even professed protestant churches will drink of the cup. (Notes, Is. 59:1-2.) 'God will purify his church by such signal judgments, as shall arouse the attention of the whole world.' Bp. Horsley. So that the happy estate of the true church, as perhaps implied by 'entering into the temple,' will not commence, till, by the same awful dispensations, obstinate enemies shall be destroyed; and lukewarm, superstitious, or formal Christians, shall be purified. Thus whatever is antiscritptural or unscriptural in every company being purged away, the whole, brought to purity, unity, and spirituality, in worship, discipline, doctrine, and practice, shall be firmly established. Zeph. 3:9-17. SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. XVI. V. 1, 2. The angels were next ordered, by a voice from the temple, to pour out the contents of 'the vials,' censers, or cups, which they had received; and which were emblems of 'the wrath of God' to be poured out on the antichristian empire, and on all who adhered to it; and, indeed, on all the opposers of pure Christianity.—As the first 4 trumpets were so many stages in the destruction of the eastern empire, and the 5th and 6th showed the extinction of the eastern western empire, and the 7th showed the gradual desolation of the Roman church, empire: so these vials mark the gradual desolation of the Roman church, and the antichristian tyranny of the kingdoms which support it: the one being the pagan, idolatrous persecuting power; the other, the papal, idolatrous persecuting power, the beast to whom the dragon had given his seat and empire. (Note, 13:2-4.) This circumstance occasions a similarity of some of the vials to the trumpets. Whether 'the noisome and grievous sore,' produced by the pouring out of the first vial, is to be understood literally, with respect to terrible pestilences, or in a figurative meaning, the event must determine. But the plague will be peculiar to the avowed and devoted adherents of the beast and his image; which



2 And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the <sup>b</sup> earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous <sup>c</sup> sore upon the men which had the mark <sup>d</sup> of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

3 And the second angel poured out his vial upon the <sup>e</sup> sea; and it became as the blood <sup>f</sup> of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.

4 And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of <sup>g</sup> waters; and they became blood.

5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art <sup>h</sup> righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and <sup>i</sup> thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

7 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, <sup>j</sup> true and righteous are thy judgments.

8 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the <sup>k</sup> sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with <sup>l</sup> fire.

9 And men were <sup>m</sup> scorched with great heat, and blasphemed <sup>n</sup> the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and <sup>o</sup> they repented not, to give him glory.

10 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat <sup>p</sup> of the beast; and his kingdom was full of <sup>q</sup> darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

b c. 8:7. h ver. 7. m or, burned.  
e Ex. 9:3—11. i De. 32:42,43. n ver. 11,21.  
f c. 13:15—17. l s. 49:26. o Da. 5:22,23.  
g c. 3:8. j c. 15:3. 19:2. p c. 9:20.  
h Ex. 7:17—20. k c. 8:12. q c. 13:2—4.  
i c. 8:10. l c. 9:17.

II. No sooner was the command given, than obeyed; no delay, no objection made.

seems to be intended of the others, though not so expressly mentioned. (M. R.)—Mr. Faber, without hesitation, interprets this plague, of the *atheistical* spirit, which has long secretly pervaded the nations, adhering to the Roman church; and which broke out so extensively and fatally about the time of the French revolution. I am by no means disposed to argue against this interpretation: yet I am not able to adopt it, as a *probable opinion*; even if 'the pouring out of the vials' may, in the order of the predicted events, be allowed to begin at so early a period; which seems to me inadmissible. Many others, besides *devoted papists*, were involved in the effects of this atheism and infidelity: but the predicted judgment is stated as selecting *them* for its exclusive objects.

(2.) 'The vials probably date from the 7th trumpet, which contains them. It is a general fault to accumulate, on the first 4 vials, too great a weight of particular interpretation; whereas, as the symbols are, so should the interpretation be, general.'

V. 3—7. (Note, 8:8—11.) 'Seas, rivers, and fountains,' turned into blood, are proper emblems of vast slaughter and devastation. Yet 'the angel of the waters,' who was appointed to preside over them, or to be 'a ministering spirit' in these dispensations, celebrated the justice of the eternal Lord, who had determined to punish, with such calamities, the blood-thirsty murderers of saints and prophets; and in appointing them, as it were, 'blood to drink.' (Notes, 17:3—6. 18:20. 19:1—6. Ex. 1:22. 7:21—23.) And another angel, 'from under the altar,' (Note, 6:9—11.) as speaking in the name of the holy martyrs, concurred in these praises; and also declared the truth of 'the Lord God Almighty,' in thus fulfilling his ancient predictions, and his promises to his church.—If the events here predicted be still future, the fulfilment of the prophecy alone can clearly explain it. Mr. Faber, however, interprets the whole passage, of the bloody transactions in France and on the continent, which have occurred during these last 20 years. I presume not to decide, whether his opinion be well grounded or not; yet I object to it for these reasons: 1st. The stage, on which these tragedies have been acted, seems by no means large enough for the completion of the prophecy. France, and the countries connected with it, form only part of the kingdom of the beast; and several countries belonging to it, have hitherto been little affected by these sanguinary measures, though, perhaps, they may ere long be involved in them: in fact, many, since the time when this was first written, have been, though not in that degree, or to that

Some of the best of men, as Moses and Jeremiah, did not so readily comply with the call of God to their work; but angels excel not only in strength, but in a readiness to do his will. We are taught to pray, that the will of God may be done on earth as in heaven.

And now we enter on a series of very terrible dispensations of Providence; of which it is difficult to give the certain meaning, or to make the particular application. But in the general we may observe,

1. An allusion, here, to several of the plagues of Egypt, such as turning their waters into blood, and smiting them with boils and sores. Their sins were alike, and so were their punishments.

2. A plain reference to the seven trumpets, which represented the gradual rise of antichrist; learn, hence, that the fall of the church's enemies shall bear some resemblance to their rise; and that God can bring them down in such ways as they chose to exalt themselves.

3. This gradual fall of the antichristian interest shall be universal. Everything that anyways belonged to them, or could be serviceable to them, their earth, air, sea, rivers, cities, all are consigned over to ruin, all accursed for the sake of the wickedness of that people. Thus the creation groans and suffers through the sins of men.

(1.) The first angel poured out his vial on the earth, v. 2. i. e. say some, on the common people; others, on the body of the Romish clergy, who were the basis of the papacy, and of an earthly spirit, all carrying on earthly designs. The effect was, *noisome and grievous sores on all who had the mark of the beast*. This sore, some think, signifies some of the first appearances of Providence against their state and interest, which gave them great uneasiness, as it discovered their inward distemper, and was a token of further evil; the plague-tokens appeared.

(2.) The second angel, who poured out his vial on the sea, v. 3. i. e. say some, on the jurisdiction and dominion of the papacy; others, on the whole system of their religion, false doctrines, corrupt glosses, superstitious rites, idolatrous worship, pardons, indulgences, a great conflux of wicked inventions and institutions, by which they maintain a trade and traffic advantageous to themselves, but injurious to all who deal

with them. The effect was, *it turned the sea into blood, as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea*. God discovered not only the vanity and falsehood of their religion, but the pernicious and deadly nature of it,—that the souls of men were poisoned by that which was pretended to be the sure means of their salvation.

(3.) The next angel poured out his vial on the rivers and fountains of waters; i. e. say some very learned men, on their emissaries, and especially the Jesuits, who, like streams, conveyed the venom and poison of their errors and idolatries from the spring-head through the earth. The effect was, *it turned them into blood*; some think, it stirred up Christian princes to take a just revenge on them that had been the great incendiaries of the world, and had occasioned the shedding of the blood of armies, and of martyrs: the following doxology favors this sense, v. 5, 6. The instrument that God makes use of in this work, is called *the angel of the waters*, who extols the righteousness of God in this retaliation, *They have shed the blood of thy saints, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy*: to which another angel answered by full consent, v. 7.

V. 8—11. The work goes on in the appointed order.

The fourth angel poured out his vial on the sun; i. e. say some, on some eminent prince, of popish communion, who should renounce their false religion a little before its utter downfall; some expect it will be the German emperor. The consequence will be, that sun, which before cherished them with benign influences, shall now grow hot, and scorch them. Princes shall use their power and authority to suppress them; which yet would be so far from bringing them to repentance, that it should cause them to curse God and their king, and look upward, throwing out their blasphemous speeches against the God of heaven; they were hardened to their ruin.

The fifth angel poured out his vial on the seat of the beast; on Rome itself, the mystical Babylon, the head of the antichristian empire. The effect was, the whole kingdom of the beast was full of darkness and distress; that very city, which was the seat of their policy, the source of all their learning, and all their pomp and pleasure, is now become a source of darkness, pain, and an-

extent, which the prophecy seems to require. 2dly. The term, since the commencement of the French revolution seems too short, to answer to the idea, excited by this prophecy, of the judgments to be inflicted: when it is considered, in how few vs. the most interesting events perhaps of 2 or 300 years are comprehended. 3dly. I doubt, whether the time for the pouring out of the vials is arrived; and whether it will arrive, till after the middle of this century.—It seems, however, still more improper to suppose all the 7 vials coincident, and all as having been begun already to be poured.

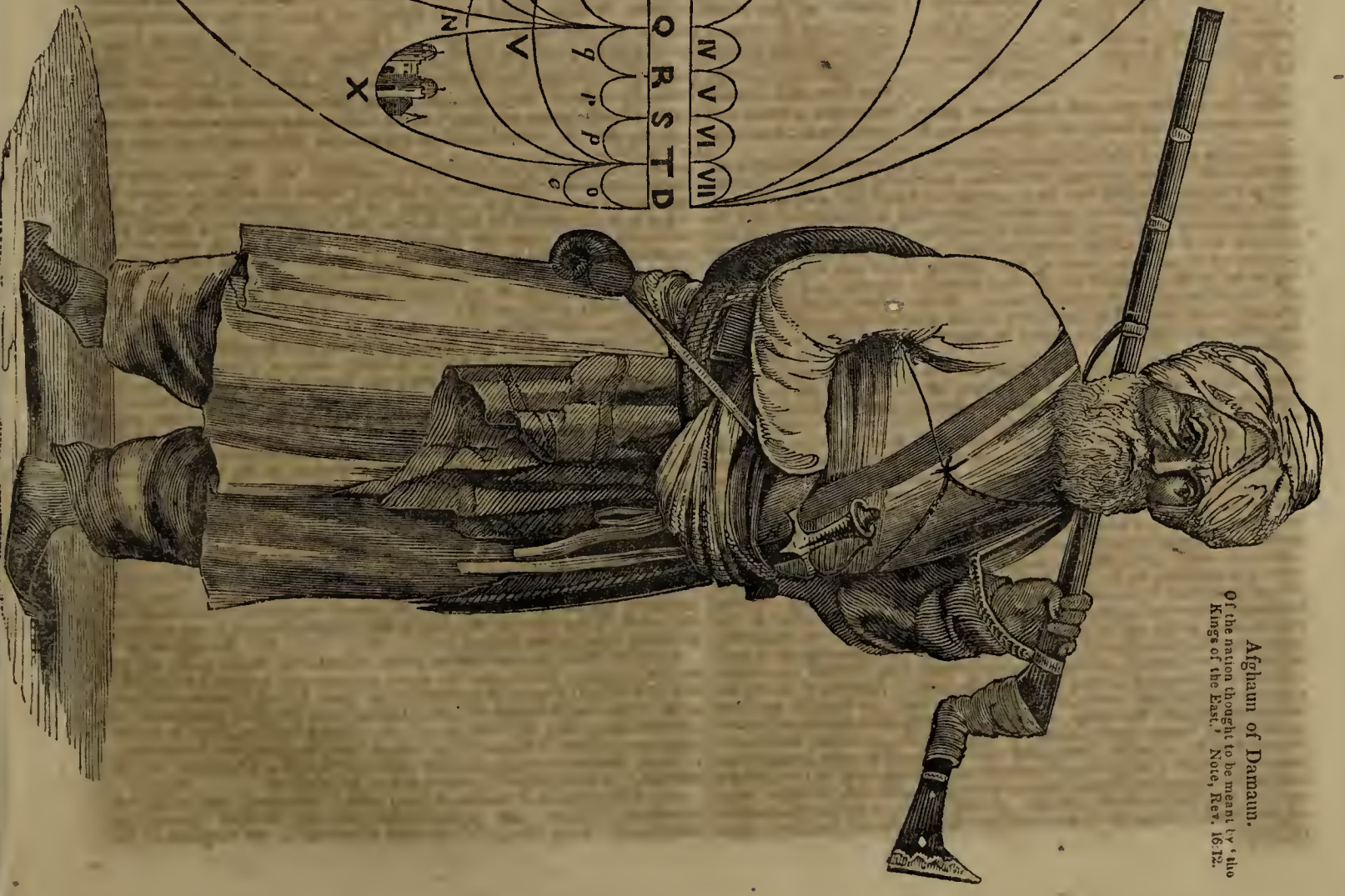
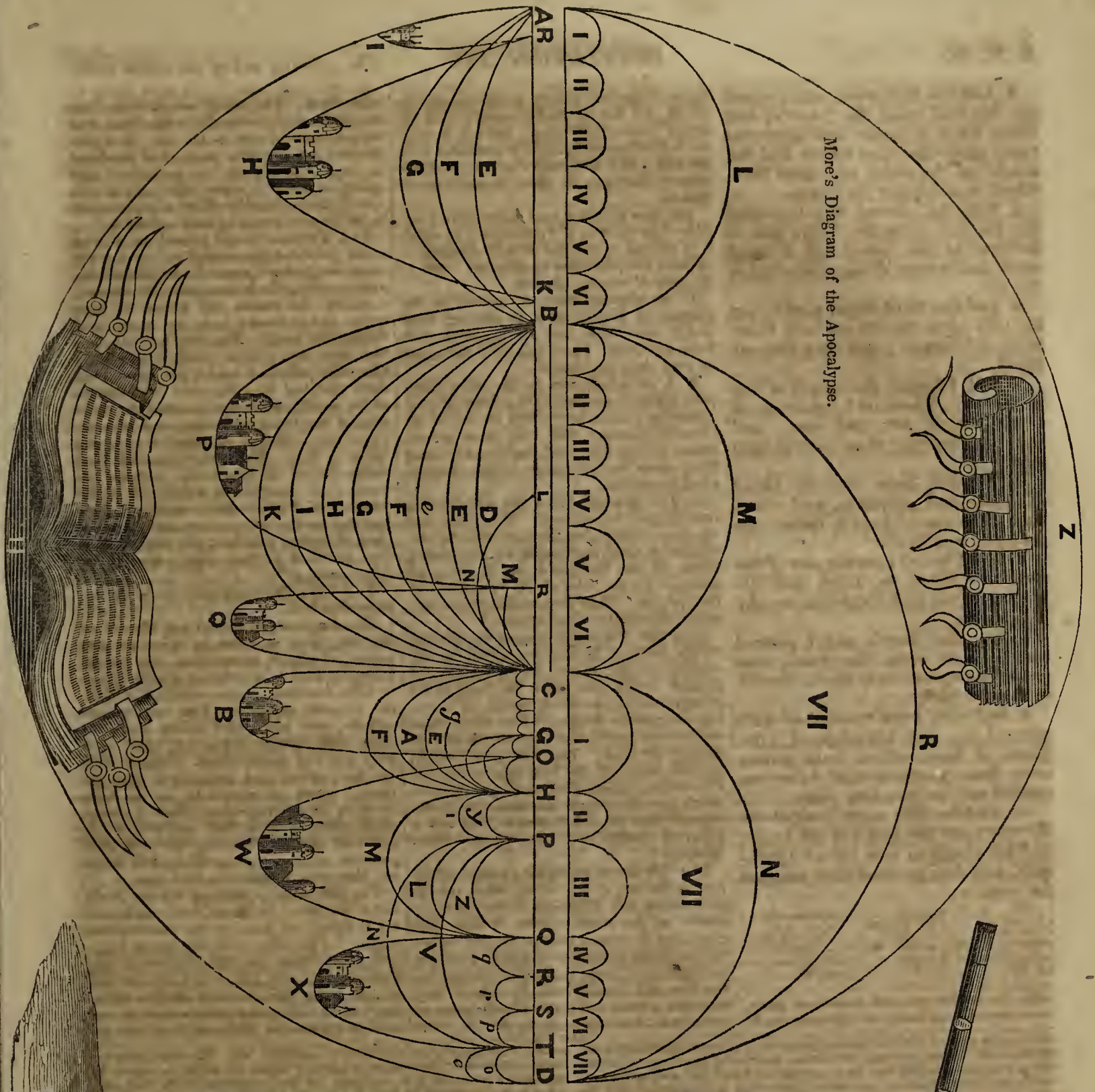
(3.) Bl. rejects 'living;' also 'Lord,' at v. 5. Ed.  
(7.) Another out of. Bl. marks these words as doubtful. Id.  
V. 8, 9. (Note, 8:12.) Whether burning seasons, producing drought and famine, or some other judgment, figuratively described by the scorching heat of the sun, be intended, the event must show. These vs. are interpreted by Mr. Faber, to mean the present tyranny of the ruler of France, over that nation, and the other kingdoms of the beast, on the continent. Not being disposed to controvert this interpretation, and much less to subscribe to it, I only again observe that, in my view, our posterity, at the end of this century, will be more competent judges of this subject, than we can be. SCOTT.

(9.) 'Divine judgments alone, do not reclaim ungodly men. But their hardening effect on men left to themselves, and given up to suffer them without remedy, is strikingly represented in this text. They produce no godly sorrow,—no repentance unto life; but rather increase the enmity of the heart against God. The conscience is convinced of his righteousness, but the heart is enraged to greater madness. This must be the effect of the curse of the law in hell, where the hope of the ungodly is turned into endless despair.'

V. 10, 11. This predicts some great calamity to Rome itself, yet of such a nature as will darken the whole antichristian empire. (Notes, 18:2) But it will only excite the sufferers to more horrid blasphemies, and more desperate defiance of God.—Interpreters of these prophecies in general allow, that this vial is not yet poured out; and this is a sufficient reason, why a commentator should decline giving any conjecture, in what manner so compendious and so obscure a prediction will be fulfilled. When fulfilled, it will cease to be obscure. SCOTT.

(10.) 'The throne of the beast is the seat of diabolical artifice and antichristian iniquity; and wheresoever these are arrayed against the kingdom of Christ, there is to be seen a portion of the kingdom of the





Afghann of Damnam.  
Of the nation thought to be meant by 'the Kings of the East.' Note, Rev. 16:12.



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11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

12 And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

r ver. 2.	v c. 13:2.	z 1 Jn. 5:19.
a c. 9:14.	w c. 19:20.	n c. 19:19.
t Is. 41:3	Je. 50: 5	x 1 Ti. 4:1.
33.	51:36.	b 2 Pe. 3:10.
u c. 12:3,9.	y 2 Th. 2:9.	c c. 3:4,13.

guish. Darkness was one of the plagues of Egypt, and it is opposed to lustre and honor, and so forebodes the contempt and scorn to which the antichristian interest should be exposed.

V. 12—16. *The sixth angel poured out his vial on the great river Euphrates.* Some take it literally, for the place where the Turkish power and empire begun: and they think

this is a prophecy of the destruction of the Turkish monarchy and [delusion], which they suppose will be effected about the same time with that of the papacy, as another antichrist, and that thereby a way shall be made for the conveniency of the Jews, those princes of the east. Others take it for the river Tiber; for, as Rome is mystical Babylon, Tiber is mystical Euphrates. And when Rome is destroyed, her river and merchandise must suffer with her.

But what did this vial produce? 1. The drying up of the river, which furnished the city with wealth, provisions, and all sorts of accommodations. 2. A way prepared for the kings of the east. The idolatry of the church of Rome had been a great hindrance, both to the conversion of the Jews, who have been long cured of their inclination to idols, and of the Gentiles, who are hardened in their idolatry, by seeing that which so much symbolizes with it, among those called Christians. It is therefore very probable, that the downfall of popery, removing these obstructions, will open a way for both the Jews and other eastern nations to come into the church of Christ. And if we suppose that Mohammedism shall fall at the same time, there will be still a more open communication between the western and eastern nations, which may facilitate the conversion of the Jews, and of the fulness of the Gentiles. And when this work of God appears, and is about to be accomplished, no wonder if it occasion another consequence, which is, 3. The last effort of the great dragon; he is resolved to have another push for it, that, if possible, he may retrieve the ruinous posture of his affairs in the world. He is now rallying his forces, re-collecting all his spirits, to make one desperate sally before all be lost. This is occasioned by the pouring out of the sixth vial.

Here, observe, 1. The instruments he

makes use of to engage the powers of the earth in his cause,—three unclean spirits like frogs, one out of the dragon's, another out of the beast's, and a third out of the false prophet's mouth. Hell, the secular power of antichrist, and the ecclesiastical, all combined to send their several instruments, furnished with hellish malice, with worldly policy, and with religious falsehood and deceit; and these should muster up the devil's forces for a decisive battle.

2. The means these instruments would use to engage the powers of the earth in this war,—they should work pretended miracles; the old stratagem of him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, 2 Thess. 2: 9, 10. Some think, that, a little before the fall of antichrist, the popish pretence of power to work miracles will be revived, and will very much amuse and deceive the world.

3. The field of battle,—a place called Armageddon; i. e. say some, the mount of Megiddo, near to which, by a stream issuing from thence, Barak overcame Sisera, and all the kings in alliance with him, Judges 5: 19. And in the valley of Megiddo Josiah was slain. This place had been famous for two events of a very different nature, the first very happy for the church of God, the latter very unhappy; but it should now be the field of the last battle in which the church shall be engaged, and she shall be victorious. This battle required time to prepare for it, and therefore the further account of it is suspended till we come to ch. 19: 19, 20.

4. The warning God gives of this great and decisive trial, to engage his people to prepare for it, v. 15. It would be sudden and unexpected; therefore, Christians should be clothed, and armed, and ready for it, that they might not be surprised and ashamed. When God's cause comes to be tried, and

beast; and commensurate with his power and authority are his throne and sceptre. It is difficult, therefore, to fix upon any local and permanent station for the throne of this tyrannical power, which extends over all people, ch. 13: 8. At some eras, and in some particular places, the spirit and power of tyranny, cruelty, and oppression, have been peculiarly prominent. And the eastern apostasy is subjected to the same power, as the western.

WOODH. V. 12—16. If the river Euphrates is here to be understood literally, some eastern nation or nations may be expected to invade Europe, or to meet the forces of the antichristian power, in the western parts of Asia, perhaps in Palestine, as the executioner of the Lord's vengeance on the kingdom of the beast. (Notes, Ps. 149: 7—9. Is. 34: 6: 3: 1—6. Ez. 38: 39: Dan. 2: 44, 45. 7: 9—12. 11: 40—45. Mic. 5: 10—15. 7: 14—17. Zech. 14: 12—19.) But as Rome is mystical Babylon, and as Babylon stood on the river Euphrates, and was both enriched and protected by it: perhaps we may understand, by the drying up of the Euphrates, such an enfeebling of the power of Rome, and increase of that of its enemies, as shall embolden and excite the nations to attack her. These events, however, will threaten the destruction of that whole kingdom and domination: so that 'three unclean spirits, like frogs, will come out of the mouth of the dragon,' as representing Satan, who gave his power to the beast; 'out of the mouth of the beast,' or antichristian empire; and 'out of that of the false prophet,' or the antichristian church and clergy. (Notes, 13: 1—12.) That is, emissaries, commissioned by them, and instigated by unclean spirits, being loathsome, and croaking, and intruding themselves into every place, to the mischief of all, (Note, Ez. 3: 1—6.) will go forth to promote idolatry, pretending to work miracles in support of their doctrine; and to collect 'the kings of the earth, and of the whole world,' even all in every place who favor that design, that they may make one united effort against the cause of God; and thus they will be 'gathered for the battle of the great day,' in which the Almighty God intends to destroy them.—Some have imagined these three mystical frogs, to be the Dominicans, the Franciscans, and the Jesuits; and the description given of them would agree well enough with the character of those Janizaries of the church of Rome: but the predicted events must fall much later than the founding of those orders; and Satan will no doubt be able to excite men of the same stamp, for similar services with those performed by them in former ages.—These will be times of great temptation; and therefore Christ, by his apostle, called on his professed servants, to expect his sudden coming, and 'to watch,' that they might retain and be found in the garments of salvation, and not 'walk naked,' and so be put to shame, as apostates or hypocrites: for the blessing would belong only to the watchful. This parenthesis interrupts the prediction; which proceeds to show, that He, even the Lord, gathered together the kings of the earth, in his righteous providence, to a place called Armageddon, or the mountain of destruction, with reference to Megiddo. (Judg. 5: 19. 2 K. 23: 29, 30. Note, Joel 3: 9—17.)—The coincidence between this prophecy, and those referred to in the notes, as unfulfilled prophecies in the O. T., is worthy of special notice, by all, who would patiently investigate the true meaning of them, and not run away with hasty, and crude, and partial, though plausible interpretations, grounded on incidental resemblances.—(14) False

prophet.] The same as the second or two-horned beast. (Note, 13: 11, 12.) SCOTT.

(12.) 'Vitr. brings many arguments to show, that "the kings from the rising of the sun," do not mean the Jews, either converted or unconverted. Pareus, and J. Edwards, are among those who apply this vial to the destruction of the mystical Babylon. Fleming considers, that, as the 6th trumpet brought the Turks from beyond the Euphrates, so the 6th vial exhausts their power, as the means and way to prepare and dispose the eastern kings and kingdoms to renounce their heathenish and Mohammedan errors, and to receive Christianity.' Henry, abr. Beyond the Euphrates, E., is an immense extent of nations and tribes. As the power of the Persians is nearly effete, many have looked for 'the kings of the East' to the next nation, directly E., the bold, enterprising, and powerful Afghans, thought to be the descendants of the 10 lost tribes. The Jews have retained their peculiar and striking physiognomy to the present day, and certainly the cut (from colored page, ch. 14.) Elphinstone's Caubul) of one of the Afghann nation, has a peculiarly Jewish physiognomy, and patriarchal bearing. ED.

(13.) Three . . frogs.] 'That from the mouth of the dragon, (the devil.) means a general spirit of licentiousness, either in sentiment or practice, or both,—any or all kinds of blasphemy, and abomination. That from the mouth of the beast, is the scheme of infidelity, known by the name of illumination; which is the beast from the bottomless pit, full of the names of blasphemy. And the spirit from the mouth of the false prophet, is popery in its falling state in Europe, since the afore-noted revolution in France. Agents and subtle efforts from these three sources, the devil will seek to perfect, and to bring into operation. This he may be expected to do in America; and thence to give a new impulse to them over the world. The church in our States, has much to fear from these three systems of infidelity.' E. Smith. (13) Dragon . . beast . . false prophet.] 'The first is the author of all [spiritual] wickedness; the second, under his direction, is the inflicter of all political misery,—of tyranny, injustice, oppression, slavery, and cruelty, under every form of government, whether despotic or republican, and at all times of the world. The third is the hypocritical arch-minister of religion, [of whatever sect.] which he first corrupts and debases, and then derives from it a sanction for all the wickedness devised and perpetrated [for] himself and his coadjutors.' WOODH.

(14.) B. marks 'of the earth' and 'of the,' as doubtful. ED. (16.) 'This war shall take the world, as the siege of Jerusalem took the Jews, by surprise. It is announced by the same terms, see Mat. 24: 42, 43. Yet, as in the instance of the siege, it will be no surprise but to the negligent, the adherents of the idolatrous church, and the general worldly and irreligious portion of mankind. To those whose eyes are fixed in humility upon the signs of the great coming, there will be, in the circumstances of the times, warning sufficient, if not to enable them to anticipate the precise steps by which the universal convulsion will arrive, at least to ascertain its approach, and to feel the solemn necessity of preparing by a renewed spirit, by a purer morality, and more anxious study of the Gospel, for a trial in which all the earth has of strength or greatness will be utterly shaken. Croly.' HENRY, abr.



17 And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

18 And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

21 And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

CHAP. XVII.

3, 4 A woman arrayed in purple and scarlet, with a golden cup in her hand, sitteth upon the beast, which is great Babylon, the mother of all abominations. 9 The interpretation of the seven heads, 12 and the ten horns. 8 The punishment of the whore. 14 The victory of the Lamb.

AND there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew

unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:

d c. 21:6. h Is. 51:17,23. j c. 11:19. e c. 11:13. Je. 25:15,16. a Na. 3:4. e. 19:2. f Da. 12:1. i c. 6:14. b Je. 51:13. g c. 14:3.

his battles to be fought, all his people should be ready to stand up for his interest, and be faithful and valiant in his service.

V. 17—21. Here we have an account of the 7th and last angel pouring forth his vial on the air, on the prince of the power of the air, i. e. the devil. His powers were restrained, his policies confounded, he was bound in God's chain, the sword of God was on his eye and on his arm. He had used all possible means to preserve the antichristian interest, and to prevent the fall of Babylon; but now here is a vial poured out on his kingdom, and he is not able to support his tottering cause any longer.

The effect was, 1. A thankful voice from heaven, pronouncing that now the work was done. The church triumphant in heaven saw it, and rejoiced; the church militant on earth saw it, and became triumphant. It is finished. 2. A mighty commotion on the earth,—an earthquake, so great as never was before, shaking the very centre; and this ushered in by the usual concomitant of thunder and lightnings. 3. The fall of Babylon, which was divided into three parts, called the cities of the nations, v. 19. having had rule over the nations, and taken in the idolatry of the nations, incorporating into her religion something of the Jewish, something of the pagan, and something of the Christian religion, and so was three cities in one. And this downfall extended further

than to the seat of antichrist; it reached from the centre to the circumference; and every island, and every mountain, that seemed by nature and situation the most secured, were carried away in the deluge of this ruin.

The antichristian party were affected with it also; though it fell on them as a dreadful storm, as if the stones of the city, tossed up into the air, came down on their heads, like hail stones of a talent weight each, yet, so far from repenting, they blasphemed that God who thus punished them. Here was a dreadful plague of the heart, a spiritual judgment more dreadful and destructive than all the rest. Observe, 1. The greatest calamities that can befall men, will not bring them to repentance without the grace of God working with them. 2. Those that are not made better by the judgments of God, are always the worse for them. 3. To be hardened in sin and enmity against God by his righteous judgments, is a certain token of utter destruction.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1—6. Here we have a new vision, not as to matter, for that is contemporary with what came under the last three vials; but as to manner of description, &c.

1. The apostle is invited to view what was to be represented, v. 1. Here is a name of great infamy, that of one that is married, and has been false to her husband's bed; she had been a prostitute to the kings of the earth, whom she had intoxicated with the wine of her fornication.

2. The appearance she made was gay and gaudy, like such sort of creatures, v. 4. Here were all the allurements of worldly

PRACT. OBS. How infatuated must men be, to set at defiance the power of God, who can fight against them by such varied means, and with such irresistible weapons! No wonder that angels, who witness or execute his vengeance on the implacable haters of God, of Christ, and of holiness, loudly celebrate the praises of his justice and truth; and adore his awful dispensations, when He brings on bloody persecutors the tortures, which they had inflicted on his saints and prophets. But 'the heart' of man is so 'desperately wicked,' that the most complicated miseries will never induce any one to repent, without the special, preventing grace of God: nay, if men are left to themselves, they will 'blaspheme the name of God,' even in the intervals of 'gnawing their tongues with pain!' It is vain, therefore, to expect that purgatory, or

hell-fire, will ever bring men to glorify God in true repentance, or in any sense purge away their sins. Hell itself is filled with blasphemies, determined and horrid, in proportion to the degree of its torments: and they are as ignorant of the history of human nature, as of the Bible and of their own hearts, who do not know, that the more men suffer, and the more plainly they see the hand of God in their sufferings, the more furiously they often rage against Him. Let then sinners now seek repentance from Christ, and the grace of the Holy Spirit; or they will hereafter have the anguish and horror of an unhumiliated, impenitent, and desperate heart, burning with enmity against God, as well as tortured by the fire of his indignation; and thus augmenting guilt and misery to all eternity. SCOTT.

V. 17—21. How this [of the hail stones] is to be understood, the event must show. (Note, 11:15—13.)—It would be very easy to give an opinion, or to quote from those who have done this: but the author would refer the reader to those, who have purposely written on the subject. It is however clear, beyond doubt, that convulsions, revolutions, and the wreck of nations, to a degree and extent never hitherto witnessed or recorded, are yet to be expected, before 'the mystery of God is finished.'—The opinion, also, that the land of Canaan will be the stage, on which the last grand conflict shall be decided, is highly probable: (Notes, 20:7—10. Ez. 38:9—23. Dan. 11:40—45.) but whether that country, or the papal dominions, be meant, by the 1609 furlongs, to be drenched with blood, must be left undecided. (Note, 14:14—20.) The dimensions may suit either one or the other: and it is not certain, whether particular dreadful judgments, on the immediate seat of the beast, or tremendous vengeance on all his remaining adherents, be there foretold.—It may be observed, by some readers, that I have not at all noticed the interpretations of those, who consider several of the vials as long since poured out. This has resulted from a full conviction, that these interpretations are absolutely inconsistent with the chronology of the prophecy, and the whole clue which must direct us in expounding it; and that they are altogether unsatisfactory, even as insulated accommodations. The opinion of those, who explain the former of the vials of recent events, which have occurred within these last 20 years, whether well grounded or not, may be allowed to be consistent with the chronology of the book, and with these vials, containing a prediction of 'the last plagues.' (Notes, 15:1—4.) The grand question to be decided, in this respect, relates to the sounding of the 7th trumpet. If that event be past, the vials have begun to be poured out; if it be future, none of them have been poured out. For it seems to me clear, that as the 7th seal includes all the 7 trumpets; so the 7th trumpet includes all the 7 vials. Nor do I think it possible for human sagacity to determine, till some considerable time has elapsed, at what precise period events of such immense magnitude, as those here predicted, began to be accomplished. SCOTT.

(17.) 'No scheme for applying the vials, as yet offered, appears to be satisfactory. Interpreters usually have applied them to the times in which they have lived, and each has been more successful in pointing out the errors of others, than in making a satisfactory arrangement. These effusions are now generally applied more or less to events connected with the French revolution. Hutcheson distributes them as follows: 1. The Reformation. 2. Wars consequent on the Reformation to 1790. 3. French revolution. 4. The sum of despotism. 5. The reaction in a struggle for civil and religious liberty. 6. The defection of the kingdoms of the pope. 7. Final overthrow of the western apostasy. The course pursued by Woodh. to view the pouring forth of the

vials, as the commencing, continued, and universal punishment of the followers of antichrist, without attempting any minute application, seems at present the only safe course for the commentator.' HENRY, abr.

(20.) 'Mountains, in a spiritual sense, are strongholds of antichristian idolatry; the islands or isles of the sea, represent the heathen nations of the Western [European] world.' WOODH.

(21.) 'Men.' 'The men, as it should be tr. here and elsewhere.' ID.

NOTES. CHAP. XVII. V. 1, 2. This chapter contains a digression from the main subject, and a kind of parenthesis in the course of the prophecy; to show more precisely what was meant by 'great Babylon,' the ruin of which had been so tremendously predicted. (Note, 16:17—21.) No one can doubt, but Rome is meant in this ch., nay, the most zealous papists allow it; and indeed, it would not have been made so undeniable by being expressly named, as it is by this description. The only question then, is, whether Rome pagan, or Rome papal is meant. But pagan Rome never seduced the kings of the earth to join in her idolatries, she never intoxicated the inhabitants 'with the wine of her fornication;' she subdued and ruled them with an iron rod, and not by artifices and blandishments; she left them in general to their ancient usages and worship; nay, she imported the idols and vices of the conquered nations, and thus became fatally corrupted. Even when the Roman emperors persecuted the Christians, they did it rather from a desire of crushing innovations, which threatened, as they supposed, the peace of the state, connected with enmity against God, and truth, and holiness, than from zeal for any particular form of idolatry. On the other hand, it is well known, by what subtle insinuations, and politic management, 'with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness,' Rome papal, without any adequate temporal force, has obtained and preserved an ascendancy over kings and nations: attaching them to her usurped dominion in blind submission, and inducing them to conform to her idolatries, and corruptions of Christianity. So that the authority of powerful kings, and the forces of mighty nations, have repeatedly been employed in defence of her tyranny; and multitudes have been intoxicated, and infuriated, by their zeal for that church, to murder their unoffending neighbors, by tens of thousands, and at the same time to enslave, weaken, and impoverish themselves! 9—14. 14:8. 18:1—3. Jer. 51:7. SCOTT.

(2.) 'Hurd shows why this term, and not that of adultery, is here used, and points out papal Rome, contrary to those who would assume that the lighter term denotes pagan Rome. The emblem is Babylon, a pagan idolatrous city, which never entered into any close contract with Jehovah. That city being noted as the first of idolatrous cities, was the fittest to be an emblem of the enormous guilt and extensive influence of idolatrous Rome. Pagan idolatry also is, for the most part, exposed by the ancient prophets, under the term of lying vanities. Hurd fully



2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.

5 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the

woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

c. c. 18:3.	h 2 Th. 2:7.	10 c. 11:7.
d. c. 12:3.	i or, Fornications.	n ver. 11.
e. c. 13:1.	j c. 16:6.	o c. 13:8.
f. gill. l.	k ver. 1.	p c. 13:1.
g. Je. 51:7.	l ver. 3.	

honor and riches, pomp and pride, suited to sensual and worldly minds.

3. Her principal seat and residence,—upon the beast that had 7 heads and 10 horns; i. e. Rome, the city on 7 hills, infamous for idolatry, tyranny, and blasphemy.

4. Her name, which was written on her

forehead. It was the custom of impudent harlots to hang out signs, with [impure emblems, and] their names, that all might know what they were. Now, in this, observe, (1.) She is named from her place of residence, *Babylon the great*. But that we might not take it for the old Babylon, literally so called, we are told there is a mystery in the name; it is some other great city resembling the old Babylon. (2.) She is named from her infamous way and practice; not only a harlot, but a mother of harlots; breeding, and training them up to idolatry, and all sorts of lewdness and wickedness; the parent and nurse of all false religion and filthy conversation.

5. Her diet; she satiated herself with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. She drank their blood with such greediness, that she intoxicated herself with it; it was so pleasant to her, that she could not tell when she had enough of it: satiated, but never satisfied.

V. 7—13. Here we have the mystery of this vision explained: but it is so explained, as still to need further explanation. 1. This beast was, and is not, and yet is; i. e. it was a seat of idolatry and persecution; and is not, i. e. not in the ancient form, which was pagan; and yet it is, it is truly the seat of idolatry and tyranny, though of another sort and form. It ascends out of the bottomless pit; idolatry and cruelty are the issue and product of hell, and it shall return thither, and go into perdition. 2. This beast has 7 heads, which have a double signification.

meets the objections of Romanists, and shows that the terms here used are especially applicable to papal Rome.

HENRY, *abr.*  
 V. 3—5. The angel then carried John, 'in the Spirit,' (i. e. being under the influence of the prophetic Spirit, he seemed to himself to be conveyed,) 'into the wilderness;' for the antichristian tyranny and seductions had reduced the church into a most desolate state, and made it like a desert. (Notes, 12:13—17.) There he saw 'a woman seated on a scarlet-colored beast.' This 'woman' was the emblem of the church of Rome, and 'the beast' was the emblem of the temporal power, by which it has been supported, and the latter was 'full of names of blasphemy,' which we have had repeated occasions to mention. (Notes, 12:3—6. 13:1—7. 2 Thes. 2:3, 4.) 'The 7 heads and 10 horns' are afterwards explained. (Notes, 7—14. 12:3—6. 13:1.) The woman was 'arrayed in purple and scarlet-color;' for these have always been the distinguishing colors of popes and cardinals, as well as of the Roman emperors and senators; nay, by a kind of infatuation, the mules and horses on which they rode, have been covered with scarlet cloth; as if they were determined to answer this description, and even literally to ride on a scarlet-colored beast!—'The woman' was also most superbly decorated with gold and jewels; and who can, in adequate language, describe the pride, splendor, and magnificence of the church of Rome, in her vestments and ornaments of every kind? Even papists have gloried in the superiority of their church in this species of magnificence, above ancient Rome when at the height of her prosperity. This appears in all things relating to their public worship, and in the papal court, even beyond what can be conceived; and external pomp attaches carnal men to a religion, which excessively interests and gratifies them, and may even be said to intoxicate them; whilst they despise the simplicity of spiritual worship.—This is beyond description, and as much surpassed my expectation, as other sights have generally fallen short of it. Silver can scarce find an admittance; and gold itself looks but poorly, among such an incredible number of precious stones.' Addison.—In the woman's hand, likewise, there 'was a golden cup full of abominations;' this alludes to the practice of harlots, in inflaming their paramours with love potions; and represents the various fascinating allurements, the impostures, delusions, promises of impunity, indulgences, absolutions, with hopes of worldly interest and preferment, by which that church has always obtained and preserved her influence, and seduced men to join in her spiritual fornication, the other abominations of her corrupt worship, and the unholiness connected with it. (Notes, 18:4—9. 19:1—6.) [How many poor young men of talents, have been thus seduced even from Protestantism, and in countries boasting of light! *Ed.*] This name [the woman's] was 'Mystery, Babylon the Great.' Her religion was 'a mystery of iniquity,' (Notes, 2 Thes. 2:5—7. 1 Tim. 3:16.) and she herself was mystically 'Babylon the Great.'—Now there was nothing in pagan Rome, to which this title was more proper, than to any other city; nor would it have been anything very mysterious to have substituted one pagan city for another; but it was indeed a 'great mystery,' that the professed metropolis of the Christian church should be another Babylon, in idolatry, iniquity, and cruelty to the people of God; and her very title of 'the Roman Catholic,' or universal 'church,' entitles her to the name of 'Mystery, Babylon the Great.' She affects, indeed, the character of 'our holy mother, the church;' but she is in fact, 'the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth;' the inventor, source, promoter, and principal example, of idolatries, and all kinds of abominable abuses and perversions of Christianity, with which the nations of the earth have been corrupted.—It is asserted by writers of good authority, that, before the Reformation, the word *mystery* was written in letters of gold, on the front of the pope's mitre; but the fact has been controverted, and, therefore, though the affirmative evidence vastly preponderates, we cannot be absolutely certain of it.  
 SCOTT.

V. 6. The woman was as notorious for cruelty and persecution, as

for idolatry and profligacy; and the apostle saw her 'drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus.' (Notes, 16:3—7. 18:20. *Don.* 7:19—27.) In this respect Rome pagan and Rome papal were both criminal; but the latter has probably slain more thousands, than the former did individuals, and the apostle would not have been greatly astonished to see a heathen city persecuting Christians, having witnessed and experienced such persecutions during many years, before he had this vision; but that a city, professedly Christian, and the metropolis of the Christian church, should thus wanton and riot in the blood of the saints, might well excite his highest amazement. 'All this is very plain; but papists wonder by what figure of speech heretics are called "saints," and rebels against the pope, "martyrs of Jesus."'  
 BP. HURD.

V. 7, 8. Lest any one should mistake or hesitate concerning the meaning of these emblems, the angel became the interpreter of the vision. As the apostle had seen and heard very much on the same subject before, the angel inquired into the reason of his excessive amazement; (Notes, 12:3—6. 13:1—17.) and he then showed to him 'the mystery of the woman, riding on the beast.' A beast is the emblem of an idolatrous and oppressive empire; the Roman empire was 'the beast' under the pagan emperors; it ceased to be so, when it became Christian, with reference to which the angel says, by way of anticipation, 'It is not.' Yet it would afterwards 'ascend out of the abyss;' i. e. when the antichristian empire became idolatrous and persecuting, and the dragon gave his power to the beast, it seemed to arise out of the sea, the tempestuous state of the nations, but it was in fact from hell, being Satan's grand scheme for opposing the Gospel: (Notes, 9:1, 2. 11:7—12. 13:1—4.) and therefore after a time it would go into perdition, and be destroyed finally and for ever.—'The empire was idolatrous under the heathen emperors, and then ceased to be so under the Christian emperors, and then became idolatrous again under the Roman pontiffs, and hath so continued ever since.—But in this last form it shall go into perdition: it shall not, as it did before, cease for a time, and revive again, but shall be destroyed for ever.' BP. NEWTON. (Note, Dan. 7:9—14, 23—27. 11:44, 45.) In the mean while, however, it is foretold, it would deceive into a stupid admiration, and blind submission, 'all the inhabitants of the earth,' within the sphere of its influence, except the remnant of the elect. (Note, 13:8—10.) (8) *Shall ascend.* Is about to ascend. This determines the rise of the beast to a period subsequent to the prediction being delivered, and consequently Rome pagan cannot be meant, for that had risen long before.

(8.) *Not written, &c.* 'This expression shows, that this revival of a persecuting power, should be greatly owing to some members of the church itself who had lost the spirit and temper of true Christianity, and were led by what they thought their worldly interests.'  
 LOWMAN.

V. 9—14. *Seven mountains.* This is the well-known situation of Rome; Constantinople is also built on 7 hills, but they are comparatively obscure, and no other mark of the beast answers to it. For 'the seven heads' of the beast had another enigmatical meaning, and signified seven 'kings,' or successions of rulers, according to the usual prophetic meaning of the word 'kings.' Some explain the 7th. of the Christian emperors; but their power must either be included in the sixth head; or it could not be a head of the beast at all, not being idolatrous. Others explain it of the Exarch of Ravenna, the deputy of the emperor of the East, under which government this proud city, Rome, continued as a dukedom for above a hundred years. Others explain it of the usurpations of the pope, before he became a temporal prince, or the prescribed '1260 years' of the reign of the beast had entered; but that of the Exarch of Ravenna seems most clear. Many other interpretations have been given, and especially the dominion of Charlemagne and his successors, during several generations, has been fixed upon. In general, however, it related to the intervening space between the subversion of the empire, and the establishment of papal tyranny; during which time



11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

q	Da. 7:20.	u	Mi. 5:8,9	a	Je. 50:41,42.
r	Zec. 1:18-21.	v	Ro. 8:30,37.	b	Eze. 16:37-44.
s	c. 19:19.	w	Ju. 15:16.	c	e. 18:8,18.
t	Je. 50:44.	x	c. 2:10.	d	Ac. 4:27,28.
u	De. 10:17. 1 Ti	y	Is. 8:7. ver. 1.	e	c. 10:7.
v	6:15. c. 19:19.	z	c. 13:7.	f	c. 16:19.

(1.) *Seven mountains*,—the seven hills on which Rome stands; and (2.) *Seven kings*,—seven sorts of government. Rome was governed by kings, consuls, tribunes, decemviri, dictators; emperors who were pagan, and emperors who were Christian; five of these were extinct when this prophecy was written; one was then in being, i. e. the pagan emperor; and the other, i. e. the Christian emperor, was yet to come, v. 10. This beast, the papacy, makes an 8th governor, and sets up idolatry again. 3. This beast had *ten horns*; which are said to be *ten kings which have, as yet, received no kingdoms*; as yet, i. e. as some, shall not rise up till the Roman empire be broken in pieces; or, as others, shall not rise up till near the end of antichrist's reign, and so shall reign but as it were *one hour with her*, but shall for that time be very unanimous and very zealous in that interest, and entirely devoted to it, divesting themselves of their prerogatives and revenues, (things so dear to princes,) out of an unaccountable fondness for the papacy.

V. 14-18. Here we have some account of the downfall of Babylon, to be more fully described in the following chapter.

PRACT. OBS. The Lord takes pleasure in satisfying his people, concerning the reasons and equity of his judgments on his enemies; that they may not be intimidated by the severity of them, or fail to adore and praise Him on that account.—Great prosperity, pomp, and splendor, commonly feed the pride and lusts of the human heart; yet they form no security against divine vengeance.—Those who allure or tempt others to sin, must expect more aggravated punishment, in proportion to the degree of the mischief done by them.—The worst abominations, idolatries, filthinesses, cruelties, and blasphemies, have been perpetrated within the professing church: and a magnificent religion, [arrogating political power, &c.] adorned with purple, and decked with gold and jewels, is generally antichristian. But 'the golden im-

Rome was under the *temporal* jurisdiction of the Exarch of Ravenna, and the *spiritual* rule of the pope, who had already introduced the worship of saints and images, and many other gross abuses. If this he reckoned a distinct form of government, then the beast, as it subsisted when the woman sat on it, was 'the eighth,' but, if it is deemed too inconsiderable to be reckoned a distinct head, 'he was one of the 7;' but, whether the 7th or the 8th, he would be the last form of government in that idolatrous empire; and 'goeth into perdition.' 'The beast, therefore, on which the woman rideth, is the Roman government in its last form; and this, all must acknowledge, is papal, not imperial.' Bp. Newton. For the last head was the only one, which existed when the woman sat on the beast, and was therefore spoken of as the beast itself.—'The ten horns' (which seem to have all grown on the last head) were 'ten kings,' or successions of kings; who had 'received no kingdom' when John had this vision; but they would 'receive power as kings one hour with the beast,' or *at the same time, and for the same period*. This points out the division of the Roman empire into ten distinct kingdoms, yet all united in one design to support the idolatry of the church of Rome; and it is wholly incompatible with *pagan* Rome. They might be kings; but they were not horns of the beast, till they embraced that religion, and both strengthened the hands of the pope and church of Rome, and were strengthened by them. 'These were *contemporary*, not *successive* princes, as the 7 kings before mentioned were; and, notwithstanding the continual interference of their several political interests and measures, and their contests in other things, they were 'of one mind to give their power to the beast,' implicitly submitting to that idolatrous religion; defending its tyranny and usurpations; and enduring its exorbitant exactions; and obeying its mandates to make war, in opposing the cause of Christ, and in order to extirpate his disciples. But it was predicted, that they would all be finally defeated in that war, by 'the Lamb of God;' as He is 'Lord of lords, and King of kings,' as many vain mortals have affected to call themselves; (Notes, 1 Kings 20:1. Ezra 7:12. Dan. 2:37.) and his followers are effectually called to enlist under his standard, in consequence of his special choice of them; and therefore they are true believers, faithful to his cause, and to their own engagements. (Notes, 19:11-21. Mat. 22:11-14.) SCOTT.

(12.) 'When the Roman empire declined, under the invasions of the Goths, and other barbarians, ten kingdoms arose, which are enumerated by different writers. Though much varied in respect to the people of which they were composed, their number has been nearly the same; and, on an average, in the long course of 1400 years, reaching to our times, the number ten would be found to predominate. Considering the changes to which all nations are exposed, and which have prevailed in other quarters of the globe, it is, indeed, a wonder, that the ten European kingdoms should subsist as they have done. Their character and designation has been exactly fulfilled. They have imbibed the doctrines of the harlot, and have executed her bloody decrees. But the time seems already to have dawned, when they shall perform their appointed part in her downfall and disgrace. Woodh.—Are not the annals of

age, or 'golden cup,' in the hand of Babylon and her daughters, will reconcile most men to 'the mysteries of iniquity' connected with it; and make them willingly swallow down the wine of their fornications; and even induce them to join in making themselves 'drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus.' (Notes, Dan. 3:1-12.) Let all then beware of a splendid, a lucrative, or a fashionable religion: let us avoid 'the mysteries of iniquity,' and study diligently 'the great mystery of godliness;' that we may learn humility, simplicity, self-denial, and gratitude, in the stable at Bethlehem, in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, by the side of the well at Sychar, in the garden of Gethsemane, and on mount Golgotha: for the more we resemble Christ, the less shall we be liable to be deceived by antichrist. SCOTT.

every country, and of almost every period, stained by the blood of the disciples of the Lamb? and has not the bitterest opposition of the ruling powers been levelled against those distinguished for purity of faith, of practice, and of outward worship? *Towers.* HENRY, *abr.*

V. 15-18. The angel next explained to the apostle 'the many waters, on which the woman sat,' in regal dignity. Four distinct words, all in the plural number, aptly describe the extensive dominion of the church of Rome, not only over those within the territories belonging to the papacy, but over all the kingdoms of that communion, and in their remote dependencies, in the East Indies, in South America, and other places. Indeed, the pope has claimed the right over all nations, to dispose of crowns, and depose princes, at his pleasure, as if he were 'Lord of lords, and King of kings!' and the very titles of 'universal bishop,' and 'the Roman Catholic church,' fully accord to this description. This, however, will not always be the case; for the 'ten horns,' or kingdoms, which once exalted and supported the ecclesiastical tyranny, will at length 'hate, desolate,' strip, devour, and destroy it. [Even Austria is beginning afresh to confiscate church property. Ed.] Most of them will be the principal instruments in the destruction of popery, and the ruin of Rome itself; though some will lament over these events. (Note, 18: 9, 10.)—How far some late revolutions may lead to this crisis we cannot tell, but present appearances render it not improbable, that the last victory of the beast over the witnesses of Christ, will be obtained in some other way, than directly by papal delusions. Yet these appearances are continually changing. (Note, 11:7-12.) God has so influenced the hearts of these kings, by his power over them, and by the dispensations of his providence, that they fulfilled his will, or did those things, without intending it, which He had purposed and predicted. (Notes, Ezra 1:1-4. Ps. 105:23-25. Ez. 14:9-11. 38:10. 2 Thes. 2: 10-12.) Thus they had agreed together to 'give their kingdom to the beast;' to make him, as it were, their liege lord; and to reign over others, only in order to render them subservient to him. But they will at length better understand their own interest, and their duty to God and their subjects, than thus any longer to prostitute their power.—To terminate the description of the woman, who sat on this symbolical beast, she was declared to be 'that great city, which reigned over the kings of the earth,' when John had his vision; and everybody must know Rome to be that city. Indeed, this was the avowed object, aim, and ambition of Rome, from its foundation; and, in different ways, it has accomplished its purpose, with little interruption, even to this present time.—(16) *Eat her flesh.* (Notes, Job 31:29-32. Ps. 27:1-3. Dan. 7:5.)—*Burn her.* The punishment of a priest's daughter, who committed whoredom. (Note, Lev. 21:9.)—(17) *Put it in her heart.* Marg. Ref. c.—*Until, &c.* With what frequent repetition is this idea brought before the reader; the 'counsel of the Lord shall stand, and He will do all his pleasure!' (Notes, Ps. 33:10-12. 19:21. Is. 14:24-27. 46:10, 11. Dan. 4:34-37. Mat. 26:21-24. Acts 2:22-24. 4:23-28. Eph. 1:9-12. 3:9-12.)

(16.) For 'upon,' *Bl.* reads 'and.'

SCOTT.  
Ed.



CHAP. XVIII.

<sup>2</sup> Babylon is fallen. <sup>4</sup> The people of God commanded to depart out of her. <sup>9</sup> The kings of the earth, <sup>11</sup> with the merchants and mariners, lament over her. <sup>20</sup> The sailors rejoice for the judgments of God upon her.

AND after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

<sup>2</sup> And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon <sup>b</sup> the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become <sup>c</sup> the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

<sup>3</sup> For all nations have drunk <sup>d</sup> of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and <sup>e</sup> the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the <sup>f</sup> abundance of her delicacies.

<sup>4</sup> And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out <sup>g</sup> of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

<sup>5</sup> For her sins have reached <sup>h</sup> unto heaven, and God hath remembered <sup>i</sup> her iniquities.

<sup>6</sup> Reward her <sup>j</sup> even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double.

<sup>7</sup> How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a <sup>k</sup> queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly <sup>l</sup> burned with fire: for strong <sup>m</sup> is the Lord God who judgeth her.

<sup>9</sup> And the kings <sup>n</sup> of the earth,

who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning,

<sup>10</sup> Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour <sup>o</sup> is thy judgment come.

a Eze. 43:2. f or, power. k Is. 47:7-11.  
 b Is. 13:19. 21:9. g Is. 48:20. 52:11. Zep. 2:15.  
 c Je. 51:8. e. 14:8. h Je. 50:3. 51:6. l c. 17:6.  
 d Is. 34:11, 14. 45. 2 Co. 6:17. m Ps. 62:11.  
 e Je. 50:39. 51:37. h Je. 51:9. n Eze. 26:16, 17.  
 f c. 17:2. i c. 18:19. o ver. 17, 19.  
 g Is. 47:15. j Ps. 137:8.  
 e ver. 11, 15. k Je. 50:15-29.

hardened to do so; and it was of God, that afterward their hearts were turned against the whore, to hate her, and to make her desolate and naked, and to eat her flesh, and burn her with fire; they shall at length see their folly, and how they have been bewitched and enslaved by the papacy, and, out of a just resentment, shall not only fall off from Rome, but shall be made the instruments of God's providence in her destruction.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1-3. The downfall and destruction of Babylon form an event so fully determined in the counsels of God, and of such consequence to his interests and glory, that the visions and predictions concerning it are repeated.

1. Here is another angel sent from heaven, attended with great power and lustre, v. 1. He had not only light in himself, to discern the truth of his own prediction, but to inform and enlighten the world about that great event; and not only light to discern it, but power to accomplish it.

2. This angel publishes the fall of Babylon, as a thing already come to pass; and this he does with a mighty strong voice, that all might hear, and see how well he was pleased to be the messenger of such tidings. Here seems to be an allusion to the prediction of the fall of pagan Babylon, Is. 21:9. where the word is repeated, as here, — *is fallen, is fallen*. Some have thought a double fall is hereby intended, first her apostasy, and then her ruin; and they think the words immediately following favor their opinion, v. 2. But this is also borrowed

from Is. 21:9. and seems to describe, not so much her sin of entertaining idols, which are truly called *devils*, as her punishment; it being a common notion, that unclean spirits, as well as your ominous and hateful birds, used to haunt a city or house that lay in its ruins.

3. The reason of this ruin is declared; for so God is pleased to do, especially in those dispensations of Providence that are most awful and tremendous. The wickedness of Babylon had been very great; for she had not only forsaken the true God herself, and set up idols, but had, with great art and industry, drawn all sorts of men into the spiritual adultery, and by her wealth and luxury had retained them in her interest, v. 3.

V. 4-8. Here is fair warning given to all that expect mercy from God, that they should not only *come out of her*, but be assisting in her destruction, v. 4, 5. Here observe, 1. God may have a people even in Babylon, some who belong to the election of grace. 2. God's people shall be called out of Babylon, and called effectually. 3. Those that are resolved to partake with wicked men in their sins, must receive of their plagues. 4. When the sins of a people reach up to heaven, the wrath of God will reach down to the earth. 5. Though private revenge is forbidden, yet God will have his people act under Him, when called to it, in pulling down his and their inveterate and implacable enemies, v. 6. 6. God will proportion the punishment of sinners to the measure of their wickedness, pride, and security, v. 7. 7. When destruction comes on a people suddenly, the surprise is a great aggravation of their misery, v. 8.

V. 9-19. Here we have a doleful lamentation made by Babylon's friends, for her fall; observe,

1. The mourners, who they are; those who had been bewitched by her fornication, sharers in her sensual pleasures, and gainers by her wealth and trade, v. 9. whom she had flattered into idolatry, by allowing them to be arbitrary and tyrannical over their subjects, while they were obsequious to her; and the *merchants*, i. e. those who trafficked with her for indulgences, pardons, dispensations, and preferments; these will mourn, because by *this craft they got their wealth*.

2. The manner of their mourning; (1.)

NOTES. CHAP. XVIII. V. 1-3. (Note, 16:17-21.) After the apostle had been certified who 'Babylon the Great' was, and what she had done, he had the vision of her destruction continued. 'Another angel,' distinct from those who 'poured out the vials,' came down from heaven, possessing great power, and illuminating the earth with his glory. This was either Christ Himself, or an emblematical representation of his coming to destroy his enemies, and to diffuse the light of his Gospel through all nations; to which events the language naturally directs our thoughts. (Note, 2 Thes. 2:8-12.) He therefore repeatedly proclaimed 'with a strong voice,' which all might hear, and which implied great power and authority, that 'Babylon the Great is fallen,' totally and finally. (Notes, 14:8. Is. 21:6-9.) It was become not only desolate, but a kind of hell upon earth. Some think, that the words may refer to the discoveries which will then be made, of the diabolical ambition, impostures, lies, murder, and horrible uncleanness, with which the city is filled, under the mask of religion; but the expressions are figurative, and borrowed from the O. T. (Notes, Is. 13:19-22. 34:9-17. Jer. 51:61-64.) It is most manifest, that no desolations have hitherto left Rome in this condition; unless any choose to say, that it hath been the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird, ever since popes and cardinals have made it their residence: for, unless this be admitted, it must be manifest to all men, that the prophecy is not yet fulfilled.—To the reasons before assigned for the ruin of this city, it is here added, that 'the merchants of the earth are waxed rich, through the abundance of her delicacies.' Her outward magnificence, luxury, and excess, have proved a source of immense wealth to vast multitudes; and the various arts, trades, manufactures, and species of commerce, which flourish by means of her pompous religion, have always helped to support it: for 'by that craft vast multitudes have their wealth.' Painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and all the fine arts, have also met with the most ample encouragement, and been cultivated, in the greatest perfection, in that splendid church. (Notes, 18:3-5. Acts 19:23-31. P. O. 21-31.) But the spiritual merchandise, by which unnumbered multitudes have wickedly lived in affluence, and enjoyed abundant delicacies, by the sins and follies of mankind, seem principally intended.

SCOTT.

ED.

(1.) *Bl.* reads, 'and he cried with a strong voice.'  
 V. 4-8. As Lot was called forth out of Sodom, before it was destroyed by fire and brimstone; (Notes, Gen. 19:14-22, 27-29.) so the people of God are directed, by a voice from heaven, to come out of Bab-

ylon before her fall. (Notes, Is. 52:11, 12. Jer. 50:7. 8. 51:6, 7, 45, 46.) This summons concerns all persons in every age. Those who believe in Christ, and 'worship God in the Spirit,' should separate from so corrupt a church, and from all others which copy her example of idolatry, persecution, cruelty, and tyranny; and avoid 'being partakers of her sins,' even if they have renounced her communion: or else they may expect to be involved in her plagues. (Note, 14:9-11.) As Rome has never hitherto been 'utterly burned with fire,' it is undeniable that events yet in futurity are predicted.

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V. 9, 10. Some of the kings, who had previously supported the church of Rome, will adhere to her, even when the rest of them will unite in destroying her; (Note, 17:15-18.) and they will lament her fall, having been bigoted to her idolatries, and having lived in more abundant and excessive luxury and magnificence, through their alliance with her. They will, therefore, bewail at a distance, beholding 'the smoke of her burning' and torment, without being able to quench the one, or relieve the other: so that they must either at length renounce her, or share her doom. (Notes, 11-19. Ez. 23:16-23.) In this situation they will say, 'Alas! alas!' Or, 'Woe! woe!' for this will be the third woe before mentioned. (Note, 11:13, 14.) Not that the fall of Rome will terminate that woe; (though it will end with the pouring out of the 7th vial, and its immediate consequences;) for the events predicted in the following ch. will form a very considerable part of it. Nor is there any satisfactory proof, though it has generally been supposed, that the 2d woe-trumpet will end in the destruction of the Ottoman empire. (Note, 9:13-21.) On the contrary, it may perhaps subsist, in an enfeebled state, till after the fall of the western antichrist. This may be one grand mean of the national conversion of the Jews; and their restoration to their own land may produce the subversion of the Ottoman empire, the destruction of the Mohammedan delusion, and the calling of the other Gentiles. (Notes, Ez. 38: 39. Dan. 11:40-45.)—We ought not indeed to be confident in such matters; yet the arrangement of this and the two following chs. seems to favor the supposition: as the destruction of all Christ's implacable enemies, the conversion of the nations, and the binding of Satan, are predicted in order, after the fall of Rome. 19: 20:1-3.

SCOTT.

(10.) 'The third woe is announced, but is never described. It comes secretly. It may perhaps be seen, felt, and acknowledged, before the final fall of antichrist; perhaps before the 1260 yrs. are expired.' WOOD.



11 And the merchants <sup>p</sup> of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more;

12 The merchandise of <sup>q</sup>gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all <sup>r</sup>thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

13 And cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and <sup>s</sup>slaves, and souls <sup>t</sup>of men.

14 And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

15 The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

16 And saying, Alas, alas! that great city, that was clothed <sup>u</sup>in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!

17 For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every ship-master, and all the company in <sup>v</sup>ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,

18 And cried when they saw the

smoke of her burning, saying, What <sup>w</sup>city is like unto this great city!

19 And they cast dust <sup>x</sup>on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

20 Rejoice <sup>y</sup>over her, *thou* heaven, and *ye* holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged <sup>z</sup>you on her.

21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast <sup>aa</sup>it into the sea, saying, Thus <sup>ab</sup>with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

22 And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft <sup>ac</sup>he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone <sup>ad</sup>shall be heard no more at all in thee.

23 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the <sup>ae</sup>bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants <sup>af</sup>were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries <sup>ag</sup>were all nations deceived.

24 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the <sup>ah</sup>bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants <sup>ai</sup>were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries <sup>aj</sup>were all nations deceived.

*They stood afar off; even Babylon's friends will stand at a distance from her fall; though they had been partakers with her in her sins, and in her sinful pleasures and profits, they were unwilling to bear a share in her plagues. (2.) They made a grievous outcry,—Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! (3.) They wept, and cast dust upon their heads, v. 19. The pleasures of sin are but for a season, and will end in dismal sorrow.*

3. What was the cause of their mourning; not their sin, but their punishment. They did not lament their fall into idolatry, and luxury, and persecution, but their fall into ruin; the loss of their traffic, and of their wealth and power. The spirit of antichrist is a [selfish,] worldly spirit, and their sorrow a mere worldly sorrow; they do not lament for the anger of God, that was now fallen on them, but for the loss of their outward comforts. We have a large schedule and inventory of the wealth and merchandise of this city, all which was suddenly lost, v. 12, 13, and lost irrecoverably, v. 14. The church of God may fall for a time; but she shall rise again: but the fall of Babylon will be an utter overthrow, like that of Sodom and Gomorrah. Godly sorrow is some support under affliction, but mere worldly sorrow adds to the calamity.

V. 20—24. We have here an account of the joy and triumph there was both in heaven and earth at the irrecoverable fall of Babylon: while her own people were bewailing her, the servants of God are called to rejoice over her, v. 20. Here observe, How universal this joy would be, how just and reasonable; and that, because the fall of Babylon was an act of God's vindictive justice, and irrecoverable; and of this they were assured by a remarkable token, v. 21. An angel from heaven takes up a stone like a great millstone, and casts it into the sea, saying, Thus shall Babylon be thrown down with violence, and be found no more at all; the

V. 11—19. (17:3—5. Ez. 26: 27:12—25.) This lamentation of these 'merchants' over Rome, coincides in many respects with that of the merchants over Tyre. The various articles of commerce enumerated do not require particular consideration: the whole is calculated to convey, in the most impressive manner imaginable, some idea of the splendor, luxury, excess, and self-indulgence of all kinds, which have so long triumphed in the powerful, magnificent, elegant, luxurious, and licentious metropolis of popery; and which have always enriched a vast number of individuals, in different ways, by impoverishing the nations belonging to that communion. Neither is it requisite to accommodate the various particulars, to the several kinds of spiritual merchandise, by which the popes, cardinals, bishops, abbots, priests, and other retainers, have been enriched, at the expense of the people. These are indeed evidently alluded to; when not only 'slaves,' but 'the souls of men,' are mentioned as articles of commerce; which is, beyond comparison, the most infamous of all traffics that the demon of avarice ever devised; even almost infinitely more atrocious, than the infamous slave-trade. Yet, alas, it is very far from uncommon. The sale of indulgences, dispensations, absolutions, masses, and bulls, has always enriched the Romish clergy and their dependents, to the deceiving and destroying of the souls of millions; and thus 'by feigned words, they made merchandise of them;' nor has the management of church-preferments, and many other things, been any better than trafficking in souls; and it would be highly gratifying to Protestants, if we could say, that this merchandise has been peculiar to the Roman antichrist, and exclusively their guilt; and that none among us were 'partakers of their sins.' (Note, Is. 56:9—12. P. O. 9—12. Note, Mat. 21:12, 13. P. O. 12—16.) In general, however, all this will at length come to nothing, and no man will 'buy the merchandise' of Rome any more: but all who have shared the gains of her commerce, temporal or spiritual, will stand afar off, for fear of her torment, and 'behold the smoke of her burning,' as that of Sodom was seen at a distance. (Gen. 19:28. Notes, Deut. 29:20—25. Is. 34:9—15. Dan. 7:9, 14.)—Probably, the destruction of Rome will be finished by some immediate judgment of God; and the nature of the soil in the vicinity, [where some geologists assert, that the crust of the earth, which incloses the central fire, is thinnest; see Cordier. Ep.] the frequent eruptions of subterraneous fires, and terrible earthquakes, which have often occurred, seem to point out the method: the combustibles are provided, and the train is already laid; there only wants the 'breath of the Almighty' to kindle it. (Note, Is. 30:33.)

(12.) *Fine linen.* 'Bussos; perhaps cotton. Silk was then a rare and dear commodity. See its history in Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of Roman Empire," ch. 40.' *Woodh. Thyine wood.* The cut, in the opposite column, shows the tree meant: it is thirty feet high, with horizontal branches, crossing each other at right angles: its hard, durable wood receives a fine polish.

(17.) *It rejects 'the company.'*

V. 20. While united numbers whose hopes of further gains will be gone, or whose vain confidence in superstition and idolatry will be ruined, shall lament most dolefully, and with anguish and trembling of heart, over the fall of Rome; the inhabitants of 'heaven,' and especially the 'holy apostles and prophets,' are called on to rejoice over

it: as God had 'avenged them' on that idolatrous and persecuting city; as well as made way for the preaching of his Gospel to all nations. (Notes, 6: 9—11. 12:7—12. 16:4—7.)—It is peculiarly worthy of observation, that 'the apostles,' who are idolatrously honored at Rome, and daily worshipped, should be specially mentioned as rejoicing in her fall; as if 'avenged them' on her, for the dishonor cast on their characters, while it vindicated the glory of God. (Note, 13:5—7.)—There could be no reason why Christians should rejoice in the judgments inflicted on ancient Rome, by the Huns, Goths, Vandals, and other idolatrous nations; for the Christians were peculiarly sufferers in those calamities. The judgments on *papal* Rome must therefore be exclusively intended. SCOTT.

V. 21—24. As a stone was tied to a book, and cast into the Euphrates, by Seraiah, in token of literal Babylon's fall; (Note, Jer. 51:61—61.) so 'a mighty angel' here cast a large millstone into the sea, to represent the violence of mystical Babylon's fall, and to show that she would never rise again. This event is further illustrated by varied emphatical expressions taken from the ancient prophets. (Notes, Is. 34:3—15. Jer. 25:10, 53:10, 11. Marg. Ref. c—g.)—But Rome is still standing, and flourishing, and is honored by many nations, as the metropolis of the Christian world; she still resounds with *singers and musicians*; she still excels in *arts*, which serve to pomp and luxury; she still abounds with *candles*, and *lamps*, and *torches*, burning even by day, as well as by night; and consequently this prophecy hath not been, but remains yet to be fulfilled.' Bp. Newton. Her merchants being said to be 'the great men of the earth,' in connexion with 'all nations being deceived by her sorceries,' plainly refers to the infamous traffic before mentioned. (21) *No more at all.* 11. 14. 22, 23. These repeated, varied, and emphatical negatives, should not pass unnoticed. (Notes, Is. 13:18—22. 14:21—23.) Of what other city, literal Babylon alone excepted, is such decisive language used, concerning its absolute and final destruction?

(23.) 'Fire, in prophetic language, implies utter destruction: Rome is Babylon; in a spiritual sense it is that she is to be burned and consumed in her corruption, superstition, and usurped dominion; not her buildings.' WOODIT.

Concluding Note. 'The denunciation of the judgment of Babylon, contained in the speech of the angel, and continued in the heavenly voice, seems principally intended for the support and comfort of the poor, persecuted Christian church, during the high zenith of the antichristian usurpation. To answer this purpose the more effectually, almost every part of the prophecy is taken from the prophetic denunciations of the O. T., against Babylon, Tyre, &c., which were known to be literally fulfilled. No other method could afford such perfect confidence to those, who, in the new Babylon, clearly discovered (and this happened in the 12th century as to papal Rome) the tyranny and wickedness of the old one.'





24 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

## CHAP. XIX.

1 God is praised in heaven for judging the great whore, and avenging the blood of his saints. 7 The marriage of the Lamb. 10 The angel will not be worshipped. 17 The fowls called to the great slaughter.

AND after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God:

2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine lin-

en, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

f Je. 51:49.  
a c. 11:15.  
b vet. 3:4,6.  
c c. 7:10,12.  
d e. 16:7.

e c. 18:20.  
f Is. 34:10.  
c. 18:9,13.  
g Ps. 135:1.  
h Ps. 97:1,12.

i Mat. 25:10.  
j Is. 52:1.  
k Is. 61:10. c.34.  
l or, bright.  
m Ps. 132:9.

place should be no longer habitable by man, no work should be done there, no comfort enjoyed, no light seen there, but utter darkness and desolation, as the reward of her great wickedness; first, in *deceiving the nations with her sorceries*, and, secondly, in destroying and murdering those whom she could not deceive, v. 24. Such abominable sins deserved so great a ruin.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1—4. The fall of Babylon being fixed and declared irrecoverable, in the foregoing ch., this begins with a holy triumph over her, in pursuance to the order there given, ch. 18: 20. They now gladly answer the call; and here you have, 1. The form of their thanksgiving, in that heavenly and most comprehensive word, *Alleluia, praise ye the Lord*; with this they begin, with this they go on, and with this they end, v. 4. their prayers are now turned into praises, their hosannas end in alleluias. 2. The matter of their thanksgiving; they praise Him for the truth of his Word, and the righteousness of his providential conduct, especially in this great event,—the ruin of Babylon, v. 2. 3. The effect of these their praises; when the angels and saints cried *Alleluia*, her fire burned more fiercely, and *her smoke ascended for ever and ever*, v. 3. The surest way to have our deliverances continued and completed, is, to give God the glory of what He has done for us. 4. The blessed harmony between the angels and the saints in this triumphant song, v. 4. the churches and their ministers take the melodious sound from the angels, and repeat it; falling down, and worshipping God, they cry, *Amen, Alleluia*.

V. 5—10. The triumphant song being ended, an *epithalamium*, or marriage-song, begins, v. 6.

PRACT. OBS. When collective bodies are ripe for vengeance, their sins will be punished in this world; but individuals are reserved unto 'the wrath to come.'—Alas! too often, injustice, oppression, fraud, avarice, or excessive indulgence, are connected with extensive commerce; and to number 'the persons of men,' with oxen, asses, sheep, and horses, as the stock of a farm, or with bales of goods, as the cargo of a ship, is no doubt a most detestable and *antichristian* practice, fit only for 'Babylon the Great.' Yet even this, cruel, unrighteous, and hateful as it is, must not be considered as the *worst traffic*, even of this our land: for the souls of men are traded for by those, who take the cure of them for the sake of the emolument, and the abundance of the delicacies obtained by it; and then either leave them to perish in ignorance, or poison them by heresy, or lead them on the road to hell by a profligate example; strenuously, and by every calumny, if stronger means are withheld, opposing all, who attempt to prevent the dire effects of their vile conduct. Many of these spiritual wickednesses, and this merchandise of souls, by feigned words, equivocating subscriptions and declarations, nay, worshipping God in expressions, which are avowedly deemed false by those who use them, and all this 'for filthy lucre's sake,' will be found, under

different forms, even in the protestant churches: and perhaps no denomination is quite free from the guilt of rendering religious profession, and sacred functions, *subservient* to worldly interest, credit, ease, and indulgence. These are the remains of the antichristianity derived from Rome, which most need protesting against and removing; in these things we ought to 'come out and separate from Babylon,' if we would not partake of her plagues. Compared with such evils, a posture, a garb, or a ceremony, through perhaps inconvenient in itself, and derived from Rome, is scarcely worth noticing: yet bigotry exerts itself principally the other way; and externals are decried against with great warmth, while the spiritual pride, avarice, worldly indulgence, and intolerance of Rome are not so much disliked! But the vengeance of heaven is coming on Rome, not for gestures, garbs, and ceremonies, though multiplied, ridiculous, and of bad consequence in themselves; but for idolatry, ambition, oppression, cruelty to the people of God; imposture, avarice, licentiousness, and spiritual tyranny. But we must needs go out of the world, and the church too, if we renounce every religious society, because some of the members or leaders of it are criminal in such matters. SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. XIX. V. 1—6. The repeated use of the word 'Alleluia,' or *Hallelujah*, which is Heb. (Ps. 106:1. 149:) is supposed by some persons to be an intimation, that the Jews will be converted about the time of the destruction of Rome; and, whatever may be thought of this, it is exceedingly probable that the accomplishment of the N. T. prophecies, in this respect, will be one principal mean of effecting that happy change, if it have not previously taken place. Sc.

V. 7, 8. Christ is the Bridegroom of his ransomed church; this sacred union will be fully completed in heaven; but the beginning of the glorious millennium may be considered as a remarkable celebration of his espousals on earth. (Notes, 21:1—4, 9—21. Ps. 45:9—17. Cant. 1:2. 3:11. John 3:27—36. 2 Cor. 11:1—6. Eph. 5:22—27.) All that has hitherto been done seems to be merely an introduction to that happy era, when innumerable multitudes will be converted all over the earth, and the state of the church will greatly resemble heaven itself. Then 'the marriage of the Lamb' will come; and his espoused church, being purified from heresies, divisions, and antichristian corruptions, in doctrine, discipline, worship, and practice, will be 'made ready,' and meet to be publicly owned by Him, as his delight and his beloved. Then to her it will be granted to 'be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white,' or pure and shining, 'which is the righteousness of the saints.' The word is plural, and some would render it, 'the righteous acts of the saints;' but the word *raiment*, in this meaning, seems generally to signify, either the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, or the image of Christ renewed in them, by the sanctification of the Spirit, of which their *righteous acts* are effects and evidences; and indeed both senses may here

be intended. (Notes, 7:13—17. Rom. 13:11—14. Gal. 3:26—29. 'That is, those good works, which are the certain evidences of a living faith.' SCOTT.)

Beza. (8.) 'This fine linen is both pure and bright. Pure, in regard of justification, because it presents us unblamable and unprovable before God, free from any spots or blot. Bright, in respect of the glory which it brings a man, both before God, who makes us heirs of his eternal kingdom, because of this purity of his love, which is made ours, as also before men, to whom it shows forth our adoption by those most goodly and glistering fruits thereof, which it makes to offer themselves readily to the view of men, by means of the Holy Ghost working together with us, and within us. And see how distinctly the Holy Ghost speaks in this place; for He saith, not that the justifications of the saints are fine linen, but contrarily, that fine linen are the justifications, and that not of the wicked, as a man is, when he is first converted to God, but of the saints; i. e. all justifications, even of those in whom piety most shines forth, flow not from a man's self, and from inherent matters of his own, but abide in the outward garment that comes unto him from without, namely, in Christ and his righteousness, whom we put in us by faith alone. It is a plain and manswerable place of Scripture, to confirm the doctrine of justification by faith only. And because of the double proof and evidence of our justification, one before God by faith, in which respect Christ is the white linen of the saints, another before men by the works of sanctification, therefore the Holy Ghost uses the word justifications in the plural, so to comprise in one word what was declared by two, pure and bright. For the works of holiness, if taken as they are



9 And he saith unto me, Write, <sup>n</sup> Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper <sup>o</sup> of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These <sup>p</sup> are the true sayings of God.

10 And <sup>q</sup> I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See *thou do it not*: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony <sup>r</sup> of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white <sup>s</sup> horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called <sup>t</sup> Faithful and True, and in righteousness <sup>u</sup> he doth judge and make war.

12 His <sup>v</sup> eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many <sup>w</sup> crowns; and he had a name <sup>x</sup> written, that no man knew but he himself.

13 And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The <sup>y</sup> Word of God.

14 And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed <sup>z</sup> in fine linen, white and clean.

15 And out of his mouth <sup>a</sup> goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod <sup>b</sup> of iron: and he <sup>c</sup> treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16 And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, <sup>d</sup> Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all *men*, both free and bond, both small and great.

19 And I saw the beast, and the

kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war <sup>e</sup> against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

20 And the beast <sup>f</sup> was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a <sup>g</sup> lake of fire burning with brimstone.

21 And the remnant were slain with the sword <sup>h</sup> of him that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls <sup>i</sup> were filled with their flesh.

office, though not in nature; I, as an angel and messenger of God, have the testimony of Jesus, a charge to be a witness for Him, and to testify concerning Him; and thou, as an apostle, having the Spirit of prophecy, hast the same testimony to give in; therefore we are in this brethren, and fellow-servants. He directs him to the true and only Object of religious worship; and that is, God; 'Worship God, and Him alone.' This fully condemns the practice, both of the papists in worshipping the elements of bread and wine, and saints and angels; and the practice of the Socinians and Arians, who do not believe that Christ is truly and by nature God, and yet pay Him religious worship; [the Socinians of the present age are not generally chargeable with this inconsistency;] and this shows what wretched fig-leaves all their evasions and excuses are, which they offer in their own vindication; they stand hereby convicted of idolatry by a messenger from heaven.

V. 11—21. No sooner was the marriage solemnized between Christ and his church, by the conversion of the Jews, than the glorious Head and Husband of the church is called out to a new expedition; which seems to be the great battle that was to be fought at Armageddon, foretold ch. 16: 16. Observe,

1. The description of the great Commander; his empire is in heaven: and He is again described as sitting on a white horse, to show the equity of the cause, and certainty of success: in his attributes He is

faithful and true: his armor is a vesture dipt in blood: either his own blood, by which He purchased this mediatorial power; or the blood of his enemies, over whom He has always prevailed. His name is The Word of God,—a name none fully knows but Himself: only this we know, that this Word was God manifest in the flesh: but his perfections are incomprehensible by any creature.

2. The army He commands, v. 14. very large, made up of many armies: angels and saints followed, resembling Him in their armor of purity and righteousness; chosen, called, and faithful.

3. The weapons of his warfare,—a sharp sword proceeding from his mouth, v. 15. either the threatenings of the written Word, or rather, his word of command, calling on his followers to take a just revenge on his and their enemies, who are now put into the wine-press of the wrath of God, to be trodden under foot by Him.

4. The ensigns of his authority, his coat of arms,—a name written on his vesture and thigh, King of kings, and Lord of lords: asserting his authority and power, and the cause of the quarrel, v. 16.

5. An invitation given to the fowls of heaven, that they should come and see the battle, and share in the spoil and pillage of the field, v. 17, 18. intimating, that this great, decisive engagement should leave the enemies of the church a feast for the birds of prey, and that all the world should have cause to rejoice in the issue of it.

6. The battle joined; the enemy falls on with great fury, headed by the beast, and the kings of the earth: the powers of earth and hell gathered, to make their utmost effort, v. 19.

7. The victory gained by the great and glorious Head of the church; the beast and the false prophet, the leaders of the army, these are taken and cast into the burning lake, made incapable of molesting the church of God any more; and their followers, whether officers or common soldiers, are given up to military execution, and made a feast for the fowls of heaven. Though the divine vengeance will chiefly fall on the beast, and the false prophet, yet it will be no excuse to those who fight under their banner, that they only followed their leaders, and obeyed their command; since they would fight for them, they must fall and perish with them. Be wise NOW, therefore, O ye kings, be instructed, ye rulers of the earth; kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, Ps. 2: 10, 12.

CHAP. XX. This ch. is thought by some, to be the darkest part of all this prophecy: it is very probable the things contained in it are not yet accomplished; therefore, it is

PRACT. OBS. All heaven resounds with the high praises of God, whenever He executes his true and righteous judgments on those who corrupt the earth with pernicious principles and ungodly practices, and when He avenges the blood of his servants on their persecutors. Who then are they, that throw out insinuations, or openly speak of cruelty and tyranny, on hearing of these 'righteous judgments,' but rebels, who blasphemously take part with the enemies of God, and plead against his dealings towards them? Let all beware of every approach to such impiety and presumption; for 'the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.'—As 'justice and judgment are the basis of his throne,' the earth has cause to tremble; but, as it is established in mercy, also, the penitent may rejoice in hope. (Notes, Ps. 97:1—7. 99:1—3.)—If created angels are so

severed from the righteousness of faith, are not pure; or if the righteousness of faith be considered apart from works of holiness, it is not bright or shining forth; for it is hidden within, far from the eyes of men.

BRIGHTMAN.  
V. 9, 10. An angel, either he from whom the voice is supposed to have come (5), or rather the angel who interpreted the foregoing vision, (17:7.) informed the apostle on this occasion, that those persons would be happy, in a peculiar manner and degree, who were 'invited to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.' (Mat. 22:1—14. Luke 14:15—24.) This seems especially to refer to the more abundant grace and consolation, that Christians will receive in those happy days which are coming. See.

(10.) 'This text supplies a principle of divine authority, that Jesus, whose Person, and character, and history, are known from the books of Scripture, is the end and object of the prophetic system contained in those books.'

HENIV, abr.  
(16.) Thigh.] Symbolizing strength and lawful rule; see cut, under the word 'thigh,' in the Concordance: thus the first 'fruit of' Jacob's [724]

glorious, as to surprise even the aged apostle into a purposed adoration; how glorious must the Lord of angels be! And if the highest of holy creatures greatly fear, and decidedly refuse, undue honor, how humbly should we sinful worms of the earth behave ourselves!—It behooves us to rejoice, and praise the Lord, when opposing tyrants are crushed, and false prophets are put to silence in darkness; and we should not scruple to add, 'So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord.' Nevertheless, it is our part to aim at more peaceful and gentle victories; and, by our prayers, example, and improvement of talents, to seek the conversion of sinners, and the salvation of the souls even of our most cruel enemies and persecutors; while we constantly declare, that, 'except they repent, they will all likewise perish.'

SCOTT.  
'loins,' is called the 'beginning of his strength.' Gen. 49:3. A little observation will show, that scarce any labor is performed, without the aid of the thigh muscles, the strongest in the body.

FO.  
V. 17—21. The 'angel standing in the sun,' emblematically denoted, that the predicted judgments would be rendered conspicuous to all the world, and his proclamation showed the immense slaughter which would be made of the enemies of God. To this place may be referred Ezekiel's prophecy of Gog and Magog; as the subsequent visions seem to relate to the millennium; (Notes, 20:7—10. Ez. 38:—48:.) for the total ruin of the eastern antichrist, and of all the opposers of the Gospel in Asia and elsewhere, seems to be intimately connected with the fall of the western antichrist.—Though Rome, 'the seat of the beast,' was destroyed, yet 'the beast' himself is supposed still to subsist: for the spirit of antichrist will survive that antichristian city.—'The false prophet' evidently denotes the same power, before designated as 'the two-horned beast'; and this effectually confirms the interpretation which has been given of that great enemy of God and his church.

SCOTT.



## CHAP. XX.

2 Satan bound for a thousand years. 6 The first resurrection: they blessed that have part therein. 7 Satan let loose again. 8 Gog and Magog. 10 The devil cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. 12 The last and general resurrection.

AND I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2 And he laid hold on the <sup>b</sup> dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound <sup>c</sup> him a thousand years,

3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal <sup>d</sup> upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

4 And I saw <sup>e</sup> thrones, and they sat upon them, and <sup>f</sup> judgment was given unto them; and I saw the <sup>g</sup> souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not

worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned <sup>h</sup> with Christ a thousand years.

a c. 1:13. 9:1. d Da. 6:17. f 1 Co. 6:2,3.  
b c. 12:9. e Da. 7:9. 22:27. g c. 6:9.  
c 2 Pe. 2:4. Jude 6. Lu. 22:30. h c. 5:10.

wiser to content ourselves with general observations, than to be positive and particular in our explications.

V. 1—3. We have here a prophecy of the binding of Satan for a certain term of time, in which he should have much less power, and the church much more peace than before. Observe, 1. To whom this work of binding Satan is committed,—to an angel from heaven, very probably no other than the Lord Jesus Christ; the description of him will hardly agree with any other. 2. The means He uses in this work, a chain, and a key; a great chain to bind Satan, and the key of the prison in which he was to be confined. 3. The execution of this work, v. 2, 3. Neither the strength of the dragon, nor the subtlety of the serpent, was sufficient to rescue him. And He cast him down

with force, and with a just vengeance, to his own place and prison, from which he had been permitted to break out, and disturb the churches, and deceive the nations; now he is brought back, and there laid in chains. He is shut up, and a seal set upon him; and Christ's lock and seal even the devils themselves cannot break open. We have the term of this confinement of Satan,—a thousand years; after which, he was to be loosed again for a little season. The church should have a considerable time of peace and prosperity, but all her trials were not yet over.

V. 4—6. We have here an account of the reign of the saints for the same time Satan continued bound; and here, observe, 1. Who they were, that received such honor,—those who had suffered for Christ, and all who had faithfully adhered to Him, not receiving the mark of the beast, nor worshipping his image; all who had kept themselves clear of pagan and papal idolatry. 2. The honor bestowed on them; (1.) They were raised from the dead, and restored to life, either literally, or figuratively; they were in a civil and political sense dead, and had a political resurrection; their liberties and privileges were revived and restored. (2.) Thrones, and

NOTES. CHAP. XX. V. 2—5. 'Jones and Park have made good observations on the happy state to which the world may attain on the prevalence of true religion. Even the cessation of war, oppression, and misrule, with their attendant miseries, would have limited influence, in comparison with the wide diffusion of happiness which would ensue, from the improvements in private life, from the banishment of vice, ambition, and idleness; litigation and crime ceasing, and kindness and brotherly-love prevailing. This note cannot be closed more appropriately than in the words of Bp. Hall—"Oh, blessed Savior, what strange variety of conceits do I find concerning thy thousand years' reign! What riddles are there in that prophecy which no human tongue can read! Where to fix the beginning of that marvellous millenary, and where the end, and what manner of reign it shall be,—whether temporal or spiritual, on earth or in heaven, undergoes as many constructions as there are pens that have undertaken it; and yet when all is done, I see thine apostle speaks only of the souls of the martyrs reigning so long with Thee, not of thy reigning so long on earth with these martyrs. How busy are the tongues of men,—how are their brains taken up with the indeterminable construction of this enigmatical truth, when, in the mean time, the care of thy spiritual reign in their hearts is neglected.'" HENRY, *abr.*

V. 4—6. I am induced to understand it figuratively, by the following considerations: 1st. The whole book is enigmatical, and full of emblems: so that a literal exposition would often imply absurdity: and the interpreter's business and skill consists principally in explaining emblems, or hieroglyphics. A succession of kings is constantly spoken of, as if they were individually the same persons: the two witnesses who were slain, were raised again, and ascended into heaven; when others were sent forth of the same spirit, and to bear the same testimony with greater encouragement and success. (Notes, 11:3—14.) Rome is called Egypt, Sodom, Jerusalem, Babylon; and, in short, this is the style and manner of the whole prophecy, which no man could possibly explain on any other principle. As, therefore, the Jews expected Elijah to come personally, and knew him not when he came mystically, in John the Baptist; (Notes, Mat. 17:10—13. Luke 1:11—17.) so, I apprehend, many Christians, and men of the utmost respectability for piety and learning, have fallen into the same mistake, in expecting a literal and personal resurrection of the martyrs, at the opening of the millennium; and they would not know them at first, when they arose, (as the witnesses did,) in a numerous race of Christians, resembling them in all their most eminent graces. 2dly. It is unaccountable, that 'the souls' of the persons raised should be exclusively mentioned, if the literal resurrection of their bodies was meant: for this rather implies, according to the enigmatical style of the book, that their souls re-animated other bodies; i. e. they appeared to live again, in Christians of the same spirit. (Note, 6:9—11.) 3dly. Some have imagined, that the resurrection of all the righteous will precede the millennium; because 'the dead in Christ will rise first.' (Note, 1 Cor. 15:20—23.) But what do they suppose the state of the earth will be during that period? Will no inhabitants dwell on earth except the risen saints? Or will all the other inhabitants be wicked? Or, being righteous, will they not die? Or, if they die, will there be three resurrections; one, of the righteous before the millennium, and another of the righteous after it, and one of the wicked? These questions are not easily resolved on that hypothesis: yet, till they are satisfactorily resolved, the sentiment is wholly inadmissible. The resurrection is always spoken of, as one grand event, occurring nearly at the same time; except, that the righteous will be first raised, and so be prepared to sit with Christ in judgment on the wicked: and it is implied in every one of those declarations, that all the dead in Christ will rise together, before the living shall be changed. (Notes, John 5:28,29. 1 Cor. 15:20—23. 1 Thes. 4:13—14.) 4thly. We cannot conceive, that it could add to the felicity of those, who, being absent from the body, are present with the Lord, (Notes, 2 Cor. 5:1—3. Phil. 1:21—26.) to come again to dwell on the earth; which must be in some degree a scene of pain, suffering, imperfection, and death, till the present state of things is fully ended: and this will not be till the general resurrection; as it sufficiently appears from the loosing of Satan, and the effects of it, after the millennium. (Note, 7—10.) 5thly. This is the only place, in which anything like such a literal resurrection, previous to the end of the world, is intimated; whereas, there are numerous prophecies of an universal prevalence and triumph of true religion throughout the earth. Now, is it most reasonable, to interpret so many

plain predictions by one expression in this enigmatical book; or, to explain that one expression by the many clear predictions, which give another view of it? Or, why should the literal sense be here insisted on, when in so many places it must, in that case, be departed from? But why speak of the literal sense? I cannot see, how the resurrection of souls can literally mean the resurrection of bodies. Now, if the resurrection here spoken of be not a literal, but a figurative resurrection; the same reasons lead us to conclude, that Christ will not come down from heaven personally to reign on earth; but that He will reign spiritually in the prevalence of his Gospel, and by his Holy Spirit in the hearts of men in general. The Scriptures speak of his 'sitting on the right hand of God' in heaven, till He shall come again to judge the world. (Notes, 1:7. Mat. 25:31—33. Acts 1:9—12. 3:19—21. 2 Thes. 1:5—10. Heb. 9:27,28.) Observe, that, in the last quotation, the coming of Christ to judge the world, is expressly called 'the second time,' but on the supposition which we combat, his coming to judgment will be the third time. The expressions concerning his coming to destroy Jerusalem, (Notes, Mat. 24:29—31. Mark 13:24—31.) and those that relate to his presence with, and coming to, his people, are stronger than any here used; yet no good expositor interprets them of his personal presence as Man, in the primary meaning of them. (Notes, Jn. 14:18—24.)—Some expositors compute the thousand years, after the same manner, as the 'three years and a half,' or '1260 days,' have been reckoned, each day to signify a year; which would extend this happy period, to 360,000 years at least: this, however, seems so much beyond all proportion to the past duration of the world, and so different from all the views elsewhere given of the speedy approach of the day of judgment, that it is not generally regarded. So that, on the whole, we may expect, that a thousand years will follow the final destruction of all the [selfish,] anti-christian, idolatrous, persecuting powers; during which, pure Christianity, in doctrine, worship, and universal holiness, will be diffused all over the earth; and that all idolatry, infidelity, impiety, superstition, heresy, false religion, injustice, fraud, oppression, cruelty, war, murder, intemperance, licentiousness, with all other evils, which now harass and desolate the earth, will be restrained by the omnipotent operation of the Holy Spirit; and that godliness, righteousness, peace, truth, purity, and love, will render the earth in some measure like heaven itself.—Hitherto, the depravity of human nature, and the malignant agency of apostate angels, have been illustrated and displayed, in the state of the world: and the inefficacy of all human inventions, and even of 'the Word of truth,' without the new-creating 'Spirit of truth,' to remedy these evils, has been demonstrated, in opposition to man's proud reasonings. The event of the trial has shown, that nothing, but the power of God Himself, can prevent men from listening to the temptations of fallen angels; or from despising, opposing, neglecting, or perverting, the Gospel of salvation itself. But at length the Lord will arise; by the almighty power of his providence, He will confine fallen angels; and by the omnipotent operation of his Spirit, He will new-create fallen men, generally all over the earth: and then repentance, faith, and holiness, will as certainly prevail, as impenitence, unbelief, and unholiness now do. Still, however, Christianity will be the religion of sinners, and there will be defects and sins in believers, and, doubtless, some unconverted persons, for a short part of their lives, at least: for men will be made holy by regeneration, not born holy: and, therefore, they will still continue liable to many natural evils, and to death. Yet that measure of righteousness, which such a prevalence of true Christianity must produce, will immensely lessen the quantity, even of natural evil.—We may easily perceive, what a variety of dreadful pains, diseases, and other grievous calamities, must cease, were all men true and consistent Christians. All the evils of public and private contention will be terminated: domestic, relative, and social felicity must be exceedingly enhanced. Industry in useful things, with frugality and temperance, would prevent that pinching poverty and distress, which now render multitudes wretched: and a greater fertility of the earth may reasonably be expected; according to the former fruitfulness of Canaan, contrasted with its present sterility. Every man will then [love his neighbor as himself, and] try to alleviate, instead of adding to, the unavoidable sorrows of all around him; nor shall they hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain' of God. The hope of glory, the prospects of a happy meeting in heaven, and the abundant consolations of the Holy Spirit, will render sickness, death, and the loss of beloved friends, far more tolerable



5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, <sup>k</sup> Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

9 And <sup>m</sup> they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

10 And the devil that deceived

them was cast into the lake <sup>n</sup> of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

i c. 2:11. 21:8. k Eze. 38:2. 39:1. Eze. 38:9, 16.  
j Is. 61:6. l c. 16:14. m ts. 8:8. n c. 19:20.

power of judgment were given to them; they were possessed of great honor, interest, and authority; I suppose, rather of a spiritual, than of a secular nature. (3.) They reigned with Christ 1000 years, in his spiritual and heavenly kingdom, in a glorious conformity to Him in wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, beyond what had been known before in the world; this is called the first resurrection. As for the wicked, they shall not be raised up, and restored to their power again till Satan be let loose; this may be called a resurrection, as the conversion of the Jews is said to be life from the dead. 3. The happiness of these servants of God is declared. (1.) They are blessed and holy, v. 6. None can be blessed but they that are holy; and all that are holy shall be blessed. These were holy, as a sort of first-fruits to God in this spiritual resurrection, and, as such, blessed by Him. (2.) They are se-

eured from the power of the second death; this is the death of the soul, eternal separation from God. The Lord grant we may never know what it is by experience! They who have had experience of a spiritual resurrection, are saved from the power of the second death.

V. 7—10. Here we have an account of the return of the church's troubles, and another mighty conflict, very sharp, but short and decisive. Satan's last efforts seem to be the greatest; the power now permitted to him, more unlimited than before, v. 8. We need not be too inquisitive as to what particular powers are meant by Gog and Magog, since the army was gathered from all parts of the world. The camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, is the spiritual Jerusalem, in which the most precious interests of the people of God are lodged. The army of the saints is described as drawn forth out of the city, and lying under the walls of it, to defend it; they were encamped about Jerusalem; but the army of the enemy was so much superior to that of the church, that they compassed them and their city about. God would, in an extraordinary and more immediate manner, fight this last and decisive battle for his people. The devil is now cast into hell, with his two great officers, the

erable than at present: 'while communion with God,' and 'the communion of the saints,' all being of one heart in the worship and service of God, will make religion a constant feast to their souls; and only inferior to heavenly felicity, because not absolutely perfect. Every one must likewise perceive, how immensely the human species would be increased, if wars, many destructive employments, and intemperance were put an end to; and God's ordinance of marriage were generally substituted, instead of that compound of licentiousness and selfishness, which constitute a vicious celibacy, at least till the prime of life is past; or, that forced and prudential celibacy, which comparative or real poverty, united with distrust of Providence, often occasions; things which exceedingly tend to corrupt the morals of the human species; and to destroy the lives of both sexes in youth, almost as much as war itself. We may, therefore, readily allow, that the number of persons, who shall live on earth, during the millennium, may be immensely greater, than the whole multitude of all the preceding ages; and, consequently, that far more of the human race may yet be saved than shall perish; even though we do not agree to the computations which have been made concerning it.—The wild notions and extravagant practices, grafted on the belief of a millennium, have long rendered the name of it contemptible or hateful to numbers; yet we have as just grounds to expect such a happy event, as the Jews had to look for a Messiah; but those who suppose it will be a carnal millennium, are as much mistaken, as the Jews were in waiting for a temporal Deliverer. It is our duty to pray for the promised glorious days, and to do everything, in our private or public situations, which can be instrumental in preparing the way for them; even as David made abundant provision for the temple, which Solomon was to build.—Whether the general opinion, that this thousand years will be the seventh thousand from the creation, or the sabbatical millenary, the event must determine: it is evident, however, that the dawn of this glorious day cannot be very distant.—(5) The rest of, &c.] 'The dead church lives again, in the same metaphorical sense, in which the rest of the dead, the enemies of the church, live again at the end of the thousand years, when Satan is loosed, and gathers them to battle against the church. The "souls of them, who were slain for the testimony of Jesus, and for the Word of God," are those Christians, who were slain in the time of the ten persecutions; (Note, 6:9—11.) and the souls of them, who worshipped not the beast, are those Christians, who chose rather to die, . . . than to be guilty of Romish idolatry: and they are said to live again; as the heathen who had received the wound of death, lived again, in the succession of the antichristian beast, . . . who exercised the power of the heathen emperors over the earth, and revived the idolatry of the heathen empire: and, as the two witnesses, when slain, are said to live again; . . . because a succession of men of the same faith, and the same opposition to the beast, revive and flourish, after they are slain.' Whit. (Is. 26:19. Ez. 37:1—14)—It appears to me undoubted, that the fathers or early writers of the Christian church in general expected a millennium, and several of them a millennium not materially differing from that above described. Others, gradually following the impulse of imagination, speculation, and carnal passions, advanced sentiments on the subject, so extravagant, ridiculous, and even licentious, that sober, yet injudicious men, became ashamed of the general doctrine. Thus it was disgraced, and almost forgotten, during many centuries: but, about the era of the Reformation, it was again revived; and again still more deeply disgraced, by the wild reveries and practical atrocities of those who maintained it, and rendered it subservient to rebellious insurrections, and every abomination. But, for some considerable time past, the question concerning a millennium has been brought forward and discussed in a more sober and holy manner. Further, the restoration to purity, [love,] and peace, of the Christian church, will be connected with the conversion of the Jews, as a nation, and their reinstatement in their own land: and this will introduce the conversion of the nations, in which the converted Jews will be most diligent and successful instruments. This seems to be foretold in many prophecies already considered: yet the event alone can fully show the order, manner, and instruments of their accomplishment. Scott.

V. 7—10. God will remove the restraint which had been laid on Satan and his angels, perhaps, among other reasons, to show that the long continued happy estate of the world, was not the effect of any amelioration of human nature, as descended from fallen Adam, but of an im-

mediate divine influence on the minds of men by regeneration, 'to the praise of the glory of his grace.'—It is in vain to inquire, who Gog and Magog will be, or whence they will come: for this also must be understood figuratively, to denote enemies fierce and numerous, as Gog and Magog had been before the millennium; and it is expressly said, that they 'were the nations in the four quarters,' or corners 'of the earth.'—When Satan and his angels shall be loosed, a few years will suffice to seduce multitudes into [selfishness] idolatry or infidelity; and then persecutions and massacres of Christians will be as natural as ever, and as readily resorted to; so that it will probably appear to the pious remnant, as if the cause of Christ was about to be altogether ruined. The opinion, that some remote nations will continue idolaters, during the whole term of the millennium, and, at the close of it, come forward as persecutors of the church, which some respectable writers have advanced, and almost taken for granted, seems to have no scriptural support, except that Gog and Magog are mentioned both by Ezekiel and John. (Notes, Ez. 38:39.) It is, however, indisputable, that Ezekiel's prophecy relates to events previous to the millennium; and John's, to transactions subsequent to it. Magog is generally supposed to have been the progenitor of the nations formerly called Scythians, and in modern times, Tartars; but not of them exclusively; and Gog may be considered as the name, or title, of their king. But, if the same nation be literally and exclusively meant, it may apply to the descendants of Magog, as well after the millennium, as before; and Gog (as Pharaoh, Ptolemy, &c.) may be still considered, as the title of their prince. This, however, can hardly be allowed; because Gog and Magog, in Ezekiel, come exclusively from 'the north quarters;'—Gog and Magog, in John, come 'from the four quarters of the earth.'—The supposition of whole nations continuing idolaters, throughout the millennium, cannot be made consistent with the general tenor of prophecy; or, in particular, with these predictions; 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ.' (Note, 11:15—18.) 'All kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall do Him service.' (Note, Ps. 72: 8—11.) 'The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' (Note, Hab. 2:12—14.) 'And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom; that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him.' (Notes, Dan. 2:34—36, 44, 45. 7:9—14.) Many others to the same effect might be adduced.—It cannot reasonably be supposed, that when Satan, with the beast and the false prophet, is removed, and prevented from deceiving the nations; that whole nations should still continue under the gross deception of open idolatry: and if human depravity alone be sufficient (as indeed it is) to account for this, how can it be conceived, that the same depravity should fail to stir up the idolaters to war against the church? Will then a perfect neutrality prevail? Will the zealous Christians of the millennium, during ten whole centuries at least, make no efforts to convert the idolatrous nations? Or, will these nations adhere to their idolatry, and yet show no enmity against those who zealously and perseveringly attempt their conversion? All this is so contrary to scriptural statements, and to the known and experienced propensities of human nature, that it is wonderful it should have been overlooked on this argument.—All over the earth, I apprehend, men will generally be changed by divine grace: but they will be holy, not by natural birth, but by regeneration. Their children will have the same fallen nature as ours have: and, if left unregenerate, and exposed to Satan's temptations and delusions, a few years will suffice to raise up Gog and Magog from the dead. (5.) The same causes will produce the same effects; enmity against God will express itself by enmity against his people; the old scenes will be acted over again, and religious wars, persecutions, and massacres, with attempts to exterminate the hated company, must follow more and more; did not God at once interpose to protect his friends, to destroy his enemies, and to bring forward the solemn and long expected day of judgment. Scott.

(8.) Gog and Magog.] I. e. so some, the barbarians, or savage nations. Judge Winthrop makes the contest between the northern and southern nations, to finish in 2001; and Gog, or the land of Magog, to extend from Norway to Kamtschatka. Ed.

(10.) 'This description is conformable to other ancient prophecies still unfulfilled, or which have received only a partial or typical completion. Such are Is. 63: 66. Joel 3. Ez. 38: 39.; of them little can be



11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the ° earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books <sup>p</sup> were opened: and another book <sup>q</sup> was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according <sup>r</sup> to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was east into the lake of fire.

### CHAP. XXI.

<sup>1</sup> A new heaven and a new earth. <sup>10</sup> The heavenly Jerusalem, with a full description thereof. <sup>23</sup> She needeth no sun, the glory of God is her light. <sup>24</sup> The kings of the earth bring their riches unto her.

AND I saw a new <sup>a</sup> heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven, and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 And I John saw the holy <sup>b</sup> city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of heaven, prepared as a <sup>c</sup> bride <sup>d</sup> adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the <sup>e</sup> tabernacle of God <sup>f</sup> is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, <sup>g</sup> and God himself shall be with them, <sup>h</sup> and be their God.

4 And God shall wipe away all

tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more <sup>b</sup> death, neither <sup>i</sup> sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

<sup>o</sup> 2 Pe. 3:10, 12. <sup>t</sup> Ho. 13:14. <sup>c</sup> Is. 54:5.  
<sup>p</sup> Da. 7:10. <sup>u</sup> 1 Co. 15:6, 51. <sup>d</sup> Ps. 45:9—14.  
<sup>q</sup> Da. 12:1. <sup>u</sup> Mat. 25:41. <sup>e</sup> 2 Co. 6:16.  
<sup>r</sup> Je. 32:19. <sup>a</sup> Is. 65:17—19. <sup>f</sup> Zec. 8:8.  
<sup>s</sup> or, the grave. <sup>b</sup> Is. 63:22. <sup>2</sup> Pe. 3:13. <sup>g</sup> Is. 25:8. <sup>c</sup> 7:17.  
<sup>10</sup> 12:22. <sup>h</sup> 1 Co. 15:26, 54. <sup>i</sup> Is. 35:10.

beast and the false prophet, tyranny and idolatry, to be there tormented night and day, for ever and ever.

V. 11—15. The utter destruction of the devil's kingdom very properly leads to an account of the day of judgment, which will soon determine every man's everlasting state; and we may be assured there will be a judgment, when we see the prince of this world is judged, John 16: 11. Here we have a description of it; where, observe, 1. The throne, and tribunal of judgment, great and white, very glorious, and perfectly just and righteous. 2. The appearance of the Judge, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, who then put on such majesty and terror, that the earth and the heaven fled from his face, and there was no place found for them, 2 Pet. 3: 10. 3. The persons to be judged, v. 12. the dead, small and great; both young and old, low and high, poor and rich. 4. The rule of judgment settled; the books were opened: the book of God's omniscience, the book of the sinner's conscience, formerly secret, now open; and another book,—the book of the Scriptures, the statute-book of heaven, the rule of life; this book is opened, as containing the law by which the hearts and lives of men are to be tried; this book determines matter of right, the other books give evidence of matters of fact; some, by the other book, called the book of life, understand the book of God's eternal counsels; but that does not seem to belong to the affair of judgment; in eternal election God does not act judicially, but with absolute, sovereign freedom. Let it be our great concern to see on what terms we stand with our Bibles.

CHAP. XXI. Hitherto, the prophecy of this book has presented a very remarkable mixture of light and shade, in the conduct of Divine Providence toward the church in the world: now, at the close of all, the day breaks, and the shadows flee away; a new world now appears, the former being passed away. Some are willing to understand all that is said in these last two chs. of the state of the church even here on earth, in the glory of the latter days; but others, more probably, take it as a representation of the perfect and triumphant state of the church in heaven. Let but the faithful saints and servants of God wait a while, and they shall not only see, but enjoy, the perfect holiness and happiness of that world.

V. 1—8. 1. A new world now opens to our view, v. 1. a new heaven and a new earth; i. e. a new universe; and the new heaven, and the new earth, will not then be distinct; the very earth of the saints, their glorified bodies, will now be spiritual and heavenly, and suited to those pure and bright mansions. To make way for the commencement of this new world, the old world, with all its troubles and commotions, passed away.

2. In this new world the apostle saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, not locally, but as to its original: this new Jerusalem is the church of God, in its new and perfect state, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, beautified with all perfection of wisdom and holiness, meet for the full fruition of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory.

3. The blessed presence of God with his people is here proclaimed and admired, v. 3. Observe, God with his church is the glory of the church; but it is a wonder a holy God should ever dwell with men: God's presence with his people in heaven will not be interrupted as it is on earth, but He will dwell with them continually. The present covenant, interest, and relation, between God and his people, will be filled up and perfected in heaven. They shall be his people; their souls shall be assimilated to Him, filled with all the love, honor, and delight in God, that their relation to Him requires; this shall be their perfect holiness, and He

conjectured with safety. They are to be handed down to the church of the latter days, even as the prophecies we see fulfilled have been delivered to us, and with this consolation, that this overflowing of iniquity shall be miraculously and completely terminated. And it is the last successful effort of Satan against the church. He is then consigned to his eternal prison. Woodh.

HENRY, *abr.*

V. 11—15. After the events above predicted, the end will speedily come; and there are no prophetic intimations of anything, which shall intervene, before the appearing of Christ to raise the dead, and to judge the world. 'It [the idea of the final judgment as here presented] is so plain, that it does not need, so majestic and grand that it exceeds, commentary and paraphrase.' Blackwall, in Scott.—Beyond doubt, it is the grandest idea, which ever was expressed in human language; unless some verses in the first of Genesis may be thought to rival it. 'And the books were opened.' This figuratively represents the discoveries, which will be made of all the thoughts, words, actions, motives, intentions, dispositions, obligations, advantages, and talents, of all men, by the divine omniscience; and the comparison of the whole with the holy law of God; and the recollection and consciousness, which every man will have of all his past actions, though he had long forgotten many of them, till thus brought to light and to remembrance. Thus an exact estimate will be made of every person's character; of the evidence and degree of his grace, and of his fruitfulness in good works, or of the aggravations or alleviations of his sins; and the final award will be made in perfect justice and impartiality, connected with truth and mercy. For 'another book was opened, which is the book of life;' otherwise, all must have been condemned. This is the emblem of the Lord's knowledge of his people; and his declaration of their repentance, faith, love, and good works, as evidential of their election, redemption, regeneration, and interest in his righteousness, and the blessings of the new covenant. Then death and hell, the grave, and the separate state, (represented as two persons,) will 'be cast into the lake of fire;' i. e. they shall subsist no longer, to receive the bodies and souls of men; there shall be no death in heaven; and all the wicked will be cast into the place of torment, in which death and the separate state will be swallowed up; for 'this is the second death,' the final separation of sinners from God, without hopes of being restored to his favor, or delivered from his wrath. Scott.

(12.) 'Here is evidently an allusion to the proceedings of human courts of judicature, as in Dan. 7:9, 10. To illustrate this striking imagery, remark, 1. The book of God's remembrance will be opened, Mal. 3:16. An exact register of every man's state before God. Here are recorded all his thoughts, words, and actions. A most awful book to all who die in their sins. 2. The book of conscience,—an exact counterpart of the former. 3. The book of the law. The law of nature will be the canon

for those who have had no other; and the law of revelation for those to whom it has been manifested. But by the law can no flesh be justified. 4. The book of the Gospel. While this will be an awfully tremendous record against all who have died in impenitence and unbelief, it will be a blessed book to every true believer in Christ Jesus. 5. The book of life. In this book will be found recorded the names of all those who will actually be saved, and brought to the possession of eternal glory and happiness; the chosen of the Father, the redeemed of the Son, and the sanctified of the Holy Ghost. This book shows the perfect knowledge the omniscient God has of all those on whom He intends to bestow eternal life, and whom He has registered as members of the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven. Gauntlett. The same ideas are partly expressed by Gill.

HENRY, *abr.*

NOTES. CHAP. XXI. V. 1—4. Some interpreters, especially among those who hold a literal resurrection at the beginning of the millennium, and the personal reign of Christ on earth for a thousand years, (Note, 20:4—6.) understand these concluding chs. principally of the state of the church on earth at that time. But they come in order subsequent to the account of the general judgment; and we can never attain to a satisfactory understanding of prophecy, if imagination or conjecture be allowed to carry us backward or forward, without any fixed principles. For example, there was a necessity of returning, at the beginning of the 12th ch. to the primitive times of Christianity; because another regular series of predictions is there evidently begun, after the other had been completed. (Notes, 10:2—4. 11:15—19. 12:1, 2) This creates a proper degree of prophetic obscurity; and when the key is found, it adds to the consistency, energy, and beauty of the whole. But, having now traced both parts of the book to the end of the world, and the final judgment with its consequences, it must introduce much perplexity, and occasion an appearance of uncertainty and ambiguity, to return back, without any necessity, to the preceding millennium. 'The holy city, coming down from heaven;' the whole church triumphant was shown to him under this emblem; that he might perceive and report something of its glory and felicity, according to man's capacity of apprehending heavenly things: and he thus learned, that its blessedness came wholly from God, and depended on Him. (1) There was no more sea.] 'Therefore this new heaven and new earth are not designed to take place, till after the general judgment: for at the general judgment, "the sea gave up the dead which were in it." (20:13.) Gog and Magog, the nations in the four corners of the earth, are deceived by Satan, after the expiration of the millennium; but Gog and Magog are not inhabitants of "the new heaven and the new earth."' Bp. Newton. (4) No more death.] M. R. m.—No expression equally strong on this particular, occurs in any part of Scripture, except where the heavenly state is evidently intended. Scott.



5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful.

6 And he said unto me, It is done. \*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

[Practical Observations.]

9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

12 And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three

gates; and on the west three gates. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

j c. 16:17. k c. 18: 22:13. l Is. 55:1. Jn. 4:10,14. 7:37. c. 22:17. m or, these. n Lu. 12:4-9. o 1 Jn. 5:4,10. p 1 Co. 6:9,10. q 1 Jn. 3:15. r He. 13:4. s Mal. 3:5. t 1 Co. 10:20,21. u Pr. 19:5,9. c. 22:15. v c. 15:1,6,7. w c. 19:7. x Eze. 40:48. y Is. 60:1,2. z Eze. 48:31,34. a Ep. 2:20. b Eze. 40:3. Zec.2:1. c.11:1.

will be their God; God Himself will be their God; his immediate presence with them, his love fully manifested to them, and his glory put upon them, will be their perfect happiness; then He will fully answer the character of the relation on his part, as they shall do on their part.

4. This new and blessed state will be free from all trouble and sorrow, v. 4. all the effects of former trouble shall be done away; all the causes of future sorrow shall be forever removed; therefore, *There shall be no more sorrow nor crying.*

5. The truth and certainty of this blessed state are ratified by the Word and promise of God, and ordered to be committed to writing, as matter of perpetual record, v. 5, 6. The subject-matter of this vision is so great, and of so great importance to the church and people of God, that they have need of the fullest assurances of it; and, indeed, it would be inconsistent with the goodness of God, and his love to his people, to create in them holy and heavenly desires, after this state, and then deny them their proper satisfaction.

6. The greatness of this future felicity is declared and illustrated, (1.) By its freeness; *He gives of the water of life freely.* (2.) The fulness of it; *they inherit all things, v. 7.* enjoying God, they enjoy all things, He is All in all. (3.) By the tenure and title by which they enjoy this blessedness; as *the sons of God*; a title of all others the most

honorable, as resulting from so near and endeared a relation to God Himself, and the most sure and indefeasible, that can no more cease than the relation from which it results. (4.) By the vastly different state of the wicked; their misery helps to illustrate the glory and blessedness of the saints, and the distinguishing goodness of God toward them, v. 8. Here, observe, The sins of those who perish, among which are first mentioned their cowardliness and unbelief: they durst not encounter the difficulties of religion, and their slavish fear proceeded from their unbelief. Their punishment; *They have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.* They could not burn at the stake for Christ, but they must burn in hell for sin. They must die another death after their natural death; the agonies and terrors of the first death, will consign them over to the far greater terrors and agonies of eternal death; to die and to be always dying. This misery will be their proper part and portion, what they have justly deserved, what they have, in effect, chosen, and what they have prepared themselves for by their sins.

V. 9-21. We have already considered the introduction to the vision of the new Jerusalem in a more general idea of the heavenly state; we now come to the vision;—*the bride, the Lamb's wife, v. 10.* i. e. the church of God in her glorious, perfect, triumphant state, under the resemblance of Jerusalem, having the glory of God shining in its lustre, as *the bride, comely through the comeliness put on her by her Husband*; glorious in her relation to Christ, in his favor now perfected in her, and in his favor shining upon her; see, in this *new Jerusalem,*

1. *The wall for security.* Heaven is a safe state. The height of it, is very great, v. 17. sufficient both for ornament and security, all built of the most precious stones, for firmness and lustre, v. 11. The form *four-square, the length as large as the breadth,* equal in purity and perfection; there shall be an absolute uniformity in the church triumphant. The measure gives room sufficient for all the people of God; *many mansions in their Father's house.* *The foundation is, the promise*

PRACT. OBS. V. 1-8. 'There remaineth a rest for the people of God;' and when the idolized objects of worldly men's affections and pursuits shall 'pass away, and be no more' for ever, believers shall enter 'the new heaven and the new earth,' 'in which dwelleth righteousness,' and where no tumultuous passions, anxious cares, or changing dispensations, shall disturb their repose to all eternity. What then should, for a single moment, divert us from seeking so vast a blessing? Or what words can suffice to express our admiring gratitude?—But surely, the curse is also set before us, in this scripture, as well as the blessing; and most loudly does Christ say to all, who hear his Word, 'Fear not them who can kill the body, but after that have no more

that they can do;' when such cowards, as dare not own Christ on earth, are ranked with the most abominable sinners, as 'cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.' Should the Lord speak in thunder from heaven, and protest to sinners by name, that they were in the way to hell, it could not be more manifest than it is at present, if men would but notice it; for, while they live in infidelity, impiety, or any of the sins here or elsewhere enumerated, does not God say expressly to them, 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish?' But, blessed be his name, He says also to the vilest, 'Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.' 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'

SCOTT.

(2.) Bl. rejects 'I John.'

V. 7. For 'all things,' Bloomf. reads 'these things.'

V. 8. 'There is then a fearfulness which alone is sufficient to cause our condemnation, as well as the other crimes here mentioned. It is not only that fear which causes us to deny and to abandon the faith; but that also which causes us to be wanting to important and essential duties, through fear of hurting our fortunes, our ease, and even our temporal and spiritual interests, and of creating ourselves enemies. True courage is, to fear nothing but God and displeasing Him. Real cowardice is, not to have courage to overcome self, nor renounce the creature, through the hope of enjoying the Creator. Quiesnel.' HENRY, abr.

V. 9-21. This city was illuminated, beautified, and rendered illustrious beyond expression, by 'the glory of God,' beaming full upon it; which shows that the happiness of heaven consists in immediate communications from God, and in conformity to Him. (Note, 22-27.) Thus the light, which shone on the city, was like the refulgency of the most admired jewels: the whole, as it appeared pendent in the air, shone with surprising lustre and beauty, and was 'transparent as crystal:' which may intimate, that our knowledge in heaven will be intuitive, certain, and productive of the most satisfying delight. The 'twelve foundations, inscribed with the names of the twelve apostles,' and formed of twelve precious stones, might show, that all who belonged to that holy city obtained their citizenship, by receiving and obeying the doctrine of the apostles respecting Christ and his salvation, as 'the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.' The whole city rests primarily on Christ Himself, 'the tried Foundation;' and, in a subordinate sense, on those who published and attested the true doctrine concerning Him, who will be honored there in a peculiar manner: nor will any person enter thither, who does not hold the doctrine of the apostles, in its grand outlines; for thus it has been believed by the church, ever since the first promise to fallen man. (Notes, Gen. 3:14, 15. Eph. 2:19-22.) The precious stones may denote, that all earthly splendor is mean and contemptible, compared with that of heaven; and

that all possible excellency and glory will there combine, abound, and centre for ever. (Notes, Ex. 28:15-29. Is. 54:11-14.) The vast dimensions of the city, being an exact square, fifteen hundred miles on each side, might be emblematical of magnificence, and of room for all the multitude of inhabitants, which should ever enter it, however immense and innumerable. As it is inconceivable how a city could be fifteen hundred miles high, when it is said, that 'the length, breadth, and height were equal;' some conclude that no more is meant, than that the height was proportionable to the other dimensions. The whole, however, is enigmatical: and as a cube seems a kind of perfect form, perhaps the language is to be understood according to its obvious meaning; and then we may consider it as an intimation, that the reader is not allowed to form any gross conceptions of the city in his imagination, but to deduce instruction from it, as an emblem. It may also imply the stability, proportion, and uniformity of heavenly things, and the incomprehensible nature and glory of them. (Note, Eph. 3:14-19.)—The city, and the street of it, being 'of pure gold, as it were transparent glass,' may be an emblem of the union in heaven of those excellences, which seem here to be incompatible. 'They will be splendid, durable as the purest gold; clear and transparent as the finest glass. In that happy world, the beauties and advantages, which are here divided and incompatible, will unite and agree. Our glass is clear but brittle; our gold shining and solid, but opaque, and discovers only a surface. And thus it is with our minds. The powers of the imagination are lively and extensive, but transient and uncertain. The powers of the understanding are more solid and regular, but at the same time more slow and limited, and confined to the outside-properties of the few objects around us. but when we arrive within the veil, the perfections of the glass and gold will be combined, and the imperfections of each will entirely cease. Then we shall know more than we can now imagine. The glass will be all gold. And then we shall apprehend truth in its relations and consequences, not, as at present, by that tedious and fallible process which we call reasoning, but by a single glance of thought,



16 And the city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal.

17 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

19 And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.

27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

CHAP. XXII.

1 The river of the water of life. 2 The tree of life. 3 The light of the city of God is Himself. 4 The angel will not be worshipped. 5 The angel will not be worshipped. 6 Nothing may be added to the Word of God, nor taken therefrom.

AND he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

c Is. 54:11. d Is. 60:19,20. e Jn. 1:4. f Is. 60:3-11. g Ps. 72:11. h Zec. 14:7. i Is. 35:8. 52:1. 60:21. Joel 3:17. Mat. 13:41. 1 Co. 6:9,10. Ga. 5:19-21. Ep. 5:5. He. 12:14. c. 13:8.

and power of God, and the purchase of Christ; as to matter, various and precious, set forth by 12 sorts of precious stones, denoting the variety and excellency of the doctrines of the Gospel, or of the graces of the Holy Spirit, or the personal excellences of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The gates for entrance; there is a free admission to all that are sanctified:—i. e. from all quarters of the earth there shall be some who shall get safe to heaven, and be received there, and there is as free entrance from one part of the world as the other, Ga. 3:28. The Pearl of great price (Christ) is our Way to God. Nothing is magnificent enough in this world fully to set forth the glory of heaven. Could we, in the glass of a strong imagination, contemplate such a city as is here described, even as to the exterior part of it, such a wall, and such gates, how amazing, how glorious, would the prospect be! And yet this is but a faint and dim representation of what heaven is in itself.

V. 22-27. The new Jerusalem has its several streets, in most exact order; every saint

his proper mansion. There is converse in heaven; the saints are at rest [from disturbing thoughts]; but not passive; not in a state of sleep, but of delightful motion; the nations that are saved walk in the light of it; with Christ, and God, and one another, and all their steps are firm and clean.

1. The temple of the new Jerusalem; not material, made with men's hands, but altogether spiritual and divine; for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. There the saints are above the need of ordinances; when the end is attained, the means are no longer useful.

2. The light of this city. Where there is no light, there can be no lustre nor pleasure. What a dismal world would this be, if it were not for the light of the sun! Heaven is the inheritance of the saints in light; yet there is no sun nor moon shining there, v. 23. but the glory of God lightens that city, and the Lamb is the Light thereof. God in Christ will be an everlasting Fountain of knowledge and joy to the saints in heaven.

3. The inhabitants of this city; described by their numbers,—whole nations of saved souls; some out of all nations, and many out of some; by their dignity,—some of the kings and princes of the earth; by their continual accession and entrance into this city, some one or other coming in every hour and moment, at the always open gates.

4. The accommodations of this city; all the glory and honor of the nations shall be brought into it; whatever is excellent and valuable in this world, shall be there enjoyed in a more refined kind, and to a far greater degree.

5. And, lastly, the unmixed purity of all who belong to the new Jerusalem, v. 27. Hypocrites, such as make lies, say they are Jews, and are not, will creep into the churches of Christ on earth, and may lie concealed there, perhaps all their days; but they cannot intrude into the new Jerusalem.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1-5. The heavenly state, before described as a city, and called the new Jerusalem, is here described as a paradise; alluding to the earthly paradise which was lost by the sin of the first Adam;

PRACT. OBS. V. 9-27. The way in which the Lord teaches us the nature of heavenly glories, implies that we are poor, ignorant children, too apt to be pleased with trifles and externals; who must be spoken to in our own language; not being capable of knowing things as they are, or of fully relishing the pure and spiritual felicity of the celestial world. Yet, if anything draw off our affections from earthly objects, to seek 'a treasure in heaven,' and a permanent mansion in that blessed world, it will be well. 'Glorious things are' indeed here 'spoken of the city of God;' (Note, Ps. 87:3.) and the whole is well suited to raise our expectations, and enlarge our conceptions, of its security, peace, splendor, purity, and felicity; but, in proportion to our

as the sight pierces in an instant through the largest transparent body. The gold will be all glass.' Newton's Cardiphonia.—The twelve gates, made of as many vast pearls, may denote, that everything will be superlatively glorious, beyond all comparison with anything ever seen on earth.—The marg. ref. will show the reader, in a manner suited to excite a peculiar interest, that even in those things, which are stated as the glory of the antichristian harlot, the true spouse of Christ will infinitely exceed her. (Notes, 17:3-5.) SCOTT.

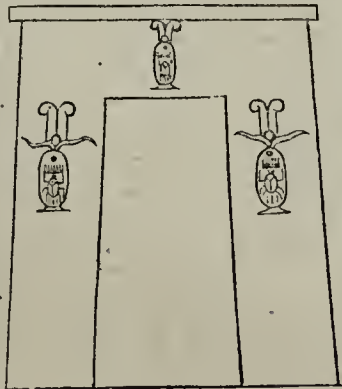
(9.) Bl. rejects 'unto me.' Ed. (10.) Bl. marks 'great' as doubtful. In. (12.) The ent shows an Egyptian gate or door of the earliest historical ages, bearing the hieroglyphic name of its owner, a king, three times repeated. Private gentlemen had also their names on the doors and gates of their houses or country villas, in ancient Egypt. See Wilkinson.

V. 22-27. The temple was essential to Jerusalem, the holy city in Judea, as its great ornament and honor, and it made a prominent part in Ezekiel's vision of the church, as I suppose, during the millennium, under the emblem of the holy city. (Notes, Ez. 40:—48:) But 'there was no temple' in the mystical city that John saw; which is a demonstration, that the heavenly state was exclusively meant. In heaven there will be no need of external symbols of the Lord's presence. Neither will this holy city need 'the sun or moon to lighten it,' or any of the things which outwardly contribute to our comfort, and are suited to our state, on earth; for 'the glory of God will lighten it,' yea, the

spirituality, we shall be more and more led to contemplate heaven, as filled with 'the glory of God,' and enlightened by the presence of the Lord Jesus, 'the Sun of righteousness,' and the Redeemer of lost sinners, knowing that 'in his presence is fulness of joy, and pleasures at his right hand for evermore.' As nothing unclean can enter thither, let us be stirred up, by these glimpses of heavenly things, in giving diligence to 'cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God;' that we may be approved as 'Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile,' and have a sure evidence that we are written in the 'book of life of the Lamb that was slain, from the foundation of the world.' SCOTT.

Lamb 'will be the Light' and Felicity of it. (Notes, Ps. 36:5-9. 84:8-12. Is. 30:26. 60:15-22. Mal. 4:2, 3. 2 Cor. 4:3-6.) What words can more fully express the mysterious union and co-equality of the Son with the Father, in the Godhead?—Let the reader also compare carefully the language with that of those scriptures, which describe in most emphatical terms the most happy and glorious state of the church on earth; and while he perceives some of the same figures employed, he will likewise perceive that this passage is far more energetical than any of them.—The gates 'not shut by day,' and there being 'no night there,' emblematically and affectingly show the liberty, peace, security, and uninterrupted enjoyment of that blessed state; (Note, 7:13-17.) and as believers are 'the excellent of the earth,' and enter thither from every nation; so it may literally be said, that 'they bring the glory and honor of the nations into it;' as well as figuratively, in respect of its incomparable splendor and excellency. All the inhabitants are absolutely perfected in holiness, and all increase, share, and rejoice in each other's felicity; being excellent, loving, and lovely, beyond expression or imagination. (Is. 52:1. 2 Pet. 3:10-13.) SCOTT.

NOTES. CHAP. XXII. V. 1. 'The river clear,' or transparent, 'as crystal' may intimate, that the happiness of heaven greatly consists in a full, clear, and intuitive knowledge of God, and his glorious perfections and works, constantly exciting all holy and delightful affections in the heart. This river, 'proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb,' especially points to the quickening and sanctifying influences and consolations of the Holy Spirit, as given to sinners through Jesus Christ, to be the Author of spiritual and eternal life to their souls. (Ex. 17:5. 6. Is. 12:3. Jn. 4:10-15. 7:37-39.) This interpretation, which coincides with so many other scriptures, gives a peculiarly interesting view of the sacred Trinity; the Father, who sent his only begotten Son to be our Savior; the Son, who, having finished his work on earth, rose and ascended, and 'sat down with the Father on his throne, and ever liveth,' as Emmanuel, our divine, our incarnate Mediator, and the Holy Spirit, as 'proceeding from the Father and the Son,'



Id.

Neither will this holy city need 'the sun or moon to lighten it,' or any of the things which outwardly contribute to our comfort, and are suited to our state, on earth; for 'the glory of God will lighten it,' yea, the



2 In <sup>a</sup> the midst of the street <sup>b</sup> of it, and on either side of the river, *was there the tree <sup>c</sup> of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

3 And there <sup>d</sup> shall be no more curse: but the throne of <sup>e</sup> God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants <sup>f</sup> shall serve him:

4 And <sup>g</sup> they shall see his face; and his name <sup>h</sup> shall be in their foreheads.

5 And <sup>i</sup> there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them <sup>j</sup> light: and they shall reign <sup>k</sup> for ever and ever.

6 And he said unto me, These sayings *are faithful and true*; and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent <sup>l</sup> his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

7 Behold, I come <sup>m</sup> quickly: blessed <sup>n</sup> is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

8 And I John saw these things, and heard *them*. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

9 Then saith he unto me, See *thou do it* not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

[Practical Observations.]

10 And he saith unto me, Seal not <sup>o</sup> the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

11 He <sup>p</sup> that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy,

let him be filthy still: and he that is <sup>q</sup> righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

12 And, behold, I come <sup>r</sup> quickly; and my reward *is with me, to give every man according <sup>s</sup> as his work shall be.*

a Eze. 47:1,12.	l Ju. 3:2.	o Pr. 1:24—33.
b c. 21:21.	h c. 3:12.	Ec. 11:3.
c c. 2:7.	i c. 21:23,25.	Mat. 25:10.
d Zec. 14:11.	j Ps. 36:9.	2 Ti. 3:13.
e Eze. 48:25.	k Ro. 5:17.	p Pr. 4:13.
f c. 7:15.	l c. 1:1.	Mat. 5:8.
g Mat. 5:3. Jn. 12:6. 17:24.	m ver. 10:12,20.	q Zep. 1:14.
1 Co. 13:12.	n Da. 8:25.	r c. 20:12.

here is another paradise restored by the second Adam. And here observe,

1. The river of paradise: the earthly paradise was well watered; no place can be pleasant or fruitful that is not so. This river is described, (1.) By its fountain-head,—*the throne of God, and the Lamb*. All our springs of grace, comfort, and glory, are in God; and flow from Him, through the mediation of the Lamb. (2.) By its quality,—*pure, and clear as crystal*. All the streams of earthly comfort are muddy; but these are clear, salutary, and refreshing, giving and preserving life, to those who drink of it.

2. The tree of life, in this paradise. Such a tree there was in the earthly paradise, Gen. 2:9. This far excels it. And observe, (1.) Its situation,—*in the midst of the street, and on either side of the river*; or, as better rendered, *in the midst between the terrace-walk and the river*. This tree of life is fed by the pure waters of the river that comes from the throne of God. The presence and perfections of God furnish out all the glory and blessedness of heaven. (2.) Its fruitfulness; many sorts of fruit, suited to the refined taste of all the saints; fruit at all times,—*every month*; this tree is never empty, never barren. In heaven there is not only a variety of pure and satisfying pleasures, but a continuance of them, and always fresh. The fruit is not only pleasant, but wholesome. The presence of God in heaven is the health and happiness of the saints.

3. The perfect freedom of this paradise

from everything evil, v. 3. *There shall be no more curse; no accursed one, no serpent there, as in the earthly paradise. They shall reign with Him for ever; their service shall be not only freedom, but honor and dominion.*

V. 6—19. We have here a solemn ratification of the contents of this book, particularly of this last vision; though some think it may not only refer to the whole book, but to the whole New Test. yea, to the whole Bible, completing and confirming the canon of Scripture. And here, 1. This is confirmed by the name and nature of that God who gave out these discoveries; *He is the Lord God, faithful and true*, and so are all his sayings. 2. By the messengers He chose to reveal these things to the world; the holy angels showed them to holy men of God; and God would not employ his saints and angels in deceiving the world. 3. They will soon be confirmed by their accomplishment; they are things that must shortly be done; Christ will *come quickly*, and put all things out of doubt; and then *they* will prove the wise and happy men, who have believed and kept his words. 4. By the integrity of that angel who had been the apostle's guide and interpreter in these visions; he not only refused to accept religious adoration from John, but once and again reproved him for offering it. He who was so tender of the honor of God, and so displeased with what was a wrong to God, would never, in his name, lead the people of God into mere dreams and delusions; and it still is a further confirmation of the sincerity of this apostle, that he confesses his own sin and folly, into which he had now again relapsed, and he leaves this his failing on perpetual record; this shows he was a faithful and an impartial writer. 5. By the order given to leave the book of the prophecy open, to be perused by all, that they might labor to understand it, that they might make their objections against it, and compare the prophecy with the events. God here calls every one to witness to the declarations here made, v. 10. 6. By the effect this book, thus kept open, will have on men; those that are filthy and unjust, will take that occasion from thence to be more so; but it will confirm, strengthen, and further sancti-

PRACT. OBS. V. 1—9. May the Lord show us the streams of 'the pure river of the water of life, which proceed out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb;' that, receiving the precious gift of the life-giving Spirit, we may be made meet for 'the inheritance of the saints in light.' All other streams are polluted, or will soon dry up; but this will flow,

'clear as crystal,' without alloy or interruption, for evermore. 'These are true and faithful sayings;' but they are so vast, that we need to pray continually, 'Lord, increase our faith,' or we shall not be able to receive them, however attested to us. SCOTT.

to apply, by his new-creating love and power, this salvation to our souls: that 'Glory may be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.' (M. R. d.)

(1.) *Bl. rejects 'a pure.'* En. V. 2—5. *Tree of life.* (Notes, 2:6, 7. Gen. 2:8, 9. 3:22—24.) This seems not here to mean a single tree, but a species of trees, which grew in the places of public resort, for the common benefit of all the inhabitants.—It is remarkable, that 'God and the Lamb,' are here spoken of as *One*, in such a manner, that we cannot determine to which of them the singular personal pronoun belongs. (Note, John 10:26—31.)—In that world of light and glory there will 'be no night,' no affliction, or dejection, no intermission of service and enjoyment; they will need no candle; no diversions or pleasures of man's devising will there be at all wanted; and even the outward comforts which God has provided, suited to our state in this world, will no longer be requisite. (Notes, 21:22—27. Mat. 22:23—33. 1 Cor. 15—39—49. Phil. 3:20, 21.) How very different is this view from a Mohammedan heaven, which could only please gross, sensual, and carnal men, if it were real! But indeed this, and various other notions of heavenly happiness, springing up, as new revelations from time to time, without excepting even the hope of philosophers, of enjoying the pleasure of 'learned society, an increasing knowledge of nature, and discoveries in science, beyond expression many and great, are mere delusions of the enemy, to soothe men into the opinion, that they may be happy without submission to the Gospel, and without the special favor and enjoyment of God, and without a renewal unto holiness; till the event shall awfully convince them of the fatal delusion. It is indeed most evident, that man, without revelation and regeneration, cannot conceive in what happiness consists. The most ingenious writers, of the pagans, fail in nothing more, than in describing the condition of their gods; who are represented as far removed from true happiness as from holiness, and liable to all the vexations of sinful men, with scarcely any peculiar satisfactions superior to what they enjoy; indeed differing little from them, except in power, knowledge, and exemption from death.—In the 292 opinions mentioned by Varro concerning the *chief good*, I apprehend that view here given of it by the apostle did not form one.—'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,

neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.' 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'

V. 6, 7. (21:5.) The angel's declaration in this passage, that the Lord God had sent him, compared with what follows (16), has been adduced as a conclusive proof of the Deity of Christ. Indeed, we meet with this doctrine, in one form or other, continually; and there is no way of avoiding it, but by rejecting, wholly or in part, the divine inspiration of those books in which it is so undeniably contained. Id.

(6.) *Bl. rejects 'holy,' and inserts 'spirits of the.'* En.

V. 8, 9. (Note, 19:9, 10.) While we are surprised, that the apostle should again fall into his former mistake, and need repeatedly the same admonition. We may observe the great wisdom of God in leaving him to do so. It has been remarked, that the idolatrous worship of saints and angels was one great abomination of that antichristian system, against which this whole prophecy is principally levelled; and here all palliations of that enormity are answered at once; for the most exalted and beneficent creature, when visibly present, would not allow the least appearance of adoration to be rendered to him; whereas, the papists worship creatures when not visibly present, and thus ascribe omnipresence and omniscience to them, as well as other divine honors! It also shows the weakness of the Socinian way of accounting for Stephen's adoration of Christ, because, say they, He was visibly present; but if He had not been also truly God, the martyr would nevertheless have been an idolater. Yet Christ neither reproved him, nor any other person, for showing Him this kind of honor, or any other, but, directly the contrary, He always honored those in a peculiar manner who thus honored Him. (Jn. 5:20—23. 20:24—29. Ac. 7:54—60. 10:24—26.) Sc.

V. 10—12. The Lord Jesus is undoubtedly the Speaker in these vs.: again appearing in vision to his apostle, to close the prophecy, as He had done at the opening of it. (Notes, 1:9—20.) Id.

(11.) 'What God permits, is often expressed in Holy Writ, by terms which imply commands, and of that which He says, it is done, the execution will follow, as if He had commanded it to be done. In the prophetic style, whether a thing be uttered in the past, the future, or in the imperative, it is equal; the imperative being really a future, and the future has frequently the force of an imperative. *Daubuz.*' HENRY, *abr.*



13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

s Is. 44:6. x c 21:2,9. c Or, from the tree.  
t L. 12:37,39. y Is. 25:5. d ver. 7,12.  
u c. 21:8,7. z c. 21:6. e He. 9:28.  
v Ps. 3:2. a Pr. 30:6. Is 25:9.  
w c. 5:5. b c. 3:5.

fy those that are upright with God; it will be a savor of life to some, and of death to others, and so will appear to be from God, v. 12. 7. It will be Christ's rule of judgment at the great day; He will dispense rewards and punishments to men according as their works agree or disagree with the Word of God; therefore that Word itself must needs be faithful and true. 8. It is the Word of Him who is the Author, Finisher, and Rewarder of the faith and holiness of his people, v. 13, 14. *the First and the Last*, He who will give a right to the tree of life, and an entrance into heaven; and this will be a full confirmation of the truth and authority of his Word, since it contains the title and evidence of that confirmed state of holiness and happiness that remains for his people in heaven. 9. It is a book that condemns and excludes from heaven all wicked, unrighteous persons, and particularly those that love and make lies, v. 15. and therefore can never be itself a lie. 10. It is confirmed by the testimony of Jesus, who is the Spirit of prophecy. And this Jesus, as God, is the Root of David, though, as Man, his Offspring; a Person in whom all uncreated and created excellences meet; too great and too good to deceive his churches and the world. He is the Fountain of all light, the bright and the morning star; and as such has given to his churches this morning light of prophecy, to assure them of the light of that perfect day that is approaching. 11. It is confirmed by an open and general invitation to all, to come and partake of the promises and privileges of the Gospel, those streams of the water of life. 12. It is confirmed by the joint testimony of the Spirit of God, and that gracious Spirit that is in all the true members of the church of God; the Spirit and the bride join in testifying the

truth and excellency of the Gospel. 13. Lastly, It is confirmed by a most solemn sanction, condemning and cursing all who should dare to corrupt or change the Word of God, either by adding to it, or taking from it, v. 18, 19. Such a fence as this, God set about the law, Deut. 4:2. and the whole Old Test. Mal. 4:4. and now in the most solemn manner about the whole Bible; assuring us that it is a book of the most sacred nature, divine authority, and of the last importance, and therefore the peculiar care of the great God.

V. 20, 21. 1. Christ's farewell to his church. If any say, 'Where is the promise of his coming, when so many ages are now past since this was written?' let them know, his coming will be sooner than they are aware, sooner than they are prepared, sooner than they desire; and to his people it will be seasonable; the vision is for an appointed time, and will not tarry; He will come quickly; let this word be always sounding in our ear, and let us give all diligence, that we may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless. 2. The church's hearty echo to Christ's promise: what comes from heaven in a promise, should be sent back to heaven in a prayer. The apostolical benediction closes the whole; The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. The Bible ends with a clear proof of the Godhead of Christ, since the Spirit of God teaches the apostle to bless his people in the name of Christ, and to beg from Christ a blessing for them; this is a proper act of adoration. It is by his grace that we must be kept in a joyful expectation of his glory, fitted for it, and preserved to it; and his glorious appearance will be welcome and joyful to those that are partakers of his grace and favor here; therefore to this most comprehensive prayer we should all add our hearty Amen; most earnestly thirsting after greater measures of the gracious influences of the blessed Jesus in our souls, and his

V. 13. M. R.—(Notes, 1:8—11.) SCOTT. (13.) *Alpha and Omega*, &c.] 'This and other like passages inconceivably refer to Christ, and, according to the known signification of the Jewish expressions, they declare his absolute perfection, his perpetual presence and protection; and that He is the Author, the effective Agent, and the End of the scheme of providential government with respect to the church, which forms the subject of the prophetic books. To perceive their force, we should compare them with the like terms in the O. T., applied to Jehovah.'

V. 14, 15. *In through the gates and without.*] No middle place, or condition, is so much as intimated. (14) *Right.*] Rendered power, in another remarkable declaration. (John 1:10—13.)

(14.) 'All spiritual obedience is the fruit of faith; we have no strength for it till we have believed in Christ. It is only by grace received from Christ that we can perform anything truly acceptable to God. Till we have obeyed this command, 1 John 3:22. we are under a sentence of condemnation which can never be reversed, but through faith in Christ. If we truly believe in Him, we shall not wish any demand of the law to be reversed, but shall labor after a perfect conformity to its every requirement. At the same time our pardon will not be on our own obedience, but on the finished work of Christ. Simeon.' HENRY, *abr.*

V. 16, 17. 'Christ's rising, in his incarnation, introduced the gospel-day; his rising in power introduceth the millennial day; his rising in the saving influences of his Spirit, introduceth the spiritual day of grace and comfort; and his appearance to judge the world, will introduce the eternal day of light, purity, and joy.' BROWN. (Note, 2:24—28.) 'The Spirit,' by the sacred Word, and by his convictions and influence in the sinner's conscience, says, 'Come' to Christ for salvation: (Notes, John 16:8—15) 'the Bride,' or the whole church militant and triumphant, says, 'Come,' and share our felicity. It therefore behooves every man, who hears the invitation, to call on others to 'come.' (Notes, Is. 2:2—5. Jer. 50:4—6. Mic. 4:1—3.) In fine, 'let every man,' throughout the earth, who 'thirsts' for salvation, 'come' to Christ. Nay, lest any should hesitate, as not able to determine whether their thirst be spiritual or not, it is added, 'Let whosoever will,' (or is willing,) 'come, and take of the water of life freely,' as he would take water from a well, which belonged in common to him and to all his neighbors: nor ought he think of paying for these blessings; except as he throws away his poison to receive food, or his dross to receive gold (Notes, 21:5—8. Is. 55:1—3. John 7:37—39. 2 Cor. 5:19—21. 6:1, 2.) SCOTT.

V. 18—21. As the Lord doubtless intended this for the conclusion of the sacred canon; and as the crime [of adding to, or taking away from, the Word of God] is similar, in respect of all other parts of the Word of God; it may fairly be applied to the whole written Word; and it warns every man, in the most awful manner, to 'add nothing to, and take nothing from,' what God has revealed, of doctrine, ordinance, or commandment; the standard of truth, the way of acceptance, the evidence of conversion, or the rule of duty. (Notes, Deut. 4:2. Prov. 30:5, 6. Mat. 15:3—14. Luke 11:52.) Enthusiasts, pretenders to new revelations, bigoted sectaries, and imposing churchmen, on the one

hand, with infidels and skeptics on the other; and all who, to maintain their unscriptural tenets, or to exclude those mysteries which they reject, would either expunge part of the sacred canon, or invalidate its divine authority; with all those, who think or say, that it is of no consequence what men believe, (which takes away all doctrinal truth at once,) have abundant cause to tremble at this solemn warning. Critics, who are continually proposing conjectural alterations, or expunging from the text of Scripture, and adding to it, often on frivolous grounds, on slight authority, and in a dogmatical and self-confident spirit, I had almost said, in a wanton manner, are in no small danger; and expositors in general have abundant cause to be cautious and humble. Indeed, I am ready to tremble at the awful responsibility to which I have subjected myself, when I write on this testimony of Christ, and think of the work in which I have been, during so many years, engaged. But the merciful Savior will no more condemn unintentional mistakes, in the honest writer, who desires to help men to understand his Word, and proceeds in simple, humble dependence on his teaching, than He will [in] the honest preacher; and I trust this effort to explain his Holy Scriptures, though feeble and defective, has been conducted from proper motives, and in dependence on the Lord. I can confidently appeal to my heart-searching Judge, that I have, as far as I know, written, word for word, what I supposed He would have me write; without adding, altering, or keeping back, the sense of any passage, willingly, to serve any personal end, or party-interest, from fear of incurring reproach or opposition, or desire of conciliating the favor of any man or set of men whatever; and that the mistakes which have been made, were involuntary, the effects of ignorance and error, and not of design.—Men are sometimes apt to think, that if they could but see a miracle wrought in favor of religion, they would readily resign all their scruples, believe without doubt, and obey without reserve. The very thing that you desire, you have. You have the greatest and most striking of miracles, in the series of scripture-prophecies accomplished; accomplished, as we see, in the present state of almost all nations,—the Africans, the Egyptians, the Arabians, the Turks, the Jews, the Papists, the Protestants, Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, the seven churches of Asia, Jerusalem, and Rome. And this is not a transient miracle, ceasing almost as soon as performed; but is permanent, and protracted through the course of many generations. It is not a miracle delivered on the report of others, but it is subject to your own inspection and examination. It is not a miracle, exhibited only before a certain number of witnesses; but is open to the observation and contemplation of all mankind; and, after so many ages, is still growing, still improving to future ages. What stronger miracle, therefore, can you require for your conviction? Or, what will avail, if this be found ineffectual? Alas! if you reject the evidence of prophecy, 'neither would you be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.' What can be plainer? You see, or may see, with your own eyes, the scripture-prophecies accomplished; and if the scripture-prophecies are accomplished, the Scripture must be the Word of God; and if the Scripture is the Word of God, the Christian religion must be true.' Bp. Newton.



21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

gracious presence with us, till glory has perfected all his grace towards us; and no good

thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.

PRACT. OBS. V. 10-21. Soon will our Savior and Judge come to determine our eternal state; but how dreadful will it be to the impenitent and polluted sinner...

ery one of their relations, friends, and neighbors, 'Come;' yea, 'who-soever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.'

(13.) Testify. Summartuomai. I bear witness along with. (Rom. 2:15. 3:16. 9:1.)—The apostle testified, and Jesus testified, by and with

him. (21.) Bl. rejects 'our' and 'you,' and reads 'all the saints.'

TABULAR VIEWS OF SEVERAL SCHEMES OF INTERPRETING REVELATION.

Woodhouse.

The annotations of Woodhouse are justly considered as among the most valuable of the numerous works on the Apocalypse.

The 4 horses of the first 4 seals, represent the going forth of some power divinely commissioned to effect changes upon the earth; the character of the change is to be collected from the color of the horse.

He then proceeds, in accordance with the scheme of interpretation adopted by Vitrina, which distinguishes the prophetic history of the seals from that of the trumpets.

The silence, 8:1. is preparatory to a change in the mode of exhibition, and in the series of the events, and the effects of the first act upon the earth are the commotions resulting from the reception of the Christian religion.

The mighty angel, ch. 10: is a created angel, and the book in his hand a portion of the larger sealed one, and possibly the same in part with the prophecies of Daniel, which were sealed in his time for a distant period.

As to the woman and the dragon, ch. 12: almost all agree, that the former represents the church of Christ, Methusias, who wrote as early as A. D. 290, applies it thus.

The beast, ch. 13: rising out of the sea, or the Gentile world, represents an oppressive and persecuting power, renewed and continued for ages, during 1260 years, even after the Roman empire had been divided into its ten horns or kingdoms.

The beast from the land, or false prophet, appears to denote a wide display of antichristian enormities in the whole Christian world, both West and East, verified in the papacy of the one part, and the Mohammedanism of the other.

The 21 relates to its further progress, and prophetically anticipates the fall of Babylon. The 31 warns of the Divine wrath.

With respect to the vials, the number, 7, denotes a complete visitation. The objects of the Divine vengeance are the enemies of the Lamb, and the persecutors of his followers.

The great harlot, the Mystical Babylon, is referred to the apostate Christian Rome. Her beast, like that of ch. 13: is the secular power, which has at all times persecuted the saints.

The white horse, ch. 19: Woodhouse identifies with the same emblem under the first seal, whose rider went forth conquering and to conquer, and has been pursuing his destined course, though not always equally in sight.

After the grand period of the millennium, another period of apostasy shall take place, but different from the former, as the same instruments are not employed.

The church of Christ being at length triumphant over its enemies, and Satan eternally brooded, nothing remains to describe but the general judgment, the process of which is shortly and sublimely related in figurative language.

Cuninghame.

His writings on prophecy have lately engaged much attention. He differs considerably from Faber and others; and writing later, can avoid some of their difficulties and mistakes.

He considers the events under the first 6 seals, as extending from the promulgation of Christianity to the consummation of all things. Those of the 7th seal he considers (with Vitrina and others) to include a new series of prophecies: indicated by the silence in heaven, 8:1.

The mighty Angel, ch. 10: is our Lord Himself, and the little book given to the prophet to eat, signifies that the time is arrived when the obscure prophecies of Dan. should be fully understood by the servants of the Lord.

The annexed table, taken, with some explanatory additions, from a diagram prefixed to his work, gives Cuninghame's view of the first 5 seals, and of the former part of the 7th seal, which he considers is parallel with them.

The events under the 6th seal chiefly describe the great revolution in the latter days, to precede the establishment of the kingdom of God. This commenced A. D. 1792, with the French revolution, indicated by the great earthquake, 6:12.



TABULAR VIEWS OF REVELATION.

which is to bring utter destruction upon the wicked. The 4 angels holding the winds, represent the 4 powers employed as instruments to procure this interval. The sealed, 7:4, appear to be the true members of Christ, set apart and saved from the general destruction of the ungodly, and the interval of peace has given occasion to new activity and more widely extended exertions in circulating the sacred Scriptures. The palm-bearing multitude he refers to the illustrious appearance and establishment of the kingdom of our Lord, described Dan. 7:13, 14, 27, being a portion of the professing church, left in the midst of the great tribulation, to be united to the faithful part, counted worthy of escaping the troubles which should come to pass.

Cuninghame's Tabular View.

The first Five Seals.				The Seventh Seal includes the events in these columns, as parallel with those in the first 5 Seals, and also those subsequent, which are parallel with the events of the Sixth Seal.			
Seal I. White horse & crowned rider. A. D. 33 to 312. Triumphs of Gospel.		Silence in heaven, ch. 8:1. (indicating new series of prophecies.) Increase offered, 3, 4, (the prayers of the saints.) Fire cast on earth, (wrath of God on Roman empire.) Earthquake, A. D. 312-324. Paganism ceased.		Woman clothed with sun (is the church), has a man child (Christ formed in his members). About 313-324.		War of Michael & dragon, who is cast out of heaven.	
Seal II. Fire-colored horse, his rider with a great sword, begins about 319. Discord & dissension in the church.		The Trumpets. 1 Visigoths, A. D. 376 2 Alaric . . . 395 3 Attila . . . 411 4 Genseric . . . 455 5 Odoacer . . . 476 Irruptions of Goths and Vandals.		The woman flies into the wilderness. (The church is concealed and invisible, and no longer has spiritual children.)		Dragon (devil) persecutes woman, and casts out flood of waters after her. (Hosts of enemies and bitter afflictions and sufferings of the church.)	
Seal III. Black horse, his rider with a yoke, begins about A. D. 500. Papal yoke during dark ages.		This space represents A. D. 533. Fifth trumpet, or woe 1. Fallen star opens pit (bishop of Rome) about A. D. 533. Locusts about 622.		Edict of Justinian acknowledging the pope. Temple measured. (Invisible church.) Outer court left out, and given to the Gentiles, who occupy it during the 1260 yrs. (Visible professing church occupied by degenerate professors.) Temple in heaven, or holy of holies, (signifying heaven,) shut during the 1260 years. Also a symbol of future and glorious kingdom of Christ on earth, when tabernacle of God shall be with men.		The 1260 years begin. The woman is nourished in wilderness, and her seed is persecuted by Dragon during the 1260 years. (True Christians sought out and persecuted with malignant activity.)	
Seal IV. Pale, livid-green horse, his rider death, followed by hell, begins about A. D. 1200. Papal persecutions.		Sixth trumpet, or woe 2. Euphratians angels loosed, prepared to slay 3rd part of men, (The Turks,) begins about A. D. 1302, ends (at peace Carlowitz) A. D. 1699, (since which period Turkish empire has been on decline.)		The 2 witnesses (true spiritual church) prophesy in sackcloth, 1260 years, (testify against corruptions.) Saino, A. D. 1548. (The interim in Germany.) Rise, 1551. Ascend to symbolical heaven, 1552 (Security from peace of Passau.) The earthquake, which overthrows a tenth part of city, begins, A. D. 1597, ends A. D. 1638. (Reformation & separation of Engl. from papal yoke.)		The Ten-horned beast (Roman empire after its division) has power to continue 1260 yrs. Co temporary with it is two-horned beast (papacy) and imperious age, (church deformed and corrupted.)	
Seal V. Souls of slain martyrs (the church, apparently extirpated) cry for vengeance, about A. D. 1500. White robes given them about 1532. Improved state of church in consequence of Reformation.		This line represents A. D. 1792, (French revolution,) and 1260 yrs.					

Seal VI. Seventh Trumpet, &c. see the following summary. The preceding table represents his views, with reference to that part of the events under the 7th seal, prior to A. D. 1792, when he considers that the Ancient days came, and the judgment began to sit, to take away the dominion of the little horn, to coalesce it into the ead, Dan. 7:21. It remains to state his views as to the latter part of this seal. We now enter upon Rev. 14: The 144,000 sealed being placed on Zion, indicates the security and final salvation of the true church during the awful convulsions of the great earthquake, the first shock of which took place at the French revolution in 1792, when the 7th trumpet began to sound. Although believers may suffer many things as individual persons, the church, as a body, shall be saved. The first proclaiming angel, v. 6, is supposed to represent a preaching of the Gospel much more extensive than any that preceded it, and a diffusion of the written Word throughout the world, in a manner and with a rapidity before unexampled. These events are now receiving their accomplishment. The going forth of the 21 and 31 angels are yet future, though already preparing; and, when Babylon is fallen and the beast slain, the church will enter into the glorious state of rest. The advent of Christ is next referred to, with the gathering in of his elect, symbolized by the harvest and the treading of the wine-press, which prefigure the dreadful destruction of the nations assembled together against the people of God.

The pouring forth of the vials or bowls, he also refers to the period of the French revolution. Vial I signifies the diffusion of the principles of anarchy and insubordination, which accompanied the national avowal of atheism at that period. These principles of irreligion and insubordination have been the germ and fruitful source of all the fearful calamities since poured forth on Europe. 2. The destruction of human life in massacres and campaigns, among the French nation, as the most numerous body of people in the Roman world. 3. The loss of life in the other smaller nations and states. 4. The symbolical sun represents the government of France, whether republican or imperial, ruining by ravages and exactions, and tormenting the men of the Roman earth yet they make an attempt to avert the wrath of God by timely repentance. 5. The seat of the beast is considered to denote successively Austria and France, distressed during the revolutionary and imperial wars, and since then the vial is poured upon England; the counsels of the kingdom on which it descends being smitten with blindness and foolishness. 6. The Euphrates is considered to denote the Ottoman empire, hastening to decay; the Kings of the East probably denote the Jews, but the accomplishment of the events here shadowed forth, is yet future. The 3 unclean spirits are now manifestly at work,—the spirit of atheism, or infidelity and anarchy, from the mouth of the dragon or Satan himself; the spirit of despotism from the mouth of the beast; and the spirit of popery from the mouth of the false prophet. 7. The symbolical air represents the political and ecclesiastical constitutions of the states, agitated throughout the bestial empire, the earthquake of the 6th seal, and that of the 7th trumpet and the 7th vial, being the same, all these passages affording different views of the last great revolution, which immediately precedes the 21 advent. And the vision of the 4 angels holding the 4 winds of the earth, relates to an interval of peace in the midst of the earthquake, granted for the purpose of sealing the elect, typifying the mighty confederacy led on by 4 great powers which lately gave peace to Europe. Thus the pouring out the 7th vial is for the present (1832) suspended. The division into three parts probably will be religious or political, or it may be taken a 3-fold division of the states under the 3 unclean spirits. Great Babylon betokens the Roman church, and the islands and mountains removed mean states and kingdoms, overthrown and disappearing; the great hail, the fierce and relentless wars since 1792.

He says, "The effects of the 7th vial are detailed more fully in chs. 17, 18, 19, but as the greater part are still future, we must wait patiently until events throw light upon them. But all the revolutionary changes which take place in consequence of the effusion of this vial into this symbolical air, will tend to prepare the Roman em-

pire for that last blasphemous opposition to the Lamb, in which it shall perish." He does not consider any national reformation is likely to take place in the Western empire. Many individuals will probably be awakened to true repentance, but the great iniquity will wax worse and worse, and bring down upon themselves the signal vengeance of the Almighty Word of Jehovah, in the day of Armageddon. But it would be very rash to form conjectures with regard to the shape the empire will assume preparatory to that event. That day is also mentioned under the 6th vial as the object of the last confederacy, which may be to oppose the purposes of God with respect to the Jews, whose conversion will proceed with accelerated velocity during the remainder of the period of the pouring forth of the vials; some being converted at their restoration, but the greater part still remaining unconverted.

Thus he supposes the 7 vials are contemporaneously poured out on the different parts of the same symbolical world. 1. Affects the political, religious, and moral principles of the people. 2 and 3. Causes the slaughter of its inhabitants. 4. Affects the imperial power in its influential effects upon human happiness. 5. Affects the same as to its authority and stability. 6. Destroys the Ottoman power. 7. Dissolves the whole frame of the political and ecclesiastical government of the empire.

In reference to the destruction of Babylon by fire, by whatever means it is effected, the incorrigibly wicked will be exterminated from the earth before the millennium, and amidst these dark scenes of deepening judgments, he thinks the future fates of England will be unfavorable.

Scripture shows the advent of our Lord will take place, before the loosing of the winds, or the outbreak of desolations, while men are saying peace and safety, busily occupied with the affairs and even the frivolities of the world, yet in a season of shaking, and alarm, and fear, when the hearts of men are filled with dismay. Both those states of mind he considers as exhibited in the events of the times wherein we live, and that we have entered into the last period of awful expectation, during which the church is likened to the ten virgins, Mat. 25. He considers, that the coming of our Lord is just at hand, when the dead saints will spring from the dust, and the living saints in a moment be changed, and both together will be rapt up above the clouds, to meet Him long before He is seen by the inhabitants of the earth. He does not consider that the restoration of the Jews will precede this advent, but that it will begin just at the rapture of the saints, and that they are to be led through the wilderness as formerly, by the pillar of a cloud by day, and of fire by night, without knowing their conductor as the crucified Nazarene, their discovery of Him belonging to a later period. At this time the whirlwind of wrath will go forth against the Roman earth, the political heavens will pass away as a scroll, the war of Armageddon will commence, and in its progress make the world a wilderness, probably beginning as an intestine war of the nations against themselves. A long interval is to elapse between the first appearance of our Lord above the clouds, and the descent mentioned, Zech. 14:4, 5, and Rev. 19:11. During the whole of this interval the glorified church shall be with our Lord in the air, in the higher region of the atmosphere above the clouds; a part of the church, however, being left in the midst of the great tribulation, to form the nucleus of the innumerable company of palm-bearers. But here we may stop; Cuninghame himself states, that he wishes his further views respecting this multitude "to be considered simply as conjecture." Henry, abr.

Mede.

He is considered the father of modern interpreters, from his ability in advocating synchronizations; of which he makes 7. A Diagram of his interpretation is given.

The first prophecy, or the Seven Seals.

Seals. The first Six, distinguished periods of the Roman empire.						The Seventh Seal, including Seven Trumpets. Six Trumpets. The Roman empire declining & falling.					
1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Promulgation of Christianity. Intestine wars and slaughter of the Jews under Trajan and Hadrian.	Severe administration of justice under Severus and Alexander.	Sword, famine, and pestilence united from Maximin to Gallienus.	Persecutions of Christians, Aurelian to Dioclesian, &c.	Overthrow of paganism under Constantine, &c.	A. D. 325. Goths under Alaric.	Destruction of Rome, and division of the empire, about A. D. 456.	Deposition of Augustulus by Odoacer, A. D. 476.	Final overthrow of the Roman imperial power.	First woe. Saracens or Arabs.	Second woe. Turks from the Euphrates. A. D. 1057.	Trumpet 7, or third woe.
The company of 144,000 protected by the mark of God.						The mystery of God is finished, as He hath declared to his servants the prophets.					
The Vials.* 1. to 6. 7.						An innumerable multitude of all nations, kindreds, and tongues, having palms in their hands.					

The lake of fire, the End, the paradise of the just.

The temple and altar measured.	The outer court, not measured, trodden down by the Gentiles 42 months.	The kingdoms of this world are made kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.
The first state of the church proved to be holy.	The Christian church given up to new idolatries.	
The dragon's war with Michael.	The 2 witnesses prophesy-interpret. of divine truth.	
Persecutions under the Roman emperors till Constantine attains the imperial power.	The woman, the church, flies into the wilderness. Floods of heresies removed by the orthodox.	Satan bound, and the just reign with Christ 1000 years.
	Beast recovers, after his deadly wound, blasphemes and conquers the saints. Secular Roman empire.	The wife of the Lamb, new Jerusalem, descends from heaven.
	The two horned beast, or false prophet. The Roman pontiff and his clergy.	
	The founder of ten horned beast exercises his power of warring with the saints. The 144,000, the church faithful to the Lamb. The worshippers of the beast warred by 3 angels.	
	Great city of Babylon sitting on the beast, makes the ks. of the earth drunk. The Roman or papal see.	

The 7 vials portend gradations of the ruin of the beast, beginning when the Waldenses and others began to renounce its authority. This method of arranging the vials under the Sixth trumpet, is considered the most defective part of Mede's scheme.

The little open book, or the latter series of prophecy.

Henry, abr.

Croly.

His view differs from others. He considers Rev. a collection of Divine visions, seen probably at different times, and divides the contents into 6 portions. I. the vision of the Asiatic persecution, 1-3: II. Vision of the seals, or general view of providence, in governing the church and world, 4-7: III. Vision of the trumpets, 8-11: IV. Vision of the vials, chs. 15, 16, with the connected chapters, 17, 18, 19. V. Vision of the church, distinguished into 3 eras, pagan persecution, papal persecution, and the catastrophe of the persecutors, 12-14: VI. Vision of the triumph of Christianity, 20-22: But if Mede's interpretation is justly considered objectionable, from the too great prominence it gives to secular events of the Roman empire, Croly's will probably be disapproved, from its being as restricted in its application, although to a Roman empire, more spiritual in its nature. Nearly the whole of the seals, trumpets, and vials are referred by him exclusively to the papacy and the French revolution.



TABULAR VIEWS OF REVELATION.

Faber.

His scheme is the most elaborate, and deserves special notice, as it purports to be the most complete, embracing and harmonizing the prophecies of Daniel and John. Townsend says, it solves more difficulties, answers more objections, and throws a brighter lustre on some of the more involved passages of Revelation, than any other; though of course it fails in some points, and from lack of judgment. We abridge from Faber's B. C. *Chronology of the Sacred Calendar of Prophecy*, 1823.

- 2325 Foundation of the Babylonian empire, Dan. 7:4. } First beast.
  - 831 It is brought down to the ground.
  - 784 Foundation of the Persian empire, Dan. 7:5. 8:3, 20. } Second beast.
  - Commencement of the 2300 days, Dan. 8:14.
  - 763 Foundation of the Macedonian empire, Dan. 7:6. } Third beast.
  - 753 Foundation of the Roman empire, Dan. 7:7. } Fourth beast.
  - First head of the Roman beast, Rev. 13:1. 17:3, 9, 10.
- 657 Era of the metallic image, Dan. 2:31, 32, 33.  
Commencement of the seven prophetic times, Dan. 4:32.  
Birth of Nebuchadnezzar, the golden head.  
Opening of the first seal, Rev. 6:1, 2.
- 606 Commencement of the Babylonish captivity of seventy years.  
563 The heart of a man given to the Babylonian lion.  
556 The Persian ram begins to push, Dan. 8:4. Cyrus' conquests.  
538 Junction of the Persian empire, or silver breast and arms, Dan. 2:32, 39.  
Opening of the second apocalyptic seal, Rev. 6:3, 4.  
636 End of the Babylonian captivity, side becomes higher, Dan. 7:5. Horn becomes higher, Dan. 8:3.  
503 Dormancy of imperial kingship, or first head of Roman beast begins; rise of the consulate, or second head, Rev. 17:10.  
497 Dictatorship, or third head, Rev. 17:10.  
458 Commencement of Daniel's seventy weeks, Dan. 9:24.  
451 Decemvirate, or fourth head.  
444 Military tribunes, or fifth head.  
334 Macedonian goat comes from the west, Dan. 8:5.  
331 Junction of Grecian empire, or brazen belly and thighs. — Opening of the third seal, Rev. 6:5, 6.  
59 Triumvirate, or sixth head.  
30 Junction of the Roman empire, or iron legs and iron clay feet. — Opening of the fourth seal, Rev. 6:7, 8.  
27 Exasperation of Roman imperial kingship, or first head, fall of the 2d, 3d, and 6th heads, Rev. 17:10.

- A. C.
- 33 End of Daniel's seventy weeks, Dan. 9:24. Death of Christ.
  - 70 Daniel's 1290 days begin, Dan. 11:32, 33. Persecution of Christians begins.
  - 511 Opening of the 5th seal, Re. 6:8—11.—Short and imperfect rest from persecution.
  - 313 Opening of the sixth seal, Dan. 11:34. Help from Constantine begins.
  - 324 The subversion of paganism; Sealing of the 144,000 mystic Israelites; Measuring the temple; Taking an exact account of the faithful worshippers; Constantine's separation of Christians.
  - Commencement of the figurative gestation, Rev. 12:2.—Opening seventh seal.
  - 325 First germination of little western horn, or spiritual kingdom of the papacy begins, Dan. 7:8.
  - 361 End of the short silence, Rev. 8:1.; Accession of Julian.—Seven angels prepare to sound.
  - 395 First Trumpet. Invasion of Goths, Germans, Vandals, and Huns, by Alaric, Rhadagant, Genseric, and Attila.
  - 406 Rise of first, or Vandalic horn, Dan. 7:7. Rev. 12:1. 17:3, 12. — Junction of iron and clay toes.
  - 407 Rise of 2d or Suevic horn, 3d or Alaric, 4th or Burgundian, 5th or Francic.
  - 408 Sixth or Visigothic horn.
  - 439 Second trumpet. Invasion of Genseric.
  - 449 Seventh, or Anglo-Saxon horn.
  - 452 Third trumpet. The star cast down. Odoacer. Wormwood.
  - 476 Eighth, or Hætic horn, — wars and desolations, extinction of Roman, western empire.
  - 493 Ninth, or Ostrogothic, eradication of eighth or Herulic.
  - 553 Eradication of ninth, or Ostrogothic before the papal horn.
  - 568 Tenth, or Lombardic horn, eradicated 774.
  - 603 Fourth trumpet. Commencement of eclipse of the western empire by Chosroes and the Persians.
  - 694 Expiration of the first period of three and a half times, or 1260 years. The latter period begins.
  - Fifth, or first woe-trumpet. — The star ecclesiastical of Rome completes its fall, Rev. 9:1.
  - Measurement of temple and altar, &c. Rev. 11:1.
  - Two witnesses (two faithful churches) begin to prophesy in sackcloth, Rev. 11:3.
  - The woman's (the faithful church of Christ) flight into the wilderness, Rev. 12.
  - Fall of the stars (bishops or pastors) through the agency of superstitions fostered by the dragon, Rev. 12.
  - The ten-horned beast becomes the tool of persecution 42 months, the unfaithful worshippers, or secular powers of the Roman empire, Rev. 13.
  - Rise of the second apocalyptic beast, or papal empire, Rev. 13:11.
  - Ten horns, or Roman kings, give their power to the beast, Rev. 17.
  - Saints thereby delivered into the hand of the little Roman horn, Dan. 7:25.
  - Completion of the demonolatrous apostasy, by the revelation of the man of sin, the Roman empire being removed, Dan. 8. 2 Thess. 2.
  - Termination of the period, Dan. 11:35.
  - Door of the abyss opened, Rev. 9:2.
  - 608 Smoke from the abyss, the Mohammedan imposture, or the little horn of Grecian or 9 he-goat stands up, Dan. 8:9, 23.
  - 512 The Mohammedan locusts issue forth for five months.
  - 638 End of eclipse of eastern empire; defeat of the Persians; battle of Nineveh.
  - 762 End of five months of the locusts; passing away of first woe; Bagdad founded; the Saracens become a settled people.
  - 800 Restoration of Roman emperors in the west.
  - 1301 Sixth trumpet. Second woe.
  - Liberation of the four Turcomanic angels.
  - Day, month, and year, or 396 1-4 years of Ephraim horsemen begin.
  - 1350 Expiration of Daniel's 1290 years, Dan. 12:11.; Wickliff begins to preach.
  - 1453 Roman emperors extinguished in the east.
  - 1517 Termination of Daniel's 2300 days.
  - Sanctuary begins to be cleansed, Dan. 8:13, 14. Rev. 11:2.
  - Flesh of the harlot begins to be eaten, or the papacy begins to be consumed by the secular power, Rev. 17:16.
  - Commencement of the Reformation.
  - 1685 The two witnesses (Waldenses and Albigenes) slain.
  - 1688 Great earthquake; Tenth part of the city falls; Revolution in England.
  - 1689 Witnesses (the Waldenses) revive, but their testimony finished.
  - 1697 21 woe passes away; Battle of Zenta, Turks defeated. The 396 1-4 yrs. expire.
  - The dragon begins to cast out a flood, Rev. 12:9.
  - Termination of period, Da. 11:35.; Commencement of Da. 11:36—39, infidelity.
  - 1739 Seventh trumpet. Third woe commences; Revolutionary France.
  - The figurative judgment of the Roman empire begins, Rev. 11:15. Dan. 7:9.
  - The stone begins to smite the image.
  - The flood rises to its height.
  - The spirit of the great antichrist, which denies the Father and the Son, is diffused, and constitutes the third woe.
  - The papal harlot made desolate and naked, Rev. 17:16.
  - 1792 First vial poured out . . . Aug. 25. Sore of avowed infidelity.
  - Second vial poured out . . . Sept. 2. Reign of terror.
  - Third vial poured out . . . Nov. 19. War with nations.
  - 1804 Fourth vial poured out . . . Imperial military despotism.
  - Rise of Francic emperors, or short-lived and slain head (7th) of Roman beast.
  - 1806 Fall of the Roman imperial kingship, or long-lived first head.
  - 1808 Fifth vial poured on the throne of the beast. The decline and fall of the Francic emperors.
  - The termination of the period, Dan. 11:36—39.
  - 1815 Political slaughter of Francic emperors, or seventh head; consequent political death of the Roman beast, Rev. 17:8.
  - Sixth vial. The downfall of the Ottoman empire, probably began with the Greek insurrection in 1821; The kings of the east, perhaps the Jews.
  - Revival of the Francic emperors will be subsequent to the fall of the Ottoman empire, Rev. 17:8.
  - Going forth of the three unclean spirits; The kings of the earth wrought up to fury by the political-theological agents of the dragon, the beast, and the false

A. C. prophet; The gathering together an unseemly mixture of blaspheming infidels and bigoted Romanists.

1864 Expiration of the seven prophetic times, or 2520 years, and of the times of the four great Gentile empires.

Seventh vial.  
Commencement of Daniel's time of end, 11:40—45, and of the restoration of his people the Jews, Dan. 12:1. L. 21:24.  
Marriage of the Lamb, or conversion of Judah.  
Rev. 19:6. Is. 60: 66:5—24. Dan. 12:1. Joel 3:16. Zech. 12:14. Rom. 11.

1865 Expiration of Daniel's time of end. The end of the third woe; Burning the harlot; Battle of Armageddon; Figurative coming of the Son of man; Destruction of antichrist in Palestine; Dissipation of the great image; Mohammedan horn broken; The Stone fills the whole earth; Figurative resurrection; Binding the dragon; The 1335 days begin, Dan. 12:12.; St. John's 1000 years of blessedness, Rev. 20:2, 3, begin; not a literal reign of Christ, but an effusion of the Holy Ghost.

2865 Second figurative resurrection of the wicked; termination of the 1000 years.  
3200 The termination of the 1835 years, destruction of Gog and Magog, Ezek. 38.  
The consummation of all things.  
Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven, but my Father only. Mat. 24:36.

A scheme modified from Whitaker; and see Ep. Newton.

Perhaps the reader would refer the seals to the Roman empire. Then, the 1st seal is applied to that era which commenced from the death of Domitian, A. D. 96, and extended to the accession of Commodus, A. D. 180, a period happy and prosperous as to public events. Thus the first spectacle revealed to the prophet would be the commencement or going forth of an era of prosperity and beneficent government, which then actually began in the Roman empire, and continued under 5 successive emperors, for nearly a century, in which time also the empire was enlarged by distant conquests. (In Poole's Annotations, the 1st seal is also considered as referring to the Roman emperors, armed with power.) The red horse of civil war, and the great sword wherewith men should kill one another, mark the period, from A. D. 130 to 378, during which there were 25 emperors, not to mention pretenders, of whom 32 perished by the sword of conspiracy or war. The 3d and 4th seals may represent the state of the empire from A. D. 376 to A. D. 456, as over-ridden and enslaved by the rider on the black horse, the barbarians, Goths, and Germans, bringing bondage and famine upon the land; and the pale or livid-colored horse, marking the period when the ruin of the empire was sealed by the ravages of the Huns and Vandals, when the miserable countries of the Roman world were exhausted by war, pestilence, and famine, and in some provinces the human species was almost extirpated.

Of this interval Robertson speaks, as the period in the world's history, during which the condition of the human race was the most calamitous and afflicted. Id.

More.

The following is the description of the curious diagram we have given on the colored page, opposite, from the rare work of Henry Moie, D. D., entitled 'Apocalypsis Apocalypsois,' 1680.

Let AD be the principal line of the Apocalyptic scheme, divided into 3 parts, AB, BC, CD, and let the whole semicircle AZD, contain the prophecy of the Sealed Book, but the semicircle AND, the prophecy of the Opened Book. But of those two particular semicircles ALB, and BRD, the former contains the first 6 Seals, the latter the 7th, which comprehends the 7 Trumpets. The 6 first of which trumpets the semicircle BMC includes, and the semicircle CDN the 7th, distributed into 7 Thunders, 1, 11, 111, IV, &c. as are the seals and trumpets. To this line of Seals, Trumpets, and Thunders, all the rest of the visions, not only of the Opened Book, but of the seven churches, may some way be annexed and applied by synchronisms, either proper and perfect, or imperfect and partial, as we shall advertise as we go through them.

AEB is the Woman in travail, 12:1.; AFB, the Court of the Temple and Altar, commensurate, 11:1.; AGB, the fight of Michael with the Dragon about the Woman, 12:4, 7, 8.; ABR, the church of Ephesus, or the Ephesine interval, contemporizing in part with the 1st Seal, 2:1.; RIK, Smyrnan do., which contemporizes with the latter part of the 1st Seal, and with the 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th Seals, and with the fore part of the 6th, 2:3.

The medial visions now follow, where BC is the company of the 144,000 servants of God, sealed, 7:3.; BDC, the outward Court trodden down, ch. 11.; BEC, the 2 Witnesses in sackcloth, prophesying 1260 days, ch. 11.; Be C, the same slain, and lying in the great city 3 1-2 days; BFC, the Woman in the wilderness, 12:6, 14; BGC, the 7 headed 10 horned Beast, whose deadly wound is healed, 13:3.; BHC, the 2 horned Beast, or false Prophet, the restorer or healer of the Beast, 13:11.; BIC, the Virgin company of 144,000, sealed of the Lamb, 14:1.; BKC, that great City, the Whore of Babylon, 17:3, 8.; KPR, the Pergamian interval, containing the latter part of the 6th seal, and with the 5 first trumpets. RQC is the Thyatirian interval, synchronizing with some small part of the 5th and with the whole 6th trumpet! As for LNC and MC, in these visions, and CEH and G II, in the following, they respect the voices of the 3 angels, the 1st is assigned to the times of the Turks taking Constantinople, the 2d to the appearing of the Reformation, the 3d to about the times of the 4th Vial.

Of the post-medial visions; CAH, HYP, PZQ, Q q R, R r S, S p T, and T o D, are the 7 antisynchronisms of the 7 Thunders; CAH, the interval of the 7 Vials, ch. 16.; CPH, the compendium of the vials, 11:35. &c. CBO is the interval of the Sardian church, contemporizing with the interval of the 6 first vials, 3:1. GH comprehends 3 combinations of synchronal Visions, the vision of the Harvest and the Wine-press, 14: 15, 18.; of the 6th and 7th Vial, 16:12.; of the preparation of the Bride, and of the battle of the Rider of the White Horse, 19:7, 11.

HYP is the New Jerusalem descending from heaven; HIR, the laying hold of Satan; PZQ, the thousand years' reign of Christ on earth; PLQ, the imprisoning of Satan during it, ch. 20.; HMQ, the palm bearing Company, 7:9.; OWQ, the interval of the Philadelphian church, 3:7, beginning with the 7th vial, and ending at the commencement of the 4th antisynchronal Q q R, which is the losing of Satan, 10:3.; R r S, the besieging of the holy city by Gog and Magog, 20:7.; S p T, the coming of Christ to judgment, 20:11.; PVT, a continuance of the New Jerusalem, or holy city, contemporizing with the 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th antisynchronals. PNT, the wicked rabble (contemporizing with the same antisynchronals) excluded out of the holy city, 22: 15.; QXT, the interval of the church of Laodicea, 3:14.; T o D, the conflagration of the earth, 20:14.; T e D, the consummate happiness of the Saints.

This is the description of all my synchronisms belonging to the Apocalyptic Visions, which differ from the synchronisms of Mr. Mede, (besides that he meddled not with the 7 churches, nor made the 3 1-2 days the same with the 1260,) only in this, that I place all the Vials after the middle synchronals under the 1st Thunder of the 7th Trumpet, he 6 of them before the 7th Trumpet, and that he does not distinguish the 7th Trumpet into 7 Thunders, in his table, as I have done, and therefore makes the binding of Satan and millennial reign of Christ, &c. to commence immediately (and consequently the reign of the beast quite to expire) at the beginning of that trumpet, whereas, in truth, the entireness of his kingdom only then expires. Ed.

It would not be difficult to add 20 other schemes of interpretation to those already given, and for the most part differing widely from them, but the reader probably is already more than satisfied. We may however remark, in reference to these, that, although each is, and must be incorrect in some respects, yet they may be considered to include among them the soundest and best interpretations which have been given, and those which it may be believed, will be found to approximate nearly to the truth in many respects, when it shall please the Most High to lift the remainder of the veil which yet covers a large portion of this book.

Durham cautions to avoid those expositors, who enervate the scope and ground of the book, which is, to show things belonging to the church and Christ's servants peculiarly, and especially to show the trials of the church from inward enemies, and the spiritual hurt and defection that is to come on the church.

One valuable feature, common to Mede, Faber, Cuninghame, and Woodhouse, is, that they seldom attempt to make any individual application of the symbols; and it may be remarked, that wherever they have so done, their interpretation will be found the least satisfactory, and the most easily set aside by their opponents. The commentaries of Vitrina (whom Woodhouse says, he found by far the most useful of all) and Gill will be found to contain much that is valuable, and notice most of the views given by the leading commentators of recent date, expressed in terms free from a dictatorial spirit, and void of censure towards those who may differ. The readers of these, and some other older commentators, will be surprised to find how few ideas, really novel and original, have of late been brought forward, even by the wilder theorists, excepting in their application to events of very recent date, in which many have been so much inclined to indulge, but here the expositor always treads upon dangerous ground. Events of our own times present themselves in such strong points of view, and appear in such glowing colors, that it is difficult to avoid the temptation to apply them to some symbolical representations in this mysterious book. Henry, abr.



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'Of the "Scripture Illustrations" we may say, that, independently of its relations to its predecessors, it will prove a most interesting and useful book to anybody. It is exclusively a compilation, and entirely free from anything sectarian.'

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'We always wait with some impatience, for the appearance of books prepared with the industry and ability of those by Professor Bush. The subject of this work is happily one of the most important to those who love to understand the Bible, the beauty and force of which are lost in many portions of it, from ignorance of oriental manners, customs, &c.

'In the preparation of this work, Prof. Bush has availed himself of the best works of oriental travellers and writers, both ancient and modern; among whom he has enumerated over forty, whose writings comprise more than 90 large volumes. The only recommendation the book requires, is the mention of its object, the name of its compiler, and a knowledge of the materials from which it has been prepared. We wish for it, and are sure it will find, an extensive circulation.'

*From the N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.*

'This work, replete with the results of all the latest and most valuable discoveries in the East, which can be made tributary to the elucidation of the Scriptures, will form, with its predecessors, the Comprehensive Commentary, and Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, a very considerable library of themselves,—one which will be invaluable to the Ministers of the Gospel, and Sabbath School Teachers; and which, we trust, will long remain, a monument of the enlightened and Christian enterprise of the publishers.'



# ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES,

DERIVED PRINCIPALLY FROM THE MANNERS, CUSTOMS, ANTIQUITIES, TRADITIONS, AND FORMS OF SPEECH, RITES, CLIMATE, WORKS OF ART, AND LITERATURE, OF THE EASTERN NATIONS; EMBODYING ALL THAT IS VALUABLE IN THE WORKS OF ROBERTS, HARMER, BURDER, PAXTON, CHANDLER, AND THE MOST CELEBRATED ORIENTAL TRAVELLERS; EMBRACING ALSO THE SUBJECT OF THE FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY, AS EXHIBITED BY KEITH AND OTHERS, WITH DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PRESENT STATE OF COUNTRIES AND PLACES MENTIONED IN THE SACRED WRITINGS, ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS LANDSCAPE ENGRAVINGS, FROM SKETCHES TAKEN ON THE SPOT. EDITED BY REV. GEORGE BUSH, PROFESSOR OF HEBREW AND ORIENTAL LITERATURE IN THE NEW YORK CITY UNIVERSITY.

Next in worth and importance to the possession, is doubtless to be estimated the correct interpretation of the sacred volume. Indeed, it is the latter which gives its value to the former. A revelation not understood, or not intelligible, is no revelation, as far as its recipients are concerned. The position, therefore, that the meaning of the Bible is the Bible, we consider as unquestionably true, and consequently any new accession of light, which goes to clear up its obscurities, and cause its genuine sense to stand forth in bolder relief upon the inspired page, is in reality enriching us with a larger amount of its treasures, and virtually bestowing upon us added communications of the Divine will. In this view, the progressive elucidation of the scriptures, whether by the expository labors of critics, the researches of travellers, or the fulfilments of prophecy, may be compared to the gradual rolling away of the morning mist from a splendid landscape. As the sun advances, the shades retire, and new and interesting features of the prospect are continually opening upon the delighted eye of the spectator. Or, it may be said to resemble the slow, but momentous process of unfolding the ancient papyrus, which the ravages of time and fire have spared among the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Here, as every successive word and letter, which can be redeemed from the crisp and crumbling texture of the blackened parchment, is noted down with the most scrupulous care, as forming a part of the continuous record, and going to make out its entire sense; so the sense of the sacred volume is gradually elicited, item by item, and needs only to be collected and treasured up with equal solicitude, in order to constitute a possession of infinitely more value than the choicest literary relics of antiquity. Perhaps it may safely be affirmed, that the materials are at this moment in existence, for the satisfactory solution of nearly every obscure passage of holy writ: but the great desideratum is to have them brought together—to collect them from their wide dispersion over a countless multitude of writings, in various languages, which the great majority of Christians can neither procure nor understand. It is only in this way that they can be made really available to the great end which they are calculated to subservise; and far from idle are the claims of any one who professes to bring from scattered sources a new quota to the general stock of biblical illustration.

As the Bible, in its structure, spirit, and costume, is essentially an Eastern book, it is obvious that the natural phenomena, and the moral condition of the East, should be made largely tributary to its elucidation. In order to appreciate fully the truth of its descriptions, and the accuracy, force, and beauty of its various allusions, it is indispensable that the reader, as far as possible, separate himself from his ordinary associations, and put himself, by a kind of mental transmigration, into the very circumstances of the writers. He must set himself down in the midst of oriental scenery—gaze upon the sun, sky, mountains, and rivers of Asia—go forth with the nomadic tribes of the desert—follow their flocks—travel with their caravans—rest in their tents—lodge in their khans—load and unload their camels—drink at their watering-places—pause during the heat of the day under the shade of their palms—cultivate the fields with their own rude implements—gather in or glean after their harvests—beat out and ventilate the grain in their open thrashing-floors—dress in their costume—note their proverbial or idiomatic forms of speech, and listen to the strain of song or story, with which they beguile the vacant hours. In a word, he must surround himself with, and transfuse himself into, all the forms, habitudes, and usages of oriental life. In this way only can he catch the sources of their imagery, or enter into full communion with the genius of the sacred penmen.

While, therefore, we readily concede the very high importance of critical and philological research in dissipating the obscurities of the scriptures, and fixing their exact sense, we cannot, at the same time, but think that the collateral illustrations derived from this source, are deserving of at least equal attention from the student of revelation. The truth is, the providence of God, which is never more worthily employed than about his Word, seems now to be directing the eyes of his servants, as with pointed finger, to the immense stores of elucidation constantly accumulating from this quarter. The tide of travel within a few years has turned remarkably to the East. Animated either by the noble spirit of missionary enterprise, of commercial speculation, of military adventure, or laudable curiosity, men of intelligence and observation have made their way into every region on which the light of revelation originally shone; exploring its antiquities, mingling with its inhabitants, detailing its manners and customs, and displaying its physical, moral, and political circumstances. From these expeditions they have returned laden with the rich results of their industry, and the labors of the pen and the pencil have made thousands partakers of the benefits of their toils. Little more than half a century ago, when the justly celebrated Observations of Harmer were given to the public, the range of materials to which he had access was comparatively limited. The travels of Chardin, Pococke, Shaw, Maundrell, Pitts, D'Arvieux, with Russet's Natural History of Aleppo, were his principal authorities—authorities, it is true, which have not yet been wholly superseded. But since his time, what an immense accession has the department of oriental travels received! The names of Volney, Niebuhr, Mariti, Clarke, Chateaubriand, Porter, Burckhardt, Buckingham, Morier, Seetzen, De Lamartine, Laborde, exhaust but a small part of the list of eastern tourists, whose labors have gone to make us familiarly acquainted with the land of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles. How desirable that the scattered gleams of illustrative light, which shine in their works, should be concentrated into one focus of illumination! This is the task which we have essayed in the present volume.

In entering upon and advancing in this task, we have been more and more impressed with the remarkable fact of the permanence of eastern usages. To the question, therefore, whether the state of things in the East, as described by modern travellers, really coincides with that which existed at the time the scriptures were written, so that one may be cited as conveying a correct idea of the other; we may reply, in the words of Sir John Chardin, one of the most respectable and authentic of the number:—"The language of that divine book (especially of the Old Testament) being oriental, and very often figurative and hyperbolic, these parts of scripture which are written in verse, and in the prophecies, are full of figures and hyperboles, which, as it is manifest, cannot be well understood without a knowledge of things from whence such figures are

taken, which are natural properties and particular manners of the countries to which they refer. I discerned this in my first voyage to the Indies: for I gradually found a greater sense and beauty in divers passages of scripture than I had before, by having in my view the things, either natural or moral, which explained them to me; and in perusing the different translations which the greatest part of the translators of the Bible had made, I observed that every one of them (to render the expositions, as they thought, more intelligible) used such expressions as would accommodate the phrase to the places where they writ: and which did not only many times pervert the text, but often rendered the sense obscure, and sometimes absurd also. In fine, consulting the commentators upon such kind of passages, I found very strange mistakes in them, and that they had long guessed at the sense, and did but grope (as in the dark) in search of it. And from these reflections I took a resolution to make my remarks upon many passages of the scriptures; persuading myself that they would be equally agreeable and profitable for use. And the learned, to whom I communicated my design, encouraged me very much, by their commendations, to proceed in it: and more especially when I informed them, that it is not in Asia, as in our Europe, where there are frequent changes, more or less, in the form of things, as the habits, buildings, gardens, and the like. In the East they are constant in all things; the habits are at this day in the same manner as in the preceding ages; so that one may reasonably believe, that in that part of the world, the exterior form of things (as their manners and customs) are the same now as they were two thousand years since, except in such changes as have been introduced by religion, which are, nevertheless, very inconsiderable."—(Preface to Travels in Persia, p. 6.) Morier, an eastern traveller, says, "The manners of the East, amid all the changes of government and religion, are still the same; they are living impressions from an original mould: and at every step, some object, some idiom, some dress, or some custom of common life, reminds the traveller of ancient times, and confirms, above all, the beauty, the accuracy, and the propriety of the language and the history of the Bible." \* \* \*

This steadfast resistance to the spirit of innovation and change, which thus remarkably distinguishes the nations of the East, will probably, in the providence of God, remain unsubdued, till it shall have answered all the important purposes of biblical elucidation, when it will give way to the all-pervading, all-regenerating influence of the Bible itself, borne upon the bosom of a new tide of civilization and improvement, which shall, ere long, set in upon the East from the nations of Europe, and the great continent of the West.

In the mean time, while the inevitable doom of revolution and transformation that awaits the East, lingers, it behooves us to make the most, for useful purposes, of that state of society which still exists, but which, ere long, will have passed away. With this view, we have endeavored to embody in the present volume a large mass of oriental illustration. The work is strictly of an eclectic character. Postponing the claims of originality to those of practical utility, the Editor, after arraying before him the amplest store of materials which he could command, set himself to the task of selecting and arranging the most valuable portions which he could bring within the limits of his plan. The kindred works of Harmer, Burder, Paxton, Taylor's edition of Calmet, (five vols. 4to.) scarcely any of which are in common accessible to the majority of biblical students, have been diligently gleaned, and all their important contents transferred to our pages. As these works are not likely ever to be reprinted in this country, there appeared no other way to arrest their progress to oblivion, and to secure a larger and wider circulation to the valuable matter which they contain.

But the range of selection has been by no means confined to the works now mentioned. So prolific has been the press within the last twenty or thirty years, of books of eastern travels, illustrative of manners, customs, and religion, that our resources in this department have been almost indefinitely multiplied.

As the present work is designed to be marked by somewhat of the same *Comprehensive* character which distinguishes the other biblical works lately issued from the press of the Publishers, the illustrations bear upon numerous other points than those relating to manners and customs.

The subject of the Fulfilment of Prophecy cannot well be lost sight of by any one conversant at once with the scriptures and the reports of modern travellers. The topographical descriptions of many of the most noted places of scripture, a department to which particular attention has been given in the ensuing pages, suggests at once the divine predictions bearing upon their future doom. The researches of tourists, both skeptics and Christians, have poured a flood of light upon this subject. It is perfectly astonishing, to one who has never examined the subject, to find how *literally* and *minutely* the prophetic declarations of scripture have been fulfilled, so that even infidel travellers and historians, as Volney and Gibbon, in their accounts of nations and countries, have unwittingly used for *description*, almost the words of scripture in which the events are foretold. Volney, particularly, (one of the bitterest opposers of Christianity,) in his published travels in the East, has afforded, unwillingly and unthinkingly, a wonderful attestation to the truth of the Bible, in the relation of facts which came under his own eye. There needs no better witness. Indeed, it is impossible for the most determined infidel carefully to examine and weigh this subject, and not be forced to feel that the Bible is divine: or, in the words of Bishop Newton, "he is reduced to the necessity, either to renounce his senses, deny what he reads in the Bible, and what he sees and observes in the world, or acknowledge the truth of prophecy, and consequently, of divine revelation." The researches of travellers in Palestine have been abundant, and the prophecies thereby verified are numerous and distinct, so that the facts may be related literally in the language of the prophecy. To use the words of a late writer in the London Quarterly Review, "we confess that we have felt more surprise, delight, and conviction, in examining the accounts which the travels of Burckhardt, Mangles, Irby, Leigh, and Laborde have so recently given of Judea, Edom, &c. than we have ever derived from any similar inquiry. It seems like a miracle in our own times. Twenty years ago we read certain portions of the prophetic scriptures with a belief that they were true, because other similar passages had, in the course of ages, been proved to be so, and we had an indistinct notion,







# THE ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE;

OR,

DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE, THEOLOGY, RELIGIOUS BIOGRAPHY, ALL RELIGIONS, ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, AND MISSIONS; CONTAINING DEFINITIONS OF ALL RELIGIOUS TERMS; AN IMPARTIAL ACCOUNT OF THE PRINCIPAL CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS THAT HAVE EXISTED IN THE WORLD FROM THE BIRTH OF CHRIST TO THE PRESENT DAY, WITH THEIR DOCTRINES, RELIGIOUS RITES AND CEREMONIES, AS WELL AS THOSE OF THE JEWS, MOHAMMEDANS, AND HEATHEN NATIONS; TOGETHER WITH THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE EAST, ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, AND A DESCRIPTION OF THE QUADRUPEDS, BIRDS, FISHES, REPTILES, INSECTS, TREES, PLANTS, AND MINERALS, MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE; A STATEMENT OF THE MOST REMARKABLE TRANSACTIONS AND EVENTS IN ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY; BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF THE EARLY MARTYRS AND DISTINGUISHED RELIGIOUS WRITERS AND CHARACTERS OF ALL AGES. TO WHICH IS ADDED A MISSIONARY GAZETTEER, CONTAINING DESCRIPTIONS OF THE VARIOUS MISSIONARY STATIONS THROUGHOUT THE GLOBE; BY REV. B. B. EDWARDS, EDITOR OF QUARTERLY OBSERVER. THE WHOLE BROUGHT DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME, AND EMBRACING, UNDER ONE ALPHABET, THE MOST VALUABLE PART OF CALMET'S AND BROWN'S DICTIONARIES OF THE BIBLE; BUCK'S THEOL. DICTIONARY; ABBOTT'S SCRIPTURE NATURAL HISTORY; WELLS' GEOGRAPHY OF THE BIBLE; JONES' CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHY; AND NUMEROUS OTHER SIMILAR WORKS. DESIGNED AS A COMPLETE BOOK OF REFERENCE ON ALL RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS, AND COMPANION TO THE BIBLE; FORMING A CHEAP AND COMPACT LIBRARY OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE. EDITED BY REV. J. NEWTON BROWN. ILLUSTRATED BY WOOD CUTS, MAPS, AND ENGRAVINGS ON COPPER AND STEEL.

## PUBLISHERS' ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present is an age, and ours is a country, demanding great condensation and brevity in writers who would secure attention. So active and busy are the habits of the mass of our countrymen, that they have neither time nor patience to turn and peruse the pages of the cumbersome quartos and folios of the 17th century; while a tolerable competency would scarcely suffice for the purchase of the numerous works of which the modern press is so fruitful, on the subjects embraced in this volume. The work then, combining and condensing the most valuable results of the researches of the best writers on any subject, while it will be most likely to be received with favor, will at the same time be best calculated to facilitate the acquisition, and consequently the diffusion of knowledge. With these views the "COMPREHENSIVE COMMENTARY on the Bible" was projected; and its unprecedented sale has encouraged the same publishers to offer to the public the present volume. *The subjects embraced in this work are interesting to ALL, and as it is not designed to be in the least sectarian, or denominational, it cannot fail to be desirable for all, whether professedly religious or not, at least as a book of reference.*

The following are some of the peculiarities of the plan:—

I. It is designed to be a *standard* and *permanent* work; and here it is believed will be found collected and compressed in one super-royal octavo volume of upwards of twelve hundred pages, in a shape combining *convenience* and *cheapness*, and in a style blending the sweetness of the popular with the richness of the profound, what has heretofore been scattered through more than *fifty* volumes, and mixed with much of little or no value. Among the works, *all the valuable matter* of which will be found in this, together with some from which copious extracts have been made, are the following:—

<b>BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATION.</b> Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible; Brown's do.; Barr's do.; Wells' Scripture Geography; Horne's Introduction; Harris' Scripture Natural History; Abbott's edition of Carpenter's do.; Paxton's Illustrations of Scripture; Draper's do.; Harmer's Observations; Jahn's Archaeology; Mrs. Sherwood's Dictionary of Types and Emblems; Burder's Oriental Customs; Josephus' Jewish Customs; Keith's Evidence of Prophecy; Cogswell's Harbinger of the Millennium; Robinson's Biblical Repository; Crabbe's English Synonymes.	<b>ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.</b> Mosheim's History of the Christian Church; Milner's do.; Jones' do.; Waddington's do.; Neander's do.; Murdock's Elements of Dogmatic History; Lord King's History of the Primitive Church; Robinson's History of Baptism; Sismond's History of the Crusades against the Albigenses.	<b>THEOLOGY.</b> Buck's Theological Dictionary, enlarged by Dr. Henderson; Jones' Biblical Cyclopædia; Hawker's Biblical Dictionary; Watson's Biblical and Theological Dictionary; Christian Examiner; Campbell's Dissertations; Dwight's Theology; Spirit of the Pilgrims; Works of Andrew Fuller; do. of Robert Hall; Douglas on the Advancement of Society in Knowledge and Religion.	<b>CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS.</b> Evans' Sketch of Religious Denominations; Jones' Dictionary of Religious Opinions; Hannah Adams' do.; Robbius' do.; Douglas on Errors regarding Religion; Benedict's History of All Religions; Williams' Dictionary of do.; Ward's Farewell Letters; Edwards' Quarterly Register.
<b>RELIGIOUS BIOGRAPHY.</b> Fox's Lives of the Martyrs; Middleton's Evangelical Biography; Jones' Christian Biog.; Davenport's Dictionary of Biography; Universal Biographical Dictionary; Betham's Female Biography; Clissold's	<b>THEOLOGY.</b> Last Hours of Eminent Christians; Ivimey's History of the Baptists; Benedict's do.; Mather's Magnalia; Elliot's American Biography; Allen's do.; Memoirs of American Missionaries; Encyclopædia Americana.	<b>MISSIONS.</b> Edwards' Missionary Gazetteer;	

Many articles are original, especially those relating to the principal denominations in this country, as will be seen on reference to the fourth paragraph below.

2. It is designed for a complete book of reference on ALL religious subjects; to which a person can turn when any thing occurs in reading or conversation connected with Religion which he does not understand, or in regard to which he wishes to refresh his memory, as he would to a dictionary for a definition of a word. Nearly every subject treated in the books which form the basis of this, is touched upon; but those which are of minor importance are very brief, and those of greater utility handled more at length. Articles rarely recurred to will be found here; but it is not burdened with any thing that is altogether useless.

3. In Theology, the general plan of Buck's Dictionary is followed; especially in its evangelical cast and Christian candor, in its copious illustrations of important topics, and its valuable references to the best works on both sides of the question. Watson, Jones, and others, however, have supplied us occasionally with articles of superior value.

The edition of Buck which has been used is the new one lately published in England, edited by Prof. HENDERSON, who has added nearly five hundred new articles, which will be found incorporated in this.

4. The accounts of the History, Doctrines, &c. of different denominations, have been prepared with an aim at the strictest impartiality. Where it was practicable some leading man of the principal sects existing in this country has been employed to prepare the article relating to it; and where it has not been, the matter has been drawn from some one or more prominent writer of the denomination, of acknowledged authority. THE WORK DOES NOT AIM TO EFFECT A COMPROMISE of opinions among the different denominations of Christians, but to present the views of each fully, and in their own words, leaving the reader to form his own conclusions as to which is most correct. This must be a truly acceptable course to all who can respond to the sentiment quoted by Robert Hall, "Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica VERITAS."

The following are some of the contributors under this head:—

<b>BAPTISM.</b> Pedobaptist Views, Rev. J. TRACY, Editor of the Boston Recorder. Baptist Views, Rev. J. D. KNOWLES, Professor in the Newton Theological Institution.	<b>CHRISTIANS.</b> Rev. J. V. HIMES, Boston.	<b>PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH.</b> Rev. Mr. BOYLE, presbyter, of Boston.
<b>BAPTISTS.</b> Prepared under the revision and sanction of Rev. Dr. Sharp, Boston.	<b>DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, or REFORMERS.</b> ALEXANDER CAMPBELL, of Bethany, Virginia.	<b>PROTESTANT METHODIST CHURCH.</b> Rev. T. F. NORRIS, President of the New England Conference.
<b>CONGREGATIONALISTS.</b> Prepared by a member, and revised and sanctioned by Rev. Prof. EMERSON, of Andover Theological Seminary, and Rev. Dr. Wisner, of Boston.	<b>FREE WILL BAPTISTS.</b> Rev. S. BEEDE, Editor of the Morning Star, Dover, N. H.	<b>UNITARIANS.</b> Rev. Prof. PALFREY.
	<b>METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.</b> Rev. S. W. WILLSON, Editor of Zion's Herald, Boston.	<b>UNIVERSALISTS.</b> Rev. L. R. PAIGE.
	<b>PRESBYTERIANS.</b> Rev. Dr. MILLER, of Princeton Theological Seminary.	<b>UNIVERSAL RESTORATIONISTS.</b> Rev. PAUL DEAN.

5. To adapt it to popular use, all words in foreign languages have been omitted; or where Hebrew, Chaldee, and Greek terms unavoidably occur, they are given in English characters.

6. Scripture Biography, which occupies a large space in most Bible Dictionaries, is handled here in the briefest manner possible—giving only the characteristic outlines, except when difficulties occur which require to be cleared up.

7. In consequence of the space thus gained, the new department of Religious Biography is made full and extensive; embracing, it is believed, every distinguished religious writer, preacher, and character, including the most distinguished females, and those philanthropists who were actuated by religious principles. Every denomination will find here notices of its most illustrious men, especially such as have lived and died in this country, from its settlement to this time. To every notice of an author a list of his principal writings (so far as possible) is given, with a reference to the best biographies of the individual.

8. As a Dictionary and Gazetteer of the Bible, the work will be found, it is believed, more copious and accurate than any other now in use, adapting it to the wants of the PULPIT and of SABBATH SCHOOLS. In the notices of the various cities and countries mentioned in the Bible, the fulfilment of the Prophecies regarding them, so far as developed, are particularly noticed.

9. The object of the ENCYCLOPÆDIA being to do good on evangelical principles, the work preserves throughout, as far as possible, a devotional and practical, as well as a critical, picturesque, and popular character, that it may minister to the heart, no less than to the judgment and the imagination.

10. MAPS AND ENGRAVINGS, as well as WOOD CUTS, have been added to enrich and adorn, as well as illustrate, the work.

On the whole, the amount of information embodied in this work is immense, and it is hoped the matter, by collation, arrangement, abridgment, and addition, has been very greatly improved; and while it will be found interesting and valuable to Families, and those individuals who only desire to acquire general knowledge, to the SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER and BIBLE CLASS LEADER it cannot but prove an invaluable treasure.

## CONDITIONS.

This volume will contain about 1250 pages, Super Royal octavo, be neatly printed, and durably bound. It will be afforded to subscribers at the low price of \$5.00. Any clergyman or other person becoming responsible for six subscribers, shall be entitled to a seventh copy gratis.



NOTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF THE  
ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE.

'The Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge is, upon the whole, a valuable book of reference, and the theological articles are, in the main, good. The work is rich in biographical notices, and contains much useful information respecting the tenets of different sects, which in most cases is supplied by their own writers. *The theological student will find it a convenient and useful companion.*  
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Newton, Mass.'

'This volume is certainly an exception to the general style in which compends, summaries, and Encys. are manufactured among us. It bears the marks of care, honest research, and accurate statement. The commendable practice is followed of giving the authorities at the close of each article.

It is not a bookselling expedient, prepared in the haste of a plagiarist from English works; but in part original, and in part condensed, and accommodated to suit the general intention of the volume. The department of religious biography is very complete;—a field of labor in which the American Encyclopædia is notoriously deficient. Candor and good judgment are here manifested.

On the whole, we heartily commend this publication to our readers. It will repay many fold the cost of its purchase. *No single volume in the language, so far as we know, contains a larger amount of valuable knowledge.* [Biblical Repository and Quarterly Observer.]

'We are confident that this must be a valuable acquisition to any man's library; and one who expects to purchase and use much literature of this sort, we are equally confident, will save both money and time by subscribing for this.

We have Encys. in other departments of science; but we do not know that any thing in the form of a Religious Ency. has ever been published in this, or any other country. A work of this kind has therefore been a great desideratum in the religious and reading community.

So far as we have examined it—and we have devoted some time and care to the subject—the book fulfils the large promise of the title quite as well as could reasonably be expected. It is a vast storehouse of information all the subjects indicated, judiciously selected—condensed, perspicuous, and well arranged; and, what is of great importance, with references, at the end of the more important articles, to works from which more particular information may be obtained. The work is handsomely printed, on good paper; the type is clean and fair, and sufficiently large. On the whole, it is entirely beyond any thing else extant as a convenient book of reference for clergymen, teachers of Bible classes and Sabbath schools, and all, in fact, who wish for any book of reference of the kind to assist them in their biblical and religious reading. It is marvellously cheap. We recommend it confidently. It will not disappoint any reasonable expectations.' [Vt. Chronicle.]

'A very useful work, 1300 imp. 8vo pages. Its usefulness in the family, in reading religious intelligence and other publications, and in writing on religious subjects, is obvious. The price, for so large a volume, prepared with so much labor, must be acknowledged very reasonable—cheap.' [N. Y. Evangelist.]

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Rev. GEO. BUSH,  
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In regard to the different denominations in our own country, it is necessary only to recur to the names of the gentlemen who furnish the accounts of them, to obtain full confidence in the fidelity with which those accounts may be expected to be composed.'

[Boston Christian Register.]

This work contains in itself a religious library; and as such we consider it one of great value to the Christian public.

The plan of it is happily adapted to make it a book of reference, a convenient substitute, and more than a substitute for many volumes which Christian readers have heretofore had occasion to consult. And from an examination of a large number of articles, the plan appears to have been well executed. Many of the original articles are ably written. Those condensed from other works were evidently prepared with great care and attention, and show the result of extensive reading and patient research.

Its cheapness strongly commends it to public favor.'

[Southern Rel. Telegraph, Richmond, Va.]

'The Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge is deservedly having a large sale.'  
[Boston Recorder.]

'Though it is a large volume, yet in view of its variety and comprehensiveness, it is *multum in parvo*,—much in a small space,—an ocean of matter in a drop of words. The work has been compiled with immense labor, with great accuracy and uncommon impartiality. Mr. Brown has performed his difficult and delicate task in a judicious manner—in a manner to highly promote the public benefit, and to entitle him to the approbation and gratitude of the community. We are happy to add, that the work has been got up in a handsome style, and in good taste.

We should sincerely hope, that the cause of truth and the interest of the religious public may be promoted by its extensive circulation. It should be a companion to the Bible in every family; it should find a place in the library of every Sunday school teacher; and we venture little in saying that, as a work of reference, the minister of the gospel would find it convenient and useful.' [American Baptist (New York).]

'The object of the work is to condense into one volume the most important matter now scattered throughout many expensive publications. The compiler appears to have executed his task with commendable diligence and good judgment. It requires more than ordinary wisdom, in compiling such a work, to determine what to reject and what to retain. As far as we have been able to examine the work, we think the author deserves the credit of a faithful and judicious compiler.—We deem the work worthy of extensive patronage. It is well executed, on good paper, and illustrated with engravings and wood cuts; and we hope the enterprising publishers will be well repaid for their expenditure on this praiseworthy and expensive work.' [Richmond Rel. Herald.]

'The general execution of the work is decidedly good. We recommend it for its general excellence, as a most useful book of reference, to families which desire information on religious subjects.'  
[Presbyterian (Philadelphia).]

'This work is emphatically what its title imports, a repository of every description of religious knowledge, alphabetically arranged, for easy and familiar reference. It seems to embrace just that kind of knowledge which the ministers of the gospel, and the curious and enlightened Christian of every denomination, requires, relative to the Bible, theology, religious biography, ecclesiastical history, missions and all religions. The amount of matter embraced in about 1300 large octavo pages on these subjects is incalculable—enough, we should think, to fill 15 or 20 volumes of the Family Library. We consider it, in fact, if not the only, the most recent, comprehensive, illustrative, and trustworthy work of reference on all denominational points, and topics adverted to above, extant. It is designed as a complete book of reference on all religious subjects, and companion to the Bible, forming a compact library of religious knowledge; and when its excellence is fully known, it will, we doubt not, find a place in almost every Christian family.'

[N. Y. Weekly Messenger.]

'We have recently procured a copy of this excellent work;—it is just such a work as the religious public have long needed. It fills a place that is not occupied by any other work in the English language. We wish one could be placed in the hands of every minister of the gospel throughout our country. This one volume would be to him a valuable library of religious knowledge; he might accumulate a great variety of books before he could otherwise obtain the information which he needs upon various points, and which would be directly available in the great work in which he is engaged. Here he has a condensed, but accurate and satisfactory view of the religious customs and sentiments of the different denominations of Christians; and, notwithstanding their number and diversity, he can in this volume hear them nearly all speak their own language and assign their own reasons.

But besides information with regard to different religions, and the different denominations of the Christian religion, the minister of Christ may here find a distinct and evangelical statement of the great leading doctrines of the Scriptures; which will be no small advantage to any who may have had to enter upon the ministry with but little preparation.

On the same account, this work recommends itself as a most important help to every Bible class and Sabbath school teacher. Indeed, every head of a family, who wishes to acquire and impart to his children correct and enlightened views upon religious subjects in general, should have in his library this Encyclopædia. Were this generally the case, we might soon expect to see a higher degree of religious knowledge in circulation, and fewer misconceptions and misrepresentations respecting the sentiments of different religious denominations.'

[Zion's Advocate (Portland).]

'Few works of more value can be named, even in this time of condensing books. For theological students as a book of reference, and as a family book for youths, to which they may devote their evenings, and imbibe correct information upon the almost boundless field of survey which is connected with the moral and religious condition of mankind, it is unequalled in variety and amplitude of knowledge. We have extensively searched the articles of which it is composed; and can attest to the general fidelity with which the work has been compiled. We have ascertained that the Ency. of Rel. Knowledge comprehends the substance of FIFTY valuable works; all of which formerly were considered necessary to the library not only of a scholar, but also of all Christians who were anxious to obtain accurate and enlarged information of scriptural truth and ecclesiastical history. We can conceive of nothing more beneficial to the American churches than this laborious and grand scheme for the diffusion of religious knowledge.'

[N. Y. Protestant Vindicator.]

(From the Literary and Theological Review, (New York,) edited by Rev. Leonard Woods, Jr.)

'It is enough to say in commendation of it, that it fulfils the promise set forth in its long, descriptive, comprehensive title. The original articles contained in it are numerous, and of great value. The mechanical execution is excellent, and the whole constitutes, we have no doubt, the completest and most valuable book of reference, adapted to the use of families, Sunday school teachers, and ministers of the gospel, that has ever been prepared and published in this country.'

(From the New York Observer.)

'This volume is on a plan which we believe to be original, and which cannot fail, if its execution be judicious and faithful, to secure to the work extensive popularity and usefulness. So far as we have examined the articles in the work, with a few exceptions we think favorably of the skill, judgment and fidelity with which it has been executed. The names of several of the original contributors are sufficient to warrant the highest expectations concerning the articles which they have prepared.'



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The Publishers select the following, from the testimonials they have received as to the value of the work:—

WE the Subscribers having examined the volume of the *Comprehensive Commentary*, just issued from the press of Messrs. Fessenden & Co., and highly approving its character, would cheerfully and confidently recommend it as containing more matter and more advantages than any other with which we are acquainted; and, considering the expense incurred, and the excellent manner of its mechanical execution, we believe it to be one of the *cheapest* works ever issued from the press. We hope the publishers will be sustained by a liberal patronage, in their expensive and useful undertaking. We should be pleased to learn that every family in the United States had procured a copy.

<p>B. B. WISNER, D. D. <i>Secretary of Am. Board of Com. for For. Missions.</i>                  WM. COGSWELL, D. D. " <i>Education Society.</i>                  JOHN CODMAN, D. D. <i>Pastor of Congregational Church, Dorchester.</i>                  WARREN FAY, D. D. " <i>Charlestown.</i>                  Rev. G. W. BLAGDEN, " <i>Salem-st. Boston.</i>                  Rev. HUBBARD WINSLOW, " <i>Bowdoin-st. "</i>                  Rev. SEWALL HARDING, <i>Pastor of T. C. Church, Waltham.</i>                  Rev. J. H. FAIRCHILD, <i>Pastor of the Cong. Church, South Boston.</i>                  GARDINER SPRING, D. D. <i>Pastor of Presb. Chh. New York city.</i>                  CYRUS MASON, D. D. " " " " " "                  THOS. MCAULEY, D. D. " " " " " "                  JOHN WOODBRIDGE, D. D. " " " " " "                  THOS. DEWITT, D. D. " <i>Dutch Ref.</i> " " " "                  E. W. BALDWIN, D. D. " " " " " "                  Rev. J. M. MCKREBS, " <i>Presb.</i> " " " "                  Rev. ERSKINE MASON, " " " " " "                  Rev. J. S. SPENCER, " " " <i>Brooklyn.</i>                  EZRA STILES ELY, D. D. <i>Stated Clerk of Gen. Assem. of Presb. Chh.</i>                  JOHN McDOWELL, D. D. <i>Permanent</i> " " " "                  JOHN BRECKENRIDGE, <i>Cor. Sec'y of Assembly's Board of Education.</i>                  SAMUEL B. WYLIE, D. D. <i>Pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian Chh.</i></p>	<p>N. LORD, D. D. <i>Président of Dartmouth College.</i>                  JOSHUA BATES, D. D. " <i>Middlebury- "</i>                  H. HUMPHREY, D. D. " <i>Amherst "</i>                  E. D. GRIFFIN, D. D. " <i>Williamstown "</i>                  JOHN WHEELER, D. D. " <i>University of Vermont, at Burlington.</i>                  J. M. MATTHEWS, D. D. " <i>New York city University.</i>                  GEO. E. PIERCE, D. D. " <i>Western Reserve College, Ohio.</i>                  Rev. Dr. BROWN, " <i>Jefferson College, Penn.</i>                  LEONARD WOODS, D. D. <i>Prof. of Theology, Andover Seminary.</i>                  THOS. H. SKINNER, D. D. " <i>Sac. Rhet.</i> " <i>late of Phil.</i>                  Rev. RALPH EMERSON, " <i>Ecll. Hist.</i> " " "                  Rev. JOEL PARKER, <i>Pastor of Presb. Church, New Orleans.</i>                  JOEL HAWES, D. D. " <i>Cong.</i> " <i>Hartford, Conn.</i>                  N. S. S. BEAMAN, D. D. " <i>Presb.</i> " <i>Troy, N. Y.</i>                  MARK TUCKER, D. D. " " " "                  Rev. E. N. KIRK, " " " <i>Albany, "</i>                  Rev. B. B. EDWARDS, <i>Ed. of Quarterly Observer.</i>                  Rev. STEPHEN MASON <i>Pastor 1st Cong. Church, Nantucket.</i>                  Rev. ORIN FOWLER, " " " <i>Full River.</i>                  WILLIAM M. ENGLÉS, <i>Editor of the Presbyterian.</i>                  GEORGE W. BETHUNE, <i>Pastor of the First Reformed Dutch Church.</i></p>
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## The following are Extracts from Letters to the Publishers, and Notices in Periodicals.

DR. HUMPHREY, *President of Amherst College.* 'The execution of the plan thus far exceeds my high expectations; I have Henry, Doddridge, and Scott, and admire them all; but to say that your great work promises, when completed, to be more valuable than either, would be little more than saying that the best things in the three combined must be better than any one of them alone.'

DR. LORD, *President of Dartmouth College.* 'I have made considerable examination of the *Comprehensive Commentary*, and am satisfied of its superiority over all others which I have seen for the purposes intended.'

DR. GRIFFIN, *President of Williams College.* 'The *Comprehensive Commentary* appears to be on a plan better than any other which I have seen, and, judging from a short examination, and from the strong testimony of the ministers of Boston and vicinity, I have no doubt the execution is as good as the design.'

DR. HAWES, *Hartford.* 'The plan and execution, so far as I have been able to examine, I highly approve. \* \* \* I sincerely hope that the work may have a wide circulation, and anything I can do to aid it, shall be done cheerfully.'

DR. WISNER, *Secretary of American Board of Foreign Missions.* 'I am exceedingly pleased with the volume published of the *Comprehensive Commentary*. I have all along had strong confidence that it would be well done, but my expectations are more than realized.'

DR. MATTHEWS, *Chancellor of New York city University.* 'I had expected that the *Comprehensive Commentary* would be a valuable work; but, judging from the volume on the Gospels, it exceeds my expectations. It gives us Henry nearly at large; and superadds a synopsis of what is important in many of the other most enlightened Commentaries on the Bible. I have no hesitation in saying, that I shall esteem it the most valuable Commentary in our language, should it be finished as it has been commenced.'

New York, Aug. 29, 1834. J. M. MATTHEWS.

DR. BATES, *President of Middlebury College.* 'I am free to express my entire approbation of the work, both in respect to the editorial labors, and the mechanical execution. Notwithstanding my previous high opinion of the Editor, the present specimen of the work altogether exceeds my high expectations. Most sincerely do I hope that it will obtain an extensive (and I might say universal) circulation through our country and in England. Besides the other qualities which recommend it, it possesses one of great importance to English Literature, viz. that of possessing the same Saxon purity, both as to the choice of words, and to idiomatic arrangement in the Commentary (Henry) as characterises the Text of the Bible, which *Fisher Ames* used to say had done more to guard against the corrupting influence of foreign words and idioms, and thus to preserve the purity and simplicity of the English language, than all other causes combined.'

From REV. LYMAN BEECHER, D. D. *Pres. of Lane Theol. Seminary, Ohio.*

'Of evangelical Expositors of the Bible, Henry and Scott are among the best for family use. The *Comprehensive Commentary* is intended to include, in a condensed form, the excellences of both, with copious explanatory notes from all the best critics and commentators. From what I know personally of the publishers and the editor of the work, and from what I know of its execution, I am persuaded it will meet the expectation of subscribers, and be cheaper and better for Family use than any other; and that it will be a treasure to any family who shall obtain it: and I cordially recommend it for universal family use.' LYMAN BEECHER.

DR. WOODS, *Professor of Theology in Andover Seminary.* 'I hope it will be extensively circulated, and doubt not that it will be very useful in Bible Classes, as well as in the study of Ministers, and the closets of private Christians.'

REV. ASA CUMMINGS, *Editor of Christian Mirror, and author of Memoir of Payson.* 'It is with no ordinary degree of pleasure that I can express myself satisfied with the *Comprehensive Commentary*—it is far superior to what I had dared to expect.'

### From the Professors at Princeton Theol. Seminary.

'The *Comprehensive Commentary* contains the whole of Henry's Exposition in a condensed form, Scott's Practical Observations and Marginal References, and a large number of very valuable philological and critical notes, selected from various authors.—The work as far as it has proceeded appears to be executed with judgment and fidelity and care; and will furnish a rich treasure of scriptural knowledge to the Biblical student, and to the teachers of Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes.'

A. ALEXANDER, D. D.  
 SAMUEL MILLER, D. D.  
 CHARLES HODGE, D. D.

### From the Professors at Bangor Theological Seminary, &c.

'This certifies that we have examined to some extent the volume of the *Comprehensive Commentary*, recently issued from the press; and although, from our knowledge of the design and plan of the publication, and of the qualifications and character of the gentlemen concerned in it, we had no doubt as to its general interest and importance, we must say that our expectations are more than realized. *The work is altogether one of great value*, and merits the attention and patronage, not only of private Christians, and those concerned in Sabbath Schools, but of the public teachers of religion also.'

ENOCH POND, *Prof. of Theology, Theol. Seminary, Bangor.*  
 ALVAN BOND, " *Biblical Lit.* " "  
 L. S. POMROY, *Pastor of 1st. Congregational Church,* "  
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AMERICAN QUARTERLY OBSERVER. 'We have looked over the first volume of this long expected work, with great satisfaction. \* \* \* Henry is permitted to speak his own sentiments in his own quaint and admirable manner. The notes are selected with taste and judgment. \* \* \* We are well satisfied that it has been done judiciously and faithfully.'

BOSTON RECORDER. 'We are glad to learn that the publishers have received many names as patrons of the work from various portions of the United States; we think now that they can present a volume liberally "got up" as this is in respect to engravings, paper, printing and binding, and combining so many advantages, their list will receive daily additions, and the cheapness of the work is such that they can only be remunerated from extended sales.'

NEW HAMPSHIRE OBSERVER. 'The excellence of the design is too obvious to be mentioned. To bring together in one work what is most valuable in all our Commentaries, for about the price of one of them, is certainly doing the public a great service. Such a work, tolerably executed, must, we think, take the place of all other Commentaries for general reading.'

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**NEW YORK EVANGELIST.** 'The Editor is well known as a gentleman of extensive learning and deep research, and in this work he has displayed a good judgment in the selection of notes. It is handsomely printed, well bound, and on good paper. We hope the publishers will take special pains to gain the assistance of American ministers. The note from Dr. Wisner, on Luke xxiv. 36—48, is a sample of what might be done by American writers in making portions of Scripture tell upon the christian action of the church. The work has been unusually fortunate in obtaining the commendation of ministers.'

**CONN. OBSERVER.** *Comprehensive Commentary.* 'The publishers of the Comprehensive Commentary, seem determined to make it as near perfect as it can be made by care, and labor and expense. It bears examination well, and the attentive reader after a thorough perusal will doubtless assent to the correctness of the remark, that aside from all its other excellences it presents the commentaries on which it is based in a better shape than the originals.'

**VERMONT CHRONICLE.** 'We have examined parts of it with a good deal of care; and can assure subscribers and others, that the work is in all respects faithfully done. Having taken pains to compare the abridgements of Henry, and the extracts from Scott with the originals, to considerable extent, and looked critically at the notes from other sources, we have no hesitation in saying that, in our opinion, it is very decidedly superior, in many important respects, to any Commentary ever published in this country. The admirers of Henry have the substance of his Commentary faithfully before them, in his own language, and fitted to be more generally useful by the removal of repetitions and other redundances, and the omission of words and phrases that are ill-judged and in bad taste. The selections from Scott and Doddridge have been carefully and judiciously made. The miscellaneous notes from other sources are the result of extensive reading, and furnish a great mass of illustrative facts and hints that can be found together nowhere else. Large libraries, accessible only to the few, have here been laid under contribution for the service of all. The whole has been prepared for popular use, and is conveniently arranged. As to its orthodoxy, and the spirit that it breathes, we need only say that Henry, Scott, and Doddridge, are permitted to speak out their views and feelings fully, and that with these, the other materials are in harmony. The price is very low—so low as to place the work within the means of almost every one. Many thousands of copies of Henry and Scott have been sold among us at a higher price. Can pastors do a better service to the interests of religion, in any similar way, than by exerting themselves to introduce this work among the people of their charge?'

*From the Literary and Theological Review, New York, Edited by Rev. Leonard Woods, Jr.*

'While the standard Commentaries in our language certainly have great excellences, they also have glaring defects, and it was a good thought to form a commentary which should combine the excellences and exclude the defects of our most approved interpreters of the Bible. Such is the object of the Comprehensive Commentary. The task was certainly a difficult one, and failure would not have been strange. But it has been accomplished thus far, under the auspices of the learned and able editor, in such a way as to realize the expectations of the public. We have no doubt that the best and only way of promoting a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, is for writers to devote themselves to the more careful study of particular books. The whole Bible is too large a field to be successfully cultivated by a single hand, hence we think the labors of Prof. Stuart, Robinson, Bush and others, are far more wisely directed in being employed on particular portions of the sacred Word, than in being extended like those of some others over the whole Bible.

This opinion, however, does not diminish our approbation of the attempt to render the riches of scripture knowledge and particular instruction *already existing* in the language, more available by the great mass of the community. The one is an effort to elevate the standard of Biblical learning—the other to disseminate the knowledge already accumulated; and for the latter object no work on the Scriptures which we have seen is better calculated than the Comprehensive Commentary.'

*From the Portland, (Me.) Christian Mirror, Edited by Rev. Asa Cummings, author of Life of Payson.*

'When the first volume of this work made its appearance, we spoke with a measure of caution, as to its merits. From the time of issuing the Prospectus, we have heard good men express fears, that it was to favor a mitigated theology, and weaken the hold of the Churches upon "the faith once delivered to the saints." We of course felt it incumbent on us to wait till we could examine it with some care before expressing a full and decided judgment of its merits. We have accordingly made it a part of the business of every week to consult the Comprehensive Commentary, and the examination has afforded us a degree of satisfaction which we did not anticipate. So far from commending it with reluctance, we feel that we should do wrong to withhold an expression of approbation.—This we give in the language of the Editors of the *Protestant Vindicator*,—and we could not use stronger.'

**NEW YORK PROTESTANT VINDICATOR.** 'Having devoted nearly a whole day to a close scrutiny of its contents, we are able to express a decisive opinion respecting its merits and its claims to public patronage. Of the quantity of matter contained in this volume an accurate idea may be formed from one remark. The Commentary of Henry, and the practical observations of Scott, are

published nearly entire. The additional notes are selected from a *regiment* of authors, for we ascertained that there are nearly *fifty* different writers quoted in the *first four* chapters only of the gospel by *Matthew*. The decorations are fine specimens of the artists skill and are judiciously selected. *As printers*, we pronounce, that the mechanical execution of this volume cannot be surpassed until some additional discovery in the typographical art gives more accuracy of composition and lucidness to ink, for we have not encountered one literal error or a stray "*Monk or Friar*," through any of the "*forms*," which we have deliberately perused. These topics, however, although they comprise economy, taste and even the multiplication of books at a price so low that there is not a christian parent in this republic "*Glory to God in the highest*," who cannot procure them; yet these attractions are "*altogether lighter than vanity*," when placed in competition with the momentous inquiry,—*Does the Comprehensive Commentary on the Holy Bible speak "as the truth is in Jesus?"* To this ineffably important inquiry, we give a deliberate answer. As we have already stated we have extensively searched the volume which comprises the four Gospels. We have amply scrutinized its pages in reference to the fundamental doctrines of Christian theology, and our examination has been very gratifying. The passages which we most inquisitively explored included the topics to which the principal modern controversies advert, and especially the cardinal points "*of the faith which was once delivered to the saints*." We have not stumbled upon a comment that in our opinion is contrary to "*that which is noted in the Scriptures of truth*."—We therefore, most conscientiously avow our preference of the "*Comprehensive Commentary on the Holy Bible*," to any others, or rather we say all others.

It must be remembered this is not an ephemeral publication. A sum of money the ordinary interest of which is amply sufficient to support any temperate family in comfort, must be expended and laid up only in the Stereotype plates, which are requisite to complete the work. We have often recommended books to the perusal of our brethren and friends, but never have we performed that duty with such deep solicitude; as we now advise all who duly value the "*one pearl of great price*," to buy this most "*godly pearl*."

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